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Master Thesis

# Political Leadership in Urban Governance: a determinant factor for transformative innovation?

A comparative analysis of eight public sector innovation cases in Europe

Dalilah Monet Pichler

Student ID 475233

*Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Jurian Edelenbos*

*Second reader: Prof. Dr. Joop Koppenjan*

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## Executive summary

This thesis researches the influence of political leadership exercised by local and regional politicians on public sector innovation across Europe. By using a comparative case study approach, eight innovative projects in the countries Austria, France, Germany, Sweden and the United Kingdom are analysed to identify to what extent political leadership has led to the generation and adoption of different types of innovation and which other factors are relevant for public sector innovation processes.

For the purpose of this study, four leadership styles and their respective characteristics are identified as well as two types of innovation, i.e. service and governance innovation. The concepts are based on an extensive literature review on (political) leadership and (public sector) innovation theory. As no clear theory exists on the effects of political leadership on innovation, a conceptual model is developed to explore to what extent different styles of leadership, or combinations thereof, influence the type of innovation generated in urban contexts. Moreover, a typology of different polity models is introduced to investigate if differences between countries can be explained by national governance traditions and political norms.

Regarding the main research question, this thesis concludes that more collaborative leadership styles generate innovations based on new forms of governance and higher levels of integration across different sectors. Contrarily, political leaders, who perceive their role more as an authority for making major decisions within an organizational structure, tend to produce innovations that are considered as new or better services provided by local authorities. To some extent, differences between the countries can also be explained by the general attitude of public authorities towards intervention and interaction with civic and private sector actors, as proposed by different polity models.

A further finding is that cases with higher levels of transformation, explained as discontinuous or disruptive change, typically touch upon more complex or politically sensitive topics. The analysis leads to the conclusion that these cases demand a more visionary leadership style, where the leader must have a long-term vision beyond the electoral cycle to tackle the complex or sensitive issues addressed through the innovation. Characteristics such as strong personal conviction, venturesome attitude and the feeling of being responsible for the process are dominant in these cases.

More generally, the attributes openness, willingness to take risks, linking capacity and empowerment are seen as essential to consider oneself as a political leader. Other factors that drive innovation processes are mainly environmental pressures such as urgency, inter-organizational relations and public demand, as well as the creation and maintenance of a supportive innovation climate within public organizations.

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# Table of content

List of figures .....	6
List of tables .....	7
<b>1 Introduction and research objectives.....</b>	<b>8</b>
1.1 Introduction to study .....	8
1.2 Presentation of problem, research question and relevance .....	9
1.2.1 Problem statement.....	9
1.2.2 Research question.....	10
1.2.3 Relevance of study.....	11
1.3 Structure of the thesis.....	12
<b>2 Theoretical framework .....</b>	<b>13</b>
2.1 Political Leadership .....	13
2.1.1 Definition.....	14
2.1.2 Functions of leadership and leadership styles.....	15
2.1.3 Leadership theories .....	16
2.1.4 An approach to political leadership in urban governance .....	18
2.2 Public Sector Innovation .....	21
2.2.1 Definition.....	21
2.2.2 The role of the innovator .....	22
2.2.3 Typologies of innovation .....	24
2.2.4 Influencing factors on public sector innovation processes.....	26
<b>3 Conceptual framework.....</b>	<b>29</b>
3.1 Conceptual model .....	29
3.2 Operationalization.....	31
<b>4 Methodology .....</b>	<b>36</b>
4.1 Research design .....	36
4.1.1 A comparative case study design .....	36
4.1.2 Case description .....	37
4.1.3 Criteria for case selection.....	38
4.2 Research methods.....	41
4.2.1 Interviews and sampling.....	41
4.2.2 Reliability and validity.....	43
4.2.3 Coding scheme .....	44

<b>5</b>	<b>Case study results</b>	<b>46</b>
5.1	Austria	46
5.1.1	We are active – Alberschwende	46
5.1.2	Stadtmenschen Vienna	49
5.2	France	51
5.2.1	Actors for a sustainable Paris	51
5.3	Germany	53
5.3.1	Marketplace for good business Bocholt	53
5.3.2	Municipal apprenticeship initiative Miltenberg	56
5.4	Sweden	58
5.4.1	Nyköping school model	58
5.5	United Kingdom	61
5.5.1	Crowdfund Angus	61
5.5.2	Improving outcomes for young black men – Hackney, London	63
5.6	Summary of results	66
<b>6</b>	<b>Analysis of empirical findings</b>	<b>68</b>
6.1	Comparison with theory: interpretations of perceived innovation	68
6.2	Effects of political leadership styles on innovation	71
6.2.1	Analysis by innovation type	73
6.2.2	Preliminary conclusions and possible explanations	78
6.3	General findings on the relationship between political leadership styles and public sector innovations	81
6.4	Other influencing factors relevant for public sector innovation	84
6.4.1	Antecedents of public sector innovation	84
6.4.2	Barriers to public sector innovation	85
<b>7</b>	<b>Conclusion</b>	<b>87</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>Discussion</b>	<b>90</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>References</b>	<b>93</b>

# List of figures

Figure 1: Typology grid for leadership roles in governance, own adaptation based on John & Cole, 1999 ..... 15

Figure 2: Leadership styles and their corresponding theories, own adaptation based on John & Cole, 1999..... 20

Figure 3: Conceptual model, own adaptation based on John & Cole, 1999..... 31

Figure 4: Four predominant modern polity models (along two constitutive dimensions) including placement of cases of this study (Jepperson, 2002) ..... 39

Figure 5: Coding scheme pre-determined variables..... 44

Figure 6: Results coding of concepts ..... 72

# List of tables

Table 1: Summary of leadership styles and their characteristics..... 20

Table 2: Variables and indicators for the concept of political leadership ..... 34

Table 3: Variables and indicators for the concept of public sector innovation..... 35

Table 4: Overview of participating projects..... 38

Table 5: Overview pre- and post-analysis types of innovation per case ..... 40

Table 6: Overview interview respondents ..... 42

Table 7: Summary of final open codes ..... 45

Table 8: Summary of case study results..... 67

Table 9: Overview level of transformation of innovations ..... 71

Table 10: Overview levels of integration by case ..... 73

Table 11: Overview cases on different levels of integration and transformation including leadership style  
..... 81

# 1 Introduction and research objectives

## 1.1 Introduction to study

Democracy, the foundation of European society, is in crisis. The increasing level of pressure on current welfare states, the rise of more pluralistic communities and declining trust and political participation of citizens are only some of the many reasons in this debate (Hirst, 2002). Politicians and public officials are constantly challenged to legitimize their actions and policies in an evermore complex environment. Solving these emerging 'wicked' societal problems, characterized by high complexity and involvement of a variety of interdependent actors with contrasting values (Klijn & Koppenjan, 2016) has required a paradigm shift in the public sector. Innovation has become the condition for the modernization of all levels of government in order to provide adequate and effective solutions for new societal challenges (Bekkers, Edelenbos, & Steijn, 2011). On the one hand, process innovation along with the development of new public services or products are typically linked to reform movements such as *New Public Management* (NPM), which in essence strives for intra-organizational optimization, increased efficiency and efficacy based on market mechanisms (Osborne & Brown, 2005; Osborne, 2006). On the other hand, newer reform movements such as *Interactive Governance* may lay the foundation for public officials to pursue and adopt solutions based on collaborative efforts. This collaborative approach is an inherent part of interactive governance, which in its nature deals with civic engagement, stakeholder participation, self-organization and civic initiatives (Edelenbos & Van Meerkerk, 2016). These interactive endeavours can produce innovations such as the development of new forms of governance processes to address societal problems or conceptual innovation by reframing specific problems and their solutions (de Vries, Bekkers, & Tummers, 2016). However, to be able to explore these innovative ways of governance and public service delivery that fit the needs of citizens and society, the actions and attitudes of politicians play a key role. For leadership in general is perceived as one of the cornerstones of innovation (Bekkers et al., 2011), and in the context of the public sector innovation, political leadership can be fundamental for giving direction to the future development of society (Sørensen & Torfing, 2016). In the traditional notion of political leadership, the focus lies on political leadership in governments, parties and political movements. However, the concept of the political leader can also be expanded, going beyond the traditional role of politicians perceiving themselves as sovereign decision makers (ibid.). Especially in an urban context, local political leaders are challenged to make sense of the complexity of urban space, with blurry territorial boundaries and loose collections of political interests, from active citizenry and influential local economic actors to overlooking national institutions and top-down regulations. Local leaders can thus find it hard to be visible in nationalised political cultures (John & Cole, 1999). Hence, there is a need to explore cases of outstanding political leaders in an urban context,



who recognize global and societal challenges and attempt to address these in their sphere of influence by encouraging governance and public service innovation. At the same time, there is an implicit tension between leadership and democracy, as qualities that make political systems work are the same ones that can undermine the claims of liberal democracy to be an effective and responsive type of government (John & Cole, 1999). There is a wide spectrum of different leadership styles that can be exercised within different contexts that may prove most effective. Politicians can for example either take a more traditional role as a sovereign decision-making authority within a hierarchical structure or a facilitative role in collaborative processes defined by equal decision-making across all involved public and non-public actors. These two extremes should only illustrate the wide range of possible forms of leadership (Bass & Bass, 2008; Van Wart, 2003), but the question remains, which actions and behaviours of political leaders lead to transformative innovations in their political community and sometimes even beyond.

## 1.2 Presentation of problem, research question and relevance

### 1.2.1 Problem statement

In the light of NPM reforms, intra-organizational optimization and increasing process efficiency are one of the major forms of public sector innovation. Moreover, NPM reform ideology originates in government-induced initiatives leaving out contributions of collaborative efforts between society and government to tackle 'wicked' societal problems (Bekkers et al., 2011). Not denouncing the relevance of such efforts, there is also a need to analyse what generates other types of innovation in the public sphere. Therefore, when looking beyond mere process innovation which aims to increase efficiency and quality in the shadow of NPM reform, we turn to the concept of public governance as the underlying theory for the emergence of more conceptual innovations. In this broad body of knowledge, one recent strand of theory is that of interactive and urban governance. Civic participation and self-organization have become the prerequisites for governments to effectively address complex issues in welfare states (Edelenbos & Van Meerkerk, 2016). In an era of big society, governments alone do not have the capacity to solely generate and adopt holistic innovative solutions in a traditional top-down policy implementation manner (Klijn & Koppenjan, 2016; Torfing, 2012). Therefore, interaction between government and society becomes a key concept for exchanging resources and information to reach a common goal of providing effective public services that fit citizens' needs. However, through increased citizen engagement and involvement of civil servants as experts or network managers, one major issue with such interactive processes is the undetermined role of politicians and elected officials, their involvement being essential for democratic legitimacy of such emerging interactive constellations (Sørensen & Torfing, 2016). Research has shown that there is a direct link between leadership and innovation (Bekkers et al., 2011;

Borins, 2002), but there is still a need to dive into the realm of political leadership and ask the question how the behaviour and actions of elected officials affect the outcome of innovation generation and implementation. The underlying significance is a democratic one, for how can democratic anchorage be ensured in an environment where representative democracy is often considered more of a barrier for transformative innovation by non-political actors (Edelenbos & Van Meerkerk, 2016; Sørensen & Torfing, 2005)? While a more traditional approach of political leadership is typically associated with power relationships, more contemporary studies investigate politics and leadership beyond the concept of power (Tucker, 1995). There is a wide set of leadership theories to draw upon, but there is still no clear line of which leadership styles are present in local urban politics and more importantly, how these styles influence public sector innovation.

## 1.2.2 Research question

In the light of the loss of trust in politics that can be seen across Europe as described in the introduction, this research aims to explore how the style of leadership exercised by local elected officials influences the generation and adoption of public sector innovations that go beyond increasing process efficiency and quality of public services. This leads to the following research question:

**What is the influence of leadership exercised by elected politicians on public sector innovation in local projects across Europe?**

To answer the main research question, five sub-questions help guide this research. First, a wide range of leadership theories is explored to identify different types of leadership. The findings aim to answer the first sub-question of:

**Which styles of political leadership in an urban context exist according to theory?**

The second part of the theoretical framework explores the current level of knowledge of public sector innovation theory. As this study aims to look at innovation that goes beyond process improvements, it is important for the results of this research to identify different types of innovations to be able to make proper case selections. Therefore, the second part of the theoretical framework answers the sub-question of:

**Which categories of public sector innovation does the body of knowledge on innovation distinguish?**

Moving to the empirical part of the study, in-depth knowledge of how local politicians perceive and exercise leadership, as well as which types of innovations are generated, is gained through a comparative case study approach. By conducting interviews with politicians and non-political actors, the next sub-question is answered:

**Which styles of political leadership and types of innovation can be found across five countries in Europe?**

After assigning the leadership styles to their matching conceptual framework, the data is analysed based on the fourth sub-question:

**To what extent does the leadership style of politicians have an effect on the type of innovation that is generated / adopted?**

Finally, given the exploratory nature of this study through a multiple case study comparison, the final sub-question is the following:

**How can a possible positive relationship of political leadership and public sector innovation be explained, and what further factors are relevant for the innovation process?**

The research goal is to add to the formation of theory on the influence of political leadership on innovation in the public sector by conducting a qualitative analysis based on interviews with local political leaders of innovative projects across Europe, as well as with corresponding involved public managers or citizens. The projects are chosen on the basis of the type of innovation implemented. On the one side there is a group of projects that generated new and innovative public products or services. This group is contrasted to the second cluster of projects that adopted governance innovations such as changed governance structures or creation of new conceptual frames. It is then evaluated if different forms of political leadership lead to certain types of innovation. Furthermore, this research intends to identify a pattern of dominant political leadership practices and types of innovation which are implemented in European countries in an urban context. The data is based on the collection of innovative political projects done by the Innovation in Politics Award institute (IPA), a not for profit organization which aims to identify and present innovative projects and the creative politicians behind them to a wider public, which in turn serves as an inspiration for others (Innovation in Politics Award, n.d.).

### 1.2.3 Relevance of study

In this research, insights are derived from political leadership literature and public sector innovation literature, both within a framework of urban governance. Through the combination of different bodies of knowledge, this research provides more detailed insights into theory about the relevance of political

leadership as an antecedent of different innovation types. On the one hand, this gives a better understanding of which behaviours and actions of politicians are influential for different types of innovation. On the other hand, a cross-country analysis across different policy fields provides insight into the question whether there is a pattern of leadership characteristics which lead to innovation. A qualitative approach allows a more in-depth understanding of complex processes and causalities in the production of innovation, as well as what politicians perceive as drivers and barriers during this process.

As for practical value, given that democracy is considered to be in crisis and trust in politics is at a dangerously low level (Hirst, 2002), there is a need for more public visibility of the innovative capacity of the public sector and particularly of the fact that political leadership can be present on different levels of government (Innovation in Politics Award, n.d.). In cooperation with the Innovation in Politics Award institute, this study may give an overview of experiences of politicians in an innovation generating process, and which drivers and barriers might be encountered. Politicians, public managers, community leaders and citizens can benefit from these insights to rethink how democratic anchorage can be ensured when pursuing more interactive processes to bring about transformational changes in public service delivery and governance.

### 1.3 Structure of the thesis

Following this introductory chapter, the next section lays out the theoretical foundation (chapter 2) on which the research is based. The first part of the theoretical chapter presents the current body of knowledge on political leadership. After elaborating on a wide set of different leadership theories, the four leadership styles relevant for this study are discussed in more detail. The second part of the theoretical framework explores innovation theories in a public sector context. As with the leadership styles, the relevant innovation types for this research are characterized at the end of this part. With this chapter, sub-questions one and two are answered. The next chapter presents the conceptual model based on the variables found in the preceding chapter. All variables are then defined and operationalized. Chapter 4 introduces the research design of this qualitative study. It is further argued why a comparative case study design was chosen and which methods are used to collect the empirical data. The next section describes all eight cases in detail and presents the results on found innovation types and leadership styles, hence answering sub-question three. These findings are then analysed in chapter 6, first by comparing them to theory, then by relating the concepts of leadership and innovation and investigating how the former effects the latter. General findings as well as other drivers and barriers for innovation processes are presented as a result of the exploratory nature of this study. This chapter answers the last two sub-questions. Finally, conclusions are drawn in chapter 7 and the contribution to existing theory is discussed in chapter 8, followed by recommendations and a further research agenda.

## 2 Theoretical framework

To answer the research questions of this study, a brief overview of the existing literature on the concepts of political leadership and public sector innovation is given. Starting with the concept of political leadership (2.1), it is introduced how more contemporary studies associate politics and leadership beyond the traditional idea of power relationships. A definition of political leadership is then provided (2.1.1) as well as its functions (2.1.2) before a brief overview of overarching leadership studies is given (2.1.3). Based on this overview, it is elaborated which categories are relevant in an urban governance context (2.1.4). In the second part of the theoretical framework, the concept of innovation in the public sector is elaborated more generally and how it differs from private sector innovation is discussed (2.2). Again, after defining the term innovation (2.2.1), an overview is given on different roles an innovator may take (2.2.2). Finally, categories of public sector innovation relevant for the purpose of this study are presented (2.2.3) and what other factors may influence a public sector innovation process (2.2.4).

### 2.1 Political Leadership

The concept of leadership derives from multiple disciplines, ranging from psychology (Hermann, 2014), management theory (Gulick & Urwick, 1937 as cited in Van Wart, 2013), organizational studies (Yukl, 1989) to political science (Tucker, 1995). Prominent backgrounds in which leadership is exercised and studied are for example military, corporate or organizational contexts. Among these backgrounds is also human social leadership, where scholars place the multidimensional phenomenon of political leadership (Masciulli, Molchanov, & Knight, 2009). Political leadership is considered a complex social process, as contradicting values and beliefs, power games as well as cultural and institutional rules dominate this sphere (John & Cole, 1999). Much thought about politics and leadership dates back all the way to ancient Greece, where the philosopher Plato discussed politics as *'the pursuit and exercise of power – in the interest of those who pursue and exercise it'* (Tucker, 1995). The view of politics as a sheer exercise of power by applying force has persisted over the centuries, however, there is evidence where constituted leaders are also capable of rising above political power considerations, as well as unconstituted leaders bringing about change without occupying a high political office (Tucker, 1995). A further discussion evolves around how far management theory and leadership can be combined. As leaders are said to be more visionaries as opposed to classic managers who seek to control and manage resources, there seem to be two separate roles. But studies have shown that it is hardly possible to separate the tasks completely, and both roles can be supplementary to each other (Knight, 2009). Moreover, in a political context, democratic forces such as electoral cycles and public opinion influence

the decisions of political actors, factors that are not present in the sphere of classic managerial leadership within private sector organizations. Given the emergence of 'wicked' problems, political leadership remains essential as the prerequisite for change in complex environments to ensure democratic anchorage in governance processes (Sørensen & Torfing, 2005). The following sub-chapters aim to define political leadership, its functions, and which categorizations contemporary leadership theories offer.

### 2.1.1 Definition

Given the broad concept of leadership, a plurality of definitions depending on the field of study is inevitable (Bass & Bass, 2008). Defining leadership strongly depends on the perspective and object of analysis (Van Wart, 2013). Going by the linguistic definitions for example offered by the Oxford English Dictionary, *leading* involves goal setting and motivation as essential notions (Masciulli et al., 2009). Bass & Bass (2008) give an extensive overview of how defining leadership might be approached. Leadership can be defined by focusing on the leader with his or her individual traits, personality and history. Another approach is looking at behaviour, roles and actions of leaders ('t Hart, 2014). A further perspective is seeing leadership as an interactive process (Bass & Bass, 2008). An attempt to create a generic definition had social scientists conclude that

*'leadership was the ability to influence, motivate, and enable others to contribute to the effectiveness and success of the organizations of which they are members' (House et al. 2004 as cited in Bass & Bass, 2008)*

Politics however, is not an organization comparable to the private sector, it functions more in the realm of social processes where decisions are based on (public) values rather than rational choices. Moreover, institutional constraints, party systems and political culture are further factors that must be considered in a political context (John & Cole, 1999). Within political leadership, a common approach by political theorists is basing political leadership on power relations (Tucker, 1995). One important aspect that has crossed between different contexts, as the generic definition by House et al. suggests, is a leader's *ability to influence others* (Van Wart, 2013: 554). The act of influencing directs us towards analysing leadership as an interaction between leaders and followers. In a political context this can be seen as a relationship between a political leader and a political community, the latter being influenced, motivated and mobilized by the former (Tucker, 1995). In essence, a political community is an entity that can be determined as a nation, political party, social class or local constituency that formally or informally authorizes a leader to act on its behalf (Sørensen & Torfing, 2016: 452). This entity accepts to be led and influence is not only limited to the exercise of power, but also involves the capacity of leaders to mobilize his or her followership (ibid.). Formal political authority, however, is not the prerequisite for successful

political leadership but emerges from the ability of leaders to give direction in a complex environment and empower the whole political community to reach a common goal (Knight, 2009).

### 2.1.2 Functions of leadership and leadership styles

In his work, Tucker (Tucker, 1995) identifies three significant functions for political leaders which are (1) diagnosing the most urgent problems and defining the problem situation or frame, (2) formulating a course of action for the group and give direction; and (3) mobilizing the followership to take action. These functions can be exercised in two different ways. The first distinction constitutes a continuum. On the one end, leadership is exercised in a directive style, where the leader is the initiator of policy changes and actively takes steps and measures to bring upon change. Decision-making typically remains in the sphere of the directive leader. The other end of the continuum is characterized by more equal relationships with followers, including their involvement in decision-making processes. Political leaders are more responsive to the demands and needs of the political community they lead (John & Cole, 1999; Masciulli et al., 2009). A further distinction is how able leaders are to inspire for collaboration, to support other actors to exercise their potential and deal with the complexity of the political and social environment (John & Cole, 1999). This end of the continuum shall be termed 'power to' as coined by Stone (1989). The other end is defined by a narrower sense of exercising power, thus 'power over' the followership in a traditional sense of control, instrumentalism and self-interest (Berger, 2005). Given the challenging measurement of power stakes, a similar approach to the distinction by John & Cole is to reframe 'power to' abilities to a politician's efforts to solve societal challenges in a collaborative manner, thus involving and empowering the political community. 'Power over' on the other hand, represents the view of a politician to see policy implementation as a more hierarchical endeavour, with control and accountability mechanisms strongly in place. With these two axes, a typology grid based on John & Cole (1999) poses a helpful analytical tool for assessing different leadership roles in governance.

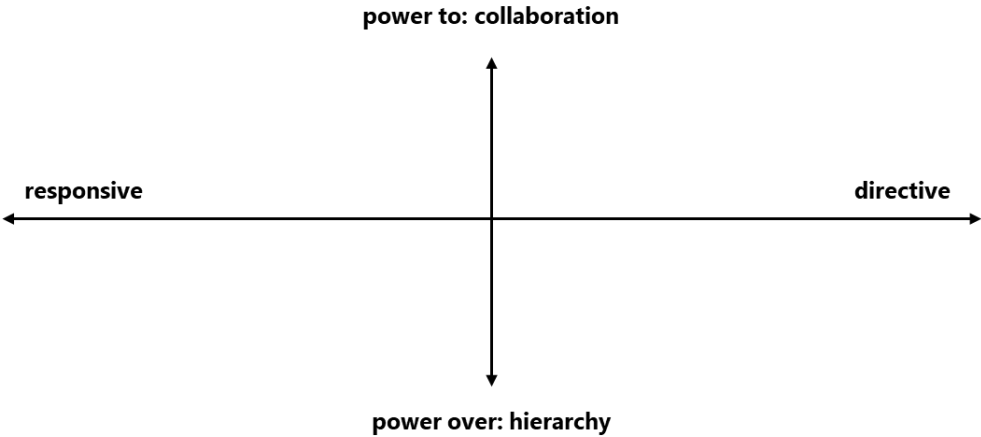


Figure 1: Typology grid for leadership roles in governance, own adaptation based on John & Cole, 1999

While the distinction by John & Cole gives a helpful first overview, their elaboration is not sufficient for the purpose of this research. Therefore, in the next section overarching leadership theories are introduced. The aim is to use these theories to elaborate each quadrant more thoroughly in order to make a choice which leadership roles are relevant when considering the generation of public sector innovation.

### 2.1.3 Leadership theories

When starting to search for literature on political leadership, one comes across many references to great historical leaders of the past and present in most introductions. Leaders such as Mahatma Gandhi, Nelson Mandela or Martin Luther King Jr. pop up as first common examples of leaders who brought about significant political and societal change. Other references include individuals who have mobilized and led a nation in times of crisis, such as Winston Churchill or Franklin D. Roosevelt. Furthermore, leaders that were destructive in world history cannot be excluded, such as Adolf Hitler or Joseph Stalin. The list of names of 'great leaders' is endless. The beginning of contemporary leadership theories in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century started with the Great Man era (Van Wart, 2003), leading to a research focus on personal traits, personality and individual characteristics of such figures (Masciulli et al., 2009: 12). More recent works, especially from complexity theorists try to shift the focus to leadership and not individual leaders, analysing more complex group processes within a system (see Murphy, Rhodes, Meek, & Denyer, 2017; Uhl-Bien, Marion, & McKelvey, 2007). Overarching leadership theories have emerged over the course of the past century such as classical management and role theory, transactional leadership theory, transformational leadership theory, horizontal/collaborative leadership theory and ethical and critical leadership theory (Van Wart, 2013). With the exception of horizontal and collaborative leadership theory, the focus lies once again more on individual leadership within an organizational context (ibid.). In brief, the main ideas of each theory are as follows.

#### ***Management and role theory***

Management and role theory has its origins with thoughts about managing organizations by Henri Fayol. He is known for the five elements of management, namely planning, organizing, coordination, command and control (Pryor & Taneja, 2010). The focus lies upon the effective and efficient use of given resources by an individual who has a specific managerial role. Even as the distinction between the concepts of management and leadership is blurred, they are on both ends of a continuum, as both roles require analytical thinking, one side being more technical and the other more general (Knight, 2009). Typical examples of a classic management-oriented approach are the manager focus on strategizing, improving weaknesses, finding quick solutions and responding to danger. The leadership approach puts



and emphasis on building culture, acting on opportunities, expanding on ones' strengths and creating a vision (Hickman, 1990 as cited in Knight, 2009). However, scholars also stress the necessity to merge the roles of management and political leadership to cope with a more complex world (Kellerman, 1999). The managerial leadership approach simply focuses less on the relationship between leaders and followers, and more on the expectations of leaders providing results and having the adequate education and training for their position (Van Wart, 2013).

### ***Transactional leadership***

Transactional leadership theory is a more relationship-orientated approach than management theory. Leaders interact with followers with the intention of exchanging something of value, with the aim of satisfying the leaders own goals and needs (Burns, 1978). Typical characteristics of transactional leaders are contingent rewards for good performance achieved through followers, taking corrective action when deviations from rules and standards occur, and interventions only if standards are not met (Bass, 1990). Transactional leaders create paths for their followers to get the job done and change their leadership style according to the situation. The leader therefore engages in behaviour that complements the followers' environment and abilities to compensate for deficiencies and to enhance performance (House, 1996). This can range from taking a more directive or autocratic style, to a more participatory or achievement-oriented style (Van Wart, 2013).

### ***Transformational leadership***

Transformational leadership takes place one level above the more traditional transactional leadership approach, it is about leading organizations and managing organizational change with a vision that can mobilize followers (Bass, 1990; Burns, 1978; Van Wart, 2013). Characteristics include a charismatic and inspirational leader, the promotion of intelligence, rationality and careful problem solving, as well as increased personal attention to followers (Bass, 1990). Bass (1985) argued in his earlier work that transformational leadership is not an opposite of transactional leadership, but more of augmentation of the effects of the latter. Transformational leaders do not necessarily need to know which change must be implemented, only that change is needed (Van Wart, 2013).

### ***Horizontal or collaborative leadership***

A more recent strand of theory deals with horizontal or collaborative leadership. Emphasis lies on the leader supporting and facilitating the self-management of networks (Wachhaus, 2012). Even if there are individuals guiding the process, leaders are more in the background and allow leadership to be a dynamic group process. The creation and maintenance of cross-sector collaborations brings together diverse groups and organizations to create public value and tackle complex social problems (Crosby &

Bryson, 2010). The adaptive capacity of leadership includes respecting conflict, negotiation and diversity of views within a community, increasing community cohesion and the development of norms of responsibility, learning and innovation (Heifetz, 1994: 26). In connection with interorganizational collaboration, boundary-spanning competencies are required by this leadership type, such as obtaining and translating information across organizational and institutional boundaries (Tushman & Scanlan, 1981), building trustful and personal relationships as well as managing non-hierarchical decision environments by negotiation and brokering (Williams, 2002).

### ***Ethical and critical leadership***

A further approach to leadership is the consideration of values, ethics and morals of leaders. The notion of servant leadership as coined by Robert Greenleaf (1977) argues that true leaders are servants to their followers. Servant leaders focus on the needs of their followers and put these needs above their own self-interest which supports the growth and development of the followership. Other scholars such as Ciulla (1995) go a step further and plant ethics at the heart of leadership, trying to explain good leadership by defining 'good' in terms of morals and effectiveness. Values such as integrity, trustworthiness and fairness guide the actions of leaders, who recognize the high standards upon which they act (Van Wart, 2013). However, such ethical propositions depend on different perceptions and perspectives of a variety of actors. Furthermore, the relevance of values may shift across cultural, social and political contexts.

#### 2.1.4 An approach to political leadership in urban governance

Given this overview of leadership theories, the question is which of these leadership styles can be found in an urban governance context on a municipal or city level. To begin with ethical or servant leadership theory, I acknowledge that this theory gives valuable insights about leadership backed by values, morals and ethics, which are relevant factors when considering political leadership. This research however does not aim to evaluate which values are dominant, but rather how political leaders behave and interact with their followership. Therefore, this strand of theory will not be further discussed.

Moving on to management theory, which does not provide much insight into the relationship between leaders and followers but puts its focus on efficient and effective resource use and control, it seems not to fit into a context where (public) values and power relations are dominant. However, basic managerial skills should not be excluded entirely when discussing effective leadership (Knight, 2009). Transactional leadership comes close to the management approach but additionally analyses the relationship and interactions between leader and follower based on value exchange. The more directive style found in transactional leadership relates to a more asymmetric power relation, as the leader can

dominate the followership and interaction is conducted because of the prospect of value exchange and self-interest (Burns, 1978). Managerial and transactional leadership therefore explain more traditional roles of leadership. The leadership style of the *caretaker*, as shown in figure 2, who remains in control and aims for effective results fits with the idea of the managerial leader. The *caretaker* is a competent, but 'old style' political leader, who is typically less charismatic and relies on the political authority given to that position to exercise power and implement policies (John & Cole, 1999). Tools such as negotiation, compromise and consensus-building will be used to cope with arising conflicts (Bolman & Deal, 1997). Transactional leadership, with its eye on value exchange, goal achievement and management by exception (Bass, 1990) fits the role of the *city boss* in its more active form. The *city boss* prefers to be in control and is often the sole decision maker, using power and tough management strategies to take action (John & Cole, 1999). The *city boss* has difficulty acknowledging complexities of the environment, relies on top-down implementation of policies and contracts an exchange of rewards for good efforts and performance of the followership (Bass, 1990).

Transformational leadership is often argued to be a supplement to transactional leadership (Bass & Bass, 2008), yet in this study it shall be considered as the end of a continuum, as suggested by Burns (1978), acknowledging that hybrid forms are also possible. In its normative definition, the transformational leader is often depicted as a *visionary*, engaging others to higher levels of motivation and purpose (Burns, 1978). The transformational political leader actively inspires the followership, provides a vision to followers, manages complex political frameworks and is able to cross institutional boundaries to link different stakeholders in order to create more creative policies. Power is used in a way that enables followers to exercise their potential and to contribute to implementing solutions to 'wicked' problems. Horizontal leadership gives an interesting approach of how leaders may mobilize followers in a collaborative way, through networks and cross-sectoral partnerships. This role is termed *consensual facilitator* who responds and adapts to emerging societal or political occurrences, rather than actively shaping the course of action. The *consensual facilitator* involves stakeholders in decision-making processes and is more adaptive to the complex environment in which he or she acts (John & Cole, 1999). This role also matches with Heifetz' thoughts on adaptive leadership theory, where '*leadership means influencing the community to face its problems*' (Heifetz, 1994: 14).

Adapting the model from John & Cole (1999), the different theories can therefore be placed into the following quadrants:

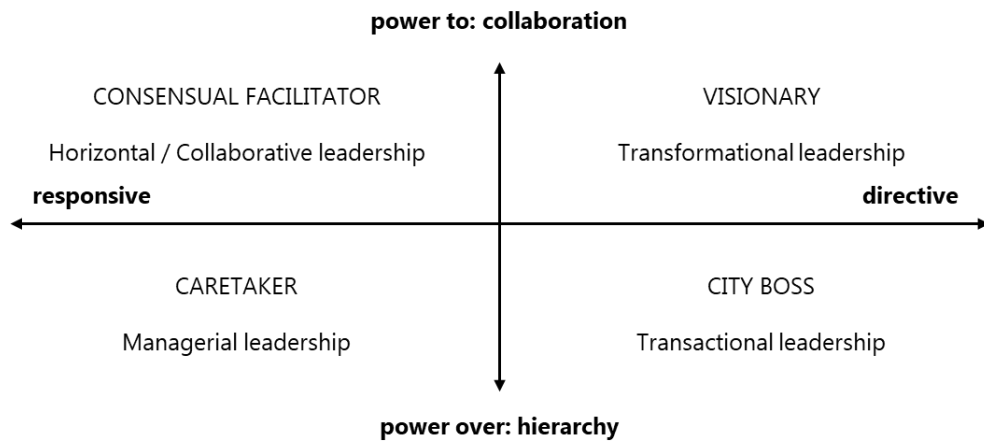


Figure 2: Leadership styles and their corresponding theories, own adaptation based on John & Cole, 1999

By drawing on a variety of leadership theories, it is possible to explore the actions and behaviour of elected officials in a situation of policy or governance change, without focusing solely on the variable of power as commonly proposed in political science. Relevant factors are how a political leader perceives his/her role within the political community, either set in a more hierarchical or collaborative structure. Moreover, it shall be analysed how political leaders interact with their followers, if a more responsive or directive position is taken. Table 1 presents a summary of the main elements of each leadership style:

Leadership style	Theory	Characteristics
Caretaker	Management and role theory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Takes on tasks such as planning, organizing and controlling</li> <li>• Authority through role and hierarchy</li> <li>• Intervention only if efficiency and effectiveness standards are not met</li> </ul>
City boss	Transactional leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Authority through role and hierarchy</li> <li>• Acts out of self-interest, when there is value exchange</li> <li>• Includes followership only as much as needed in decision making process</li> <li>• Watches and searches for deviations from rules and standards, takes corrective action</li> </ul>
Visionary	Transformational leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides long-term vision for political community</li> <li>• Boundary-spanning skills</li> <li>• Final decision-making power still with leader</li> </ul>
Consensual facilitator	Horizontal/collaborative leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community building capacity</li> <li>• Followership is included in decision-making process more equally</li> <li>• Promotes co-operation and self-management of networks</li> </ul>

Table 1: Summary of leadership styles and their characteristics

## 2.2 Public Sector Innovation

The growing 'wicked' problems of contemporary society call for an innovative public sector. Globalization, technology, changing citizen needs and paradigm shifts from government to governance has forced traditional public bureaucracies to transform (Osborne & Brown, 2005). In the private sector, the capacity to innovate in a competitive situation is key to survival. The absence of such a competitive environment and the dominance of bureaucratic culture are some of the main arguments against the possibility of true innovation in the public sector (Bekkers et al., 2011). A further barrier to innovation is the political component, as short-term orientation, drama democracy and the fear of risk and failure do not foster great innovation (ibid.). However, there are also arguments claiming the opposite. Given the complex and fast changing nature of the contexts in which public actors operate, new solutions are constantly demanded by citizens and customers of public goods (ibid.). As will be seen in the next paragraphs, there are many different views of innovation, either revolutionary or incremental, either as a process or as reframing of a whole conceptual approach.

### 2.2.1 Definition

Innovation itself is a broad concept, but a starting point for innovation theory is mainly found within the works of economist Joseph Schumpeter. In his opinion, innovation is embedded in the process of creative destruction, which searches for new combinations of existing resources (Schumpeter, 1942). An organization can only remain competitive and survive in the long-term by constantly innovating. There are different models of innovation based on Schumpeter which have developed over time. The focus changed from the entrepreneurial individual, to innovation being an open and interactive process, throughout which different actors share their resources (Fugslang & Pederson, 2011). This model is particularly interesting for the public sector, as resources are scattered across society and greater innovation can thus be achieved if governments are able to tap into this local knowledge. However, this model is not without controversies, as political control can be jeopardized in such processes (ibid.).

A further attempt to grasp the meaning of innovation is to differentiate it from mere change. *'Change and innovation are over-lapping phenomena'* (Osborne & Brown, 2005: 5). While change is more about the development of service design, organizational structure or the management of such organizations, innovation is a more specific form of change. It is a discontinuous change (ibid.). Following the often-cited definition of Rogers (2003: 12), innovation is

*'an idea, practice, or object that is perceived as new by an individual or other unit of adoption'*.

Therefore, innovation is not necessarily something that is new to the world but is something which is objectively or subjectively perceived as new by the innovating actors in their specific context. Innovation itself can be a process or an outcome (Osborne & Brown, 2005). Other scholars describe more specifically what exactly an innovation should improve, for example Mulgan & Albury (2003) see innovation as successful when *'the creation and implementation of new processes, products, services and methods of delivery [...] result in significant improvements in outcomes efficiency, effectiveness or quality'*. This gives the implication that innovation is only considered as such if it is 'an idea that works'. However, the very idea of innovation is two-sided, it leads to the creation of something new, but can also have a destructive impact in other spheres (Schumpeter, 1942). It is a flawed perception to consider innovation as a normative 'good', such an assertion is part of the problem that hinders innovation in public services as innovation can also lead to perceived negative effects for different actors across society. Failures in the public sphere can lead to a rapid political death often led by a spiral of citizens' protests and negative news headlines (Osborne & Brown, 2011). These factors might explain more reluctant positions taken by political leaders towards radical innovations. But it is misleading to think that only radical innovations lead to the desired effect of accommodating the needs and demands of citizens, a key goal from a political perspective in the era of New Public Governance (NPG). There are various levels of public innovation that, in their sphere of influence, are still considered new and innovative.

### 2.2.2 The role of the innovator

The stimulation of all the different forms of public sector innovation can be placed in both major public administration reform movements, namely New Public Management (NPM) (see Hood, 1991) and New Public Governance (NPG) (see Osborne, 2006). The former relies on market mechanisms and competition to enhance effectiveness and efficiency in public service delivery. This paradigm draws from management and innovation theories which derive from the private sector, which includes traditional strategic management as one major driver for innovation. This implies the role of an innovator being related to the idea of a leader as a 'public entrepreneur' following the **'individual characteristics' model** (Roberts & King, 1996). This public entrepreneur is goal driven, willing to take risks and skilled in using a political network, similar to the dedicated individual entrepreneur as proposed by Schumpeter (1969). In another framework by Roberts (1992), there are further types of entrepreneurs, ranging from policy, bureaucratic, executive to, if the individual is democratically elected, political entrepreneur. However, critics of this model highlight the lacking organizational perspective and that looking at individual personality traits in isolation does not explain why innovators use their skills to innovate (Osborne & Brown, 2005). Building on the 'individual characteristics' model, the **structural model** by Bartlett and Dibben (2002) moves away from personal characteristics to organizational roles of innovators.

Innovation and entrepreneurship go hand in hand, and there are clear roles for public managers, whom they term *innovation champions*, and leaders within a political context, who take on the role of the *innovation sponsor*. The innovation sponsor simply provides the political mandate and must work together with the innovation champion to foster innovation (Bartlett & Dibben, 2002). Both models' view on individuals exercising top-down entrepreneurial leadership, who are more often public managers than by political executives, fit with strategies of NPM to implement private sector management styles.

The latter reform paradigm of public administration, NPG, emphasizes more horizontal and inter-organizational governance (Osborne, 2006). In the context of public sector innovation and deriving from collaborative governance theories (see Ansell & Gash, 2008), this perspective suggests that collaboration is the major driver of an innovation process. By including different types of stakeholders in the innovation process, informed dialogue and deliberation can take place, participation and joint ownership contribute to the diffusion of innovation (Sørensen & Torfing, 2017). This collaborative network approach may compensate in areas where market mechanisms and hierarchical structure fail (Sørensen & Torfing, 2011). Innovators in a collaborative governance arena can be seen as described in the **contingent model** (Osborne & Brown, 2005) advocated by Borins (2001a). Innovators do not emerge only from the top, but also bottom-up. Innovative ideas can emerge from any part of the organization, and not only from a senior elite (Borins, 2001b). These processes however, must be properly designed to ensure democratic anchorage and to avoid long-term stalemates (Klijn & Koppenjan, 2016). From a political perspective, Sørensen & Torfing (2016) suggest that politicians take a role as political metagovernors. The concept of metagovernance, in brief, is a coordination mechanism in a fragmented political system to direct and facilitate the self-governance of networks (Sørensen, 2006). In a political context, a politician can take the role of metagovernor who supports and facilitates collaborative innovation processes with multiple stakeholders by giving direction, providing adequate institutional settings for participating stakeholders, providing means and resources or participating as an equal stakeholder in decision-making processes (ibid.). In conclusion, a collaborative innovation process sees innovation as being able to emerge top-down or bottom-up, and politicians as being able to take a more facilitating and/or participating role in the process.

The term innovator or entrepreneur is linked to leadership capacities from the previous section on political leadership. The way these capacities are exercised, however, differs in different models and theories. What they have in common, is the fact that there is an individual guiding, leading or facilitating an innovation process, which may result in different types of innovation.

### 2.2.3 Typologies of innovation

A classification which is relevant for this thesis is the stage of the innovation, whether it is being generated, adopted or diffused. The process that results in an outcome, which can be a product, service or technology, and is new to the organizational context is termed innovation generation (Damanpour & Wischnevsky, 2006). Whereas the adoption of innovation is a result of assimilating a product, service or technology that was generated elsewhere but is new to the adopting organization (ibid.) A further approach, innovation diffusion, is defined as '*a process in which an innovation is communicated through certain channels over time in a social system*' (Rogers, 2003: 10). This goes beyond mere adoption, including decision phases on whether the innovation is adopted or rejected and how it is spread through a whole social system. In studies, characteristics of innovation are typically analysed in the adoption and diffusion stages, whereas other antecedents such as individual leadership or organizational environment help explain the innovation generation and to some extent the adoption stage (de Vries et al., 2016). The data that is analysed for the purpose of this thesis is gathered from projects that are not older than five years, therefore, the focus will be on innovation generation and adoption.

A further helpful approach when analysing innovation is the degree of radicality. First there is *incremental innovation*, which signifies relatively minor changes and improvements to existing services and processes. The next step is *radical innovation*, where new services or new ways of providing public goods and services are created. However, the overall dynamic of a sector does not change. Finally, *systemic or transformative innovation* transforms sectors, making use of major technological change, redefining relationships of a variety of actors, and reshaping structures within the sector. Social, cultural and organisational arrangements fundamentally change, decades are often required to see the effects (Mulgan & Albury, 2003). Building on these distinctions, we move on to the different categories which have been identified as relevant and present in public sector contexts.

Following the categorization by de Vries et al. (2016), the types of innovation are process innovation, product or service innovation, governance innovation and conceptual innovation. Each category is elaborated briefly.

#### ***Process innovation***

The aim of process innovation is to redefine how goods and services are produced and to improve quality and efficiency of internal and external processes (Bekkers et al., 2011; Edquist, Hommen, & McKelvey, 2001). However, there are two aspects of process innovation; that of organizational or administrative process innovation and that of technological process innovation (Edquist et al., 2001). Organizational innovation aims to improve the organization's practices, create new organization forms, introduce new management techniques or implement new working methods (Walker, 2014).



Technological process innovation is the creation or use of units of material goods, which have been improved through technological change (Edquist et al. 2001). These goods are technological novelties in the production process and are introduced to render services to users and citizens (de Vries et al., 2016).

### ***Product or service innovation***

As opposed to process innovation, product or service innovation is the creation of a new or better public goods and services (Edquist et al. 2001). Even though it is seemingly clear by definition, there is a distinction between trivial and non-trivial changes. Minor design changes to existing products or services which leave it unchanged in construction or performance are not considered to be a significant innovation (ibid). Along with process innovation, this type is mainly generated and adopted from an intra-organizational perspective.

### ***Governance innovation***

The development of new forms and processes of governance in a specific societal context to tackle 'wicked' problems is called governance innovation (Bekkers et al., 2011). Important factors as to how governance innovation differs from process, product or service innovation, are five-fold according to Moore & Hartley (2008). First, these innovations cut through organizational and sectoral boundaries to change systems how products and services are provided. Second, the pool of resources which public organizations tap into is enlarged to ultimately improve performance systems. Third, governments make use of different instruments to achieve goals of tackling wider societal issues. Fourth, decision-making power and processes are shifted into new spheres such as the private and civic sectors. Finally, success is not so much measured by improved cost efficiency and effectiveness, but also by considering which values, for example fairness and justice, are important in communities and society (Moore & Hartley, 2008).

### ***Conceptual innovation***

Reframing the nature of societal problems by introducing new concepts, frames or paradigms to find innovative solutions is the basis of conceptual innovation. Basic assumptions are challenged, and conceptual innovation can involve the creation and introduction of new world views, objectives and strategies (Bekkers et al., 2011). It is particularly relevant to institutions that link social economic objectives of public organizations and their operational rationale (Windrum, 2008: 9). A prominent example for radical conceptual innovation is the shift to a 'minimalist state'. Previously public goods were solely distributed by public organizations, however, with the paradigm shift to NPM, more discussions were sparked if and how the private sector can provide certain goods better (ibid.) In sum,

fundamental problems are looked at from a different angle and the aim is to reach a more holistic solution.

#### 2.2.4 Influencing factors on public sector innovation processes

With the different types of innovation explained, a further step is to understand the nature, source and determinants of innovation. There are many ways to analyse the antecedents of innovation in different organizational contexts, but especially in a public sector sphere there are five lessons which can be derived from existing research and theory on public service innovation (Osborne & Brown, 2011). First, within public policy the nature of innovation is complex and must be understood and reflected upon when implementing public service innovation. Clashing values, opposing problem perceptions, political and economic interests and media coverage are only some examples of potential events that might hamper such delicate processes and increase complexity. Second, an organizational and political mandate is necessary for any innovation process to ensure legitimacy of outcomes. Third, an open system orientation is important to promote and sustain innovation that goes beyond organizational boundaries. Relevant knowledge, information and resources are not always found within one single agency but requires the crossing of sectoral or organizational boundaries. Fourth, one way to distinguish public service innovation from the private sector equivalent is to discard the model of innovation from a manufacturing perspective and embrace a service orientation. This means also regarding service users as co-producers of innovation. Finally, political culture, institutional norms and the nature of the political party system cannot be ignored and must be considered as the environment from which innovation will emerge (Osborne & Brown, 2011).

Keeping these lessons in mind, we turn to possible factors of influence on innovation, where some parallels to these lessons can be drawn. **Environmental antecedents** relate to the complex nature of public sector innovation and are in line with the more managerial perspective of the relationship of an organization to its external environment (Osborne & Brown, 2005). In a public sector context, the antecedents include regulatory aspects, network participation and the presence of environmental pressures such as media attention as well as political and public demands, which make any type of innovation specific to a local context (de Vries et al., 2016). External pressures, such as a sense of urgency or crisis situations, are at the same time often considered important drivers of innovation. Sørensen & Torfing (2011) argue in their analytical model for studying collaborative innovation that environmental factors, presented through cultural, institutional and interorganizational components are simultaneously possible barriers to innovation processes. Prevalence of a legalistic, zero-error culture, predominance of paternalistic professional norms and bureaucratic silos, and inappropriate designs for dialogue and exchange are only some of the examples given (Sørensen & Torfing, 2011). Particularly interesting for

the scope of this study is the exploration of innovation processes in different polity environments, governance traditions and political norms and how leadership styles might differ in these contexts. For this, a classification must take place on how society and government agencies are organized. This will be taken into consideration by choosing countries that score differently on constitutive dimensions within comparative political theory, specifically in terms of levels of *statism* and *corporateness* (Jepperson, 2002). These concepts are further elaborated in the methodology chapter (4.1.3).

In a study by Borins (2001a) internal problems such as the inability to reach a target population or the inability to coordinate policies were the major impulse for innovating within public service organizations (50–60 percent of all innovations in his sample) as opposed to the conventional view of innovation emerging from publicly visible crises (around 30 percent). Other conditions identified in this study were also political influence (30 percent), emergence of new opportunities (30 percent) and new leadership (10 percent). This conclusion brings us to **organizational antecedents**. Here, a management perspective refers to the formal organizational structures to explain innovative capacities (Osborne & Brown, 2005). In this category slack resources, leadership styles and degree of risk aversion are present (de Vries et al., 2016). Nevertheless, a lack of focus on fostering innovation can pose a barrier within organizational boundaries (Sørensen & Torfing, 2011). This suggests that within organizational boundaries there is a need for a supportive climate for innovation, which is a great challenge for public sector organizations, as there are hardly rewards for public sector innovation and grave consequences for unsuccessful ones (Borins, 2001a). Bekkers et al. (2011) speak of innovation ‘milieux’, spaces within and across organizational boundaries where knowledge, information, experience and resources are willingly exchanged by relevant actors, as a prerequisite for the emergence of innovation. Here, the focus lies more on the linkages that are created within this space, which leaders can encourage, or which can also emerge by themselves through interaction.

Finally, **individual antecedents** reflected as actions, behaviours, skills, knowledge and leadership of employees, managers, politicians and key stakeholders further have an influence on innovation processes (Borins, 2001a; de Vries et al., 2016; Sørensen & Torfing, 2011). While there are many angles to look at this category, we particularly focus on the leadership perspective. For ‘*Leadership can create the context for innovative ideas and new ways of working to flourish*’ (Murphy et al., 2017: 694). Relating to the previously explained supportive climate for innovation within an organization, it is the role of the leader to create this space where innovation can emerge, and where innovators from different levels of the organization are promoted and protected from control-oriented agencies (Borins, 2002). For an overview of different roles such leaders can take, see chapter 2.2.2.

This list of antecedents of innovation is not exhaustive, there are many different angles to view how innovation emerges in the public sphere. The purpose of this short elaboration of possible factors is to

support the exploratory analysis of empirical data in this study and to find explanations for case-specific contexts that might have been as or more important than the political leadership found in the cases. The focus for this thesis still is, however, to explore how the style of political leadership has an influence on the type of innovation that is implemented and why this might be positively related.

## 3 Conceptual framework

### 3.1 Conceptual model

Based on the findings in the theoretical framework, leadership in general is the *'ability to influence, motivate and enable others to contribute to the effectiveness and success of the organizations of which they are members'* (House et al. 2004 as cited in Bass & Bass, 2008). *Political leadership* is narrowed down to the relationship between a political leader and a political community, which is an entity that can be determined as a nation, political party, social class or local constituency that formally or informally authorizes a leader to act on its behalf (Sørensen & Torfing, 2016: 452). Following the functions identified by Tucker (1995), the political leader must diagnose the most urgent problems, formulate a course of action for the group and mobilize the followership to act. Taking this as the essence of political leadership, all four roles from the visionary, the consensual facilitator, the caretaker to the city boss must fulfil these functions to be identified as political leaders.

The two collaborative leadership styles – visionary and consensual facilitator – focus on mobilizing the followership to take action, as they opt for collaboration and participation. What also connects these two roles are their boundary spanning skills, which are essential for cross-sectoral and cross-organizational collaboration efforts. The *consensual facilitator*, deriving from horizontal leadership theory, encourages the self-governing of networks and collaborations between the civic, private and public sector. Decision-making processes are more equal and are not necessarily bound to the role of the political leader. The *visionary*, deriving from transformational leadership theory, provides a long-term vision for the political community, and is more active in innovation process. Decision-making is more asymmetrical compared to the consensual facilitator, but both aim for the mobilization of their followership to tackle societal problems. In connection with innovation processes, innovation is not necessarily created top-down, but innovation can emerge bottom-up as well. Politicians foster and facilitate these collaborative innovation processes, not necessarily taking on the role of the innovator. The nature of the collaboration and empowerment implies a nurturing ground for governance and conceptual innovations, as wider groups of stakeholders are involved in the innovation process (Sørensen & Torfing, 2011; Sørensen & Torfing, 2017). Problem and solution frames might be discussed that lead to the generation of more radical innovations that go beyond the improvement of efficiency and effectiveness of public services.

On the other end we have the more hierarchical oriented leadership styles where the caretaker and city boss are placed. If leadership is defined as the ability to influence others, it does not necessarily involve a collaborative approach, even though it is argued to be not as effective (Knight, 2009). As

management theory and transactional leadership theory suggest, leadership can be exercised with an eye on effectiveness, control, hierarchy and value exchange. The roles of the caretaker and the city boss derive their elements from said theories. They exercise authority given their role as elected officials and prefer to remain in control of any process (John & Cole, 1999). While the *caretaker* is responsive to the needs and demands of different actors and aims for consensus, the *city boss* typically implements policies top down and involves stakeholders only as much as necessary in decision making processes. In an innovation context, these leaders see the need to innovate in exchange for staying in their positions and with the purpose of re-election, thus a value exchange as transactional leadership theory suggests (Burns, 1978).

Based on the possible categorizations of public sector innovation, this research compares only two types of innovation, namely product or service innovation with governance innovation. Process innovations are excluded, as they put a greater emphasis on more intra-organizational developments and increasing efficiency and effectiveness, which are typically less radical. Conceptual innovation overlaps with governance innovation in some points, as the reframing of a specific societal problem may make way for new forms and processes of governance. However, for the scope of this research, this type of innovation will not be taken into account.

The aim of this study is to explore how different styles of leadership, or combinations thereof, have a positive relationship with certain types of innovation on a municipal or regional level. It will be further explored why there might be a positive relationship and which activities deployed by political leaders have fostered or hampered the development of public sector innovations. The case study design allows an in-depth analysis of case specific contexts which helps to identify other factors that might have affected the innovation process and the exercised leadership style. Furthermore, the analysis across five nations might give valuable insights into the relationship between innovation and political leadership in different governance cultures and traditions.

The conceptual model is thus shown in figure 3:

## Urban Governance

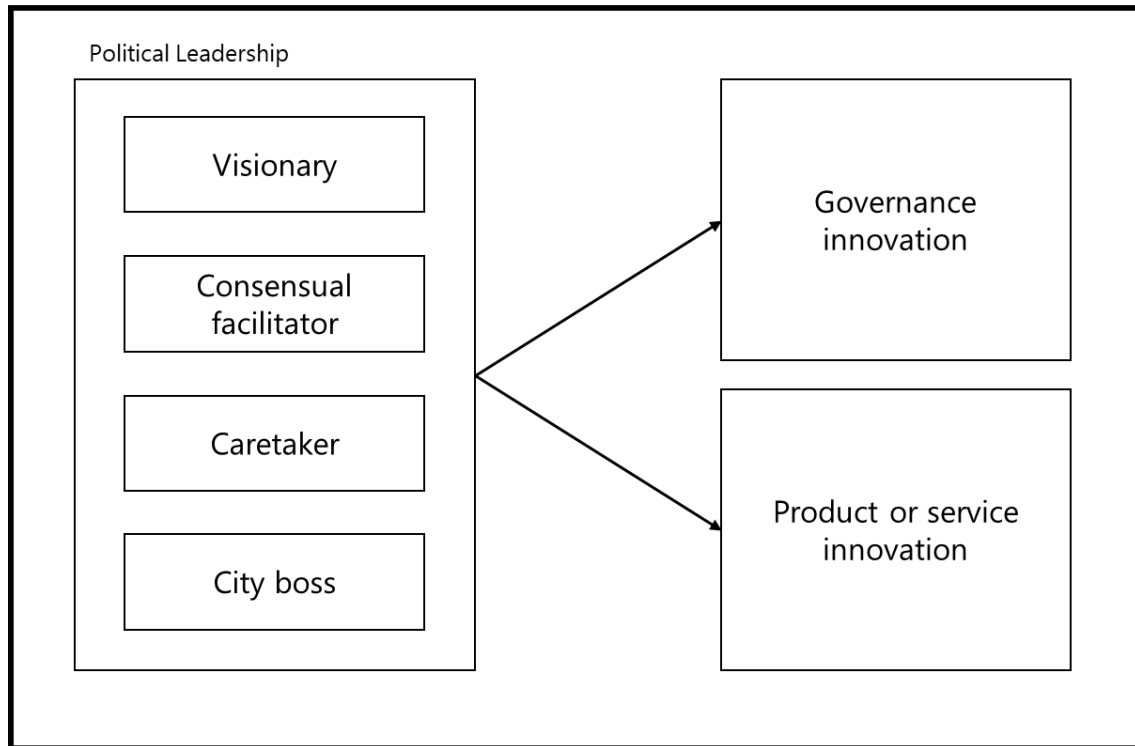


Figure 3: Conceptual model, own adaptation based on John & Cole, 1999

### 3.2 Operationalization

Before operationalizing the identified variables, some terms must be more concretely defined. This regards the terms from the grid of leadership theories (see figure 2). First, *collaboration* requires two or more actors to engage in a very close relationship, where shared long-term goals are developed, information and communication flows are thick, trust levels are high, and all involved parties regularly and actively contribute resources to achieve these shared goals (Keast, Brown, & Mandell, 2007). This can be distinguished from other forms of integration such as cooperation, in a sense that relationships, commitments, trust, and contributions are much less intense compared to collaborative efforts (ibid.). Second, we have *hierarchy* on the other end. This term is viewed as an organizational form, where information, resources, instructions, and decisions are passed in a predefined flow according to roles and positions within an organizational structure. Commitment and accountability remains within the own agency. Third, *responsiveness* refers to a leader having a more equal relationship with followers, including their involvement in decision-making processes. Political leaders are more responsive to the demands and needs of the political community they lead and tend to keep a more distant or administering overview of the process. *Directiveness* on the other hand is the opposite, indicating a leader's position as an active initiator of a process of change. The leader keeps the process firmly under control and directs it at the forefront contrary to facilitative tasks.

Further clarification is needed on the concept of innovations. To be considered a *public product or service*, it must be provided, offered or administered by a public organization that is subject to political influence. *Forms or processes of governance* involve the interaction of interdependent public, private and civic actors within self-organizing networks (Rhodes, 1996) or different forms of cross-sectoral and cross-organizational collaboration (see: Ansell & Gash, 2008) aiming to provide solutions for wider societal problems.

With the clarification of said terms, indicators for the proposed variables becomes clearer. The following tables give an overview of all identified variables:



Concept	Political Leadership		
Variable	A	Visionary	
	<b>Definition</b>	Charismatic and inspirational politician who leads political community with a long-term vision that mobilizes followership to take collective action for higher levels of purpose (Bass & Bass, 2008; Burns, 1978)	
	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>A1</b>	Elected official has a <b>clear long-term vision</b> for his/her political community beyond the electoral period, which acts as an inspiration to followership
		<b>A2</b>	Elected official <b>actively initiates process</b> where at least two major actors with opposing perceptions of local societal problems engage in <b>collaboration</b>
		<b>A3</b>	Elected official uses position to <b>share resources/information</b> to support/encourage collective actions of political community in which <b>major decision-making power is retained</b>
Variable	B	Consensual facilitator	
	<b>Definition</b>	Politician creates, maintains and facilitates cross-sector collaborations and networks by bringing together diverse groups, institutions and organizations to develop shared goals, create public value and tackle complex social problems (Crosby & Bryson, 2010)	
	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>B1</b>	Elected official creates time and space for at least two major actors with opposing perceptions of local societal problems to engage in <b>joint discussions, a process which the leader facilitates</b>
		<b>B2</b>	Elected official takes an <b>adaptive role</b> within a network of actors who aim to solve a local societal problem, <b>encouraging the self-organizing capacity</b> of networks
		<b>B3</b>	Elected official fosters <b>collaborative endeavours</b> between different societal actors to tackle local problems

Variable	C Caretaker	
	<b>Definition</b>	Politician exercises leadership through efficient and effective management of resources within a hierarchical structure
	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>C1</b> Elected official <b>intervenes</b> in local policies <b>when perceived efficiency and effectiveness are not met</b> with current proceedings
<b>C2</b> Elected official takes a <b>risk-averse and process controlling role</b>		
<b>C3</b> Elected official perceives his/her position as an <b>authority for decision-making</b> with the broadest possible consensus on how a local problem should be solved within his/her political community		
Variable	D City boss	
	<b>Definition</b>	Authoritarian leader who follows a clear hierarchical structure and interacts with followership with an eye on value exchange (Bass, 1990; Burns, 1978)
	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>D1</b> Elected official's priority is the <b>alignment of actions with existing rules and standards</b>
<b>D2</b> A local societal <b>problem is defined by elected official</b> , who <b>actively initiates, and controls process</b> to bring upon a solution		
<b>D3</b> Elected official perceives his/her position as an <b>authority for taking final decisions</b> on how a local problem should be solved within his/her political community		

Table 2: Variables and indicators for the concept of political leadership

Concept	Public Sector Innovation		
Variable	X	Product / Service innovation	
	<b>Definition</b>	Creation of a new or significantly better public good or service (Edquist et al., 2001)	
	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>X1</b>	Public good or service has not existed in a similar form at moment of introduction on the local level of city / municipality and is <b>perceived a novelty</b> on a scale from (1) <i>incremental</i> to (5) <i>radical</i> by users and providers
		<b>X2</b>	Public good or service <b>replaces existing ones</b> and is <b>perceived as superior</b> to products or services it supersedes
		<b>X3</b>	Public good or service is perceived to <b>deviate significantly from the local custom and existing procedures</b> by users and providers
Variable	Y	Governance innovation	
	<b>Definition</b>	Development of new forms and processes to address specific societal problems (de Vries et al., 2011)	
	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Y1</b>	Governance process or form of collaboration to tackling a specific societal problem is <b>perceived a novelty</b> on a scale from (1) <i>incremental</i> to (5) <i>radical</i> by actors within and outside a public organization
		<b>Y2</b>	Governance process or form of collaboration <b>replaces or co-exists with existing procedure</b> for addressing specific societal problem and is <b>perceived as superior</b> to processes it supersedes
		<b>Y3</b>	Governance process or form of collaboration is perceived to <b>deviate significantly from the local custom and existing procedures</b> by users and providers

Table 3: Variables and indicators for the concept of public sector innovation

## 4 Methodology

### 4.1 Research design

This section presents the research design used in this study, followed by a discussion of criteria for the case selection.

#### 4.1.1 A comparative case study design

This study aims to explore if different leadership styles of politicians result in certain types of public sector innovation. To answer the research question, one must gain in-depth knowledge within a specific local context, where an innovation has been generated and implemented in the public sector. Thus, a case study approach offers the benefit of extensively exploring a specific situation, gathering local knowledge and getting a better understanding of the overall social context (Matthews & Ross, 2010). Furthermore, a case study helps *'investigate a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident'* (Yin, 1994). Furthermore, given a lack of cross-national studies of public sector innovation and its antecedents (de Vries et al., 2016), this study will choose multiple cases across five countries for a comparative approach, contrasting cases of service innovation with those of governance innovation. This research design is deemed most appropriate as the concepts of leadership and innovation are quite vague and open to broad interpretations and local perceptions. Through qualitative research, a more in-depth inquiry of the respondent's understanding of these concepts can be made at the time of the live interview making it possible to narrow the concepts down for the purpose of later analysis. Furthermore, there is no clear line of theory of how different political leadership styles influence which type of public sectors innovation is generated or implemented and whether there is a positive relationship. Accordingly, the aim of this research is not to test theory, but to explore the nature of political leadership and to what extent it has an influence on the new services and governance forms deemed most innovative from hundreds of projects handed in at the Innovations in Politics Award institute. With this open and qualitative approach, comparisons can be made as to how governance traditions could explain differences or similarities between the cases and which further factors were most relevant for innovation processes.

The evidence from such a multiple case study approach contributes to the overall study being more robust (Yin, 1994), as the causality between different leadership styles and differing innovation types is analysed within multiple contexts. The developed conceptual framework will be used as a template to compare the empirical results of the case studies, and through 'analytical generalization', findings are carefully generalized to theoretical expectations and replication may be claimed (ibid.).

## 4.1.2 Case description

The mission of the Innovations in Politics Award institute based in Vienna, Austria, is to support political leaders and institutions who have been involved in a process that has led to exceptional innovations in their political communities. This support is expressed through a yearly competition of implemented innovative projects within the European Council nations.

*'We present the work of courageous and creative politicians from all levels of governance and from all democratic parties in Europe so that it can serve as a source of inspiration to others.'*  
(*Innovation in Politics Award, n.d.*)

As a first stage of the selection process, projects are accepted by criteria such as politician(s) being involved in a key role, projects being financed by public funds, having substantial impact on at least 1,000 citizens and the project not being older than five years. After this first stage, the accepted projects are evaluated by a jury of 1,000 European citizens – representative for the European population in terms of nationality, sex and age. The members of the jury are randomly selected and have to evaluate all projects according to the following substantial criteria:

- Innovative character in its sphere of influence (valued 50 %)
- Participation of citizens (10 %)
- Trust building for democratic processes and institutions (10 %)
- Bridge building between actors with different values (10 %)
- Sustainability (10 %)
- Financial viability (10 %)

Finally, the jury evaluation for the year 2017 led to a set of 80 finalists from 17 countries, which were divided into 8 categories including civilisation, democracy, human rights, community, ecology, prosperity, jobs and quality of life. For each category a winner was chosen during the award gala held December 2017 in Vienna.

Based on the set of these eighty cases, a total of ten cases in five countries was aimed for, but due to practical reasons, that is lack of response or willingness to participate, or in some cases language barriers, the final number of researched projects was reduced to eight. Table 4 gives an overview of the participating cases:

Country	Project name	Category
Austria	We are active	Human rights
Austria	Stadtmenschen	Quality of life
France	Actors for a sustainable Paris	Ecology
Germany	Marketplace for Good Business Bocholt	Prosperity
Germany	Municipal apprenticeship initiative	Jobs
Sweden	Nyköping school model	Civilisation
UK	Crowdfund Angus	Prosperity
UK	Improving outcomes for young black men	Human rights

Table 4: Overview of participating projects

### 4.1.3 Criteria for case selection

In a first selection round, the range of countries was discussed with the Innovation in Politics institute regarding language capabilities as the possible interview languages were English or German. Furthermore, given the limited number of finalists per country, it was important to have at least one governance and one product/service innovation per country within the sample as well as a leading political figure in the project operating on a municipal or regional level.

Additionally, the selection was based on having a wide range of different polity models, countries that score differently on constitutive dimensions within comparative political theory. Based on a typology of polity models developed by Jepperson (2002), there are two dimensions in which national political culture may be placed. The first dimension is the degree of *statism*, where there are either statist models of centrally organized authority or a locus of political sovereignty in civil society. Countries with high levels of statism, typically Germany and France, derive their legitimacy for a separate and superior order of political governance from strong centralized bureaucracies within a unified state apparatus (Jepperson, 2002; Schofer & Fourcade-Gourinchas, 2001). The rule of law is identified with the state's authority and civil society is regarded as a source of chaos, which needs administrative supervision and guidance. States scoring low on statism locate purpose and authority in civil society, centring around the idea of a self-governing society and minimal state intervention, as government is more widely considered an instrument wielded by society. Anglo-Saxon countries are typical examples of this category. Also, Scandinavian countries locate political sovereignty in society, but more as a collection of organized, legitimate interests that are mediated by the public authority (Schofer & Fourcade-Gourinchas, 2001). The second dimension is the concept of *corporateness*, which considers the variation of how society is organized. Germanic central Europe, Scandinavian Europe and parts of southern Europe

maintain a functional theory on society and therefore show high levels of corporateness. *'Social organization is envisioned as rational and planned, rather than natural and emergent as it is depicted in associational imagery'* (Jepperson, 2002: 66). Society is therefore organized along 'corporate' lines, thus broader collectives and organized groups with specific rights and functions. On the other end of the continuum, we have British polity which is anti-corporate de novo and France, with its revolution being anti-corporate in both ideology and effects. Both nations have an associational vision of society, a system of action generated by (socialized and regulated) subunit actors (Jepperson, 2002). Emphasis is therefore put on the individual as the organizer of political and social activism, who is the best representative of his or her own interests (Schofer & Fourcade-Gourinchas, 2001).

Based on these criteria, four 'ideal type' countries who score differently on the concepts of *statism* and *corporateness* are identified. Consequently, the countries France, United Kingdom, Germany and Sweden were chosen for this study. Austria was added as a further state-corporate form, scoring very close to Germany (Schofer & Fourcade-Gourinchas, 2001), as the projects were also particularly interesting for the scope of this study.

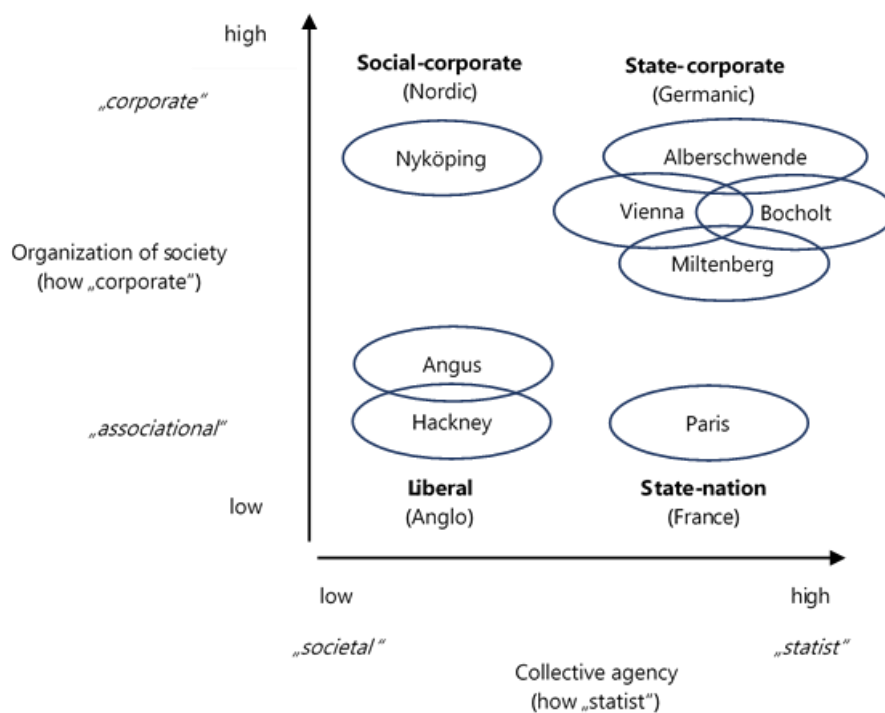


Figure 4: Four predominant modern polity models (along two constitutive dimensions) including placement of cases of this study (Jepperson, 2002)

In line with the research of Schofer & Fourcade-Gourinchas (2001), it is expected that cases placed in high-statist countries have a strong sense of central authority and government is more interfering and interactive in bottom-up initiatives than in cases in low-statist counterparts, who view society as more self-governing. At the same time, societal and civic activities that are developed in nations scoring high

on corporateness are expected to experience more support for collective actions from local authorities. It should also be noted that in high-corporate countries society is more rationally and formally organized in groupings or orders, whereas the organization of society is seen as more organic and emergent in low-corporate countries (Jepperson, 2002; Schofer & Fourcade-Gourinchas, 2001).

After determining the countries, a pre-analysis of documents provided by the Innovation in Politics Award institute was conducted, which provided detailed information of how projects fulfilled the substantial criteria to be eligible for the award. Through further analysis of official web pages, social media channels, media coverage and documents handed in for the nomination of the award, the type of innovation was pre-determined. Because of limited eligibility, unavailability or lacking willingness to participate, as well as limited language capabilities in the proposed interview languages, the aimed number of ten cases was not reached. Therefore, the intended balance of having two cases per type of innovation for each country was not achieved, which poses a limitation.

The following table gives an overview of the pre-analysis types of innovation for each case as well as the categorization after data collection and analysis:

<b>Country</b>	<b>Project name</b>	<b>Pre-analysis innovation type</b>	<b>Post-analysis innovation type</b>
Austria	We are active	Governance	Governance
Austria	Stadtmenschen	Service	Hybrid
France	Actors for a sustainable Paris	Service	Hybrid
Germany	Marketplace for good business Bocholt	Service	Service
Germany	Municipal apprenticeship initiative	Governance	Governance
Sweden	Nyköping school model	Governance	Service
UK	Crowdfund Angus	Service	Service
UK	Improving outcomes for young black men	Governance	Governance

*Table 5: Overview pre- and post-analysis types of innovation per case*



## 4.2 Research methods

This section focuses on qualitative research methods and techniques which are used in this study.

### 4.2.1 Interviews and sampling

Qualitative studies typically involve a language of cases and contexts, examine social processes in their social contexts, and study interpretations or meanings in specific socio-cultural settings (Neuman, 2013: 176). In general, through qualitative research one aims for the *'the nonnumerical examination and interpretation of observations, for the purpose of discovering underlying meanings and patterns of relationships'* (Babbie, 2012: 390). For this study, the exploration of the relationship between a political leader and the followership is essential, therefore qualitative methods in the form of semi-structured interviews are employed. This format enables interviewers to collect data on a topic that is quite broad, and interviewees can talk about a set of questions in their own way and with their own choice of words (Matthews & Ross, 2010). Furthermore, flexibility is given to reach a better understanding of certain socio-political contexts that effect the results.

In this study, a total of eight cases in five countries agreed to participate. In each case the leading political figure was interviewed, as well as a second involved actor outside the narrow sphere of the political individual to act as a controlling factor for each case. The selection of the second actor was done through making independent inquiries to involved organizations or citizen groups through e-mail or social media channels. This helps to ensure viewing the innovation from a different perspective to avoid biases from the view of the political leader. The politician are contacted with the support of the Innovation in Politics institute, who have had regular contact with the leading officials of each project. The final interview list can be seen in the following table:

Code name for results and analysis	Country	Project name	Interviewed politician
			Second interviewee
Alberschwende	Austria	We are active	Angelika Schwarzmann <i>Mayor of Alberschwende</i>
			Civic actor and member of local association
Vienna	Austria	Stadtmenschen	Tanja Wehsely <i>Councillor and Member of Vienna Parliament</i>
			Project manager of Stadtmenschen
Paris	France	Actors for a sustainable Paris	Célia Blauel <i>Deputy mayor of Paris in charge of environment and sustainable development</i>
			Civil servant in directorate for environment
Bocholt	Germany	Marketplace for good business Bocholt	Peter Nebelo <i>Mayor of Bocholt</i>
			Strategic volunteer sector coordinator of the municipality of Bocholt
Miltenberg	Germany	Municipal apprenticeship initiative	Jens Marco Scherf <i>District chief executive of Miltenberg</i>
			Coach and employee of association for professional development
Nyköping	Sweden	Nyköping school model	Veronica Andersson <i>Former president of children and youth committee in the municipality of Nyköping</i>
			Principal of school
Angus	UK	Crowdfund Angus	Lynne Devine <i>Councillor and economic development spokesperson of Angus Council</i>
			Strategic policy and planning manager
Hackney	UK	Improving outcomes for young black men	Antoinette Bramble <i>Statutory deputy mayor and cabinet member for education, young people and children's social care of Hackney</i>
			Employee of umbrella organization of voluntary sector in Hackney

Table 6: Overview interview respondents

## 4.2.2 Reliability and validity

In general, qualitative research is often seen as less reliable as observed processes and relationships are unsteady over the course of time (Neuman, 2013). In this study, it is particularly challenging to capture wide concepts such as leadership and innovation that are subject to broad interpretations and potential conscious or unconscious bias towards perceiving one's own innovation and/or political actions. Therefore, the definitions are derived from a wider set of theories and each variable is given at least three indicators. The interviews are recorded, transcribed and coded by the author of this study. To further enhance reliability, which ensures that results can be replicated in other cases with the same methods (Matthews & Ross, 2010), transparency of the closed and open coding process is provided with the detailed coding scheme being depicted in the following sub-chapter. Furthermore, the author of this study conducts two coding rounds with a time span of at least two weeks in between to critically review the impressions of the first coding round.

Concerning validity, the interviewees are not only responsible political leaders for each project, but second interviewees for the same case are chosen independently to retrieve a different perspective on the leadership style of said politician, as well as on the perceived novelty and function of the innovation. Furthermore, through the use of triangulation, the empirical data from interview transcripts is cross-checked with documents provided by the IPA institute. These files were the basis of project selection for the 2017 Innovation in Politics Award and were evaluated by the institute's expert group of researchers. Each file contains detailed information on how projects met the substantial criteria for the Innovation in Politics Award and is therefore considered a reliable source.

The case study approach also allows us to shed light onto contextual conditions and therefore reach a better understanding of the real-life situation across different socio-political contexts. As described above, through 'analytical generalization' of multiple cases, contributions to theoretical expectations may be made (Yin, 1994) to enhance external validity. Given the wide set of leadership and innovation theories, this study aims to add to theory by focusing on the leadership styles of politicians on a local, municipal or regional level and on how their roles influence which type of public sector innovation is generated and implemented in their sphere of influence.

### ***Limitations***

The selection of cases for this study constitutes certain limitations. First, the original number of cases aimed for was ten. Due to practical reasons (lacking response or willingness to participate), the final number was set at eight. A balance of two cases per country with both one service and one governance innovation is therefore not achieved. Thus, there is a heavy overrepresentation of cases from German speaking countries as well as only one case for each Sweden and France. This disproportionate

spread across five countries heavily limits the results of the cross-national analysis, as no significant conclusions can be drawn from the underrepresented countries. Second, all cases pose successfully implemented innovations and thus a comparison to cases where innovation processes have failed is not conducted. This may limit the results regarding how same leadership styles may differ in unfavourable contexts and what other factors may have a stronger determining influence on successful implementation. Moreover, it is not tested if the implemented innovation effectively improved the previous situation, if the intended outcomes were actually reached or if effectiveness, efficiency or legitimacy was achieved.

Regarding limitations based on the choice of interviewees, politicians may be subject to personal bias towards innovations they were personally responsible for. Therefore, each case is checked with the responses of a second interviewee. However, most second interviewees are also personally involved in the development of the innovation and can only report from an intra-organizational perspective. Other second interviewees were too distant from relevant processes to provide detailed information on certain actions and behaviours from politicians, which may limit the control factor on the viewpoint of the elected official.

### 4.2.3 Coding scheme

The coding process, conducted with the qualitative analysis programme MAXQDA, consisted of a closed coding phase, where all indicators on both concepts of leadership and innovation were determined according to the operationalization as presented in chapter 3.2.

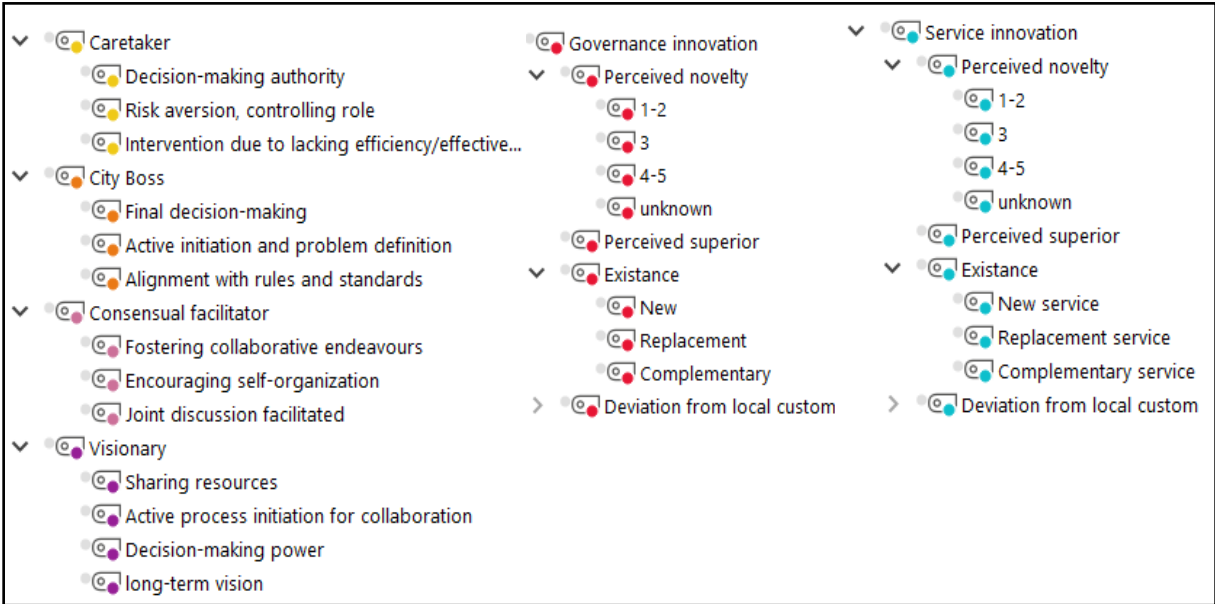


Figure 5: Coding scheme pre-determined variables

However, as the research is exploratory, there was also an open coding process for three areas: activities deployed by elected officials, innovation antecedents (with sub categories environmental, organizational and individual antecedents) and innovation barriers. In a first coding round, codes were either assigned to the predetermined indicators or created with each document. Regarding the leadership styles, some fragments were applicable to multiple leadership styles without having an indicator. The codes 'collaboration', 'hierarchy', 'responsiveness' and 'directiveness' according to the proposed model depicted in figure 2 were therefore added to the political leadership code scheme and are described in chapter 3.2.

The codes that were openly coded, were then checked back with the theoretical framework which assisted a possible organization into categories. After creating the new categories in the coding scheme, a second coding round was conducted to increase reliability.

<b>Activities conducted by political figure</b>
Agenda setting
Giving direction
Create arena and delegate tasks and responsibilities
provide mandate and share resources
Defending and endorsing innovation
Communicating innovation
Other actions and behaviours
<b>Innovation antecedents</b>
Environmental antecedents
Environmental pressures
Inter-organizational relationships
Regulatory aspects
Other
Organizational antecedents
Good team
Slack resources
supportive climate
Effectiveness and efficiency
Individual antecedents
Empowered employees
Non-political boundary spanner
Expertise
Innovation champion
Innovation sponsor
<b>Innovation barriers</b>
Rules and regulation
Citizen resistance
Political barrier
Failures

Table 7: Summary of final open codes

## 5 Case study results

This chapter provides detailed case descriptions of each of the selected eight cases researched for this study. The sources are the transcripts of two interviews per case as well as documents provided by the Innovation in Politics Award institute. After giving a brief summary to understand the nature of each case, the results are presented concerning which type of innovation and which political leadership style could be found according to the pre-defined variables from chapter 3.2. At the end of this chapter, the third sub-question of *'which styles of political leadership and types of innovation can be found across five countries in Europe'* is answered. This categorization facilitates the subsequent analysis of the relationship between political leadership and public sector innovation.

### 5.1 Austria

#### 5.1.1 We are active – Alberschwende

With the refugee crisis in Europe, many countries have faced the challenge of a large influx of asylum seekers and their subsequent integration into society. In Austria, one of the struggles was to find sufficient accommodation for the large number of refugees, hence a national call was issued inquiring local governments with unused accommodation capacities to come forward. The mayor of the small Austrian town of Alberschwende, Angelika Schwarzmann, recognized the urgency of the issue and in agreement with the local council followed the call. After the first refugees were welcomed to the town, the community of Alberschwende was confronted with the infamous Dublin regulation of the EU, which determines the repatriation of asylum seekers to the country they were first registered in when arriving in the EU. Through citizen engagement and multiple negotiations, the deportation of Alberschwende's small group of refugees to countries with questionable humanitarian situation was prevented. Once it became clear that this group of refugees was allowed to stay, citizens and local associations took to the question of giving refugees an opportunity to complete tasks and activities prior to the final asylum decision. This started as an idea of 'help for self-help', where refugees could self-organize and coordinate where they could complete small tasks in the local community, without receiving official compensation as this is strictly prohibited by national law. They were provided a small office in the municipality, managed to coordinate themselves and got involved in the community, which in turn supported language learning and acceptance among the population. The final step was the cross-sectoral collaboration of the community to find a way to integrate the refugees into the labour market as soon as possible, and not only as soon as a certain language level was reached, which typically takes years. Active citizens engaged in negotiations with local businesses, and the mayor used her contacts and

networks to involve public institutions in finding a solution. Despite major resistance from institutions, who referred to strict rules and regulations, the community of Alberschwende found a way to create a traineeship especially for refugees, to ensure early job orientation and labour market integration in local businesses. The uniqueness of this traineeship is the possibility for refugees to have an orientation of future jobs, prior to acquiring the sufficient language skills as stipulated by national law. With the traineeship, the long waiting period between granted asylum and access to the labour market is usefully bridged and consequently, integration into society accelerated. In the meantime, this innovation has already spread to a regional level.

### ***Type of innovation***

Through the self-organization of the civil society under the leadership of the mayor and the constant interaction between public, private and civic actors in an evolving process, this form of collaboration clearly aimed to tackle the local and societal problem of integration of refugees into society and the labour market and thus clearly is a governance innovation. The service of helping refugees to self-organize to complete small voluntary tasks in the community was considered complementary to services that were already done by other charity organizations. The concept of creating the traineeship, however, was perceived as completely new and non-existent before. The big systems were failing in this urgent situation, so through intensive negotiation and collaboration with public institutions such as employment services, social security, and the chamber of labour, and partly supported by legal assistance, a loophole was found on how to design this traineeship to support the integration of refugees. Whereas the mayor perceived the change to be around (3) on the novelty scale, the civic actor saw it as more radical (5), as major public institutions were challenged because existing rules and regulation were not solving the problem. The innovation challenged the local custom of 'blind adherence to the law', for law is subject to interpretation and this situation was used to find a loophole. The thought of starting the integration process before the required language skill is achieved makes the approach also very different to current procedures.

*'Radical was the beginning, it was radical to use the traineeship for this [note: integration], the institutions and insurance companies did not expect this. Then the radical step was to support integration of non-German speakers as quickly as possible, into society. **This was also a sledgehammer approach. And, by the way, that was an impetus for an important thinking process throughout the region.** Companies have realized that we do not have to blindly adhere to the law, and we can also trust that we can get to know the [potential new] workforce. It has then successively improved, in a sense of closer cooperation between the companies and public authorities on a regional level ... much has improved.'* (civic actor, own translation)

### **Political leadership style**

*'When I look at [political leadership] in this process, **it was simply very important that there was someone, somewhere who could say yes, this is how we will continue now.**'*

*(Schwarzmann, own translation)*

Two themes were present in this case regarding political leadership. First, it was a clear long-term commitment from mayor Angelika Schwarzmann to act on this societal challenge. She personally went forward, gave direction, called for action and took full responsibility for the outcomes. This inspired many of her supporters to also engage in the process and become more active in the community. She used her position to contribute resources to support collective action, however, she did not see herself as the final decision-maker and engaged in a more collective decision-making process. When asked what her role as a political leader means to her, she responded:

*'This means that you have to evaluate very well, what's going on in society and **how do I manage the balancing act of bringing in all sorts of different positions and needs, without excluding anyone, without neglecting** ... that seems to be a big challenge for a politician in general. Having a certain vision of what could happen is a big challenge.'* (Schwarzmann, own translation)

This hints a very horizontal understanding of leadership, to include all positions and needs of citizens, also by involving them more equally in decision-making processes. This matches the second theme, in this case how the self-organizing capacity of citizens was encouraged and facilitated by the elected official. The mayor took a very supportive role by trusting the civic actors and giving them freedom and resources to create and find a solution. Her continuous presence and personal stance bolstered the community to keep going. This was confirmed by the second respondent of this case:

*'She leads, globally speaking, in a very authentic and personal way. She is very authentic by saying we have to work with common sense. We can put up resistance, **she encouraged the citizens, or us volunteers, to do that. Without her support, I do not know if we would have gotten the people together to do this.** I cannot imagine that. That's her strength and she carried that forward and said we're doing it like this in Alberschwende, are there any objections? Then everybody stuttered. So, in a nutshell, this stance she took, I admire I must say.'* (civic actor, own translation)

This directive and inspirational stance the mayor took by saying to her followers *'yes, this is how we will continue now'* as well as the encouragement of the civil society to self-organize around an urgent challenge and engage in collaboration across all sectors, combines the visionary and consensual facilitator style in this case.



## 5.1.2 Stadtmenschen Vienna

Together with individuals from the private sector, member of Vienna parliament Tanja Wehsely co-initiated a platform based in Vienna with the purpose to support, foster and implement societal innovation and build a network for civic and social initiatives. The platform 'Social City Vienna' acts independently from the public sector, and is an initiative mainly funded by the private sector. Tanja Wehsely as co-initiator, however, remains the patron of the initiative and puts forward her ideas for social innovation through this platform. Such was the case with one of the projects of Social City Vienna, Stadtmenschen, which aims to help citizens of Vienna navigate through the extensive network of social services, public institutions and charity organizations when they are in need. Tanja Wehsely with her 20 year experience in local social and youth work, saw the challenge of people not knowing where to go when they faced problems, and recognized that they often did not have the resources to research which types of social services were even existent. Within Social City Vienna, the idea was further developed to include volunteers to act as a first point of contact and to direct fellow citizens in need to the right social institution. These volunteers, called 'Stadtmenschen', which can be loosely translated to 'urban scouts', participate in a training programme to be able to learn and subsequently share their knowledge of the Viennese social services environment. The 'orientation service' is provided at fixed office hours, in a non-bureaucratic manner and is coordinated with other public and non-public partners who additionally provide space, training and support for the project.

### ***Type of innovation***

In this case the innovation is two-fold. The service Stadtmenschen itself is provided and organized by the social innovation platform Social City Vienna in cooperation with other public organizations and volunteers, who are also a target group of the project. A new service is thus offered by a private initiative that is independent from the city government, but functions in cooperation with public partners such as the Viennese adult education centres (*Wiener Volkshochschulen*) and *Fonds Soziales Wien*, the responsible body for most social services in the city. Furthermore, through the interaction between a platform funded mainly by the private sector, public partners and the civic sector in the form of volunteers, a cross-sectoral collaboration fundamentally makes this service function. In the end, Stadtmenschen is an in-between innovation of service and governance. A more formal and bureaucratic position (*Sozialombudsmann*) existed prior to the introduction of Stadtmenschen, however, the combination of volunteers helping fellow citizens and becoming disseminators in their communities and offering a low-threshold for having discreet conversations with non-officials was new. Both interviewees also perceive the service to be more complementary to already existing welfare consultations, this service simply points citizens in need of assistance in the right direction. The perceived novelty was hard to

place for both interviewees, but the cooperation and interaction with different sectors were emphasized as important drivers for innovation.

*'It was not our intention to create another social consultation service, because there is already a lot there. That's why we never use the word consultation, but we always talk about office hours or orientation service. For us, it is simply to give an overview of the social system, that is, what counseling centers, public services of magistrates, clubs, NGOs on various topics are out there and offer an orientation service because we think **it is not the gap in offered services, but the communication gap we want to close.**' (project manager, own translation)*

### **Political leadership style**

The idea for the creation of a new service came from the elected official, who actively initiated the innovation process. She placed the idea in the hub for social innovation where other actors then turned the idea into concrete actions, her further contributions were sharing her knowledge of the sector and referring her contacts to important organizations and institutions to collaborate, as also confirmed by the second respondent. Moreover, the same respondent explained that the major and non-operational decisions were agreed upon between the board members of Social City Vienna, which includes Tanja Wehsely.

*'I am, so to speak, mostly a source of ideas, do my part and create all the contacts. I do not do any consulting myself, I do not work in the project myself, but when it comes to opening new locations [for Stadtmenschen] I am of help. [...] When it comes to talking to politics, I'm also there sometimes, but not necessarily anymore. When it comes to authorities and especially government contacts in the city, then I do it.' (Wehsely, own translation)*

Tanja Wehsely also emphasized a more directive attitude, being the actor who actively recognizes opportunities and aims to link actors from other sectors and organizations to bring upon more innovation outside of organizational and bureaucratic silos. Partners and other actors need to be formally organized with assigned roles and responsibilities to be able to engage in formal collaboration. When asked on how she perceives her role as a political leader, she responded:

*'But I think you must have an attitude that you would like to promote innovation, that is, that you are open to listen to things, to recognize things, to see things, that you would like to have a network and also believe that networking outside of silos adds value. And I've never worked differently in my life, I always do it that way, because coming from youth welfare work, that's the way of working. It is a hub, you are well connected, **you have to immerse yourself in the world of people and bring as many players to the table to achieve a goal.**' (Wehsely, own translation)*

Given these dominant themes of active initiation of collaboration by sharing of resources in form of contacts and networks, as well as being involved in major decisions, her style can be placed in the visionary corner.

## 5.2 France

### 5.2.1 Actors for a sustainable Paris

'Actors for a sustainable Paris' is an online platform which aims to enhance visibility of individuals and collectives who are taking action to support sustainable development as well as climate and environmental protection in the city of Paris. Individuals and collectives can register their plans, projects or initiatives, as long as they are connected to the topic of sustainability. Not only is it a virtual meeting space where exchange can take place, but also an own facility exists where active citizens and officials can meet, or host free events related to the topic of sustainable development. The topic of sustainability was put on the agenda by the then-mayor of Paris, who showed political willingness to implement programmes to help raise awareness of sustainability issues. The concrete idea of the platform came from one of the deputy mayors who then launched the programme in 2011. The emphasis was put on mobilizing citizens, including them in the process, and helping the many existing initiatives to become more visible to the public. In 2014, deputy mayor Célia Blauel took over the project and has since then been facilitating and further developing the programme together with the municipal department of 'territory mobilization'.

*'The idea comes from an observation: citizen initiatives, personal and individual in terms of sustainable development, are very numerous on the Parisian territory but lack visibility. By creating a network like this one, we wanted to make local initiatives more visible, but also to link the actors acting on the territory. **The aim is to support these initiatives, encourage their multiplication and even create new ones.**' (Blauel)*

#### **Type of innovation**

Due to the dual nature of the project, with a website being administered by the municipality on the one hand, and the provision of a physical space for collaboration with regular events and competitions on the other, a clear distinction between service and governance innovation is challenging. The term public service in France has a legal binding, therefore, the argument was given that the platform cannot be called a public service per se. Network and citizen mobilization is fostered and supported by the responsible department, however, the municipality itself does not engage in concrete projects with citizens but merely provides the space for exchange and interaction. In this sense it is a service

innovation, not in the sense of the legal term, but as a voluntary service offered and administered by a public authority. Nevertheless, one can also argue that this new form of interaction with citizen initiatives contributes to an overall goal to mobilize citizens and society, thus making it a kind of hybrid form between service and governance. A similar tool did not exist prior to the platform, but the interviewees acknowledge the fact that non-public organizations have been trying to link initiatives prior to the new tool. What also makes the platform unique is the territorial roots in Paris and the geographical proximity of the meeting space for all actors in Paris. At the time it was launched, the platform was considered to be a radical novelty from the administrative side. Reasons given for this was the untypical procedure of a public institution in France to engage in promoting private initiatives. When judging the project as it currently functions, the novelty was scored more in the middle of the novelty scale, from both the administrative and the political side as the service is considered to 'merely' provide a link to an already rich citizen ecosystem.

*'It was not a question of going slowly, the change was not progressive (1), it was punctual, and it continues today to unfold its consequences. **It was not a question of suddenly upsetting (5) an already rich citizen ecosystem, rather to give it a link, to make it aware of its own existence, and thus to strengthen it.** The novelty of this service is therefore halfway (3).'* (Blauel)

### ***Political leadership style***

In this case multiple politicians were involved due to the time frame of the project. The impulse to foster initiatives dealing with sustainable development in general was given by the mayor of Paris. The predecessor of interviewed deputy mayor Célia Blauel was involved in the launching of the project but was not interviewed for this case. However, through interviews with civil servants in the responsible department, a working environment in line with the philosophy of the project was described. There is a strong sense of trust and collaboration between politics and administration and an open mind to encouraging citizen participation. Decision-making, exchange and discussions take place in a less hierarchical and more equal frame within the public organization. When asked about her role as a political leader, Célia Blauel explained:

*'A political leader today must certainly be a force of proposal, implement public policies that respond to environmental and societal challenges, while taking into account the needs of citizens. Our legitimacy comes from citizens, from their vote. We, as elected representatives, must maintain this link by placing ourselves as a reference for citizen action: **the political leader gives an orientation, a general objective, must convince of the relevance of this objective, and thus inspire the talent and the innovation of his or her fellow citizens, and finally he or she must remain by their side to provide expertise and means.**' (Blauel).*

The role of the politician in this case is to be a force that initiates and implements public policies, but also takes into consideration societal and environmental changes as well as citizen needs. Even with the first half of the quote indicating a visionary style and being more general, the second half in bold comes closer to the context which was also explained by the other respondent. In this case, the politician emphasizes the need to provide favourable conditions for citizen initiatives and networks, thus creating a space for collaborative endeavours which is done through the platform. This way of more horizontal thinking and working was also confirmed by the interviewed administrators.

*'Especially because we have this kind of **horizontal organization with the political leaders** we get something that is more open and more collaborative' (civil servant)*

One effect of this horizontal organization is that it also makes civil servants feel more empowered. In relation to political leadership outside of public organizations, the second respondent further explained:

*'But this is a new form of political leadership based on trust and co-working. And getting citizens involved. This is what call in French **participative democracy**. This is a new form of political leadership.'* (civil servant)

Based on the view of the politician on the project *'the aim is to support these initiatives, encourage their multiplication and even create new ones'*, Célia Blauel shows commitment to support collective action of citizens. However, it seems she takes a more distant and administrating role, not actively collaborating with civic initiatives. Rather, she supports them by maintaining a service to foster the self-organizing capacity of society, as well as horizontal leadership within public organizations and an attitude in favour of participatory democracy, her style is thus categorized as that of a consensual facilitator.

## 5.3 Germany

### 5.3.1 Marketplace for good business Bocholt

Back in 2012, Peter Nebelo, mayor of the German city of Bocholt and the municipal administration have recognized the importance of volunteer work for the proper functioning of the city. The municipality saw itself as a service provider for volunteer associations, i.e. to mediate, advise, support, promote and to develop a culture of appreciation for the civic sector. As a first step, a political decision was made to create a separate position for strategic support and coordination of the city's volunteer sector. This newly developed position put forth an idea to provide a service, which helps the voluntary sector interact and connect with local companies and businesses on a more equal footing. This method

is called 'marketplace method' and works similarly to the concept of speed-dating. A fixed number of associations and business take part in a carefully planned event and at a certain point at this event there is an official time frame of 60 minutes where all parties can discuss different possibilities and propose project ideas to each other. However, it is not allowed to talk about money, rather about exchangeable non-monetary resources. In the end, contracts and agreements settled are binding after the event. This idea was also supported by other non-public actors, who were interested in trying this existent and known method in the local context. The event 'marketplace for good business Bocholt' was thus carefully planned by the public authorities in coordination with stakeholders across all sectors. In total representatives of 37 organizations and 29 companies took part. As the feedback was very positive, the administration is currently evaluating if the event should be held regularly every couple of years.

### ***Type of innovation***

The marketplace method which brings together the voluntary sector with local businesses and companies is a known and wide-spread method and can be typically found in bigger cities. However, as Bocholt is a smaller city with around 74,000 inhabitants, implementing this method was considered quite risky and would consume a lot of resources. The organization and hosting of the event was also carried out completely by the municipality, which views this event as a service for the voluntary sector. Therefore, this case presents a type of service innovation. The perceived novelty was interpreted in two ways, on the one hand the voluntary sector coordinator of Bocholt saw this particular project of the marketplace as a logical next step in the direction they were already going concerning increased strategic support for the voluntary sector. Therefore, it was perceived a (3) on the scale between incremental (1) and radical change (5). Similarly, mayor Nebelo perceived it between (3) and (5), adding that the way actors from different sectors could engage on equal terms as equal partners, and not in a relationship of 'donor and petitioner', made this sort of event unique. Moreover, it was also argued that bringing this known method to the context of a smaller city with typically less resources than larger counterparts, was also perceived a more radical novelty. Similarly, the coordination with the voluntary sector was not a new service, but the particular method with the coordinated involvement of businesses and companies in this process by the municipality was considered as something new and unique, also in the context of local customs.

*'Companies were already working with associations of course, **but a coordinated process, moreover coordinated by the public administration**, and you could not even talk about money [at the event], **that's something completely new not only here for us, but in the wider environment.**' (voluntary sector coordinator, own translation)*

### ***Political leadership style***

A number of topics were touched in this case and need careful interpretation in order to identify the combination of different leadership styles. The mayor of Bocholt strongly emphasized the importance of being authentic, being present and showing appreciation for the voluntary sector as a major contributor to the functioning of the city. The decision to support this sector by providing a number of actions and services can be seen as a type of value exchange between the public and voluntary sector. On the one hand cross-sectoral coordination is encouraged, which is reflected in the case of developing and planning the marketplace event. In creating the position of a volunteer sector coordinator within the municipality, politics dedicated resources to a position that deals with encouraging collective actions in the community. In general, the mayor is keen to provide a setting where collaborative endeavours can thrive.

*'...if the volunteering sector realizes that there are more possibilities to try, [...] such as with the marketplace, then that is absolutely innovative. **And if you as an administration create the ground for it, and also appeal to the various actors in order to work together with them on how to do this, then that's good.** And if the volunteers put forward their own ideas and implement them, that's a good thing because volunteering cannot be forced, it is voluntary. That's good and only works if the cooperation works well.'* (Nebelo, own translation)

The decision-making power in the process of developing the innovation remained formally within the public sphere, based on the position of the mayor also as the head of the administration. In the interviews the flow of information, resources and decisions within the organizational structure was present as a topic, even though de facto no interventions came from the mayor in the planning process as trust levels and transparency within the municipality are considered to be high by both interviewees. This is underlined by the following quote:

*'So, to stay with this project, I always stayed informed. And for me control means you have to know what's going on. You must then check for yourself if it is still **corresponding with what you have planned.** And if that's the case then that's good, **if that's not the case, then you have to intervene in a controlled manner** and say 'guys, in my opinion you are going the wrong way'. But that was not the case at all with this project, and I cannot remember a project where I really had to intervene because they were on the wrong track.'* (Nebelo, own translation)

The perception of politics as a decision-making authority is underlined by the following statement by the second respondent on how important political leadership is for public innovation:

*'Politics happens to be the decision-maker and can also very often be a decision-denier because it is often the case that politics prevents [things from happening]. Here we see in a positive case that without politics it would not work, and politics simply can, if they want, get a lot of things going.'* (volunteer sector coordinator, own translation)

Therefore, even though in this case there is a commitment to encourage collaboration by contributing resources, strategic decision-making power remained with the mayor (visionary style). Additionally, a sense of hierarchy was present in both interviews, even if effectively no intervention was necessary. The position of mayor is seen as an authority for final decision-making, and control is exercised by knowing when to intervene if agreements are not met (city boss style). As a result, there is a combination of both the visionary and city boss style in this case.

### 5.3.2 Municipal apprenticeship initiative Miltenberg

The district of Miltenberg in Germany is facing two demographic challenges. On the one hand, the more rural district is experiencing a demographic shift with an increase in the age of the population, a decline in the proportion of young people and a lack of skilled workers in the region. On the other hand, during the migration crisis in 2015 many refugees arrived in the region and had to be integrated into society. District chief executive Jens Marco Scherf strived to find a way to solve these two challenges and was given an impulse by one local business owner who suggested the best way of integrating refugees is integration into the labour market. As a result, the district administration brought together actors from various sectors, among them businesses, professional education service providers as well as the employment agency and social and youth welfare offices. In an informal setting all actors discussed how a concept could be designed to integrate refugees more effectively into the labour market, as similar programmes had poor results with high dropout rates in schools and apprenticeships. Consequently, a three-step apprenticeship programme was created. First, candidates are selected based on the motivation, commitment, and willingness to learn. In a second step the candidates are prepared what to expect in their apprenticeship and what hurdles they might encounter. Finally, over the course of the whole programme they receive intensive personal coaching and are accompanied as much as necessary. One particular outcome apart from the integration of a first group of refugees into the labour market was that reservations and insecurities from employers' sides were broken down, which resulted in companies being more open towards the employment of refugees and having a better understanding of the barriers individual refugees might struggle with.



### ***Type of innovation***

Given the fact that cross-organizational collaboration took place in this case to provide a solution to a wider societal challenge such as integration into the labour market, as well as the innovation process being considered unusual and new for this context, this case is placed more in the sphere of governance innovation. However, it shall be noted that the facility providing the individual coaching for the apprentices is contracted by the district administration. Thus, the service itself is indirectly administered by a public authority and has a small but insignificant element of service innovation as well. The service itself was perceived as something completely new, that co-exists with other similar support programmes for apprentices. What made it innovative was the intensity of the individual coaching and the focus on refugees as a specific target group.

*'It was actually something completely new in this form. Because we did not have this intensive form of apprenticeship coaching yet ... of course there are different forms of apprenticeship preparation. There are certain support programmes for young people with an increased need for support. So, we could basically fall back on experiences, **but in this intensity of the accompaniment and for this target group it was completely new.**' (Scherf, own translation)*

In total, both interviewees ranked the novelty as a (4), close to (5) a radical change. What added to the uniqueness in such an environment was the high degree of freedom the contracted association for professional development was given by the district. This was explained by not having to adhere to strict and formal documentation requirements which contracted agencies usually face. Instead, the administration was regularly updated and informed in a mutually agreed upon process.

*'But in a nutshell, it is always the case that the contracting authority, whether that's the state, or a federal state, or the employment agency or something else ... they want to see what is going to happen to [the target group]. And this is done with the help of documentation. **And that was just a freedom in this project, to say that we would not force ourselves into such a corset [...] but the motivation to attend to the individual, that is the priority. And not that we have to write ourselves to death ...**' (coach, own translation)*

### ***Political leadership style***

For Jens Marco Scherf, district chief executive, it is essential for political leaders to be open, to signalize that one is receptive to ideas and to create a dynamic atmosphere within and across organizational boundaries. This dynamic atmosphere he seeks to create is his vision for a democratic and innovative society, which he shares with partners and citizens alike. This is underlined by the following statement:

*'... we need this dynamic, we need this willingness to take responsibility, everyone in his area. If we only turn to others or to other agencies, at the end to state agencies... **government agencies will not move anything without movements from society.** So that is my understanding of politics, my understanding of democracy and why democracy and politics is gratifying for me.'* (Scherf, own translation)

This general attitude was also independently confirmed by the second respondent. In this particular case the politician acted in a very directive manner, picking up an idea and initiating a process of collaboration by bringing all the relevant actors together to discuss and find a better solution for the challenges ahead:

*'The business man approached me and said that we had to do something. **Then I invited several actors to the table to develop a concept.** [...] And in this group composition, you can call it a creative concept group, we met several times.'* (Scherf, own translation)

The group that designed the concept met on a more informal and equal level, decisions were made in a very pragmatic, fast way and during the initiation phase also outside the sphere of political committees. The result was the municipal apprenticeship concept that was presented as a pilot project. Jens Marco Scherf also considered it as his task to persuade the political committees to distribute financial resources to the project. Given his long-term vision of creating a dynamic society, his active process initiation for collaboration and the sharing of resources, the style of Jens Marco Scherf fits with the outline of the visionary. This attitude was confirmed and described by the second respondent as follows:

*'And then there needs to be a political leadership style, a **political pioneer who simply says I will dare to try something new now**, I'll just try to bring it to the political committee and say, let's see if that works and if not, what have we done wrong? It does not always have to go to the highest level [...] to say I will dare to try something new, but let's just try it, and then we can say we were innovative here in the political sector. A new sphere, an entrepreneur, one who has opened the door for other districts to imitate. **And this is what the district chief executive has created with all his undertakings here.**'* (coach, own translation)

## 5.4 Sweden

### 5.4.1 Nyköping school model

Several years ago, the small city of Nyköping, just south of Sweden's capital Stockholm, faced challenges in their educational system. In 2010, only 70 % of all students aged 16 had sufficient results to pass to upper secondary school. Furthermore, there were four schools in the city in total, which all

faced similar problems. Apart from the poor student results there were difficulties with securing full-time employment for teachers. In the course of evaluating the economic perspective of school management, a further factor became clear. Due to the schools being located in different parts of the city, each school had a strong concentration of a certain ethnic and social group which reinforced segregation in the local community. Local politician Veronica Andersson, who was chairwoman of the board for youth and education in the municipality at the time, in consultation with principals, teachers, students and parents and with the support of all but one of the political parties decided to fuse all four schools into one in 2010. Even if the discussion initially started due to poor results and inefficiencies, it also became a long-term goal to tackle the segregation of society in the city to ensure a better future for the children. With the Nyköping school model, students encounter other children from different backgrounds, and can strengthen their social skills. Furthermore, gathering all students in one school helped to put the focus on improvement of results and optimization of allocation of resources and pedagogical competences. However, there were strong protests against the initiative especially by parents from students with a higher socio-economic background. After the decision became final in 2010, Veronica Andersson was not re-elected into office. The new school was only opened four years later in 2014, as the implementation phase proved to be very challenging due to growing resistance and reluctant support by political parties due to the sensitivity of the topic. Currently around 1,400 students are enrolled in the newly formed school and their results have improved but not as significant as demanded by opposing political parties. However, this can be linked to the massive influx of refugees and immigrants in the years 2015 and 2016 which further added to the initial challenge.

### ***Type of innovation***

The local organization of public schools was completely changed through the closing of three schools and the creation of one larger school for the whole municipal community. Through the 'destruction' of the current system, it was possible to re-allocate resources in order to create a presumably better public service of compulsory education. As a result, the existing structure was replaced and is perceived superior both from an economic, as well as a pedagogical and societal point of view. Even if not all problems in terms of segregation and integration could be solved, the results of students have in fact improved and youngsters that would not normally meet interact on a daily basis in carefully balanced classes in terms of societal and ethnic background. In this case, therefore, the innovation is clearly a service innovation. The novelty was perceived by both the politician, as well as the current principal of the newly created school as quite radical, especially in their local context and because they were the first municipality in Sweden to try this approach. One of the reasons given is that changes in the educational system are usually quite sensitive topics and not many politicians dare to pursue radical changes in fear of becoming unpopular in public opinion. At the time of the decision the

politicians had been more united and very active for this change, the second respondent confirmed. The situation now, however, eight years after the decision and four years after the opening of the school, is challenging due to scepticism especially from local media and right-winged political parties, who continue to scrutinize the Nyköping school model.

*'During these 4 years there was much focus in media, local media and some national media too. And we have been followed with great interest. It is really from two ways, because local media has been really really critical all the time, and when something is not so good, or there have been some problems or some challenges that we face, the focus is really really critical. While more national media, or more like these teacher organization newspapers [...] and so on, they have been more of interest and curiosity. **And from that point of view it is really important that the politicians stand up for the decision they have made.** [...] the majority, which is now, this mandate period, they are really really positive towards this initiative, they are really supporting. But they are quite quiet in their way of supporting. The opposition which is quite critical, they are not so quiet in their critique.'* (principal of school)

### **Political leadership style**

The local politician Veronica Andersson, back then chairwoman of the board for youth and education, emphasized her feeling of responsibility to make a change to provide a better future for the youth. Through consultation of experts from the educational field and support across political parties, Veronica Andersson took the decision of change as chairwoman of the responsible committee. She saw her position less as one of authority, but as the one responsible to take this difficult decision of how the local problem should be solved.

*'It was being responsible, it was you had to take this question with a lot of respect and **I didn't see myself as the boss or the one who decided, because I saw myself as someone who has to take the decision, we cannot waste our youth anymore.**'* (Andersson)

Hierarchy seemed to be the basis for decision-making, as information, resources and decisions were passed in a predefined flow according to the organizational structure between politics and administration (which in this case means school administrators, principals and teachers). After the decision was made, the responsibility for implementation was passed to the school administration. The second respondent did not perceive that politics controlled this implementation process, but more that there were high expectations. Andersson was also considered to be the initiator and driver of this process of change, acknowledging the risks that came with it, which also indicates a more directive side of leadership.

***I also knew if I make changes in school I have to quit as a politician and 2010 after the decision I wasn't welcome anymore in the politics, so I had to go. But it was a very small price for... because this was my mission. I was elected to do the best for the kids, and that's fine with me.*** (Andersson)

Characterizing the leadership style is very challenging in this case, as only single indicators are touched upon. Even though the final decision was made in a hierarchical structure, and Andersson was responsible for this decision, value exchange was not the motivation of the elected official as proposed by transactional leadership theory. There was a clear long-term vision of improving community life through supporting the upcoming generations to reach higher educational goals and reduce segregation within society. Even though extensive collaboration did not take place outside public sector entities, at the time of the decision-making experts, public school administration and some parents and students were consulted to make an informed decision. This is underlined by the following statement:

*'... other politicians were not on our side. But then we had the principals and some of the parents, but at the end, we didn't care about the reaction from parents, especially the parents of the all-white kids, we didn't care about the reaction because those students who needed the most help didn't have any voices at all in this process, so we had to be their voices. **So that was one of the times that I didn't listen to the public. I listened to the professionals instead, because that's why we have teachers.** They are professionals, parents are there for the support in the spare time but in school we have professionals, and they know how to make a good school. So, I had to bow to that. To parents we didn't listen.'* (Andersson)

To conclude, in this case the leadership is a combination of visionary and city boss style. The leader's role is considered as that of the final decision-maker of how a local problem should be solved. However, the focus is not on personal gains in this case, but on a clear commitment to improve societal problems in the long-term and to bring actors together for a higher level of purpose, even at the cost of not being re-elected. In line with directive styles, the process of change is initiated and driven by the leader's desire to improve effectiveness and efficiency on the one hand and giving a sense of direction for societal change on the other.

## 5.5 United Kingdom

### 5.5.1 Crowdfund Angus

Angus is a council area located on the east coast of Scotland. In this remote setting, it is challenging for the communities to attract funding for different projects. Previously, the grant scheme of the Council of Angus for community organizations and projects involved month-long application procedures which

took up a lot of staff time. Moreover, mainly the same organizations would apply over and over for grants and therefore available funding was not being spread effectively. Community organizations were also struggling to find funding due to major budget cuts in public organizations. Given these inefficiencies and coupled with the desire and need to empower communities, new and sustainable ways of funding were searched for. The funding policy department of Angus came into contact with a private UK crowdfunding platform and started the first collaboration between a crowdfunding platform and a local authority in the UK. The result of this collaboration was the launch of Crowdfund Angus, an online crowdfunding platform, where individuals, communities and businesses can raise the funding they require. Based on how much money an organization or individual wanted to raise, it would first be raised from the crowd and the gap between raised and desired amount, the council would match it with up to max. 1,250 pounds. This promotes business development, community empowerment and job creation in a practical and efficient way. In addition, organizations and individuals have to work a bit harder to get funding, but at the same time receive support from the local authorities on how to market and promote their projects.

### ***Type of innovation***

The grant scheme of a local authority was redesigned to be more effective and efficient, and to empower communities to raise funds and awareness for their projects more independently. In this context, Crowdfund Angus can be considered a service innovation because a local authority is providing a service in the form of a crowdfunding portal for their communities. It is considered by the interviewees to complement the previous grant scheme rather than replacing it, and the current service has shown that more organizations are coming forward and community participation and engagement has increased. Moreover, benefits in terms of time, money and energy within the funding team of the local authority have been generated. It is also perceived to be unusual for such a small local authority to be the first mover in rethinking the funding scheme by using third party providers, which means taking risks in a typically risk-averse environment. From the administrative point of view, the change is therefore considered to be quite radical, whereas from the political side, the novelty seemed to be more in between incremental and radical, as the innovation is still growing and has yet to reach its full potential.

***'For us in local authorities it was a radical change. And was seen as quite risky because we were putting our money into third party portals and let them deliver on it, which local authorities are quite risk-averse so that was quite new for us. The benefit in terms of time, money and energy has been amazing for us. We are a small local authority, our funding team was 3 people, we really needed to become more efficient and that is what that helped us to do.'***  
*(policy manager)*

### ***Political leadership style***

The idea for the innovation emerged bottom-up from staff members of the local authority and was brought to Councillor Lynne Devine, at the time spokesperson for economic development in Angus Council. To create and plan the platform, a steering group was established including representatives from the communities, council services and elected members. Lynne Devine was very enthusiastic about the proposed project and backed by convincing reports and evidence provided by the funding policy department on how this project can benefit the community, she presented the concept to the policy and resources committee to sign off the project.

*'We [the committee] just took the decision to allow them to go ahead with this because we could see that it was going to raise the benefit in the communities and we are about community engagement and empowerment, so that was good.'* (Devine)

The role of the political leader was also mainly seen as the link between council and administration by the second respondent, as stated in this quote:

*'What I would say, Councillor Devine did not have a crucial role with regards to developing the portal. For me it was more about her understanding what the portal could do and what it could do for her constituents, so she could **take that back to the other elected members and say to them: this is something quite new, it is led by the council but involves the communities, and this is what it could do for your areas.** And that's very much what she did.'* (policy manager)

Also, a further motivation for the policy change was that the spreading of funds would become more efficient (due to looming budget cuts) and effective (wider spread of organizations applying for funding, raising of entrepreneurial spirit), which was confirmed by both respondents. Due to a more responsive behaviour of the politician by keeping a distant and administering view of the innovation process, hierarchical flows of decision and information in form of reports, as well as clear positions within the organizational structure, this style can be placed in the quadrant of the caretaker.

### 5.5.2 Improving outcomes for young black men – Hackney, London

In the London borough of Hackney, striking evidence of inequalities and disproportionalities involving young black men (YBM) across various fields including education, employment, health and the judicial system was the impulse for needed change. Voluntary sector organizations had been highlighting the need to address the issue of racial inequalities for some years, and in 2014 Hackney Council put this issue on the political agenda and declared it a priority within the council to reduce these inequalities regarding YBM over the next ten years. Councillor Antoinette Bramble was asked to champion this ambitious approach, which involves local communities, the voluntary and public sector as

well as businesses to jointly discuss the reasons and causes for disproportionalities for YBM. Consequently, a collaborative setting aimed to find holistic solutions and set concrete actions of what each organization and individual can engage in to improve the situation for this target group. Moreover, a whole culture change is being aimed for throughout the community to tackle conscious and unconscious biases regarding racial and cultural identity, which is a further factor contributing to the disproportionalities. A set of key actors meet on a regular basis, usually chaired by Councillor Bramble, and are monitored on their personal and organizational effort of what they are contributing to improve the results for YBM. Examples of actions are working with education facilities to reduce school exclusion of black boys, empowering young black men to be community leaders, the development of preventative mental wellbeing activities in community settings, as well as encouraging business to diversify their workforce.

### ***Type of innovation***

By involving key actors across all types of fields, this innovation aims to bring upon a holistic solution and cultural change within public authorities and to improve the situation of the community of Hackney by addressing a group that faces the harshest inequalities, specifically young black men. The societal problem of disproportionalities within the group of YBM has led authorities and the voluntary sector to unite and to develop not a specific service, but a new process of collaboration to tackle this issue. This has not previously existed in such a form anywhere in the UK level according to both interviewees, the uniqueness being in the mutually respectful inter-organizational relationships in Hackney and the political influence on 'keeping the momentum alive'. The perceived novelty ranged from radical on the side of the politician, given that the aim is to shift a whole narrative and that there is a clear strategy for this, to a more middle positioning of perceived novelty by the voluntary sector representative, because the issue has existed for a longer period of time, but simply has not been put on the political agenda. The innovative part is the holistic approach including a variety of actors, since such issues are usually dealt with within organizational silos, and the regular monitoring of the improvement for this issue, which has not been included before in the working environment across different sectors.

*'But because it is a priority, everybody now has to ask this question when doing their work. And that is what is innovative. Because you are forced to, it is part of your job, because one of the question on supervision, when you are supervised, so what work are you doing around improving outcomes for YBM. People are being monitored on this as well, which I think is impressive.'*  
(voluntary sector representative)



### ***Political leadership style***

With figures and data showing grave disproportionalities regarding the outcomes of YBM, the then-mayor of Hackney asked Councillor Antoinette Bramble to champion the piece of work to improve these figures. When asked what factors were important for the process to start, Bramble responded:

*'I think it is our **drive for equality** really, as a local authority we want Hackney to be a place for everyone and we believe in equality.'* (Bramble)

By developing a theory of change, the foundation was to first understand the issues YBM face within the community and then putting down actions to consider. All actors from the council, voluntary sector, education, health, employment agencies etc. are brought to the table to engage in regular joint discussions which are typically chaired by Councillor Bramble. A no-blame culture was established to avoid actors accusing each other of what could have been done differently so far, and to reflect together on good practices and how work can be done differently to jointly address this issue of inequality. Actors are united by the drive to tackle inequalities in society involving YBM, and this vision and momentum is also kept alive and carried further by the political side, as confirmed by the second respondent. The arena of collaboration and joint discussion was explained like this:

*'What we then **have partnership meetings with me every few months**, what we have in the council, we would have officers that would work on a strand, so for example we would have a member of the council that would work with our education department, our [inaudible] department would work with outward agencies around education for example... so the different strands and depending on where the organization was, **they would tap into that strand, partners would also report back on what they were doing**. And a big part of what we were doing is control, competencies and cultural awareness.'* (Bramble)

Apart from a clear long-term vision for the community (*'drive for equality'*), which is seen as a visionary leadership style, the process initiation for collaboration and the sharing of resources in form of staff time are also found in this case. However, there is a strong focus on cross-sectoral and cross-organizational formal and informal collaboration, which also fits the style of the consensual facilitator. The councillor sees herself as holding the umbrella for the people and the community, decisions being discussed and made collectively between council and officers (administration), but also always allowing input from other partners. This is underlined through regular formal and informal meetings on the topic and the fostering of collaborative endeavours between different societal actors. To conclude, a strong horizontal leadership style (consensual facilitator) is found in this case with elements of transformational leadership theory (visionary), because the long-term vision of tackling inequalities is kept as a priority on the political side, inspiring the whole community to achieve this change. Even though decision-

making is still in the political sphere, de facto it is made collectively with all partners and resources and information are regularly shared. A final statement which supports the characterization is the following:

*'... we don't necessarily want to be in control of it, we want to hold the umbrella for the people. But we don't mind organizations being organic and growing and taking that piece of work, as I said, YBM don't just stay within the local authorities, they do services, they are out in the community, they move across boroughs. So actually, what we want to do is to see how the narrative is shaping, [...] by empowering, facilitating this piece of work. **But ultimately, we want to empower people to run with this because the more outside agencies take hold of this the better the piece of work works** for these YBM that we are trying to reach.'* (Bramble)

## 5.6 Summary of results

The table on the following page gives a summary of the findings of this chapter. These characterizations are the basis for the analysis presented in the next chapter.

Code name	Country	Type of innovation	Political leadership style
		Key characteristics	Key characteristics
Alberschwende	Austria	Governance innovation	Consensual facilitator and visionary
		<i>New form of collective action and collaboration across all sectors to tackle challenge of integration</i>	<i>Strong belief in citizen participation, encouraging civil society to self-organize and acting as inspiration in an urgent situation</i>
Vienna	Austria	Hybrid innovation	Visionary
		<i>Idea for new service came from politician; collaborative in provision of service; aim to close communication gap</i>	<i>Active initiator and driver for collaboration; shares resources and involved in major decision-making</i>
Paris	France	Hybrid innovation	Consensual facilitator
		<i>Service is administered by municipality; way of supporting and interacting with citizen initiatives perceived as new</i>	<i>Fostering self-organizing capacity of civil society; horizontal leadership</i>
Bocholt	Germany	Service innovation	City boss and visionary
		<i>New coordinated service by municipality offered for the benefit of voluntary sector and businesses</i>	<i>Encouraging collaboration, sharing resources for such process but also authority for final decision-making in hierarchical organization</i>
Miltenberg	Germany	Governance innovation	Visionary
		<i>New form of collaboration across organizational boundaries to tackle challenge of integration</i>	<i>Active initiator of collaborative process and has long-term vision for region</i>
Nyköping	Sweden	Service innovation	Visionary and city boss
		<i>Provision of educational service radically changed; next to increasing efficiency and effectiveness, tackling local segregation of society aimed for</i>	<i>Initiator of change with long-term vision for community, but also final decision-maker in process within hierarchical structures</i>
Angus	UK	Service innovation	Caretaker
		<i>New form of providing funding services; increasing efficiency and effectiveness achieved</i>	<i>More administering view of innovation process; decisions and information flows within hierarchical structure</i>
Hackney	UK	Governance innovation	Consensual facilitator and visionary
		<i>New form of collaboration across sectors to address issue of systematic inequalities</i>	<i>Fostering of collaborative endeavours, facilitation of process of change with different actors and long-term vision</i>

Table 8: Summary of case study results

## 6 Analysis of empirical findings

Using the categorization of the empirical data presented in the previous chapter, the relationship between the concepts of political leadership and public sector innovation is analysed and related to the theoretical framework in this section. First, the identified types of innovation and the perceived levels of transformation thereof are interpreted and compared to theoretical definitions to broaden the discussion (6.1). Second, the governance innovation cases are contrasted with the service and hybrid innovation cases to identify if different political leadership styles are determinant factors for a certain type of innovation (6.2). Preliminary conclusions are added, and general results compared to the polity model described in chapter 4.1.3 to see if similarities or differences can be explained through state or governance traditions. Third, a more general idea of how a positive relationship between leadership and innovation can be explained is presented (6.3). Finally, due to the exploratory nature of this study, not only are the relationships between the defined variables analysed, but also which other factors are relevant for innovation processes (6.4). At the end of this chapter the final two sub-questions are answered, which then leads to the main research question being answered and discussed in the concluding chapters.

### 6.1 Comparison with theory: interpretations of perceived innovation

As described in the previous chapters, eight cases across five countries were selected according to their pre-assumed type of innovation. This selection was supported by a pre-analysis of documents and consultation with the Innovation in Politics Award institute. After analysing the results, most cases were confirmed to be in their pre-determined innovation category (see table 5). The case of Nyköping changed from an assumed governance to service innovation due to a more intra-organizational innovation process and two cases, 'Stadtmenschen' from Vienna and 'Actors for a sustainable Paris' showed elements of both service and governance innovation and are thus considered hybrid forms. In the Vienna case, the idea of a new and additional service came from a public figure. The way of working together in a coordinated fashion with the innovation hub and other organizations and institutions from different sectors, however, was not considered that novel. Rather than tackling a wider societal problem, Stadtmenschen aimed to close the gap between citizens seeking help and a diverse offer of social welfare services. The interpretation as a hybrid innovation is based on the service originating from an elected official, but the service being provided in cross-sectoral coordination, which expresses an innovative governance character. Paris, on the other hand, shows clear indications for a service innovation, as a new public 'good' (the online platform and the physical space) was created within the municipality based on the idea of the former deputy mayor. However, given the interview responses, the way of working

together and the interaction with citizen initiatives was perceived completely new and unusual for public institutions. To be more concise, the idea of a service transformed the way of working with actors from non-public spheres for this particular department. This differs from the service innovation case of Bocholt, which, similarly, created a new service in form of an event to encourage actors from the volunteer sector and business to interact on equal terms. However, the basis of cooperation and coordination with these actors was not new to the municipality of Bocholt.

Going back to the concrete variables for public sector innovation, the following observations were made. None of the interviewees across all cases perceived the novelty of the innovation below (3) on the scale between (1) incremental and (5) radical change or novelty. The main reasons for those with higher rankings was for one the novelty within their own local context, the deviation from local customs and procedures and new forms of collaborating with other actors. The arguments for a slightly lower ranking on (3) were either that the speed of change was seen as more incremental than punctual (Angus, Alberschwende), that the innovation itself existed in some form elsewhere and was simply brought to the local context such as a particular method or online platform (Bocholt, Paris), or that an issue was there but simply not on the political agenda yet (Hackney). All in all, each individual perceived their idea or process as new in their context, which in terms of Roger's definition (Rogers, 2003: 12) is sufficient to be considered as innovation.

Concerning the indicator of replacement or co-existence of innovations of/to existing services and procedures, the governance innovation cases were all observed as completely new processes. Some were also considered as complementary to already existing services, which were failing to provide adequate solutions. In general, new ways of working together across organizational and sectoral boundaries enabled the creation of more holistic solutions to a complex problem (Hackney) or the exploration of faster and more effective ways to tackle an issue because current systems or institutions were failing to do so (Miltenberg, Alberschwende). Through collaboration, public sector organizations were able to tap into new pools of resources (e.g. expertise, local knowledge) and different actors had more freedom to act on wider societal issues such as integration of migrants or systematic inequalities. This pattern is supported by the observations on governance innovations of Moore & Hartley (2008). Regarding conceptualization of innovation, these forms apply to the later innovation model of Schumpeter, who defines innovation as an open and interactive process involving internal and external resources from various types of actors (Fugslang & Pederson, 2011). The governance innovations also had disruptive impacts on other spheres, such as organizations and departments being monitored on their actions to tackle inequalities (Hackney) or rigid institutions being challenged by the perception that current regulations were not contributing to a solution for an urgent matter (Alberschwende). Given the responses of the interviewees of the Miltenberg case, what made the innovation a bit less radical (ranked

(4) on the scale of perceived novelty), was already available experience among the collaborating actors on how to coach young people, which supported the design of the accompaniment programme for refugees. The way of working together, however, was perceived as quite uncommon for their context, which places it in an in-between position of continuous and discontinuous change, only the latter being considered a definition for innovation (Osborne & Brown, 2005).

As for the hybrid innovations in Vienna and Paris, as well as for the Bocholt case, the developed service itself was perceived as new in their context, but all three cases acknowledge the fact that they are providing a linking service to an already rich and active civic and associational sphere. With the exception of Vienna, the services are provided by municipalities directly. Given the arguments in the interviews such as

*'... the marketplace was a **logical consequence** of what we have been doing until now' (volunteer sector coordinator, Bocholt, own translation);*

*'... and that was also the idea of Stadtmenschen, how to **use the power of civil society and that of volunteering** for Viennese citizens, but at the same time for the professionals in the city of Vienna itself, to bring together the people that have a concern and are searching for the right place and then actually find it with as few barriers as possible' (Wehsely, Vienna, own translation);*

*'It was not a question of suddenly upsetting an already **rich citizen ecosystem, rather to give it a link**, to make it aware of its own existence, and thus to strengthen it' (Blauel, Paris);*

these services propose a more continuous change, rather than discontinuous. Continuous change is considered to be the development and improvement of services or changes in organizational structure and management (Osborne & Brown, 2005). And as stated by respondents, the services were developed to create an additional link between already interacting actors, therefore the outcome is an improvement of an already existing process. Hence, these cases are considered more continuous rather than discontinuous, disruptive or radical change.

In contrast, only in the final two service innovation cases Crowdfund Angus and Nyköping school model the previous forms of providing the services were actually partly or completely replaced. Whereas the change of the service in Angus was perceived as an in-between novelty by the politician (however, was ranked (5) by the second interviewee due to the risk of implementing a third party platform in such a small local authority), the school fusion in Sweden was a very radical transformation. This case also had a heavy theme of citizen and later political resistance as well as very critical local media. Schumpeter's creative destruction is nicely showcased here, as existing resources, i.e. four schools, were recombined into one while having a 'disruptive' impact on those who were against it the most, in this case parents from a higher socio-economic background (see Schumpeter, 1942). In a less radical form, this can be

seen in Angus, as the organizations and associations that typically applied for grants each year had to ‘work harder’ with the crowdfunding platform, thus giving more opportunity to other community projects. Moreover, the innovation had a strong positive impact in terms of time, money and energy for the local authority.

The following table summarizes the above mentioned distinctions between continuous and discontinuous / disruptive change:

<b>Continuous change</b>	<b>In-between</b>	<b>Discontinuous change</b>
<i>Improvement, design or development of services without disruptive character for other spheres</i>	<i>Combination of continuous and discontinuous change</i>	<i>New services or new ways of governance lead to disruption in other spheres</i>
Bocholt (Service)	Miltenberg (Governance)	Alberschwende (Governance)
Vienna (Hybrid)	Angus (Service)	Hackney (Governance)
Paris (Hybrid)	-	Nyköping (Service)

Table 9: Overview level of transformation of innovations

What the cases of discontinuous change have in common is the leadership style of the visionary assigned to the respective political leaders to varying degrees. However, this preliminary conclusion needs further exploration, as the visionary style is of course not found exclusively in the more disruptive cases.

## 6.2 Effects of political leadership styles on innovation

The coding results of which leadership styles were found in the case studies can be found in figure 6. The transcribed interviews are simulated by the vertical light grey lines, two for each case. The first line represents the interview conducted with the politician, the second line that of the second interviewee. The size of squares depicts the number of codes for each variable found in the respective transcript and is relative to the sum of codes in each row. The blue frame contains the cases marked as service innovation, whereas the red frame does the same for governance innovations. The two hybrid cases includes codes from both sides.

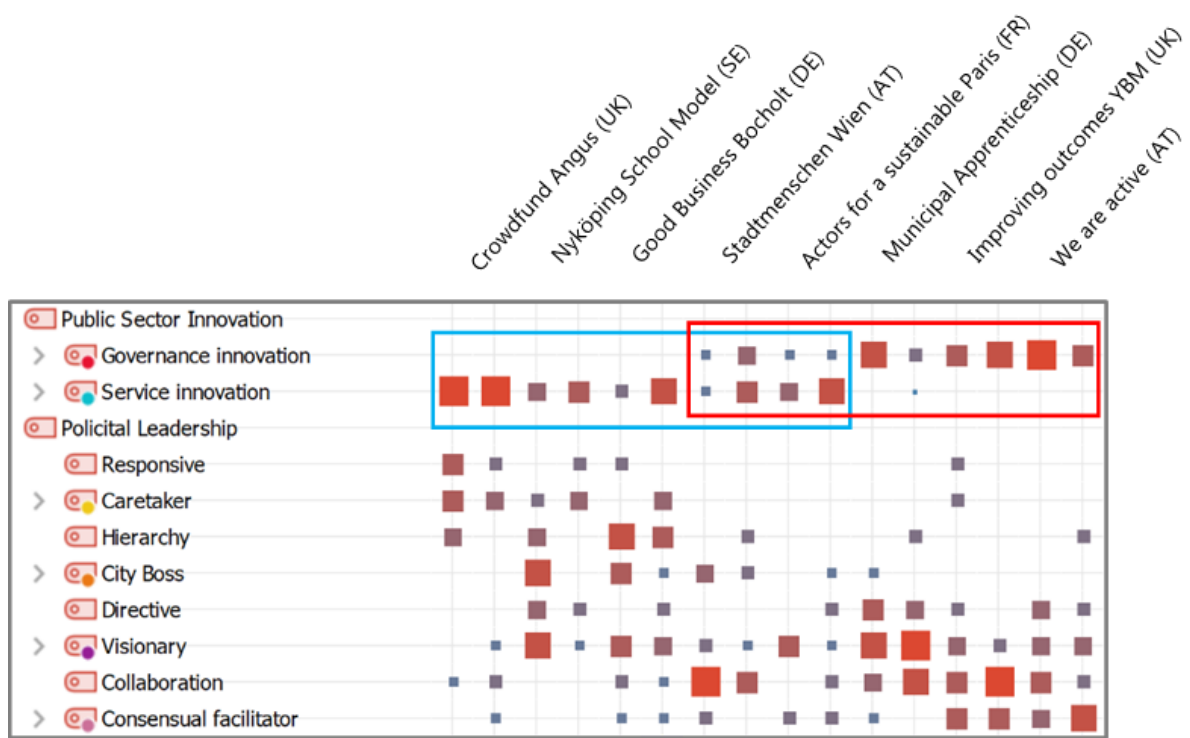


Figure 6: Results coding of concepts

To begin with general remarks, the concept of collaboration was emphasized in almost all cases. However, after thorough analysis the degree of collaboration varied greatly between all projects. Following the framework of Keast, Brown & Mandell (2007), one must distinguish between three levels of integration, that is cooperation, coordination and collaboration. *Cooperation* is the starting point of inter-organizational relationships, where different organizations take each other's goals into account and try to accommodate them. The relationship between parties is less intense and unstable. *Coordination* is found in processes where organizations work together in more structured mechanisms. This level of integration is typically project related, resources are shared around this medium-term project, trust-levels are based on prior interactions and communication flows are structured. The third level of integration is *collaboration*, and as pointed out in the operationalization, very close relationships exist, where shared long-term goals are developed, information and communication flows are thick, trust levels are high, and all involved parties regularly and actively contribute resources and are strongly committed to achieve these shared goals (Keast et al., 2007). With this differentiation, the three governance innovation cases as well as the Vienna case reached the highest level of integration. The other four cases were on lower levels of integration, based on information gathering and consultation of experts (Nyköping), the creation of a steering group with multiple actors and organizations to develop and design the 'service' (Angus, Bocholt), or the cooperation with civic initiatives by enhancing their visibility and fostering interaction (Paris).



Lower levels of integration (cooperation and coordination)	Higher levels of integration (collaboration)
<i>Ranked by level of transformation from discontinuous to continuous change (see Table 9)</i>	
Nyköping (Service)	Alberschwende (Governance)
Angus (Service)	Hackney (Governance)
Paris (Hybrid)	Miltenberg (Governance)
Bocholt (Service)	Vienna (Hybrid)

*Table 10: Overview levels of integration by case*

Thus, a first careful conclusion is that collaboration as the highest level of integration is needed to foster governance innovations. The highest level of integration is, however, not the determining factor of how disruptive/discontinuous the innovation turns out to be, as the cases of Nyköping and Angus were more coordinated processes despite them being more radical changes, and Vienna with a high level of integration is seen as a more continuous change. As for polity models, a second preliminary conclusion can be drawn due to the expectations presented in chapter 4.1.3 with political authorities in German-speaking countries typically being more interfering in new forms of civic engagement and being more supportive towards collective action, which can be found to a great extent in the German and Austrian cases. Regarding the liberal polity model, the outlier is the local council in Hackney, which is engaged in a very collaborative manner with community representatives and organizations. The relationship was also termed very unique by the respondents. This uncommon course of action in Hackney may also explain the perceived radicality of governance change. Finally, also anticipating the detailed analysis of leadership styles in relation with innovations which will be presented later in this chapter, what unites the cases with higher levels of integration is the leadership style of the visionary, which was assigned to these political leaders to different extents. This will be elaborated more in the subsequent paragraphs.

### 6.2.1 Analysis by innovation type

#### ***Governance innovations***

To start with the three 'pure' governance innovations (Alberschwende, Hackney, Miltenberg), there was a strong positive relationship to the concept of collaboration in the leadership styles. In terms of variables a combination of visionary and consensual facilitator leadership styles was found. Small outliers in the direction of hierarchy were more attributable to perceptions of having to take decisions as a politician within the public institutions and wanting to be informed by officers or civic actors of the

development of the innovation without actually intervening. The politicians Scherf (Miltenberg), Bramble (Hackney) and Schwarzmann (Alberschwende) were all categorized as visionaries, with the latter two also being consensual facilitators. What unites these three cases is especially the complexity of the topics, labour market and societal integration of immigrants and refugees on the one hand, and systematic inequalities and institutional racism on the other. Leaders took up a topic where hierarchical structures failed and created a collaborative governance arena, where innovation could emerge from every level as proposed in the contingent model (Borins, 2001a; Borins, 2001b; Osborne & Brown, 2005; Sørensen & Torfing, 2011). What defined the processes were regular formal and informal meetings with relevant actors,

*'The second important thing is to **initiate and accompany the concept phase**, that is to ensure that the key players are sitting around a table that can contribute to the success of the project. It's not that you do it yourself, you must find and bring people together.'* (Scherf, Miltenberg, own translation)

high levels of trust and respect between the stakeholders,

*'It is a unique relationship that we have, it is probably the **best relationship between council and voluntary sector in London**. It does not normally work like this, but Hackney is a unique borough where the relationship between the community and the council... there is a mutual level of respect.'* (volunteer sector representative, Hackney)

more equal decision-making,

*'... that one is careful not to make decisions alone [as a politician], participation is something very important. The **inclusion of citizens in the decision-making**, this is really necessary, so one can find a good way.'* (Schwarzmann, Alberschwende, own translation)

and a strong belief of the politicians in bottom-up dynamics.

*'In my eyes, if I may put it a bit more dramatic, this is actually exactly our image of society or the image of a liberal society, that **we activate the strengths of every single citizen**. As a government agency we would be overwhelmed to develop all innovations ourselves'* (Scherf, Miltenberg, own translation)

This leads to the preliminary conclusion that governance innovations demand leadership styles that recognize the complexity of a topic and put it on the political agenda, engage in cross-sectoral collaboration by creating the possibility that all relevant actors can come together, and give a sense of direction by being present as well as continuously encouraging and empowering employees and society to tackle wider societal challenges. A further observation for both cases touching the integration

challenge is that the innovations had to be protected and defended by the politicians from public opinion and bashing from other institutions or political parties.

### ***Hybrid innovations***

The two hybrid innovations, which are seen as more continuous changes in their contexts, were determined, similarly to the governance innovations, by more collaborative attitudes of the political leaders. The only indicator that pointed in the direction of the city boss style was the problem definition by the politicians and the active initiation of a process of change either by placing the idea in a private social innovation hub to develop it further, but at the same time staying regularly informed (Vienna), or by defining what type of service is envisioned, subsequently handing the idea to the operational level to be developed (Paris). The nature of both services is aimed at engaging and mobilizing volunteers and citizens in a large urban context. Both leaders also emphasized the need of creating a link between actors, which was coherent with the philosophy of their respective projects. The leaders spoke more of a general attitude rather than their leadership in the presented project. In Paris, civil servants from the municipality pointed out the unique horizontal hierarchical structure within their department. *'[B]ecause we have this kind of horizontal organization with the political leaders we get something that is more open and more collaborative.'* This attitude creates a dynamic that motivates and encourages employees and citizens, as was put by the civil servant:

*'... the main added value that they [the politicians] gave to the project was their trust in the administration and in the citizens. Basically, they let go. **They triggered off the project but then they let go.** [...] And this is pretty rare because usually politicians want to get a grip on the project and in that sense, they have a way of working that is quite old school actually. So, we were pretty lucky to have this trust, this confidence from the deputy mayor at the time and even today that is how it works.'* (civil servant, Paris)

In Vienna, the politician saw her role as linking actors across sectors, and in the case of Stadtmenschen she had the idea of the innovation and shared her resources in the form of networks and contacts to relevant institutions. However, similarly to the attitude in Paris, she also in a sense 'let go' of the project and trusted that the innovation would develop and thrive on its own.

***'I am, so to speak, mostly a source of ideas, [I] do my part and create all the contacts. I do not do any consulting myself, I do not work in the project myself, but when it comes to opening new locations [for Stadtmenschen] I am of help. [...] When it comes to talking to politics, I'm also there sometimes, but not necessarily anymore. **When it comes to authorities and especially government contacts in the city, then I do it.'***** (Wehsely, Vienna, own translation)

The second preliminary conclusion is therefore, that these hybrid innovations, which were also identified as more continuous changes rather than disruptive ones, were supported by a general leadership attitude of bringing in ideas and fostering cross-sectoral collaboration. While Vienna showed a stronger idea of collaboration between public institutions and formally organized societal partners as the key to sustainable innovation, Paris embraces a rich citizen ecosystem which should become more visible and encouraged. This can be explained by the degree of corporateness, the dimension of how society is organized. German-speaking cultures have an idea of a rational and planned society, whereas in France society is considered as emergent and natural (Jepperson, 2002). The difference to the leadership styles found in the governance innovation cases is the lesser complexity and sensitivity of the topic, therefore a less intense political or personal involvement in the hybrid innovations can be seen. This can be explained by a stronger need for defending and protecting the innovation process in the governance innovation cases due to their more disruptive nature for other spheres.

### ***Service innovations***

The three service innovation cases had a nice representation of different degrees of innovation. From Bocholt showcasing a more continuous change, to Nyköping with a very disruptive change and Angus, which was more of an in-between. What distinguished these cases from the more governance oriented ones was a tendency of the interviewees to speak about their role and position within the administration. Furthermore, the innovations were developed within public organizations and are subsequently offered to the constituents by a local authority. All three cases had some sort of steering group for the development of the innovation, however, they were either formalized (Angus, Bocholt) or had the purpose of gathering expertise to make an informed decision (Nyköping). The steering groups existed around the creation of the project, which implies more of a coordination process rather than one of collaboration by definition (Keast et al., 2007). Devine (Angus) was identified to have a caretaker leadership style, whereas both Nebelo (Bocholt) and Andersson (Nyköping) showed a combination of city boss and visionary styles. In Angus and Bocholt, the innovation ideas came from civil servants, who also felt very empowered in their way of working at the time.

In the case of Angus, the structural model (Bartlett & Dibben, 2002) with the idea of a public manager being an innovation champion, taking ownership of the project, and a politician being the innovation sponsor by providing the political mandate could be argued. Councillor Devine was included in the steering group, had an understanding of the possible benefits and created the link between administration and political committee.

*'What I would say, Councillor Devine did not have a crucial role with regards to developing the portal. For me it was more about her understanding what the portal could do and what it could do for her constituents, **so she could take that back to the other elected members and say to them: this is something quite new, it is led by the council but involves the communities, and this is what it could do for your areas.** And that's very much what she did.'* (policy manager, Angus)

As for Bocholt, given the scope of the project, the decision to go through with it was not made in political committees but instead between the members of the municipal administration board. Resources were delegated, the mayor assumed patronage of the event and received regular and sound reports on the development of the project from the responsible department, without being involved in the steering group.

*'No [I was not part of the steering group], we sat together and had this project explained to us. And then, as head of the administration, I feel that you do not have to do everything yourself. People have to believe, 'I can do something myself, I can set something up myself, and I do not always have to get the OK from the mayor'. **What is important is that the mayor is informed, thinks the project is good, is kept up to date, which ensures that everything is going in the right direction.***' (Nebelo, Bocholt, own translation)

However, even with many factors pointing toward a hierarchical understanding of roles and positions, the long-term vision of the mayor to encourage coordination with the volunteer sector and to implement a culture of appreciation toward the associations within the municipality was the foundation for this innovation and thus implies elements of the visionary style.

Finally, the fusion of four schools in Nyköping was a very radical change in how educational services are provided in the city. According to Andersson, chairwoman of the board for youth and education at the time, it was a question of daring to touch and change the sensitive topic of public schooling, because the problems were evident for many years, as student results were poor, segregation among society high and from an economic perspective, the four schools were also not being run efficiently. In a coordinated process with pedagogical experts, school administrations, and feedback from parents and students, the change was decided upon with the majority of politicians on the board. Even with this process being handled in a more hierarchical structure, where roles and flows of information, resources and decisions seemed to be pre-determined, the main leadership contribution was the feeling of being responsible for the final decision that had to be taken and thinking about the long-term consequences beyond the electoral period by also touching sensitive topics. However, from the three service cases, this innovation also faced the most resistance and is still challenged and scrutinized by opposition parties and local media today.

The third preliminary conclusion is that service innovations seem to be preceded by more hierarchical leadership styles. This is underlined by innovation processes taking place within the organizational boundaries of an administration, even if the innovation itself has the purpose to empower non-public actors or tackle a wider societal problem. A possible explanation is that the provision of public services is perceived to be the responsibility of the local authority. In the case of Angus and Nyköping, an existing service had to be made more efficient and effective, while additionally taking wider problems into account such as facilitating more independence from public grant schemes (Angus) or addressing segregation (Nyköping). For Bocholt, the innovation is considered a voluntary 'extra' service by the municipality to support the local civic sector which contributes to the functioning of the city.

## 6.2.2 Preliminary conclusions and possible explanations

In sum, there are three perspectives to take into consideration when explaining the relationships between political leadership and public sector innovation. Starting with the probably most inherent result, the **level of integration** had an effect on which type of innovation was generated. Consequently, those cases with higher levels of integration, i.e. collaboration, also produced more governance innovations. Thus, the collaborative leadership styles visionary and consensual facilitator fostered governance and hybrid innovations. As already briefly touched, the dominance of cases from Germany and Austria in this category supports the notion of the state-corporate polity model, with government authorities being more involved and supportive of civic and societal actions. The exception is the case of Hackney, where respondents also pointed out the uniqueness of the relationship between council and community leaders on a London and even UK level. The more hierarchical styles of caretaker and city boss generated service innovations, which were also mainly administered and designed within an administration. Moreover, these innovations were established using lower levels of integration. A possible explanation in some cases is the governance tradition, the best example being Angus which belongs to the more liberal polity model. The role of the caretaker fits the idea of a more distant support of civic engagement, and in the case of Angus a service was created to empower the community by setting a framework for organizations and initiatives to raise funds via crowdfunding which helps them become more independent from public grants. In Paris, the innovation was developed by a municipal authority, but the approach of public institutions directly supporting private and collective initiatives was seen as very untypical, which corresponds with France scoring low on corporateness. Nonetheless, the presence of certain leadership styles in the service innovation cases cannot be exclusively explained by country differences.

The next perspective is that of the **level of transformation**. Leadership styles did not seem to have a strong effect on the degree of radicality, as styles were represented on all levels. However, the more complex or sensitive the topic, the more a visionary leadership style brought forth innovation, which could be explained through characteristics such as strong personal conviction, venturesome attitude and feeling of being responsible for bringing about change. One of the most interesting observations is that to reach a more disruptive innovation, it was not decisive whether the process took place in a more collaborative arena, which was the case for example in Nyköping. Furthermore, governance and service innovation were more or less equally distributed on the disruptive level. On the other end, the continuous changes had the same representation of leadership styles (visionary, consensual facilitator and city boss elements), and had the service and hybrid innovations accumulated under this category. In the middle, two extreme opposites (Angus and Miltenberg) in all terms, leadership style, innovation type, polity model and level of integration were represented, thus leading to an overall conclusion that leadership styles do not influence the level of transformation, but rather that complex and sensitive topics demand a visionary style to navigate through the rough and challenging environment.

Finally, referring back to the last perspective of **polity models** along two constitutive dimensions by Jepperson (2002), some leadership attitudes can also be explained through the context of governance traditions in the respective countries.

Starting with the Germanic cases with two cases from Austria and two from Germany, we recall that the **Germanic polity model** has a high placing in both statism and corporateness. In Germany, both cases recognized the necessity to coordinate and collaborate with large corporate associations and chambers (so-called *Verbände* and *Kammern*), which confirms a positive and supportive role of these organizations through the 'state'. Similarly, in Vienna, the politician believed that effective and sustainable innovation is generated by collaborating networks of formally organized social organizations and less by loosely self-organized networks and initiatives. In Alberschwende, one of the major actors was a small local citizen association (*Verein*), which was also strongly supported by the local authority to achieve the innovation. In terms of statism, Alberschwende showed more untypical elements within a high-statist country, as the local government took a more distant stance and allowed the association more freedom in their activities, which was considered an outstanding leadership trait by the second respondent of this case. Also, in Miltenberg, the reduced requirements of documentation and reporting that are typically imposed on organizations by governments was seen as a driving factor for the success of the innovation and was ascribed to the leadership qualities of the district executive chief. Overall however, the attitudes of all politicians and the nature of innovations was that of government collaboration with a 'rational and planned society', which is organized in all kinds of associations and chambers. This might explain the stronger representation of cases with higher levels of integration.

On the opposite side we have the **liberal polity model**, typically found in Anglo-Saxon countries, which score low on levels of statism and corporateness. In Angus, community empowerment was a key term in the implementation of the innovation. In accordance with the expectation for non-statist countries, the innovation generated optimized the way financial support is distributed to community initiatives, therefore a more hands-off governance strategy (Sørensen, 2006) was followed. In Hackney, the involvement of community organizations striving for improving the outcomes of young black men within the borough was, contrary to the expectation, a more interactive form than typically found in the liberal polity model. The whole nature of the innovation is a holistic and collective approach, with a government authority interacting and working closely together with civic initiatives and community organizations. This could explain why this form of collaboration is considered quite unique in a London or UK context.

France is associated with the **state-nation polity model** defined as a high-statist but low-corporate state (Jepperson, 2002). In accordance with the expectation of higher government interference (in high-statist countries), the local authority in Paris signaled strong support for citizen initiatives which are committed to sustainability topics. With the innovation in form of an online platform and the physical space, interaction as well as material and non-material support for the initiatives (e.g. in form of sponsoring ads in Paris to increase visibility) is encouraged. In terms of corporateness, where France scores typically low, no relation could be found, as the importance of the mobilization of collective action was emphasized by both interviewees, therefore not confirming with the expectation in this dimension.

For the last polity model, the **social-corporate model** associated with Nordic countries, no clear conclusions could be drawn, as no statements were made on interactions with society, civic initiatives or corporate associations.

All in all, the main conclusions are firstly, that collaborative leadership styles produced more governance innovations, which were also strongly represented by Germanic cases and can thus be also explained by certain state and governance traditions. The case of Hackney was the exception that proved the rule, as the respondents saw the intense collaboration as quite unique and untypical for their government context. Secondly, disruptive innovations and more complex topics demand a more visionary leadership style. However, the other way around a visionary leadership style does not necessarily affect which type of innovation is generated. This is underlined by most innovations indicating a visionary leadership to some extent (exceptions were Paris and Angus). Finally, the country contexts affected the degree of perceived innovation to some extent, as deviations from local customs led to a high ranking of novelty, even though objectively the level of transformations did not always correspond.



Level of integration \ Level of transformation		Level of integration	
		lower (cooperation & coordination)	higher (collaboration)
continuous	Paris (H) ●	●	Vienna (H)
	Bocholt (S) ● ●	●	
in-between	Angus (S) ●	●	Miltenberg (G)
discontinuous	Nyköping (S) ●	●	● ● Hackney (G)
		●	● ● Alberschwende (G)

<i>S ... Service innovation</i>	● Consensual facilitator	● Visionary
<i>G .... Governance innovation</i>	● Caretaker	● City boss
<i>H ... Hybrid innovation</i>		

Table 11: Overview cases on different levels of integration and transformation including leadership style

### 6.3 General findings on the relationship between political leadership styles and public sector innovations

As presented in the theoretical framework, the concepts of leadership and entrepreneurship are interwoven with innovation theories. However, as innovation is traditionally assigned to the private sector context, factors such as absence of a competitive environment and political and administrative risk-aversion are said to hamper innovation in the public sector (Bekkers et al., 2011). In this research, politicians acting in very different contexts exercised their role quite differently to achieve innovation, but all were very clear on the fact that without leadership, there would be no innovation. How can this positive relationship be explained? First and foremost, most cases emphasized the **need to be open** as a politician, open to ideas from employees, the administration and citizens, open to the needs of the political community, continuously listening and communicating with the followership to gather relevant information for decision-making, open to and interested in networks and other actors and open to solutions and pathways that have not been tried before.

*'... one should communicate with one's leadership style: I am receptive. If I had an autocratic style of leadership and claim myself to be so ingenious, I know everything, I develop everything on my own ... a certain dialogic leadership style is needed so that in my council my executives have the courage or motivation to approach me and say: I have an area, I would like to think differently. And so, in the district, **there has to be the openness that people know when a matter is pressing, or they have an idea, they can come to me. From that point of view, I think that that is crucial to drive innovation.**' (Scherf, Miltenberg, own translation)*

*'It is very important for innovation processes to be open to unfamiliar solutions. In things where your first thought is: 'that is not good' ... you should be at least open to such things, hear it out and only then form an opinion, could that not also be a solution?' (Schwarzmann, Alberschwende, own translation)*

In connection with openness, **bravery, courage and risk-taking** were often mentioned, because without this attitude, a politician would never dare to try something new. The term risk seemed to be judged quite differently in all cases, and therefore, the term should be seen as quite broad. However, the perceived risk was typically very high in the respective contexts, either due to the risk of failing, political or public opposition or the risk of negative headlines. The concept of risk-taking can also be found in the general concept of the entrepreneur, who is willing to take risks, dedicated to getting things done and is brave enough to go against the 'mainstream' (Fugslang & Pederson, 2011). In two cases, Nyköping and Alberschwende, the position of political leader was also strongly associated with being the one taking full responsibility of the innovation and its consequences. A sense of protecting the team and the innovation process was connected with this as well.

*'Yes, this was very crazy and brave. It depends, it's a compliment if people say you're crazy and yes maybe I am but I made the decision. [...] The only thing I can say now is that the old model and the old school wasn't the best for the kids. It didn't work. Everything or anything was better than the old way because we didn't make our best to get all the kids to have a better future. It was that, that was the thing in my mind. **I must do something else because this is not working. Everybody knew it, but no one dared to make a change.**' (Andersson, Nyköping)*

A further explanation for the positive relationship between leadership and innovation is the **linking capacity** political leaders have, which can be seen in two ways. On the one hand, political leaders were seen as essential for finding political consensus within political decision-making bodies. However, more importantly, the linking capacity was related to bringing relevant actors together to engage in an innovation process, prior to any kind of decision-making. This attitude towards involving stakeholders encourages innovation processes, as more knowledge and resources can be exchanged in a more open process as proposed in collaborative governance theories (see Ansell & Gash, 2008).

Finally, the term **empowerment** was present in most cases. On the one hand, the more service-oriented innovations had employees that felt empowered in their work, and who had the freedom to develop the innovation. At the same time, the elected officials were kept informed through formal reporting within a hierarchical structure. On the other hand, especially the governance innovation cases showed a strong belief in empowerment of non-public actors to collaborate in order to tackle societal challenges. As already mentioned in previous sections, politicians created an innovation arena to facilitate a more collaborative innovation process and also shared their resources to encourage the process.

### ***Further activities deployed by political leaders***

Due to the exploratory nature of this research, other relevant actions highlighted by respondents were searched for. There was a recurring pattern of activities that political leaders deployed which were connected with political leadership. These activities were first coded openly, the codes were then categorized with the help of the theory on political metagovernance (Sørensen & Torfing, 2016), and re-checked in a second coding round. The three main tasks which were found across all cases and were therefore independent of the leadership style were agenda-setting activities, the creation of innovation arenas, and communicating the solution to the general public and other (political) actors.

The first includes the identification and definition of problems or challenges within the political community and the setting of priorities. Agenda-setting was also considered as either having or taking up an idea for innovation, as well as information gathering by listening to and communicating with the political community. This included proclaiming issues to be top priority within the council (Hackney), responding to an urgent situation and calling for collective action (Alberschwende) or translating a global programme of sustainable development to concrete local actions (Paris) to name a few examples.

The other major activity was the creation of innovation arenas and the delegation of tasks, which included providing linkages and empowering actors within and outside of public organizations, as well as the personal non-involvement in operational tasks by delegating responsibilities to other key actors. Examples are the provision of contacts and networks to relevant institutions, which became part of the innovation (Vienna), or the creation of an informal committee and shielding the process from public and political scrutiny until the innovation was 'ready' (Miltenberg).

The third key activity was communicating the innovation on all levels, from communicating it to the general public to communicating it within one's own organizational boundaries. This included regularly interacting with citizens or other public actors to explain, refer to or defend the innovation.

Other findings were context specific and thus insignificant for the overall analysis.

## 6.4 Other influencing factors relevant for public sector innovation

### 6.4.1 Antecedents of public sector innovation

Even though the focus was on political leadership as an influencing factor in this research, respondents were asked which other factors they deemed important for the innovation process. The antecedents were organized in three major categories, as proposed by de Vries et al. (2016), namely environmental, organizational and individual antecedents. The results were checked back with the expectations from the theoretical framework (see chapter 2.2.4)

**Environmental antecedents** were by far the strongest drivers of innovation. Environmental pressures were found across all cases, such as a sense of urgency, triggering for example the cases Alberschwende and Miltenberg which deal with the challenge of migration and integration due to the European refugee crisis. Similarly, growing political and public demand to address certain topics such as sustainable development (Paris) or systematic inequalities (Hackney) provoked innovative action. A further environmental antecedent is the inter-organizational relationship and participation in networks, which were represented as formal platforms of collaboration where innovation is fostered (e.g. innovation hub in Vienna), as well as a culture of trust and mutual respect between actors. A third factor within this category were regulatory aspects. This factor was present in only two cases. For one in Angus, where a new legislation of community empowerment pushed authorities to rethink how public funding should be distributed. And in Alberschwende, where existing rules and regulations were considered inadequate for the local challenges (e.g. Dublin regulation or working restrictions for asylum seekers). In the sub-category 'other', some case-specific factors were found such as unity among political parties (Angus, Nyköping), or already existing methods and tools being implemented in the local context (Bocholt, Angus, Paris). Also, evidence and figures as justification for the need for action were emphasized strongly and repeatedly in both British cases, which corresponds with the NPM paradigm strongly present in Anglo-Saxon countries (see Hood, 1991). Overall, however, there were no significant deviations from existing theory found.

Moving on to **organizational antecedents**, a general observation was that these were typically mentioned by the second interviewees. Bocholt stood out with a classic main driver of slack resources within the organization, which made it possible for the municipality to create a strategic department and allocate staff and budget to be able to provide additional services specifically for the voluntary sector. All but one non-political respondents spoke of a supportive climate within or between organizational boundaries where information, knowledge and resources were willingly shared. This matches the concept of the innovation 'milieux' (Bekkers et al., 2011) as a prerequisite for the emergence of

innovation. Finally, only the two service innovations in Nyköping and Angus were initiated due to lacking efficiency and effectiveness of the pre-innovation services.

The final and last antecedent, **individual antecedents**, did not present many significant results. One observation was that some politicians were deemed experts in their field due to previous professional or voluntary careers (Miltenberg, Vienna, Hackney). Another was the importance of an employee or civil servant feeling empowered in their work, which meant freedom and autonomy to champion the innovation. This list is finished with general remarks of politicians on what they considered relevant for innovation processes:

*'What was important was that my vice-president in the opposition party... I could trust her. She and I, we could talk about this process before we made any decisions. [...] And when I had her support, I knew that I had the majority to go further with school organizations. [...] So that was most important, **get someone you can trust and that you can talk with everything about.**'*  
(Andersson, Nyköping)

*'You have to reach a broad public. **Show that you are convinced of this project and pass on this conviction**, if one is convinced of one thing then one is more willing to put in strength and energy. If that comes across as authentic, to people who are not involved in the project, the public sees, OK, something is happening where everyone is behind it and is willing to invest time, money and passion... that is better than any advertisement on the radio or newspaper.'* (Nebelo, Bocholt, own translation)

**'It often comes down to single persons**, if you allow them [to act] and put trust in them, then they move something in the municipality.'

 (civic actor, Alberschwende, own translation)

#### 6.4.2 Barriers to public sector innovation

Not many remarks were made by the respondents on potential and actual innovation barriers. The findings are more case specific and can be summarized as barriers in the form of existing rules and regulations, citizen resistance, political barriers such as electoral cycles and fear of failure. Rules and regulations were explained to typically hamper public sector innovation in other departments. Some projects acknowledged that given their topic, more freedom was possible also due to less political risk. Rigid institutional structures were especially a challenge for the innovation project in Alberschwende. Active citizen resistance was also experienced in Alberschwende (concerned citizens around the refugee crisis) and in Nyköping (parents with higher socio-economic background). Next to citizen resistance, political resistance grew in Nyköping, as the principal of the school expressed difficulties in the implementation phase with very critical opposition parties. Similar challenges were expressed in Angus,

where finding majorities for all kinds of changes has become more challenging due to the current rainbow coalition in the council.

In sum, the barriers listed here are from interviewees who mentioned the challenges in their own words and context, without the specific question being raised. Therefore, the findings here are limited and case-specific.

## 7 Conclusion

The thesis investigated how different leadership styles exercised by democratically elected officials influence public sector innovations that emerge on a municipal or regional level, thus in an urban governance context. The cases were chosen from 'ideal type' countries according to comparative political theory, in order to find possible explanations through governance and state traditions. Building on theories of leadership and public sector innovation, the research started out with a model, which intended to explore if certain styles of political leadership have an effect on the type of innovation generated and implemented, specifically comparing service to governance innovations. The four styles of leadership identified for the purpose of this study were drawn from multiple leadership theory approaches to enable a more exploratory research on actions, behaviours and attitudes of politicians in a situation of change, without focusing on the variable of power as commonly proposed in political science (Tucker, 1995). All four leadership styles were found in the eight cases across Europe, with the visionary leadership style being most strongly represented in six out of eight projects. A pattern of leadership styles being dominant in certain countries cannot be proposed due to the disproportionate distribution of cases per country, which constitutes a limitation to this study. Regarding the second theoretical concept, innovation theory was used to get a general understanding of what is considered an innovation, as opposed to a mere change or improvement of services or processes, and to categorize different types of innovation in a public sector context. In the course of analysis, however, some innovation types could not be exclusively assigned to one category, which thus led to a third innovation type being introduced, namely hybrids between governance and service innovations.

With regards to the main research question, this paper concludes that more collaborative leadership styles, i.e. visionary and consensual facilitator, did produce innovations based on new forms of governance and higher levels of integration across different sectors, including hybrid forms. The more hierarchical leadership styles, i.e. caretaker and city boss, generated service innovations with lower levels of integration. The main indicators pointing towards the more hierarchical leadership styles were based on clear perceptions of roles, positions and responsibilities within an organizational structure. As service innovations were also mainly created and developed within local authorities, information, resources and decisions were exchanged according to predefined flows. To some extent these differences can be explained by polity models. The state-corporate model typically found in Germany and Austria proposes a very interactive and supportive government attitude towards civic engagement, with society being quite formally organized in larger associations and chambers (Jepperson, 2002). This might explain why politicians in these countries had a more open attitude towards collaborative working in general, which mainly resulted in governance and hybrid innovations. On the other end, drawing on the liberal model typically found in Anglo-Saxon countries, the British service innovation case (Angus) showed elements

of a hands-off governance mentality (Sørensen, 2006). Whereas the British governance innovation (Hackney) was the exception that proved the rule, as the close collaboration with the civic sector on a wider societal issue was deemed very untypical for a UK context. Due to the underrepresentation of cases in France and Sweden, no clear conclusions can be drawn for these samples. Nonetheless, one overall conclusion is that country contexts affected the degree of perceived innovation, as deviations from local customs led to a high ranking of perceived novelty of the innovation, even though objectively the level of transformations did not always correspond.

Concerning the final two sub-questions and the exploratory nature of this study, several conclusions can be drawn. First, different degrees of transformation that were achieved through the introduction of new services or forms of governance were spread across both types of innovation. The cases which showed higher levels of transformation, explained as discontinuous or disruptive change, typically touched upon more complex or politically sensitive topics. The analysis led to the conclusion that these cases (Nyköping, Alberschwende, Hackney and Miltenberg) demanded a more visionary style. Revisiting transformational leadership theory (Bass, 1990; Burns, 1978), the basis of the visionary style, the leader must have a long-term vision beyond the electoral cycle to tackle the complex or sensitive issues addressed through the innovation. The process of change was actively initiated by political leaders, without them being too far away from major decision-making. Characteristics such as strong personal conviction, venturesome attitude and the feeling of being responsible for the process were also dominant and can be attributed to transformational leadership. Second, in an attempt to explain the positive relationship found between leadership and innovation, the attributes of openness, willingness to take risks, linking capacity and empowerment were seen as essential to consider oneself as a political leader. This is in line with the current body of knowledge (see Bekkers et al., 2011; Borins, 2001a; Osborne & Brown, 2005; Schumpeter, 1942; Sørensen & Torfing, 2017), which states that through an open and interactive process design more resources, expertise and knowledge can be pooled to achieve innovation. By creating a supportive climate for innovative thinking and action, employees, civil servants and citizens feel more empowered to bring forward ideas. This was considered as very important to support bottom-up change. Political leaders saw their role in crossing organizational and sectoral boundaries to bring all relevant actors to the table. The willingness to take risks is also an attribute typically assigned to the innovator or entrepreneur, as transformative change can bring upon unintended consequences, which can be fatal in a political context. Finally, other factors apart from leadership were searched for via an open coding process of the empirical data. To conclude, environmental antecedents were major drivers of innovation, thereof most importantly a sense of urgency, political or public demand, good and stable inter-organizational relationship as well as solid evidence and figures demanding action (see de Vries et al., 2016). Organizational antecedents were less present but overlapped with the concept of the innovation 'milieux' (Bekkers et al., 2011), hence the



importance of creating a supportive climate for innovative thinking within public organizations. Furthermore, lacking efficiency and effectiveness of existing services were the main drivers of the innovations which replaced previous services entirely.

## 8 Discussion

The presented theories on leadership and innovation have proven useful to analyse the empirical data. Particularly innovation theory provided a sound foundation for the interpretation of perceived innovation. This was useful for justifying the categorization of innovation regarding the levels of transformation, as the scoring of perceived novelty by all respondents was usually quite high in their respective contexts. As for the concept of leadership, it was challenging to categorize the politicians as it was rare that all indicators of one variable were met, and sometimes the codes were quite distributed. This required a careful interpretation and a search for overlaps with statements made by the second respondent of each case. The process and argumentation of characterization was presented as transparent as possible in the results chapter.

The aim of this research was to add to the formation of theory on the influence of political leadership on innovation in the public sector that goes beyond mere process innovation to increase efficiency and quality of public goods and services. By linking and integrating different leadership theories (Van Wart, 2013) and going beyond the traditional perspective of politics as a mere power play (Tucker, 1995), a framework for the context of local political leaders was developed. With this framework, key characteristics of concrete actions, behaviours and attitudes of politicians could be identified, and it was examined how these led to the implementation of different types of public sector innovation. Next to these conclusions, valuable insights were gained as to how urban political leadership across different countries and policy fields shows similar patterns for the creation of not only certain innovation types, but also which leadership styles were necessary for addressing more complex issues. There were some overlaps with the concept of political metagovernance (Sørensen & Torfing, 2016; Sørensen & Torfing, 2017), and this empirical research provides more concrete answers to the question how certain types of innovation each require different leadership styles and actions in an urban governance context.

Regarding the exploration of other influencing factors for innovation apart from leadership, findings were in line with the current body of knowledge (de Vries et al., 2016), hence no major additions to theory were made. Some minor factors were specific to the local contexts but no significant deviations from existing theory were identified. What could be argued is the representation of some innovation antecedents across all polity models, however this generalization is limited by the qualitative nature of this study. Similarly, the positive relationship between leadership and innovation was supported in all cases to a varying extent and was sometimes only vaguely justified. This also confirmed existing theories, such as the importance of linking capacities in public sector innovation (Bekkers et al., 2011), or innovators emerging in collaborative governance arenas as proposed in the contingent model (Borins, 2001a; Borins, 2001b). As a result, only the attributes which were present in all cases were emphasized in the concluding chapter.

Finally, it should be noted that while most methodological hurdles were overcome, the findings and conclusions presented in this thesis should be interpreted in the light of methodological shortcomings (see chapter 4.2), such as sample limitations (disproportionate country representation, successful innovation cases, lack of critical respondents), reliability limitations (open coding) and validity limitations (operationalization, biases).

### ***Recommendations***

In the light of practical value, a line of recommendations for local political leaders is proposed by the author of this study. First and foremost, the creation of a supportive climate within and across organizational and sectoral boundaries is essential for innovative thinking to flourish in any context. Empowerment of employees, civil servants as well as citizens can lead to a more open flow of information, expertise and knowledge. Open and interactive processes must be designed to sustainably implement this way of working (see Bekkers et al., 2011). Furthermore, a politician must be convincing in the assertion, that he or she is open to ideas, suggestions, doubts and critique, and should translate them across organizational and sectoral boundaries (see the concept of boundary-spanning, e.g. Williams, 2002; Tushman & Scanlan, 1981). This goes hand in hand with the necessity of political leaders to set the political agenda. By being open and receptive towards the followership, the most urgent challenges of the community can be identified, and it is the role of the politician to mobilize citizens and call for (collective) action (see Tucker, 1995). A second recommendation is that politicians should acknowledge and evaluate the underlying complexity of an issue he or she wants to address. The more sensitive or complex the topic, the more leaders must protect the innovation process by taking a firm stance and assuming responsibility for the process (which includes the willingness to take risks in a typically risk-averse environment), going out to the general public and political committees at the right time to communicate and defend the innovation, as well as keeping the momentum of change alive by being present and driving/participating in deliberation and decision-making. The transformative potential of innovations should be evaluated in the innovation process to be able to respond to unintended or destructive outcomes in other spheres (theme of 'creative destruction' as proposed by Schumpeter, 1942). This means that politicians must find a balance between (problem) perceptions of opposing actors and ensure equal representation of more vulnerable actors or stakeholders with less resources for participation in decision-making (for further exploration see for example theories on political metagovernance by Sørensen & Torfing, 2016 or management of governance networks by Klijn & Koppenjan, 2016). Actions and behaviours attributed typically to transformational leadership (Bass, 1990; Burns, 1978) can support this process. Such actions and behaviours include providing a long-term vision for the political community, mobilizing the followership to engage in collective action for a higher level of purpose, taking responsibility and protecting the innovation process, fostering collaboration and

contributing resources and information. Finally, when confronted with new and complex challenges which require the commitment or support of a variety of actors, political leaders should aim for creating new forms of governance which simultaneously demand higher levels of integration. For governance innovation to reach its potential, politicians should encourage and set the framework for higher levels of integration, which can lead to public and non-public actors having a strong sense of ownership of found solutions and an increased commitment to the long-term functioning of new pathways taken.

### ***Future research***

The findings and conclusions of this thesis do not enable a sufficient explanation of differences in leadership and innovation across a variety of national governance traditions. Therefore, further comparative studies are needed with larger and more balanced numbers of cases per country to identify more conclusive patterns on how state, culture and governance traditions have an influence on political leadership styles and on the perceived innovativeness of the public sector. Similarly, the focus of this research was on local level and urban governance. Research on which political leadership styles and characteristics are needed to encourage innovation on different levels of government is a further interesting outline for the future. Moreover, as one of the conclusions was the need for a visionary style when addressing more complex or sensitive topics, this could also be further explored by comparing innovations in the light of the underlying complexity rather than by innovation types.

Concerning a methodological perspective, quantitative studies should be conducted to find more generalizable patterns of which activities political leaders deploy that lead to different types or levels of innovation. This should be coupled with exploring to what extent other factors also influence innovation processes and if these are also generalizable. Finally, the role of politicians must be further theorized and conceptualized in connection with public sector innovation capacity on all levels of government, as there were no integrated theoretical concepts on this positive relationship yet.

## 9 References

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