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**Governance networks, democratic anchorage, and the  
impact of national political context<sup>1</sup>**

**Chris Skelcher, Erik-Hans Klijn, Daniel Kübler, Navdeep Mathur,  
Eva Sørensen and Helen Sullivan<sup>2</sup>**

Contact for correspondence:  
Professor Chris Skelcher  
Institute of Local Government Studies  
School of Public Policy  
The University of Birmingham  
Birmingham  
UK

[c.k.skelcher@bham.ac.uk](mailto:c.k.skelcher@bham.ac.uk)  
++ 44 (0)121 414 4962

**ABSTRACT**

*Advances in understanding of the democratic anchorage of governance networks require carefully designed and contextually grounded empirical analysis, in which pertinent features of the context are carried through into theory building. The literature on governance networks tends to use insights from empirical research as though they had universal applicability. Evidence from studies in Denmark, England, the Netherlands and Switzerland are used to develop a clearer understanding of differences and similarities in the democratic milieu within which governance networks are located. Four conjectures about the relationship between governance networks and representative democracy are used heuristically to review the evidence. Conclusions are drawn about the implications for the next stage of theory building in this field.*

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<sup>2</sup> Chris Skelcher is at the Institute of Local Government Studies, School of Public Policy, the University of Birmingham, UK; Erik-Hans Klijn is at the Centre for Public Management, Erasmus University, the Netherlands; Daniel Kübler is at the Department of Political Science, University of Zurich, Switzerland; Navdeep Mathur is at the Institute of Local Government Studies, School of Public Policy, the University of Birmingham, UK; Eva Sørensen is at the Centre for Democratic Network Governance, Roskilde University, Denmark; Helen Sullivan is at the Cities Research Centre, University of the West of England, UK.

## INTRODUCTION

The central thesis of this paper is that advances in understanding the democratic anchorage of governance networks require carefully designed and contextually grounded empirical analysis, in which pertinent features of the context are carried through into theory building. At present the literature on governance networks tends to use insights from empirical research as though they had universal applicability. The results of studies are transferred across national boundaries with limited reference to the constitutional, governmental, and socio-political cultures (collectively, the 'democratic milieu') in which the research was undertaken. The tendency to acontextualisation reduces the potential of the field to generate new advances in knowledge through a differentiated analysis. The collaborative European research being undertaken by the authors, which is located within the 'second generation' of governance network research (Torfing 2005), is designed to address these questions. This paper presents some of the early results from this research programme.

The paper uses research data from European countries to explore the impact of cultural forces on the democratic anchorage of governance networks.<sup>3</sup> The term 'governance network' refers to the emergent forms of interaction between government, business and civil society actors around public policy issues. Such interaction is usually characterised as having a high degree of self-organisation between actors and relatively limited external regulation (Koppenjan and Klijn 2004; Torfing 2005). Consequently, the conventional wisdom amongst students of the field is that governance networks tend to be loosely coupled to the institutions of representative democracy, although it should be noted that there has been relatively little empirical investigation of this relationship (Skelcher forthcoming). This problem of loose coupling leads to questions about the extent of the democratic mandate and accountability of governance networks, and the nature of any links to elected decision-makers at European, national, regional, or local levels of government. The concept of democratic anchorage captures this issue. It refers to the extent to which governance networks are articulated with the democratic infrastructure of a society (Sørensen and Torfing 2005).

We explore these issues through a heuristic framework based on four 'conjectures' about the relationship between governance networks and representative democracy. The conjectures present the relationship as being either incompatible, complementary, transitional (in the sense that there is a movement from representative to network forms of governance), or instrumental (by which we mean that elected office-holders use network governance as a means to secure their objectives). We explore the conjectures by drawing on evidence from studies undertaken by four of the leading European research groups in this field. The research evidence is used to construct narratives about the democratic anchorage of governance networks in four European countries: Denmark, England, the Netherlands, and Switzerland. Although these are predominantly northern European countries, there are differences in their democratic milieu that enable us to draw conclusions that we intend to explore through collaboration with partners outside this group of countries.

In the first part of the paper we explain why attention to context provides an important next step in scientific research into the democratic anchorage of governance networks.

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<sup>3</sup> The order of the words 'governance' and 'network' is important. 'Governance network' gives primacy to governance, that is the articulation, resolution and realisation of public values in society. The alternative (and more usual) word order – network governance – concerns a higher level concept associated with a particular mode of societal organisation, and is usually contrasted with 'market' and 'hierarchy'.

We then set out the four conjectures and the rationale for this approach. Next, we set out the national narratives, and explain the methodology for their construction. In section four, we draw conclusions about the extent of democratic anchorage between the four countries. This is used to highlight relevant features of the underlying democratic milieu or context as it impacts on governance networks. We conclude by indicating the implications for our future research activity.

## **DEMOCRATIC MILIEU – ITS SIGNIFICANCE IN EXPLANATION**

Questions of autonomy and constraint are at the heart of the analysis of majoritarian governmental institutions of legislature, executive, and so on. Such institutions are regulated through formal constitutional rules and conventions, which include codes regarding transparency, accountability and probity. Governance networks, however, are somewhat different. Typically, they are a-constitutional in the sense that they exist outside or are loosely-coupled to formal governmental apparatus. They may comprise an association of actors without legal identity. Even where governance networks do consolidate around a formal piece of organisational structure and/or acquire a legal identity (e.g. a board, contract, or company), there is some evidence from the few European studies undertaken into this question that they have lower levels of constitutional safeguard than majoritarian bodies and generate problems of legitimacy and accountability (Andersen 2004; Beaumont 2003; Sadran 2004; Skelcher, Mathur and Smith 2005; Wälti and Kübler 2004).

It is the form of governance networks that gives this different perspective on questions of autonomy and constraint. Governance networks can be defined in the following way:

(1) relatively stable horizontal articulation of interdependent, but operationally autonomous actors who (2) interact with one another through negotiations which (3) take place within a regulative, normative, cognitive and imaginary framework that is (4) self-regulating within limits set by external forces and which (5) contributes to the production of public purpose. (Torfing 2005: 307)

The key questions raised by this definition, in the context of this paper, are:

1. How self-regulation (autonomy) and the limits set by external forces (constraint) are exercised in relation to democratic anchorage?
2. What are the similarities and differences between European countries?
3. How any differences might be explained?

There is some empirical evidence on the first question, as we indicate above and discuss in more detail below. There is also a more extensive literature, often with little empirical content, that argues that governance networks present problems of legitimacy and accountability. This has now become the accepted wisdom on the matter.

Our goal is to move beyond this limited and taken-for-granted conclusion and establish a robust theoretically-informed and empirically-based analysis. At the heart of our explanatory schema is an interpretivist philosophy. This requires governance networks (and other forms of governance) to be understood in terms of the specific meanings attributed by actors to the overall and individual features of the institution with which they are associated, meanings that themselves are shaped by the particular constitutional, governmental, and socio-political context – the democratic milieu – within which the case is located. This approach overcomes two specific limitations in the field, which are

that comparative analysis is seldom undertaken (Beaumont 2003 is an exception), and conclusions from empirical studies are often used with little consideration of the democratic milieu within which the case was studied.

From a comparative methodology, accessing the democratic milieu is a complex task. What we are seeking to do is gain an appreciation of 'the way democracy means' within a nation (c.f. Yanow 2003). As Flyvbjerg (2001: 43) notes, 'context dependence does not mean just a more complex form of determinism. It means an open-ended, contingent relationship between contexts and actions and interpretations.' In this paper we make a start in this process, by using the four conjectures to reflect on what we already know from our empirical work about the democratic anchorage of governance networks in Denmark, England, the Netherlands and Switzerland, and on this basis to begin to establish inductively the features of the respective democratic milieux in respect of this field of study.

#### **FOUR CONJECTURES – A HEURISTIC FRAMEWORK**

The use of conjecture provides a helpful way of exploring a problem in which there is limited data, or incomplete understanding of the variables involved and their relationships. Conjectures are provisional theories that offer a plausible explanation to the research problem, and provide a basis from which further investigation and theorising can proceed. They are an outcome of the use of 'disciplined imagination' by the researcher to develop theory (Weiss 1989). We employ them in this heuristic way, rather than the more rigorous approach proposed by Popper (1963).

The current state of knowledge regarding the democratic anchorage of governance networks is such that the use of conjectures is entirely appropriate. Second generation research has only recently begun to produce results. Consequently there is limited empirical evidence, or theoretical explanations for these data. The available data comes largely from the four research teams contributing to this paper. The Danish research group have explored the democratic aspects of informal networks in a number of settings (e.g. Sørensen 2004). The English group have developed work on democratic accountability and transparency in quasi-governmental agencies and 'new collaborative spaces', semi-formal arenas in which a number of actors engage in policy formulation and delivery (e.g. Skelcher, Mathur and Smith 2005; Sullivan 2003). The Netherlands team have investigated interactive decision-making between citizens and politicians and problems of complexity in public-private networks (e.g. Klijn and Koppenjan 2000). And the Swiss research group have examined the democratic conditions applying in new decision-arenas and governance networks (e.g. Wälti, Kübler and Papadopoulos 2004).

Four conjectures are explored in this paper. The conjectures are that the relationship between governance networks and representative democracy is incompatible, complementary, transitional, and instrumental (table 1). We outline these briefly here; a fuller discussion is available in Klijn and Skelcher (forthcoming).

----- table 1 about here -----

### **The Incompatibility Conjecture**

The incompatibility conjecture posits that representative democracy and governance networks conflict because each is predicated on a different set of institutional rules. Sørensen (2002) identifies four issues. First, governance networks lead to a multi-level system of shared sovereignty. This challenges the hegemony of the state and, by implication, the construction of 'the people' as the self-regulating sovereign. Second, governance networks reconstitute the notion of political representation from an expression of the political will of the people, through the electoral and other processes of representative democracy, to a terrain contested between a multitude of public and private actors. Third, public administrators become more active in the policy process because of their role in facilitating and coordinating governance networks. This places the role of the public administrator in the democratic process in a new light. Fourth, traditional theories of representative democracy see a separation between the political system and society. Governance networks challenge this separation, and indeed are constructed precisely on the basis of their potential to engage multiple actors across the boundary between state, market, and civil society.

This perspective emphasises the closed and compartmentalised nature of decision-making in separate policy sectors (Laumann and Knoke 1987; Rhodes 1988), and the limited accessibility to these by non-specialised and poorly organised interest groups. The relative closed nature of decision-making and the sector character results in a dominant involvement of sector specialists, tending to increase the participation of technical actors and specialists appointed to quasi-governmental bodies at the expense of elected politicians (Heisler 1974; Koppenjan, Ringeling and te Velde 1987). Consequently this conjecture focuses on the way governance networks interfere with the principles of the primacy of politics and the political accountability of ministers and other elected, executive officeholders.

### **The Complementarity Conjecture**

The second conjecture points to complementarity between governance networks and representative democracy. It suggests that governance networks engage a wider range of actors in the policy process that is possible through representative democratic methods, and thus enhanced representative democracy as it struggles to govern in a complex environment (Rhodes 1988; Pierre and Peters 2000). There are two types of complexity. The first complexity is a function of the issues facing governments, including environmental, security and labour market problems (Koppenjan and Klijn 2004). These stretch government by bringing public policy into new arenas and relationships. The second type of complexity is because these new agendas are superimposed on the earlier cleavages in society around which constitutional arrangement in advanced liberal states were designed (Lijphart 1984). New cleavages in society associated with religion, ethnicity, cultural orientation, sexuality, and so on pose challenges of legitimacy and accountability for representative democratic systems based on older constitutional settlements.

Governance networks provide a flexible institutional design to mediate the relationship of representative democracy with citizens and other parties. It achieves this through the creation of quasi-governmental institutions within which civil society and business actors can interact with public servants, thus engaging them more fully in the public policy process. The normative view is that governance networks contribute democratic anchorage and legitimacy in several ways (Fung and Wright 2001; Papadopoulos 2000).

First, the creation of new institutions offers greater opportunities for participation in the policy process. This re-engages citizens with democratic practice, and also increases the quality of information available to government on citizens' needs and preferences. Second, governance networks engender both a democratic ethos and consensual decision-outcomes that transcend and accommodate partial preferences. Third, the structured nature of governance network institutions enables participation across the various phases of the policy process, from agenda setting through evaluation and into implementation. This builds coalitions committed to realising policy intent, thus enhancing the probability of successful delivery. Finally, the process of interaction and debate in arenas that are semi-formal (i.e. they have few constitutional rules) and semi-public (i.e. they typically meet beyond the view of the ordinary citizen) builds a measure of social capital, integrating citizens into a trust relationship with government (McLaverty 2002). The complementary view thus sees governance networks as additions to more traditional forms of decision-making and accountability.

### **The Transitional Conjecture**

This conjecture proposes that the relationship between representative democracy and governance networks is part of a transition from state-centric government to a network form consisting of decentred, distributed nodes of authority. This process is a result of widespread changes, including the information society, different patterns of social ties and identity, and decline in traditional forms of political participation. As a result, the transitional conjecture sees decision-making as a complicated negotiation processes where public policy problems are ill-defined, require novel solutions, affect many values, and draw on knowledge that is dispersed (Fischer and Forrester 1993; Hajer and Wagenaar 2003; Koppenjan and Klijn 2004). Consequently there has been a move towards deliberative democracy in which the process cannot be separated from the outcome, as it is in more classical perspectives on democratic decision making. Such forms of citizen and stakeholder engagement could be an indication of a new mode of interactive governance, as well as a symbol of the need for politicians and administrators to acquire support, to generate new solutions and to strengthen the legitimacy of their decisions (Papadopoulos 2003).

This process of transition inevitably produces points of tension as old forms of governance decline and new forms take precedence. For example, it is likely that deliberative stakeholder participation will be difficult to combine with the actors and mechanism of representational democracy (Klijn and Koppenjan 2000). A fear by politicians that interactive decision-making threatens their primacy as decision-makers could thus be interpreted not just within the incompatibility conjecture, but equally as the inevitable friction involved in the transition from one governance system (representational democracy with vertical lines of accountability and power) to another (governance networks with more horizontal forms of accountability and power).

The transitional conjecture points to the changing roles of elected politicians as mediators and facilitators of this process, not just the ultimate decision-makers judging the general public interest. The *a priori* general interest is alien to the transitional perspective because it stresses that various actors have different interests and that these have to be reconciled in interactions. Instead, politicians should guarantee open access to the process, set initial conditions for the solutions, and check the outcomes on their values. But they could also facilitate the process more actively by using their legitimacy to enhance the importance of the process or by guiding the solution seeking process (Koppenjan and Klijn 2000; Sørensen 2002). This last role however requires a very

active process management role, which is completely different than the more passive role and judgement afterwards that is common in most tradition decision-making processes

From the transition perspective democracy becomes more a societal model than a representational model. Democracy becomes a process of deliberation that has to be organised and guided carefully to enhance the open character of it, and supported by multiple forms of accountability. In the transitional conjecture, democracy is a design task to be implemented in real life practice of governance networks. It is both a high ideal but also a pragmatic task.

### **The Instrumental Conjecture**

The instrumental conjecture views governance networks as a medium through which powerful governmental actors can increase their capacity to shape and deliver public policy in a complex world. Governance networks provide an instrument to structure the inputs to and outcomes from the policy process so that their alignment with dominant agendas is increased. This perspective applies a more critical reading to the relationship between governance networks and representative democracy than is found in the approaches previously discussed. Theoretically, the instrumental approach can be located either in a notion of local elite strategies or the wider debate about changing forms of social regulation in a neo-liberal context. In either case, the instrumental perspective starts from the premise that the interests of governmental actors are relatively immutable and exist prior to any wider engagement with stakeholders. Governance networks provide a means of reinforcing these dominant interests (through the input structure) and realising them (through the output structure). In contrast, both the complementary and transitional approaches assume that interests are transitive, being refined and redefined through dialogue and deliberation between elected politicians and their officials on the one hand, and the various publics on the other.

The governmental actors have powerful financial, legislative and political resources that can be deployed to structure the design and policy outcomes of governance networks. In addition, vertical linkages that cut across multiple tiers of government can enhance local delivery of national policy intent. These resources enable government to extend and reproducing its policy agenda into a new arena, and enhance the possibilities of realising its broader goals (Le Galès 2001). Additionally, pluralistic governance networks may be colonised by powerful state actors to ensure that participants comply with the official view of problems and solutions, or risk exclusion from the network and the resources to which it provides access (Wälti, Kübler and Papadopoulos 2004).

Unlike the other three conjectures, the instrumental conjecture views governance networks as coming after rather than before the definition of political projects, and being associated with powerful political actors within representative democratic institutions proactively creating or reshaping such networks. It is these characteristic that gives it its instrumental function. In this conjecture accountability is secured by the strong involvement of political office holders who remain responsible. Other accountability measures (such as performance management) are designed to support the accountability of the central political stakeholder.

## **FOUR NARRATIVES ON GOVERNANCE NETWORKS AND REPRESENTATIVE DEMOCRACY**

We now present a narrative on the relationship between governance networks and representative democracy in each of the case study countries. Each narrative sets out the development of governance networks, how they relate to the democratic milieu in the nation, illustrating this by exploring the role of elected politicians and wider questions of accountability, and concludes with reflections on the conjectures.

The four countries have been chosen as a purposive sample. There is a well-established research group in each country that has undertaken empirical investigations into the democratic anchorage of governance networks, enabling us to draw on existing evidence. The analysis is used to draw out the features of the democratic milieu in each country, as it applies to the democratic anchorage of governance networks.

## **Denmark**

### *Origins of governance networks*

Governance networks have throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century played a central role in national as well as local policy processes. Denmark has a long history of a very strong state and a very strong civil society (Knudsen 1991), and governance networks have served as a means to bridge the gap, resolve conflicts and enhance cooperation and coordination between the two sectors through the shaping of negotiated agreements. In policy areas such as labour market policy and agriculture a strong corporatist tradition for networking between the state and the relevant interest organizations has prevailed, and within policy areas such as education, social services, culture and sports there are an even longer tradition for negotiated network cooperation between public actors and a broad variety of voluntary organisations (Bogason, 1990, 2000). However, from the beginning of the 1980s and most markedly from 1990 and onwards the role of networks in public policy processes has increased in number and spread into new policy areas (Sørensen, 2006). Networks between policy sectors and institutions have become a still more frequently used means by which to coordinate policy making and policy implementation within a still more fragmented public sector (Bogason, #), and networks between public and private actors are moving into new policy areas such as business, tourism, regional development, education, health and infrastructure.

Governance networks play a central role both at the national and at local levels but the role that they play tends to differ. Networks that operate at the national levels are predominantly engaged in policy making while networks that operate at local level are more often involved in policy implementation. However, since Denmark has a constitutionally ensured local level of government with a considerable degree of political competence and autonomy, local governance networks are also in many instances engaged in processes of local policy making. The national and local governance networks take many different forms. Some networks are relatively informal while others are formal; some networks are open and inclusive while others are closed and exclusive; some are initiated from below while others are initiated from above; some are metagoverned by public authorities while others are not.

One of the central driving forces behind the growth in governance networks is a more and more positive view on networks among leading politicians and public administrators i.e. the Ministry of Finance and the Association of Danish Municipalities (Sørensen, 2006) who increasingly point to the involvement of stakeholders in processes of public governance as a means to increase the efficiency and legitimacy of public governance. It provides more informed decisions, promotes efficient implementation by reducing

stakeholder resistance and increases governance legitimacy by increasing the responsiveness of the political system vis-à-vis central stakeholders.

#### *The relationship to Danish democratic milieu*

Denmark is not only characterized by a strong state and a strong civil society – it is also characterized by a strong national and local representative democracy and a strong participatory democracy. Seen in this context governance networks can be understood within the complementary conjecture as a way of linking national and local levels of representative democracy with various forms of democratic participation. This complementary view on governance networks is among other things expressed by a growing number of national politicians (Christiansen & Nørgaard, 2003) and in the concluding report of the Danish National study of Power and Democracy (Togebjerg et al, 2003).

Networks that are initiated and regulated by public authorities can also to some extent be understood within the instrumental conjecture as a new and more efficient means to implement public policy. However, it seems to be generally accepted that in order to be efficient governance networks need a considerable amount of autonomy and a considerable ability to affect the outcome of the processes of public governance in which they are involved. For that reason governance networks are not seen as neutral instruments for implementing public policies, but as active co-producers of public policy that has a direct effect on the policy outcome. In other words governance networks tend to be seen both as a form of governance and as a form of policy making that needs to be regulated democratically. Accordingly, one of the central debates in the Danish context concerns how representative democracy and democratic network participation are to supplement each other.

#### *Governance networks and elected politicians*

When focussing on the role of elected politicians, however, the growth in governance networks are best understood within the transitional conjecture as a gradual transformation of representative democracy. Studies show how the increased use of governance networks (as well as the growth in market based forms of self-regulation that goes under the name ‘New Public Management’) transforms national and local politicians from sovereign decision makers to metagovernors. Politicians no longer seek to govern through detailed laws and regulations, but aim to govern through the metagovernance of self-governing actors among which we find various forms of self-regulating networks (Sørensen, 2006). As an effect of this transformation of politicians from sovereign decision makers to metagovernors, representative democracy as we know it has changed into something new.

In the Danish context the transformation of the role of national and local politicians has taken place in a way that has reduced their influence on public policy processes considerably. Hence, the nature and amount of resources that Danish politicians facilitate in their effort to exercise metagovernance are limited to those of defining the political and economic conditions of the governance networks. As a consequence a large part of the metagovernance is performed by public administrators (Torfing, Forthcoming). This is among other things due to the fact that these forms of metagovernance are perceived as administrative and not political (Sørensen 2006). The limited role that Danish politicians play in the metagovernance of governance networks represents a serious danger to this new form of representative democracy.

### Transparency and accountability

The transparency and accountability of Danish governance networks vary considerably. Formalized governance networks tend to be more transparent and accountable than informal networks. This is among other things due to the fact that formal networks are often metagoverned by public authorities in a way that contributes to ensuring some level of openness and broad inclusion in their constitution, and some degree of publicity and public attention. Informal governance networks are often less visible to the larger public and thus more difficult for public authorities and the larger public to hold to account. However, experience shows that deliberate efforts to metagovern governance informal networks, can increase their transparency and accountability (Sørensen, Forthcoming).

One of the major barriers for increasing the transparency and accountability of governance networks, however, is the narrow perception of the media on where and how politics is performed. The narrow media focus on the traditional political institutions of representative democracy means that they show little interest in the political role of governance networks. The effect is a low level of publicity and hence a limited transparency and accountability of formal as well as informal governance networks.

### Conclusion

The strong tradition for close cooperation between public authorities and civil society, and the presence of strong constitutionally ensured local political institutions has led to the formation of a plurality of national and local governance networks that function as a complement to the national and local institutions of representative democracy. However, the recent growth in the number and importance of governance networks has to an increasing extent transformed the institutions of representative democracy through a gradual reinterpretation of the role of public authorities from that of being sovereign decision makers into being metagovernors that govern at a distance and leaves considerable autonomy to self-regulating governance networks and institutions. Seen from a democratic perspective it is problematic that the politicians seem to be playing a marginal role in the metagovernance of governance networks and that the transparency and accountability of many governance networks tend to be relatively low.

## **England<sup>4</sup>**

### Origins of governance networks

The significance of governance networks in England was identified by Marsh and Rhodes (1992) and their collaborators in studies of the structured incorporation of business, labour and other special interest groups in national level policy formulation. Their analysis of 'policy networks' complemented the wider debate about corporatist interest representation in English government arising from the accommodation between state, labour and capital in the period from the 1950s, and especially in the attempts by government to undertake national economic planning and management in the 1970s. The period of Conservative government in the 1980s dislocated these embedded patterns of relationships, but also began a process of building local-level collaboration in which business and citizen interests were given greater weight relative to local government through their formal incorporation into new institutions of governance (Skelcher 2005).

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<sup>4</sup> There are significant differences in governmental structures, processes and policies between England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales arising from devolution. Consequently the discussion of the English case should not be treated as applying to the whole of the UK.

Since the late 1990s, there has been a substantial increase in ‘stakeholder’ engagement with government at all levels. Newman (2001) locates the momentum for governance networks within the discourse of ‘modernisation’, a New Labour project to recast political, economic, social, and cultural relations in English society. A broad ‘pro-modernisation’ coalition of New Labour politicians at national and local level, public managers and professionals, and civil society and business actors have promoted the widespread use of governance networks. This reflects a congruence between the interests of national government in promoting collaborative and inclusive policy making, managers who see advantages in terms of their increased authority and discretion, and political actors who recognise the opportunities of finding new ways of engaging with communities (Stoker 2004; Sullivan 2004).

Consequently, civil society representatives, business, faith groups, and other interests have been incorporated into governance networks, some of which have a legal identity while others operate on a less formalised, but not necessarily less influential, basis (Sullivan and Skelcher 2002). Such governance networks are often consolidated into a ‘partnership’ - a board, committee or management group that forms the nodes in each network (Lowndes and Skelcher 1998). Partnerships cover a wide range of public policy issues, including urban regeneration, crime reduction, health improvement, environmental sustainability, and supporting asylum seekers and refugees. They offer a flexible institutional design for shaping, deciding and implementing public policy, in contrast to government departments or quasi-governmental agencies.

#### *The relationship to the English democratic milieu*

The development of governance networks/ partnerships can be understood within the terms of the instrumental conjecture. England is a unitary state where the constitutional status of local government is not safeguarded and there is a long tradition of central government intervention to reshape the governance of local affairs (Stewart 2000). The instruments traditionally deployed by central government include legislation, executive decisions by ministers, manipulation of financial resources, and political persuasion (Jones and Stewart 2002). However, governance networks and partnerships emerged as the predominant mode of local-level policy making and delivery with an almost complete absence of national legislation, political persuasion, or public debate. New Labour and its modernisation allies were quickly able to exercise hegemony on the question of governance institutions, supported by the strategic use of special funds accessible only by partnerships of public, business and civil society actors, and an appeal to ‘stakeholder engagement’. The use of governance networks provided a means through which national policy objectives could be delivered in the locality.

However, the evidence can also be interpreted from the complementary conjecture. The idea of stakeholder engagement is particularly important here. Stakeholder engagement derives from the Third Way philosophy, upon which the political strategy of modernisation is based. It presents a view of democracy in which society is segmented into groups organised around different interests, and where these interests have a right to be directly represented in public policy making rather than these interests being aggregated by elected politicians. Stakeholders are understood to be structured in terms of public (that is, government), business, nonprofit, and community sectors. Each partnership typically includes representatives from each of these four sectors. This form of representation is understood by actors to complement the operation of representative democracy, whose decisions are delegated to such bodies. However our research shows that the assumption that partnerships will deliver improved engagement is open to

question. There are particular problems arising from the way publics are constituted and the processes of incorporation that occur when citizens come into contact with state institutions (Barnes, Newman, Knops and Sullivan 2003; Lowndes and Sullivan 2004)

#### *Governance networks and elected politicians*

Our research into the composition of local-level partnerships and the wider governance networks of which they are a part reveals a very limited presence of elected politicians. In 2002-03 we identified and analysed the membership of partnerships in two localities. In Mid Town, there were fourteen partnerships with three hundred and four board members. Only 17 (6%) were elected local politicians. Eighteen partnerships were identified in West Shire, involving five hundred and eleven different individuals, just thirteen (3%) being local elected politicians (Skelcher forthcoming).

Our qualitative research confirmed that local politicians generally did not play a direct role in relation to partnerships. There is a structural hole between governance networks and representative democracy. In this space, the public managers working in partnerships have considerable discretion, including over the design of the institution, its forms of democratic anchorage and the definition of the publics to be included (Barnes, Newman, Knops and Sullivan 2003). These managers (who are principally from the local authority) operate within the general policy mandate provided by elected politicians in their municipal councils. This is reinforced by a strong managerialist discourse that locates partnerships as part of an implementation structure rather than as policy-making bodies (Skelcher, Mathur and Smith 2005). Consequently, it is not so much that governance networks and representative democracy are incompatible, but that the prevailing discourse located elected politicians as higher-order decision-makers in relation to lower-order partnerships. This can be traced back to the instrumental conjecture, which is also evident when we consider transparency and accountability.

#### *Transparency and accountability*

The minimal constitutional safeguards that apply to partnerships are located within a discursive construction of partnerships as managerial implementation structures rather than policy-making, governmental bodies. Our methodology included using a Governance Assessment Tool to undertake a criteria-based assessment of the constitutional safeguards in twenty-five partnerships (Mathur and Skelcher forthcoming). The results revealed that partnerships vary considerably on this parameter. Some had boards that met in public session, posted reports on a web site, and had procedures to avoid conflicts of interest in decision-making. But in most cases governance standards were quite low when compared with those applying to elected local governments. The strongest forms of accountability were for public funding and the delivery of performance targets. These were closely monitored by higher levels of government. But in contrast, general democratic oversight was limited. This finding again suggests that the instrumental conjecture is helpful in understanding the English case.

#### *Conclusion*

The predominant aspects of the democratic milieu that this case illustrates are those of the informal constitution that can be changed on a pragmatic basis. England (and the UK as a whole) is not a constitutional polity. The institutions of governance are not designed with reference to universal democratic principles. In a unitary state, where local institutions are not protected by a constitution, this means that there is considerable scope for national government to change and adapt as it sees fit. Hence the predominance of the instrumental conjecture in our analysis.

But alongside this is also the complementary conjecture. There is clear evidence of the opening-up of local decision-making to a wider spread of actors, even if there are difficulties in this process. The combination of instrumental and complementary is not accidental. Modernisation as a political strategy requires the reshaping of local governmental institutions to affect both enhanced delivery of public policy and greater legitimacy from stakeholders. The resultant governance networks, and their partnership nodes provide the a-constitutional flexibility to enable both the managerialisation necessary for the policy delivery and participation necessary for legitimation. This happens under the broad oversight of representative democratic institutions at local level, expressed through their managers, but with almost no direct involvement by elected local politicians.

## **The Netherlands**

### *The origins of network governance*

The Netherlands has traditionally been a 'pillarized' society. Each 'pillar' of society (Socialist, Protestant, Catholic, Liberal) had its own organizational structures (political parties, intermediate organizations) and operated relatively separately from the others (Lijphart, 1992). Decision-making was based not only on a high degree of passivity (and loyalty) on the part of citizens but also on close contact between the elites of the political parties and third-sector (societal) associations.

Thus the relationship between policy-making and implementation was secured. Political elites laid down policy through consultation between the top-ranking political actors in each pillar, after consulting and obtaining information from related organizations in the third sector. Implementation was left to the societal organizations in each of the political pillars (Lijphart, 1992), which were closely affiliated with the political parties. This systems of decision-making, which emerged in the beginning of the 20th century lasted till the end of the sixties, and on its turn rested on the consensual decision-making processes of the Dutch republic of the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century

The emergence and rising importance of governance networks in The Netherlands is difficult to fix at a specific point of time because it is more a gradual shift. This can be illustrated by the example of the deepening of the Scheldt Estuary, the river system on the Dutch/Belgian border, which forms the shipping channel to the Port of Antwerp. In the recent history there have been three deepenings: in 1970-1972, in 1980-1995 and in 1998-2005. If one compares the decision processes with each other one can witness that each next decision about deepening is more complex than the previous one. The first deepening was a relatively technical decision-making process where only a few actors were involved. The second deepening took considerably more time but was still decided in a limited network of political and bureaucratic national actors and regional authorities and stakeholders were excluded. With the third deepening however this exclusion was no longer possible and a wide variety of actors participated in the decision.

This observation fits the research on decision-making in The Netherlands of the last 30 years. Many researchers stress that in the sixties and seventies the old pillarized decision-structure was evolving in a more complex and strongly sectoral network like decision-making. The growth of the welfare state resulted in a large group of actors who are specialized and interested in sector decision-making and are entering the decision-

making process. (Van den Berg/Molleman, 1975, Van Putten, 1980; Koppenjan et al, 1987). Because of the knowledge and resources of these sector specialized organizations dependencies relations between public and private and semi-private actors increase an observations that is in line with international research into decision-making (See for instance Marsh/Rhodes, 1992; Klijn, 2005).

So the development of the welfare state and the sector specialization that went along with it already led to complex forms of decision-making, which we could label as the increase of governance networks<sup>i</sup>. The developments in later years seems to enhance this trend in two ways. One can witness a growing need for different more integral solutions for problems which surpass sectors and networks. This creates governance networks around certain problems that include a wide variety of actors with different backgrounds that complicates decision-making processes. The trend towards public private partnerships (Kenniscentrum, 2002) but also the trend towards autonomisation which gives several implementing sections of the former bureaucracy more autonomy only enhances the network like character of decision-making. The previous mentioned Schelde case is a perfect example of this.

This ongoing trend toward the increasing importance of governance networks is also shown by the increasing number of interactive decision-making processes that are started up by almost all Dutch municipalities but also with some national initiated decision-making processes (see Edelenbos/Monninkhof, 2001; Denters et al, 20-3). In interactive decision-making stakeholders are invited to participate in the decision-making process in an early phase (before solutions are developed) (see Klijn/Koppenjan, 2000; Edelenbos/Monninkhof, 2001; Edelenbos/Klijn, 2006).

#### *The relationship to the Dutch democratic milieu*

The evidence above about the emergence of governance networks in The Netherlands, certainly if one considers the gradual developments over a longer period in time, suggests something of a continuum in which the network character of decision-making increases as does the involvement of other actors. This trend towards governance networks also fits the Dutch political administrative system (the Decentralised unitary state) in which local governments have relatively much power and there is a lot of negotiating between central and local public bodies. This trend points somewhat to a transitional conjecture in which the already consociational democratic and political system of The Netherlands slowly converts itself to something of which can not see the whole contour yet but could be labelled as a network democracy for the time being.

One can however also trends, which do not fit in this picture. The strong call for leadership (see the research of the social economic research bureau) of citizens and some discussions in the political arena on ways to curtail the involvement of external actors (and especially their legal rights) to speed up complex decision-making seem to point at another conjecture: that of the incompatible conjecture. It seems to point at hard clashes between the rules and requirements of governance networks, which focus on mutual interaction and negotiation and the developing of acceptable solutions during the process to which the negotiating actors commit themselves and the more horizontal accountability structure of representational democracy. There is certainly evidence of these clashes in the experiments of interactive decision-making in The Netherlands (see Klijn/Koppenjan; Edelenbos/Monninkhof, 2001).

### Governance networks and elected politicians

The available empirical material on Dutch policy-making points out very clearly at two conclusions. The first is that there is strong dominance of specialized (often sectoral) actors in most decision-making processes (Van Putten, 1980; Koppenjan et al., 1987) and that the role of elected politicians is limited, although elected officeholders like city alderman and ministers can be decisive at important points in the process. The role of the City council or parliament is less prominent, except for a limited number of decisions that catch the eye of the media. The other conclusion is that although most of the interactive innovative forms of decision-making are initiated by political office holders (for instance to bridge the perceived gap between politicians and citizens) the presence of the city councils is far from dominant. Edelenbos and Klijn concluded after comparing six Dutch interactive cases that most of the time the city council is absent in the process and that the main factor for achieving satisfactory outcomes is the fact that the process is well managed. They conclude: "Our findings on these six case studies do, however, provide a good impression of the importance of good process management for the success of interactive processes" (Edelenbos/Klijn, 2006 forthcoming). So it seems that for the success of these new governance networks it is managers that make the differences and not politicians. If this is an indication for the transitional conjecture is of course very hard to determine. It could also be an evidence of the incompatibility conjecture.

### Transparency and accountability

It is very difficult to make general observations about transparency and accountability of governance networks because we see so much variation in types of processes and forms. In general one sees that decision-making processes in governance networks are complex in the sense that many actors, decisions and various arenas are involved, which make these processes not very transparent. It is also seldom that new forms of accountability are developed and often accountability is achieved by connecting the decision-process to the regular democratic institutions (the agreement of a city council at the end of the process for instance). General democratic oversight was thus limited and restricted mostly to the consent of the final decision. Other forms of accountability were related to possible rules for interaction, which had been agreed upon earlier, or on the monitoring of public funding, but only after projects had been accepted by central ministries.

### Conclusions

The Netherlands is a decentralized unitary state in which municipalities have more power than in many other western countries. The emergence of governance networks seems, if we look at the developments for a longer period, to fit in the typical Dutch consociationalism style of policy making in which actors negotiate with each other. The emergence of governance networks does however give the political officeholder a less prominent position in the whole process, especially since the classical pillarization relations have disappeared.

In that sense the transitional conjecture seems a reasonable model to describe and explain the developments. There are however also different signs, which point at some clashes between governance networks and representational democracy. The question is whether we have to explain these as a sign that the transition is not always smooth and proceeds with discontinuities, or is a sign for an explanation from the incompatibility conjecture. Only time will tell!

## Switzerland

### Origins of governance networks

The Swiss state is generally considered as the prototype of a weak state (Badie and Birnbaum 1979). As a corollary, civil society actors have always played an important role in the delivery of public policies. On the one hand, Switzerland has a long tradition of corporatism. Indeed, the delegation of state authority to *private interest governments* (PIG) (Streeck and Schmitter 1985) is a recurrent feature in a wide array of policy fields, ranging from the regulation of vocational education and training by professional associations, over the implementation of money laundering legislation by the Swiss bankers association, to various aspects of agricultural policy – where PIGs are particularly widespread (Linder 1987: 114 ff). On the other hand, there is an even longer tradition of subsidiarity, featuring the delivery of public services by non-profit-organisations. This is especially present in the field of social policy, where “third sector” organisations – i.e. neither private nor public – have played a central role in relieving social hardships since the industrial revolution (Anheier and Seibel 1990).

Both traditions of collaboration between the state and the civil society have evolved since the 1980s. International pressures for market liberalisation have led to the dismantling of PIGs in many sectors, transforming the corporatist entrenchments into more loosely connected governance networks (Wagemann 2005). Subsidiarity arrangements have also evolved into network governance, as state agencies increasingly tended to associate the non-profit sector to the implementation of public policies (Bütschi and Cattacin 1993).

### The relationship to the Swiss democratic milieu

A peculiar feature of Swiss democracy is the existence and the extensive use of direct democratic procedures of decision making at all state levels. Switzerland is the undisputed world record holder in popular votes (Papadopoulos 1998: 42). The importance of representative institutions in legitimising public policy is therefore only relative: the popular vote is clearly the most relevant locus of democracy in Switzerland. The democratic quality of network governance is therefore often scrutinised according to the extent to which they feature possibilities of direct democratic decision making with respect to crucial policy choices.

However, the drawback of direct democracy is that it creates a pressure towards compromise and negotiation. In order to reduce the risk for blockades, groups with “referendary potential” are integrated in the elaboration process of the legislation submitted to popular votes (Neidhart 1970). The resulting corporatist colonisation of representative institutions in Switzerland is often seen as one of the “broken promises of direct democracy” (Papadopoulos 2001).

Case studies have shown that the budgetary process provides the main nexus for connecting governance networks to both representative and direct democratic milieus (Kübler and Wälti 2001: 110). Legal procedures for budget or credit approval generally stipulate a cascade of decisions by different bodies (government, parliament, electorate) according to the amount that is involved. Since the delivery of public policies by governance networks generally involves a transfer of public funds, the procedures for budget approval provide the main link to the democratic sphere.

### Governance networks and elected politicians

A wave of public management reforms has swept over Switzerland in the 1990s. One of the characteristic features of New Public Management, Swiss style, consists in the separation of strategic aspects from operational aspects of administrative steering (Schedler 2000). This also portends a redefinition of the role of the elected politicians: whereas operational choices are left to the discretion of the bureaucracy (or private partners), strategic choices are the privilege of elected politicians who are thereby transformed into meta-governors.

However, empirical research has shown that elected politicians do often not behave according to New Public Management theory. They continue to interfere a lot in issues that are operational in nature (Widmer and Rieder 2003). The public bureaucracy is often subject to such scrutiny, but also non-state agencies that are funded in the wake of a particular policy programme – as Kübler (2000) has shown for drug policy.

### Transparency and accountability

Transparency of governance networks is generally poor. Unlike representative institutions, there is no statutory right for public scrutiny with respect to decision making bodies of governance networks. Case studies in the four fields of drugs policy, public transport, cultural policy and water provision have shown that lines of accountability are blurred in governance networks (Kübler and Schwab 2006).

However, murky accountability is not necessarily peculiar to network governance. Indeed, Switzerland, as the Netherlands, has multi-party coalition governments at all levels of the state and it is difficult to hold government members – or particular parties – accountable when things go wrong. Hence, it can be argued that in terms of transparency and accountability, decision making in governance networks is not worse than decision making in representative institutions (Kübler and Wälti 2001: 110).

### Conclusion

The emergence of governance networks in Switzerland as a consequence of both the dismantling of corporatist private interest governments and the transformation of the subsidiarity principle emphasises the plausibility of the instrumental conjecture. Indeed, governance networks have become an instrument for the state to expand regulations to new policy fields.

In terms of democratic anchorage, however, governance networks in Switzerland are best described by the complementary conjecture. Indeed, *Rechtsstaat* procedures – especially the budget process – provide systematic linkages of governance networks to the main democratic milieus, i.e. representative and direct democracy.

A supplementary problem in Swiss governance networks, however, is the democratic consequence of interlocking politics (“*Politikverflechtung*”) due to the vertical partitioning of federalism – well described for Germany by Scharpf (1993). As coordination across government levels can only be reached through negotiation, this tends to shift decision making power from parliaments to the executives who take part in negotiations across territorial levels. This also results in a role change elected politicians in parliaments who are increasingly unable to decide important issues and are increasingly left to merely rubber-stamp choices made by the executives (Benz 1998).

## CONCLUSION

Our analysis of the democratic anchorage of governance networks in four European countries serves to highlight the importance of context in shaping local expectations of and judgements about appropriate levels and dimensions of democratic anchorage (See Table 2). In Denmark the longstanding co-existence of a strong state and civil society coupled with a constitutionally secure role for local government, have fostered a productive relationship between representative and participative democracy, reflected in the institutionalisation of governance networks as co-producers of policy and services. In England the relatively weak position of local government and the increasing centralisation of decision making and control, have enabled the central state to use governance networks for its own purposes, to deliver policy locally with only marginal reference to local elected representatives. In the Netherlands the tradition of negotiated and decentralised governance amongst decision makers has allowed governance networks to evolve over time to become an increasingly important element of policy making and implementation, but so far retaining a clear link to democratic authorities for purposes of accountability. Finally, in Switzerland the culture of ‘consensus democracy’ has, paradoxically perhaps, contributed to the operation of governance networks largely outside public scrutiny, despite the strong tradition of direct democracy. Elected officials do however have important influence over these networks through budgetary processes.

Whilst there are clear differences between our four countries in terms of their context, our analysis has also revealed that all of these countries have been experiencing significant changes that have affected how policy makers and analysts view the continued democratic anchorage of governance networks. Common amongst those changes have been the impact of the introduction of new public management techniques and the introduction of markets to public service provision. In Denmark and England these developments can be argued to have limited the engagement of elected local politicians in governance networks and developed new roles for public managers. Attempts in Denmark to establish a new role for elected politicians as ‘meta-governors’ is experienced as further embedding politicians’ marginal position. By contrast in the Netherlands where the role of public managers in governance networks was more strongly delineated, there is less concern about the implications of their involvement. However this is contingent upon representative institutions retaining their role as ‘regulators’ or arbiters of governance networks. Switzerland provides further contrast. Here too the stimulation of governance networks through the adoption of new public management techniques has emphasised the role of public managers and highlighted a different role for elected politicians, that of meta-governors as in Denmark. In Switzerland however, elected politicians are refusing to settle for this role, continuing to involve themselves in the operation of governance networks, regardless of the new ‘rules of the game’.

Understanding the possibilities for the democratic anchorage of governance networks across contexts points to a number of avenues for research based on the foregoing analysis. First there is the future role for local elected politicians. Important questions to consider include, whether the role of local elected representatives in governance networks should change and if so how, and what does ‘meta-governing’ have to offer elected representatives, how can it contribute to the continued democratic anchorage of governance networks and what might its limits be? Second, questions surround the role of public managers in governance networks, specifically, whether and how they can

contribute to the democratic anchorage of governance networks as members of these networks, and how that might affect their interaction with other members of the network and their relationship with local elected representatives.

This four country analysis has also surfaced the dynamic nature of the context or democratic milieu in which governance networks operate. This has implications for the relationship between governance networks and democratic anchorage as indicated by the conjectural possibilities associated with the current and future conditions identified for each of our cases. Interestingly the case studies reveal how countries operating in very different political contexts (England and Switzerland) offer up the same combination of conjectures (instrumental and complementary), and how countries with rather longer experience of governance networks, but more similar political cultures (Denmark and the Netherlands), share concerns about the potential end point of the developments in governance networks, ie the possibility of the ‘transitional’ conjecture leading to ‘incompatibility’, if matters of democratic anchorage cannot be addressed. This suggests both that these conjectures have purchase across a range of different governance contexts, and more importantly, that appropriate formulations of democratic anchorage for governance networks, remain an important matter for ongoing research and theory.

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**Table 1: Four conjectures on the relationship of governance networks to democratic institutions**

Conjecture	1: Incompatible	2: Complementary	3: Transitional	4: Instrumental
Characteristics				
Relationship of governance networks to representative democracy	Governance networks challenge legitimacy and decision rules of representative democratic institutions	Governance networks provide democratic institutions with additional linkages to society	Governance networks offer greater flexibility and efficiency than representative democratic institutions, they will increase as the primary mode of societal decision-making, at the expense of representative democratic institutions	Governance networks provide a means for representative democratic institutions to increase their authority in the face of societal complexity
View of democracy	Representative democracy should be the primary means of societal decision-making	Representative democracy has primacy for decisions affecting fundamental values, but for other types of decisions it can co-exist with deliberative and participative democracy introduced through governance networks	Representative democracy is being replaced by other modes of societal decision-making that reflect plural weighting of values in a diverse world	Representative democracy reasserts itself, by working through procedures that are less subject to public scrutiny and accountability, and emphasising agreement over outputs rather than inputs to the decision process
Role of elected politicians	Politicians are decisive at crucial points and their electoral authority should not be undermined by introducing alternative democratic modes	Politicians try to cope with complexity by using networks to increase involvement in policy formulation, thus strengthening input legitimacy. But at the same time their electoral authority gives them a special role in the goal setting process and means that they should be the final arbiters between competing views	Politicians within a representative democratic system are unable to accommodate the complexities of the modern world; they should act as meta-governors (mediators and referees)	Politicians try to cope with complexity by using governance networks as a means to control actors and realise policy, by emphasising output legitimacy and should be more 'emphatic' to other actors
View of accountability	Primary accountability lies with the elected political officials (classical accountability)	Accountability is shared between political office holders and other actors, multiple forms of accountability are added to the classical political accountability (performance indicators, boards, etc) (shared accountability)	Accountability is in the first place achieved by checks and balances in the decision-making process, by securing the openness of decision-making and enhancing transparency of decision-making by multiple forms of accountability (constructed accountability)	Accountability is secured by the dominant role of elected politicians. Other forms of accountability (like performance indicators) are used by political official holders to control other actors and the decision-making process as a whole (instrumental accountability)
View of decision-making	Decision-making takes place in closed networks that lack sufficient steering by or accountability to representative democratic institutions	The increasing complexity of decision-making requires governance networks in order to bring relevant actors into the process; politicians should focus on the main decisions, and devolve lower level decisions to governance networks	Modern society inherently is characterised by networks and complex decision-making with interdependencies; the information revolution and globalisation create new societal complexities; institutions created in the age of democracy are no longer adequate	Decision-making is complex, but takes place under the 'shadow of hierarchy'.

Source: Klijn and Skelcher (forthcoming)

**Table 2: Governance networks and representative democracy: comparative analysis of four European countries**

Nation	Denmark	England	Netherlands	Switzerland
Origins of governance networks	Governance networks longstanding means of enhancing co-operation between strong state and civil society. Increasing enthusiasm for networks from 1980s. Wide variety of networks sponsored by national and local government..	Political strategy of ‘modernisation’ by new national government, supported by coalition of local politicians, public officials, business, nonprofit and community actors	Gradual evolution from mid 20thC from ‘pillarized decision structures’ to sectoral networks and now to governance networks (problem oriented, wide stakeholders) and interactive decision making.	Dismantling of corporatist sectors in the wake of deregulation, transformation of the subsidiarity principle.
Relationship of governance networks to democratic milieu	Act to link national and local representative democracy with highly developed participatory democracy. Relative autonomy of governance networks and role in co-producing policy points to need for democratic regulation.	Hegemony established on use of governance networks/ partnerships as normal mode of local policy making and delivery, avoiding use of legislative instruments in unitary state. Extensive stakeholder engagement.	Negotiated in same way as decentralised political system requires constant negotiation between the centre and localities. Contrary factors include calls for citizen leadership and controls on external actors.	Budgetary processes defines legal procedures for linking governance networks to representative institutions and direct democratic decision making.
Role of elected politicians	Growth of governance networks and use of markets (NPM) implies changed role for elected politicians to meta-governors and new form of representative democracy. Experience of meta-governance reveals more limited role for elected politicians and increased role for administrators.	Marginal to governance networks/ partnerships. May have broad oversight role, but key actors are public managers working with considerable discretion but within broad political mandate.	Politicians have limited though important roles in governance networks. Most significance paid to role of public managers in securing good processes for interactive decision making.	New Public Management foresees the role of meta-governors for elected politicians. In practice, however, they tend to interfere in governance networks as if they were part of the public bureaucracy.
Transparency and accountability	Variable democratic oversight and constitutional safeguards though meta-governance of governance networks by public authorities improves transparency and accountability.	Strong accountability for public finance and delivery against targets. Variable democratic oversight and constitutional safeguards.	Variable and often not transparent because of range of actors involved. Democratic oversight through representative institutions at the end of the decision process.	Poor transparency as governance networks are not open to public scrutiny. However, accountability is difficult in general, due to “consensus democracy”.
Relevant conjectures	Complementary conjecture long established. Recent developments suggest transitional conjecture more relevant though marginality of elected officials causes concern in relation to future democratic anchorage.	Instrumental conjecture offers main explanation, with complementary conjecture also relevant in relation to legitimising governance networks.	Transitional conjecture provides main explanation with incompatibility conjecture a possibility if tensions between governance networks and representative democracy not resolved in process of transition.	Instrumental conjecture offers plausible account for the origin of governance networks. Complementary conjecture is relevant for the relationship to democratic milieus.

<sup>i</sup> The term network in Dutch literature to indicate these patterns of decision-making surfaces already in the eighties (Wassenberg, 1980; Rosenthal/Bekke, 1984)