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Implementing missions in Nordic regions

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Introduction

Mission-oriented innovation policies (MOIP) have gained traction in academia and policy in recent years as a possible means to set directionality of collective efforts and accelerate transformative change around some of today's grand societal challenges (e.g., Mazzucato, 2018; Schot & Steinmueller, 2018). This policy brief aims to shed some light on the mission's approach, specifically within innovation policy, and how it is interpreted and implemented at different territorial levels. First, the academic debate around the territorial dimensions of MOIPs is presented, followed by a brief discussion of how MOIPs have been adopted so far at the supra-national, national and sub-national levels. More specifically, a snapshot of the innovation policy landscape and the degree of penetration of mission and transformative approaches in Denmark, Finland and Sweden is presented. Furthermore, the interpretation and adoption of missions at the regional level are discussed based on the results of three Nordic case studies, including Northern Jutland (DK), Ostrobothnia (FI) and Västerbotten (SE). The final section discusses the implications of adopting MOIPs and provides a list of recommendations for Nordic regions.

The policy brief is based on research conducted on the project *Green Innovation: Systems Perspective and Mission-oriented Policies*, funded by the Nordic Council of Ministers via the Nordic Thematic Group on Green, Innovative, and Resilient Regions. The authors do not take any specific stance on whether authorities should or should not adopt mission approaches but rather present the academic and policy debate openly. In that spirit, the recommendations in the final section do not lay down a path forward but list key questions that competent authorities should consider when adopting mission-oriented approaches.

What are missions, and mission-oriented innovation policies?

Traditionally, innovation policy was mainly concerned with economic growth (Binz & Castaldi, 2024). In contrast, MOIPs and other related types of transformative innovation policies are today broadening innovation policies' objectives towards addressing grand societal challenges (Tödtling et al., 2020). Definitions of MOIPs vary. However, one dominant approach defines missions as setting ambitious societal goals, concrete success criteria, and a specific time frame within which they should be achieved (Mazzucato, 2018).

While both the European Commission (EC) and several countries and regions have adopted a mission-oriented approach to their innovation policies in recent years, there is little clarity about what it takes for public administrations at different levels to design and implement successful MOIPs (e.g., Bugge et al., 2022). A

narrower understanding of mission-oriented innovation can be dated back to the 1980s (e.g., Ergas 1987), and indeed, directionality and transformative policy approaches are common at the level of programmes and schemes. However, the broader understanding of government-led missions as a new way of applying Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) efforts to coordinate work within the public sector, across levels, and with society is rather new (OECD, 2022). Examples of national MOIPs include the *Mission-driven Topsector and Innovation Policy* of the Netherlands, the *High-Tech Strategy 2025's* missions of Germany, the *Moonshot R&D Program* of Japan, and the *Innomissions - Mission-driven green partnerships* – of Denmark. However, it is premature to assume that a broader understanding of mission-oriented innovation will become the norm. Indeed, governments in many countries are assessing the suitability of the approach in their contexts, while others have adopted smaller, more careful steps, mainly at the programme level.

The debate

MOIPs have received growing attention from both policy and academia, and several countries and regions are beginning to implement them (Edler & Fagerberg, 2017). However, MOIPs have also been criticised for different reasons. Critics argue that MOIPs can be too top-down (Henderson et al., 2023) and that by narrowing the scope, there is a risk of leaving out alternatives or focusing on the wrong missions (Wøien Meijer et al., 2022), which eventually could risk harming the overall goal, e.g., climate neutrality. Furthermore, it is uncertain what tools are necessary for implementing MOIPs (Mazzucato, 2018), as most societal challenges that missions try to address are so-called "wicked" problems (Boon & Edler, 2018). Wicked problems tend to be highly complex, difficult to solve, involve numerous stakeholders with varying and even opposing interests, require action at different institutional levels, and no single solution or approach can be identified (Rittel & Webber, 1973; Elia & Margherita, 2018). Another key critique relates to the lack of geographical focus of MOIPs despite being developed and deployed at different territorial levels (e.g., Wanzenböck & Frenken, 2020). Scholars have long argued that applying one-size-fits-all policies to innovation efforts tends not to be feasible and risks damaging regions by disregarding existing regional specificities and capacities (Tödtling & Trippl, 2005). This argument has also been raised more specifically about MOIPs, where some scholars have questioned whether sufficient geographical knowledge is considered (e.g., Coenen et al., 2015). Scholars have, among others, feared that especially structurally weaker regions could risk suffering under EU and nationally mandated MOIPs (Cappellano et al., 2023). It is argued that today's move towards adopting MOIPs could be scrutinised (Brown, 2021), e.g., due to the lack of empirical evidence (Bloom et al., 2019). However, how are MOIPs being implemented at different territorial levels today? The following sections will shed some light on this question.

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Implementing missions at supranational level

With the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda, countries are committed to undertaking profound transformative processes to address the environmental crisis (United Nations, 2015). Some scholars argue that these agreements demand major institutional innovations and governance frameworks to enable public authorities to design transitioning processes (Mazzucato, 2018). However, as Braams et al. (2021) note, there is no specific role or blueprint for how authorities should deliver on sociotechnical transitions in existing administrative traditions. Another complication is that countries alone cannot achieve ambitious climate goals; they require global coordination (United Nations, 2015).

At the UN COP21, in 2015, which led to the Paris Agreement, the global 'Mission Innovation' (MI) initiative was announced as a strategic alliance to meet the SDGs, including the pledge to double public funding with $32 billion per year in a five year period for energy research and development (Sánchez & Sivaram, 2017). Later, in 2021, Mission Innovation 2.0 was launched, pulling 23 countries and the European Commission (EC) together to collaborate around key areas that require particular action and RDI to accelerate progress in a targeted mission-based approach. Among other coordinating roles, the EC is responsible for co-leading the Clean Hydrogen and the Urban Transitions Missions and supporting the implementation of the other missions, seven in total (European Commission, 2022a).

Furthermore, the EC stands out as a key promoter of transformative innovation policies within the bloc through its research and innovation programme – Horizon Europe – with a substantial budget of €100 billion (Hekkert et al., 2020). Applying Mazzucato's approach (2016), the EC introduces 'missions' specifically for tackling

societal challenges which are deemed urgent, including adaptation to climate change, climate-neutral and smart cities, soil health and food systems, healthy oceans and waters and cancer.

However, directionality is also steered via more broad strategic framework policies such as the European Green Deal (EGD), Cohesion Policy, and the Recovery and Resilience Facility (Pontikakis et al., 2022). Implicitly, the New European Innovation Agenda (NEIA) brings the approach to life in other ways, such as the Regional Innovation Valleys (RIVs) initiative. In the case of the Clean Hydrogen Partnership, the EC has a dual role in co-leading the implementation of the Clean Hydrogen Mission globally and supporting the establishment of Hydrogen Valleys (H2V) within the EU.

According to Pontikakis et al. (2022), the EGD represents "Europe's Moonshot mission of the 21st Century" (p. 15). The problem's crux is that its implementation raises complex multi-level governance challenges. As challenges and possibilities vary significantly across territories, Pontikakis et al. (2022) argue that the success of MOIPs relies on a 'widespread bottom-up engagement and mobilisation' (p. 16). To this end, some scholars argue that close links are needed between missions and the Cohesion Policy (e.g., Cappellano et al., 2023). Cappellano et al. (2023) note that MOIPs can benefit from Cohesion Policy's adaptability to regional contexts and as a tool for redistribution. More specifically, Smart Specialisation Strategies (S3) provide "a unique combination of both top-down macro-level directionality and widespread bottom-up micro-level and enterprise-led engagement" (Pontikakis et al., 2022).

Photo: Tuomas Uusiheimo / Visit Finland

Implementing missions at the national level in Nordic countries

The adoption of MOIPs at the national level varies significantly in their stage of implementation and in approach. In this brief, we elaborate on the cases of Denmark, Sweden and Finland. Nordic countries represent interesting cases, as they all are high-income and known for prioritising innovation, yet innovation policy traditions and strategies are strikingly distinct. As follows, we provide a snapshot of the state of adoption of MOIPs in Denmark, Sweden and Finland based on an in-depth policy overview published in collaboration with professors Teis Hansen, Markku Sotarauta, and Markus Grillitsch (see Giacometti & Jessen, 2024).

Denmark: Gathering the innovation efforts through missions?

Denmark is the only one of three countries in this policy brief that has developed national missions to steer their innovation efforts. MOIPs can be seen to complement the existing research, development and innovation (RDI) instruments (Hansen, 2024). Scholars have argued that the innovation landscape of Denmark tends to be rather fragmented and that the MOIPs were a way to pull together Danish innovation efforts (e.g., Hansen, 2024). At the same time, different national institutions in Denmark have made various attempts to introduce mission-oriented

approaches, e.g., the InnoMissions by the Innovation Fund (Innovation Fund, 2025) and the eight regional Erhvervsfyrtårne ("Business beacons") by the Danish Business Authorities (Danish Business Authorities, 2025). While these two initiatives often overlap in themes and actors, there is limited coordination between them. According to Hansen (2024), the selection of broad priorities and missions is predominantly conducted top-down from the national to the regional and local levels. On the other hand, the follow-up and the selection of the more specific goals and targets, as well as designing action plans for implementation, tends to be a more bottom-up process facilitated by and involving relevant stakeholders. Generally, MOIPs selected at the national level in Denmark tend to lack specific geographic considerations. However, Hansen (2024) notes that depending on existing regional capabilities, implementing Danish MOIPs could add regionally specific benefits to certain areas, as seen with the InnoMissions. Furthermore, despite not having a direct geographical perspective, some of the InnoMissions might be more relevant for certain regions than others. The Regional Business Beacons from the Danish Business Authorities have an explicit place-based focus. However, they mainly focus on stimulating economic growth and regional competitiveness, and not all of them can be categorised as MOIPs (Hansen, 2024).

***NOTE:** See in-depth chapter titled 'Denmark: On a mission towards mission-oriented innovation policy' by Professor Teis Hansen, University of Copenhagen & SINTEF* (in Giacometti & Jessen, 2024).

Finland: Following the lead of businesses?

Setting directionality to innovation policy is not new in Finland. On the contrary thematic and challenge-orientation have been present since the 1980s. Furthermore, the now common use of related concepts, i.e., 'mission', 'transformative' and 'challenge' in policy documents, denote an increasing focus on innovation efforts as a means to address societal challenges. According to Sotarauta (2024), mission and challenge-oriented approaches are directly and indirectly embedded in many innovation policy and research programmes. However, the process of policy exploration and experimentation in the 2020s has not yet landed in an integrated and coherent policy strategy, nor is there an explicit comprehensive mission-oriented approach (Sotarauta, 2024).

Sotarauta (2024) describes how, although it appears top-down from the outset, in practice, the Finnish innovation system has a stakeholder-centric approach. The embedded nature of innovation policy enables more flexible processes where the

content and themes discussed continuously evolve via consultation with academia, businesses, and the public sector at different levels. Moreover, despite the place-less nature of innovation policy, a great deal of reinterpretation is possible at regional and local levels as well as influence from universities and companies. In this vein, public authorities adopt the role of facilitators of the innovation ecosystem, instigating various developmental processes and providing resources but leaving it to the business and the market to determine directionality (Sotarauta, 2024).

Sotarauta (2024) notes that the contradictory trends of emphasising the need for the state to take a firm role in setting directionality while reinforcing the business-driven innovation system show the lack of a shared vision. Therefore, instead of transforming policy frameworks, the pragmatic Finnish approach has focused on embedding sustainability-related missions into existing programmes and instruments (Sotarauta, 2024).

***NOTE:** See in-depth chapter titled 'Finland: Mission-orientated innovation policy?' by Professor Markku Sotarauta, Tampere University* (in Giacometti & Jessen, 2024).

Sweden: Consensus-oriented approaches to missions

Historically, Sweden has adopted several transformative innovation policy frameworks. Sweden's EU presidency in 2009 resulted in the Lund Declaration emphasising the role of R&I as a means to address societal challenges. Since then, Sweden has stepped up its efforts to a range of transformative, challenge- or mission-oriented research and innovation programmes explicitly targeting societal challenges and system change. Most importantly: Challenge-Driven Innovation (UDI, 2011), the Strategic Innovation Programmes (SIP, 2012), and Impact Innovation (2023). Based on these experiences, Vinnova, the Swedish innovation agency, released a handbook outlining a practical guideline for "Designing Missions" (Hill et al., 2022). However, besides the Impact Innovation framework, the mission-oriented approach is not widely diffused throughout the rather fragmented governance system. Nevertheless, Grillitsch (2024) argues that Sweden is still a frontrunner in transformative policies, with several government agencies mandated to implement transformative innovation policies.

According to Grillitsch (2024), Mazzucato's (2018) approach clearly reflects the understanding of missions in Sweden. However, rather than government-driven initiatives, the Swedish application is more cautious and embedded within the consensus-oriented approach to policymaking. Hence, rather than top-down directionality, missions function as a tool for stakeholder mobilisation. While the

government sets broad goals, missions are predominantly stakeholder-driven. National research programmes are more top-down, as topics and challenges are outlined in research bills. However, these bills are often the product of intense consultation processes and, thus, are more inclusive than they formally appear (Grillitsch, 2024). Furthermore, transformative innovation policies are generally aspatial, benefiting mostly the strongest actors. In the later mission-oriented pilots, however, place-based considerations have begun to appear through community engagement. Overall, Sweden's experience with MOIPs has delivered mixed results with a high degree of fragmentation at project level.

***NOTE:** See in-depth chapter titled 'Sweden: Journey towards a mission-oriented approach – 'made in Sweden' by Professor Markus Grillitsch, Lund University* (in Giacometti & Jessen, 2024).

Photo: Fredrik Larsson / imagebank.sweden.se

Implementing missions in Nordic regions

The focus of MOIPs at supra-national and national levels has naturally trickled down to sub-national levels. However, like at the national level, mission-innovation approaches are in the early stages, and their interpretation varies significantly across regions. MOIPs' have raised many questions about the extent to which they recognise geographical variations and allow for adapting to place-specific contexts (e.g., Coenen et al., 2015). In recent years, many scholars have contributed with ideas for how to incorporate geographical perspectives into the design and implementation of the MOIPs, such as Morisson et al. 'small-wins' strategy for underdeveloped regions (2023) and Tödtling et al. 'challenge-oriented RISs' (2022).

The following section elaborates on three distinct cases of manufacturing in Nordic regions: Northern Jutland in Denmark, Ostrobothnia in Finland, and Västerbotten in Sweden. Results are based on fieldwork conducted during 2024, including interviews and workshops with diverse stakeholders.

Northern Jutland: Local solutions to global challenges

The Northern Jutlandic Regional Business Beacon, CO2Vision, focuses on green industries, carbon capture, storage, and utilisation (CCUS) technologies, and power-to-X (PtX) technologies (Innovation Fund, 2025). CO2Vision consists of a broad consortium with representatives from universities and other higher learning institutions, business and industry organisations, and municipalities, to name a few.

According to the stakeholders interviewed in Northern Jutland, the selection of CCUS and PtX technologies as Northern Jutland's main mission was decided at the national level but with input from the regional level. It was experienced that the regional specificities, like the strong technical university in Aalborg, the labour market characteristics, and the vast underground, were taken into account by the national decision-makers when selecting CCUS and PtX as primary missions. The consortium meets regularly to develop subgoals, applies for funding and knowledge share. In the case of Northern Jutland, participants described how their distance to the capital region was hindering direct impact and the ability to meet and consult with national decision-makers. The top-down selection of the mission theme could, however, also be a way to create legitimacy for both the regional authorities and the local communities in these large societal transformation processes, i.e., deployment of CCUS and PtX-technologies. The partnership in Northern Jutland describes their work as experimental, allowing them to move beyond CCUS and PtX technologies, learn from their experiences, and be more flexible.

The partnership members had different roles and responsibilities, depending on their specific competencies. The university had experience writing applications, the municipalities could grow local support, and the business representatives knew the market and could provide technical know-how. The members knew each other well because of the tight-knit community in Northern Jutland and the partnership's regular meetings. On one hand, this would allow the members to build trust and work together to solve global and regionally specific problems. On the other hand, it was also described how there was the risk that they would only hear perspectives aligning with their own.

Overall, while the mission selection was decided on the national level, the Northern Jutlandic stakeholders described the CO2Vision as a Northern Jutlandic result, depending on regional capabilities and subsequently benefitting the region while benefiting Denmark and solving global grand societal challenges.

***NOTE:** This case is mostly based on fieldwork conducted in Northern Jutland in June 2024, during which several stakeholders from the regional innovation system were interviewed.*

Ostrobothnia: Policy evolution and collaborative approaches

Similar to the national level, the presence of directionality and mission-driven approaches in Finnish regions are embedded in the innovation system despite no direct use of full-fledged missions. The interviewed regional authorities described the introduction of transformative approaches as a gradual process of policy evolution rather than a sharp U-turn from pre-existing frameworks. The regional council of Ostrobothnia has been described as a forerunner in adopting Smart

Specialisation Strategies (S3) and facilitating the conditions for nourishing the innovation ecosystem (Johnson et al., 2019). According to the regional council, the innovation ecosystem and the intensive collaborative culture are today highly mature, particularly in the core sector: energy. EnergyVAASA cluster, pulls together several large companies, such as Wärtsilä, ABB, Danfoss, VEO, and The Switch, and many highly innovative SMEs (ibid.). It is believed in the region that the internationally relevant sector has the potential to be a driver in some of the imminent transitions. One of the mechanisms in place bringing in the mission-oriented approach is the 'ecosystem agreement' between the city of Vaasa and the government of Finland, a funding instrument made available through the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). However, the regional council has limited mandates and instruments to pressure the industry to fulfil ambitious missions. Instead, missions and transformative innovation efforts become incorporated into the stakeholder-driven decision-making process. The regional council is, therefore, active in pulling in instruments made available by the EU to boost consensus-based decisions in the region. The latest effort, in a joint effort with neighbouring regions is the application for the official status as a 'Hydrogen Valley' (H2V), an initiative driven by the EC as part of both the New European Innovation Agenda (European Commission, 2022b) and the global mission to produce 'Clean Hydrogen' (Mission Innovation 2.0) (European Commission, 2022a). Interviews revealed that if successful, the beneficiaries will receive up to € 20 Million in funding to boost the development of hydrogen value chain. The interviewed stakeholders in Ostrobothnia thereby experienced that a collaborative approach works most effectively in setting highly ambitious goals for the region, as opposed to a top-down exclusive process. Interestingly, stakeholders understood missions not as strict goals but more as a general guide towards which all relevant actors should align their efforts. Collaboration, however, was not argued to eliminate competition. Indeed, stakeholders stated that they were able to work together despite being exposed to a fiercely competitive market.

***NOTE:** This case is mainly based on fieldwork conducted in Ostrobothnia in May 2024, during which several stakeholders from the regional innovation system were interviewed.*

Västerbotten: Missions as a new way to work consensus-based

Although at a premature state, Västerbotten region has begun moving towards the adoption of MOIPs. With the elaboration of the *S3 Västerbotten Roadmap for Smart Economic Transformation,* the region makes clear its intent to introduce missions. Similarly to the case in Ostrobothnia, rather than a radical policy shift, missions are described as a form of policy evolution from previous policy efforts,

particularly the S3, and "a complementary element of the regional innovation strategy (RIS Västerbotten) and regional development strategy (RDS Västerbotten)." (Region Västerbotten, 2023, p. 15). Taking the Partnerships for Regional Innovation (PRI) Playbook (2022) as a point of departure, Västerbotten declares that missions need to be challenge-based, place-based and inclusive approaches, as well as to strive for system-level transformations (ibid.). According to interviews, the green transition generated sudden optimism in the region. The general decline of industrialisation in the post-1980s has accelerated the population drain towards Sweden's southern regions (Eriksson et al., 2024). However, the region's key importance of renewable energy and natural resources has opened new opportunities for Västerbotten. According to interviews, this has resulted in MOIPs and other transformative policies gaining traction.

Favourable conditions in Västerbotten in terms of land availability and inexpensive renewable energy were described as key factors in attracting large investments. Interviews revealed, however, criticism towards the corporate tax system in Sweden, which is seen to disproportionally favour urban regions while draining resources from low-density regions. According to interviews, the challenge with such a system is that the distribution of costs and benefits is imbalanced, with municipal and regional administrations being burdened with the costs, such as infrastructure and investment in education and healthcare. The boom-and-bust case of Northvolt battery factory is an example of the high risks involved not only for the company but also for sub-national authorities who support with significant resources. Stakeholders have drawn parallels between this case and the possible implications of MOIPs, generating some scepticism as they are, on the one hand, considered risky and, on the other hand, seen as potentially neglecting other important areas that need attention from innovation policy. Nevertheless, MOIPs appear to enjoy a decent level of support given that the regional stakeholders are well-experienced with industrial transformations. They are aware of the necessary and ambitious structural changes.

***NOTE:** *This case is mostly based on fieldwork conducted in Västerbotten in November 2024, where several stakeholders from the regional innovation system were interviewed.*

Photo: Werner Nystrand/Folio/ imagebank.sweden.se

Implications and Recommendations for MOIPs in Nordic regions

Despite MOIPs' increasing popularity, their diffusion at different territorial levels might be easier said than done (e.g., Wanzenböck & Frenken, 2020). Indeed, we have shown here that the penetration of missions into national and regional innovation systems varies significantly across the three countries.

It is key to highlight that mission-oriented approaches have not replaced pre-existing structures but appear as one additional tool in countries' and regions' innovation systems toolbox. In the Nordic countries, MOIPs seem to be integrated into well-established consensus-based policy- and decision-making traditions. There tends to be a major difference between how the system appears formally and how actors at multiple levels are involved in designing innovation activities. The reality depicts a mix of top-down and bottom-up processes leading to a great deal of re-interpretation and localisation of innovation activities.

Given the ongoing debate, contentious argumentation for and against mission-innovation approaches, and their heterogeneous understanding and implementation, the recommendations here do not lay out a pathway for implementation but rather present a number of key points that require reflection from the relevant authorities. Recognising the importance of the regional context and the unsuitability of one-size-fits-all approaches in the design and implementation of MOIPs represents a fundamental point of departure. The recommendations are based on the findings from the case studies from three different types of predominantly manufacturing regions in Nordic countries and, therefore, may not apply to regions with different contextual characteristics.

- **Regional context**: take the regional context as a point of departure

  I. Consider how the specific regional context can determine the mission approach regarding the available resources, economic structure, social context, and collaborative culture. The economic specialisation, e.g., manufacturing, process industries, or services; geographical location, e.g., peripheral or centrally located; population size; or level of maturity of stakeholder organisation may largely determine how missions are shaped.

- **Multi-level policy implementation:** recognise the opportunities for regional policy and suitability of MOIPs based on the degree of flexibility of administrative and legal structures.

  II. Review the legal mandates, policies and directives to understand the responsibilities of different government tiers and the degree of flexibility and autonomy of implementation each level has. Flexibility in the system may allow regions to re-interpret and localise top-down policy. However, a restricted mandate may challenge the possibility of regional authorities setting and implementing ambitious missions or may need support from the local, national or European levels to achieve them.

  III. Consider the advantages and disadvantages of aligning regional policy efforts with EU, national and local authorities. Stronger coordination may enhance impact and build momentum, but alignment can also risk neglecting regional priorities.

- **Leadership and legitimacy:** Embrace collaborative approaches

  I. Spreading responsibilities and de-centralised leadership can enhance action and build legitimacy over common goals. In cases where the regional mandate is weaker, de-centralised leadership may be a way to pull resources together.

  II. Recognise different actors' knowledge and capacities and enhance their abilities to lead or co-lead actions of common interest.

- **Nature of challenges:** Acknowledge the different nature of the challenges addressed by MOIPs adopting different approaches, types of solutions, and timelines.

  I. Addressing different societal challenges may require technical and non-technical, e.g., institutional innovations and behavioural change. MOIPs need to be designed according to these different perspectives.

- **Targeted vs. open-ended missions:** Consider the degree of certainty, complexity and contestation around problems and possible solutions (Wanzenböck & Frenken, 2020) to define the level of specificity of the missions. If there is much contestation and uncertainty around a mission, it may be challenging to define targeted and measurable goals and set strict

deadlines. Room for flexibility and an explorative approach to discovering the goals along the way may sometimes be preferable.

- **Managing expectations:** missions often entail conflicting or competing interests. Therefore, an important role of the authority is to manage expectations, help stakeholders find compromises, negotiate, and agree on common visions. Consensus, however, should not be understood as eliminating competition. Competition can co-exist with cooperation.
- **Building capacities** – Build the capacities and tools necessary to address complex challenges within public administrations and among stakeholders. Those involved in leading transformations need to be equipped with capacities that allow them to envision long-term plans as well as the agility to adapt to sudden changes in conditions and emerging knowledge. to be able to design, implement, monitor, and evaluate missions. More specifically, capacities are needed for:

  I. Designing missions addressing socio-technical systems (long-term vision) and **processes** that are inclusive and build legitimacy around the priorities and goals set.

  II. Coordination including both having facilitation skills (not only single events but continuously throughout the process) and the ability to understand and process different types of expertise (e.g., technical information and data vs values), different timelines (e.g. technological innovations, business plans, social-behavioural change) and expectations.

  III. Allowing for reflexivity, continuously monitoring the progress, the global context (e.g., markets, social trends, technological innovations, etc.), and evaluating objectively and inclusively the results and challenges. This process or reflexivity needs to be followed by a process of recalibrating the goals and timelines set and the means to achieve them. This may entail changing focus from technical to institutional solutions, for instance.

Further reading

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About this publication

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