

## **Holistic solutions to shared problems**

a case study on inter-organizational collaboration and collaborative innovation in crime prevention

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*Publication date:*  
2015

*Document Version*  
Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

*Citation for published version (APA):*  
Kankaala, E. (2015). *Holistic solutions to shared problems: a case study on inter-organizational collaboration and collaborative innovation in crime prevention*. Roskilde Universitet.

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# **HOLISTIC SOLUTIONS TO SHARED PROBLEMS?**

A CASE STUDY ON INTER-ORGANIZATIONAL  
COLLABORATION AND COLLABORATIVE  
INNOVATION IN CRIME PREVENTION



**PHD THESIS**  
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# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Although there is the name of only one author on the cover page, writing this thesis has also been a collective effort. Therefore a good way to start is by giving credit to all the people who over the course of this thesis project have been involved and provided support and constructive feedback. I am grateful to all the people I have met at Roskilde University and elsewhere, in PhD courses, work in progress seminars and around the lunch table, and who have provided feedback, supportive comments and challenging questions.

Thanks to my supervisor Professor Jenny Lewis for helping me to get through the messy process of thesis writing with not only excellent professional advice but also a whole lot of patience and humor. Associate Professor Annika Agger who took over after Jenny moved to Australia has been a great help in putting together the final bits and pieces and helping me believe in that the day will come when I finish this thesis. Thanks to my co-supervisor Professor Jacob Torfing for providing challenging feedback and filling quite a few gaps in my knowledge of the public administration literature. It has also been a privilege to be a part of the CLIPS project and meet researchers and practitioners with many different backgrounds and participate in discussions on collaboration and innovation. Thanks also to all the people who have taken time from their busy schedule to participate in my case study. Without you there would be no thesis, and I hope that the findings of this thesis can contribute to better understanding of inter-organizational collaboration and collaborative innovation.

Finally, a big thank you to all my friends and family for support and encouragement throughout this project and for putting up with yet another “I’m sorry, but I can’t make it tonight. I have to work”. I’m dedicating this thesis to my father who would have been proud and excited to share this experience with me if he was still here.



# CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 INTRODUCTION TO THE PROBLEM FIELD

This thesis focuses on the field of *crime prevention*, and more specifically *inter-organizational collaboration* and *collaborative innovation* in crime prevention among young adults. Crime is a topic of intense media interest and has also drawn plenty of political attention in Denmark and elsewhere. The thesis focuses on prevention of recidivism among young adults who have been involved in what is called repeated serious crimes or crime against persons. The kind of crime focused on in this thesis is specific, in that it often takes place in public spaces and hence is a problem not only from the point of view of the victim and the offender, but also a potential risk for urban public safety. Fear of victimization can be a problem that reduces urban dwellers' life quality, and cause individuals to avoid using public spaces.

In the context of crime prevention, two concepts are commonly used in the Danish public sector and other western countries – collaboration and innovation. Crime prevention is an area with high expectations for governments and public sector agencies to ‘do something’, to find new ways of working to tackle the problem of crime – i.e. create innovation. Crime prevention is also a typical example of a policy field where involvement of several actors and agencies is embraced, also in Denmark (e.g. Ministry of Justice 2009). As discussed in this thesis, inter-organizational and also inter-sectoral collaboration have gradually received more and more emphasis. In Denmark, for example, the collaboration between School, Social services and Police (SSP) for crime prevention purposes is presently functioning in every Danish municipality (The National Board of Social Services 2008)

Based on a case study from one Danish municipality, this thesis analyzes inter-organizational collaboration and collaborative innovation in the field of crime prevention. The case study focuses on a program that helps young adults to abandon a criminal career, referred to here as the Young Adults Program (YAP). Collaborative innovation in this thesis means public sector innovation involving actors from different organizations. The more specific purpose of this thesis is to analyze how new solutions to the problem of crime are created in collaboration between public agencies and how public sector actors perceive of the need to create new solutions. The concept of collaborative innovation is relevant, as it addresses the nitty-gritty of putting together ingredients from different agencies so as to create new solutions in the field of crime prevention.

The structure of this introductory chapter is as follows: First, I discuss how this study is related to previous studies in the policy field, and the contribution of this thesis to the literature in the field. This is followed by a brief description of the development of the research problem, a brief description of the case study, an outline of the theoretical concepts

employed, research problem, research design, and finally the structure of the rest of the thesis.

## **1.2. RELEVANCE OF THE STUDY**

The relevance of this thesis can be viewed from two different angles, empirical and theoretical. Empirically, the thesis can shed light on both inter-organizational collaboration and collaborative innovation within this field in Denmark. The thesis can also contribute to theories on inter-organizational collaboration and innovation through inter-organizational collaboration.

It is important to note that the focus of this thesis is not on outcomes of collaboration or collaborative innovation, but rather on the process of collaboration, although it is argued that the process of collaboration can also influence outcomes to some extent. The point of departure is that it is important to understand the process of collaboration and innovation and the challenges to collaboration posed by this particular policy field in order to understand how outcomes are created.

Crime among youth and young adults is scarcely a new phenomenon, and inter-organizational collaboration in the area of crime prevention in Denmark, particularly within the SSP collaboration, started already in the 1970s and has had a place in the Danish field of crime prevention ever since. In other European countries, inter-organizational crime prevention has for example in the UK been endorsed since the late 1990s (Locke et al. 2004). The same is true in Finland (Virta 2002) and the Netherlands (Terpstra 2005).

In Denmark, quite a few studies have been made of the effects of different crime preventive efforts. Some research has also been carried out on the organizational factors and their role in crime prevention, especially in the SSP collaboration. This literature is reviewed in chapter 2. However, SSP collaboration is organized very differently in different municipalities, ranging from a formal organization with several levels of administration to not even having a full-time employee (National Board of Social Services 2008). Hence, there is room for additional studies on the organization of inter-organizational crime prevention. As explained in chapter 2, the case, the YAP program, has some organizational characteristics that have not yet been studied in detail. This thesis can thus add to the understanding of organizational factors pertinent to crime prevention in the Danish context.

Inter-organizational collaboration, or network governance, or joined-up governance – depending on which term is used – is in general already very well researched within several policy areas and countries. However, it is argued in this thesis that some aspects of inter-organizational collaboration have not received very much attention. Such neglected areas include the role of interpersonal relations and not only inter-organizational relations in inter-organizational collaboration (Lewis 2011), as well as the combination of horizontal and vertical relations – i.e. the role of both inter-organizational (horizontal) relations and relations between levels of administration (vertical relations) in inter-organizational collaboration. Collaboration between agencies is by definition not only about horizontal

but also vertical relations, as the participant agencies very clearly consist of executive, administrative and operational levels. Although the role of interpersonal relations already has been acknowledged, the question of why interpersonal relations matter has not been discussed to any great extent. It is argued in this thesis that interpersonal relations are relevant to concrete outcomes in inter-organizational collaboration, in that qualitatively different outcomes are reached due to personal knowledge of the other collaborators. In other words, a positive synergy effect is created.

Often no distinction is made in the literature between collaborations in different types policy fields. As discussed in section 1.4 below, specific for this case is that the collaboration comprises agencies that can be characterized as frontline bureaucracies. It is argued in this thesis that this poses particular challenges to both inter-organizational collaboration and collaborative innovation and that have yet not been addressed in the literature. The thesis seeks to combine understanding of this particular policy field, inter-organizational collaboration and public sector innovation in order to increase the knowledge about creating new solutions in the field of crime prevention through inter-organizational collaboration. The thesis thus addresses inter-organizational collaboration in general and inter-organizational collaboration within the field of crime prevention in particular, and attempts to contribute to empirical knowledge on inter-organizational collaboration in crime prevention.

Innovation through inter-organizational collaboration – collaborative innovation – as a particular form of public sector innovation, has been in focus only recently (Bommert 2010, Sørensen and Torfing 2011) This literature has recently started to deal with the specific character of different policy fields and how this influences collaborative innovation. This thesis seeks to add to this literature by revealing the particular challenges present in crime prevention, seen as a field characterized by frontline bureaucracies. This thesis starts with the assumption that collaborative innovation can be seen as a particular type of inter-organizational collaboration, and that therefore understanding inter-organizational collaboration will also contribute to understanding collaborative innovation.

### **1.3. DEVELOPMENT OF THE RESEARCH PROCESS**

Urban public safety in general, crime and delinquent behavior are relevant research areas for a number of reasons, one of which being the inherent complexity of the issue and the fact that the solutions proposed are different depending on the respondent's professional/-organizational affiliation (see chapter 2) (e.g. Rosenbaum 2002). Therefore, my research interest was initially to study this inter-organizational and inter-professional work based on the assumption that professional conflicts might be found, or the tendency for one profession to dominate over others, or that some fruitful mix of different forms of professional knowledge would be found among the YAP participants. The character of inter-professional relations was also assumed to exert an influence on collaborative

innovation, particularly its output, and influence how the views of actors with different professional backgrounds can contribute.

Gradually, however, it became clear that professional differences in this case were in fact not quite as prevalent as assumed. From interview responses, a new theme started to emerge, namely the way in which financial and regulative frameworks in the different agencies influenced the maneuvering space of the individuals participating in the collaboration, and how the actors on different levels negotiated these barriers. The study then shifted focus to analyze the complex set of factors pertinent in inter-organizational collaboration and collaborative innovation. The focus also shifted from not only seeing the individuals involved in the YAP as representatives of a profession to also seeing them as individuals forming interpersonal ties across organizations and balancing between their home agencies and the YAP collaboration.

## **1.4. OUTLINE OF THE CASE**

The case study presented in this thesis is described in greater detail in chapter 2, but here I outline briefly the kind of crime prevention work that is in focus. This thesis presents a single case study of a program intended to help offenders, aged 18 to 25, out of criminality. The program is being carried out in a large Danish municipality and operates within the frame of the SSP collaboration. It is referred to as the Young Adults Program, or the YAP. In the program, individual action plans are created for the participating citizens in collaboration with different municipal agencies. The action plans are created in groups of frontline workers from different agencies. The regular member agencies at the time of the data collection were: Department of Employment, educational counseling from Department of Youth and Children, the adult unit and the children and family unit from the Social Department, as well as a special unit for young adults from the same department. The local SSP is coordinated by a central steering organization. This type of organization is known in the literature as Network Administrative Organization (NAO), which is also used in the thesis. The NAO's purpose is to coordinate, and in this case also develop, the work in the local SSP, and the NAO staff are also in charge of coordinating the YAP program. In addition to the NAO staff, the YAP program is led by collaborative organs on different levels of administration consisting of representatives of the participant agencies. According to employees, the YAP was launched in 2009 and was the first program for youth over 18 organized within the framework of SSP in Denmark. Since then, other Danish cities began establishing program aimed at youth over 18.

## 1.5. OUTLINE OF THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The thesis draws on essentially three different bodies of literature that address three different dimensions of the problem field: *frontline bureaucracies*, especially within the field of crime prevention, *inter-organizational collaboration/network governance* and *public sector innovation*. In the following, I describe how each of these literatures is used and how they relate to the thesis' problem field.

### 1.5.1. Crime prevention as frontline bureaucracy

This thesis focuses on crime prevention work among agencies that can be characterized as frontline bureaucracies (Lipsky 2010). Frontline bureaucrats, such as police officers, social workers, and education specialists, are public sector employees who have direct contact with citizens and by definition exercise a great deal of discretion in their work. Their contribution to crime prevention work is therefore important. Lipsky (2010) argues that frontline bureaucrats can in fact be seen not only as implementers of policy but also policymakers. The concept of frontline bureaucracy is therefore crucial for understanding crime prevention, and thereby, also inter-organizational collaboration and innovation in crime prevention.

Understanding frontline bureaucracies is relevant not only because of the role of frontline bureaucrats in actually making policies. Frontline bureaucrats are also in some sense mediators between the government and the citizens, and at times this places them in a difficult position (Lipsky 2010, Maynard-Moody and Musheno 2003). The relevant issues in understanding frontline bureaucracies are, on the one hand, the relationship between the citizen and the frontline bureaucrat, and on the other, the relationship between the frontline bureaucrat and higher levels of administration. It is argued in this thesis that due to these issues, inter-organizational collaboration and collaborative innovation involving frontline bureaucracies present particular challenges and preconditions.

### 1.5.2. Inter-organizational crime prevention as network governance

The second set of literature deals with inter-organizational collaboration. In the thesis I use the concept *governance network*, which is one of the concepts commonly used to describe inter-organizational collaborations. A governance network is defined by Sørensen and Torfing (2008:11) as follows:

*1. A relatively stable horizontal articulation of interdependent but operationally autonomous actors; 2. who interact through negotiations; 3. which take place within a regulative, normative, cognitive and imaginary framework; 4. that is self-regulating within*

*limits set by external agencies: and 5. which contributes to the production of public purpose.*

What is especially relevant in relation to this thesis is that the participants in a governance network are in a horizontal relation towards each other – i.e. typically, no one agency has decision-making power over the other agencies. However, since governance networks are to some degree self-regulating and based on horizontal relations, there is a need for some type of leadership (e.g. Ansell and Gash 2008). In steering governance networks, traditional, hierarchical methods are not feasible, so a different kind of leadership is required. The need for steering means that even though inter-organizational collaboration is based on essentially horizontal relations, vertical relations are also involved.

The point of view taken in this thesis is that leadership of governance networks need not be carried out only by formally appointed collaboration leaders – in this case, the employees of a NAO. The concept of collaboration leadership applied in this thesis assumes that leadership can take place through different leadership media (Huxham and Vangen 2000): processes, structures and participants (elaborated in chapter 3). This concept also entails that the factors that have an influence on inter-organizational collaboration can be both intentional and unintentional, and the actors who influence inter-organizational collaboration are not necessarily formally appointed leaders; they can also be other actors. The concept is also useful in relation to the point of view taken in this thesis that it is not only organizational factors that influence inter-organizational collaboration but also interpersonal relations and factors outside the governance network such as broader economic and political developments, called in this thesis “environmental factors” according to a distinction made by Mandell and Keast (2008).

It is also important to mention that a network can be seen both as a way of managing, based on the idea that there are some benefits to be reaped through collaboration between different actors, and a metaphor for the tendency to build networks across sectors and organizations (Nohria 1992). This is elaborated further in chapter 3. A network can be seen as a mode of organization alongside markets and hierarchies, but differs from them in that the kinds of relationships between the involved actors are different (Powell 1990, Gittel and Douglass 2012). The network mode of organization is based on reciprocal relationships between interdependent/complementary parties rather than on competition (i.e. market relations) or hierarchy (Powell 1990). These network-like relations come about not only through management decision but also spontaneously. Finally, although inter-organizational collaboration is often seen as relevant for crime prevention, the thesis does not assume that this has to be the case in every given situation.

### **1.5.3. Crime prevention as collaborative innovation**

The third set of the literature deals with public sector innovation. This thesis is interested in how different actors contribute to finding new solutions to the problem of crime, and how they perceive of the need to create new solutions. This issue is conceptualized in the thesis by using the term innovation. The concept innovation is understood as the creation and implementation of ideas that lead to qualitative change (Sørensen and Torfing 2011) –

i.e. new services, organizational forms etc. The definition quoted above is a broad definition, and innovation literature contains debates about which processes should be labeled innovation. Especially, the magnitude of change required for something to be called innovation, and whether innovation should be an intentional, planned process are matters of debate. This thesis focuses more specifically on service innovations in frontline bureaucracies, and the point of view here is that innovation should be defined by those involved, irrespective of the magnitude of change. This standpoint is explained in more detail in chapter 4.

Also, this thesis does not assume that innovation is necessary *per se*, or that it is the only way to create improvement in the public sector, although it is acknowledged that the need exists to “do something”, because the public sector is faced with increasingly complex problems while struggling with economic imperatives. The rationale behind drawing on theories of innovation in this thesis is that innovation is one way to conceptualize what is being done in public agencies to respond to the new demands, needs and policy objectives they are faced with. The administrative side of the public sector, which is the focus of this thesis, exercises a substantial degree of power through articulating and implementing policies in practice, and thereby influencing how policies actually turn out (Lundqvist 1994). This is especially the case within fields that are dominated by frontline bureaucracies (Lipsky 2010), where employees have a great deal of discretion. Irrespective of what term one uses, the need exists to develop crime prevention work, and demands exist that need to be responded to one way or another. All this can be addressed by using the innovation terminology.

The concept of collaborative innovation, then, as it is understood in this thesis, means innovation as described above, where actors from different organizations participate in one or several phases of the innovation (the view that innovation consists of different phases is discussed further in chapter 4).

Table 1 summarizes the key bodies of literature and the main ideas and concepts drawn from each.

<p><b>Frontline bureaucracy</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The role of frontline bureaucracies in crime prevention</li> <li>• Frontline bureaucrats as policymakers</li> <li>• Frontline bureaucrats between citizen and state</li> </ul>
<p><b>Inter-organizational collaboration</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inter-organizational collaborations as networks of interdependent/complementary organizations</li> <li>• Horizontal and vertical relations</li> <li>• Interpersonal, organizational and environmental processes</li> <li>• Collaborative leadership: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Structures</li> <li>○ Processes</li> <li>○ Participants</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Public sector innovation</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Innovation as creation and implementation of ideas that lead to qualitative change</li> <li>• Innovation needs to be defined as innovation by those involved</li> <li>• The role of public sector agencies, and especially frontline bureaucracies, in policymaking as a reason to study innovation in public sector agencies</li> <li>• Collaborative innovation as creating new solutions in inter-organizational collaboration</li> </ul>

*Table 1. Summary of the literature*

## 1.6. RESEARCH PROBLEM AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

To sum up, the aim of this thesis is to understand how and why new solutions – i.e. innovation – are created in collaboration with actors from different organizations in the field of crime prevention, which is a field characterized by frontline bureaucracy. This aim is accomplished through a three-step process. First, the thesis addresses the incentives and disincentives involved in working across organizational barriers in this case. Second, the factors that influence the collaboration are discussed, drawing on the concept of collaboration leadership (Huxham and Vangen 2000) and on the understanding of inter-organizational collaboration as influenced by three levels: interpersonal, organizational and environmental (Mandell and Keast 2008). Third, the thesis concludes by drawing on findings from the first two issues to discuss the creation of new solutions by working across organizations using the concept of collaborative innovation. The problem field and



concepts are analyzed in this thesis on the basis of the research problem that can be formulated in the following two questions:

**What are the incentives and disincentives to inter-organizational collaboration and collaborative innovation in crime prevention, understood as a field characterized by frontline bureaucracies?**

**How do leadership of inter-organizational collaboration and factors on the interpersonal, organizational, and environmental levels influence inter-organizational collaboration and collaborative innovation?**

The research problem is further divided into three questions, investigated through the case study and unfolded in the three analytical chapters of this thesis, which build upon each other successively. The questions are placed in this particular order so that the analysis derived from the first question forms the basis for the analysis of the next question; and finally, the conclusions drawn on the basis of the findings from the two first questions form the point of departure for addressing the last question.

**Research question 1:**

*What challenges, incentives and disincentives to collaboration across professional and organizational barriers in crime prevention can be found based on the YAP case?*

Inter-organizational collaboration in crime prevention is a widely embraced policy objective, and the purpose of this question is to analyze, and also problematize, this notion by drawing on previous literature on inter-organizational collaboration in crime prevention and theories on network governance.

**Research question 2:**

*What is the role of interpersonal relations and leadership through structures, participants and processes in inter-organizational collaboration in the YAP, and what factors influence these leadership media?*

This question focuses on factors that influence inter-organizational collaboration as described by the participants in the YAP collaboration on different levels of administration, including the managers (the NAO staff) involved in coordinating the YAP program. Here, I draw on the leadership concept used by Huxham and Vangen (2000) and the idea of interpersonal relations as a crucial aspect of governance networks.

### **Research question 3:**

*What incentives, disincentives and preconditions for collaborative innovation in crime prevention can be found based on the YAP case?*

The third and final question addresses in turn the concept of innovation, and in particular, innovation through collaboration between different agencies. In answering this question, the views of the participants in the case study on public sector innovation are addressed first. Then, the findings on inter-organizational collaboration and the factors that influence inter-organizational collaboration are drawn on, based on the first two questions, together with the findings on innovation, in order to discuss collaborative innovation as a particular form of innovation.

## **1.7. OUTLINE OF RESEARCH DESIGN**

The thesis is a case study that uses a mixed method design, but the emphasis is on qualitative methods. The study relies on interviews with the participants in the YAP program on different levels of administration and NAO staff, observations in meetings and Social Network Analysis (SNA), but with a heavy emphasis on the interviews. The interviews are roughly based on an interview guide. The methodological choices and data collection are discussed more thoroughly in chapter 5.

## **1.8. STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS**

Chapters 2, 3 and 4 review the relevant literature on crime and crime prevention, inter-organizational collaboration and public sector innovation, including more detailed discussions of how these three types of literature are used.

**Chapter 2** elaborates on *crime as a social problem* and *crime prevention as a policy field*. The specific focus of this thesis is on what is called social crime prevention – i.e. on the social reasons behind crime. The chapter outlines the understanding of the field as an interdisciplinary and inter-organizational field in which the frontline bureaucracies play a crucial role.

**Chapter 3** discusses *inter-organizational collaboration* by using the concept of network governance. The character of inter-organizational collaboration is discussed as both an inter-organizational and inter-personal process. At the same time, inter-organizational collaboration is seen to function as part of a wider social, political and economic context. The chapter also discusses leadership of governance networks by using Huxham and Vangen's (2000) categories of different leadership media.

**Chapter 4** discusses *public sector innovation* with specific focus on innovation in policy fields dominated by frontline bureaucracies as well as innovation involving several organizations – collaborative innovation.

**Chapter 5** presents the *methods* used for data collection, operationalization of the theories used, and the method of analysis.

Chapters 6, 7 and 8 form the analysis of the thesis, and each chapter addresses one of the three research questions. The chapters also build upon each other as described above.

**Chapter 6** discusses *challenges, incentives and disincentives in relation to inter-organizational collaboration* by drawing on previous literature on inter-organizational collaboration in crime prevention and literature on network governance.

**Chapter 7** focuses on the *role of leadership and interpersonal relations in inter-organizational collaboration*, based on the concept of three different *leadership media* (Huxham and Vangen 2000), and discusses how these three media and the interplay between them influence inter-organizational collaboration.

**Chapter 8** builds on chapters 6 and 7 and discusses the concept of *public sector innovation* as perceived by the interviewees and *preconditions for collaborative innovation*. Particular focus in this chapter is on *the role of different levels of administration in innovation*, with emphasis on frontline bureaucrats and on preconditions for collaborative innovation in such a policy field.

**Chapter 9** presents the thesis' conclusions and makes suggestions for further research.

# CHAPTER 2. CRIME PREVENTION AS A POLICY FIELD

## 2.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter briefly outlines where this thesis' case study is positioned in the field of crime prevention, and what is specific to collaboration and collaborative innovation in crime prevention. Although the main focus of this thesis is on inter-organizational collaboration and collaborative innovation and not on the substance of crime prevention, the point of view taken is that understanding the policy field in which inter-organizational collaboration and innovation take place is important. In much of the literature presented in chapter 3 on governance networks, the policy field in which the governance networks operate is not in focus; the focus is rather on the organization of the collaboration and issues pertinent to collaboration as such. It is assumed in this thesis, however, that the character of inter-organizational and professional collaboration, and also managing and organizing inter-organizational collaboration, is to some extent dependent on the characteristics of the policy field.

The first section of this chapter discusses crime prevention as a policy field and also specifies the kind of crime prevention that is in focus in this thesis. The concept frontline bureaucracy and its relevance for this thesis is also discussed. Frontline workers play an important role in crime prevention, because they function as middlemen between the citizens and the state. It is therefore important to understand their role and relations with other frontline bureaucrats, with public sector agencies' clients and the public sector 'machinery' in general. Finally, the first section outlines the characteristics of crime prevention in Denmark, including the role of inter-organizational collaboration in the field.

In the chapter's second section, three issues are discussed that, based on previous literature, can be said to be particularly relevant when studying inter-organizational collaboration and collaborative innovation in this field. First of all, the fact that the field is very politically charged is relevant. The thesis' case study deals with hindering recidivism in serious crime or crime dangerous to persons, which is an issue that receives a great deal of political attention. Second, the field of crime prevention is characterized by the diversity of professions involved, which tends to lead to conflicts stemming from different professional views regarding crime prevention. Finally, due to the fact that inter-organizational collaboration in this case deals with individual citizens, confidentiality is important; but at the same time, inter-organizational collaboration requires exchange of information between the participants.

In the final section, the case study – the Young Adult Program (YAP), and the SSP collaboration of which it is part, are presented in more detail. This section also includes

presentations of the agencies involved and their roles in the YAP and tasks in relation to the group of citizens targeted by the YAP program.

## **2.2. CRIME AND CRIME PREVENTION**

This section first discusses crime as a societal problem in Denmark and defines the kind of criminality focused on in this thesis. This is relevant in order to specify the thesis' problem field and what it seeks to contribute. Criminality comprises a wide array of phenomena, from economic crime to domestic violence, and crime prevention efforts are also various. Different types of crime also have different societal consequences.

Thereafter, an overview is presented of different views on the causes of crime, and then crime prevention is discussed as a policy field. As mentioned in the introduction, one of the main themes in this thesis is frontline bureaucracy, and this section also discusses the role of frontline bureaucracies in crime prevention.

This section also presents a historical overview of crime prevention in Denmark. This is relevant since approaches to crime and crime prevention differ somewhat, for example, between the Nordic countries and the rest of Europe. An overview of research on inter-organizational collaboration in crime prevention in Denmark is also presented, with particular focus on what this thesis can contribute to this literature.

### **2.2.1. Crime as a societal problem in Denmark**

Discussing crime prevention requires some words about what crime is and the kind of criminality focused on in this thesis. A crime is strictly speaking an act that is prohibited by law and for which there is a punishment. Needless to say, what is defined as illegal varies greatly in different societies and across time. An example is criminalization of begging in many European countries. In Denmark, for example, as this thesis is being written, begging is a punishable crime (Danish Criminal Code Ch. 22 § 197), and since 1 July 2014, Norwegian municipalities have the right to forbid begging.

This thesis focuses particularly on what is called repeated serious crime and crime dangerous to persons, which is committed by young adults, as these are the types of crime targeted by the YAP program. These definitions are not legal definitions; they are used in crime preventive work in the local SSP collaboration in my case study to classify different levels of criminality. Serious crime includes, for example, burglary, aggravated vandalism, selling drugs, serious threat with violence, and violence and crime related to involvement in extremist religious or political groupings or ideologies. Crime dangerous to persons includes, for example, assault, serious violence, use of firearms and robbery. In other words, the criminality addressed by the YAP program covers a wide range of criminal acts.

It is outside the scope of this thesis to discuss the development of crime rates in Denmark comprehensively, because crime rate development has been different for different types of crimes, and fluctuates from year to year. However, a few trends are worth presenting here.

There was a general rise in crime rates after the Second World War in Denmark as well as in most industrialized countries, but the level of criminality stabilized after the 1980s (Balvig 2005). According to a report from the Danish Crime Prevention Council (2014), violent crime, measured in victims' visits to an emergency room, increased from 2000 until 2007 and has decreased since then. The report covers the period from 1995 to the first half of 2013. Burglaries show an upward trend in Denmark as well as in other EU countries, according to Eurostat.

Crime and delinquent behavior is typically most common among youth and young adults, with crime rates declining with increased age (Moffit 1993).<sup>1</sup> This is also the case in Denmark (see e.g. Ministry of Justice 2012), but there has been a remarkable decline in criminality among youth between 10 and 17 years of age in Denmark since the 1990s, as shown by Balvig (2011). Crime rates are also higher among men than women. The gender perspective on crime and crime prevention is not discussed in this thesis however.

What is most relevant to this thesis is the trends in recidivism. According to recent Danish statistics, individuals with previous offences were more likely to commit new crime (within two years after release) than first time offenders (Statistics Denmark 2013); therefore, recidivism is clearly a serious problem that demands attention.<sup>2</sup> According to statistics from the Danish Prison and Probation Service, the younger the offender, the higher is recidivism (Ministry of justice 2013). Young adults are thus an important group on which to focus in order to reduce recidivism. Lösel (2012) also argues that the criminal career of young adult offenders is not yet as consolidated as that of adults, and it is therefore important to focus efforts on preventing crime in this group.

Crime is a societal problem on several levels. Crime of the types mentioned above, such as robbery, vandalism and violence, is obviously a concrete threat to the safety of individual citizens, and damage caused by crime entails societal costs. Some of the types of crime mentioned can also be seen as a threat to safety in public space. Safety is an important factor in citizens' free access to urban public space. The individual's ability to access social, cultural and other facilities without fear of becoming victims of crime is one crucial feature of quality of life. What is more, crime or a real or perceived threat of crime can also be relevant for a whole city or city area. It can have an impact on the reputation of a city and be seen as a threat to local businesses. In the public debate, crime often involves a stigmatizing view of disadvantaged urban neighborhoods and ethnic minorities, especially young men with ethnic minority background (Sernhede 2006, Qvotrup Jensen 2009), which adds to the political dimension of crime as a societal problem. In other words, interest in fighting crime stems not only from individual citizens – offenders and victims – but also from the wide range of interests and dimensions of conflict involved. These interests can also have an influence on what kind of collaboration and innovation takes place in this policy field.

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<sup>1</sup> According to many researchers, the reason for this age division can be found in individual characteristics that influence the likelihood of committing crime, such as impulse control and ability to anticipate consequences and plan ahead, which are not yet fully developed among youth and young adults (e.g. Lösel et al. 2012)

<sup>2</sup> Important to note, however, that patterns of recidivism also differ depending on the crime for which the offender was convicted. During recent years in Denmark, sex offenders have had the lowest recidivism levels, while those convicted for theft or robbery had the highest levels (Ministry of Justice 2013).

### **2.2.2. What causes crime?**

In the following, I present a brief history of criminological thought and the way in which crime has been viewed in Denmark during the last decade, but it is outside the scope of this thesis to make an extensive review of the criminological literature on causes of criminality. As discussed in section 2.2.4, the Nordic countries constitute in many ways an exception in criminal politics, although international tendencies have also shaped the view on crime in Denmark.

Criminology as a science has its roots in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and different theories have existed about whether the individual who commits crime is acting based on free will or has some characteristics that lead to crime, or if crime is related to societal factors such as the existence of socio-economic differences (Sarnecki 2010).

Borch (2002) describes how the view on the characteristics of an individual who commits crime has changed over time. In the early days of criminology as a science, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, it was argued that criminality is an innate individual property. A criminologist who had a major influence on the development of criminology, Lombroso (1835-1909), argued that a criminal disposition could be diagnosed judging by the shape of the skull and other physical features (Borch 2002). The view of criminality as a physiological property of an individual was soon dismissed, and focus shifted to seeing criminality as something caused by mental illness or deficiency and hence a phenomenon that could be understood through psychiatry.

The idea of psychological explanations of crime has also existed in Denmark, where the ideas stemming from Lombroso were also influential (Kyvsgaard 2012b). Around the 1960s, the views on what causes crime shifted from the biological and psychological explanations to focus on social psychology and sociology, and such issues as the role of living conditions, e.g. families and unemployment, became important. There was also critique of the methods of punishment and rehabilitation used in earlier periods, which is discussed in more detail in section 2.2.5. on crime prevention. The idea of the criminal as a particular type of individual was also questioned, as the earlier theories of criminology failed to explain why seemingly ‘normal’ people also commit crime. The conception of the criminal act as a rational choice rather than a symptom of mental illness was introduced in criminology (Borch 2002).

During the past 20 years, the focus has shifted again to individuals and individual risk factors as causes of crime, and psychiatric risk factors emerge again (Kyvsgaard 2012b). Kyvsgaard (ibid.) argues that in a sense this implies a return to the roots. Factors that potentially play a role in why individuals commit crime are many. Christoffersen et al. (2011) made a literature review of factors that increase the risk for an individual to end up in criminality. These factors include, for example, being the victim of violent abuse or psychological violence at home during childhood and other family-related problems, behavioral problems – most prominently ADHD- and ADHD-like symptoms – lack of social relations and low performance at school. There is no unambiguous causal relation, however, between any such background factor and the actual acts of crime, but rather an increased risk. For example, not everyone with a certain family background or diagnosis

will commit crime. The study by Christoffersen et al. (2011), which aims to create a model for identifying youth and children at risk of becoming criminal, shows a large number of “false positives” – that is, youth who did not commit crime despite displaying characteristics assumed to be risk factors according to research. Kyvsgaard (2012b) argues that the new focus on risk factors is also problematic, as there is a risk of overconfidence in the possibilities of identifying individuals at risk. What is more, she points out, mere statistical relationship between two factors does not prove a causal relationship.

Summing up, it can be concluded that there is a variety of explanations for why individuals commit crime, and this is also reflected in crime prevention. The next section presents an overview of different types of crime prevention and defines the kind of crime prevention focused on in this thesis.

### **2.2.3. Preventing crime**

Although this thesis focuses on a rather narrow area of crime prevention activities, a brief overview of crime prevention as a field is presented in this section. Crime prevention measures are typically categorized as social and situational. The point of departure in social crime prevention measures is that acts of crime are an outcome of different kinds of social factors, whereas situational crime prevention is based on the idea that crime is an outcome of some kind of rational choice, a decision, made by the offender rather than the offender’s social or psychological disposition (e.g. Clarke and Cornish 1985). What is known as social prevention typically includes a so-called community prevention approach and developmental approach (Tonry and Farrington 1995). Community prevention focuses, as the name indicates, on residential neighborhoods and involvement of local community organizations etc. (e.g. Hope 1995). Some of the assumptions behind such approaches are that informal social control, social cohesion, and other factors related to residential neighborhoods as communities, have a crime preventive impact. Another strand in the social preventive approach is a focus on individuals and the risk factors that lie behind why individuals commit crime, such as school, family and individual factors. This is known as developmental prevention (e.g. Farrington 2002, Tonry and Farrington 1995). Situational prevention involves attempts to reduce opportunities to commit crime. This thesis focuses on *social prevention*, with particular focus on individuals, but it is nevertheless relevant to point out the diversity of points of view on crime prevention, as these stem from different ideas of why crime takes place and what should and can be done about it (Pease 2002).

A second distinction in crime prevention activities can be made between primary, secondary and tertiary crime prevention (e.g. Lab (2007), according to Sarnecki 2009). Primary crime prevention involves measures directed towards the whole population, such as measures to reduce socio-economic differences or provide family support; secondary prevention involves measures aimed at risk groups; and tertiary prevention refers to measures to prevent recidivism. This thesis focuses on crime prevention among young adults who already have a history of crime – *tertiary crime* prevention. Although this thesis does not focus on outcomes but on the process of collaboration, this distinction is relevant to make, since in other types of crime prevention somewhat different kinds of issues may



arise; also, the kinds of innovations made and the actors involved may be different. For example, community prevention approaches typically involve the local civil society, and different sets of issues are pertinent, such as decision-making rights and questions of participant democracy.

What is especially relevant in considering inter-organizational collaboration in crime prevention is that the proposed solutions for how to fight crime also vary depending on professional background (Gilling 1994). As discussed later in this chapter, representatives of different professions and agencies can have different ideas about how to tackle criminality. A particular dilemma in crime prevention is between, on the one hand, the social perspective that addresses offenders' social and other problems, which can also be seen as causes of criminality, and on the other hand, the demand to punish criminal behavior (e.g. Ashworth 2002), a dilemma that is even clearer in cases of young offenders, as noted by Kyvsgaard (2004).

In its complexity, violent crime is emblematic of the complexity of modern society. Rittel and Webber (1973) launched the concept, "wicked problem" to denote the kinds of problems that are typical for contemporary society. Characteristic of a wicked problem is that the puzzle lies not in how to solve a problem in the most effective manner, but rather the fact that there is no unambiguous problem definition to begin with. Koppenjaan and Klijn (2004:28) define wicked problem as a problem where there is both "knowledge uncertainty and societal disagreement". As for attempts to solve a wicked problem, it is never quite clear how goals should be formulated and how to know when a goal has been accomplished. In the case of crime prevention, it is difficult to know what the actual effects of crime prevention efforts have been, since it is difficult to know what the situation would have been in the absence of any measures (e.g. Sarnecki 2009). Defining the kinds of issues that have a connection with crime is to some extent a grey zone.

What is more, solutions found may themselves breed unforeseen consequences. Increased policing, for example, may reduce risk of crime while increasing distrust of the police and other public institutions among the groups that are often seen as guilty by association, such as young immigrant men. Another example is crime prevention through surveillance cameras, which can pose an ethical problem if the filmed material should be stolen or leaked. Wicked problems also have a high degree of connectedness to other problems and involve conflicting values (Weber and Khademian 2008), most notably the already mentioned contradiction between punitive and social/preventive approaches to crime prevention and the broad range of interests behind attempts to prevent crime.

#### **2.2.4. Crime prevention as frontline bureaucracy: Frontline bureaucrats between citizens and the state**

As stated already in the introductory chapter, this thesis places a great deal of emphasis on the role of frontline employees. It is argued here that understanding frontline bureaucracy is important for understanding inter-organizational collaboration and innovation in this policy field, and particularly in social crime prevention efforts directed to individual offenders. The reason for this is first of all that frontline bureaucrats by definition need to rely on their own discretion in their work and can be seen to have a role as not only

implementers of policy but also in some sense as policymakers (Lipsky 2010). From the point of view of innovation, or creating new solutions in crime prevention, it could also be argued that frontline workers have plenty of knowledge about the citizens they deal with, since they are in face-to-face contact with them. Finally, as discussed in greater depth in chapters 3 and 4, not only horizontal (inter-organizational) but also vertical relations (that is, relations between levels of administration) are important for inter-organizational collaboration and innovation. In the case of inter-organizational collaboration in crime prevention, the vertical relations, the relations between levels of administration, are also influenced by the characteristics of frontline bureaucracies.

Frontline workers are in some sense the link between the state and the citizen. This role of frontline bureaucrats as the link between citizens and the state has been understood in very different ways in the literature over the years. The traditional way of portraying civil servants in public sector bureaucracies stems from Weber's notion of ideal bureaucracies. The Weberian ideal bureaucracy is based on the idea of a bureaucrat who acts universalistically, treating all citizens in the same way and with a practice based on objectivity and explicit, rule-based criteria (Weber 1922/1987).

The accuracy and also normative desirability of the above-mentioned view has later been questioned. Lipsky, in his seminal work (1980), coined the concept street-level bureaucracy.<sup>3</sup> Street-level bureaucrats are civil servants who work in direct contact with citizens, such as doctors, judges, teachers and police officers. Lipsky argued that these street-level or frontline bureaucrats in effect play an important role, not only as implementers of policy but also as policymakers, as they by definition need to exercise discretion in their everyday work and therefore have an important role in how the policies made are in fact enacted. Lipsky also points out that frontline bureaucrats are faced with a number of dilemmas when carrying out their work in the midst of the expectations of their home organizations, with pressures to deal with different interests and political and financial constraints. He describes how frontline bureaucrats tend to use various coping mechanisms to deal with their work situation and to allocate their scarce time and the scarce resources of their agencies.

Maynard-Moody and Musheno (2003), who have studied frontline workers, teachers, social workers and police officers in the USA, also emphasize the difficulty of being between the state and the citizen, but they have a somewhat different take on the role of the frontline bureaucrat. The essential difference between the two authors and Lipsky is their understanding of the motivations of frontline bureaucrats. While Lipsky argues that frontline bureaucrats rarely act as advocates for their clients to advance their interests despite the expectations to do so of their superiors and policymakers, Maynard-Moody and Musheno essentially claim the opposite, that frontline workers are devoted and often do see themselves as advocates for the clients/citizens.

Maynard-Moody and Musheno (2003) make a distinction between workers as state-agents carrying out policy, and workers as citizen-agents – advocates for their clients, who do not necessarily equate the norms and rules of the bureaucracies they represent with

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<sup>3</sup> In this thesis, the term frontline bureaucracy/bureaucrat is used, but the term street-level bureaucrat is the concept used by Lipsky.

fairness. The view of frontline bureaucrats as mere fulfillers of political decisions can also be nuanced by drawing on theorizing about public service motivation (e.g. Perry and Wise 1990) with the notion that individuals in public services act not only in order to maximize their own self-interest. Their motivation to work in public services can also be to serve public interest or based on affection for their fellow citizens. It is therefore questionable to see frontline workers only in relation to their role in policy implementation.

Nevertheless, frontline workers are also expected to act as bureaucrats, implementing policy, whether they personally agree with the policies or not. This puts them between the state and the citizens, potentially balancing between the demands of their home organization, their own professional views and normative and affective motivations, and the needs and expectations of their clients. A typical example of a value conflict that can face frontline workers is the discussion of whether or not health care personnel should be allowed to refrain from carrying out abortions due to their religious beliefs. Another example comes from Sweden, where the members of parliament representing the Sweden Democrat party presented a bill (motion) that would among other things criminalize helping illegal immigrants. This should also apply to employees in the public sector, who would be obliged to turn them over to the police (Bill 2011/12:Ju411). These, albeit extreme, examples illustrate the distance that can exist between an official policy and the values of frontline employees. What public interest or public value is can be contested.

However, the role of frontline bureaucrats is not only seen in a positive manner. Maynard-Moody and Musheno (2003) also point out how the citizen, as client, is constructed by the frontline bureaucrats and often divided into good and bad, deserving and undeserving. The authors conclude that there is a tendency among frontline bureaucrats to think that they, as opposed to their supervisors and the clients, know best (ibid.: Ch. 10). The ‘dark side’ of frontline bureaucracy can also include practices of racial profiling by police officers, and other stereotyping treatment. Therefore, the concept of public sector motivation or the idea of frontline workers as citizen agents, despite a positive aura of unselfishness, does not exclude a stereotyped view of citizens as clients. According to a study by Hjelmar (2013) on a crime prevention program in Denmark, the youth participating in the program felt that the youth coordinator employed to help them did not treat them equally, providing more help to some than to others, which they saw as a major downside. This illustrates the downside of the flexibility and discretion available to frontline workers.

Another study by Center for Boligsocial Udvikling [Center for Social Community Development] (2014) found that relational workers who have individual contact with disadvantaged youth can achieve good results in helping the youth to hold on to their education or find a job. It is clear from the report, however, that in order to develop a trusting relationship with the youth, the relational worker cannot work as the Weberian ideal bureaucrat but must use a very different, more informal approach. According to interviews with the youth, it is important that relational workers give the impression that the work is not “just work” for them, that they occasionally do something a little over the ordinary, that they do not make promises they can not keep, and have a non-authoritarian relation with the youth.

The degree to which frontline bureaucrats in fact exercise discretion is also a question of some dispute and is obviously dependent on different factors. May and Winter (2009, with reference to Meyers and Vorsanger 2003) list essentially four factors that influence the choices and actions of frontline workers: the actual policy goals, organizational factors that influence implementation such as the extent to which the frontline bureaucrats are able to exercise discretion, the attitudes and knowledge of the frontline bureaucrats regarding the tasks and finally factors like workload, the composition of the client group and such contextual issues.

A study by Stahlkopf (2008) presents an example of the consequences of external influence on frontline bureaucrats in an inter-professional collaboration in England, Youth Offending Teams (YOT). It illustrates the influence of performance management on frontline workers. YOTs' intention was to improve stability, uniformity and transparency, but the policy turned out instead to lead to desperate attempts to fulfill formal criteria, such as the number of meetings between the youth and YOT workers, and even fingering the program results in order to secure financing linked to performance.

Understanding frontline bureaucrats is thus relevant for understanding collaboration and collaborative innovation, irrespective of the view of their motivations or working methods, since they influence the work done in this and similar policy fields – for better or worse, one might say. In any case, it is important that frontline bureaucrats should not only be seen as implementers of policy. They should to some extent also be seen as actors in their own right, both in terms of the impact they have on the content of policy, and in terms of their role in contributing to new knowledge on crime prevention work. What is more, the motivations of frontline workers need not be either to fulfill a set of policy goals or maximize self-interest, as argued above. Frontline bureaucrats can also act as citizen-agents (Maynard-Moody and Musheno 2003) through mediating between clients and administrators and politicians. As discussed in chapter 4, frontline bureaucrats can, for example, resist implementing innovation when they consider it to put their clients at risk (Brown 2010). Thus, frontline bureaucrats are important actors with motivations that stretch beyond fulfilling policy goals and coping with the demands of their daily work.

Summing up, this and the previous section introduce central concepts in crime prevention. The focus of this thesis is on social crime prevention as opposed to situational crime prevention. Frontline bureaucrats play an important role in social crime prevention, as they are the link between the citizens and the state. The next section presents an overview of how crime prevention has been seen in Denmark and the Nordic countries. Subsequently, I discuss in particular inter-organizational crime prevention, earlier literature in the field and the contribution of the thesis to this literature.

### **2.2.5. Crime prevention in Denmark and the Nordic countries**

Despite some foreign influence on criminological thought in the Nordic countries, Denmark and other Nordic countries constitute an exception compared to other industrialized countries with regard to responses to crime. The Nordic countries have a less punitive view of criminal justice compared to other European countries. This is reflected, for example, in lower incarceration rates and average prison sentences in the Nordic

countries (Lappi-Seppälä 2012). Von Hofer (2005) argues however that since the 1980s even the Nordic countries have experienced a shift towards a more punitive stand in fighting crime. This is also the case in Denmark, where punishments have gradually become more severe for a number of different crimes, despite the fact already mentioned that after the initial rise in crime rates after World War II, the level of criminality actually stabilized in the 1980s (Balvig 2005). However, Lappi-Seppälä (2012) argues that these changes have not been so radical that the Nordic countries can no longer be seen as an exception in terms of criminal justice.

Historically, Nordic criminal policies have gone through different periods with different ideologies, along the lines of the different criminological ideas presented above. Kyvsgaard (2012a: 129-30) says a division can be made into three periods: “reform and optimism” in the early twentieth century; “disappointment, new directions and alternatives” from the 1950s onwards; and “democratization and popularization of criminal politics” after the 1990s. In the early twentieth century, there was an optimism with regard to rehabilitation of criminals, whereas those considered incurable were given long prison sentences. After the middle of the twentieth century, both the rehabilitation ideology and long sentences were questioned (Kyvsgaard 2012a, Borch 2002). Long sentences were increasingly seen as inhumane, and alternatives to imprisonment were developed. Research also emerged on the actual effect of the earlier criminal policy, such as indeterminate sentences, which were thought to have a rehabilitative effect. The empirical research that emerged in the 1960s in Scandinavia showed that incarceration, or the indeterminate sentences practised, actually did not reduce recidivism, and this led to criminal policy reforms. As Kyvsgaard (2012b) notes, the early ideas about rehabilitation of criminals through incarceration or other means were in fact based on ideas rather than empirical research.

In the twenty-first century, a new change has taken place as the role of those previously seen as experts in criminal policies has been undermined (Balvig 2005). Now, criminal policies have become the domain of politicians (Kyvsgaard 2012a, Balvig 2005). The attitude towards crime has become more punitive, and what is more, the focus has shifted from offenders to victims (Balvig 2005).

According to the Danish Crime Prevention Council, there has been more focus during the past 10 years in Denmark on evidence-based criminology and what works in crime prevention. As mentioned in section 2.2.2., there is also an increased focus on individuals and individual risk factors recently, as opposed to sociological explanations (Kyvsgaard 2012b).

There has recently also been a tendency towards diversification of youth justice policies in Denmark, and plenty of different initiatives and measures have been made (Kyvsgaard 2004). It is difficult to gain an overview of the types of crime prevention carried out in Denmark today, since each municipality has their own crime prevention interventions, and not every crime preventive measure taken is systematically evaluated (National Board of Social Services 2012). Crime prevention efforts reported by the National Board of Social Services (2012) include for example a survey on substance abuse, new types of inter-organizational work and a new youth club.

A theme that has emerged in recent decades is the idea that local communities, and in particular disadvantaged neighborhoods, are important sites for crime prevention, and crime prevention efforts have been included in local development projects (Borch 2005). In Denmark, social problems and ethnic tensions in disadvantaged neighborhoods received much attention in the early 1990s, which led to establishing the national City Committee (Danish: Byudvalget) in 1993 (Agger 2005). Among the issues to be tackled in the new strategy for disadvantaged neighborhoods was the high level of criminality in these areas. These local development projects typically involve several aspects, and tackle issues like social problems, integration and enhance citizen involvement. One measure recently adopted from the Netherlands and also mentioned in the report by the National Board of Social Services is the so-called Hotspot concept, where crime preventive and safety improving efforts, both social and situational, are employed in a limited city area. The idea is also to improve coordination of the different crime preventive measures in the area.

The breadth of the view on crime prevention is also illustrated in the recommendations by Danish Crime Prevention Council. They distinguish between “building up”, prevention and crime prevention. The first focuses on “creating good, safe and developing preconditions for everyone in the society” (Danish Crime Prevention Council 2009: 5); the second focuses on preventing an “undesirable situation, event or problem” from happening; and only the last aims to prevent acts of crime or recidivism. The undesirable situations referred to need not be criminal acts but can also include cannabis or alcohol abuse, and prevention intends to focus on factors that protect against criminality (Danish Crime Prevention Council 2012). In fact, Borch (2005) goes so far as to argue that crime prevention in Denmark has gained a totalitarian character that encompasses every aspect of life, since, as he argues, virtually anything is promoted as having a crime preventive purpose.

The diversity in crime prevention efforts can be both positive and negative. This diversity, notes Kyvsgaard (2004: 381), risks making the system less predictable and comprehensible for offenders and the public “...and risks more inconsistency in practice”. Existence of many different crime prevention projects in the same location also makes management of crime preventive efforts more difficult and demands coordination in order to avoid overlapping projects (Torfing and Hagedorn Krogh 2013). Overlap in municipal crime preventive efforts has also been found in other case studies of Danish crime prevention (Hjelmar 2013, Mehlbye et.al. 2012).

### **2.2.6. Inter-organizational collaboration in crime prevention in Denmark**

As mentioned in the introductory chapter, inter-organizational and also cross-sectorial collaboration in crime prevention has a long history in Denmark and has gradually become more institutionalized. The emphasis on collaboration is also reflected in legislation on inter-organizational collaboration that has developed over the years.

The so-called school, social services and police (SSP) collaboration, which is the focus of the case study of this thesis, is a rather institutionalized form of inter-organizational

collaboration that exists nowadays in all Danish municipalities. There are, however, major differences between municipalities regarding how the SSP collaboration is organized (National Board of Social Services 2008). The SSP collaboration was started in 1977 (Danish Crime Prevention Council 2012), and its work originally focused on youth under 18. The age group has gradually expanded, but not all municipalities have SSP for youth over 18 (Danish Crime Prevention Council 2012).

Although the SSP collaboration in institutionalized form is not legally mandated, the collaboration is also in some respects anchored in legislation. Inter-organizational collaboration within the SSP is facilitated by the fact that it is possible to exchange information between different authorities for crime preventive purposes, based on a law that has been in place since 1990 (Kyvsgaard 2004). This precondition has naturally been debated, due to concern for individual privacy, but this special legislation does enhance the possibilities for inter-organizational collaboration that otherwise would be more difficult (Thomas 1990).

To some extent, the SSP collaboration also has to do with overlapping responsibilities with regard to delinquent youth. Social authorities are involved in cases of young offenders, except for very minor offenses, but this is not the case for offenders over 18, and collaboration between social services and police is not legally mandated after offenders turn 18. In a publication by the Danish Crime Prevention Council (2012), it is noted that one challenge for inter-organizational collaboration is to secure the transfer of youth from the services available to those under 18 to the services available for those over 18, as many changes take place when a person turns 18.

A police reform in 2007 entailed yet another step toward deepening collaboration between public sector actors, and also to involve citizens more in crime prevention. An addition was made to the Administration of Justice Act that obliges the police to establish collaboration with the school, social services and the Danish Prison and Probation Service (Administration of Justice Act, Chapter 11, § 114). As mentioned in the previous section, another important feature of Danish crime prevention is what can be called a form of community prevention ideology (see section 2.2.3) with focus on involvement of local communities and cross-sectorial collaboration (Torfing and Hagedorn Krogh 2013). A part of the 2007 police reform was that the police are also obliged to make a plan for collaboration between the police, the municipalities, other public authorities, interest organizations and associations in each police district (Danish: politikreds) (Administration of Justice Act, Chapter 11 § 113). However, since cross-sectorial collaboration is not within the scope of this thesis, this type of crime prevention effort in the Danish context is not discussed in more detail here.

As already mentioned, municipalities have developed very different types of SSP organization. This is the case since there is no obligation to organize the SSP collaboration in a specific way. According to a publication by the Danish Crime Prevention Council (2012), it is characteristic for the SSP in Denmark that the collaboration in each municipality has developed on the basis of the local situation. The SSP collaborations existing in different municipalities vary in terms of number of fulltime employees, leadership (i.e. which agency the collaboration is anchored in), how many levels of

administration are involved, on which level of administration coordination takes place, the types of activities arranged etc. (National Board of Social Services 2008). This also entails a challenge to research on inter-organizational collaboration in Denmark, as it is difficult to generalize findings across municipalities. As discussed in more detail in the next chapter, inter-organizational collaboration is greatly influenced by such contextual factors as the history of collaboration in the area, which further complicates the possibility of drawing conclusions based on case study research.

The field of crime prevention is currently being researched not only in many Danish universities but also in different national research centers in Denmark, e.g. the Center for Community Social Development (Danish: Center for Boligsocial Udvikling), National Institute of Municipal and Regional Research and Analysis (KORA) and the Danish National Center for Social Research (SFI). These institutes deliver research and also policy recommendation-oriented evaluations of different crime prevention initiatives. The focus of research on crime prevention is mainly on outcomes of specific crime prevention efforts rather than organizational aspects of inter-organizational collaboration, although some studies exist on organizational factors as well. Hjelmar (2013), from KORA, has studied the role of a coordinator in a youth crime prevention program in Albertslund municipality. Mehlbye et al. (2012), also from KORA, have carried out an evaluation on crime prevention work in the Danish municipality of Ishøj and also addressed organizational issues. Inter-organizational collaboration in the Hotspot model presented earlier is discussed in a report by the Center for Community Social Development (2010). Perry (2012) has studied the relation between youth and SSP employees. Balvig et al. (2011) have evaluated the police reform that was launched in 2007, and also addressed the development of collaboration between the police and other actors after the reform. Torfing and Hagedorn Krogh (2013) have studied drivers and barriers in relation to collaborative innovation, particularly in gang prevention, with focus on the role of innovation leadership and organization of the collaboration (the study uses the term “institutional design” regarding the organization of inter-organizational collaboration). These studies are referred to in the next section on challenges to inter-organizational crime prevention, in addition to other predominantly international literature related to the field.

The contribution of this thesis to the crime prevention literature can be seen in two ways. First of all, this particular type of inter-organizational collaboration, the Network Administrative Organization (NAO), has largely not been researched in this problem field. The role of a SSP secretary (a NAO) is discussed in Torfing and Hagedorn Krogh (2013) in connection with a case study, but this is not the main focus of their study. In the report on Hotspots (Center for Community Social Development 2010), organizational factors are also mentioned but not in great detail – rather than being a theoretical article, the report is intended to provide guidance to practitioners. I argue, therefore, that a more detailed analysis of this form of organization as such can well supplement the existing literature. Second, the existing literature on inter-organizational collaboration in crime prevention focuses mainly on practical/empirical findings rather than theory (apart from the studies by Perry and Torfing and Hagedorn Krogh). This thesis aims to contribute by applying theories on frontline bureaucracies, network governance, and innovation to provide a method for



making more theoretical conceptualization of inter-organizational collaboration in crime prevention.

## **2.3. CHALLENGES OF INTER-ORGANIZATIONAL COLLABORATION AND COLLABORATIVE INNOVATION IN CRIME PREVENTION**

This section aims to discuss what is specific about crime prevention as a policy field with regard to inter-organizational collaboration and collaborative innovation. As concluded in section 2.2.1, the reasons for the type of crime addressed in this thesis are various; therefore, many different public sector agencies are involved in work related to crime prevention. This section reviews literature from Denmark and abroad, and to the extent possible, research from Denmark is drawn on to discover what is specific about the challenges of inter-organizational collaboration in Denmark.

This section discusses essentially three characteristics of this policy field: first, the fact that the field is very politically charged; second, inter-professional conflicts especially have to do with the punitive vs. social preventive ‘camps’; third – and possibly not specific only to crime prevention but more to frontline work in general – is the dilemma of, on the one hand, the need for some information sharing between different agencies, and on the other, the confidential character of the work.

### **2.3.1. Politics**

As also discussed in the next chapter, inter-organizational collaborations are influenced by the surrounding political context and what is done in inter-organizational collaborations, and the why and how are not without political motives. As mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, crime and causes of crime constitute a very politically charged area. Politics of crime prevention can influence inter-organizational collaboration so that political demands dictate what kind of crime prevention is implemented. What is more, the very idea of inter-organizational collaboration is motivated not only by arguments that have to do with the substance matter of crime prevention; in many countries, such collaboration has become a policy imperative, something that ‘should be done’.

According to Kyvsgaard (2004), crime in Denmark, as well as in other countries, is becoming increasingly political and has symbolic value, because it is assumed to be important for voters. Politicians tend to react quickly to crimes that receive wide publicity, and actions are taken that seem out of proportion to the actual prevalence of a certain crime, e.g. violent crime and sexual crime. Kyvsgaard (2004) also argues that the increased political focus has been an important factor in the increase in the number of new projects in the policy field. In Denmark, demands for harsher punishment have been increasing, while actual crime rates have not (Balvig 2005). This, says Balvig, is also part of an international trend of increasing punishments.

In Denmark, much focus on criminality during recent years has been due to a rise in organized crime and gang-related shootings, where not only gang members but also citizens with no connection to gangs have become victims of gun violence, sometimes causing deaths. In connection with escalating gang conflicts in Copenhagen in fall 2008, a new law enabling harsher penalties for gang-related crime was approved, and in 2013, this legislation was revised and measures were introduced including additional harshening of penalties and more emphasis on preventive measures.

Politics of crime prevention can also influence inter-organizational collaboration, which can to some extent be seen as a response to fragmentation of the public sector into separate, specialized sectors and the view that more than one actor is needed to fruitfully engage in crime prevention. However, inter-organizational collaboration is at times embraced, not only on the basis of its expected benefits, but also as part of a political agenda. This, it is argued (Goris and Walters 1999), has happened for example in Belgium.

The political nature of crime prevention can also influence the local level. Typical critique of a network form of governance is that such networks are difficult to control through democratic means, as they involve actors not only from public but also other sectors and from multiple levels of government (e.g. Sørensen and Torfing 2005a). This particular field, however, illustrates how the democratic anchorage of governance networks in crime prevention can be challenging, if not also to some extent counterproductive. Goris and Walters (1999) have studied inter-organizational collaboration in Belgium, where they argue that involvement of politicians has had the effect that the focus of the collaborations has continuously shifted and the collaborations are used for political purposes. To some extent, this issue is also pertinent to the Danish case, since one of the changes entailed in the 2007 police reform was that municipal politicians were to be included in the district councils of the police (Balvig et al. 2011).

### **2.3.2. Professional conflicts**

The second issue that is specific to this field has to do with inter-professional conflicts. What makes inter-organizational crime prevention complicated is that different actors within the policy field often have different perceptions on what crime prevention should be about (Gilling 1994, Locke et al. 2004). For example, according to an evaluation of a crime prevention partnership in the USA, relationships between police and social workers became strained, because the police advocated a punitive approach while social workers were more inclined toward preventive measures (Rosenbaum 2002). Representatives of different professions may be skeptical about other professions' abilities to deal with the problem (Larsson 2005) and reluctant to let other professions inform their expertise (Locke et al. 2004).

Furthermore, it is not always only a question about different professions but also different roles within the same profession. A study by Larsson (2005) on the Norwegian police force showed that tension existed between the crime preventive and law enforcement sections within the police.

Burnett and Appleton (2004) noted that multi-actor collaboration need not be seen as unambiguously positive, despite the perceived benefits in an ideal case. It can be argued that the idea of having a joint objective in effect serves to suppress disagreement (ibid., referring to Bailey and Williams (2000) and Crawford (1998)).

Halliday et al. (2009) found that social workers, when working in courts, felt a tension between their own profession and the judges'. They felt they had to adjust to the judges' expectations in order to be taken seriously. An imbalance existed between these two professions, since the latter has higher status and also formal decision-making power in court cases. This example illustrates that factors other than different perceptions of the subject matter influence the interaction between the participants in inter-professional collaboration, because the legal framework and the distribution of decision-making rights regulating the policy field where collaboration takes place also influence the collaboration on the frontline level.

It is however not necessarily the case that the differences between professions are similar in the UK and Denmark. According to a case study from Denmark by Melbye and Hjelmar (2012), a kind of consensus seems to exist among employees from different departments about what should be the focus of crime prevention and the importance of making a broad effort in several areas (i.e. inter-organizational collaboration). Also, the study by Balvig et al. (2011) indicates that partners in SSP collaboration were generally satisfied with the involvement of the police in SSP, which also indicates a lack of professional conflicts, although this was not the topic of the study. However, Torfing and Hagedorn Krogh (2013) noted professional differences that were to some extent a problem for inter-organizational collaboration in a case study on SSP collaboration.

### **2.3.3. Confidentiality**

Finally, a third challenge of collaboration is not related to professional conflicts but to the workers' relationship with citizens, most notably the issue of information sharing vs. confidentiality (although this obviously is an issue within other fields as well, such as health, where confidentiality is important). Young et al. (2005) write about involvement of mental health professionals in risk assessment of dangerous offenders. They argue that a tension exists between the duty to collaborate with other authorities and a confidential relationship with the offender. This tension is due to the risk of being seen as an informer, which might prevent offenders from disclosing their thoughts about delinquent behavior and thus harm the therapeutic process. This is also noted by Perri 6 et al. (2006). Perry (2012) found that distrust towards SSP employees existed among ethnic minority youth in a Danish city. They saw the SSP employees as traitors, believing that they were collaborating with the police behind their backs, while Melbye et.al. (2012), in a case study of crime prevention in a Danish city, found that public sector employees considered secrecy to be a barrier to collaboration between organizations.

Thus, an inherent dilemma exists in inter-organizational collaboration in crime prevention between frontline employees. On the one hand, information sharing is necessary to do work of the kind discussed in this thesis – coordinating efforts between different

agencies – while on the other hand, information sharing can also be counterproductive. Information sharing is important for any collaboration, but in the case of crime prevention and probably also other work involving frontline bureaucracies, the information is of a different kind, and the reasons for keeping information confidential are different than in the case, for example, of collaboration between businesses. Information sharing in frontline work has to do with the privacy of the individual citizen and the relationship between the employee and the client, while in some other areas reluctance to share information may, for example, have to do with fear of exposing business secrets to competitors.

Summing up, inter-organizational collaboration is characterized by potentially conflicting ideas about crime prevention, political demands and a dilemma between confidentiality and the need for information sharing. What is more, this case, as is typical for social crime prevention, is characterized by the importance of frontline bureaucracies. The challenges described mean essentially that inter-organizational collaboration in crime prevention is influenced by the environmental factors described in the introductory chapter – that is, factors that stem from outside the collaboration, political demands that influence how the agenda is set. But inter-organizational collaboration is also a process that takes place between individual employees and organizations, which may or may not share the same ideas about the problem. Finally, inter-organizational collaboration in crime prevention is also about the relationship between the frontline workers and the clients. In other words, the preconditions of inter-organizational collaboration are influenced by factors on different levels (see the level distinction by Mandell and Keast 2008, presented in chapter 1 and further in chapter 3).

In the following, I present the case study of this thesis, and the kind of crime prevention done in the case. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, the thesis focuses on so-called social crime prevention, and more specifically tertiary crime prevention – that is, preventing recidivism. I present the agencies involved and their tasks in relation to this group of clients, and also how the collaboration is organized and steered politically in order to provide an introduction to the kinds of relationships between the organizations and employees involved and how the collaboration is anchored to the political decision-making system.

## **2.4. THE CASE**

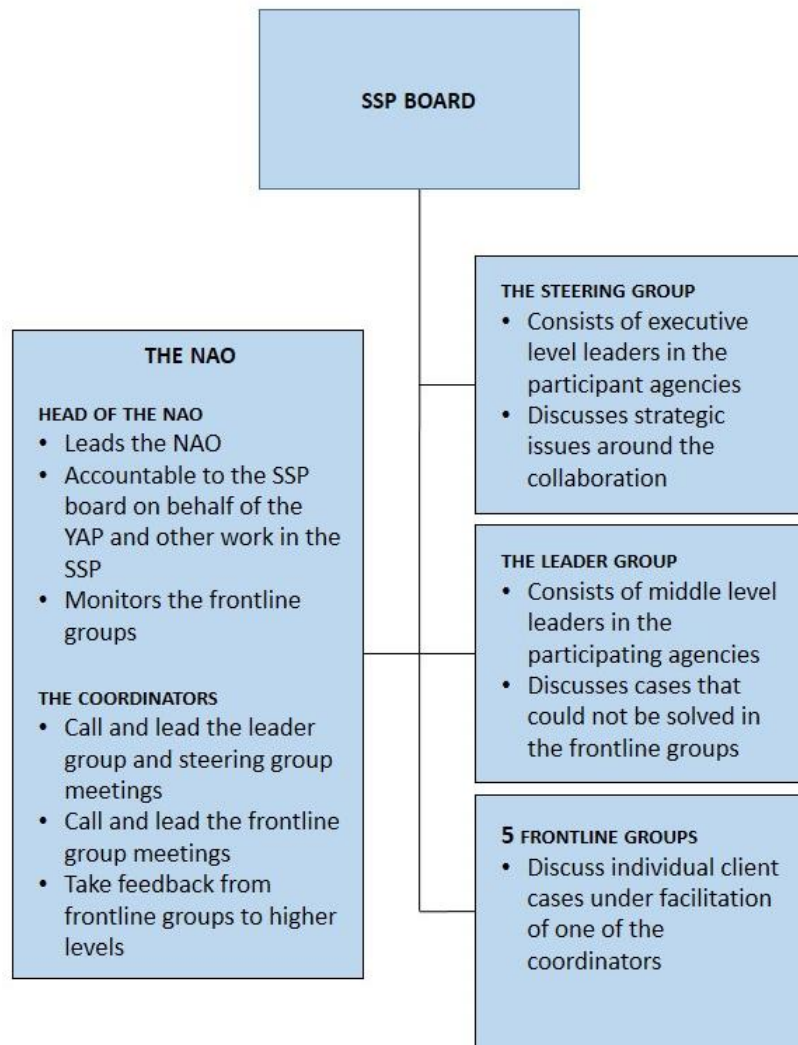
In this final section of the chapter, I describe the case that is the focus of this thesis in order to further clarify the kind of crime prevention the thesis deals with. As mentioned in the introduction, this thesis is based on a single case study of a program, called here the YAP. The YAP focuses on getting young adult offenders, who have been involved in repeated serious criminality, or criminality that is dangerous to people, out of criminality. In the following, I describe briefly the kind of collaboration that is taking place in my case, the agencies involved and their tasks, and outline how the collaboration is organized. The methodological considerations behind this thesis are discussed more thoroughly in chapter 5.

### **2.4.1. The Young Adults Program**

The Young Adults Program (YAP) is a service where teams of frontline employees from different municipal agencies work to make individual action plans for the citizens participating in the program. These teams, five in all, work in different areas of the city. The teams include professionals from the youth educational counseling that is a part of the department for children and youth, the Job Centre, and three different units from the social department: the department of children and families, the adult department and a special unit for young adults. Additional participants can also be included in individual frontline meetings when deemed relevant. Nowadays, the program also includes the Danish Prison and Probation Service (although this institution is not included in the interviews, because they were first in the process of entering the YAP during data collection).

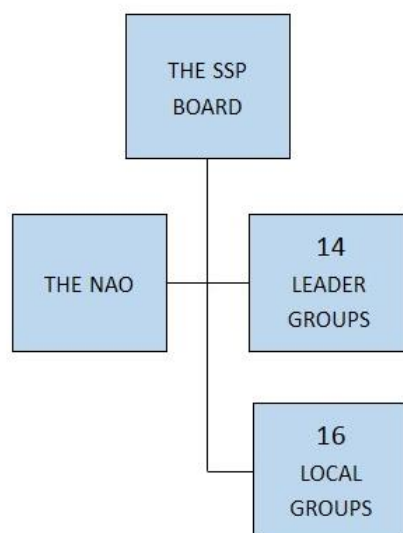
The YAP program is part of the SSP collaboration in the municipality, and two coordinators employed in the Network Administrative Organization (NAO), which coordinates the whole SSP collaboration, coordinate the teams of frontline workers. A leader group consisting of middle-level leaders in the participant organizations supervise the teams. The leader group also deals with individual client cases that were not possible to solve in the frontline groups. The two coordinators are also responsible for mediating between the leader group and the frontline groups and calling meetings in the leader group. A steering group also has some additional strategic tasks in relation to the program (see figure 1).

The program was granted funds to employ one coordinator; the other coordinator previously worked at the Job Centre and was ‘borrowed’ to work in this collaboration. The actual services to the individuals participating in the YAP are provided by the agencies participating in the program.



*Figure 1. Organization of the YAP*

The YAP program that was started in 2009 is not legally mandated. It is also important to note that the clients participate in the program voluntarily, as they are over 18. The program is one of several crime prevention initiatives introduced in the municipality at the time. It was initiated due to realization of the need for special measures for this group of young adults; the focus until then had been on youth under 18. The YAP can be regarded as an addition to the SSP collaboration that has been in place in the municipality for a long time and gone through a process of formalization since the NAO was created ten years ago. The SSP collaboration for youth under 18 is carried out through local councils in different local neighborhoods; these groups are supervised by leader groups consisting of middle-level leaders in the participating organizations. The structure of the YAP program resembles the organization of the SSP for under 18 year olds, although the five frontline groups all have a joint leader group rather than each having their own, and there is no steering group in the SSP for under 18 year olds (see figure 2).



*Figure 2. Organization of the SSP for youth under 18*

The YAP, as well as the whole SSP collaboration in this municipality, is steered by a board to which the whole SSP organization in the municipality is accountable. The board consists of heads of departments in the participating agencies and the leader of the police in the city. Specific for the board is that it consists of leaders from both the municipality and the police – which is not a municipal authority; therefore, it is not under the sole authority of the municipality’s political leadership, since the police are accountable to the Justice Ministry and not the municipal government.

The aim of the YAP is to coordinate the support efforts available through the different agencies. The work in the YAP is largely structured according to the current policy goals regarding employment and education. The crime preventive content is assisting citizens with a history of crime to get started with something other than criminality to the extent possible – i.e. employment or education.

### **2.4.2. The agencies involved in this case**

This section discusses more thoroughly the responsibilities of the participating agencies in relation to this group of citizens. Some of the agencies are in charge of providing financial assistance to citizens, while some have merely a counseling role. This thesis is focuses on the social prevention side of crime prevention, and although the collaboration is taking place within the confines of the SSP collaboration in the municipality, the police are not involved in this program. A representative from the crime preventive department of the police in the municipality is in the leader group, but the police are not involved in the frontline work.

### **The adult unit**

The adult unit is part of the department of social services and is in charge of services for citizens over 18 who have mental health or social problems. This unit has not previously been involved with this particular group of citizens and has no legal obligation to be involved in cases of criminal offenders, unless it is deemed that their help is necessary for other reasons.

The unit provides help for example in housing matters, has some possibilities to arrange a contact person and can arrange special housing, for example for handicapped. In the case of the YAP collaboration, the role of this unit seems mainly to be to make housing arrangements for the clients and to some extent arrange for a contact person, although responsibility for the latter is a matter of some debate, as discussed in the analysis.

### **The children and family unit**

The children and family unit of the social department offers services for children (citizens under 18 years) or families with children in need of special support. Children with criminal/delinquent behavior are one of the unit's target groups. The services of the department especially related to criminality include providing a contact person for youth involved in delinquent or criminal behavior and who have problems with transition to adult life. In some situations, "... where it is deemed to be of vital importance, having regard to the need of the young person for support, and where the young person agrees thereto" (Consolidation Act on Social Services, Ch. 12, § 76), the unit can also provide extended help for youth who are already 18 and until they turn 23, if it is evaluated that the individual will be able to live an independent life after this extended period of time. According to the law, the social department must also be involved in criminal court cases considering youth under 18, except for very minor offences.

### **Job Centre**

This unit used to be part of the social department in the municipality, but it is presently in another department that works with employment and other issues. Generally, the Job Centre's tasks are payment of social security benefits and employment-related counseling, training and internships. For this group of clients, it has responsibility for paying social security benefits and counselling with regard to employment opportunities, internships and other measures related to citizens' employment and employability.

### **Special unit for young adults over 18**

This unit is in the social department and works with youth over 18. It offers youth club facilities that provide leisure activities and also counseling with regard to employment and education for young adults between 18 and 25. The intention of this work is to encourage this group of citizens to find an alternative to criminal life and, in the long run, to get started with employment or education. This agency has no formal authority or responsibilities and cannot offer social services apart from counseling, but the involvement of the agency in the YAP program was motivated by the fact that this unit has closer contacts with potential clients.



### **Educational counseling**

Also this department has no legal mandate to act in YAP clients' cases, but its role is to provide expertise on education and educational counseling for the youth participating in the program. The services the agency can provide include counseling services, advice regarding educational programs and assistance in applying for them. As the participants are over 18, no legal mandate makes education compulsory for these clients; but the unit's services are available for youth and young adults until they turn 25, and the department is obviously engaged in the governmental goal of getting more and more youth to complete their secondary education.

## **2.5. SUMMARY**

This chapter discusses crime as a social problem and crime prevention as a policy field. First, the chapter defines the type of criminality that is the thesis' focus: repeated serious crime and crime dangerous to people, committed by young adults. The chapter concludes that such crime is a problem that has to do not only with the individual victims and offenders but also with safety in public space; thereby, crime is also an issue about the quality of urban life and access to public space. The chapter also discusses crime prevention as a policy field and within this field, thesis focuses on social crime prevention and so-called tertiary crime prevention, which entails preventing recidivism.

Second, the chapter discusses crime prevention in Denmark and concludes that Denmark and other Nordic countries are exceptions in traditionally taking a less punitive stand with regard to crime; despite some recent changes, this exception still exists. Denmark, as well as many other countries, has also put increased emphasis on inter-organizational and cross-sectorial collaboration in crime prevention.

Third, the chapter concludes that the kind of crime prevention focused on in this thesis is characterized by a high degree of involvement of frontline bureaucracies. It is specific for frontline bureaucrats that they are a link between citizens and the state, and that this position is at times difficult. Frontline bureaucrats have traditionally been seen as neutral bureaucrats enacting policies created by politicians. Recent research (Lipsky 1980, Perry and Wise 1990, Maynard-Moody and Musheno 2003), however, presents a more nuanced image of frontline workers and points out that a number of other factors and motivations influence frontline bureaucrats. Such factors include the need to cope with a heavy workload and resource scarcity (Lipsky 2010), but they are also influenced by motivation to act in the best interest of the citizen, which does not necessarily equate with following official policy (Maynard-Moody and Musheno 2003), as well as motivation to act in the public interest (e.g. Perry and Wise 1990). In other words, frontline bureaucrats should not be seen as mere fulfillers of the policy goals imposed on them.

Fourth, the chapter points out that there are reasons to argue that crime prevention as a policy field has some particular characteristics that are important for understanding

both collaboration and innovation in this field. The factors that have an influence on inter-organizational collaboration and innovation need not be completely different from other policy fields, but it can nevertheless be argued that some issues are specific to this field. Three different points are made. First, the political focus on this problem field can to some extent inform the policies made and also cause instability in inter-organizational collaboration. Second, different professional views on crime prevention often exist among participants of inter-organizational collaboration, and these especially emerge in meeting the challenge of reconciling punitive and social perspectives on criminality and crime prevention. Third, reconciling the dilemma of the need (or demand) to collaborate and share information with other collaboration participants while maintaining a good relationship with clients can be a challenge.

This chapter is drawn on in the following two theory chapters to specify what is particular about the literatures from point of view of crime prevention and frontline bureaucracies. Then the chapter together with the theory chapters is utilized in the analysis.

# CHAPTER 3. GOVERNANCE NETWORKS: WHAT, WHY AND HOW?

## 3.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses inter-organizational collaboration with the concept, *governance network*, as the point of departure. The chapter introduces the key concepts that are used in the analytical chapters 6 and 7 and presents a review of relevant literature in the field. After first discussing briefly the concept of governance network and some definitional issues, the chapter focuses on two main themes. First, the chapter presents the view taken in this thesis that inter-organizational collaboration is driven and influenced by factors on both the organizational and interpersonal levels and that inter-organizational collaboration should also be seen in a wider context of societal developments that are not under the control of the collaboration participants. To illustrate this distinction, the chapter utilizes a division into *different operational levels* of governance networks: environmental, organizational and operational levels (Mandell and Keast 2008). The environmental level comprises factors that stem from outside the governance network and have an impact on governance networks, such as economic and political factors. The organizational level of the governance network is understood here as relations between organizations participating in the network and interdependencies, potential positive synergy effects and other organizational factors pertinent to collaboration. The operational level is where interactions between individuals participating in the governance network and the interpersonal processes that influence governance networks take place.

The second part of the chapter discusses management of inter-organizational collaboration. Here, the discussion is structured around Huxham and Vangen's (2000) notion of *collaborative leadership*, which sees leadership in inter-organizational collaboration in a broad sense, as taking place through not only individuals, but also through the structure of the collaboration and through the modes of interaction between the collaboration participants. The authors make a distinction between three different *leadership media*: structures, processes and participants. This view of leadership makes it possible to analyze the management of governance networks as being to some extent a contingent activity, and it entails an understanding of governance networks as not being entirely controllable by the network participants and depending on factors on different levels: interorganizational, interpersonal and environmental. What is more, it also takes into account not only actions by individuals in a formal position of leadership but also the broad set of other actors whose actions influence governance networks.

The key issues in this chapter are:

- inter-organizational collaborations as governance networks
- governance networks as consisting of organizational, interpersonal and environmental dynamics
- leadership of governance networks through structures, participants and processes

## **3.2. NETWORK AS A CONCEPT**

### **3.2.1. Model or management tool?**

Much of the literature drawn on in this thesis utilizes the network concept. This concept has won considerable foothold recently, and the number of network-like constellations in the public sector have increased (e.g. Rhodes 2000). The concept suffers to some extent, however, from a lack of clarity, or maybe it could be described as diversity in terms of which phenomena the concept is applied to. There is therefore a need for some clarification regarding the use of the concept. Broadly speaking, it can be said that a network, on the one hand, can be a metaphor or concept to describe a certain kind of social organization, and on the other hand, it can be associated with a normative idea of what organizations should be or do (Nohria 1992).

Network can first of all mean a social network consisting of individuals, either in the same organization or belonging to different organizations. Nohria (1992) claims that essentially all organizations consist of networks of individuals. A network can then be a metaphor to describe an organizational form that is based on reciprocal, horizontal relations (e.g. Powell 1990).

Network as a metaphor can also be used to describe the organization of the contemporary government and the shift from government to governance, where the role of the state has been reduced and the state is only one actor among many and is increasingly being hollowed out (Rhodes 2000). In this thesis, however, the focus is not on non-state actors; hence, the discussion of the role of the state as opposed to other actors is less relevant here.

Finally, networks of organizations can also be created intentionally in order to solve policy and coordination problems in the public sector. In other words, networks can be used as management tools, as an intentional way of governing through involvement of several different actors across organizational and sectorial boundaries. In this view, networks are typically seen as normatively desirable and necessary for solving contemporary social problems (Koppenjaan and Klijn 2004).

### 3.2.2. Definition(s) of governance network

This thesis focuses on networks as a type of management, although in some sense even a managed network also consists of a network of social relations (discussed further later on). A number of different concepts are often used to refer to more or less the same thing, such as joined-up governance, network governance or collaborative governance. In this thesis, the concept *governance network* is used to describe the kind of network of organizations focused on, while the term collaboration is generally used to describe the act of working across boundaries in a governance network, this despite the multiple uses of the word collaboration.

As already mentioned, a large body of research addresses working across sectors and organizational boundaries. The existence of a number of different perspectives obviously makes it difficult to navigate in this literature and make a relevant literature review. Many of the concepts, for example collaboration, are often used in a rather diffuse and undefined manner (Keast and Mandell 2011). This also applies to the literature on managing networks, where some concepts like network structure, can mean different things.

A broad definition of a governance network is defined by Sørensen and Torfing (2008:11) as:

*“1. a relatively stable horizontal articulation of interdependent but operationally autonomous actors; 2. who interact through negotiations; 3. which take place within a regulative, normative, cognitive and imaginary framework; 4. that is self-regulating within limits set by external agencies: and 5. which contributes to the production of public purpose.”*

The most important element of this definition for this thesis is the notion of governance networks as horizontal articulations of interdependent actors. This captures the challenge of collaborating across boundaries and leading such collaboration. We return to this definition later in this chapter.

The above-mentioned very broad definition by Sørensen and Torfing (2008) leaves room for more detailed definitions. When navigating in the governance network literature, one point that is important to note is that different bodies of literature talk about different kinds of networks and hence, to some extent, have different perspectives (Koppenjaan 2008). For example, Sørensen and Torfing (2008) note that governance networks differ based on how they are formed – whether they are mandated or voluntary, whether they are created spontaneously or by an authoritative decision, and how formal or informal they are.

Governance networks also vary in their orientation – for example, in terms of the purpose of the network (Mandell and Keast 2008). They can focus on different parts of the policy cycle, either policy formulation or implementation (Sørensen and Torfing 2008). For example, policy networks consisting of various interest groups are to be found on the policy formulation side, whereas a large number of network-like constellations are also to be found in service delivery, which is the case in youth work, social work and crime prevention. It can reasonably be assumed that it is necessary to ask somewhat different questions when

analyzing a policy network compared to analyzing service delivery networks that are more on the implementation side of the policy circle.

It is also important to note that the above-mentioned definition in principal leaves out arrangements that are based on contracts, such as contracting out of public services to the private or third sector (Sullivan and Skelcher 2002). The key feature of a partnership, which is the word Sullivan and Skelcher use instead of governance network, is that joint decision making takes place rather than one party imposing what is to be done on the other party, a type of principal-agent relationship (Sullivan and Skelcher 2002). Nevertheless, there can be variation in the degree of specificity and freedom in relationships between organizations.

It is also important to distinguish between governance networks based on which actors are participating. Typically, the concept governance network refers to constellations of actors from not only public but also private and third sectors, but in this thesis, the focus is on only public sector organizations, mainly within the municipal sector. It is likely that collaboration across sectors is more challenging, and challenging in a different way, than collaboration between municipal authorities. A large portion of the literature on governance networks deals with cross-sectorial networks, where some issues, like decision making, are more of a challenge. In networks between the third sector and the government, for example, decision-making rights and the actual influence of the third-sector actors on the process are typically an issue, which is not the case here.

Finally, and importantly, governance networks differ in terms of the degree of integration between the participants. Keast et al. (2007) make a distinction between cooperation, coordination and collaboration as three different types – or to be more precise – three degrees of integration between organizations participating in a governance network. Cooperation is the lowest level of integration and mainly entails that the cooperating parties share information with each other and take each other into consideration, and potentially make some compromises but do not necessarily have a common goal (Keast and Mandell 2011). Coordination is a closer integration that entails more formal and tight linkages. In addition to information sharing, there are also joint operations – such as common projects. Finally, the third level, collaboration, entails a deeper level of commitment, and according to Keast and Mandell (2011), also a shared goal, and is the most stable and long-term mode of integration.

Integration depends in essence on how close the relations between agencies are, and consequently, how much the agencies impact each other and need to take each other into account. Even though participants in a governance network maintain their character as separate organizations, adjustment is still inherently necessary, depending on the purpose of the particular governance network (Keast and Mandell 2011).

It could be asked why I choose to use the concept governance network in this case. The reason is that although I do not focus on a cross-sectorial network, it is nevertheless a horizontal constellation of actors, as none of the agencies in the YAP has decision-making rights over the other participants. Decision-making is instead based on negotiations.

### **3.3. DYNAMICS OF COLLABORATION ON DIFFERENT LEVELS**

This thesis is mainly interested in the purpose of inter-organizational collaboration and the factors that influence such collaboration. It is obviously the case that a governance network is mainly an inter-organizational arrangement that has to do with different agencies working together for a particular purpose. However, the point of view in this thesis is that governance networks consist not only of inter-organizational constellations and the interdependencies and conflicts of interest that can exist between the participating organizations/agencies, but rather that governance networks are also in some sense constellations of interpersonal relations, relations between concrete individuals, and this has some consequences for collaboration. Mandell and Keast (2008) argue in fact that interpersonal relations are at the core of governance networks and, as will be discussed, that factors on the interpersonal level are quite important for the functioning of governance networks. What is more, governance networks, obviously, do not exist in isolation from a wider political, social and economic context, and inter-organizational collaboration is not based on decisions and rationales only among the participants within the governance network (e.g. Benson 1975, Mandell and Steelman 2003).

As mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, governance networks, according to Mandell and Keast (2008), can be understood as having three different levels, the environmental, organizational and operational level. The environmental level includes factors that come from outside the network that have an influence on the network, while the organizational level includes, loosely speaking, the factors that characterize an inter-organizational constellation. The operational level is where interaction between individual participants takes place. These distinctions are used by the authors in a somewhat different way, to illustrate network effectiveness on these different levels, but nevertheless the level distinction serves as a useful way to systematize different dimensions, or layers, of a governance network.

#### **3.3.1. Organizational level: Different rationales of inter-organizational collaboration?**

It has been stated above that the number of governance networks has increased, and also that working through governance networks is sometimes seen as something that ‘should be done’. This section focuses particularly on the issues related to the rationale of inter-organizational collaboration from the organizational (or more precisely, inter-organizational) perspective, along the lines of the distinctions made by Mandell and Keast (2008). Issues discussed in this section relate to the questions of why agencies engage in inter-organizational collaboration, and the nature of the driving forces for inter-organizational collaboration on this level.

Sullivan and Skelcher (2002) make a distinction between *optimist*, *pessimist* and *realist* perspectives on governance networks [collaboration is the word the authors use

instead of governance network], based on a distinction originally made by Challis et al. (1988, referred to in Sullivan and Skelcher 2002:36). The realist perspective is the contribution made by the authors. According to them, scholars who take an optimistic view of collaboration base this on two assumptions: first, that collaboration [in governance networks, author's note] is about creating a shared vision, and that collaboration will lead to positive outcomes from the point of view of the governance network as a whole; second, that the participants have an altruistic mindset towards the collaboration, meaning that "*the future positive outcomes for the system override the desire for sectional gain by the participating organizations*" (ibid.: 37). There is an assumption of a collaborative advantage (e.g. Vangen and Huxham 2010); that is, an idea that governance networks can achieve more than its individual parts, although collaboration also tends to suffer from collaborative inertia – that is, it can be slow and conflict-ridden (ibid.).

The scholars representing the pessimist view emphasize in turn the attempts by the individual participants [participant organizations] to maximize their own resources, achieve their own organizational goals, and cope in the midst of financial constraints. In this view, dependency on the other organizations' resources acts a driver for collaboration. The realist view, which the authors present, assumes that in reality governance networks are a combination of the two above-mentioned and that governance networks are formed and developed as a response to external factors. This is discussed further in section 3.3.3, Environmental level: governance networks in a context.

The two different ideas, optimism and pessimism, represent different views of the participating organizations as actors in a collaboration. The optimistic view tends to focus on the collective, on the participant actors as a group; and the pessimist, resource-dependency view tends to focus on the actors as individual organizations that act on individual motives. These views can also lead to posing different research questions and to different research foci. For example, an optimist view would see the development of mutual goodwill as a sign of successful collaboration (like Mandell and Keast (e.g. 2008) and Huxham and Vangen (e.g. 2010)), although this does not necessarily mean that actual outcomes have been achieved in the governance network. An optimist view tends to focus on inter-organizational collaboration as inherently positive. On the other hand, in my view, a pessimist view may underestimate the potential synergy effects of collaboration when focusing on the gains/losses of individual actors.

Another, similar, distinction is made by Sørensen and Torfing (2005b), who divide theories on network governance into those focusing on governance in networks as coordination, and those who focus on governance networks as inherently conflict based. According to the authors, the rise of network governance can in one view be seen as a response to a lack of coordination and an increase in functional differentiation and fragmentation. In another view, network governance can be seen as characterized by competition between actors who attempt to maximize their own benefits.

In practice, there can be ingredients from both optimistic and pessimistic, coordination and conflict perspectives, as noted by both Sullivan and Skelcher and Sørensen and Torfing. There are probably also sectorial differences in conflict tendencies. Public and third sector actors are more likely to have incentives for cooperation than private sector actors. Their primary goal is not profit maximizing, as is the case for private sector



firms, and the different agencies in the public sector are not in a position of competition in the same way as private sector actors. However, different agencies are still in a position of competition in terms of access to funding and in negotiating how many resources each are willing to devote to the governance network.

The above-mentioned perspectives and the dilemma presented have to do with a tension between aiming to achieve the individual organizational goals and secure resources, vs. envisioning a shared goal that can override the individual organizational goals. There are naturally also other than resource arguments that have to do with differences between agencies. Even the substance of the collaboration can be a source of conflict. As discussed in chapter 2, in this policy field, inter-professional conflicts can be a barrier to collaboration. The positive view of reaching a common goal and prioritizing network-level goals can potentially be problematic from the point of view of substance. As indicated in chapter 2, section 2.3.2. it can be asked whether arriving at a common goal is a matter of mutual learning that leads to a shared understanding or the mere choice of one goal instead of some other goals (Klijn et al. 2010:1065). This is also a political issue, a question of democracy, as it can be argued that downplaying interest conflict and emphasizing the importance of common goals can normalize and conceal conflicts and unequal power relations. Koppenjaan (2008) argues that especially in the literature on policy networks, management is treated as an apolitical and mainly managerial activity, and that the literature presents an embracing and essentializing view of consensus.

It can thus be argued that there is a risk of suppressing disagreement between different perspectives. Goris and Walters (1999:639) say, with reference to previous research in Belgium, that in local crime prevention collaboration, it was found crucial that the different agencies were allowed to play their own role rather than be “dominated by the agenda, goals or methods of other agencies”. It can thus be asked: When is close integration good, and when is it not? What consequences do different degrees of integration have for formulation of the goals of the collaboration? And does the need for adjustment associated with a high degree of integration also mean suppression of differences?

Finally, the degree of integration between organizations and the view on inter-organizational collaboration as having a shared goal can also be thought to play a role in the interaction between professionals. In a study by Burnett and Appleton (2004) of a multi-professional team that constituted its own organization with employees who were not affiliated with a partner organization, it was found that a risk existed for the professionals to lose touch with developments in their own field and lose their specialization.

### **3.3.2. Operational level: Governance networks and interpersonal processes**

In section 3.2.1, it is stated that this thesis does not focus on networks as a metaphor for social organization, but rather as a management method. However, these two aspects need not be mutually exclusive, since in addition to inter-organizational factors, it can be argued that interpersonal factors and interpersonal relations are also relevant for governance networks. Two things that seem important in this context are discussed in this section: on the one hand, the characteristics of the relationships between network actors; and on the

other, the role of the structure of the social networks in a governance network – i.e. who the participants tend to have connections with.

The role played by interpersonal relations in the functioning of governance networks is addressed somewhat in the literature. The role of such factors as relationship building (e.g. Keast et al. 2004, Koppenjaan and Klijn 2004) and trust (Edelenbos and Klijn 2007, Klijn Edelenbos and Stein 2010, Ansell and Gash 2008) in work in governance networks has received some attention in the literature. Trust is a somewhat difficult concept to define, however, and also used sometimes in an unclear manner (as is argued by for example Lewis 2010). Trust is often mentioned in relation to private sector collaborations – for example, trust that business partners will not disclose business secrets – and it could be assumed that trust is understood differently in pure public-sector collaboration.

Although all of the above-mentioned essentially have to do in some sense with interpersonal relations, the focus is nevertheless on how relationships between individuals influence organizational-level outcomes and relate to issues that are pertinent to inter-organizational work, such as the need to find a common ground.

In the following sections, it is argued that inter-organizational collaboration does not only have to do with carrying out organizational goals and relations between organizations, but also reflects individuals as ‘social beings’, and this creates a dynamic of its own. First of all, patterns of interaction between actors have their own logic, which is not only dependent on organizational factors. Social networks between individuals can, but do not necessarily, follow the same system as the formal positions of individuals within an organization – for example, an individual might have more contact with a leader than someone who is the person’s formal superior. Secondly, interpersonal relationships, even those across inter-organizational borders, can be something more than merely instrumental, serving the purpose of fulfilling organizational goals (e.g. Ingram and Roberts 2000).

### **Network relations as social capital**

Relations in a governance network can primarily be seen as a social network and understood through the concept of social capital. Recently, the rather vast literature on social capital is also theorized especially in relation to public policymaking and administration (Lewis 2010). Some theorists (most notably Putnam) see social capital as a property of a group, a set of common values, trust etc., whereas Bourdieu, for example, sees it as an individual resource – social capital as access to resources through the connection to other individuals (e.g. Lewis 2010). Here, the focus is on social capital in the latter sense, as something posed by individuals. Nevertheless, social capital in this sense is still related to networks, since “it is about individuals in networks” (ibid.:49).

A well-known distinction is made between different forms of social capital: *bonding, bridging and linking capital*. The first mentioned, bonding capital, means having strong connections with individuals/groups who are somehow similar, while bridging capital refers to connections between individuals who are dissimilar. An example is such heterogeneous groups as ecumenical religious movements (Putnam 2000). The third type of capital has been somewhat less researched until recently, so-called linking capital, which refers to connections between different levels of hierarchy (Woolcock 2001).

For network governance, these concepts are relevant for conceptualizing how actors with different backgrounds – for example, different organizational or professional backgrounds – are (or are not) connected, and how individuals choose whom to interact with. The idea of bridging and bonding capital can be illuminated by the character of inter-organizational collaboration in crime prevention, with its prevalence of professional differences and professional conflicts. It could be assumed that individuals tend to have connections with others with a similar background (e.g. similar professional background). The importance of bridging capital in the context of inter-organizational collaboration is also related to access to knowledge and other resources that bridging capital can enable.

The body of research on social networks provides a number of ways to characterize social networks (see e.g. Kilduff and Tsai 2003 for an overview). Concepts that are relevant for this thesis are centrality, clique, and brokerage. One or few people can be central by either maintaining contact with many people within the network (have a high out-degree centrality), or being contacted by many people in the network (a high in-degree centrality). Furthermore, individuals can form so called cliques, small subgroups in a wider network. Some actors can function as brokers – that is, act as a link between cliques. To reconnect to the concept of social capital, cliques tend to form among people with similar characteristics, which can be seen as an example of bonding capital, whereas individuals who act as brokers, with connections with two groups, have bridging capital.

As discussed later in this chapter, individuals working as network leaders or facilitators require the ability to act as brokers between different groups of actors in a governance network. What is more, they also need to be able to move between levels of government (e.g. Crosby, Bryson and Stone 2010). Therefore, the concept of linking capital (Woolcock 2001) as a particular form of bridging capital linking actors on different levels of hierarchy is discussed further in section 3.4.

### **Network relations: universal vs. particular**

This section elaborates why it is important to understand interpersonal relations in networks as relations between particular individuals and not only as instrumental – existing for the purpose of achieving network or organizational outcomes. The section also addresses some of the problems that become obvious when network relations are seen as interpersonal relations.

Heimer (1992) discusses the interpersonal character of organizations by using the conceptual pair *universalism vs. particularism*. Universalism is the idea of dealing with each individual according to the same principle and through standardized conduct. Universalism, as mentioned in the previous chapter, is one of the basic features of ideal bureaucracy, which departs from the idea of dealing with every situation according to a prescribed, explicit rule. Heimer argues that this mode has an inherent problem, however, in that it is unfunctional when dealing with situations in organizations, because dealing with others in an organization is not feasible if the particular relationship between individuals is ignored. Heimer (1992) argues that any organization is in fact based on networks of relations. She writes (ibid.:143): “...relations are among named individuals who know one another as particular others and not just generalized actors playing broadly defined roles”. However, Heimer does not only talk explicitly about inter-organizational networks.

As for inter-organizational relations, Ingram and Roberts (2000), in a study on friendships among competing business owners, found that these friendships could not be explained as merely serving instrumental purposes but also had to do with affection. In a similar vein, Gittel and Douglass (2012) distinguish between relational and bureaucratic organizational forms. The relational form is literally based on relations between individuals, while bureaucracy is based on standardization of conduct and rules. The relational form, according to the authors, enables a flexible response to situations as they emerge, which is opposite to the rule-bound bureaucratic mode of organization. Flexibility is in fact one of the inherent positive sides of governance networks as opposed to hierarchies. What is more, the authors also include the affectionate dimension in the equation, saying that there is an aspect of care, caring responses, in the relational form, which is absent in the bureaucratic form.

Particularism, or relational bureaucracy, can however pose an ethical dilemma in that particularism can mean favoritism (or at the opposite end, discrimination) (Gittel and Douglass 2012, Heimer 1992). Particularism towards the citizens who are clients of the social work sector is addressed in chapter 2, but particularism in relation to colleagues can also exist when some colleagues are favored over others. Although not directly related, the concepts of bridging and bonding capital can also relate to this issue. As mentioned, bonding capital refers to a tendency to form close ties to a group of individuals who in some way resemble oneself. Particularism can manifest itself in terms of preferring contacts with individuals from one's own reference group and avoiding others.

There are also concrete, more practical challenges in an organization that relies on interpersonal, particularistic relations, namely that such an organizational form is vulnerable to high staff turnover and long geographical distances between network participants (Gittel and Douglass 2012).

Another issue that is relevant when working in inter-organizational networks is the way in which each participating agency has their own goals, which the employees are expected to follow, but all these goals are not necessarily compatible with those of the other agencies, as discussed already in section 3.3.1. What is more, the network participants are expected to be loyal to their own organizations and also to the network. This can present a dilemma in the sense that the actors participating in the network have to find a balance between working for their own organization and for the network, and also have to decide how much time and effort to put in the work of the network (e.g. Thacher 2004 and Puonti 2004). This dilemma will probably also depend on the orientation of the participant organizations towards either an optimistic, shared-vision perspective, or a more pessimistic, rivalry-ridden perspective, and the degree of integration between the participant organizations (see section 3.3.1.)

Finally, in the case of a frontline bureaucracy, another dimension is the relationship of the employees to the citizens as clients. As discussed in the previous chapter, theories on frontline bureaucrats represent different views of the relation between the employee and the clients. Understanding all work in organizations as relational can also extend to include the citizens whom the agency serves. This can potentially pose a dilemma in that there can be a perceived need to deal with the citizens not as a homogeneous group but as individuals, while trying also to fulfill the expectation of treating all citizens equally (Heimer 1992).

### **3.3.3. Environmental level: Governance networks in a context**

Finally, governance networks are also influenced by contextual factors. In distinguishing the operational levels, Mandell and Keast (2008) identify the contextual factors as the environmental level. This level consists of the “*social, economic and political realities ... surrounding the network*” (Mandell and Keast 2008:720).<sup>4</sup>

Governance networks are in many ways dependent on the so-called environmental level. Many networks are mandated to work for a particular purpose, and the agenda of governance networks is not always defined by the network participants themselves. The environmental level can also have a geographic dimension. Sullivan and Skelcher (2002:116) note that collaboration is subject to what they call the “locality effect” – i.e. it is influenced by the geographic and demographic characteristics of the area, the organizational boundaries, “political culture and relationships” and “history of partnership working in the locality”. Crosby, Bryson and Stone (2010) and Bryson, Crosby and Stone (2006) also note that initial conditions such as history of collaboration and turbulent environment tend to be factors that lead to formation of collaborative arrangements and shape the processes and outcomes of the collaboration. Finally, the fragmentation of the public sector and subsequent need for coordination mentioned in section 3.3.1. can also be included on this level as ways in which societal developments act as drivers to formation of governance networks.

## **3.4. MANAGING GOVERNANCE NETWORKS**

In chapter 1, a distinction is discussed between market, hierarchy and network, and it is also stated that it is characteristic for networks as a mode of organization that they are based on horizontal relations rather than a command and control, hierarchical mode of organization. A general conclusion from the literature, however, is that some form of management or facilitation is necessary in order to ‘get things done’ in governance networks (e.g. Agranoff 2007, Ansell and Gash 2008). But in governance networks, it cannot be the traditional, hierarchical management, since no actor has authority over the other participants (Huxham and Vangen 2000).

This section is structured as follows. First, a short discussion is presented of the need for leadership in inter-organizational collaborations and the particular characteristics of this leadership. Thereafter, the leadership concept used in the thesis is described.

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<sup>4</sup> In fact, Mandell and Keast also include in the environmental level the pressure on the network from the participant agencies, but in this thesis, I include such factors in the organizational level, as mentioned earlier. It is not always clear where the limits of the network go. Mandell and Keast (with reference to Porter 1981) argue that whole organizations are rarely part of a network but rather only parts of an organization. In my opinion, this again ought to depend on the degree of integration and structure of the participant organizations; therefore, the level distinctions in this thesis are as described above.

### **3.4.1. Need for leadership in governance networks: Between network and hierarchy**

Management in inter-organizational collaborations is, as already mentioned, different from single organizations in that it cannot be based on hierarchy. Typically then, the concepts used to describe network leadership have not been called leadership; instead, concepts like brokerage (e.g. Pope and Lewis 2008) or network management (Koppenjaan and Klijn 2004), which refer to non-hierarchical forms of management, are used. Lately, more authors have started using the concept of leadership even in inter-organizational contexts (Huxham and Vangen 2000, Bryson and Crosby 2010, Dudau 2009). However, this does not mean that leadership in collaborations is similar to that in organizations (for the above-mentioned reasons), but rather that it requires a different set of skills and different practices to carry out leadership in inter-organizational collaborations (Bryson and Crosby 2010, Silvia and McGuire 2010, Huxham and Vangen 2000). In this thesis, the term leadership is used, since the authors referred to regarding the management of networks use this term.

The distinction between network and hierarchy is somewhat arbitrary, however. In a study on 14 public management networks, Agranoff (2007) found both similarities and differences in network management as compared to the typical characteristics of single organization management. Agranoff (2007:230) concludes that trust serves as a substitute for the formal-legal hierarchy of an organization, but that the organization of the work in networks is largely similar: “*structure, planning, coordinating, reporting and budgeting similar to that of public sector organizations*”. In other words, interpersonal relations play a major role in governance networks. It can be said that governance networks lie between the hierarchical and horizontal forms (e.g. Lewis 2010, Agranoff 2007), and that there is an inherent tension between these two, because it is against the character of governance networks to be hierarchically led.

Despite the findings that there is a need to manage networks, it is also the case that not everything in a governance network can be managed. Governance networks generally develop over time and can be seen to have different stages of maturity (Provan and Milward 2001, Mandell and Keast 2008, Sullivan and Skelcher 2002, Gray 1989). The factors that are important for network governance – trust and commitment (Provan and Milward 2001, who refer to Ring and Van de Ven 1994) – have been found to develop over time, which is not particularly surprising. Density of connections between network participants also increases over time (Lewis 2010). The question is: To what extent are such processes ‘manageable’ and to what extent do they develop spontaneously?

Despite the large amount of existing literature on the topic, it is rather difficult to compare findings, because different authors use different ways to categorize the characteristics of a collaboration leader, and these characteristics are somewhat ambiguous. The categories of tasks carried out are constructed by the authors themselves, and it is necessary to disentangle the content of each category in order to review the contribution of previous literature.

### **3.4.2. Leading governance networks through structure, process and participants**

The way in which this thesis understands inter-organizational collaboration as a combination of interpersonal, inter-organizational and environmental processes is also taken into account in the way this thesis understands leadership of collaborations. A broad view on leading governance networks, which incorporates all of the above-mentioned aspects, is employed by drawing on Huxham and Vangen (2000). Huxham and Vangen define leadership as “*the mechanisms that lead a collaboration's policy and activity agenda in one direction rather than another*” or “*making things happen*” (ibid.: 1160). Leadership in these authors' view need not be enacted by individuals but can also be attributed to organizations.

More specifically, Huxham and Vangen divide leadership media into *structures, processes and persons*. For them, structure of a governance network is “*the organizations and individuals associated with it and the structural connections between them*” (ibid.: 1166). In Huxham and Vangen's view, structure means the ways in which new actors enter the governance network, distribution of decision-making rights and the way in which the agenda of the governance network is decided. Processes are the interactions between individuals, both formal and informal, and can include meetings, committees, workshops, phone calls etc. Leadership through participants means leadership enacted by persons in leadership positions in the governance network, but can also mean organizations, such as a Network Administrative Organization (NAO), or a steering group. Acts of leadership can also be carried out by actors other than those in a formal leadership position.

The crucial issue about this definition considered in this thesis is that leadership is not defined as something associated with a particular person, but can consist of a set of various practices and factors, and as Huxham and Vangen also note, not all such factors are under the control of any individual participant. This definition also allows taking into account contingent factors, and it does not see network leadership as a process that is possible to manage in detail and that is under full control of any of the participants.

In the following, I elaborate why this distinction between three leadership media is particularly useful for this thesis, and I also draw on some more literature to develop the role of these three leadership media in the light of what was discussed in section 3.3 on organizational, operational and environmental levels of inter-organizational collaboration. Although these different media are discussed separately here, they are intertwined in practice and also influence each other. It is useful, however, to make this distinction in order to illustrate the different factors that influence governance networks.

#### **Structure**

It is not entirely clear what Huxham and Vangen mean by structure, but in this thesis, structure is taken to mean the process by which new actors enter the governance network, allocation of decision-making rights and agenda setting.

To start with inclusion of new actors, the authors point out that a structure can be something between open, where anyone can participate, and strictly limited by demands imposed on the network from outside or by decisions made by the participants themselves.

Inclusion of new actors is obviously not necessarily something that can be completely planned; rather, who enters and exits a governance network depends on a number of conditions. The composition of a network also tends to vary over time. Service networks often start with the core actors; then, more peripheral actors join in as the network matures (Provan and Milward 2001). Size of the governance network in terms of the number of actors can influence the network – the larger the network, the higher the transaction costs and the less effective the governance network is (e.g. Provan and Milward 2001).

The second structural aspect in governance networks is the way decisions are made and by whom. As mentioned, governance networks are often partly self-regulating, partly externally steered. Who has decision-making authority is obviously, also relevant when considering power relations between the participating agencies. Sometimes a governance network is led by a person from one of the participating agencies, which can lead to loyalty dilemmas. This problem can be avoided, at least to a large extent, by an external NAO. Also, decision making is obviously something that is partly out of hands of the participants and influenced by external factors, funding, legislation and such.

A third aspect of the structural characteristics of governance networks is how decisions about the network agenda are made and who makes such decisions. Again, not very surprisingly, this depends not only on internal (within network) but also external factors. Agenda can be partly determined by the network's financiers, legislation, whether the collaboration is legally mandated, or other actors who can influence the network.

The impact of environmental conditions obviously varies over time, due to changes in resource allocation caused by changed political priorities and economic recessions (Benson 1975). It is also likely that different policy domains have different degrees of freedom in their operation, and that some domains are more regulated than others (ibid.).

There can also be important power differentials between the different participants. This is related to the point made earlier about the framework within which collaboration takes place and the relationship between actors. These power differentials can entail for example, that one of the participants has a formal decision-making power in a matter (Sullivan and Skelcher 2002) or possesses or is able to gain access to more resources than others, or there are dependency relations between actors (Benson 1975). According to Benson, this power asymmetry can have different expressions. It can be that the role of one organization is such that its actions indirectly influence other organizations' work, which in turn may be related to their funding, or one agency has influence through the connections it has to institutions or groups outside the network. Some agency may have a strategic position that gives them an advantage vis-à-vis the other agencies. Benson (1975) argues that inter-organizational networks ought to be seen from a political economy perspective, where especially access to money and authority and the influence of these on power relations between the network actors are important factors.

### **Processes**

Processes, or the ways participants in a governance network interact, can be both formal and informal and include meetings, seminars, workshops, phone calls and emails (Huxham and Vangen 2000). Again, these interactions are not entirely under the control of the participants. Input can also come from outside the governance network. This leadership



media is related to the notion of the interpersonal/operational dimension of governance networks discussed in section 3.3.2. In the following, the process aspect of leadership is discussed from the point of view that interpersonal relations are an important factor in governance networks.

Networks can be highly brokered, where interactions mostly go through a broker or leader; or they can be decentralized, where interactions take place on the initiative of network participants (Provan and Kenis 2008). Interaction can also be of informal character, and as noted in section 3.3.3., collaboration partners can form informal ties amongst themselves.

It can be said that different communication media have different characteristics and different pros and cons with regard to work in governance networks. Nohria and Eccles (1992) argue that face-to-face interaction, as opposed to more distant electronically mediated interaction, is in many ways better for network relations. It enables more holistic communication in that not only text but also different kinds of other cues mediated through other senses are possible. For example, the particular characteristics of face-to-face interaction with its “ability for interruption, feedback and repair” (ibid.: 296) help dealing with ambiguity and uncertainty, which are typical for governance networks. Arriving at consensus is faster in face-to-face interaction (Kiesler et al. 1984, referred to in Nohria and Eccles 1992). Electronic communication is better for spreading information than arriving at decisions, especially complex ones. Nohria and Eccles also argue, in agreement with Heimer (1992) in the same volume, that roles between actors in an organization are not universalist, but particularist. For this particularist relation to be created, they argue, face-to-face interaction is necessary.

It must also be said that face-to-face interaction can also be challenging. Dudau (2009) found that in an inter-organizational collaboration where the participants representing different organizations also represented different levels of administration, the participants in the higher levels of administration tended to dominate the discussions at meetings. Face-to-face interaction is also vulnerable to stereotyped notions of the communication partner; therefore, electronic communication can serve to eliminate the impact of for example gender and racial stereotypes (Nohria and Eccles 1992:297, referring to Poster 1990).

### **Leadership through participants**

Leadership through participants can in Huxham and Vangen’s (2000) terminology be either a person or a group of persons, such as a board or a committee. Network participants themselves can also exert leadership towards their own organization in order to mobilize and motivate them to participate (ibid.). There is sometimes no formal agreement on who is to act as leader, and the person need not be someone who has a formal leadership position (Khator and Ayers Brunson 2001, Lewis 2010). In the following, I discuss network leadership through persons and through a network administrative organization (NAO).

#### *Leadership through persons*

The need for a central person who assumes the role of coordinating the work in a network is well established in the literature on network governance (e.g. Lewis 2010, Keast et al.

2004, Khator and Ayers Brunson 2001, Ansell and Gash 2008), but as already mentioned, this task is inherently difficult, since a leader in a collaborative setting cannot be in a position of leadership that is similar to that within a single organization with a clear mandate to make decisions. Also, the goals of a governance network are not as easily definable as goals in a single organization, and steering towards a goal is not workable in a governance network in the same way as in a single organization (Huxham and Vangen 2000). The degree to which a leader or coordinator of a collaboration intervenes also varies, from actually having influence on decision-making to merely helping the participants arrive at solutions (Gray 1989).

Gray (1989) points out that the choice of a leader is also a highly political one, as a leader can also have interests of his/her own. The leader can either be from one of the participating organizations or an independent third party. As mentioned, one potential source of power imbalance and possibly also of conflict is the position of the leader in relation to the other participants. Being part of one of the participating organizations can put a leader in a difficult position of conflicting loyalties and also potentially compromise impartiality. According to a study by Lewis (2010), it is important that a broker is not affiliated with any of the participating agencies.

Gray (1989) argues that the leader's background can be relevant in other ways as well. In situations of negotiation, a leader should be rather conversant in the subject matter that is under debate, since this is also a precondition for the ability to propose solutions. It can also be important to have knowledge of the local context and how local government and the state function, and be acknowledged in the community (Lewis 2010). The leader's connections outside the network can also be important for achieving outcomes. This is discussed further later in this chapter.

#### *Network Administrative Organization (NAO)*

As indicated in the previous section, one challenge to inter-organizational collaboration can arise from a power asymmetry caused by the fact that one agency is acting as a lead agency. From this point of view, a NAO potentially allows more horizontal relations between the participant agencies.

The NAO as a form of network governance can potentially have more advantages than just reducing power inequality. A NAO also facilitates collaboration by reducing transaction costs for the participating agencies by relieving them of the coordinative tasks (Provan and Kenis 2008). Provan and Milward (1995) found that the absence of a NAO in mental health networks, where the collaboration was rather informal among providers, meant that the network actions were not well coordinated and not favorable for the clients.

#### *Leadership activities*

The literature on network leadership describes a number of different activities carried out by persons in leadership/manager positions. These activities have to do with relations between participants, agreement on and moving towards the goals set for the collaboration, and especially relevant in this policy field, linking levels of hierarchy (especially levels of administration, see chapter 2).

As discussed in section 3.3.3., interpersonal relations are considered important for inter-organizational collaboration. A leader can play an important role in facilitating the building of relationships between network participants (Lewis 2010). A leader can also be important in facilitating consensus building and decision making between individuals with different points of view and different interests (Innes and Booher 1999). Somewhat related to this is the ability to ‘speak the language’ of the different participants (i.e. different professional groups). Bryson and Crosby (2010) consider this a useful characteristic of a collaboration leader.

In addition to relationship building and facilitating interaction, the role of the leader can also be to create the preconditions for moving the work of the collaboration forward and to deal with obstacles such as organizational silos and organizations that hamper the work of the collaboration (Lewis 2010). A leader is also important in “getting things to move forward”, acting as a driver of the process (Keast et al. 2004) and motivating participants to engage in the collaboration (Huxham and Vangen 2000).

Finally, one kind of leadership activity that is important is not only bridging on a horizontal level but bridging the different levels of administration. As noted earlier, governance networks are not only horizontal; they also have a vertical dimension. Linkages in a governance network are on the one hand between the different agencies (horizontal), but they can also be between levels of administration in the same network (vertical).

The concept of linking capital (see section 3.3.2), i.e. social capital that reaches between levels of hierarchy, refers in the use by Woolcock (2001) to linkages between socially disadvantaged groups and practitioners/policymakers in the public sector. However, the concept seems plausible for describing other kinds of vertical linkages as well. In my view, one form of linking capital can be important in order to link levels of administration – e.g. bridging frontline workers and management and bridging a governance network’s leadership and government levels that are hierarchically above the network actors.

The role of linking capital is described in a number of ways indirectly in the literature, even though the specific concept is not used. Sehested (2003) argues that many leaders in public sector institutions in Denmark find themselves balancing between the professional and managerial spheres, because a shift has taken place in how Danish welfare institutions (such as schools and nursing homes) are led. The emphasis has shifted from the importance of professions and professional knowledge to more managerial values. The study illustrates the sometimes difficult balancing between different roles. The task of balancing between different levels of hierarchy and being able to communicate with two groups of people on different levels of hierarchy, and the task of mediating between the managerial and professional spheres, can be seen as tasks that demand linking capital.

Another relevant finding in previous literature is the role of the broker. Important characteristics of a broker in community partnerships (Lewis 2010, Pope and Lewis 2008) are the ability to help navigate among government institutions and identify resources and also a standing in the local community. This ability to mediate between two levels of hierarchy could be interpreted as linking capital in the definition by Woolcock (2001). Finally, the study by Crosby, Bryson and Stone (2010) concludes among other things that a collaboration (governance network) should be integrated into the regular decision-making

channels, and that winning support from different decision-making levels is crucial. Again, this can be interpreted as linking capital.

Vertical relations can also exist within a network. In a NAO, there is typically a board supervising the work, while the NAO does the operational work (Provan and Kenis 2008). Seen in relation to the distinction made by Huxham and Vangen (2000) between different types of leadership media, not one but several leadership groups are in place at the same time, and they are also in a sense arranged hierarchically, since the board plays a supervisory role in relation to the NAO.

### **3.5. SUMMARY**

This chapter introduces governance networks as a phenomenon and addresses two main themes: First, I address previous literature regarding why organizations engage in governance networks, adding some background about different views of governance networks and possible dilemmas in the different viewpoints. By applying the distinctions between different operational levels, I also discuss how governance networks are not only driven by inter-organizational but also interpersonal and so-called environmental dynamics, i.e. influencing factors that stem from outside the network (see table 2 for a summary). This division into different levels is a basic assumption of this thesis regarding the driving forces of governance networks, and the different ideas on the characteristics of these levels that are presented in the chapter are discussed further in the analysis.

<b>Level</b>	<b>Focus</b>	<b>Concepts</b>
<b>Interpersonal level</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus on individuals as network actors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Non-instrumental aspects of relations between network participants as drivers of collaboration</li> <li>• Social networks in governance networks</li> <li>• Universalism vs. particularism</li> <li>• Bridging, bonding and linking social capital</li> </ul>
<b>Inter-organizational level</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus on organizations as network actors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Optimist vs. pessimist views on interagency collaboration</li> </ul>
<b>Environmental level</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus on governance networks as a part of the wider social, political and economic context</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Role of political decisions, societal developments and economic imperatives for governance networks</li> </ul>

*Table 2. Different operational levels of governance networks*

Secondly, I address leadership of governance networks, drawing on a leadership concept by Huxham and Vangen (2000), who divide the concept into three different leadership media: structure, processes and participants (see table 3). This definition of leadership allows seeing leadership as an outcome of several different factors. It also takes into account the characteristics of governance networks as interpersonal and inter-organizational constellations, which in addition are influenced by environmental – i.e. external – factors.

<b>Leadership media</b>	<b>Expressions of the leadership media</b>
<b>Structure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do new actors get involved?</li> <li>• Who makes decisions?</li> <li>• Who decides on agenda?</li> </ul>
<b>Processes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interaction between individuals</li> <li>• Formal and informal processes</li> <li>• Meetings, workshops, seminars etc.</li> </ul>
<b>Participants</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employees of the NAO</li> <li>• Boards</li> <li>• Individuals in relation to their home organization</li> <li>• Acts of leadership by participants: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• relationship building</li> <li>• bridging between different groups</li> <li>• moving things forward</li> <li>• linking capital</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

*Table 3. Leadership media*

This chapter together with chapter 2 on crime prevention as a policy field form the basis of the first two of the analysis chapters. The first analysis chapter sets out to discuss challenges, incentives and disincentives of inter-organizational collaboration and draws on sections 3.2. and 3.3., as well as chapter 2. In the second analysis chapter, I address the role of interpersonal relations and leadership through structures, processes and participants for inter-organizational collaboration and draw on section 3.3.2 and 3.4. together with the findings from the first analysis chapter.

# CHAPTER 4. COLLABORATIVE INNOVATION IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR

## 4.1. INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter dealt with inter-organizational collaboration and leading inter-organizational collaboration. This chapter's focus is to discuss the concepts *public sector innovation* and *collaborative innovation*, drawing partly on the previous chapter regarding collaborative innovation and drawn on in turn in chapter 8. Section 4.2 discusses public sector innovation as a concept and how the concept is understood in this thesis. The point of view of this thesis is that innovation can mean both a large-scale radical innovation and an incremental change and that this definition of innovation is relevant, because otherwise there is a risk of missing innovations that may not be large in scale but nevertheless valuable. In the view of this thesis, innovation should be defined as such by those involved, irrespective of the magnitude of change. In this section, I also discuss the particular characteristics of service innovation and innovation in frontline bureaucracies as a special case, drawing on chapter 2.

Section 4.3 discusses how and why innovation comes about, what characterizes *innovation processes* according to different definitions, and also how the process of innovation is understood in this thesis. This section also discusses different views on whether or not innovation is always positive. It is argued that connecting different levels of administration is important, because actors on different levels have different roles in innovation. In the view of this thesis, innovation does not need to be an actively managed process since it is typically somewhat unpredictable and cannot be planned in detail. However, innovation can be understood as having a number of different phases from idea creation to actual implementation. This thesis uses a phase model described by Juul Kristensen and Vøxted (2009) that is also used in the discussion of preconditions of collaborative innovation. This model includes the following phases: idea generation, coalition building, development/implementation and consolidation.

Section 4.4 draws on innovation and inter-organizational collaboration literature to discuss the concept of *collaborative innovation* as, on the one hand, a particular type of innovation, and on the other, a particular type of inter-organizational collaboration/network governance. In previous literature, innovation has typically been seen as a process taking place within only one organization (Moore and Hartley 2008), whereas in this section, I discuss previous literature on collaborative innovation in particular and the theories on inter-organizational collaboration that can add to innovation literature with regard to

collaborative innovation. As discussed in the previous chapter, it is the point of view of this thesis that inter-organizational collaboration is influenced by three different operational levels, environmental, organizational and operational (Mandell and Keast 2008). This level distinction together with the phase model of Juul Kristensen and Vøxted (2009) and previous literature on public sector innovation is drawn on to present a set of factors that are pertinent to collaborative innovation in different phases.

The key issues in this chapter are:

- Public sector innovation as a concept
- Where does innovation come from, and how and why, according to different theories
- The role of different levels of administration in innovation
- Collaborative innovation as a particular kind of inter-organizational collaboration
- Factors that influence collaborative innovation in different phases of an innovation

## **4.2. INNOVATION IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR**

Despite its wide use, innovation as a concept avoids clear-cut definitions. This makes innovation research challenging, and it also makes it difficult to make meta-analyses of previous research, since the concepts are not always defined the same way in different studies, as noted by Pollit (2011). In this section, I present how this thesis employs the concept of innovation. As concluded in chapter 1, the thesis essentially focuses on *service innovation created in collaboration with different organizations, and in particular innovations created in frontline bureaucracies*. This section specifies what is characteristic of this type of innovation and presents the considerations regarding the definition of innovation in this thesis.

### **4.2.1. What is innovation in the public sector?**

The overarching definition of innovation in the thesis is *that innovation brings about qualitative rather than merely quantitative change, and that an innovation needs to be implemented in order to be called innovation*, a definition suggested by Sørensen and Torfing (2011). But innovation does not need to be completely new, as long as it is new in a particular context, as is suggested by Hartley (2005) and Sørensen and Torfing (2011). Although the definition by Sørensen and Torfing (2011) also includes dissemination (spread) of innovation, this thesis does not focus on dissemination. Different definitions of innovation also entail different views of the process that creates innovation and the extent to which innovation is an intentional and systematic activity. These issues are discussed in more detail in section 4.3.5, where different views of the process of innovation are presented.



Furthermore, the thesis focuses on *public*, rather than private sector innovation. The concept of innovation has traditionally been used in the private sector literature, but is increasingly also used in relation to public sector activities. The character of the public sector differs in many aspects from that of the private sector, and this has an impact on the way in which innovation does and can take place in the public sector (e.g. Juul Kristensen and Vøxted 2009; Miles 2004, referred to in Røste 2005:26-29). Since the goal in the public sector is to contribute to public purposes, innovation in the public sector is necessarily faced with a different set of demands than private sector innovation. Political decisions are often a driver for new innovation in the public sector. Decision making in the public sector is not focused on making profit, as is the case for private sector innovation. What is more, public sector organizations are under scrutiny by the media, and it can be feared that failure will lead to negative media attention. It should however be noted that public and private sector innovations need not be two completely different phenomena. For example, incentives for public and private sector employees to create innovation can have some similar characteristics, such as individual prestige or economic benefits for the organization (Halvorsen 2005).

In the literature, public sector innovations cover a broad range of phenomena. One classification of innovation types in the public sector is found in Halvorsen (2005) and includes the following types: a new or improved service, process innovation (a new way of manufacturing a service or a product), administrative innovation, system innovation (for example, a new organization or new type of cooperation), conceptual innovation and radical change of rationality (change in the world view or “mental matrix” of the employees in an organization). Hartley (2005) adds to the list: for example, rhetorical innovation, strategic innovation and innovation in governance, which means new forms of citizen engagement. These long listings indicate that public sector innovation can mean a number of different things, and the view in this thesis is that it is not necessarily useful to assume that all the phenomena listed above come about through a similar process (e.g. Walker 2008) or have other common denominators apart from bringing something new to the context into which they are introduced. This thesis mainly focuses on service innovation, because this kind of innovation is the most prevalent in the case study. Also, the YAP program as such can be seen as a case of service innovation.

One aspect of defining innovation that divides researchers working with public sector innovation is deciding the magnitude and type of change required for something to be classified as innovation. There is in fact no completely clear line between innovation and mere change (Considine et al. 2009). The definition by Sørensen and Torfing (2011) asserts that innovation needs to be qualitatively different and not just more of the same. This definition is useful for this thesis, as it does not assume that innovations need to be of a certain magnitude to qualify as innovation. The way the distinction between innovation and incremental change is made plays a role in relation to what types of changes are classified as innovations, and it can potentially serve to conceal some types of innovation. This is discussed further in section 4.3.5.

Typically, a distinction is also made between radical and incremental types of innovation. Some authors promote radical innovation as an ideal and argue that innovation should challenge old, long-held assumptions (Eggers and Singh 2009). They find that

innovation needs to be radical in order to be able to meet the challenges facing the public sector (Harris and Albury 2009). It is not clear, however, exactly how these authors define radical and incremental innovation.

In the service innovation literature, however, the idea of what qualifies as innovation is broader. Gallouj and Weinstein (1997) present a category of innovations characteristic for services they call ad hoc innovation – small innovations that are created in a specific context to solve an issue for a particular client. Fuglsang (2010) points out that including even the small-scale innovations is important in order to capture how innovation and development are actually going on in public organizations.

This thesis does not take a definite stand on the radical/incremental distinction. Rather, it is argued that radicalism in innovation is relative and dependent on the context. How radical an innovation is might be measured by its impact, especially after its implementation, in the context; and the focus in this respect could be on what kind of changes and how extensive changes are necessary for the organization(s) involved. In this thesis, the point of departure is that an innovation needs to be defined as innovation by the respondents; hence, I have not set any limits that only allow innovations of a given magnitude to be included in this thesis.

#### **4.2.2. Innovating public services in frontline bureaucracies**

Innovations in services have some specific characteristics that distinguish them from, for example, technological innovations. Osborne et al. (2013) argue that public services production is specific and different from, for example, production of consumer goods in three respects: First, services are intangible, which means that the ‘product’ created in essence consists of a process rather than a physical product or artefact such as a washing machine. Second, production and ‘consumption’ of the service occur simultaneously, which implies that in contrast to, for example, manufactured goods, it is not possible to separate production and consumption of the service. Such changes in production as reducing staff will have an impact on the actual service provided. Third, the citizen is by definition a co-creator of the service, since the service delivered is in fact created at the same time as it is consumed. To clarify this last point with an example from Osborne et al. 2013 – a visit to a doctor is influenced both by the situation causing the patient to seek help and the doctors’ skills.

Although innovations created within public services can represent a wider range of types of innovations and can also be artifacts, in either case these are “*not ‘public goods’ in their own right, but rather they are required to support and enable the delivery of intangible and process driven public services*” (Osborne et al. 2013:136). Even a new computer software that is used for example to follow up on client cases can still have an impact on how the service is actually delivered to the client. As indicated in the previous section, the point of view taken in this thesis is also that innovation in services is not necessarily a completely new service, but can also be an adjustment of existing services or more small-scale innovations. Osborne et al. (2013) argue that this special character of services has not been sufficiently understood in public management literature. This thesis does not focus on

technological innovations, but I just want to illustrate the embeddedness of public service innovations in the public sector context.

These points illustrate how public services and innovation in public services cannot be seen in isolation from their context, and how both the service providers (public sector employees) and users (citizens) are involved in influencing the outcome of the service.

As is discussed in chapter 2, since frontline workers play an important role in social crime prevention, their role in innovation is also important. Frontline bureaucrats act as mediators, as a kind of middlemen, between the citizens and the state and play an important role in actually carrying out policies (Lipsky 2010). Frontline workers in effect create the services produced in the public sector, together with the citizens (Osborne et al. 2013). Therefore, understanding the role of frontline workers also has to do with increasing understanding of the role of the citizen in innovation, as frontline workers by definition are closest to the citizens.

Chapter 2 discusses the concept of citizen-agent – i.e. frontline workers as citizen agents – meaning that frontline workers act at times as advocates for citizens (Maynard-Moody and Musheno 2003). An example of what could be called a case of frontline workers acting as citizen agents in innovation can be found in Brown (2010). Brown found in her study on innovation within social services that one major problem in implementing innovation was that the frontline staff felt that the risks involved for the very vulnerable groups of service users were not adequately taken into account, and they therefore resisted implementation. It can thus be argued that frontline workers should be included in innovation in order to better take into account the needs of the users and the work practice. Fuglsang (2010) notes in his study on innovation by home-helpers in elderly care that the small-scale everyday innovation that took place in the case could also be a way of understanding the contribution of citizens in innovation, as this innovation took place in response to perceived needs of the citizens.

As discussed in chapter 2, the idea of frontline workers as the interpreters of citizens' needs is certainly a controversial issue as well. Frontline workers can be said to be part of defining and articulating the needs of the citizen, for better or for worse – they can have prejudiced assumptions about the clients, but they can also act as advocates promoting clients' rights. In either case, through being forced to exercise discretion in their treatment of individual clients, frontline bureaucrats play a significant role in innovation, irrespective of whether the innovation is created in the frontline or is a top-down innovation.

## **4.3. WHY AND HOW INNOVATION IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR**

In this section, I discuss the role of innovation in the public sector and how the view and character of public sector innovation has changed over time. I also discuss different views on incentives of innovation and the question of whether or not innovation is always good. Secondly, I discuss *innovation as a process* and different views on how innovation can and should come about. One important aspect from the point of view of this thesis is the role of different levels of administration in innovation, which is also discussed in this section.

### **4.3.1. Public sector innovation in different paradigms of public administration**

Innovation has received increasing attention in the public debate and on the political agenda in Denmark as well as in other western countries. In Denmark, for example, the Danish government launched a new national innovation strategy in December 2012. Innovation is portrayed in the public debate as an imperative, as something that should be done. Although innovation has recently become a topic of intense interest, this does not mean that innovation has not taken place before. Changes have taken place, however, in relation to the kind of innovation focused upon. Different paradigms of public administration also entail different foci and assume different roles for different actors in the public sector. Hartley (2005, referring to Benington and Hartley 2001) discusses how the view on innovation has shifted according to the current paradigm in public sector governance. The authors make a distinction between traditional public administration, new public management and networked governance (also known as new public governance).

Traditional governance was characterized by bureaucratic top-down government, where politicians had the decision-making power. Citizens were portrayed as a homogeneous group whose needs were defined and met by professionals employed in the public sector adhering to standardized solutions. Innovations were typically large scale radical innovations.

New public management is characterized in turn by focus on organizational improvements, also largely inspired by private sector management practices. Characteristic of new public management is the view of the citizen as a customer and a strict division between politics and administration. Innovations are in this paradigm typically organizational ones.

Networked governance, the third paradigm, which is discussed in detail in the previous chapter, is according to Hartley (2005, referring to Benington and Hartley 2001), characterized by a view of the public sector as changing continuously and the needs the public sector is expected to address are seen as complex and involve risk. Furthermore, citizens are seen as a diverse group, and there is also more focus on the role of citizens in innovation as no longer mere passive actors without influence but co-creators of public

services. Accordingly, the view of innovation is also characterized by a need for flexibility and work in networks of organizations rather than only within single organizations.

These three paradigms can be roughly located in different historical periods (Hartley 2005). However, they also partly exist side by side, and therefore any particular situation in public administration is characterized by a mixture of these paradigms. Nevertheless, these paradigms represent different types of approaches to innovation and also different roles for and different understandings of the citizen, and citizens as a group.

This thesis subscribes to the idea of citizens as a heterogeneous group with equally heterogeneous sets of needs, which also motivates the focus on understanding how these demands can be met in a flexible way – for example, through governance networks. This view is also in line with the idea presented in section 4.2.2. regarding the character of innovations in services and how public services are essentially created in interaction between the citizens and the frontline bureaucrats.

#### **4.3.2. Where does innovation come from? External, organizational and individual factors**

With the increasing focus on innovation, one obvious research question is: why does innovation happen? Public sector innovation can be seen as a response to external events and crises (e.g. Halvorsen 2005). It is dependent on how innovation processes are managed in organizations, the organizational characteristics of innovative organizations (e.g. Walker 2008), and the characteristics of individuals involved in innovation. In this section, I discuss some of the main ideas found in the literature about what factors are relevant for innovation. This section does not have particular emphasis on collaborative innovation, but mainly on innovation within single organizations. Collaborative innovation is discussed in greater detail in section 4.4.

First, innovation has to do with factors that stem from the environment: the social and political context. Generally, the pressure on the public sector to ‘do more for less’, in a cost effective way address the contemporary societal challenges, is seen as a major motivation to enhance innovation. Halvorsen (2005) lists a number of factors that drive public sector innovation, and they can be said to stem from external factors (i.e. factors that do not stem from the organizational or individual level): policy change and political targets, popular opinion and demands, new scientific or technological developments, societal developments in general (such as demographic change), the need to implement new international laws and standards, and user needs and preferences.

Secondly, other literature discusses the organizational characteristics that are beneficial to innovation. In the following, I present some findings from the literature. It is clear that there is no simple relationship between organizational type and innovation. Damanpour (referred to in Considine et al. 2009) found that a highly centralized decision-making process hampers innovation, whereas Moon (1999, referred to in Considine et al. 2009) found that in highly centralized organizations, it is rather the case that senior managers create innovations while those lower down in the hierarchy are hampered from innovating. As for service innovations in particular, Walker (2008) found that large and

outward-looking organizations with target-orientation and an organic structure – i.e. organizations where decision-making authority is pushed down the organizational hierarchy – devolved decision-making and a high degree of specialization were associated with service innovation. Also, as suggested for example by Walker (2008), different innovations come about in different organizational types; therefore, the role of organizational characteristics for innovation is not unambiguous.

Another organizational factor commonly mentioned is related to the risk associated with innovation. Borins (2001a) found that innovative organizations are characterized by not being afraid of failure while public sector organizations typically try to avoid risk, which can be due to the media focus receive by failed innovations (as noted by Borins 2002). This is also related to the fact that public sector agencies are obviously under public scrutiny and accountability criteria, which can limit innovation. The view of risk and risk aversion as a barrier to innovation is discussed further in the next section, since it can be argued that risk aversion is not to be categorically seen as negative; in some cases, it can also be motivated.

To sum up, earlier literature on the role of organizational features for innovation does not imply only that some types of organizations may be more innovative than others, but also that different organizations promote different kinds of innovation. Organizational factors also influence who in the organization is an innovator, especially the level of administration innovators come from.

A third set of factors related to innovation has to do with individual innovators. In early theories of economic innovation, individual (and collective) entrepreneurship was seen as crucial for innovation (Hagedoorn 1996). More recently Sanger and Levin (1992) found that innovations were often made by actors who were optimistic despite bureaucracy. It was found by Considine et al. (2009) that being connected through external networks was an important predictor of whether or not a person was an innovator. Another issue related to individual factors is the role of interaction between different individuals in innovation. This issue is discussed in more detail in section 4.4. on collaborative innovation.

Finally, it can be noted that the characteristics of any particular innovation are likely to depend on factors on each of these levels – external, organizational and individual. The political demand and windows of opportunity set to some extent the preconditions for what kinds of innovations are made in each policy field, but organizational context also plays a role, as do individual factors.

What is relevant regarding the different views on where innovation comes from is that they can lead to very different policy recommendations and policies with regard to innovation and emphasize different sets of factors as having influence on innovation. This is relevant to consider especially if and when it is a government's political priority to promote innovation. Focus on organizational factors or the need for innovative individuals, for example, may downplay the role of external influences and create expectations that organizations need to be innovative irrespective of the role of external conditions such as access to financing or regulations.

### **4.3.3. Outcomes of innovation: Is innovation good or bad?**

As said in the introduction, this thesis does not assume that innovation is necessarily something positive *per se*. Sometimes in the public discussion, however, it is as if innovation has an intrinsic value, and that innovativeness is a sign of being a well performing agency.

Although essentially this thesis does not focus on or evaluate outcomes of innovation, the point of view is that it is problematic not to take into account that all innovation is not necessarily positive. The analytical focus on only identifying how innovation, any kind of innovation, can be created, makes it impossible to include a normative dimension in the analysis. Questions like how to inhibit bad/useless innovation, or how to promote innovation that is good/useful are not addressed; however, as Hartley (2005) points out, innovation that leads to initial performance loss can still lead to improvement in the long run. Therefore, there is no yes or no answer to whether an innovation is good; innovation can obviously be good for some and bad for others or from a different point of view.

As for innovation in this particular context, there are some reasons to be cautious when creating innovation. First of all, it can be noted that innovation always creates a disturbance in the context where it is implemented; therefore, it is relevant to ask how much innovation is good. System stability – i.e. absence of comprehensive changes in the network – had a positive impact on network effectiveness in service networks in mental health care, according to a study by Provan and Milward (1995). It is necessary for such networks to be closely knit, and this study indicates that changes will disturb linkages. Changes also cause uncertainty among clients. The question is therefore whether or not – or at least under what circumstances – innovation is desirable, at least radical innovation, when working with a vulnerable group of citizens.

Discussion of whether or not and when innovation is good also leads back to the question of risk touched upon in the previous section. Osborne and Kerry (2011) argue that although innovation in the public sector is typically thought to involve risk, there is little scholarly or political discussion on how actually to manage risk. It can be asked whether risk aversion is always negative. Brown (2010), as mentioned earlier, found that social workers resisted implementation of new innovations, because they thought them to be risky for their clients and because of insecurity about continued financing.

The notion of risk aversion thus needs to be seen in a more nuanced way rather than only as hindering innovation. The assumption that public sector actors are averse to innovation due to risk, because of fear of personnel loss, loss of reputation, or becoming open to accusation, could indicate a view of public sector employees that sees them as motivated only by maximizing individual benefits and saving their own skin. This discussion comes down to the view of frontline bureaucrats to the extent that they resist innovation, but it might just as well be middle managers or other employees who resist innovation because of a value conflict, and not only due to risk of bad media exposure or other such disincentives. If, for example, risk aversion is (categorically) seen as a barrier to innovation, no room remains for arguing that risk aversion would have been quite good in some cases.

#### 4.3.4. Innovation and connecting different levels of administration

As mentioned in chapter 3, in inter-organizational collaboration, not only the horizontal (inter-organizational) connections are important, but also the vertical. Some literature on public sector innovation points out that different levels of administration typically play different roles in innovation. It is therefore interesting when considering collaborative innovation to review this literature. In this section, the role of different levels of administration is discussed and later connected with the discussion of inter-organizational collaboration and governance networks in innovation.

Borins (2002) makes a distinction between top-down and bottom-up innovation. Sundbo (1996) argues in turn that this distinction is not particularly strict but that there can be actors from different levels involved in the same innovation. Juul Kristensen and Vøxted (2009), instead of talking about bottom-up or top-down innovations, make distinctions between who is initiating the innovation, who are involved, and who is steering. In their view, leaders, employees and users (i.e. citizens) can all be innovation actors (see table 4).

<b>Actor/ form of innovation</b>	<b>Leadership</b>	<b>Employees</b>	<b>Users</b>
<b>Actor initiated</b>	Leader initiated innovation	Employee initiated innovation	User initiated innovation
<b>Actor involving</b>	Leader involving innovation	Employee involving innovation	User involving innovation
<b>Actor steered</b>	Leader steered innovation	Employee steered innovation	User steered innovation

*Table 4. Types of involvement of different actors in innovation. Source: Juul Kristensen and Vøxted (2009:40).*

These distinctions indicate a broader view of the actors behind innovation than the top-down, bottom-up distinction. As the authors point out, an innovation where employees play a major role can nevertheless be initiated by the leadership. What is more, this distinction takes into account that different actors can be involved in different phases of the innovation (although innovation is not necessarily, or even typically, a neat linear process).

However, what is useful about the distinction by Borins is that the factors that influence innovation relate to the fact that different levels of administration play different roles. In any case, leadership sets the framework for innovation – even when the innovation is initiated by employees – by providing resources. Borins (research referred to in Borins 2002) found that support from immediate superiors was crucial for successful innovation by public employees. Frontline staff rarely has access to the necessary resources, nor can they set aside time to develop their innovations without support from their superiors (ibid.).



Innovation initiated by leadership typically leads in turn to a need for adjustment on lower levels and hence to new innovation, depending on the definition of innovation (Fuglsang 2008). As Funder and Sørensen (2011) point out, the lower levels of administration play a major role in whether a policy eventually succeeds. This point is also made by Lipsky (2010). Funder and Sørensen (2011) argue that ideally the actors involved in implementation should already be included in the idea creation phase. As discussed in chapter 2 and in section 4.2.2, the need to include frontline staff has to do not only with overcoming implementation resistance, but also with the fact that frontline employees have relevant knowledge of the problem field and of the needs of the citizens by being in direct contact with them.

It is also relevant to note that innovation initiated at different levels is different. Fuglsang (2010) noted in an experimental study on elderly care that innovations essentially arose in three ways: as an intentional top-management initiated activity; as a (semi-intentional) management activity that is problem-driven and takes place around concrete problems; and as small-scale adjustments on the frontline level, which he calls bricolage, drawing on the concept established by Lévi-Strauss (1966). By bricolage, he means minor adjustments that arise from everyday work, such as improving techniques to help the clients in their everyday life.

There is more to the division of roles between levels of administration, however, since the view of innovation is not necessarily the same in different parts of the organization. Lewis et al. (2011) found that the view of the role of different procedures and actors involved in innovation depended on the position of the individual. Politicians were typically more positive about political procedures for innovation, while managers saw politics as a hindrance to innovation. The authors point out that such different views may be related to the fact that different positions offer different opportunities and different actors control different things. For example, politicians have obviously more control over political procedures. They also found that bureaucrats on a high level of administration were most positive about the innovation potential in the structure of the organization they represented. According to the study, different individuals can also have different views on what constitutes innovation – for example, whether innovation is about small incremental changes or large changes. This is relevant in relation to what was said earlier about the role of the organizational form in innovation, as it is clear that this not only depends on the kind of innovation, but also on the fact that different actors have different views on what constitutes innovation.

#### **4.3.5. Managed vs. emergent, planned vs. ad hoc**

Opinions differ as to how innovation should be actively managed by public sector leaders and administrators, and whether it even can. Osborne and Brown (2005:Ch.3) make a distinction between scholars who promote planned innovation and those who see innovation as an emergent process. Planned innovation means a systematic scanning of the environment for sources of innovation, while the notion of emergent innovation is based on the idea that “*the environment is too complex and is itself changing too rapidly to allow for a planned approach*” (ibid. 26).

Some authors strictly argue that public sector innovation should be a systematic and managed process. Eggers and Singh (2009), who promote innovation as a systematic activity, call non-planned innovation “accidental”, whereas other authors see innovation as a messier and less systematic process. Sanger and Levin (1992) found that successful innovations in the public sector were in fact characterized by a non-linear, ad hoc process that the authors call evolutionary tinkering – putting new things together from existing ingredients.

A problem with making it a prerequisite that innovation be a systematic process is that this can serve to make some innovations invisible if they fail to fit the definition, as indicated in section 4.2.1 (Fuglsang and Sørensen 2011). This is again related to the issue of how to define innovation in innovation research. Fuglsang refers to a categorization by Toivonen, Tuominen and Brax (2007, referred to in Fuglsang 2010). They identify three different models of innovation: separate planning stage model, rapid application model, and *a posteriori* recognition (of innovation). These represent different ways of arriving at innovation, and only the first involves a more systematic planning phase, while the other two are based more on trial and error and less systematic methods. However, there is not necessarily a clear-cut line between systematic and non-systematic innovations. As Sørensen and Torfing (2011) point out, innovations and outcomes of innovation processes are always partly unpredictable and contingent. It is the view of this thesis that innovation may – but does not have to – come about through a systematic process that has an explicit intention to create innovation.

The way in which innovation is defined and what is classified as innovation potentially also have consequences for recognizing the role in innovation of different actors in the public sector. Frontline employees in the case studied by Fuglsang (2010) were often involved in small-scale bricolage. Small-scale innovations made by frontline employees in public services, such as those described by Fuglsang in the home help service, may play an important role in relation to the outcomes of the services and contribute to a qualitative change from the point of view of the citizen receiving the service; but such changes are not necessarily recognized as innovation according to some scholarly definitions. In my view, if and when the ultimate goal of innovation is to contribute to public purpose, it must be crucial to take into account the different ways to achieve innovation and the positive value added through different types of innovations.

#### **4.3.6. Innovation as a process: phases of innovation**

Although it is stated earlier that innovation is not to be seen as a simple, linear process, it is nevertheless the case that innovation processes can be roughly divided into different phases. Making such a division is also useful for analytical purposes.

One phase division is made by Juul Kristensen and Vøxted (2009). Their model also assumes different phases in the innovation process, but what I like about this model is that it portrays innovation as a messy process and does not assume that innovation needs to be systematized to the degree that for example Eggers and Singh (2009) do. The model also takes into account the context of innovation and the possibility of diversity in innovation processes, where innovations do not necessarily all follow the same path. The phases in the

model by Juul Kristensen and Vøxted (2009) are: *idea generation, coalition building, development, implementation and consolidation*.

Idea generation also involves “selling” the idea to the organization “*as an idea that demands that resources be set aside and innovative employees be connected to the project*” (Juul Kristensen and Vøxted 2009:25, referring to Kanter 2000 and Van de Ven et al. 1999, my translation from Danish).

Coalition phase means creating alliances in order to gain necessary support, economic and political, for the innovation. This phase, say the authors, is mainly relevant for large-scale innovation. The alliances created demand continuous negotiations to be maintained, which may change during the course of implementation.

Development phase means concretizing the ideas into actual practices, perhaps creating prototypes and trying out the idea. In this phase, the idea might develop into several ideas and spread in many directions.

Implementation means actually putting the idea into practice, selling the new product, starting up the new service etc. The authors note that in some organizations implementation concurs with development.

Finally the model includes consolidation of innovation as a phase of its own, meaning that innovation is made a part of the organization’s daily work. The authors note that innovations have different lifetimes, and not all innovations actually get consolidated as a part of the organization’s daily work.

This model is useful, because it assumes that innovation is developed over a longer period of time and gradually adjusted. However, the model discusses innovation as a process that takes place within one organization and therefore does not address the particular issues related to collaborative innovation. Therefore, in the next section, I draw on this phase division and the theories on inter-organizational collaboration presented in the previous chapter to discuss collaborative innovation as a particular kind of innovation that involves actors from different organizations and issues that are pertinent to different phases of collaborative innovation.

## **4.4. COLLABORATIVE INNOVATION IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR**

As mentioned in the introduction, this thesis focuses not only on innovation as such, but on innovation created in collaboration with actors from different organizations. This final section of this chapter draws on the previous sections and theories on network governance to discuss collaborative innovation as a particular form of innovation in the public sector. In this thesis, I am interested in ways in which innovation can be *collaborative*, in the sense that different actors participate in creating and implementing innovation, and the benefits and challenges of innovation in inter-organizational collaboration, where both horizontal (inter-organizational) and vertical relations are important..

#### **4.4.1. Collaborative innovation**

Collaborative innovation as a concept has existed for some time within the private sector and has recently also been discussed by scholars focusing on public sector innovation (Bommert 2010, Sørensen and Torfing 2011, Nambisan 2008). Specific for collaborative innovation is that the “*innovation process is opened up, that actors from within the organization, other organizations, the private and third sector and citizens are integrated into the innovation cycle*”<sup>5</sup> (Bommert 2010:16). In this thesis, focus is narrowed to only public sector actors.

The rationale for studying collaborative innovation is based on the idea discussed earlier about the complexity, the “wickedness”, of the problem of crime and the need to involve several actors in finding solutions. Flexibility and inter-organizational collaboration are necessary to meet the demands of such complex policy fields as crime prevention (Rhodes 2000). According to Bommert (2010), the complexity of contemporary societal problems is an argument for crossing over organizational silos in search of the most suitable innovation assets and resources. Eggers and Singh (2009) bring up in turn the fast changing environment as an argument for promoting innovation. These ideas correspond in fact to the discussion in section 4.3.1. on the changed view of the challenges the public sector ought to meet, and the acknowledgement that the needs of the population are not homogeneous but diverse, that the environment is continuously changing, and the problems the public sector must face are complex, volatile and involve risk.

According to Bommert (2010), not only are collaboratively created innovations somehow qualitatively better, collaboration also leads to more innovation. Bommert (2010:20) argues that collaboration can help to “*produce the necessary quality and quantity of innovations in order to meet the emergent and persistent social, economic and environmental challenges*”. The assumption is, therefore, not only that a different kind of innovation is needed, but also that this will produce more innovation. It is however not the assumption made in this thesis that collaboration necessarily leads to innovation, but rather that it can lead to a certain kind, a more holistic, innovation.

#### **4.4.2. Role of governance networks and collaboration for collaborative innovation**

Collaborative innovation in this thesis is seen on the one hand as a particular kind of innovation while on the other hand as a particular kind of inter-organizational collaboration. Here, I draw on theories on network governance as Sørensen and Torfing (2011) and Bommert (2010) also do in their theoretical frameworks.

As I state above, collaborative innovation holds the promise of a different, more holistic innovation; however, it also presents challenges. In this section, these challenges are discussed with point of departure in theories on network governance combined with theories on innovation. Collaborative innovation means that not only the dynamics and role

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<sup>5</sup> Innovation cycle refers here to Eggers and Singh (2009) and their division of innovation processes into different phases: idea generation, idea selection, implementation and dissemination.

divisions that have to do with different levels of administration are in play, but also the challenges that have to do with negotiations on the horizontal direction, between different organizations.

Until recently innovation research focused mainly on innovation taking place within single organizations (Moore and Hartley 2008). Moore and Hartley point out that innovation that crosses organizational boundaries entails a whole different set of issues, which means that decisions regarding what is produced must be negotiated with several organizations or across sectors. Also, the resources needed are not contributed by just a single organization. Moore and Hartley focus on examples of cross-sectorial innovations, but innovation *within* the public sector that only involve public sector organizations can be faced with similar challenges, even though they are not of an equally fundamental character. Even in pure public sector collaboration, reorganization at the inter-organizational level is demanded, which means that innovation across organizations has an additional layer of complexity on top of the issues that are pertinent to innovation in general. Even within sector collaborations, creating innovation collaboratively demands the investment of resources, time, money and personnel to engage in the innovation process, and decisions must be made regarding who is to contribute these inputs. The content of the innovation must also be negotiated with actors that may or may not share each others' views and problem definitions.

Thus, many of the same issues are pertinent to collaborative innovation as to governance networks. Decision making is not based on hierarchical decisions, but on negotiations between autonomous parties. This poses challenges very similar to the challenges of managing inter-organizational collaboration. The tighter the integration between participants in a governance network is, the more adjustment it demands from the participant organizations (Keast et al. 2007, see also section 3.2.2. in chapter 3), and it can be said that collaborative innovation involves a very tight integration and demands a lot of adjustment from the participating organizations. In the following section, I discuss different aspects that can be pertinent to collaborative innovation, and that can be concluded by combining theories on innovation and theories on governance networks. I draw on the different dynamics of collaborative innovation presented in the previous chapter – the different operational levels – to discuss issues pertinent to collaborative innovation.

#### **4.4.3. Different operational levels and collaborative innovation**

In the previous chapter, I conclude on the basis of previous literature on governance networks that inter-organizational collaboration is influenced by organizational, interpersonal and environmental factors (e.g. Mandell and Keast 2008). In this section, I discuss how these factors relate to collaborative innovation. These issues, argued to be pertinent to inter-organizational collaboration, are discussed here in combination with the factors already mentioned as pertinent to innovation. The assumption is that collaboration in a multiple sense of the word – collaboration as an interpersonal process and an inter-organizational process – is relevant for understanding collaborative innovation. In addition, it is assumed that collaborative innovation, in the same way as inter-organizational collaboration, is also influenced by external (i.e. environmental) factors.

### **Collaborative innovation as an organizational process**

As mentioned in section 4.2.2, many studies discuss the role of organizational factors in innovation, and a number of issues, such as centralized decision-making, risk aversion, lack of financing, are said to have an influence on whether or not innovation takes place. Until now, only few studies have focused on the role of the characteristics of inter-organizational collaboration in innovation (Sørensen and Torfing 2011). As mentioned, some literature has been published on collaborative innovation from the point of view of network governance, and this thesis can add to this literature.

One of the ways in which collaborative innovation is said to be relevant is that it enables tapping into a larger pool of resources or innovation assets (Bommert 2010). Diverse sets of resources in collaborative innovation means that more resources are made available, but it also means that a different set of challenges arise, since it is necessary to negotiate the substantive content of the innovation as well as the practical details regarding its implementation. The way in which these resources are “tapped into”, however, and the challenges of actually implementing collaborative innovation, demand further elaboration, as Bommert also notes.

Here again, the tension between optimistic and pessimistic views of inter-organizational collaboration (see previous chapter) is illustrated. Inter-organizational collaboration that creates innovation can be said to require a high degree of integration (Keast et al. 2007); therefore, the need for a common goal and adjustment are particularly important.

### **Collaborative innovation and interpersonal relations**

It is stated in the previous chapter that inter-organizational collaborations are not only influenced by organizational but also interpersonal factors, and that based on theories on social capital, it could be assumed that individuals have close connections to others who are similar to themselves and that relationships between individuals in a network are not only instrumental but also have emotional motives. From the point of view of collaborative innovation, the involvement of different actors, according to the literature, is beneficial, because including individuals with different knowledge bases optimizes the idea generation phase (Sørensen and Torfing 2011, Eggers and Singh 2009).

Previous literature indicates that this process of including different actors also poses a potential dilemma. Keast and Hampson (2007) found that interpersonal relations were important for creating innovative outcomes in an inter-organizational partnership. The existing relationships facilitated risk taking in the collaboration and created synergy effects (ibid.) The authors also note that in the case on collaboration (the field studied was the construction industry), these relations had taken some time to develop. Innes and Booher (1999) describe in turn situations where the need arose to create joint understanding between different parties, and where this consensus building took place in the course of several facilitated face-to-face interactions. According to the authors, this interaction created a synergy effect that was greater than any individual actor could have created by themselves. Skilton and Dooley (2010) argue, however, that repeated interaction tends to

make project teams less creative, in the sense that the groups start repeating themselves and tend to create more similar solutions than earlier.

This presents something of a dilemma, as innovation should introduce a discontinuity with the past, since innovation is typically associated with creativity in relation to output (Osborne and Brown 2005), challenge to existing mindsets (Eggers and Singh 2009), and radicalism (Harris and Albury 2009); but these characteristics may stand in contrast to the characteristics of collaborative innovation as a relational process. There may be a trade-off between wanting to involve individuals with creative ideas and the ability to implement these ideas in the collaboration. One can also ask, whether or not it is likely that collaborative innovations tend to be incremental rather than radical, if implementation demands a certain degree of cohesion between the participants.

Keast and Hampson (2007), when discussing the importance of attracting the right participants, also note the importance of being able to tap into their resources, knowledge and skills. It can therefore be said that it is not only a question of involving the most creative individuals or those who get along best, but also having these individuals' access to resources and position as a criteria for who to involve, since the ideas for innovations also need to be matched with what can actually be accomplished. This also illustrates a connection between different levels, in that interpersonal relations influence inter-organizational level outcomes as well.

This dilemma may also depend, however, on the process of innovation. As Eggers and Singh (2009) argue, in opposition to Juul Kristensen and Vøxted (2009), the idea creation phase should be separated from idea selection, so as not to shoot down promising ideas ahead of time. Either way, the question is whether or not it is possible and even desirable to decouple idea generation from the realities and resource capacities of the participants in the collaborative innovation process.

### **Collaborative innovation and environmental factors**

Until now, collaborative innovation has been discussed in this section as an inter-organizational and interpersonal process. However, as discussed in the previous chapter, far from all aspects pertinent to governance networks, and therefore also to collaborative innovation, are under the influence of network participants.

Governance networks are often mandated, and the participation of certain actors can be politically motivated and not on the basis of their relevance for the issue in question. As also mentioned in chapter 3, governance networks are influenced by the previous history of collaboration (e.g. Sullivan and Skelcher 2002). Therefore, the possibilities for creating innovation in governance networks depend on a number of contingent background factors and not only on the potential contribution these actors can make to the particular issue.

As already mentioned, financing is one of the issues that is important for innovation. Financing is probably to a high degree dependent on environmental factors and network participants' ability to attract funds. Also, gaining political acceptance is necessary in case of a public sector innovation (Juul Kristensen and Vøxted 2009). Here, the concept of linking capital, referred to in section 3.4.2, is relevant, as it is important that those involved in collaborative innovation are also sufficiently connected to actors with political power and financial means.

#### 4.4.4. The process of collaborative innovation

To sum up on the challenges posed by collaborative innovation on different levels of operation, I discuss in this final section how the above-mentioned issues are related to the different phases of the innovation process, as defined by Juul Kristensen and Vøxted (2009).

The model of the different phases of innovation presented in section 4.3.6. (Juul Kristensen and Vøxted 2009) focuses only on innovation as an intra-organizational process. In table 5, I summarize how different phases of innovation are related to collaborative innovation in particular, in order to show the contribution of theories on collaborative innovation and network governance to analyzing different phases of innovation.

<b>Innovation phase</b>	<b>Relevance of collaboration</b>	<b>Challenges of collaborative innovation</b>
<b>Idea generation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Including a broad set of actors in order to come up with relevant ideas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creativity vs. relationality, challenges in implementing generated ideas</li> </ul>
<b>Coalition building</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Winning support from politicians and other relevant actors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need for linking capital</li> </ul>
<b>Development/-implementation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to a broad set of resources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Power asymmetries</li> <li>• Resource imbalance</li> <li>• Shared vs. individual organizational goals</li> <li>• Need for mutual adjustment</li> </ul>
<b>Consolidation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continuous commitment to the innovation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continuous financing</li> </ul>

*Table 5. Phases of an innovation process*

In the idea generation process, it is somewhat relevant to include a broad set of actors with diverse knowledge bases (Sørensen and Torfing 2011), but the challenge is that in order to implement the ideas generated, trusting interpersonal relations are necessary. In the coalition building phase, individuals with linking capital may be needed (Woolcock 2001) to gain support from politicians and other relevant actors in order to be able to implement the innovation. These individuals could be, for example, leaders of the collaboration (e.g. Crosby, Bryson and Stone 2010, see the discussion in section 3.4.2).



In the development and implementation phases, it is important to have access to the relevant resources in order to be able to implement the innovation, but here the challenge is to find the balance between shared and individual organizational goals and the need for mutual adjustment. Potentially, other issues typical for governance networks in general also arise, such as power asymmetries and resource imbalance. Finally, in the consolidation phase, the question is whether the innovation is deemed relevant, and if so, to ensure commitment from the participants involved and continuous financing, unless the innovation can be financed by existing means.

As mentioned in section 4.4.3, the question is also what the relationship is between the idea generation and implementation phases, and to what extent the issues that are relevant for implementation should be taken into account already in the idea generation phase. Sørensen and Torfing (2011) argue for example that collaboration in the idea creation phase is relevant also in order to assess the possible risks of the innovation; and Juul Kristensen and Vøxted (2009) argue “selling” the innovation for the organization starts already during the idea generation phase. On the other hand, Eggers and Singh (2009) believe the idea generation phase should be a free process where ideas should not be shot down too early, and that the free idea generation phase should be followed by a separate idea selection phase. It is not clear however from the authors’ argumentation how possible interest conflicts are negotiated in the selection phase, which might turn out to be a problem.

## **4.5. SUMMARY**

This chapter presents previous literature on public sector innovation and, in particular, collaborative innovation. It is concluded that this thesis focuses on collaborative service innovation in social crime prevention with particular emphasis on the role of frontline workers. It is also stated that the thesis does not make a delimitation based on the magnitude of change for something to be called an innovation. Otherwise, the risk would arise of excluding important innovations from the definition. As stated in chapter 1, collaborative innovation refers to innovation that involves different organizations, possibly from different levels of government and different sectors, although this is not the case in this thesis, and the involvement can take place in different phases (Juul Kristensen and Vøxted (2009) of the innovation or in all of them.

In section 4.2, I discuss different views of innovation, the nature of the public sector innovation process according to different authors, and what factors have an impact on innovation. I note that the views on how innovation comes about depend on participants’ position in the public sector, and also that different levels of administration play different roles in innovation. I also discuss the normative issue of whether innovation is always positive. I present different views on the process of innovation and whether it should or even can be a systematic, planned process.

In section 4.3, I focus on collaborative innovation as a specific kind of innovation and a specific kind of inter-organizational collaboration, and how the theories on network

governance presented in chapter 3 can also inform the study of collaborative innovation. I conclude that there are two overall dilemmas: first, a dilemma between innovation as a creative process and the need to have trusting personal relations in order to implement the innovation, which can be mutually exclusive; second, a dilemma between the need for innovation to have a shared goal and a possible conflict between individual organizational goals and those related to the collaborative innovation.

This chapter together with the first two analysis chapters (6 and 7), forms the basis for the third analysis chapter, chapter 8, where I address this thesis' third research question and discuss incentives, disincentives and preconditions for collaborative innovation in crime prevention.

# **CHAPTER 5. METHODOLOGY: RESEARCH DESIGN, DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK**

## **5.1. INTRODUCTION**

This chapter describes the research design of this thesis, the analytical framework, method for data collection and strategy for data-analysis. The chapter also includes a systematic operationalization of the research questions.

As is usually the case in predominantly qualitative research, the analysis has been an iterative process, moving between theory and data (e.g. Sinkovics and Afoldi 2012), and the initial research problem has been sharpened during the process. An iterative research process is also known as the abductive approach, which is a position between strictly deductive and inductive approaches. Abductive reasoning does not start (as in deduction) or end (as in induction) with a theory, but is somewhere in between, a way of formulating a hypothesis, as argued in Bogason (2006), and drawing on both theory and empirical data in doing so.

This means, and has also meant for this thesis, that the research process is to some extent contingent, shaped by the order in which interesting findings are revealed in the case and as these are mirrored against theory. The literature reviews have therefore also developed over the course of the process. This is the case in this thesis, even though a literature review on inter-organizational collaboration and particularly inter-organizational collaboration within crime prevention was carried out in the early phase of the project. The literature on inter-organizational relations and public sector innovation covers a broad range of topics, and most of all, the literature embraces a broad range of perspectives (as discussed in chapters 3 and 4). This makes it difficult to navigate and narrow down the topic in theoretical terms.

The structure of the chapter is as follows: first, a discussion of the choice of research design and choice of case; second, the research questions in the light of the theoretical discussion in the chapters 2, 3, and 4; third, a discussion of the operationalization of the research questions and data collection and then the method for data analysis. Finally, I discuss the limitations of the methods used and other methodological limitations, as well as ethical considerations.

## **5.2. RESEARCH DESIGN**

### **5.2.1. Choice of research design**

This thesis is based on a single case study and a mixed methods research design. Flyvbjerg (2006) argues that single case studies defend their place in social science research due to the very character of social science knowledge. Social science knowledge, he argues, is context-dependent and is not understandable through grand theories. It is the intention of this thesis to gain a holistic understanding of different possible factors that are (seen to be) relevant; therefore, a case study is very relevant, as it enables an in-depth focus on understanding the factors that are pertinent to inter-organizational collaboration and collaborative innovation.

To grasp the complexity of inter-organizational collaboration and collaborative innovation a mixed methods approach was deemed crucial. The thesis was inspired by the study on governance networks by Bogason et al. (the methodological approach of the study is presented in Bogason and Zölner (eds.) 2007), who argue that applying different methods to the study of governance networks enables different aspects of governance networks to be understood. As discussed in chapter 3, governance networks consist of both formal and informal processes on different levels – interpersonal, organizational and environmental – and these are difficult to capture with only one method.

### **5.2.2. Selection of the case**

The choice of case was made based on expectations regarding the information this case could provide and not due for example to representativity or random selection (Flyvbjerg 2006:230). Yin (2009) argues that choice of case study can be motivated by the uniqueness (or at least rarity) of the case. What makes this case particularly interesting is the existence of a so-called network administrative organization (NAO). This is a particular way of organizing inter-organizational collaboration that has not been researched very much at this point, particularly not within the field of crime prevention and especially not in Denmark (see chapter 2). What is more, SSP work among youth over 18 is not found in many municipalities, although no mapping of the extent of SSP work among young adults exists at this point, and SSP collaboration is organized in very different ways in different municipalities, so in some sense it can be argued that any SSP case is unique.

### **5.2.3. Outline of the research design**

Mixed method designs vary depending of the relative emphasis of the different methods, the timing of the different methods (sequential or concurrent – i.e. using different methods at the same time) and the degree of integration (mixing) of the methods (e.g. Leech and Onwuegbuzie 2009). In this case, a combination of qualitative interviews, Social Network Analysis (SNA) and observations was employed. Some written material was also obtained

through the municipality home page and from interviewees who provided some relevant information, although no systematic document analysis was carried out. The research design can be roughly divided into a pre-study, consisting of a mixture of reading through some written material and two interviews (one of which was not carried out by me), and the main study, which consisted of 22 semi-structured interviews and observations from meetings, 5 altogether. In connection with the interviews, the respondents were also asked to respond to two questions that were to be used for the SNA.

In the first phase, all the readily available written material was gathered that could provide information on the structure, organization and goals of the collaboration. Relevant information was also obtained through an interview transcript I received from another member of the research group and an interview I conducted myself with two employees in the NAO. The background information, particularly the interview I carried out myself, was also helpful in further defining the research focus and pointing out potential problems in the case selection and research questions. The interviews were helpful in sharpening the research focus and formulating an interview guide for the subsequent interviews.

In the second phase, the data collection using different methods, interviews, observations and SNA was done simultaneously, and the findings from different methods were mixed in the analysis and used to answer each of the three research questions. However, the observations started after most of the interviews were already carried out; therefore, the interviews could obviously have influenced the observations. For example, I had already given up the focus on the importance of inter-professional collaboration and inter-professional conflicts by the time and was therefore not especially focused on these aspects. The analysis relies largely on interviews, as they also form the main bulk of the data. This was not the intention from the beginning but partly a consequence of methodological difficulties with SNA and the finding that the observations did not turn out to be quite as useful as hoped.

#### **5.2.4. A mixed methods design**

Social network analysis, in combination with qualitative methods, has previously been used to study networks in the healthcare sector (Lewis 2005) and governance networks in employment policy (Borrás and Olsen 2007). The major benefit of employing mixed methods is typically seen to be the possibility of increasing validity through triangulation (e.g. Borrás and Olsen 2007). This was however not the purpose in this study, but rather to expand and complement the qualitative findings with the quantitative data from the SNA (Greene, Caracelli, and Graham 1989, referred to in Leech and Onwugbuzie 2006). Mixing different data in the analysis is not without problems, and the simple way would have been to keep the analysis of data collected with different methods separate, and for example to use different methods to answer different sub-questions (e.g. Creswell 2009).

An obvious problem is that qualitative methods allow for more flexibility during the process than quantitative methods, which are more rigid. Both interviews and observations are also somewhat unpredictable, especially when they are not strictly structured. In this case study, new themes emerged during the course of the study, but the SNA questions had to be kept the same throughout the whole study. The interviews revealed

new interesting themes, which it would have been relevant to elaborate in the SNA analysis – for example, it could have been relevant to ask more questions about interpersonal relations.

### **5.3. ACCESSING THE FIELD**

The process of accessing the field turned out to shape the research process quite a lot. I found myself forced to rely on two gatekeeper individuals in the organization who provided information about the organization and about how the organization could be accessed. These individuals played a major role by assisting me in actually negotiating the access to the field by being involved in presenting the project to both the leadership and the interviewees.

The study was presented with a formal letter in Danish to the board of the organization and with an introductory letter to all involved in the organization. The introductory letter was formulated by one of my contacts, but I read and commented on it before it was sent out. Although I was not planning to use an interactive or action research approach, the letter of motivation that was sent out to the informants encouraged them to participate, as this would help develop the work of the organization.

Because I carried out my whole data collection in the same organization and met with some individuals often, it was particularly important to be aware of my relationship with the participants and make sure I did not undermine my access to the field – for example by appearing too intrusive. I met some actors in both interviews and observations, and I was at times concerned that my presence caused irritation.

### **5.4. RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND OPERATIONALIZATION**

In this section, I return to my research questions and how they were arrived at, based on the problem field and the previous literature presented in chapters 2, 3 and 4. The kind of data that was gathered to analyze the research problem is then discussed.

#### **5.4.1. Research problem and research questions**

As already stated in the introduction, the research problem in its final form can be summarized with the two questions:

**What are the incentives and disincentives to inter-organizational collaboration and collaborative innovation in crime prevention, understood as a field characterized by frontline bureaucracies?**

## **How do leadership of inter-organizational collaboration and factors on the interpersonal, organizational, and environmental levels influence inter-organizational collaboration and collaborative innovation?**

The next three analytical chapters (6, 7 and 8) each focus on a theme or question based on these overarching research questions. These questions are introduced in the following.

### **Research question 1**

The first question is:

#### **What challenges, incentives and disincentives to collaboration across professional and organizational barriers in crime prevention can be found based on the YAP case?**

As concluded in chapter 2, inter-organizational collaboration in crime prevention is widely embraced in Denmark and is assumed to be beneficial, while the challenges of collaboration and potential disincentives also exist. Chapter 3 addresses different issues pertinent to inter-organizational collaboration in general. Based on these two chapters, this question deals with both what motivates and demotivates collaboration, factors that drive collaboration and dimensions of conflict.

The first question is further divided into the following sub-questions:

1. How do frontline employees describe the character of professional differences in the YAP?
2. Are there particular patterns of interaction to be found between employees in different agencies in the YAP?
3. What are the incentives and disincentives for inter-organizational collaboration, according to the frontline workers?
4. What are the incentives and disincentives for inter-organizational collaboration on the organizational level?
5. What are the challenges are for, on the one hand, organizations and on the other, individuals of being involved in an inter-organizational collaboration?

The first sub-question focuses on the YAP as a collaboration between frontline employees from different professional backgrounds. As indicated in chapter 2, professional conflicts, “speaking different languages”, and the need to negotiate between different views could be anticipated. The second sub-question, in connection with the first, addresses the patterns of interaction between the participants in the YAP collaboration. The underlying assumption (discussed in chapter 3) is that the actors may have a tendency to have connections only with certain agencies, that some actors or agencies might be more central than others, and some actors might be excluded. The third sub-question addresses the issue of incentives and disincentives for inter-organizational collaboration, according to the frontline bureaucrats. The analysis draws on the previous research on inter-organizational collaboration in crime prevention presented in chapter 2. The fourth sub-question addresses the incentives and disincentives of collaboration on the organizational level, drawing on

chapter 3 and what was said about the different rationales of collaboration, the optimistic vs. pessimistic perspective. Finally, the fifth sub-question addresses the implications of inter-organizational collaboration for organizations and individuals. As discussed in chapter 3, the closer the integration between organizations, the more need for adjustment by the participants, and this sub-question addresses how this adjustment takes place in this case.

### **Research question 2**

The second question is:

**What is the role of interpersonal relations and leadership through structures, participants and processes in inter-organizational collaboration in the YAP, and what factors influence these leadership media?**

This question addresses the preconditions for inter-organizational collaboration in crime prevention and the factors that influence inter-organizational collaboration. It is divided into the following sub-questions.

1. What characterizes the structure of the YAP?
2. What is the role of the NAO and other participants in the leadership of the YAP?
3. What is the role of processes for the leadership of the YAP?
4. How do contextual factors influence leadership through processes?
5. What factors are important for collaboration as an interpersonal process, according to the interviewed YAP employees?
6. What is the role of interpersonal relations for inter-organizational collaboration?

These sub-questions draw on the concept of collaboration leadership employed by Huxham and Vangen (2000), where leadership is divided into three different media: structure, process and participants. This way of conceptualizing leadership allows us to address factors that have an influence on inter-organizational collaboration in a broad way that does not assume that inter-organizational collaboration is merely influenced by factors that are under direct control of actors in formal positions of leadership. This is found to be the case, even though the literature on inter-organizational collaboration concludes that inter-organizational collaboration rarely moves forward without some acts of leadership or coordination. In addition to the three leadership media, chapter 7, which aims to answer this question, also discusses the role of interpersonal relations and demonstrates how the interpersonal character of governance networks is itself a factor that influences governance networks.

The first sub-question addresses the overall structure of the collaboration, how new actors enter, agenda setting and decision making based on the definition by Huxham and Vangen and the character of inter-organizational collaborations as governance networks discussed in chapter 3. The second sub-question addresses the role of participants in the collaboration, assuming that these participants can have both a formal or another kind of position. The third sub-question addresses the role of processes – i.e. meetings, workshops, interaction between the participants in the collaboration. It is important to mention again that these processes can be both formal and informal and can have both direct and indirect influence. The fourth sub-question addresses factors that I have labeled contextual factors.



Factors that are not under direct influence by network participants but nevertheless are pertinent to leadership through processes. The fifth sub-question addresses the relevant characteristics of interpersonal relations among YAP participants as described by the participants themselves, and finally the sixth sub-question addresses the role of interpersonal relations in the YAP.

### **Research question 3**

The third question is:

#### **What incentives, disincentives and preconditions for collaborative innovation in crime prevention can be found based on the YAP case?**

The question addresses the concept of collaborative innovation in the public sector as a specific form of public sector innovation, and the preconditions for such innovation. The question is addressed through first focusing on the concept of innovation, and then the roles of different levels of administration in innovation. The reason for taking what might seem like a detour, and first discussing innovation as such, is (as has been said many times in this thesis): in order to understand innovation, it is important to understand the role of different levels of administration in innovation; therefore, this is also important in order to understand collaborative innovation.

This question is further divided into following sub-questions:

1. How do interviewees define innovation in their problem field?
2. What kinds of incentives for innovation do the interviewees present?
3. What is the role of different levels of administration in innovation, according to the interviewees?
4. What is the role of collaborative innovation in this problem field, according to the interviewees?
5. What preconditions are there for collaborative innovation on the environmental, organizational and operational levels of governance networks?
6. What are the preconditions and challenges for collaborative innovation in different phases of an innovation?

In sub-question 1, the interesting thing is how innovation is defined by the interviewees in YAP. Chapter 4 states that the thesis focuses broadly speaking on service innovation in frontline bureaucracies. However, this definition leaves space for different understandings among the interviewees of what constitutes innovation. This is deemed a relevant issue as such, and the first part of the chapter is devoted to this issue.

Sub-question 2 addresses the incentives for innovation, according to the interviewees. As discussed in chapter 4, innovation is a concept that receives plenty of attention, and there are different ideas of why and what kind of innovation is relevant.

The third sub-question focuses on the role of different levels of administration in innovation. This was identified in the literature as a relevant dimension in public sector innovation, as different levels of administration can have different roles, but until recently

there has been little focus on innovation in this particular policy field. Especially the role of frontline employees has not been discussed to any great extent in the literature.

The last three sub-questions focus on collaborative innovation. The fourth question addresses the incentives for collaborative innovation in particular, as defined by the interviewees. The fifth question addresses the preconditions for collaborative innovation on different levels of administration, drawing on the findings on inter-organizational collaboration and innovation. Finally, the sixth question addresses preconditions and challenges of collaborative innovation in different phases of the innovation.

## **5.4.2. Data collection**

To answer the research questions, this thesis employs interviews as the main source of data but also Social Network Analysis and observations. Written material contributed background information on the organization and the history of the YAP program. As mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, the data analysis was an iterative process where also the research questions and the sub-questions were modified during the process. The following discusses how the data was collected and how it was intended to answer the research questions.

### **Written material**

The written material used consisted of documents found on the municipality website and some documents obtained from the interviewees that had to do with the background of the collaboration, the formal organization and tasks of the different agencies. I was also provided with some written evaluations of the program. The documents were used in practice to obtain information on the YAP program, for example, the kind of information presented in chapter 2 on the role of the different agencies and the structure of the NAO. Initially, documents did not seem to be available that could contribute to answering the thesis' research questions, so the focus was not on systematically using document analysis as a method. This lack of a more systematic use of documents is also partly due to the iterative character of the research process, where the focus of the research shifted somewhat during the process.

### **Interviews**

A total of 22 interviews were conducted in the second phase. They lasted on average one hour, were taped and then transcribed. The interviews were loosely based on interview guides, although in practice the questions were also modified depending on how the interviews developed. Three main themes were addressed: inter-professional collaboration, collaboration in general, and innovation.

The employees involved in the YAP program are altogether around 30, although new participants entered the program during the data collection phase. The collaboration involves two full-time employees who have a coordinating role. The other participants are involved in the collaboration in addition to their regular jobs in different municipal agencies. At the frontline level, practitioners work in area-based groups that deal with individual client cases, and there is also a leader group that deals with individual cases that

the frontline groups are not able to solve. A board is ultimately in charge of the whole SSP collaboration in the municipality as well as the work of the YAP.

My goal was to interview all of the participants in the YAP collaboration. The selection of interviewees was based on a list of employees involved in the YAP that I received from my contact person. The list included frontline employees as well as members of the leader and steering groups. I then contacted individuals on the list and booked interviews with those who wanted and were able to participate. Some of the interviewees turned out to be either very difficult to get in contact with, said they were not part of the collaboration anymore, or gave other reasons why they were not available for interview. The group of participants in the frontline groups is not entirely fixed, and participants are invited to the meetings with the frontline groups based on who are considered most relevant for the client cases being dealt with. Hence, not everyone involved in the YAP were on the list, and it also turned out that some individuals on the list were no longer involved in the YAP. What is more, some actors participated in several of the groups. During the period of the interviews, there were also ongoing discussions about including additional agencies in the collaboration.

I finally had to settle on 22 interviews, all in all – fifteen frontline workers, two middle-level leaders from the leader group, two top-level leaders from the steering group, and finally three NAO employees. The occupational background of the interviewees was mixed. The majority of the interviewees are teachers, social workers, political scientists, and social educators. In most of the agencies, there seemed to be a mix of different professions within social and educational fields, but in the Job Centre, I was told, it is typical for employees not to have a social/pedagogical background; rather the employees come from a range of different educational backgrounds so as to match the professions found on the labor market. It also turned out that some of the frontline workers had more than one education, had taken a number of specialist courses within their field, and had work experience from several agencies. What is more, it is also possible to work as a social worker with a social education degree.

Despite the failure to interview all participants, I judge that the interviewee sample was reasonably representative, as I was able to interview individuals from all levels of administration, individuals affiliated with different agencies, and at least a few individuals in each of the frontline groups.

With hindsight, it is clear that extending the selection of interviewees to also include citizens participating in the YAP would have been relevant. However, the selection of interviewees was originally made with the intention to focus on inter-professional differences; hence, the original research questions did not focus on citizens. Another reason that I rejected the idea of interviewing citizens in an early stage was that I anticipated that it would be difficult. In chapter 9, I return to the question: What could have been done otherwise in the thesis.

I made a total of four different interview guides for different groups of interviewees. One for frontline workers, another nearly identical for the leader groups, one for the steering group, and one for the coordinators from the NAO. Interview questions for all groups (see appendix 1 for the interview guides) started with a section of background questions on how long the interviewees had been in the collaboration, which agency they

worked in, what their tasks were, and what their educational background was. However, I eventually did not ask the steering group members about their educational background, although this was included in the interview guide.

The second set of questions for all groups except the steering group focused on working inter-professionally. The interviewees were asked to tell about their experiences with working with other professions, whether they felt they were doing something differently when working with different professions, and also what they did in case of a disagreement in the working group, (frontline or leader group, depending on the interviewee). These questions were based on the assumption that there would be inter-professional differences, in terms of different professional views on the client cases and also that different professionals might “speak different languages”. The intention was to find out how such situations were coped with.

The third set of questions focused on collaboration as a concept, and this time not only collaboration as an inter-professional but also as an inter-organizational issue and how the YAP collaboration works as a collaborative arena. I also asked what factors the interviewees thought have a good, respectively less good, impact on collaboration. The intention was not to ask about particular management practices. I wanted the interviewees to spontaneously tell which factors they thought were relevant, based on the assumption that not only formal management practices but other factors would be relevant as well, but I did assume that the interviewees would find, for example, coordination of the inter-professional and organizational collaboration to be relevant. Obviously, the coordinators were asked about what they thought was important in their work as coordinator. I also asked about interaction between different levels of administration, and chose intentionally not to use the word leadership. I wanted the question to be broader and include different roles at different levels of administration and not only leadership, but with hindsight the question was probably far too theoretical.

Finally, I also asked about innovation, although in the interview guide I did not use the word innovation. Instead, I used the expression developing/finding new solutions in the work, since I thought it was likely that the interviewees had very different ideas about what innovation was. The first was a broad question about what factors the interviewees thought were important for developing the work in the SSP collaboration. The second question was about the role of different levels of administration in creating new solutions. The third question was about whether the interviewees themselves had participated in innovation, and finally, the fourth was about whether the interviewees thought working in SSP resulted in better or different solutions than those created only within one agency. The idea behind these questions was first to find out about the respondents’ views and definitions of innovation, and then ask about their views on the roles of different levels of administration in innovation and whether they thought some solutions were created within a collaboration like SSP that would not have been arrived at otherwise. Here, the intention was to build upon the second set of interview questions in order to discuss any possible positive synergy effects that materialize in what in this thesis is called collaborative innovation.

The steering group members were given a slightly different version of the interview guide (see appendix 1), as they are not involved in the work on the frontline. The questions focused on innovation (i.e. creating new solutions), and again on whether the SSP

contributed to some added value that would not have been achieved if working only within one agency, and on the levels of administration and their different roles. I also asked directly about the need for leadership and coordination in the SSP.

It turned out to be difficult to keep some degree of focus in the interviews, despite use of the prepared interview guide. Some interviewees had quite extensive knowledge of some parts of the organization, the history of the YAP and the SSP collaboration, or a particular innovative project, and asking follow-up questions on these topics took time from asking other questions. In practice, it was also very easy to slide into detours, as many of the participants in this organization were also part of other collaborations and also active in the SSP collaboration working with children under 18. It was clear that many individuals had considerable experience from other inter-professional/inter-organizational work that helped them in their work, while others had less experience. This may also have been the reason some interviewees had very detailed opinions about the administrative/organizational side of collaboration, while some were less specific. My understanding of the field increased gradually during the course of the data collection and also as I read more literature, and this also had an influence on the interviews, in that I could build upon information I gathered in the previous interviews.

Qualitative interviews in research on inter-organizational collaboration can according to Zølner et al. (2007) be used as a source of both factual information and information on the interviewee's perceptions of their own and other participant's roles, and this turned out to be true in my case as well. I gained plenty of information on the background of the collaboration through interviews, although it also became clear that some events were interpreted differently by my informants. The distinction between factual information and information based on perceptions is difficult to make, since the way in which the interviewees described different events differed from person to person and was probably dependent on the interviewees' position, the way they chose to present their knowledge to me, and simply a result of imperfect information and memory failure with regard to events that happened some time ago. Interviewees (as well as the interviewer) also tend to have their own specific interpretations of different events from their individual vantage points. Nevertheless, I found the qualitative interviews very useful, because the concepts investigated in this thesis are rather ambiguous and difficult to operationalize, and it was necessary during the course of the interviews to clarify what kind of information really was of interest.

### **Observations**

In addition to the interviews, four observations were carried out at meetings with the local frontline groups and one observation at an education seminar for YAP employees. The observations were carried out after the most of the interviews were already made.

Notes of the meetings were made in a notebook and later written on the computer. I wrote the notes in my mother tongue, Finnish, so I did not have to be concerned about someone seeing my notes. One methodological difficulty was that the meetings took place in Danish and many interesting details unfortunately got lost in translation.

The observations were intended to complement the data obtained through interviews. Initially, I planned to use a scheme for what to observe in order to improve

comparability between observations in different groups and also to help maintain focus, but it turned out not to be useful, and my observations became less structured. The coordinator of the meetings was always the same, and as I became more familiar with the way the meetings were run, I was able to focus on the finer details. The main points observed had to do with the way in which the coordinator directed the meeting, the negotiations regarding what should be done in each individual client case, and how the inter-professional collaboration and interaction took place in practice.

A major positive aspect of observation studies is that this research method is relatively unmediated, meaning that the researcher is not steering what is happening but only observing (Sørensen and Torfing 2007). Observation of meetings provides insight into how different actors interact in practice (ibid.). Observations provide a different view of interaction between actors than interviews. Interviews are a useful supplement to observations, in that observations do not give information about “*how the individual actors perceive, interpret and evaluate the observed interaction processes*” (Sørensen and Torfing 2007:153). Obviously, however, the researcher can make interpretations by reading body language or tone of voice, or simply see if someone is being critical or positive about what is going on and being talked about.

Another point that can be made about the distinction between observation and interviews is that observations enable the researcher to see things that interviewees may treat as given or be unaware of and therefore not verbalize in interviews (Bryman 2012). It may be that some of the things that turn out to be interesting – such as how individuals participate in a discussion or how exactly the coordinators lead meetings, interact with the participants and what kind of role they have – are not reflected upon by the interviewees, because they see these kinds of issues as simply the normal way of interacting. It can also be that it is difficult to verbalize in the interview situation what exactly the researcher is looking for, and the interviewee may make their own judgments about what may be of interest for the researcher and answer accordingly. In this thesis, observations proved particularly useful in relation to interaction and communication between individuals, and especially leadership and coordination, which are difficult to address in interviews.

### **Social Network Analysis**

Finally, the interview guides included two Social Network Analysis (SNA) questions, which contributed mainly with responses regarding the first research question on interaction across organizational barriers, and by identifying the patterns of interaction among the actors.

The first of the two questions was about how often the respondents have contact with individuals in the other agencies in order to discuss an idea about how to develop the work in the YAP collaboration (i.e. talk about innovation). The second question was about how often the respondents have contact with individuals in the other agencies in order to discuss a work-related issue (see appendix 2 for the SNA questions). The intention behind using SNA was to identify patterns of interaction between participants, the assumptions behind which are described in Chapter 3.

Initially, the idea was to ask the respondents to name the actual individuals they had contact with, in order to analyze patterns of interaction between the network participants, but the interviewees were reluctant to name names. As some interviewees said, this could be because they found it difficult to remember all the people they had contact with and how often, as their work involves frequent contacts with employees from different agencies. A change of strategy was therefore necessary and as a solution, I decided to ask individuals to name organizations/agencies they had contact with and made a list, with the help of my contact person, which they could choose from.

## **5.5. ANALYSIS OF THE DATA**

The analysis of the interview data was carried out by dividing the data into codes, using the analysis software NVivo, to which transcribed interviews were uploaded. Social network data was in turn analyzed using the software UCINET (Borgatti et al. 2002). Observation notes were read through and used to supplement the interview responses where this was considered relevant.

Use of NVivo or similar software has some great advantages. Most notably, it enables creation of an overview of the material and systematizes the analysis. However, and this can be seen as one of the shortcomings of this thesis, computer-assisted data analysis runs the risk of chopping up data and thereby losing the context of the statements made in the interviews (Bryman 2012). This is always a risk when using coding as a method of analysis and was experienced also in this case. For example, interviewees often added a positive follow-up comment after having said something that was negatively charged, and simply coding these comments as positive aspects of collaboration may be problematic.

### **5.5.1. Coding interviews**

The coding of the interviews was done in several steps, in which the coding categories gradually developed. The coding was also guided by the need to choose which story out of many possible stories should be emphasized in this particular thesis. The concepts focused on in this study turned out to be difficult to study methodologically, and it was difficult to make the process of doing the coding very rigid.

In the first version, a very rough categorization was made into collaboration and innovation. The collaboration category included anything the interviewees said about things that influence collaboration, views and values about collaboration, including also the role of vertical relations in collaboration. In the innovation category, I placed anything that according to me or in the interviewees' definition was classified as innovation: examples of innovation and the process of innovation, values about innovation, any views on the process of innovation etc. Background information on the interviewees and comments made on the SNA questionnaire during the interviews were also given a code of their own, in case they should turn out to be relevant. To make the more detailed coding easier, these

rougher codes were printed and read in order to find more specific themes, and these steps were repeated.

These categories were gradually developed. The collaboration category was made into two umbrella categories: the first had to do with what the interviewees thought collaboration was all about, the benefits of collaboration and what factors influence collaboration according to the interviewees; and the second was named network management and included a number of sub-categories about different practices that were used by the NAO employees and the collaborative organs on different levels. Eventually, these categories were rearranged, because I decided that the concept of leadership initially used was still too narrow and did not correspond to what seemed to emerge from the data. I decided to employ the broader concept of leadership, the one used by Huxham and Vangen (2000). Finally, after several rounds of modifications of the categories, I decided on the theme division used in the analytical chapters.

### **5.5.2. Observations as supplement to interviews**

The observations conducted were finally of less use than hoped for, mainly due to language difficulties that were more apparent in the observations than in the interviews. The final use of the observations was in the perspective they provided on the actual behavior of the meeting coordinators and interaction between participants. They supplemented interview responses on these issues.

### **5.5.3. Using SNA to map connections between agencies**

The responses from the two SNA questions were fed into the SNA software UCINET. Since the interviewees were reluctant to give individuals' names, some modifications had to be made in the data. I created nodes to represent each organization involved or nominated, and where there was more than one respondent from one organization, I calculated an average of the responses by interviewees of the organization.

The response alternatives in the formula were recoded so that response "at least once a week" received value 3, "at least once a month" value 2, "more seldom" value 1 and "not at all" value 0. In some cases, respondents had marked somewhere between two alternatives; also in these cases, an average was calculated. An error was discovered in the SNA questionnaire. An older version of the questionnaire was given to one of the respondents that displayed the wrong name of one of the collaborative organizations. The particular answer was marked as zero in UCINET. Also, one of the names of the meeting forums in the collaboration was slightly misspelled in the survey, which may have caused confusion.

Using the UCINET software, a network graph was made showing the connections between different agencies. I also made a graph showing weighted lines – i.e. a diagram showing not only which agencies have connections with each other, but also how frequent these connections are. I also calculated measures for in- and out-degree centrality. In-degree centrality of an individual, or in this case an agency, indicates how many other network participants report having contact with the agency. The more contacts, the higher the in-



degree centrality. Out-degree centrality measures how many contacts individuals (or agencies) have to other agencies.

## 5.6. LIMITATIONS

This section discusses the methodological limitations of this thesis and how they may have influenced the study. These have to do with both the characteristics of the methods used and also unexpected problems that arose when applying the methods.

### 5.6.1. Limitations posed by the methods

#### **Interviews: Asking sensitive questions and the role of the researcher**

Interviews are in many ways a useful method for gathering data, but there is good reason to be cautious and reflexive in relation to the kind of data that is actually created in interviews.

First of all, the research topic has some inherent normative aspects, and in spite of the guarantee of anonymity, it is quite likely that one source of bias stems from the fact that the interviewees were aware that the whole organization was being interviewed at different levels of administration. Thus, asking questions about collaboration and what makes for good or bad collaboration are inherently normative questions and pose difficulties, as the interviewees are likely to feel a sense of loyalty and reluctance to be critical of their organization. It can be assumed that interviewees would downplay conflicts and problems. In order to address this problem, I tried to find expressions that enabled the interviewees to talk about potentially difficult issues in such a way that they were not laden with value, so they could still express critical views. I chose to pose questions like: *what kind of things would make collaboration difficult?* In that way, it is not implied that this kind of challenge must be present, or it does not have to have happened to them. I also chose to use the word challenge instead of the word problem, when asking about difficulties connected with collaboration.

Common advice regarding interview research is to avoid leading questions and to avoid expressing agreement or disagreement with the interviewees (e.g. Bryman 2012). This requires a difficult balance to be struck. In forming the interview guides, I made particular effort to avoid leading questions, also during the course of the interviews. At times, however, I tended to ask what Kvale (1996, referred to in Bryman 2012) calls interpreting questions – i.e. summarizing the argument made by the interviewee in order to check whether my interpretation was correct. It is possible that this also had an influence on responses. What is more, at times the interviewees did not quite understand the question, and when trying to explain what I was getting at, I could refer to statements in previous literature, for example, or how something is conceptualized in the literature.

### **Observations: Authentic access to data?**

Meeting observations are associated with both ethical and plain methodological problems. Meeting observation, while not demanding any action on the part of the observed, is nevertheless an intrusion into the environment of the observed. The meeting participants were informed by email by the meeting coordinators that I would participate, and I asked the coordinators to also let the participants know that if anyone objected to my participation, I would not participate. I did not see the emails that were sent and their exact content however. I therefore did not have full influence on how I was presented. At the start of the meetings, I was asked by the meeting coordinator to present the project and myself. It was only in the final meeting that I attended that I was not presented to the whole group, although I already knew some from previous meetings or interviews. I had not given much thought about how to present myself in advance, however. I thought I would do best by just taking things as they came.

When making a distinction between observation and interviews, it can be assumed that the observation provides a somehow more authentic, undistorted access to “reality” and enables checking facts (Atkinson and Coffey 2003). Although the meetings followed a strict agenda, it cannot be excluded that my presence had an influence on the participants. Since I told them that I was interested in inter-professional collaboration, it could be that the participants made an effort to seem like good collaborators. Seeing observations as undistorted access to reality also underestimates the role of the researcher as an interpreter of the situations observed, and that the researcher also sees the situation through a specific vantage point and some preconceptions.

As for possible ethical dilemmas, I had met some of the meeting participants already at the time of observation, and some I would meet later on. It is possible that it had an impact on some of the meeting participants that they had already participated in an interview with me or knew they had an interview booked.

### **Sources of bias in Social Network Analysis**

A potential pitfall with SNA questionnaires is that respondents, as is usual, have different interpretations of the questions posed (Knoke and Yang 2008). It is also likely that respondents forget or falsely recall individuals or simply have difficulty remembering who they have had contact with (ibid.)

I saved the SNA questions for last in most interview situations, and there was often only little of the agreed time for the interview remaining, which may have had an influence on the responses. I emailed the questionnaire to some interviewees, which may have meant that they spent more time on the questions. These problems may have reduced the reliability of the method.

What is more, it turned out that I should have specified the agencies in the list more precisely, as it turned out that some agencies have several sub-units. A methodological problem also arose because many interviewees said that they in fact only have contact with a few specific individuals in different agencies or a small sub-unit. Since not all participants in each organization were interviewed, the sample of interviewees could also comprise some bias. It is also obvious that there are individual differences between respondents, even

in the same agency. In one agency, for example, one person seems to be very active and knows many people in other agencies.

Many interviewees pointed out that contacts with other agencies depend on the period being examined; in some periods, they have frequent contact with some agency and in others less. There is also reason to believe that contacts between representatives of different agencies also depend on geographical proximity. This was mentioned by many interviewees.

With hindsight, it might have been more useful to carry out the SNA and interviews in sequence, in order to be able to analyze these two sets of data separately and use the former method to inform the latter. As discussed in the analysis, having had the results from the SNA at the time of the interviews would have been useful, because the interviews could have provided additional understanding of the results of the SNA study. On the other hand, considering the difficulties encountered with the SNA method in connection with the reluctance to provide names, it may be that the response rate would have been far lower had the SNA analysis been carried out first – unless perhaps a pilot study had been made that would have pointed out problems with the initial plan for the SNA.

### **5.6.2. Positionality**

It is not only interview respondents who see the world from their own vantage point; the same is true of the researcher. I have some experience as a frontline worker, as I have worked as a nursing assistant in a nursing home and home-help service while studying at the university. This has clearly had an impact on how I see the research topic. Through my previous experience, I have a preconception about what it is like to be a frontline employee, and I believe this also shows in some of my interviews when I sometimes spontaneously showed agreement or sympathy with the interviewees. Especially, the view of frontline workers and the relationship between the frontline worker and the client are influenced by my previous experience. Also, the need for continuous ad hoc innovations is something intuitively familiar to me from my own work experience. My, in principal, positive attitude towards frontline workers, as reflected by my reference to public service motivation in chapter 3, is quite likely also influenced by my own experience.

### **5.6.3. Language**

Since English and Swedish (which is very closely related to Danish) are my stronger languages, some methodological difficulty arose from language barriers. All the interviews were conducted in Danish, with only occasionally some clarifications in English. One of the interviewees said he could understand Swedish with no difficulty, so I decided to speak Swedish and he answered in Danish. The interviews were taped and transcribed, which was a great help in checking the interviews for details that were missed. It is clear that some things were lost in translation in the interview situation, and as a result, I failed to make some relevant follow-up questions that otherwise would have been made. On the other hand, it was probably more convenient for the interviewees to speak Danish.

Language can also be a methodological challenge for other reasons. In the English language, distinction is made between cooperation, coordination and collaboration. Although sometimes used vaguely, these concepts are typically used to denote different types and degrees of joint work (Keast et al. 2007). In Danish, the word *samarbejde* is used to denote both cooperation and collaboration, which may have caused some confusion.

A more general problem is that the concepts studied – inter-organizational collaboration and innovation – are at the same time both vernacular and scholarly concepts, and at times it was very difficult to discuss these concepts in interviews. With hindsight, it would have been useful to take a more rigid approach to these concepts, as at times, it was not quite clear whether the interviewee and I were talking about the same thing.

## 5.7. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethical considerations were made with regard to data collection as well as with regard to presentation of the data in the analysis. I finally decided not to use the name of the city or the YAP program in the thesis. All the interviewees were granted anonymity, but this involved some problems, because since the interviewees were relatively few and all came from the same municipality, it might be possible to identify them. If there is only one person in a certain position, such as the coordinators, it can be very difficult to anonymize these individuals even though their names were not mentioned in the thesis. In practice, I tried to avoid situations where it is possible to recognize one single person, although this is difficult. This means that in the analysis, when I talk about a middle-level leader, it can be either the two members of the leader group or one of the coordinators. When I talk about an employee in the NAO, it can be either one of the two coordinators or the head of the department, and when I talk about a top-level leader, it can be either the head of the NAO or a member of the steering group. It is difficult to be completely consequential, especially since I am writing about management practices, as these are by definition person-dependent.

The meetings attended dealt with confidential issues. In addition to agreeing to keep information I heard confidential, I also avoided taking notes about names of particular individuals, and in the final report, the focus is not on issues subject to confidentiality.

# **CHAPTER 6. INTER-ORGANIZATIONAL COLLABORATION IN CRIME PREVENTION: ORGANIZATIONAL AND PROFESSIONAL BOUNDARIES**

## **6.1. INTRODUCTION**

The focus of this chapter is to discuss challenges, incentives and disincentives characteristic of inter-organizational collaboration in crime prevention. As mentioned in chapters 1 and 3, inter-organizational collaboration is often seen as a policy imperative, and this is also the case in crime prevention. Chapter 2 states that reasons for criminality are various, and individuals involved in criminality typically have different kinds of social and other problems, which can be seen as motivation for inter-organizational collaboration. It is also stated that inter-organizational collaboration in crime prevention, understood as collaboration between frontline bureaucracies, faces a number of dilemmas. The field is characterized by professional disagreements and relations between frontline workers and the citizens are also crucial. The risk exists for confidentiality and trust problems. The latter is especially relevant in this chapter, which thus focuses on the research question:

**What challenges, incentives and disincentives to collaboration across professional and organizational barriers in crime prevention can be found based on the YAP case?**

In the analysis, this research question is approached from two different angles, which emerged from the data: collaboration as inter-professional practice on the frontline, and collaboration as inter-organizational practice. On the one hand, the YAP collaboration can be seen as a collaboration between frontline bureaucrats from different agencies as perceived by the individual frontline practitioners involved, and on the other hand, as a collaboration between agencies, as an inter-organizational practice.

As discussed in this chapter, the challenges, incentives, disincentives of collaboration are different, depending partly on the angle from which the issue is approached. On the frontline level, the focus is on the role of inter-organizational collaboration on the concrete operational work aimed at serving the citizens. The focus on the frontline is also on the interaction between actors with different knowledge bases in relation to the problem field. From an inter-organizational perspective, relevant issues are:

the extent to which the collaboration is perceived to have a joint goal (optimist perspective, Skelcher and Sullivan 2002 and chapter 3, section 3.3.1), how the agencies and individuals participating in the YAP negotiate allocation of resources between the collaboration and their own agency, and the implications of organizational integration.

The structure of the chapter is as follows: first, I present the findings in relation to how the frontline employees see the characteristics and benefits of the collaboration as opposed to working within only one agency. Then, I discuss the YAP from the point of view of inter-organizational collaboration and the challenges, incentives and disincentives to engage in such collaboration while remaining individual agencies. Finally, I conclude by revising the research question this chapter attempts to answer.

The chapter answers the following sub-questions:

1. How do frontline employees describe the character of professional differences in the YAP?
2. Are there particular patterns of interaction to be found between employees in different agencies in the YAP?
3. What are the incentives and disincentives for inter-organizational collaboration, according to the frontline workers?
4. What are the incentives and disincentives for inter-organizational collaboration on the organizational level?
5. What are the challenges are for, on the one hand, organizations and on the other, individuals of being involved in an inter-organizational collaboration?

## **6.2. INTER-ORGANIZATIONAL COLLABORATION AS FRONTLINE PRACTICE**

This section is about collaboration on the frontline, and what the interviewees see as the purpose of the collaboration and its possible disincentives and challenges. The general conclusion is that the majority of the interviewed frontline workers are very positive towards the YAP and believe it leads to more holistic solutions. The professional disagreements that were assumed to be important turned out not to be as prevalent, and to the extent they exist, they appear to be of a different nature than assumed. In the instances interviewees mentioned the existence of professional differences regarding punitive vs. preventive methods, they had to do with different approaches of those with positions of official authority (Danish: myndighedsansvar) and those with a more informal role. Although the majority of the interviewees are positive towards the YAP, the little opposition that could be found had to do with the idea that the YAP posed a threat to confidentiality, and that some experienced that street-level workers are in a difficult position, because they are afraid that the youth will see them as traitors. This section thus illustrates that it is crucial to include the citizens in the equation when analyzing inter-organizational collaboration in crime prevention, even though they were not interviewed for this thesis.

### 6.2.1. YAP as an inter-professional collaboration: “Lack” of professional differences

The issue this thesis originally set out to analyze was collaboration between representatives of different professions, with the assumption that they held different views on crime prevention. It turned out, however, that these differences were not very prevalent in this case, and when they appeared, they had a different character than initially assumed. Typically, the literature points out that professional differences exist that cause friction in inter-organizational crime prevention work (e.g. Gilling 1994), even though counter-evidence also exists in Denmark (Balvig et al. 2011, Mehlbye et. al. 2012). In particular, a distinction is made between social/preventive and punitive approaches, which stem from the dual role in the public sector both to punish criminal offenses and address the social problems offenders may have (e.g. Ashworth 2002). This division did not seem to be a very prevalent problem in this case. In the YAP, the police are not involved, and since the contradiction between social/preventive and punitive approaches typically exists between the police and other professions, the contradiction was obviously less likely to be found in this case.

The aim of the interviews was to find out whether working with different professional groups had an influence on the respondents’ work practices, and if so, how. The underlying assumption was that professionals from different departments would be speaking ‘different languages’ or in some other way have different ways of working that would demand mutual (or one-sided) adjustment or effort in order to work out misunderstandings arising between participants; however, none of the interviewees seemed to think this was the case. In general, very few interviewees indicated any kind of professional disagreement or conflict.

Typically, employees on the frontline level did not mention having different interpretations of the young persons’ situation, nor did they promote one professional view over another. There seemed to be a kind of joint view of the work being done, albeit with different specializations. One interviewee from the social department said:

*...Even though we belong to different professional groups, we nevertheless have a joint social understanding. So irrespective of how you are educated, you know well what it is like to work with marginalized clients.*

Although the social vs. punitive aspect did not seem to be prevalent, however, there did seem to be another issue that potentially caused disagreement. The few conflicts that were mentioned had to do with the relation between employees and clients, rather than between social and punitive approaches.

An important issue seemed to be the position of workers in relation to citizens. A difference seemed to exist between employees with formal responsibility for clients and those who have a more informal position and are out on the streets interacting

with citizens (Danish: gadeplansmedarbejder, which translates to street-level worker<sup>6</sup>). According to one interviewee who is a social worker, street-level workers often have a social pedagogic degree, which means, according to her, that they have a different approach to working with youth. Also, street-level workers do not have the formal responsibilities of representatives of public agencies, which makes a difference according to the interviewee:

*... The street-level workers... ...see the youth in a whole different way, and the youth see them in a different way than us. Many of the young people see us as those who only say, "No, you can't do that, you cannot get money, you have to do this and this", while the street-level workers work in a whole different way with the youth. They are on the streets where they get in contact with them.*

A situation that one coordinator described as the only example of an irresolvable disagreement in a frontline group was when a representative from a social pedagogic program – who had, in the interviewees' words, a softer approach – could not agree with the rest of the group. They thought more pressure should be put on the client discussed to start a job or education and move away from the current milieu. The coordinator thought that part of the reason for the disagreement was not only professional differences but also language barriers and the way the person acted. There are certainly different reasons that can cause such a situation, but it could also be related to the fact that the case workers in the social department and employment services also act as representatives of the state and have policy goals to fulfill, such as getting people into employment or education, which some other participants in the collaboration do not have. I could also observe some disagreement during one meeting between representatives of youth clubs and a civil servant regarding expectations that citizens should live up to. The distinction citizen agent vs. state agent (Maynard-Moody and Musheno 2003) mentioned in chapter 2 is relevant here. It seems that potentially there is a division among frontline workers with regard to the citizen agent vs. state agent distinction.

Somewhat related to this discussion, one interviewee noted that a hierarchy exists between the different professions, which emerges as a kind of competition about who knows the youth best, and who has the toughest working conditions. The same interviewee also had experienced schisms in terms of different professions claiming ownership of the problem, arguing that the others do not understand it. Again, it is the citizens and the relationship to the citizens that is relevant.

Some interviewees also said that differences in perception also have to do with the fact that representatives from different agencies meet the citizens in different situations, and some meet them more often than others. As one person put it, people who work with paying social welfare benefits see that many people cheat or try to cheat, and this influences their view of the citizens. Workers in the children and family unit of the social department who meet with whole families have a different relation to the citizens than those in the adult

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<sup>6</sup> Therefore, the term frontline worker/bureaucrat is used in this thesis, instead of street-level worker, because it turns out that according to the interviewees, a distinction exists between the two. It is more appropriate to use the term frontline worker for the YAP employees in order to make this distinction and avoid confusion.



department or employment office. The interviewee thought that this makes a difference. She herself works in the children and family unit.

Hence, the character of the inter-professional dimension is related to the relationship of the professionals to the citizen and the task the employee has in relation to the citizen, rather than, or at least not only, to a different view of crime prevention or social work. It can thus be said that a different distinction is prevalent, not that of preventive vs. punitive but namely the state agent vs. citizen agent division.

Finally, some interviewees thought there was a positive side to the existence of professional differences. One interviewee, a social worker, said that in her profession a tendency exists to see only problems and barriers that the citizen has instead of seeing possibilities, and that other professions could help her see possibilities instead of barriers. Another social worker said that the YAP collaboration also has a benefit in terms of bringing in new perspectives to the issue discussed. The interviewee described how she herself changed her views as a result of meeting in inter-organizational groups.

*Yes, I often when come to the meeting and have a case with me ... .. I have a plan in my head that I think would be the correct one. And then the others come with their professions and say, but have you thought about this, and why don't you point to that. And I think, oh, well, you could do it like that as well. So you get your views revised.*

The same interviewee also sees professional differences as complementary rather than conflicting:

*I hold on to my profession and my knowledge, and the others hold on to theirs. And in that way we get things up on a higher level, usually.*

Some interpretations can be made of why inter-professional conflicts did not turn out to be particularly relevant in this case. One interviewee said that the educational backgrounds of the different professionals participating in the YAP are in fact very similar. It also turned out that some of the interviewees had work experience from several different departments, and also that individuals working in a particular agency did not necessarily all have the same education. It was in fact difficult to make comparisons between participants based on education, because many interviewees had several degrees and had taken additional courses within their fields during the course of their careers. What is more, most of the interviewees reported that they regularly work with people in different professions. In the words of an interviewee on the top level, the individuals recruited to work in the YAP program “think it is fun to collaborate”.

Previous work experience is also an important requirement for those employed in the YAP, according to one frontline interviewee. He said that they must have some working experience to get a job in the YAP. Therefore, it can be questioned whether the employees working in this program are representative of their professions and their work fields. It might be that some people enjoy working in groups more than others and that ease of working with other professions is therefore an individual characteristic rather than related to professional background.

Another aspect that can reduce professional conflict was said to be the fact that since the work carried out in the collaboration is based on what the citizens themselves wish, there is therefore less room for professional negotiation. The room for negotiation is also reduced by the scope of decision making in the frontline groups. As discussed in chapter 2, the goals of the organizations participating in this case deal with providing for immediate physical and social needs, such as housing and rehabilitation, and then motivating the citizens participating in the program to start either education or employment. It can be argued that the awareness of the limitations regarding what can and cannot be done in the collaboration, by ruling out other options, also reduces the potential for conflict in the face-to-face interaction.

This view was expressed by one of the interviewees from the social department who pointed out that the limits posed by the decision-making frames have an impact on the collaboration process, in that the narrow frames for decision making actually also reduce the potential of conflict.

*As a scholar ... .. I would be concerned that so many people agree with each other. Because that is impossible ... .. that is what I also think sometimes when I sit in the meetings. ... There is also an obvious risk when a young person comes to YAP that there is an agreement about what needs to be done, because the young person doesn't really have so many alternatives. I mean, our options to help are also limited due to our departmental situation. So therefore there is not so much to disagree on.*

This is relevant, since it illustrates the limitations of collaborative decision making. Inter-professional collaboration is not simply about coming up with a wide array of creative ideas, but also about implementing policies that are outside the scope of the frontline workers' influence. The findings also question the actual discretion (Lipsky 2010) of frontline workers discussed in chapter 2.

This section's focus is on the interview findings on inter-professional collaboration. The next section discusses the findings from the Social Network Analysis (SNA), which focus on the YAP as a network of participants from different organizations and the characteristics of this network. The SNA complements the interviews with regard to the character of professional differences, and focuses on patterns of interaction between YAP participants. In chapter 3, section 3.3.2, different types of patterns in social networks are discussed, and the next section discusses what kinds of patterns can be found in the YAP case.

### **6.2.2. Social network patterns among participants**

Social Network Analysis (SNA) was employed in order to identify whether patterns of interaction existed among the participants that were based on professional or organizational divisions. It could also have been the case that one or several agencies would be less connected than others, or that some agencies would be more central.

In this section, I present findings related to SNA question number 2, which asks with whom and how often employees in the YAP program have contact with one another to ask for advice or to discuss a professional matter. As mentioned in the methodology chapter, this method proved not to be quite as useful as initially hoped, because the interviewees were reluctant to provide names and probably could not even remember all the interactions they had in relation to the issues asked about. What is more, there are representatives of different professions in the same agency, so the answers to SNA questions do not necessarily reveal inter-professional but inter-organizational contacts.

It turned out that the network was relatively dense, meaning that there seemed to be relatively many connections between the participants (although a formal measure of density could not be calculated as the data finally collected does not allow this). There was no agency that was particularly disconnected, and the YAP was not split into smaller cliques. Figure 3 illustrates the contacts made by representatives of the different agencies when they want to discuss a professional matter or seek professional advice. The lines are weighted – that is, the more frequent the connections, the thicker the lines. Also, the size of the symbols representing the different nodes (i.e. the agencies involved in the YAP or nominated by interviewees as agencies they have contacts with) indicates the centrality of the different agencies. Centrality is here non-directed – that is, the graph shows only connections, but not who has contacted whom. For clarity, the agencies where no participants were interviewed are colored grey, since obviously they appear as less central in the figure because they can only receive but not give nominations. The agencies where participants were interviewed are marked with blue, as well as the different collaborative organs involved in the YAP.

The results show that there are no major differences between agencies with regard to question 2. That the adult unit is displayed at the edge of the graph may relate to the fact that there is little reason for employees of the adult unit (VE) to contact the police (PO), displayed at the other end of the graph, since there is no formal collaboration between the police and the adult unit; therefore, there is no obvious reason why actors from these agencies would have contact. These two units thus end up far from each other on the network map.

This result then can be seen as an indicator that the participants in the YAP contact not only their co-workers in their own agency but also employees of other agencies to ask for advice. The results can also be seen to confirm the findings presented in the previous section on the absence of conflicts, as it seems that individuals are connected across organizational borders. However, it is not completely clear whether or not the interviewees filled in both mandatory and voluntary/informal contacts with other agencies, even though the intention was to ask about informal contacts.

JC	Job Centre
UU	Educational counselling
PO	The police
VE	The adult unit
BE	The children and family unit
KF	Danish Prison and Probation Service
ME	Reception Unit, new clients of social department go through this unit first
HE	Homeless unit
18	The young adults unit
RC	Substance abuse unit
SG	The YAP frontline group
SL	The leader group
SS	The YAP steering group
SE	The NAO
YS	The unit that pays social welfare benefits, sickness benefits, etc.
UR	Youth counselling

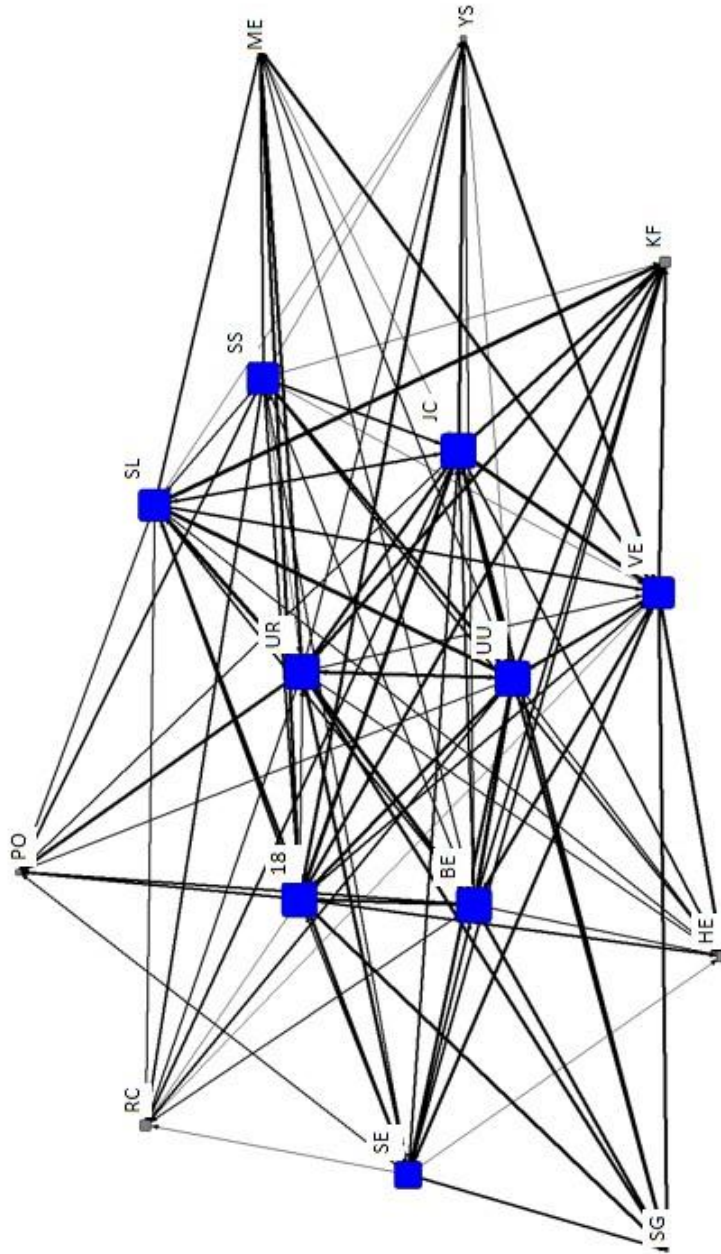


Figure 3. Contacts between YAP employees when asking for professional advice or discussing a professional matter

This and the previous section deal mainly with professional differences and the extent to which these seem to pose a challenge to inter-organizational collaboration. Section 6.2.3 focuses on how the interviewees on the frontline see the incentives and disincentives of inter-organizational collaboration through the YAP.

### **6.2.3. Incentives and disincentives in collaboration on the frontline**

As discussed in chapter 2, crime prevention is typically seen as a field in which inter-organizational collaboration is relevant. All of the interviewees believe that youth with problems of the kind the YAP program works with need help from different agencies, and all but a few frontline workers are positive about this program. The few dissident voices did not disagree about the need for collaboration and interaction across agencies, but rather about the way in which this is done. Either it was argued that the YAP is too slow and bureaucratic, or that it is questionable on the grounds of confidentiality. There were differing views about whether information exchange is good. It was also pointed out that street-level workers could be reluctant to bring cases to the YAP.

#### **Holistic approach vs. specialization**

The typical argument in favor of the YAP program was what some interviewees labeled its holistic approach towards the citizen that is developed in the inter-organizational meetings on the frontline level. In different ways, many interviewees tell about how the YAP collaboration improves the coordination of the work of the different agencies in relation to the citizen. The interviewees use concepts like “holistic orientation” and the ability to work with the whole person in order to describe the benefits of the collaboration. According to an interviewee from educational counseling:

*Well, the idea is that you can work more holistically... ... It is something about being able to do things in the right order, and concurrently; I mean that we act jointly and concurrently.*

Another interviewee from the Job Centre expresses the benefits of the YAP like this:

*It is of course better when we get hold of the whole person, instead of one department taking what belongs to their department. So I think we do a better job, if I can put it like that. Not that we don't do what we're supposed to and the best we can, but the focus is on the whole person instead of parts of a person when we sit there.*

As indicated in section 6.2.1, many interviewees think there is a positive synergy effect created when actors from different agencies participate in the frontline meetings. Many interviewees emphasize that the presence of the different actors in the frontline group meetings is good, because more knowledge is made available. Many interviewees point out that meeting across agencies provides more knowledge about the citizens, about what can be done in different departments for the citizen, and professional views of the citizen's situation.

One interviewee from the social department said:

*The more different professions are in place, the bigger the change that we can help the young person we're talking about.*

Some interviewees also said that the fact that representatives from different agencies meet citizens in different situations provides different perspectives on the citizen, and that some agencies meet the citizen more often than others and know more about the citizen. In the previous section, this was mentioned as a cause for street-level workers having different perspectives on the citizen, but another interviewee also brought this up as something positive, providing better knowledge of the citizen.

### **Coordination on behalf of the citizen**

A second aspect many interviewees brought up is that they believe that citizens are not able to manage the contacts they need to have with a large number of agencies by themselves, and they also risk falling between agencies, especially when they turn 18 and are expected to start managing on their own. An employee in the special unit for young adults says:

*It can be hard for some of the youth we work with just to send them to the Job Centre, for example. Because just when they get inside the door, they think, oh my God, I just cannot grasp this. So it is a bit about creating shortcuts to get into the system more easily, because many [citizens] just cannot manage the tough long road that it is for most of them.*

A couple of interviewees also point out that it is cumbersome for citizens to go and tell their life stories in all the different agencies and have different case workers in different places. One of these interviewees, an educational counselor, pointed out that at times different action plans are made for the same citizen in different agencies, and these plans can be contradictory. Another interviewee, from a unit in the social department, said that she wonders whether the regular system is mostly good for the system [the agencies] and less so for the citizen, and therefore the coordination carried out by the employees in the collaboration, with the consent of the citizens, is in the citizen's interest.

Although the interviewees generally think inter-organizational collaboration is in one way or another relevant and also in citizens' best interest, they have some different views about whether this highly formalized collaboration such as YAP's is the best way of coordinating different agencies' efforts. Some interviewees thought that this coordination could be done in a better, faster way in the YAP collaboration with its formalized meetings than if employees instead contacted other agencies individually. Others said that this way of collaboration is good for the citizens, because otherwise, with individual counseling, they might promise the citizen some things that cannot actually be done. In the YAP meetings, employees can check directly with professionals in other agencies whether the plan for education or other services they have in mind actually is possible to realize, since employees in one agency cannot possibly be familiar with legislation related to fields other than their own.

A view was also expressed that there is a tendency in the meetings at times to make plans on behalf of the citizens that are thought to be best for the citizen, but that the citizens themselves do not finally think is such a good idea. Although coordination on behalf of the citizen is necessary, the notion of ‘best for the citizen’ can also be contested.

Another critical view expressed was that the YAP collaboration was slow and unnecessarily bureaucratic, and that it is more efficient for employees to use their own professional networks instead. However, a view was also expressed that the experience of the YAP collaboration is most likely dependent on where in the organization one works. Those with a large workload find it helpful to be able to connect with professionals from other agencies through the YAP meetings, instead of having to contact them for advice and to coordinate services, whereas those with less workload have time to use their own networks. The role of organizational factors and views on the YAP’s meeting form are discussed in greater detail in chapter 7.

### **Collaboration and relations to citizens**

As discussed in chapter 2, some studies point out that in inter-organizational collaboration in fields like crime prevention, where confidentiality is an important issue, one challenge relates to exchange of information (Young et al. 2005, Perri 6. et al. 2006). Chapter 2 also discusses the importance of relations between the employee and the citizen (Center for Community Social Development 2014), and related to this the role of trust in relations between SSP workers and youth (Perry 2012). A particular feature of the YAP collaboration is that exchange of information is very free within the confines of the collaboration, and the view was expressed that this is a problem. It can be questionable to discuss the youths’ lives without their presence. It also came up that some street-level workers are sometimes reluctant to bring up cases in the YAP program, because they fear being labeled snitchers.<sup>7</sup>

On the other hand, other interviewees were very positive about the possibility of extended information exchange. They felt that information exchange is necessary, but that different agencies sometimes had a tendency to be reluctant to share information. This is related to what was mentioned earlier about different professions having different relationships with the youth and the division that seems to exist between those with formal responsibilities for clients and those with a more informal role.

Although this issue was not a key theme in interviews, it nevertheless illustrates a dilemma in inter-organizational collaboration related to crime prevention, in that a tension exists between creating the most effective coordination and maintaining relations with the actual clients the program intends to help and also convincing citizens to participate in the program. Some interviewees said that far from everyone who is potentially in the program’s target group actually wants to be helped in this way, and that many young people, by the time they turn 18, are reluctant to participate in public programs. They want to live independent lives. Hence, the citizen agent vs. state agent perspective is relevant here as well, since it can be difficult to strike a balance between a client perspective and a state perspective, and employees may have difficulty dealing with this division.

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<sup>7</sup> However, this was the opinion of one of the interviewees, none of my interviewees were street-level workers in a sense that they were literally working on the streets meeting the youth.

To summarize section 6.2, this case study indicates that inter-organizational collaboration is widely embraced as positive by the frontline workers interviewed, who consider it to provide more holistic outcomes and serve a coordinating purpose, since citizens are assumed not to be able to coordinate the services they receive by themselves. However, it seems also reasonable to say that particular challenges exist, as discussed in chapter 2, although these challenges are somewhat different than could be expected. Inter-organizational and inter-professional collaboration is perceived as positive by a majority of the interviewees on the frontline level, contrary to what could have been expected on the basis of previous literature. The view of the respondents seems to be that the different agencies and professions are complementary rather than competitive, indicating an optimistic (see chapter 3 and Skelcher and Sullivan 2002) view of inter-organizational collaboration.

Since the police are not involved In this case, the preventive/punitive dimension that is otherwise typical for inter-organizational collaboration in crime prevention, is not present. However, another dimension that seems to cause some friction relates to the fact that some employees participating have official responsibility in relation to the citizens, while others have a more informal relationship. The few dissident voices opposing this way of organizing claim that there is a confidentiality/distrust problem in the YAP, and that many youth are reluctant to join public programs voluntarily when they reach 18 and are therefore not interested in the YAP.

These findings taken together also indicate that an analysis of inter-organizational collaboration in crime prevention in this case should not only include relations between frontline workers, but also relations to clients. This challenges collaboration theory, in that these collaborations not only have relationships on the horizontal level, between agencies, but also involve relations to the clients. This can be a dilemma. In theory on inter-organizational collaboration, where citizens are involved as clients, it is thus important to understand the relations of the citizens to the public sector agencies, the potential for trust and other issues. In other words, it is necessary to understand the character of the relations between the involved actors, particularly those between citizens and public sector actors.



## 6.3. COLLABORATION AS INTER-ORGANIZATIONAL PRACTICE

This section shifts focus from the YAP collaboration as a practice on the frontline level, to YAP as a collaboration between organizations. In this section, I reconnect to what is called in chapter 3 the organizational level of governance networks and the different rationales of inter-organizational collaboration. The analysis shows that there is something of a discrepancy between the predominantly positive experience at the frontline regarding the benefits of inter-organizational collaboration and the view expressed by some of the leaders and also indicated by some frontline workers regarding inter-organizational collaboration as an inter-organizational process.

The first part of this section illustrates that despite the positive view of inter-organizational collaboration as a holistic process, and the positive synergy effects experienced at the frontline level, decisions about how many resources each agency should invest in the collaboration have caused friction, and there have been discussions about whether this group of clients is all the participating agencies' 'problem'.

The second part of this section discusses the challenges involved in finding a balance between being individual organizations and yet being involved in an inter-organizational collaboration. The section illustrates that some of the challenges of collaboration relate to how deep the integration is between agencies. There are two kinds of challenges. First, there is the question of whether collaboration is always better than a 'silo' structure, and second the question of the implications of organizational integration from the point of view of the frontline workers. Frontline workers indicate that it can be difficult to find their balance between working in the home agency and working in the YAP collaboration.

An overall conclusion of discussion is that it is problematic to portray inter-organizational collaboration as something desirable *per se*. Despite positive synergy effects, there are costs and trade-offs involved in deep integration that should be acknowledged. The analysis also concludes that the view of collaboration, whether leaning toward pessimist or optimist, depends on the participating organizations and their role in the collaboration. Not all organizations are necessarily in the same position; they have different amounts of resources and different roles in relation to the problem field.

### 6.3.1. Governance networks: Working towards a common goal?

This section discusses incentives and disincentives in inter-organizational collaboration on the inter-organizational level. Although the frontline employees describe the collaboration among themselves in very positive terms, as described in section 6.2, the analysis also reveals some friction. Not all the agencies are in the same position in the YAP. Different agencies are expected to deliver different contributions to the YAP in terms of providing services to clients. There is also an unclear division of tasks in relation to this group of citizens, and there are also different opinions about the extent to which the different agencies actually have responsibilities in relation to the clients.

### **Participating agencies as a heterogeneous group**

Although the SSP collaboration in the municipality is based on equality between actors, and the Network Administrative Organization (NAO) that coordinates the collaboration, including this program, is jointly financed, the services that are actually provided for the citizens enrolled in the YAP are funded by the agencies providing them. As mentioned earlier, the YAP program and the NAO as such do not have resources to offer such services as contact persons.

As made clear in the description of the participating agencies in chapter 2, the agencies play very different roles in relation to the citizens on which the program is focused. The youth educational counseling provides counseling on educational choices, the Job Centre provides unemployment insurance benefits and employment-related services, and the adult unit provides a contact person in some cases and also helps clients with housing. The children and family unit in the social department provides prolonged support in some cases, although they essentially focus on youth under 18. Finally, the special unit for youth over 18 provides counseling, also for educational and employment choices, but does not have official decision-making authority in decisions regarding their clients and does not provide services other than counseling.

In other words, some agencies have only a counseling role, while others are expected to contribute financial or other resources. What is more, all the participant organizations contribute personnel to the frontline groups, which has also caused some friction as discussed in chapter 7. In this case, then, it is not necessarily the question of unequal power relations that causes friction, but rather the fact that the contributions the participating agencies are expected to make are different. This case illustrates how the flow of resources to the participant organizations influences their preconditions for engaging in inter-organizational collaboration (Benson 1975). What is more, this case illustrates how organizations can have unequal positions due not only to resource or decision-making imbalance between actors on a general level, but also due to the content of the collaboration and what is concretely being done in the governance network, since in this case there is an imbalance related to the contributions the agencies are expected to make. This means that participants in the collaboration should not be seen as a homogeneous group.

### **Balancing in the grey zone: Whose problem is this?**

Although the frontline workers were remarkably positive about the YAP collaboration and maintained that there were very few professional disagreements, another source of disagreement existed that was not related to what should be done in the client cases directly, but to the division of tasks between the participating agencies in relation to the YAP clients. This finding illustrates that the incentives and disincentives of inter-organizational collaboration are complex and also contested among the participant agencies. In chapter 3, it is stated that governance networks are characterized by interdependency, according to the definition of Sørensen and Torfing (2008). This chapter illustrates that the view of interdependency is partly contested among the YAP participants, and that this may have to do with both economic factors and the substance of the collaboration.

As presented in chapter 2, the different agencies involved in the YAP have different tasks in relation to the client group. It became clear that this division of tasks is far from clear, but is rather a grey zone. When a citizen is under 18 and involved in criminality, the social services department is usually involved, but after the individual turns 18, the services available to them change, and the individual typically becomes a client of the employment services instead, or in some cases a client in the adult unit of social services. The children and family department has some possibilities to continue helping clients over 18 until they turn 23, but some interviewees argue that there is a tendency not to use this opportunity. To receive this extended help, the unit must evaluate that the client is not yet able to live an independent life but will be able to do so when 23. Others are either no longer clients of the social services or are transferred to the adult unit if they are considered to have problems that will persist even after turning 23.

An interviewee even notes that at times citizens are not covered by any agency after they turn 18, because to remain in the children and family unit requires that the citizen's problems are not too comprehensive. If they are, they become clients in the adult unit. This unit can offer clients much less help, which, as the interviewee points out, is paradoxical. On the other hand, representatives working in the children and family unit say that the adult unit has services that are more appropriate for this group of citizens, as they have employees who are specialized in supporting clients in relation to employment etc, which the children and family unit is not able to do. It is thus not completely clear whether a person should be a client in the social services in the first place, and if so, whether these services should be provided by the department of children and families or the adult department. Although the two units both belong to the same department, they have their own budgets, and the interviewees claimed that the adult unit does not have as much funding as the children and family unit.

I was presented with several different interpretations of the reasons behind the dilemma regarding the involvement of the social services. The reasons seemed to depend on the position of the interviewee.<sup>8</sup> A leader representing the adult unit pointed out that there is a lack of funding for the work in the YAP, and the unit did not receive additional funding for work with this particular group of citizens, which the department had not previously been involved with. The interviewee also argued that it is not self-evident that just because individuals are criminal that they also have social problems to such an extent as to motivate involvement of the social department. Therefore, it is not always clear that this particular department should provide services for this group of citizens. According to some of the interviewed frontline workers, employees in the adult unit have a large case load, and this is evidenced by the fact that case work and decision making takes longer. One frontline employee from the children and family unit said:

*We know it well, it takes 100 years before something happens [with a case referred to the adult unit]. They have such a pile of cases to go through.*

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<sup>8</sup> Unfortunately, not all relevant interviewees on the middle and executive levels were interviewed, which could have provided a more nuanced view; but nevertheless, the interview responses reveal a tension between working towards individual organizational goals and working in the collaboration.

Another interviewee from the middle level, however, had the interpretation that the adult unit simply was not used to working with this group of citizens and thought that the agency was more used to working with people who fit a more traditional picture of a person with social problems:

*I mean people who you look at and say, "Poor people" – people who are substance abusers, have mental health problems and cannot function in everyday life. And this is not the image of a criminal. They are people who act, who are rude and aggressive. It is a different image.*

Yet another interviewee from the middle level in another agency said:

*[There is a tendency to] shuffle the responsibility for the individual citizen away from themselves. We need to see it in such a way that this is not the responsibility of the individual agencies. This is joint responsibility. We will have to lift up the weakest citizens in a group one way or another.*

Hence, because there are many different ways to see the situation, it is difficult to solve the issue of who should help the youth over 18. Interestingly, it was the agency receiving extra tasks but no extra funding that pointed this out as a problem, while another agency argued that the agencies should have it as a common goal to help this group of citizens. One interviewee said the adult unit should see these citizens as their client group, while another said it is not given that young criminals should always be clients of social services, even though they could be.

What is also interesting is that some interviewees present the dilemma between adult and children and family units as clearly due to a grey zone, while others consider it less so. When I asked about how the participating agencies deal with these grey zones and how they negotiate in these cases, a representative of the adult unit was quick to say that the issue was not a matter of negotiation but of evaluating the needs of the particular citizen, in effect arguing that there was no grey zone. These findings indicate that the incentives and disincentives of collaboration are contested among the YAP participants, and that they all see the challenges of collaboration from their own vantage point.

One of the interviewees argues that this dilemma is also reflected in the inter-organizational collaboration on the frontline level, in that participants avoid suggesting certain services if it means that their agency will have to provide them. Others note that there can be a tendency for participants to avoid taking tasks into their own department. The interviewed meeting coordinator said, however, that this problem has become somewhat less prevalent over time, as the working relations in the groups develop. This is developed further in the next chapter.

It could of course be the case that this dilemma illustrates a methodological difficulty. It seems likely that the employees interviewed choose to emphasize 'doing the right thing', even in the face of economic scarcity. Overall, there seems to be a tendency to emphasize that the choices made have to do with how to help the citizens best, and are based on legislation rather than using saving costs as an argument. This is probably the outcome of a perceived need to prove that they are doing the right thing for the citizens

while not spending public money excessively. The interview material could be interpreted as showing that using resource scarcity as an argument is avoided; it is better to argue that one is doing what is right for the citizens and staying on the right side of the law. It could be that a narrative of legal restrictions is a coping mechanism used in order to deal with frustration caused by economic restrictions and the way these limit what can be done in the collaboration. Some interviewed employees said explicitly that money is a restriction to collaboration, while others did not.

These findings illustrate that the view of collaboration and the rationale of the YAP collaboration are to some extent contested among the participants, and the roles of the different participants are unclear. Consequently, the findings indicate that the notion of collaborative advantage and the so-called optimistic view of inter-organizational collaboration presented in chapter 3 are complex phenomena when taken into the empirical reality, since the different actors have different perceptions of their roles in the YAP, and because the different participants have different views of the incentives and disincentives of collaboration in the YAP. The next section continues this discussion, and based on the findings presented in this section, problematizes an optimistic view of collaboration (see chapter 3).

### **Crime prevention: In what sense a shared problem?**

The grey zone mentioned above regarding responsibilities in service provision indicates tension between the ideal of a joint vision or the need to collaborate across organizations, while the investment of resources and negotiations about organizational and collaboration goals give rise to conflicts. This tension is reflected in the way in which the participants talk about the collaboration and its goals as opposed to those of their own agency. All of the interviewed leaders in different agencies generally agreed that there is a need to collaborate across organizations, but there was still some ambiguity about the concrete expressions this collaboration ought to take.

Chapter 2 states that crime prevention can be seen as a so-called wicked problem (e.g. Rittel and Webber 1973), and that involvement of several actors is necessary due to the complex nature of the issue. When taken to the level of individual citizens and the concrete reality of municipal agencies, however, the issue becomes more nuanced. Although it may be typical that delinquent behavior coincides with other social problems, this need not be the case. Therefore, each individual case raises the question of which departments should provide help – in other words, resources – because each individual case is different. There is and have been a number of different specialized agencies working for different groups of citizens in the municipality: homeless, substance abusers, mentally ill etc. It could be that one individual needs help from several agencies, but this is not necessarily so.

As an interviewee pointed out, just because someone is criminal, he or she does not always need help from several different agencies – sometimes but not always. As in the case of the adult unit discussed here, it is not necessarily agreed when enough reason exists to involve an agency in a case. This recalls Goris and Walter's (1999) note about how collaboration tends to be used as an all-round panacea in crime prevention, and this study indicates the need to reflect on what the different actors participating in a collaboration

contribute, what kind of common denominator is motivating the collaboration. What is more, as research from the UK points out, in inter-organizational collaboration in crime prevention, a discrepancy can exist between a positive view on collaboration in policy rhetoric and the challenges that are encountered in the daily reality of inter-organizational collaboration (Burnett and Appleton 2004, Crawford 1997).

As already mentioned, criminological research does not provide unambiguous causal relations between certain background factors and criminality, and even if some factors coincide with criminality, not all individuals have the same background. It is therefore not surprising that some actors may be reluctant to invest in participating in collaborations, since there is a chance that their involvement is not deemed necessary.

In an optimist view on collaboration, the focus is on how to create and maintain a joint vision in a governance network. What is problematic about such focus is its underlying premise that inter-organizational collaboration is good *per se* and that finding a common goal between (any) set of actors is a goal as such. According to Huxham and Vangen (e.g. 2003), the obstacles to reaching a positive synergy effect, collaborative advantage, are called collaborative inertia. However, especially in more or less mandated collaborations, it seems that collaboration problems should not automatically be seen as collaborative inertia that must be overcome; in some cases, this situation should lead to questioning the rationale of the collaboration between the given partners in the first place. Examining inter-organizational collaboration – for example, within the field of crime prevention – should then also include a discussion about in what sense crime prevention is a shared problem, what is shared about it. It should also be taken into consideration that the participating agencies are not a homogeneous group but have very different objectives and tasks in relation to what they are collaborating about and will therefore also have different views on the collaboration in different cases.

### **6.3.2. Agencies and employees between network and home agency: silos vs. integration**

This section presents an additional set of incentives and disincentives to collaborate, which relate to the dilemma that appears to exist between participating in the work of a governance network while working in a home agency, both from an organizational perspective and from the point of view of individual frontline workers. This can also be discussed by using the concept “organizational integration” (Keast et al. 2007). According to Keast et al., it is important to distinguish between cooperation, coordination and collaboration as different degrees of organizational integration. The authors note that the deeper the integration, the more the participant organizations need to take each other into account and make adjustments. This section discusses how the interviewees in this case study view the consequences of close organizational integration, as opposed to retaining a distinct “silo” structure (i.e. no collaboration), and illustrates that there are consequences for both organizations and individuals. It is important to be aware of trade-offs between integration and silo structure.

### **Silos vs. integration**

Chapters 3 and 4 contain a discussion of the way in which the public sector is fragmented into specialized units that can cause inflexibility, and conclude that one answer to resolving this issue is inter-organizational collaboration. The interviewees seem to agree with this notion. However, none of the interviewees on the middle and executive levels seems to want to erode the boundaries between agencies, and none of the interviewees thought agencies should be fully merged. They should retain their distinct specialties and remain as separate organizations.

This illustrates the complexity of the rationale behind inter-organizational collaboration. Although the interviewees generally seem to think that this way of collaboration somehow works to bridge the fragmentation of the public sector, they are also somewhat ambivalent and for several reasons. First, although the agencies seem to agree that there is a positive synergy effect created in the cases of individual citizens, this is not from their point of view necessarily seen as a synergy effect. In the case of private sector collaboration, for example, synergy effects can be expected in terms of both economic benefits accruing to all participants and more innovative solutions. In the case of public sector agency collaboration, the benefits are (potentially) achieving agency goals (such as reducing crime, unemployment etc.), but economic benefits are not necessarily to be expected. The agencies have their own organizational budget limits to keep and performance criteria to fulfill, which may be in conflict with the goals of the collaboration, or at least need to be negotiated.

This is however not the only dilemma in close integration. Another reason for wanting to avoid too close integration relates to inter-professional collaboration and the risk of losing professional specialization through too close integration (Dudau and McAllister 2010). Also in this case, two of the leaders interviewed – one on the middle level and one on executive level – point out that there is a need for specialization. Employees cannot be specialists in everything, and therefore a specialty must be maintained in order to actually provide the best possible care for the citizens.

Finally, the question of silos vs. integration is also related to the previous section's discussion about in what sense agencies have shared problems. Some individuals only need professional help with employment, and others only need help with educational counseling. Therefore, we can conclude that the need for collaboration is not completely unambiguous, and a need does not necessarily exist to collaborate on all issues across organizations.

The tensions between agencies essentially seem to arise as the collaboration becomes 'materialized' in the actual resources and personnel that are required to be invested, and also in a perceived need to maintain a degree of specialization. Considering that it does take time and resources from agencies to be involved in inter-organizational collaboration, there is always a grey zone in terms of the extent to which each agency should be involved. The motivation for involvement is measured against the perceived interdependency and the extent to which the issues dealt with in the collaboration are considered relevant to the participating agency.

### **Frontline workers between agency and network**

The ambiguity of being an individual agency and at the same time collaborating with other agencies also has consequences for frontline workers. The employees who participate in the YAP collaboration do this work in addition to their regular work in their home agencies. They are not assigned a fixed number of hours to work in the program, but must negotiate how much work to put into the collaboration. Therefore, an interest conflict can arise in relation to finding time for both the YAP collaboration and the regular work in the home agency.

A couple of frontline interviewees indicated that it is somewhat difficult to find a balance between time spent in the YAP collaboration and in their regular work, although not everyone mentioned this. It may depend on which department they come from, because in some departments, the YAP employees only work with criminals, while in others, they work only part time with this group of citizens and work with many other groups of citizens as well. This difficulty of balancing between the agency and the network is also found in research by Thacher (2004) and Puonti (2004).

Some interviewees said spontaneously that it is important to have the support and acceptance of their superior to participate and use working hours in the YAP. One frontline worker expressed the view that clearer guidelines were needed in terms of how much time should be spent in the collaboration; another expressed discontent with the fact that the employees are not assigned fewer tasks when they participate in the YAP. The NAO is also aware of this tension and addressed this issue to some extent.

There is also a potential risk of a kind of commitment stress in this situation. Although this was not a major theme in the interviews, some comments were made about feeling that it is difficult to draw the line as to how much time to spend in the collaboration, and one person also mentioned expecting other members of the group to take responsibility –meaning, make a little extra effort to work on the cases in the group. One interviewee said she wanted at one point to set a limit and say that she only wanted to spend a certain number of hours in the collaboration, but then she thought: *You just can't work like that. Because then you get (caught up in it) and [say] well, I'll take care of that before next time [next frontline meeting].*

Another interviewee also mentioned that it was important that there was a commitment towards the collaboration, rather than caseworkers involved in the YAP passing on the case in question to their colleague, which they sometimes did, according to the interviewee.

This section illustrates that incentives, disincentives and challenges of inter-organizational collaboration do not only exist on the organizational level, but also on the inter-personal level. The individual frontline worker needs to find the balance between working in the collaboration and working in the home agency. It can be argued that it is important to take into account that network relations are also relations between particular individuals (Heimer 1992). This also means that individuals have expectations towards one another, and they may feel it as a duty to make more than a standard effort to do their work in the collaboration.



Summing up section 6.3, it seems clear that there exists a tension between the frontline incentives to collaborate across agencies and the possible organizational disincentives. There can be a clash between the perceived need to collaborate and the different agencies' resources for doing so. This is especially so in this case, because the collaboration participants in the YAP are not a homogeneous group with regard to their role in the YAP; different agencies are expected to make different contributions in relation to the target group. Furthermore, it is not always clear what the motivation is for each agency's participation, and there are grey zones in relation to the responsibilities of the different agencies in relation to the target group.

This section points out that having an inherently optimistic view of inter-organizational collaboration is risky, because this view portrays inter-organizational collaboration as desirable *per se*, and arguments against the involvement of a particular actor, or disagreement about the collaboration's goals, can be labeled problems of collaboration rather than actually reflecting the lack of a joint goal. The section also points out that the challenges of inter-organizational collaboration are influenced by the degree of integration, because the deeper the collaboration, the more the participating agencies need to adjust. A question is also raised about the possible risks of employees compromising their specialized professional skills in 'too close' integration as a disincentive of collaboration. It is also important to note that challenges of collaboration can arise not only on the organizational but also on the inter-personal level (i.e. operational level, see Mandell and Keast 2008), since not only organizations, but the employees in the organizations, are challenged by the demand to focus on both the collaboration and their home agencies.

## 6.4. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

This chapter aims to answer research question 1:

**What challenges, incentives and disincentives to collaboration across professional and organizational barriers in crime prevention can be found based on the YAP case?**

The case study indicates that challenges, incentives and disincentives cannot be presented in a general list, but that they rather depend on the point of view: a frontline perspective or an organizational level perspective. Even though citizens were not interviewed, interviews with frontline workers revealed yet another challenge from the citizens' point of view. Some interviewees reported that potential YAP clients sometimes felt distrust toward the YAP program.

As for challenges, incentives and disincentives on the frontline level, professional boundaries turned out to be less of a challenge than expected on the basis of previous literature, and to the extent professional disagreements existed, they were of a different kind than expected. The (rather few) times professional conflicts were mentioned, they had to do, not with the punitive vs. preventive distinction, but rather with the position of the professionals in relation to the citizens. According to one interviewee, at times a kind of

“competition” was going on about who knows and understands the citizens best. There also seems to be a distinction between those with official responsibilities and those with a more informal position.

This low degree of conflict and positive view of inter-professional collaboration could also be a plausible explanation as to why no particular patterns of interaction between actors from different agencies seemed to be found in the Social Network Analysis. All agencies seemed to have contacts with each other with regard to discussing or seeking advice in a professional matter.

Despite the overall positive view of the YAP, the view was also expressed that the same work that is done in the YAP could be done faster by using the worker’s own contact network, and that the YAP tends to be rather bureaucratic and slow. But it was also concluded in the interviews that since different agencies use different amounts of time per citizen, for agencies with large case loads, this collaboration meant that the work could be done faster within the YAP than otherwise.

The above-mentioned division into frontline and other workers is also reflected in the interviewees’ views regarding the benefits of the YAP collaboration. Although a majority of the interviewees were unreservedly positive towards the collaboration, some of the frontline workers were said to be reluctant to refer individuals to the program, because they were afraid of being labeled snitchers. The view was also expressed that it is questionable to discuss the lives of the clients in the YAP groups. Although only mentioned by a couple of interviewees, this can nevertheless be a relevant finding, also in light of the discussion in chapter 2 on sharing information about citizens and the impact this can have on employee-citizen relations and the potential for mistrust, which may lead to less beneficial outcomes from the work with the citizens.

Based on this part of the analysis, it can be concluded that inter-professional collaboration is perceived to have a positive effect on coordinating services for the citizens in the YAP program, youth and young adults who have been involved in criminality. The prevalent view seems to be that a positive synergy effect is achieved through inter-professional collaboration. Inter-organizational collaboration was generally thought to be relevant in relation to this group of citizens. The commonly mentioned incentive was that inter-organizational collaboration was thought to provide more holistic solutions for this group of citizens, who are typically clients in several different agencies and have complex social and other problems. It was also thought that these citizens would not be able to manage the necessary coordination of the services provided by the different agencies; therefore, collaboration like this was considered also to be in citizens’ best interest. The view was also expressed, however, that a mismatch could result in citizens’ and YAP workers’ view of what is best for the citizen. In subsequent studies of inter-organizational collaboration, it would be interesting to focus more on outcomes of collaboration, and the perceptions of frontline workers and citizens on these outcomes.

The analysis of collaboration from an inter-organizational perspective revealed a different perspective on inter-organizational collaboration in crime prevention. First, not all agencies considered the program’s clients necessarily belonged in their target group, although there was general agreement that inter-organizational collaboration is generally relevant and important. This dilemma illustrates that often collaboration literature,

particularly the body of literature that has a positive, optimistic view of inter-organizational collaboration, assumes that inter-organizational collaboration is good *per se*, and emphasizes finding a common ground, a goal shared by the participating actors. The problem with such a perspective is that any failure to find a common goal becomes a failure of the process and an indicator of a bad collaboration, whereas the question could also sometimes be asked whether or not the involvement of all the participants is relevant and motivated. What is more, the different agencies participating in the collaboration have very different relations to the YAP program and its clients, in the sense that some of the participants only have a consulting role, while other agencies are expected to contribute financial resources.

Secondly, the closer the integration between the participating agencies, the more the agencies need to take each other into account and there is a trade-off between organizational integration and a silo structure. The analysis reveals an inherent dilemma that has to do with a rationale for collaborating across agencies even though collaboration is deterred by the fact that the agencies each have their own budgets and organizational goals, while there is also a rationale for these organizational boundaries and specialization into smaller agencies. This dilemma also influences the frontline workers to some extent, as they need to allocate their time between the inter-organizational collaboration and work in their home agencies.

Summing up the whole chapter, the frontline practitioners experienced the YAP collaboration as predominantly positive and relevant. Professional conflicts did not seem to be particularly pertinent, contrary to what could have been expected on the basis of some of the international and Danish literature, although there do seem to be examples of non-conflictual inter-professional collaboration in Denmark. However, the case study illustrates two inherent dilemmas. These have to do with the relationship between the citizens and the collaboration, and the rationale for collaboration as opposed to working within only one agency.

First, in relation to the role of the citizens: The citizens are not necessarily positive about participating, and there are trust issues involved in participating in programs like YAP. This means that inter-organizational collaboration in crime prevention consists not only in the relations among frontline workers, but also the relations between citizens and frontline workers. Collaboration theory analyzing this problem field needs to take into account the relations between citizens and frontline workers as a particular kind of relationship, where trust (Perry 2012) and confidentiality are important issues. Based on this case study and previous literature, it can be concluded that collaboration in frontline bureaucracies is a special case, because of the importance of the relations between frontline workers and citizens. Challenges related to combining the citizen agent and state agent perspectives in inter-organizational collaboration can be encountered if the collaboration participants have different roles in relation to the client.

Second, although frontline workers had a positive view on collaboration, the collaboration might not necessarily have been entirely positive from the point of view of the participating agencies. Inter-organizational collaboration is not only about professionals acting on the basis of their own judgment, but also about the agencies they belong to and their dependency on the resources available in the different agencies for engaging in

collaboration. And it should be added that the frontline workers are also caught between their home agencies and the collaboration and can be faced with pressure from both. They feel a sense of duty to the collaboration, especially since there is no fixed amount of time that they are expected to spend in the YAP. Hence, the challenges involved in inter-organizational collaboration not only exist on the organizational but also the interpersonal level.

To express it briefly, collaboration is not only about the goals of collaboration and ideas about what should be done but also about realizing these ideas in concrete practices that demand financial resources and personnel in order to be carried out. This thesis argues, therefore, that there is good reason to problematize the premises underlying the theoretical lens employed to analyze inter-organizational collaboration. Some theories – e.g. the optimist perspective with the underlying assumption that collaboration is something positive *per se* (Sullivan and Skelcher 2002) – are problematic, because there are cases when collaboration between the parties in question is not necessary. To the extent there is a trade-off between resources invested in the home agency and resources invested in the collaboration, these considerations become all the more relevant. Hence, theories of inter-organizational collaboration should take into account that failure to find a common goal and motivation for collaboration may not be a sign of a problem of collaboration but rather an actual lack of a common ground. It should also be acknowledged and taken into account in the literature that individual work efforts and commitment are limited resources. More focus should be on inter-organizational collaboration as an inter-personal process and on the challenges of collaboration for individuals.

In chapter 7, I discuss how the above-mentioned issues have been dealt with in this collaboration, and the factors found by the interviewees to have an influence on the functioning of the collaboration and to some extent on the collaboration outcomes.

# CHAPTER 7. LEADERSHIP OF INTER-ORGANIZATIONAL COLLABORATION

## 7.1. INTRODUCTION

Chapter 6 dealt with inter-organizational collaboration as both a process between collaborating frontline bureaucrats and an inter-organizational process. This chapter builds upon chapter 6 by focusing on leadership of inter-organizational collaboration based on research question 2:

**What is the role of interpersonal relations and leadership through structures, participants and processes in inter-organizational collaboration in the YAP, and what factors influence these leadership media?**

As the purpose of the YAP is to create action plans for the program's clients in groups of frontline workers, this chapter takes its point of departure in the preconditions for the work in these groups and discusses how the structure of the collaboration and the way in which the YAP collaboration is organized on the frontline level influences this work.

As discussed in chapter 4, any new service consists not only of the actual service provided for a concrete citizen, but also of all the ways in which the service is embedded in the public sector context (Osborne et al. 2013). The important thing is thus not only what happens in the frontline groups, but also what happens on the other levels of administration and the interplay of the different actors in implementing and running the YAP program. This chapter therefore attempts to analyze leadership of the YAP in a comprehensive manner, focusing not only on the YAP frontline groups but also the organizational and political context in which the frontline groups are embedded, and how these influence the preconditions for the YAP. This chapter applies the division into different leadership media by Huxham and Vangen (2000; see section 3.4.2) in order to be able to take into account factors on several levels and include both formal and informal, direct and indirect factors that have an influence on the YAP. The chapter also discusses the role of interpersonal relations as a specific factor, which, I argue, is a factor in its own right that plays an influential role in inter-organizational collaboration.

The structure of the chapter is as follows: First, I discuss what is called leadership through structure by Huxham and Vangen (2000), the composition of the collaboration in terms of which actors are involved, and factors that have an influence on the structure. The employees in the NAO are also included. Then, I move on to discuss leadership through processes, and how processes are also influenced by participants in the collaboration.

Finally, I discuss the specific issue of interpersonal relationships and their role in the YAP collaboration, since the interviewees deemed them to be of crucial importance.

The chapter answers the following sub-questions:

1. What characterizes the structure of the YAP?
2. What is the role of the NAO and other participants in the leadership of the YAP?
3. What is the role of processes for the leadership of the YAP?
4. How do contextual factors influence leadership through processes?
5. What factors are important for collaboration as an interpersonal process, according to the interviewed YAP employees?
6. What is the role of interpersonal relations for inter-organizational collaboration?

## **7.2. INTER-ORGANIZATIONAL COLLABORATION: PROCESSES, PARTICIPANTS AND STRUCTURE**

This section discusses factors that have an influence on the YAP, according to interviews and observations. The first three sub-sections discuss the different types of leadership media and their role in the YAP. The first discusses the structure of the YAP; the second discusses leadership through processes; and the third the role of participants. The analysis indicates, just as Huxham and Vangen (2000) argue, that leadership of collaboration is a contingent process and not under the sole influence of any specific actor. The analysis also points out that not only formal but also informal types of leadership are relevant.

### **7.2.1. Structures: Who decides, what and why?**

In this section, I discuss factors that are related to the structure of the collaboration. Leadership by structure is defined by Huxham and Vangen (2000) as the ways in which decision making takes place, how new actors enter the collaboration, and agenda setting, and here I discuss the characteristics of the YAP with regard to these issues. Some characteristics of the YAP's structure (according to Huxham and Vangen's definition) set preconditions for the purpose and partly also the functioning of the collaboration. First, what is done in the YAP, why and by whom is largely an outcome of political decisions in the municipality and on the national level that influence the collaboration, as indicated in chapter 2. Secondly, the roles of different levels of administration in decision making are particularly relevant, also for inter-organizational collaboration, since the different administrative levels play different roles in relation to the collaboration's work. Although the frontline workers carry out the operational work in the YAP, they do not have formal decision-making power. As discussed later in section 7.2.2, the NAO plays an important mediating role in decision making between different levels of administration.

### **Who is in and why?**

The original composition of the YAP collaboration was a political decision made by the municipality, and it was based on a plan made by a working group. After subsequent negotiations, new actors have joined the collaboration, so it is not entirely closed. It is not entirely open either, as new actors cannot enter freely. Entry into the frontline groups is rather flexible. New visitors can sometimes enter the groups, depending on which client cases are being discussed, because the intention is that those who know most about the clients should be able to participate. What makes the participants' entry special in this case, however, is that the issues dealt with in the frontline and leader group meetings are confidential, and therefore the involvement of different actors is regulated. At present, the Job Centre is also included in the law on exchange of information for crime preventive purposes, which is one of the foundations of SSP collaboration in Denmark (see chapter 2, section 2.2.6.).

It seems clear that there are different ideas about why different actors participate in the collaboration. A new actor that was about to enter the collaboration during the data collection phase was according to one interviewee entering because of demands of the frontline workers, whereas another said it was because there was a legal demand for the organization to join the SSP. At least one of the frontline workers did not seem to know why the organization had joined. It is therefore clear that there is some imperfect information among the participants on what takes place in the YAP. The implications of this have not been analyzed more thoroughly in this thesis, but it could be assumed, for example, that understanding who makes decisions in the collaboration could be relevant, because this can play a role in promoting a feeling of ownership among the collaboration's participants.

The complexity surrounding the entry of new actors illustrates the difficulties connected with steering an inter-organizational collaboration in detail. It also indicates that the structure of the collaboration evolved through a complex and contingent process involving not only the formally appointed leaders.

### **Agenda: Legislation, policy and politics**

The YAP collaboration is essentially an implementation (rather than policy-making) network. What is concretely done in the program is largely decided by the policy goals of the participating agencies. One of the interviewees on the frontline points out that this framework does to some degree hinder alternative paths. An example she gives is that in some cases she would have wanted to send a youth to a folk high school,<sup>9</sup> but this is not possible within the current framework. As indicated in chapter 6, the policy goals of the different agencies could also play a part in the low degree of conflict perceived in the program, since they narrow the scope of decision making.

What is more, as discussed in chapter 2, crime prevention and public safety are very politically charged areas. A couple of interviewees thought that the YAP as such was

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<sup>9</sup> A folk high school (Danish: højskole) is an educational institution that offers courses on various subjects such as art but does not award a degree.

initiated and received financing largely due to a political demand to do something for public safety.

### **Decision making: Collaboration on different levels of administration**

As mentioned, the YAP is essentially an implementation network, and its work is focused into the frontline groups. The leader and steering groups make the strategic decisions that influence the work in YAP's frontline groups. The frontline groups do not have actual decision-making power in client cases. Decisions regarding the clients are made in the participating agencies. Typically, however, the frontline workers know what is possible within the framework of their home agencies. Client cases that cannot be solved in the frontline groups are brought up in the leader group, which consists of middle-level leaders in the participating agencies (see figure 1, in chapter 2 for a diagram of the YAP organization). A steering group consisting of higher-level leaders in the participating agencies and the head of the NAO is in charge of more strategic issues regarding the collaboration and ensures that financing is available. One problem connected with collaboration can be that participants are not able to make decisions on behalf of their agencies (Dudau 2009), but this does not seem to be a major problem in this case, even though the frontline group participants lack formal decision-making power. The interviewees on the frontline level say that in practice they know what can and cannot be done in their agencies and expect others to know their agencies as well, which means that most of the time there is in fact little uncertainty regarding decisions. It was actually considered to be one of the frontline workers' most important qualities in participating in the YAP – that they know their agencies' limitations and possibilities. They know in advance what decisions are likely to go through, and this facilitates the collaboration. Some of the interviewees mentioned, however, that they experienced problems due to lack of decision-making competencies, which slowed down the decision-making process. One employee on the frontline level also saw the lack of decision-making competencies as a major failure of the collaboration, because not being able to tell clients straight away what was decided in the frontline meetings, where cases are discussed, causes frustration.

Other factors – in addition to the individual actors' knowledge of the decision-making frames of their agencies – which can serve to reduce friction, can be that the decision-making processes in the YAP are not so much matters of negotiation but rather about following legislation. This is also confirmed by the fact that the interviewees continuously refer to the legislative framework when asked about collaboration and the foundations of decision making. Some decisions are more difficult to make, however. For example, since the availability of housing is limited, it is difficult to make decisions about finding housing for clients. It was also discussed in chapter 6 that legislation may also be used as a way of motivating decisions, and perhaps also as a way to deal with the pressures caused by financial constraints. It was also stated in chapter 6 that there are some grey zones in decision making, in that it is not always clear who has responsibility for taking action in each case, although it varies how or whether the interviewees talk about these grey zones. As discussed in section 7.2.2, the NAO has been involved in resolving these issues and mediating between levels of administration.



As for the overall structure of decision making, there is no lead agency; all agencies are in principal equal, and the NAO is in charge of coordinating the local SSP, including the YAP. As indicated in chapter 6, the collaboration in this case – both the overall structure of the SSP in the municipality and the YAP – are characterized in principal by equal decision-making (based on interviews with YAP leaders). Each agency has a representative in the collaboration board, and the leader groups comprise representatives from each of the participating agencies. Some of the interviewees, who were involved in the institutionalization of the SSP collaboration in the municipality from the start, argue that equal decision-making rights and the fact that the collaboration is jointly financed are some of the important features of the collaboration. As stated in chapter 3, one potential source of power differential is that one of the participating agencies has a leading role in the collaboration.

To sum up section 7.2.1, the participant group in the YAP is decided on the basis of actors that are deemed relevant in the frontline groups, which are somewhat flexible but not entirely open due to the nature of the work. The agenda of the YAP is largely shaped by policies and political demands that are outside the influence of the collaboration itself, which is characteristic for crime prevention collaborations (as mentioned in chapter 2). The mode of decision making consists of a set of collaborative organs on different levels of administration. One of the basic features of the SSP in this municipality is the idea of equality in decision making, and the fact that there is no leading agency, but that the NAO is in charge of coordination is said to be an important feature of the collaboration.

The interplay between the NAO and the collaboration partners is discussed further in section 7.2.2, which focuses on leadership through participants.

## **7.2.2. Leadership through participants**

This section deals with the role of participants in the leadership of the NAO. As mentioned in chapter 3, participants can mean both individuals and organizations and also collaborative boards. This section focuses on two issues: first, the role of the NAO and its employees in the YAP and how the NAO and the collaborative organs on different levels of administration serve as a kind of system of leadership through participants; second, the leadership of the work in YAP meetings.

### **The interplay between the NAO and arenas of collaboration on different levels**

As stated in chapter 3, not only individuals but also organizations and collaborative boards can be participants exercising leadership. In the case of the YAP, there seems to be a kind of system of leadership on different levels of administration, which consists of the NAO and the different collaborative forums in the YAP. Decisions are formally made in leader and steering groups, but the NAO employees' role is to mediate between levels of administration and the decisions made on different levels, and also to coordinate the meetings of the groups. What is more, NAO's employees have an important indirect role in decision making, since they work not only as meeting coordinators but also outside the regular meeting arenas to coordinate the work being done. The coordinators closely monitor the practical workings of the collaboration and intervene if something is not working well.

My data on this work is based on interviews with the NAO employees, and although I have not gathered data on all the different ways in which this behind-the-scenes work takes place, some examples of this kind of behind-the-scene leadership did emerge. The employees in the NAO were involved in negotiating practices related to deciding who should provide help to clients after they turn 18, and according to one of the consultants, they also observed things that did not work in the collaboration and then attempt to find a solution. Hence, the NAO has some influence on the process of decision making by acting as mediators in conflict situations, despite the fact that they do not have formal decision-making power. It could also be said that the NAO employees can act as leaders in relation to the SSP employees on behalf of the SSP board, which is in turn a collaborative organ consisting of the participating agencies in the SSP.

Typically in literature on network governance or inter-organizational collaboration, a coordinating person, a network broker is seen as crucial (e.g. Pope and Lewis 2008, Gray 1989), but I use the word leadership in this thesis as stated in chapter 4. The NAO employees, however, seem to be wary of using the word leader to describe themselves and keep referring to not having actual decision-making power. The two coordinators who work with the frontline YAP groups do not call themselves leaders, but the head of the NAO used words that refer to a hierarchical organization more directly and called himself the leader of the daily work of the collaboration. Yet, he still emphasized the need to allow for flexibility. For example, when it comes to the workings of the frontline groups, he said he preferred to let the groups develop on their own rather than steering too much. He also says:

*It is [the frontline workers'] knowledge, their thoughts, their ideas about the future that I am interested in cultivating, and I will help with that. Instead of saying that it is [the NAO] that will take care of this and we will let you know what you have to do.*

Interestingly, however, the head of the NAO, when talking about the middle-level leader groups does not call himself a leader. Only when he talks about the frontline groups does he explicitly refer to himself as their boss. In the relationship between the executive and middle levels, he acts as a mediator between the middle-level staff and their leaders and functions as leader on behalf of the collaboration board. The head of the NAO is in other words a leader in some situations and a coordinator in some other situations.

Related to the same issue, I observed the way in which one of the coordinators interacted with the frontline groups. I noticed that the person was in a sense shifting between two roles: the role of 'system representative' and 'being one of the group'. By this I mean that at times the coordinator participated together with the group members in suggesting possible alternatives and what can and cannot be done in different agencies. At the same time, the coordinator also steered the discussion by taking initiatives to move on to the next case and checking whether more people wanted to say something more about a case. I also observed that (the few times) there was a contradiction or a hint of contradiction the coordinator switched to acting like a representative for SSP collaboration. At one meeting, some of the participants expressed disagreement about some things in the collaboration, and the coordinator's way of responding was to start explaining why the collaboration was the way it was. This behavior can be interpreted as linking capital

(Woolcock 2001). By shifting between two different languages (e.g. Bryson and Crosby 2010) ‘SSP language’ and ‘frontline employee language’ the coordinator was able to shift between two roles. This coordinator worked previously as a frontline employee, and it is my interpretation that the person uses the familiarity with the frontline bureaucrat role to be able to communicate with the group on the same level. Then, the coordinator assumes the role of a representative of the NAO when needing authority.

It seems that the position between authority and horizontal relations is a difficult one. Two frontline employees described the difficulty of being in-between levels of hierarchy in a collaboration. One of the interviewees had been a member of a local SSP group and also attended the SSP leader group meetings. Another told about a situation where she was promoted to temporary leader and suddenly was made a leader of her colleagues. She said that it was difficult to gain acceptance from both her colleagues and the other leaders. This is along the lines of a finding by Dudau (2009) that collaboration between individuals from different levels of hierarchy is fraught with difficulty, as those on a higher level of the hierarchy tend to dominate discussions. These findings indicate that there is something ambiguous in the behavior of the NAO employees as they balance between leadership and coordination. This issue would be interesting to focus on in more detail, but it is outside the scope of this thesis.

This section focuses on the NAO and the collaborative organs in the YAP that have a leadership role in an overarching way. The next section focuses on leadership in the concrete decision-making processes in the YAP frontline meetings, and what is deemed important for the functioning of the meetings.

### **Leadership of the frontline meetings**

In this section, I discuss the views of the NAO employees and the frontline group participants regarding the role of the coordinators and the other factors that make a good meeting. The analysis of the views of interviewees on the frontline group meetings indicates that the role of a coordinating person is not unambiguous, and that it is important to acknowledge the network participants, and not only the leader, as important actors who can be said to exercise leadership.

The analysis of the interviews indicates that the role of the coordinators as facilitators of the YAP meetings is complex. Also, the interpretations of the expectations of the frontline workers regarding the role of the coordinator in face-to-face interaction show broad variation. This may have to do with individual differences, and also, as was mentioned earlier in the methodology chapter, it can be assumed that the interviewees found it somewhat difficult to verbalize their thinking about meeting coordination and might not know what kind of information I was looking for. The intention of the interviews was to find out what factors the interviewees considered important for collaboration rather than asking, for example, about the role of some specific management strategies. I only asked directly about the role of the coordinators a few times.

The two coordinators emphasize somewhat different things regarding their role as meeting coordinators in the frontline groups. According to them, the role of the coordinator had to do with both steering the discussion in the groups and dealing with practicalities, such as sending out agendas in time. The coordinators expressed the view that a coordinator

is needed in inter-professional work to steer the discussion; otherwise, there is a tendency to end up in lengthy professional discussions. Another view was that a coordinator should create a frame where all actors can contribute as much as possible, the more quiet participants get a chance to say something and nobody dominates too much, and all possibilities and ideas are brought to the table. It was also said that it is important to have an overview and work to create understanding among the different parties and finally arrive at a decision on what to do with the individual client cases and follow up on the cases.

It was surprising that only one of the interviewed frontline workers spontaneously mentioned the role of the coordinators in facilitating joint problem solving in the frontline level groups, considering the importance attached in the literature to the role of a coordinator. What is more, the participants expressed very different expectations and opinions regarding the work of the coordinators.

A couple of interviewees were particularly positive about the role of the coordinators in the practical work done, keeping minutes and keeping things running. Another view was expressed, however, that anyone could have kept the minutes, and that the coordinator should instead take more ownership of the actual work, take responsibility, as the interviewee said. It was not quite clear what was meant, but my interpretation is that the person wanted the coordinator to engage more in the actual substance of case work and not merely facilitate the work of others.

One person said explicitly that the positive thing about the coordinator in his group is the person's ability to facilitate decision making and his ability to identify good ideas, whereas another interviewee thought that the same coordinator lacked the ability to keep participants motivated and engaged.

A factor that is potentially important is the coordinators' knowledge of the subject matter being discussed (Gray 1989). An interviewee on the middle level also emphasized that coordination demands knowledge about the work and the different agencies. One of the coordinators worked in two of the participating departments and felt that this was an advantage. Also the head of the NAO has worked in the organization as a consultant, and it seems that he too benefits from being familiar with the field, although he did not say this explicitly. A couple of interviewees said it was positive that the coordinators have contacts to other actors and information that can be relevant for the case and are familiar with the different agencies.

These findings could relate to the other finding that the degree of conflict is in fact rather low in this case, or also that there is not always very much to disagree about, as discussed in chapter 6. If there had been more disagreement, the role of the coordinators might have been perceived otherwise. The findings could also indicate that the participants perceived themselves rather than the coordinators to have a high degree agency in the collaboration situation. One interviewee from the middle level argued that the way of working in this program is good, because it is the employees on the operative level who coordinate, while the NAO facilitates. In other words, this person makes a distinction between facilitating and coordinating, seeing the former as facilitating other people to do the coordinative work but not make decisions. Finally, one interviewee on the frontline level, from the Job Centre, was clear about coordinators not making decisions:

*It's them that call the meetings and keep minutes; it's them that steer things overall. Well, of course, they participate in the meetings, but it is us that sit at the table with our fingers in it. It is us who make the plans; it's not them.*

The meeting observations indicated that the collaboration participants themselves, and not only the coordinators, seem to contribute to creating the dynamics and pushing the discussion forward at frontline meetings. Although the coordinator held the threads together, the participants also communicated with each other and made plans together – for example, to hold network meetings. It may be that this was especially the case for the group mentioned by the coordinator to work particularly well. One of the interviewed leaders also thought that the groups would develop by themselves over time, which would mean less need for coordination. Here, it can again be concluded that collaboration is also influenced by the ‘ordinary’ participants rather than only by a coordinator. In some sense, it could then be argued that any individual participant also exercises leadership, defined as “*the mechanisms that lead a collaboration's policy and activity agenda in one direction rather than another*” (Huxham and Vangen 2000:1160).

There were also other issues that were said to have an impact on frontline collaboration. One reason the frontline group’s participants gave for the good functioning of the collaboration was that the individuals working in the program all do so voluntarily, because they have expressed an interest in collaborating. One interviewee also mentioned that the workers in the program are knowledgeable in their subject areas, and said that a person who had just graduated would not be employed in the collaboration. Personal attributes and attitudes towards collaboration are questions that could have been developed more in the interviews.

In most of the interviews, it was generally difficult to address the question of how frontline group meetings are organized. It is possible that some interviewees have more experience than others in arranging meetings and administrative tasks, and they are therefore more aware of such issues. Some of the interviewees who focused more on the organizational aspect of collaboration talked about the importance of having a clear goal for the meetings. One interviewee also found that collaboration does not work, if there is a lack of focus on the task.

*When the focus is lost from the target group, when focus shifts away from why we are here, things go badly straight away. ... I think the YAP is successful because there is a very (stable) frame. We know why we are there. It is very predictable. There are some stable roles.*

Along similar lines, another interviewee said the collaboration is good because the work done is very concrete with concrete goals, rather than just “sitting and talking”. Finally, one interviewee thought it was important to get information about the agenda in advance in order to be able to prepare for the meeting. An interviewee also thought that there could be more than just casework in the meetings – for example, professional discussions. And a couple of interviewees also thought that the meeting form was too slow and bureaucratic. In other words, the interviewees have different expectations regarding the process in the

frontline groups. Some seem to prefer more straightforward, concrete tasks, while others prefer freer, more general discussions.

The evolutionary character of governance networks – i.e. governance networks developing over time (e.g. Mandell and Keast 2008) – is obvious also here, according to the coordinators. One of the coordinators said that coordinating was different when the frontline groups began, that there was a need for motivational work and removal of barriers to the collaboration that the groups identified. The coordinator said that in the beginning, the workers needed to get used to each other, and for most participants, this was not a problem. He said that now the collaboration more or less “runs like a machine”, based on some fairly stable routines. One of the middle level leaders thought that the groups had developed into largely self-steering groups, but in the early days there were more cultural conflicts, and the leader group was involved to solve them. It is not clear what the person meant by cultural conflicts, however. The fact that the participants were interviewed after the YAP program was already up and running may possibly have influenced their perception of the role of the coordinators, because these motivational or relation-building efforts no longer take place in the collaboration work.

Summing up section 7.2.2, the case study indicates that leadership exercised by the NAO and the collaborative organs on different levels of administration is relevant for the functioning of the YAP. It also seems important that this leadership balances between a leader role and a role that positions the individual leader in a horizontal relation with the network participants. But it is potentially difficult to find this balance. It seems that the NAO employees also have both leadership and coordinator roles, depending on the situation. The frontline meeting observations revealed that the meeting coordinator seemed to shift between two roles, being “one of the group” and being a SSP representative. This is interpreted as an expression of linking capital (Woolcock 2001). Bryson and Crosby (2010) note that speaking the languages of the different participant groups is an important ability for a collaboration leader. In this case, it can also be argued that the coordinator was able to speak the languages of frontline workers and the SSP administration, and hence mediate between levels of administration.

The case study also indicates that the role of a coordinating person for facilitating face-to-face communication is complex, and that there are probably also methodological difficulties in researching such facilitation. It is clear that there are many different views on the role of the coordinator among frontline workers. This is an important point, as it indicates that it is not easy to generalize about the characteristics of a good coordinator/network leader in this type of network. It also seems clear that the interviewed frontline workers see themselves, and not only the coordinator, as actors, and that they can be said to exercise leadership as well, according to the definition by Huxham and Vangen (2000). This means that it is important not to overestimate the role of a formally appointed leader and fail to see that also the ‘ordinary’ participants are active actors. Plenty of network governance literature focuses on the properties of a collaboration leader, but it would be relevant to also focus on the network participants as actors.

In the next section, the focus is on what Huxham and Vangen call processes. The main focus is on the role of face-to-face interaction, as this was identified as an important issue.

### **7.2.3. Leadership through processes**

Processes for Huxham and Vangen (2000) mean the ways in which interactions between those involved in a governance network take place: meetings, workshops, phone calls, emails, etc. The work of the YAP is based on the meetings on the frontline and in leader and steering groups. Emphasis is on the frontline groups, as the operational work of the YAP is carried out here. In addition, the employees in the NAO have organized workshops for teambuilding and developing the work in the YAP.

I have not made a systematic mapping of different leadership processes. The analysis is rather based on what the interviewees found important and the processes I was told about in interviews or found out through reading the available written material. An issue emphasized in the interviews was the role of face-to-face interaction, i.e. meeting other network participants physically. Hence, the focus in this section is on face-to-face interaction and also on challenges of organizing such collaboration. This section illustrates why organizing collaboration among frontline workers is particularly challenging. Not only organizational aspects, but also relations with citizens are relevant. Other factors indicated by interviewees as relevant for collaboration are geographic proximity and size of the municipality.

#### **Meetings, workshops and seminars: Teambuilding as a side effect**

Many of the interviewees discuss in detail the face-to-face interaction that takes place in meetings, especially frontline group meetings, and the role that this way of organizing plays in the collaboration process and also outcomes. What is especially interesting is that all meetings and other situations of face-to-face interaction seem to serve the double function of both discussing the substance of the collaboration and also building relationships and getting to know the other network participants. Apart from the meetings held in the collaborative organs on different levels, three workshops were held during the course of the implementation of the YAP program, and an educational seminar was also held for the program participants. According to the coordinators, the goal was to solve some of the issues that had arisen and needed to be solved regarding the organization of the YAP. However, according to an interviewee who participated in planning and carrying out these meetings, their goal was as much, or even more, teambuilding rather than just gathering development ideas.

I had the chance to attend the educational seminar as an observer. The seminar was meant to educate the employees about the collaboration and involved, among other things, discussions on information-sharing practices and the workings of the collaboration and also included a lecture. After the seminar, I had the chance to ask one of the frontline interviewees about her experience, and her idea of the day was that it was “nice” and provided a good chance to get to meet people from other frontline groups and learn more about the organization and what is going on. In other words, the benefit of the seminar for her was not only related to its formal purpose; it also served the purpose of networking. This is related to what was concluded in the previous section about the role of individual participants as opposed to the formally appointed leaders. Relationship building – deemed to be important for inter-organizational collaboration – happens not only through the efforts

of the coordinators, but also through the initiatives of the YAP participants as they engage in social interaction with each other.

The next section continues to discuss the role of face-to-face interaction between the YAP participants in collaboration in the frontline groups. In the next section, it is concluded that face-to-face interaction not only serves networking purposes, but also helps to facilitate collaboration through increasing knowledge of the other participating organizations among the YAP participants.

### **Importance of face-to-face interaction for avoiding conflicts: Getting to know people and organizations**

Most YAP participants seemed to agree that face-to-face meetings are beneficial for the work. The general view seemed to be that not only knowing the other participants, but also knowing about the other professions and agencies and what can and cannot be done in different agencies, facilitates collaboration, and this knowledge is obtained through face-to-face interaction.

Many interviewees argued that the lack of knowledge about the other agencies, about what services they provide and why they do things in a certain way, causes friction, and knowledge of the way things work in other agencies seems to be a factor that facilitates fruitful collaboration. One interviewee from the social department says:

*If you don't collaborate with others, you have a tendency to blame them and say they don't do their job. ... So that's a good effect of sitting together with different professions, that you gain insight into the others' professions and their possibilities.*

Another interviewee, also from the social department, with experience in less close inter-organizational relations, argued that negative myths about other agencies are most prevalent where the collaboration is less close and employees in different agencies do not know each other. One of the coordinators also said that knowledge of the other agencies partly solved the "18-year-old problem" during the course of the collaboration as the participants learned more about the preconditions in the other agencies.

The consequence of getting to know people in face-to-face interaction has to do with both knowing actors as individuals and obtaining knowledge about the individual agencies. The actors are both representatives of their home agencies and individual actors who have relations to other individual actors. Nohria and Eccles (1992) list a number of ways in which face-to-face interaction is beneficial for collaboration, for example by making dealing with ambiguity and uncertainty easier and also making it possible to arrive at consensus faster. Based on the YAP case, it also seems that in relation to issues pertinent to smooth collaboration, improving the YAP participants' knowledge of the different agencies served to alleviate potential antagonisms between the network participants.

In the following two subsections I discuss factors that in sub-question 4 are called contextual factors. These factors are not under immediate influence of the YAP participants, at least not directly. The two factors discussed have to do with the way in which the participating agencies are organized, and the importance of geographic proximity for collaboration.



### **Meeting organization and differences between agencies: Organization vs. citizens**

A factor that according to some interviewees has influence on collaboration is the fact that the agencies participating are organized in different ways, which has consequences for how the meetings, especially the frontline meetings are organized. One of the leaders who was part of the YAP collaboration from the beginning said that one problem in the beginning was that while the social department is organized in districts, the Job Centre is city wide, as is also the department of youth and children. A practical problem has been that the other agencies did not want to have several frontline groups in different districts but would have preferred only one city wide group. One leader representative argues the motivation to not have a district division was to avoid excessive meetings. On the other hand a view was also expressed that having district based meetings will save time as it divides the workload. Otherwise there would be too many cases dealt with per frontline meeting. Finally the decision was made to start 5 frontline groups and the Job Centre involved 5 different people to work with one frontline group each.

Avoiding too many meetings has to do with the limited amount of time available for the work in the YAP collaboration, but from the point of view of the work done in the YAP there is also another dilemma. One interviewed middle level leader was concerned that although it would be preferable that the employees who know the citizens best participate in the frontline meetings, this is difficult to arrange in practice. This is the case because it would take too much personnel resources to send employees who are actually working with the clients discussed in the meetings to the meeting in question. This could have been avoided if the YAP group had been city wide, argued the interviewee. The interviewee argued that sometimes there has been incorrect information given about citizens as meeting participants have not been the ones who know the citizen best. On the other hand, the situation of the social department seems to be that since the department is divided into district based groups, the way the collaboration is organized now in fact does enable to send case workers who know the citizens well to the meetings.

It is not clear what the situation has been in detail, but this situation illustrates a potential contradiction in inter-organizational collaboration in the frontline level. It may be time consuming to involve the case workers who know the citizens best, but it would be better for the citizen. This also illustrates how contradictions can arise out of different organizational structures of agencies.

Another issue brought up was that different work practices of different agencies are counterproductive for collaboration (also noted by Puonti 2004). A view was expressed that the Job Centre, but also other agencies have a very strict organization that makes it very difficult to arrange network meetings with the employees. This view, however, had to do with other collaboration than this particular program. This was also mentioned by the frontline workers. Workers in different agencies have different workloads in general, and what is more, in some agencies employees involved in YAP only work with this group of clients while in other agencies the employees work with many different groups of clients and therefore some employees have more time to spend on this collaboration than others. Some interviewees are also participating in several inter-organizational collaborations, not only the YAP.

These findings illustrate the particular challenges of inter-organizational collaboration between frontline agencies discussed in chapter 6, as the collaboration has to do with not only collaboration on horizontal level, but also needs to be anchored in the citizens. There can be a trade-off between organizational efficiency and a citizen perspective. This section also illustrates that the different participant agencies are not a homogeneous group, as the employees in different agencies have different preconditions for participating in the YAP.

### **Geographic proximity and collaboration**

Another factor that indirectly turned out to be important was geographic proximity. Many interviewees argued that the particular challenge of this city is that it is a large municipality. They compared it with smaller municipalities where “everybody knows everybody” and all municipal employees may even all work in the same building. One frontline interviewee from a unit in the social department says:

*I often think of the city like Kafka, like a castle where he just goes round... it's a cool job in a large municipality, but it is also a big white elephant – I mean if you want to start challenging and want something different.*

Some interviewees also gave examples of how they had spontaneously collaborated across organizational barriers with people working in the same building but in different fields, and they argued that this would not have happened if there had been more physical distance. Some interviewees told about an agency's moving to a different building also caused social networks to disappear. But formalized collaborations like the YAP can to some extent work as a substitute for physical proximity, since actors meet on a regular basis.

These findings are interesting, as geographic proximity does not seem to be necessary for all forms of collaboration. For example, Lewis (2010) found that proximity was not relevant for academic researchers' networks. What might then be the reason for the importance of proximity in this case? Maybe the kind of knowledge is of a different kind in social services than in academic research, in a way that is also relevant for collaboration patterns. Maybe the knowledge is not mediated in a textual form in the same way as in academic research, but more through anchoring it in a material context, since the work is very concrete – coordinating action plans for individual clients. Also Nohria and Eccles (1992) argue that face-to-face interaction has an important role, especially for decision-making processes. In the YAP case, there is a need for negotiations about who will do what and what the best course of action could be, and this might not be so easy in an email correspondence, for example.

What is more, the reason for collaboration in the YAP is to coordinate concrete action and interact with individuals with different institutional and professional backgrounds, which maybe demands more face-to-face interaction. In the case of academic collaborations, the networks in the study by Lewis (2010) were predominantly within a single discipline.

Summing up, section 7.2.3 concludes that different formally arranged processes such as meetings, and seminars, serve both the formal purpose of carrying out the work in the YAP, but also have indirect effects, in that individuals get to know each other. This

makes for smoother collaboration in the future. The interviewees also argued that face-to-face interaction reduces conflicts, because uncertainties about the other agencies become clarified. These findings illustrate again that individual participants in a network, and not only formally appointed leaders, influence the collaboration as they engage in social interactions with each other. It is important to note, however, that the YAP provides a framework for this interaction to take place.

It turned out that arranging meetings between agencies is challenged by the way in which the participating agencies are organized. This means that there can be a trade-off between an organizational effectiveness perspective and a citizen perspective. What is more, as is also discussed in chapter 6, it should be noted that the participating agencies do not comprise a homogeneous group with regard to their opportunities to participate in the collaboration. This not only has to do with the tasks the agencies have with regard to the YAP clients, but also with how the collaboration work fits in with the other tasks the YAP participants have. Finally it is concluded that geographic proximity and the fact that the municipality is a large one influence the preconditions of collaboration. The two latter findings illustrate that inter-organizational collaboration in crime prevention may be different from those in other policy fields. This may be due to the character of issue collaborated on in the YAP. The YAP collaboration focuses making action plans for concrete individuals, rather than technical solutions or abstract policy goals.

## **7.3. INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS AND COLLABORATION**

This section discusses the role of interpersonal relations and argues that interpersonal relations form an actual dynamics of their own that cannot necessarily be called leadership. The point is that interpersonal relations are a factor in their own right and are about relations between specific individuals (Heimer 1992); hence, this issue deserves a heading of its own. It became clear during the course of the interviews that the interviewees placed a lot of emphasis on getting to know the other participants, and not only that; some also discussed the character of the relations to other participants and that these relationships in fact also had consequences in relation to outcomes. This section also indicates that according to some interviewees, social networks between individuals can be seen as a substitute for formal collaboration.

### **7.3.1. Respect, trust and commitment as characteristics of inter-organizational collaboration**

Chapter 3 discusses trust in connection with interpersonal relations. Literature on inter-organizational collaboration and network governance mentions trust as an important factor (Edelenbos and Klijn 2007, Klijn Edelenbos and Stein 2010, Ansell and Gash 2008). Many interviewees pointed to trust and respect as important factors for collaboration; however, based on the interviews, these concepts seem to mean a number of different things to the

interviewees. It may also be the case that the interviewees themselves lack clear definitions of these concepts, for they are not only scholarly but also vernacular terms that can easily have more diffuse meanings.

The complexity of the concept of trust is illustrated by the following quote from a frontline employee from a unit in the social department. Here, the word means on the one hand trusting that the other participants know their field, and on the other hand, that they carry out what they have promised.

*Well, I think it is something fundamental to have respect towards each other's different professions and world views. Because sometimes I can wonder why a psychiatrist does something and why he/she thinks one thing is more important than another, but I will have to have trust that (based on) their education or (?) their organization that is what they do. But I think, when you have respect, you can ask and have some discussions in a nice way. But then you also need to have trust that what was agreed upon will also be done.*

Respect was mentioned in terms of respect for the different participants' professional background and organizational role. This was expressed by many in different ways to be a prerequisite for inter-organizational/inter-professional collaboration. Respect was also mentioned by one interviewee to mean acceptance of the framework and legislation the other agencies have.

Many of the interviewees also spoke of the importance of being able to count on the participants' carrying out the work commitments agreed upon in the meetings—for example, about investigating services that could be provided for the clients, and being able to present alternatives at the next meeting. Some expressed dissatisfaction that this was not always happening, although this opinion was very rare. As discussed in chapter 6, this relates to the finding that commitment can also be a potential challenge to participants in an inter-organizational collaboration, because individuals can feel caught between the collaboration and their home agency.

The previous literature on inter-organizational collaboration and the role of trust is predominantly based on public-private partnerships or is private sector literature. There is reason to expect that the role of trust is different in a public sector context. In a literature review, Edelenbos and Klin (2007) conclude that three characteristics of trust can be found in the literature: acceptance of vulnerability (trusting that the collaboration partner will not behave opportunistically), acceptance of risk, and positive expectations of the other. Motivation to behave opportunistically is not very obvious in this case, since public agencies in the same municipality are not likely to engage in strategic behavior towards each other. It seems more logical that trust is necessary for different purposes in the private sector than in the public sector, as the risk of one party stealing another's business secrets is not very likely in the public sector. It seems that the role of trust in this case has more to do with trust in the professional competence of the collaboration participants. Trust, broadly speaking, as positive expectations of the other, seems to be a good way to define how the YAP participants understand trust. What is more, trust also seems to be trust in the commitment of the participants in the joint project, and living up to the work commitment of the other participants.

Speculatively, it could also be assumed that the fact that different things are at stake in different types of collaboration might influence interpersonal relations. It could also be concluded that since trust is also understood as trusting that the commitments made to carry out tasks in the YAP actually will be carried out, it might present a challenge for the YAP participants to maintain their commitments both in the home organization and in the YAP. However, these issues need a more profound analysis before such conclusions can be made. Nevertheless, interpersonal relations are deemed by the interviewees to be an important factor. In the next section, I discuss how interpersonal relations are considered by the interviewees to contribute to outcomes of collaboration.

### **7.3.2. Interpersonal relations and collaborative advantage**

As discussed in chapter 3, the concept of collaborative advantage (e.g. Vangen and Huxham 2010) denotes how collaboration leads to results that would not otherwise have been achieved. Many interviewees argued that it is the relations between the network participants that lead to realizing this collaborative advantage in the YAP case. The interviewees' view seems to be that coordination benefits greatly from knowing the employees from the other agencies, and in fact that combinations of services are made available that would not have been made in the absence of interpersonal relations.

Many of the interviewees said that the coordination of the efforts of different agencies would not have happened in the same way had it not been for the close relations between the participants from different agencies. An example of this was a situation where a citizen was starting an education while receiving social welfare benefits and lacking housing. Typically, a student receives a student allowance and not social welfare benefits. In this one case, an exception was made so it was possible to start the education on social welfare benefits and then apply for a student apartment and then start receiving a student allowance. The interviewee telling this story explained that it is very difficult to apply for a student allowance while being homeless, because the application requires an electronic ID and this requires a home address. The frontline workers were afraid the client would quickly end up quitting the education without this arrangement. The interviewee said that this kind of solution would not have been realized without knowing each other and making an extra effort, even though the practice is within the scope of what can formally be done.

Other similar examples were given. When I asked another interviewee about whether in the example she gave she thought the solution could have been arrived at otherwise, she answered that the possibility would have been there, but "*the thinking may not have been there*". Another person believed that some of the ideas presented in the frontline meetings about what alternatives – for example, in education – there are for a particular client, would not have come up, if she as an employee had called a counselor at the educational department at random.

Innes and Booher (1994) use the concept bricolage (Lévi-Strauss 1966) to denote this process of how existing ingredients are put together in a new way and in a way that none of the actors would have come up with by themselves. The authors present examples of how this kind of bricolage takes place between actors as a result of a facilitated process through repeated face-to-face interaction, which again points out the importance of time for collaboration, that it takes time for inter-organizational collaboration to develop. In this

case, it seems that such bricolage starts taking place in the groups as the groups develop. What is relevant here is that in essence, according to the interviewees, the kind of help the citizen receives can be in practice qualitatively different in this collaboration compared to only working in separate agencies. This is the case even though the formal possibilities of the different agencies are the same. One of the leaders interviewed said that the fact that the SSP collaboration was institutionalized, that a NAO was created and the SSP collaboration became formalized was largely because of a good personal chemistry between the individuals leading the agencies at that time. It seems therefore to be the case that decision making in general is facilitated by these positive relations, as was also found by Keast and Hampson (2007). Therefore, the process of collaboration, the face-to-face interaction between people who know each other, actually does create different outcomes than more distant relations.

### **7.3.3. Interpersonal networks as substitute for formal collaboration?**

Many interviewees said that they call the other members of their frontline groups to ask for advice, even outside the YAP, and that this is much easier to do after having had face-to-face contact during the meetings. It also turned out that some interviewees also contact the NAO employees and coordinators when they want to ask advice. The informal networking activity seemed to vary from person to person, and the meeting coordinator interviewed said that the different groups had developed differently, and some groups are more active in terms of informal networking.

One of the coordinators actually mentioned that in the groups that function best, the participants also work together spontaneously. It could be observed in the meetings I participated in that the group members were also networking with each other during pauses, and some clearly knew each other, which they also mentioned in interviews. One interviewee explicitly mentioned that one eventually makes friends with the other participants and then they call each other for help and advice.

The view was also expressed that personal relations with colleagues in other departments are in fact a substitute for the formal organization in the collaboration, and are faster and less bureaucratic. On the other hand, another interviewee thought that it can be a problem in that some people call their friends for advice rather than the person who knows most about the issue. Direct personal relationships may provide a faster way to get work done, but the question is whether the person with whom one has a personal relationship is the most relevant person in relation to the issue in question. The way of organizing the meetings in the YAP program could possibly ensure that network relations are created with individuals who are relevant for the task, but considering that the participants may be and often are involved in several collaborations, there can also be a trade-off – in the sense that the employees can only invest their time in a limited number of networks.

Summing up section 7.3, it was concluded that interpersonal relations are important for inter-organizational collaboration, as is also discussed in chapter 3. The analysis also indicates that they are important in that the interviewees argued that qualitatively different outcomes are achieved in the YAP collaboration due to interpersonal relations. It could be said that interpersonal relations are a factor that influence inter-organizational collaboration, along with the formal organization of a governance network and some

contextual factors. A view was also expressed that informal networks may in fact accomplish the same work as the YAP, just faster. At the same time, the formal meeting forums designed for the YAP collaboration also seem to facilitate the creation of these interpersonal relations, and it could also be said that the formal meetings enable the participants to meet individuals who have specialized knowledge about the topic. The section also raises the question of whether the demands on interpersonal relations might be different in public sector partnerships than in private sector ones, as the issues that potentially cause friction may be different. Trust, respect and commitment are mentioned as important for collaboration, but the character of these need not be the same as in private sector collaborations.

This section leads back to the discussion in chapter 6 on the demand for commitment in the collaboration. Chapter 3 quotes Carol Heimer (1992:143): “*Relations are among named individuals who know one another as particular others and not just as generalized actors playing broadly defined roles.*” Personal relations between network participants potentially present a challenge for the participants, although this was not explicitly discussed. Especially one interviewee thought that the participants in the collaboration should take responsibility and be willing to do a little extra for the casework in the collaboration. Knowing colleagues in the other agencies personally can facilitate collaboration, but it can also potentially add to the pressure of finding enough time to carry out the work in both the collaboration and the home agency, since it is expected that employees adjust their working practices so they also have time to make the necessary preparations before the next frontline meeting.

## 7.4. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The research question addressed in this chapter was:

**What is the role of interpersonal relations and leadership through structures, participants and processes in inter-organizational collaboration in the YAP, and what factors influence these leadership media?**

To start with, although this chapter is about leadership, the fact that the YAP is an implementation network means that the notion of leadership as “*the mechanisms that lead a collaboration's policy and activity agenda in one direction rather than another*” or “*making things happen*” (Huxham and Vangen 2000:1160) is slightly misleading, since the policy agenda of the YAP is largely decided elsewhere. The focus in this chapter is therefore mainly on issues that are deemed to be relevant for the smooth functioning of the YAP collaboration and work in the frontline groups. These are both small and large issues that contribute to the goals of the YAP or shape the YAP collaboration. The concept of leadership as defined by Huxham and Vangen (2000) is very useful, however, as it enables

taking into account the broad variety and complexity of factors that influence inter-organizational collaboration, and provides a good way of systematizing this complexity.

With regard to the YAP's structure, it is characteristic of the YAP collaboration that it is an implementation network, and therefore its goals and agenda are largely determined outside the participants' influence and are less subject to continuous negotiation. This may also be one of the reasons behind the seemingly low degree of conflict, apart from the division between the adult unit and the children and family unit of the social department. The group of participants depends largely on what is deemed relevant for the functioning of the frontline groups, and the setup of the collaboration is somewhat flexible. As for decision making, the actors involved in developing the collaboration argued that one crucial feature of the collaboration is that it is based on equality between partners, since the central steering agency is jointly financed and the collaboration is led by a board consisting of top executives in the participating agencies. This could also be expected based on previous literature.

As for the role of leadership through participants, the overall leadership of the YAP consists of a leadership system of collaborative arenas on different levels of administration and the NAO. The interviews and observations carried out for this thesis showed that the coordinating actors practice facilitation of interaction on the horizontal level in the collaborative arenas, and also mediate relations in the vertical direction. When there is a dilemma on one level, the coordinators mediate it to the next level or consult the leader in charge of the issue on the next level. In this way, although the NAO does not have decision-making competence, the NAO employees nevertheless influence decision-making processes. Chapter 3 concluded that leadership of governance networks is challenging, because no one is technically in charge. The participating agencies do not have decision-making authority in relation to each other. What is more, according to the literature, there is typically a need for a coordinating individual in governance networks. In the YAP's leadership system, however, the coordinators cannot exercise actual decision-making power, and clearly, the position of the NAO employees is somewhat ambiguous, shifting between a leadership role and a coordinator role. Although the need to connect between levels of administration is in itself not a new finding, the contribution of this case study is its findings regarding the process by which such connections can take place. A conclusion drawn in this thesis is that for this mediation, a form of linking capital is utilized where the coordinator of the frontline meetings is able to "speak the language" of both the frontline workers and the NAO. The coordinator shifts between two roles and is thereby able to assume a position of authority when necessary and step back when that is appropriate. This is similar to Bryson and Crosby's (2010) notion of how the ability to "speak different languages" – i.e. communicate with different professional or other groups – is helpful in collaboration leadership. It can be argued that a similar kind of ability can also be used in order to mediate between levels of administration.

The case study also shows some ambiguity regarding the role of the coordinators in coordinating the frontline meetings. Different participants in the frontline groups had very different experiences and expectations towards the coordinators, ranging from very positive to not exerting enough effort. Some focused more on the importance of practical issues at



the meetings, such as keeping minutes and holding all the threads in their hands, while others thought the coordinators should also be more involved in the actual case work.

Only a few participants mentioned the coordinators spontaneously when asked about factors that are important for the collaboration. It could be that the frontline group participants do not place much emphasis on what the coordinators do, because of the low degree of conflict in the groups. It could also be that the groups have developed over time so that the need for facilitation has decreased. These results could also indicate that the frontline workers see themselves as having a high degree of agency, some more than others. It can therefore be argued that it is not only the formally appointed coordinator/facilitator but also the 'ordinary' participants in the collaboration who themselves facilitate collaboration. As discussed in this chapter, answering this question is fraught with methodological difficulties, as it is likely that the interviewees are not aware of all the actions taken by the coordinators to facilitate the collaboration, or they may take such actions as given.

As for leadership through processes, the analysis shows that face-to-face interaction plays a crucial role, and that the meetings in frontline groups, as well as other activities arranged in the YAP, serve a double purpose of developing interpersonal relations as well as addressing the issues they were intended to address. Face-to-face interaction in the frontline groups also increases the participants' knowledge of the other agencies, and seems to serve the purpose of alleviating conflicts that arise due to lack of knowledge about the other participant agencies.

A challenge to inter-organizational collaboration in the frontline meetings seems to be the different organizational structures of the participant organizations. Some agencies are city-wide, while some are divided into districts. There has therefore been some need for negotiation in designing the collaborative arenas. On the one hand, collaboration demands time resources that are already scarce, with the risk of meeting overload; on the other hand, it is frequently argued that it is important that the people who know the citizens best should be able to participate in the frontline meetings. As one interviewee puts it, coordination should happen as close as possible to the citizen. It can be difficult to satisfy these two criteria at the same time, and a trade-off can result between a citizen perspective and organizational efficiency. This finding is related to the dilemma discussed in chapter 6 regarding the importance of relations to citizens, and it is important to take it into account – not only the preconditions for collaboration in the different agencies but also the need to focus on relations to the citizens.

Many interviewees noted that trust, respect and commitment are important for collaboration, which gives rise to the question of whether these aspects differ in public sector partnerships compared to those in the private sector, since the issues at stake are different. Public sector partnerships do not need to be concerned about disclosing business secrets or other business-related issues. In this case, trust, respect and commitment have to do with acknowledgement of the other participants' professional abilities and their commitment to carrying out tasks as planned at the YAP meetings.

According to interviewees, interpersonal relations influence the collaboration. The outcomes arrived at through face-to-face interaction between the meeting participants who know each other are qualitatively different than outcomes arrived at without such close

relations. They make a greater effort to create new and innovative combinations of the existing possibilities in the different agencies. Finally, some interviewees mention that informal interaction between parties plays an important role; and some mention that at times it even overrides the formal interaction in the frontline groups, which is seen as overly bureaucratic. The role of informal networks for collaboration also entails a dilemma. Informal networks may be faster and less bureaucratic, but they are also dependent on network relationships with the individuals with the most knowledge on the topic in question. Therefore, the frontline meetings can still defend their position as a means of creating informal networks appropriate to the task.

Summing up, the findings of this case study are mainly relevant for understanding other implementation networks (rather than, for example, policy networks). It also seems clear that the case study indicates that leadership of collaboration between frontline workers has some particular preconditions, since such collaborations demand a focus not only on relations between the frontline workers but also on connections to the clients, as concluded in chapter 6 as well. For leadership of collaboration on the frontline, it is important that individuals who work directly with the citizens are involved, while it is also necessary to connect with levels of administration that have decision-making competence. In this case, the NAO employees seem to accomplish this connection between levels of administration in the YAP. And important for this connection may be similar factors that are important for mediating between different organizations – namely, speaking the language of the different actors involved. Hence, the chapter shows that mediating between different levels of hierarchy can have similar characteristics as mediating between organizations. The concept linking capital (Woolcock 2001) seems a good concept to describe this ability to mediate between levels of administration.

There are also other ways in which leadership in this case is different from other policy fields. The characteristics of trust may be different compared for example to private sector partnerships. Face-to-face collaboration was deemed very important in this case, which is not the case in academic collaborations (Lewis 2010). Hence, it cannot necessarily be assumed that literature on different types of collaborations is directly applicable to the field of crime prevention.

The case study also confirms Huxham and Vangen's (2000) idea that leadership is not only about direct and formal but also indirect and informal processes, and that it is not necessarily under the influence of any given actor. The literature on network governance indicates that networks develop over time (e.g. Mandell and Keast 2008). It can be argued that this development also takes place as a social interaction process between network participants; hence, a governance network can in some sense be 'leading itself'. An important leadership task is therefore to focus on the recruiting process of the participants in the YAP. Related to this, interpersonal relations can be seen as a factor in its own right. Interpersonal relations influence the collaboration and actually lead to qualitatively different outcomes – the realization of collaborative advantage.

The next chapter focuses on collaborative innovation and draws on findings in this and the previous chapter on the characteristics of inter-organizational collaboration in crime prevention and its leadership.

# CHAPTER 8. COLLABORATIVE INNOVATION AS PHENOMENON AND PROCESS

## 8.1. INTRODUCTION

The previous two chapters focus on inter-organizational collaboration. This chapter builds further on these two analytical chapters, focuses on innovation in an inter-organizational context and addresses the third research question:

**What incentives, disincentives and preconditions for collaborative innovation in crime prevention can be found based on the YAP case?**

As discussed in chapter 4, a reason for studying collaborative innovation is essentially a normative one, in the sense that collaboration as well as innovation through collaboration can be argued to be relevant in this problem field. However, as concluded in chapter 6, collaboration need not be seen as necessary *per se*, and different actors can have different views on the degree to which the collaboration participants in fact have a shared goal. This and other findings on inter-organizational collaboration are drawn on in this chapter's discussion of collaborative innovation.

It was clear at the outset that there is no systematic strategy for creating innovation *per se* in my case, even though the SSP collaboration in the municipality could be seen as rather innovative. In fact, many innovations did result, and the SSP organization did seem to have a focus on developing innovative work. Hence, this chapter focuses on so-called emergent innovation (Osborne and Brown 2005) rather than processes that intentionally focus on creating innovation. Furthermore, this chapter uses a broad definition of innovation. As stated in chapter 4, the point of view of this thesis is that innovation can mean both incremental and radical innovation, and both large- and small-scale innovations. Including small-scale innovations in the definition is important, especially since this thesis focuses on innovation in frontline bureaucracies. The work in frontline bureaucracies is by definition such that the employees and the citizens themselves are involved in the creation of the services (Osborne et al. 2013) provided to the citizens; hence, even small-scale innovations can be seen as relevant.

The structure of the chapter is as follows: First, the concept of innovation as perceived by the interviewees are discussed, and the incentives for innovation. This is followed by a discussion of how the interviewees perceive the roles of different levels of administration in innovation, with emphasis on the role of frontline workers. Then, I discuss

collaborative innovation in particular. The final section develops the conclusions from this chapter as well as chapters 6 and 7.

The chapter takes its point of departure in the following sub-questions:

1. How do interviewees define innovation in their problem field?
2. What kinds of incentives for innovation do the interviewees present?
3. What is the role of different levels of administration in innovation, according to the interviewees?
4. What is the role of collaborative innovation in this problem field, according to the interviewees?
5. What preconditions are there for collaborative innovation on the environmental, organizational and operational levels of governance networks?
6. What are the preconditions and challenges for collaborative innovation in different phases of an innovation?

## **8.2. INNOVATION: WHAT AND WHY?**

As noted in chapter 4, several authors point out that scholars do not agree on what qualifies as innovation (e.g. Considine et al. 2009, Pollit 2011). I chose not to operationalize any definition very strictly at the outset, but rather let the interviewees define what they meant by innovation. This meant that they focused on innovations concerned with public services. The interviewees were asked about examples of innovations they themselves had been involved in, and what was the best way to develop the work in the field of crime prevention. I did not employ any definition of the magnitude of change required for something to be called innovation, because this would serve to conceal small-scale innovations that nevertheless can be important (Fuglsang 2010).

The interviewees mainly described service innovations of different magnitudes. It became obvious however that interviewees had very different ideas about what innovation is, let alone how it could/should be created and why. What is more, many interviewees found it difficult or also potentially irrelevant to talk about innovation as a process in order to create something new. While I asked about the best way to develop the work in the field of crime prevention, they talked generally about what could be done to improve the work, and the answer was not necessarily more innovation.

### **8.2.1. Definitions of innovation among interviewees**

The view of this thesis is that it is necessary that innovation be defined as such by the respondents, and that both large- and small-scale, incremental and radical innovations are all taken into account. Since the interviewees were asked to tell about innovations in which they themselves had been involved, the result was a very broad variety of answers ranging from rhetorical innovation via new service innovations to some small-scale ad hoc

innovations. Some interviewees used the word innovative, which seemed to mean for them either a characteristic of an innovation, or something that has a positive aura of novelty to it. For example, one of the interviewees in the NAO mentioned that the establishment of the principle of equality in the SSP collaboration in the municipality was innovative. The same interviewee also said that the fact that the different departments are open for input from other actors and to re-evaluate their plans was innovative. These could be labeled rhetorical (see Hartley 2005) or conceptual (see Halvorsen 2005) innovations. Section 8.3.3. describes in more detail some examples of what could be called collaborative service innovations created on the frontline. They illustrate the process of service innovation in the frontline and the challenges associated with this type of innovation.

Innovation is generally seen by the interviewees as something that brings about a positive change, or at the very least is experienced as something positive irrespective of the magnitude of the change. A frontline interviewee, when asked if he had participated in an innovation, told about a meeting arranged in his department where employees from different sections met and told about their work. Although a very incremental innovation, it had apparently been important for him. Another told about the time she and some colleagues initiated a meeting with prison personnel to discuss one of their clients, and the positive surprise this had caused the prison personnel. This could be called an ad hoc innovation (Gallouj and Weinstein 1997).

It was sometimes difficult to understand why the word innovation was used. One interviewee thought that learning more about other agencies at the frontline group meetings was a form of innovation. Like the word collaboration, innovation is also both a vernacular and scholarly term, which proved to be difficult to manage in an interview situation. It might also be that the interviewees, in the interview situation, felt that they were obligated to provide me with some kind of example of innovation when I asked for one.

As discussed in chapter 4, no consensus exists regarding the magnitude of change that qualifies as an innovation (e.g. Considine et al. 2009), and the division between incremental and radical innovation is also not very clear cut. Even the interview responses in this case study indicate some ambiguity in the use of the concept of innovation, in terms the magnitude of change required in order use the term innovation. Some interviewees, especially the frontline workers, thought that even small, ad hoc initiatives were innovation (as indicated by the responses already presented, like the meeting with prison personnel). It may be that for the frontline workers, even the everyday ad hoc innovations appear concrete, and the change they entail in their work practices is experienced as innovations, because they bring about a qualitative change.

One middle-level leader said, *“I’d say innovation is not a word we use a whole lot, although we think we develop things all the time”*. Another middle-level leader argued that also the implementation of the YAP entails a form of innovation, and that innovation of this kind is something that emerges from daily practice when trying to figure out the best way do things. This also illustrates how it can be difficult to make an analytical distinction between the idea creation and implementation phases. As the innovation is developed the creation phase in some sense continues throughout the implementation process, as has been the case with the YAP program. An innovation can also be seen as a series of small innovations that take place in different parts of the organization. To return to what one

interviewee said about the implementation of the YAP as an example of innovation, it is also interesting to bring up here the work done by the NAO employees to implement the YAP. One of the consultants had the task of creating the concrete forms of collaboration, and among other things created a system for following up the progress of the client cases. This is a kind of innovation as well.

The responses described above illustrate how the view of what constitutes an innovation is rather broad, and that there is certainly a fine line between improvement and innovation. The point of view of this thesis is that what constitutes an innovation should be defined in the context where it is created and implemented in order to understand the sense in which it introduces a qualitative change. The exact definition of the magnitude of the change necessary is not necessarily relevant, as there is no clear distinction between incremental change and innovation. What is more, having a broad definition of innovation also avoids excluding small-scale innovations that can also be experienced as very relevant in their context. In the case of service innovation, it could be argued that even a seemingly small-scale innovation can have a positive influence in concrete casework with citizens. As argued by Osborne et al. (2013), public services are by definition co-creations of the citizen and the employee; in their final form, they are created in the interaction between the frontline worker and the citizen. Hence, when studying this policy field, it seems reasonable to employ a broad definition in order not to exclude potentially relevant types of innovation.

Some methodological issues became obvious during the course of the interviews, which have implications for the analysis. The interview guide prepared turned out to be difficult to follow, particularly with regard to innovation, as it was occasionally very difficult to lead the discussion into relevant issues. I was not completely consequent in my use of terminology. Sometimes, I asked interviewees if they had been involved in developing some new project or innovation, although my intention was not to use the term innovation. In some cases, I even presented some hypotheses from innovation literature, particularly when I asked whether different levels of administration had different roles in innovation.

It could be assumed that some interviewees were more familiar with the innovation vocabulary than others; some of the interviewed frontline workers had administrative, coordinative tasks in addition to the regular case work, while some did not, which may have had an impact on how they spoke about innovation in interviews. As mentioned earlier, this was also the case in the responses regarding collaboration. Some interviewees gave long accounts of what they thought of the administrative system, politics of crime prevention and meeting organization, while others did not.

It is likely that my way of approaching innovation in interviews may have generally been too theoretical, and for methodological reasons, it would have been easier if I had chosen a concrete case of what I thought was an innovation and asked interviewees about their views of it. However, it was my aim to take my point of departure in how the interviewees themselves defined innovation, as this could be expected to depend on who was asked.

This section examines the concept of innovation as it is understood by interviewees working in the YAP in a very broad way, which can also include smaller, ad hoc

innovations. In the next section, I discuss how the interviewees see the incentives for innovation.

### **8.2.2. Incentives of innovation**

Although not part of the original interview guide, the interviews nevertheless generated some findings regarding the motivation to create innovation, which I argue are relevant for nuancing the discussion on innovation in this case. The interview responses show some ambiguity in relation to the need for innovation in the public sector.

Some responses indicate innovation is needed because of the complexity of the problem field, whereas others indicate the view that innovation is positive and desirable *per se*. However, not all interviewees spontaneously mentioned innovation when asked about how to develop work in the field of crime prevention. It turned out that interviewees found it very difficult to see innovation as separate from the work they do and discuss creating innovation *per se*. Most interviewees took their point of departure in the context of crime prevention work, and did not talk about how innovation – any kind of innovation – can be created. They rather took a normative standpoint, in terms of what way of creating innovation is desirable in the context in which they work. The interviewees often preferred talking about why a particular innovation is beneficial for the work they do, rather than telling about the organization and planning of the innovation. For example, many spoke of the importance of involving the youth and people who work most closely with the youth.

#### **Innovation as problem solving**

As indicated earlier, the point of departure in this thesis is not that innovation is desirable *per se*, or that innovation is necessarily always good. My point of departure at the outset was that the SSP organization in my case study was focused on emergent innovation (Osborne and Brown 2005), in the sense that innovation in the organization is need-driven and not systematic, with the aim of generating more innovation, as was indicated in the early interviews.

The interviews indicate that the majority of interviewees seem to share this view that innovation should be based on some actual need rather than being important for its own sake. Three frontline interviewees actually argued that the character of the problem field is such that there is a need for being innovative. One frontline worker said:

*I think it is important that we as an agency always think in terms of new solutions, new ways to do things, because otherwise, at the end of the day, we get paralyzed if we don't try new ways. Because these young people, irrespective of how much we want to help them, some of them keep doing stupid things. So you need to have patience, and you also need to have the desire to do new things, new measures.*

According to another frontline worker:

*If we are to inspire the youth to want something else with their lives, we have to inspire ourselves to think new. There is a connection. Because otherwise it gets very rigid. We end*

*up just doing casework and moving, describing and moving problems. I think it can feel like that sometimes. But I am a very action-oriented person.”*

A middle-level employee also emphasized the importance of having an attitude of learning and development. These responses reflect the view that crime prevention is a wicked problem (Rittel and Webber 1973) – or in any case a complex problem – and there is therefore a constant need to find ways to address the problem, and this serves as an incentive for innovation. However, the responses did not indicate anything about the scale of innovation, or whether it is ad hoc frontline innovation that is mainly meant. It could be said that the citizens and their problems comprise an incentive for innovation, at least for ad hoc innovation.

Finally, it can be asked whether innovation is the only way to improve the public sector. The underlying assumption during the interviews was that the interviewees' answers would reveal *how* they thought innovation should be created. However, many interviewees, especially the frontline workers, did not seem intuitively to think of innovation when asked how to develop the work within crime prevention. At first glance this appeared to be a methodological problem, but it also raises a question of the specific role of innovation in relation to improving public sector services. Innovation understood as creating and implementing new ideas (Sørensen and Torfing 2011) is after all only one way to improve service delivery in the public sector. One interviewee, for example, mentioned continuous education of employees in the field as important.

### **Innovation as ‘something positive’**

In addition to the ‘innovation as problem solving’ approach, some interview responses also indicated that there is a view of innovation as something inherently positive. Interviewees themselves did not necessarily think of innovation as categorically positive themselves, but some talked about or indicated the existence of a normative view on innovation as something desirable *per se*. A middle-level interviewee said:

*...[in this organization] there is an innovative willingness. I mean, there are politicians who are willing to pay the risk, and there are many employees who are very interested. There are many young employees who want to try new things. [?] So it is very positive, but it also gets misused.*

This quote illustrates the dilemma and ambiguity of finding a balance between developing the work and the risks potentially associated with it.

It may be anecdotal, but I found a comment by one of the frontline workers worrying. When I asked if she had participated in an innovation, she said she could not think of any such situation, and continued, *”It sounds almost like I don’t work at all”*. This comment could be taken to reflect the view that a good employee is an innovative employee, that it is an important part of working, also in the public sector, to innovate. This attitude towards employees did not come up in interviews with the management representatives, but it would be problematic if this was the case, that innovativeness was an expected employee skill/property, as this could mean that some other skills were



downplayed. Again, this is related to the view of the need for innovation in the public sector. The premise that innovation is something desirable *per se* can also lead to expectations that employees be innovative.

Summing up section 8.2, it is clear that there is very broad variation in how the interviewees define innovation. Among the interviewees, the conception is that innovation need not mean radical, large-scale changes, but can also mean small incremental improvements that they perceive as something positive. The interviews indicate that the complexity of the problems dealt with in the field of crime prevention is an incentive for innovation. It could be argued that, in a sense, the citizens the interviewees work with indirectly provide an incentive for innovation, because the challenges the citizens face demand the creation of new solutions. There also seems, however, to be tendencies to see innovation as something good *per se*, and one interviewee thought this could also be problematic. It could also be the case that some interviewees felt they were expected to be innovative, which I find concerning if this means that innovativeness as such is given higher priority than other aspects of the work. Finally, this section could also lead to questioning the usefulness of the concept of innovation for describing empirical reality, since the interviewees see innovation as being closely associated with their work practice, and their focus is largely on how to improve the work rather than produce innovation as such. Hence, the concept of innovation can shift focus away from outcomes, especially if innovation becomes a goal in its own right.

### **8.3. PRECONDITIONS FOR INNOVATION ON DIFFERENT LEVELS**

The focus in this section is on the interviewees' views regarding factors that have an influence on innovation according to the definition they embrace. The section focuses in particular on the roles of different levels of administration in innovation, with emphasis on frontline workers, as this was concluded to be relevant in chapter 4. Previous research shows that individuals have different views on the preconditions for innovation, depending on their organizational position (Lewis et al. 2011). The preconditions for innovation on the frontline are illustrated by both interview responses and examples of frontline innovations provided by the interviewees. It is clear from the interview responses that employees on different levels of administration have had different experiences with innovation and that some tensions exist between levels, which some of the interviewees describe. The analysis also shows that the frontline workers interviewed experience financial and legal constraints limit their opportunities to create innovation despite their willingness to engage in innovation.

As stated in chapter 4, this thesis does not assume that innovations need to be of a certain magnitude to be considered innovation. It is also clear from the interview responses that the YAP participants have a broad variety of understandings of what constitutes innovation. Hence, when interviewees talk about preconditions for innovation, they are

most likely basing this on somewhat different ideas of what innovation means. Nevertheless the findings presented in this section can introduce relevant knowledge in terms of the roles of different levels of administration in innovation and the perceptions of these roles, irrespective of the respondents' understanding. Furthermore, as concluded in chapter 4, divisions into radical and incremental innovation, and innovation and change are not clear cut; it can therefore be said that a strict definition would not necessarily have provided a stricter conceptualization of the role of different levels of administration in collaboration. The examples of innovation are service innovations created by frontline employees, and the purpose of presenting them is to concretize the issues presented in the first two sections.

### **8.3.1. Levels of administration: Tensions and division of tasks**

The general view among interviewees who developed this issue in the interviews is that there is a division of roles and also occasional tensions between levels of administration with regard to innovation. Some of the leaders interviewed pointed out that the views on innovation differ between frontline workers and managers, in that the management is more concerned with economic frames and strategic goals, whereas the frontline workers are more focused on the concrete work. According to one of the top-level interviewees:

*There are always challenges, because you always see things from where you stand yourself. ... It can be that we have an agenda that has to be realized, but on the local level they say, but we cannot do this; we don't have the resources; we don't have enough people to do this. Or the other way round, they tell us that there's something they really would like to do, and we say, we know that the politicians don't want us to do that.*

Unfortunately, I did not ask the interviewee to elaborate on this, or about the kinds of suggestions from frontline workers that would typically not receive political support. But this quote illustrates how innovation on different levels of administration is dependent on and influenced by the other levels. In a similar vein, one of the middle-level leaders said:

*I think those who sit on the middle level are very focused on economic frames that they have to keep, and they have more focus on legislation than the workers on the ground level [i.e. frontline workers]. I mean, they typically have a more practical approach to it. ... Workers on the frontline experience that they will get a no because there was no money, or there were legislative barriers to doing something.*

This is of course not a surprising finding, but nevertheless relevant to point out, because this role division also illustrates how innovation is influenced by both political and economic constraints. As was concluded by Lewis et al. (2011), individuals in different positions have different views on the preconditions for innovation. The interview responses above illustrate how administrative and frontline staff have different frameworks within which to work, as the former have an obligation to keep within budget limits and other regulations, whereas the latter can be frustrated by these limitations.

Nevertheless, many of the interviewed leaders said that the role of the frontline workers in innovation is important, since they have the hands-on knowledge of the problem field, and that it is important that their views are utilized in innovation. This is mentioned by many of the interviewed leaders. One middle-level leader said:

*The leaders usually have a great overview of things. They can put things in a broader context. The [frontline] employees in turn have a hands-on experience and insight that the leaders don't necessarily have.*

This view was also backed up by a top-level leader, who also points out that frontline workers often notice developments, such as collaborations that are not working, or that more and more citizens have certain kinds of problems, and it is important that these issues are brought up. The interviewee also thought that it is important that the frontline workers mediate their knowledge to the leaders about what they think works and how they think the work should be developed. These views indicate that frontline workers are not seen as only implementers of policy but also as actors who can and should have an influence on what is done in this policy field.

Although this division of roles is not particularly surprising, as such, it is relevant to discuss it in relation to innovation. The interview responses indicate some tension between the levels of administration, and this could be an expression of the particular character of frontline bureaucracies. It can therefore be argued that there is a need to complement the innovation literature with regard to innovation in crime prevention and such frontline bureaucracies.

Some tension was expressed, which shows how some frontline workers talk about role division between the administrative/leadership level and the frontline level with regard to innovation. One frontline interviewee, who has been involved in implementing project plans (i.e. service innovations), said, “*When you read some of these projects, you just [think] – yeah, academics who've never actually met a hardcore gangster*”. Another said when asked about where innovative ideas usually come from, “*Well, it depends on who you ask. If you ask the leaders, they'll think it's them that are smart, and we think it's us who get the ideas and try to pass them on to the leaders*”. Also, a third frontline worker believed that innovation typically comes from the frontline workers.

The interview responses that indicated skepticism regarding the contribution of the actors on higher levels of administration can also be seen in the light of the literature on frontline bureaucracies reviewed in chapter 2, where interviewees saw themselves as more expert than their superiors (e.g. Maynard-Moody and Musheno 2003). Many frontline interviewees also emphasized the importance of involving the users, the youth, when creating new solutions. Many of the frontline workers gave long accounts of their views on the relationship between the workers and the clients, and as mentioned in chapter 6, the frontline workers emphasize the importance of taking into account the young peoples' own wishes and basing actions on their premises. This can be seen an indicator of the citizen agent perspective (Maynard-Moody and Musheno 2003) also mentioned in the previous analytical chapters.

An issue that was brought up entailed frontline workers' need to feel ownership of innovations. One interviewed leader pointed out that in order to obtain good results, it is necessary to involve the employees on the operational level:

*...otherwise, we can make big planning efforts, but if they're not worked with out in the areas or with the individual youth, then it doesn't do any good if you finally don't work with the things you've decided to work with.*

This indicates that the operational level workers need to feel ownership of innovations in order to carry them out. The importance of this kind of ownership was also mentioned by a top-level leader, who said that this is also emphasized in the local SSP-collaboration. This issue was also developed by the frontline worker mentioned earlier, who has experience with innovations in the form of different youth projects, and particularly, with being the middleman formulating project plans to put into practice. She argues that one important factor in social work is that frontline workers feel ownership of the innovations made. She said that in social work, it is crucial that the employee feels that the practices they are expected to carry out make sense. The people implementing the innovation need to feel that the innovation is relevant and something they can stand up for in their contact with the citizens. Otherwise, the practice will not be implemented. The view was also expressed that it is unrealistic to begin with to think that it is possible to plan a linear process that the citizens participating in the YAP will follow, because all kinds of things can happen on the way. This is in line with Osborne et al. (2013) regarding the character of service innovations. They note that in service delivery, there is always some degree of co-creation, which means a need for certain degree of flexibility and sensitivity to the users of the innovation, the citizens. Therefore, it is reasonable that frontline workers need to feel that whatever practices they are expected to implement are actually relevant for the work they do.

Another point of view on the role of frontline workers in innovation is that of Brown (2010), who argues that it is important to acknowledge the particularities of innovation in the social work field, and especially risk, which is typically acknowledged as an important variable to take into account (e.g. Borins 2001a). Brown argues that the discussion of risk in much innovation literature fails to address the particular character of the social work and the characteristic risks involved, including the risks for the vulnerable group of citizens that social work clients represent.<sup>10</sup> The ownership or lack of it in innovation can also have to do with the perception that risks have not been adequately taken into account, although this was not brought up in the interviews directly.

To develop the issue of risk in this context, Brown's (2010) argument is that the risks/benefits of innovation in this field are complex and cannot be managed in a straightforward way, but rather through deliberation, taking into account the nature of the problem field. This, I think, illustrates the importance of the frontline workers for

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<sup>10</sup> Social work is only one of the professions represented in this case, but it is a reasonable argument to be made in relation to other represented professions as well.

innovation in this field, but also the tension that exists because of the separation of tasks between frontline and administrative workers.

This section indicates that innovation in frontline bureaucracies has some particular preconditions, due to the nature of the frontline bureaucracies. The citizen agent vs. state agent (Maynard-Moody and Musheno 2003) perspective discussed in the two previous chapters can be brought in here as well. This perspective has implications, not only for inter-organizational collaboration but also innovation and collaborative innovation in frontline bureaucracies. This section also indicates that innovation resistance should not be seen categorically as a barrier to be overcome; the focus should rather be on the reasons for innovation resistance. One reason could be that an innovation is not seen as relevant or having the intended outcome.

### **8.3.2. Preconditions for innovation at the frontline level: Politics and economy**

In addition to the roles in innovation of the different administrative levels that the interviewees were asked about directly, a number of other factors were also brought up, which they perceived as also playing a role in innovation. These can be mainly placed in the category “environmental factors” (Mandell and Keast 2008): political decisions and legislation and economic resources. It was clear from the interviews that these factors can either hinder or advance innovation, depending on the situation; therefore, the term precondition was preferred here, rather than incentives or disincentives.

Many frontline workers said that they are interested in engaging in innovation, but that they also feel limited, due to external circumstances. Some of the frontline interviewees felt very bound by political decisions and wished for more flexibility. As mentioned in chapter 6, the measures initiated for the youth in the program were typically about finding the shortest way to either education or employment; therefore, the actual alternatives for this group of citizens are very limited.

The limitations posed by political directives mentioned by the interviewees can be related to a feeling of lack of influence as well as an actual lack of influence. It was not always clear whether the interviewees had actually tried to introduce an innovation and were turned down because of political decisions, or whether this had to do with a general feeling of being limited. With the benefit of hindsight, I can see that I failed to ask follow-up questions on these issues, because I intuitively shared the assumption that legislation poses limitations. It is not clear either whether these constraints were related to local or national political goals.

A couple of the interviewed frontline workers, who further developed the issue of innovation in their responses, said that economic resources are a barrier to innovation. *You can get a lot of ideas, but it is really difficult to get them implemented... .. It's there we always get stopped, that you can have some ideas, but there is no money to make the project.*

Another frontline interviewee said:

*It's no secret that economy and resources make a big difference in terms of how far you can dream and whether or not you can make new projects.*

The YAP is also a case in point in terms of limits set by financial constraints. As discussed in previous chapters, some tension arose because the division among the participant agencies of the responsibilities for investing resources was not clear. The whole YAP program was initially started for only a limited time and is now dependent on continued financing. Also in the operation of the YAP, the financial constraints are apparent. For example, the employees who work in the program have not had their other tasks reduced in order to compensate for their participation; they participate in the program in addition to their regular tasks.

The issue of economic constraints can also be seen from a political economy perspective. One interviewee said that how much can be done for this group of citizens depends on how much money is put in politically. Another interviewee, who works with other special client groups and collaborations, pointed out that she sees many other areas that demand innovation as well. To some extent, innovation in the public sector is thus a zero-sum game, since money invested in one area has to be taken from somewhere else. At least, this is the case if an innovation only involves actors within the public sector and if additional funding is not available from outside, or unless innovations can be financed with existing means.

### **8.3.3. Innovations at the frontline**

Many interviewed frontline workers reported innovations that were developed as solutions to needs encountered in the everyday work. In this section, I present examples of such innovations. These examples illustrate the kinds of innovations made and their motivations, as well as some of the challenges to innovation in the frontline. For example, the original idea for the YAP was inspired by a similar collaboration developed in one of the local areas and is hence an example of how innovation on the frontline level can be disseminated into the whole organization.

A couple of interviewees told about innovations that were implemented and practiced on the frontline, but that were abandoned due to decisions at the higher levels of administration. An interviewee in the social department told how she got the idea to place a case worker from the social department in a youth institution so that the same person could take care of all clients in the same institution. This had been very useful in helping the youth to trust their case worker, and it was also good for the staff in the institution. This practice was abandoned after a re-organization of the work of the case workers. Now, clients were allocated to case workers based on their social security number, which made it impossible to continue the practice.

Another interviewee from the children and family unit of the social department told about an arrangement that could be called collaborative innovation on the frontline. A school teacher could book an appointment with the social service personnel to discuss

problematic situations with their students anonymously. This arrangement ended, according to the interviewee, when the school received fewer resources. As a result, it was no longer possible to hire a substitute for the teacher who was participating in a meeting with the social workers.

Finally, two different interviewees told about projects to help youth find an after-school job. They collaborated with private sector actors, mainly grocery stores, in order to help youth who would find it difficult to apply for and manage such a job by themselves. These projects were still running at the time of the interviews.

These examples are obviously a very small sample, but they nevertheless illustrate the innovative problem-solving capacity on the frontline, and show that frontline employees do create service innovations. They also show the vulnerability of frontline innovations to decisions and priority shifts at the city level.

In chapter 4, it is argued that radical innovation need not be seen as preferable to incremental innovation, and that ad hoc innovations could also be considered innovations because they can play an important role in individual client cases. However, the examples presented point out an inherent problem in innovations created at the frontline, namely that they are vulnerable to changes implemented on higher levels of administration. What is more, as noted in chapter 2, a large number of innovations are made in the field of crime prevention in Denmark (Kyvsgaard 2004), and this can possibly make the system unpredictable and inconsistent. Also, as is pointed out in Provan and Milward (1995) absence of comprehensive change had a positive impact on effectiveness of service networks. In other words, the possibility for frontline workers to make incremental and ad hoc innovations in client cases can also be problematic in the sense that such innovations are subject to continuous changes. Finally, in this situation, citizens can receive different services depending on where their social services are coming from. Hence, this case also illustrates the dilemma between flexibility and the universalist principle of treating all citizens equal.

Summing up section 8.3, it is clear that the interview responses reflect the view that different levels of administration have different roles in innovation. The perception of these roles has to do with a division of tasks between administrative/strategic and frontline staff, but also with some normative views on the role of frontline workers. The interview responses on different levels illustrate that frontline workers are not seen as only passive implementers of policy. They are also seen as actors with knowledge about the problem field, and their role is important, also in innovation. It is also seen to be important that frontline workers should feel ownership in relation to innovations. In a broad sense, it can be said that, as in the case of inter-organizational collaboration and work in frontline bureaucracies in general, the division between citizen agent and state agent perspectives is relevant, also with regard to innovation. Related to this, it can also be argued that frontline workers' resistance to innovation should not necessarily be seen as a barrier, but should rather give rise to the question of what the reasons are for the resistance.

This section also presents some innovations that were created on the frontline. But in many cases abandoned due to organizational changes at higher levels or financial constraints. Although only a few examples are presented, they do illustrate that at the frontline level, innovation is vulnerable to changes at higher levels. This is also in line with

the view of some of the frontline workers regarding the preconditions for innovation – that political decisions, legislation and economic constraints limit innovation even though interest for creating innovation exists at the frontline. What is more, although innovation at the frontline can be seen as an expression of creative problem-solving capacity, it is also very vulnerable to changes and may make the services available less predictable and even reduce effectiveness of frontline services. Finally there might be a risk of putting citizens in unequal positions, because not everyone will receive the same service, which is the downside of flexibility.

## **8.4. COLLABORATIVE INNOVATION**

This section discusses collaborative innovation more specifically – the role and preconditions for collaborative innovation in this problem field, according to the interviewees. The section draws on the conclusions made in chapters 6 and 7 on inter-organizational collaboration, and the discussion in section 8.3 on the roles in innovation of different levels of administration, and also on the development of the YAP, which can be understood as a case of collaborative innovation. Chapter 6 discusses inter-organizational collaboration as a practice, and incentives, disincentives and challenges of inter-organizational collaboration at both frontline and inter-organizational levels, while chapter 7 focuses on the role of different leadership media (Huxham and Vangen 2000) and interpersonal relations in collaboration. This section argues that these findings are also pertinent to collaborative innovation. As is argued in chapter 4, there is no strict distinction between collaboration and collaborative innovation, and in fact, collaborative innovation is in some sense one form of inter-organizational collaboration.

### **8.4.1. Why collaborative innovation?**

In addition to asking what the interviewees considered the best way to create innovation, I also asked whether they thought that the innovation created in this particular collaboration would somehow lead to different innovation, if collaboration brings some added value to innovation. Although this was one of the interview questions that for some reason was the most difficult to discuss in the interviews, some interviewees had an opinion on this as well. As already mentioned in chapter 6, a majority of the interviewees thought that collaborating across organizational barriers brought about some positive qualitative difference compared to only working within one agency. According to some interviewees, a qualitatively different kind of innovation is also created when working across agencies.

A few of the interviewees said spontaneously that collaboration in innovation is in fact preferable as a way of creating innovation. One of the interviewed frontline workers argued that innovation should be created by:



*...working together with others (from other agencies) and hearing what possibilities they have. I mean, we all know we all have a legislation, but it is different legislations we work with. But I think you learn a lot by hearing what the others can do and what ideas they have.*

The interviewee also thought that collaboration could help avoid creating overlapping, parallel programs, as this was otherwise the risk. This particular interviewee had also worked with administration and was one of the respondents who had participated in many innovations herself.

An interviewee on the top level also pointed out that the division into different agencies is artificial, as such, and does not always correspond to the needs of the citizens:

*It's an artificial division we have made in relation to the kinds of needs one has as a citizen. I mean throughout your life you can need help from a health department, employment department, social department and department of children and youth. So it is an artificial division we have made. So it is necessary that we collaborate. That is why it is also necessary when you make development or innovation or whatever you call it, that you also consider that there are others than yourself that can contribute to the solution.*

This quote also illustrates the dilemma of being separate agencies and yet seeing a need to collaborate across agencies.

One frontline worker, who is an educational counselor, thought it necessary to collaborate with different agencies to solve complex problems like getting more youth to finish a secondary education. Finally, a frontline worker, when asked if innovation in collaboration with other actors was somehow different than innovation created within one agency, said that the good thing about innovation through inter-organizational collaboration was that it makes it possible to think holistically. In principal, no frontline interviewee was against inter-organizational collaboration, but only a few explicitly mentioned creating innovation collaboratively.

Many of the interviewees could tell about situations where something was done in collaboration with participants from other agencies, and where some things the different agencies had to offer were put together in a new way in individual client cases. Examples were presented in chapter 7, section 7.2.3, under the heading, interpersonal relations and collaborative advantage. The previous section presents examples of some service innovations that involved employees from different agencies. The service innovations presented in 8.3.3 all had to do with bridging different agencies – like the case where school teachers could come for advice from social workers, or where a social worker was placed in a youth institution.

The positive view of inter-organizational collaboration presented in chapter 6 is in other words also reflected in the views on collaborative innovation. The way in which the interviewees talked about both collaboration and innovation indicates that they think of collaborative innovation as a kind of bricolage (Lévi-Strauss 1966) – the putting together of ingredients from different agencies, or bridging the separate specialized agencies in the fragmented public sector. This view contrasts with that expressed in some of the innovation

literature, where it is argued that innovation should be an open and creative process (Eggers and Singh 2009). The view on innovation as a creative process was mentioned by only one interviewee on the executive level who said that when making innovation, it is important to allow for a free exchange of ideas without first thinking about delimitations.

#### **8.4.2. YAP participants: A heterogeneous group with regard to innovation**

In chapter 6, much emphasis was placed on the fact that the agencies participating in the YAP are a heterogeneous group with different incentives and preconditions for engaging in the YAP. This finding is also relevant to understanding collaborative innovation. The Social Network Analysis (SNA) conducted was initially intended to shed light on whether there are particular patterns of interaction between different agencies. An initial assumption was that there might have been some agencies that were excluded or some agencies that were more central than others. Although this did not turn out to be the case, something else interesting showed up in the results of comparing the results from SNA questions 1 and 2. Question 1 was about whom the respondents talk to if they have ideas about how to develop the YAP program, and how often. Question 2 was about whom the respondents contact if they want to discuss a professional matter or need advice. At first glance, all the participating agencies were roughly similarly central; and no agencies were completely excluded from the social network. However, if a distinction were made between the amount of contacts with an agency by other agencies (in-degree centrality) and the amount of contacts made by an agency (out-degree centrality), some differences could be noted. The first question on participation in developing the program showed that Job Centre, youth educational counseling, and the children and family unit in the social department all had a relatively high in- and out-degree centrality. The adult department and the young adult unit were both high on the in-degree but remarkably low on out-degree centrality, compared to the other agencies. See table , where the agencies with the lowest out-degree centrality are marked with bold letters, and units where no one was interviewed are marked with italics. These obviously also have zero on out-degree centrality.

It could be interpreted that employees in the adult unit and young adults unit are less focused on collaboration in general, had it not been that these differences were not equally present in the second question on seeking advice and discussing professional matters in general. An interpretation of this could be that the participants in the adult unit and the young adult unit feel less ownership to the YAP program. Another interpretation could be that the adult unit is less involved in developing the YAP, because of the heavy workload of the employees in the agency.

Both of these two units are newcomers in the SSP collaboration, but this is also the case for the Job Centre, which figures as an active participant in terms of both in- and out degree centrality. The third lowest score on out-degree centrality was received by the youth counseling unit, which is part of the social department but does not engage in the same kind of regular case work as the children and family unit. The unit is also not a formal member of the YAP collaboration at the administrative level. Although it is not clear why employees from some agencies seem to be less involved in developing the YAP, the findings are

nevertheless relevant, as they show that for some reason individuals from some agencies are less active in developing the work of the collaboration. It would be interesting to investigate why this is the case in a later study.

Agency	Question 1.		Question 2.	
	In-degree	Out-degree	In-degree	Out-degree
<b>Job Centre</b>	6	13	8	14
<b>Educational counseling</b>	7	11	8	13
<i>Police</i>	5	0	8	0
<b>Adult Unit</b>	6	2	8	11
<b>Children and Family Unit</b>	7	15	8	15
<i>The unit that pays social welfare benefits, sickness benefits etc.</i>	3	0	8	0
<i>Reception Unit, all new clients of the social department go through this unit first.</i>	5	0	8	0
<i>Homeless Unit</i>	7	0	9	0
<i>Danish Prison and Probation Service</i>	7	0	9	0
<b>Youth Counseling</b>	5	8	7	15
<b>Young Adult Unit</b>	7	6	8	13
<i>Substance Abuse Unit</i>	6	0	9	0
<i>YAP frontline group<sup>11</sup></i>	7	0	7	0
<b>YAP leader group</b>	5	13	5	14
<b>YAP steering group</b>	5	10	4	14
<b>The NAO</b>	4	14	8	13

Table 6. Involvement of employees from different agencies in developing the YAP. Differences in in- and out-degree centrality.

<sup>1111</sup> The responses from frontline employees were divided according to organizational affiliation; therefore, this category appears as if there were no respondents in it.

### **8.4.3. Collaborative innovation and different operational levels**

In this section, I connect to chapter 4, section 4.4.3 on how the literature on governance networks can inform the understanding of collaborative innovation. I draw especially on the division into three different operational levels (Mandell and Keast 2008) and how processes on these different levels are relevant for innovation. This section illustrates that an understanding of collaborative innovation can benefit from seeing it as one type of inter-organizational collaboration. This has the consequence that although this thesis does not focus on the role of leadership *per se* in creating innovation, the findings regarding running and implementing the YAP can be relevant for understanding preconditions for collaborative innovation. Research on innovation has until recently focused mainly on intra-organizational collaboration. This section illustrates that when inter-organizational collaboration is brought into the equation, and findings in the literature on network governance are drawn on, a different set of factors are found to be important than typically emphasized in public sector innovation literature. Furthermore, in section 4.3.2, it is noted that some innovation literature focuses on environmental factors, some on organizational factors and some on the role of individuals. This section argues that all of these need to be taken into account simultaneously.

#### **Operational level: Interpersonal relations as a precondition for collaborative innovation**

In chapter 7, a great deal of focus was on the interviewed frontline workers' view that personal relations are crucial and actually facilitate creating solutions that would otherwise not be found. According to interviewees, interpersonal relations are relevant to collaboration at the higher levels of administration as well. An interviewee, who was part of the SSP collaboration in the municipality from the start, even before the NAO was created, argued that a "good personal chemistry" between directors of the participating agencies was crucial for the institutionalization of SSP collaboration in the municipality. This interviewee argued that a culture of collaboration enables decisions to be made that oblige the parties to invest resources in the joint work. This finding is similar to that by Keast and Hampson (2007). Interestingly, the interviewee noted that there were conflicts, major ones according to him, between the parties despite of the good chemistry, which indicates that good personal relations do not necessarily mean lack of conflict.

Also an interviewee at the middle level, a member of the YAP leader group, emphasized the mutual commitment of the group for achieving joint solutions.

*The leader group has an understanding that here it is not only one who is steering... Here, it's three or four people who decide. That we "drive in the same direction". I mean that there is not a power game in any way.*

This is in line with the views of the frontline workers, presented in more detail in chapter 6, about how the personal relations that develop over time, as such, contribute to facilitating collaboration between agencies, and therefore also to collaborative innovation. The frontline workers who told about the collaboration in the frontline groups in the interviews seemed to emphasize that interpersonal relations, as well as facilitation of collaboration,

were dependent on face-to-face interaction, for example at the YAP frontline meetings. These findings illustrate how collaboration and collaborative innovation build not only on formal frames or management practices but are also dependent on interpersonal relationships. The conclusion in chapter 7 is that formal acts of leadership do not necessarily have direct influence on interpersonal relations; however, since the face-to-face interaction was organized by the NAO, an indirect form of leadership lay behind the interpersonal relations.

As discussed in chapter 4, some of the innovation literature, especially on the idea creation phase, sees innovation as an open and creative process where ideas are generated and exchanged freely (Eggers and Singh 2009), and in their repeated interaction, working groups tend to start repeating themselves and produce similar kinds of ideas (Skilton and Dooley 2010). This could be in conflict with the finding regarding the need for interpersonal relations to actually carry out innovations, as discussed by Keast and Hampson (2007) and also in this thesis. But such relations sometimes need time to develop. As discussed in the next section, interpersonal relations are not only relevant for the idea creation phase but also for implementation.

### **Organizational level**

In section 4.4.3 in the theoretical chapter on collaborative innovation, it is concluded that until now, few studies have shed light on the role of inter-organizational arrangements for collaborative innovation, while a fair amount of literature addresses the characteristics of single organizations with regard to innovation, such as willingness to take risks (Borins 2001a) and decentralized decision making (Walker 2008).

It could be claimed that when creating innovation in collaboration with actors from different organizations, the same issues that are mentioned in chapter 6 are also pertinent to collaborative innovation. As mentioned, collaborative innovation can be seen as one type of inter-organizational collaboration, collaboration that entails a high degree of integration (Keast et al. 2007) between the participants; thereby, collaborative innovation demands adjustment by the participating organizations. Although the YAP respondents typically confirm the need for inter-organizational collaboration, the fact that the innovations made demand investment of resources and personnel poses a challenge. According to Bommert (2010), collaboration can help to draw on a broader set of what he calls innovation assets: knowledge, personnel resources and financial means. Even though there are benefits in being able to combine a broader set of resources, it is important to note that these resources have very different characteristics. Knowledge and ideas are intangible goods that do not impose extra costs on the organization sharing them, whereas manpower and economic resources are obviously not intangible.

As concluded in chapter 6, section 6.3.2, individuals who must share their time between a collaboration and work in an agency can find it difficult to negotiate their time between the two. As for economic resources, their use must also be negotiated. As long as the organizations and agencies participating in the collaboration remain separate agencies with separate budgets, the involvement in the collaboration demands extra resources, and the organizations need to negotiate their own goals with those of the collaboration. A dilemma therefore exists between a rationale on the level of the substance of the innovation

to be created collaboratively, and the fact that innovations are not only ideas but also need to be materialized in concrete practices that demand resources. These issues have been negotiated and solved to some extent in the YAP case. Chapter 7 discusses leadership of inter-organizational collaboration and argues that connecting levels of administration is an important leadership task with regard to implementing the YAP. In the YAP case, this connection is mainly accomplished by the NAO employees.

As discussed in chapter 6, relevant questions in relation to inter-organizational collaboration, and consequently collaborative innovation, are also: When is collaboration relevant? And which actors should be included? Inclusion of actors in a collaboration becomes even more complex, the more resources the participants are expected to invest, and also depends on the participant perceiving the innovation as part of their organizational mission.

What is more, as concluded in the two previous chapters and in section 8.3.1, above, the characteristic of frontline bureaucracies and frontline bureaucrats as being mediators between citizens and the state needs to be taken into account in order to understand innovation and collaboration in this problem field. As for inter-organizational collaboration, frontline employees may feel caught between being representatives of the state and representatives of the citizens, and issues of trust and confidentiality between citizens and the public sector representatives can be involved. Also, in organizing inter-organizational collaboration, both organizational and citizen perspectives need to be taken into account. As for innovation, the interviews point out that it is pertinent that frontline workers feel ownership to the innovations. Understanding the special relation between citizens and frontline bureaucrats was also emphasized by the interviewees. Hence, there are not only inter-organizational or inter-professional issues to be solved, but also issues regarding the relations between citizens and state representatives. A citizen perspective is therefore also pertinent.

The YAP program however, the implementation of which forms the basis of the findings in chapters 6 and 7, is not necessarily representative of all collaborative innovation. The examples of collaborative innovations on the frontline presented in section 8.3.3, are on a smaller scale and involve maybe only a few individuals – for example, the case worker who moved her workplace to a youth institution. This leads back to the discussion in section 4.2.4, on the continuum between incremental and radical innovation. It could be argued that preconditions for collaborative innovation to some extent depend on the magnitude of adjustment needed – i.e. the radicality of the innovation. The larger the change, the more inertia and conflicts are to be expected.

Although implementation may be easier, the more incremental an innovation is, another challenge is associated with small-scale incremental innovations. Innovations at the frontline level can be vulnerable to changes at the higher levels of administration, as was indicated by the examples presented. Therefore, different innovations have different preconditions. It is argued in previous literature that a decentralized structure is important for an organization to be innovative (Walker 2008), but even though frontline employees, for example, have the freedom to take initiatives and start local projects, these can be wiped away during re-organizations, or their funding can be withdrawn so they are discontinued.

This happens even though decentralization can in principal lead to better adjustment to local conditions and improved flexibility.

### **Environmental level**

Finally, the kind of innovation created and who are involved also depend on environmental (Mandell and Keast 2008) conditions, among them political priorities. This is argued to be the case by interviewees on different levels of administration in the YAP case. It was also clearly expressed in interviews with the frontline employees that they feel limited by legislation. As already discussed however, it is not clear what is disguised behind the narrative of legislation as a barrier, and there also seems to be some misinformation regarding the possibilities that can be found even in the current legislation.

In this same category, geography and the size of the municipality can also be included as shapers of the preconditions for collaborative innovation. In a large municipality like the one where the case study is located, an inertia is created by the fragmentation of the agencies into many smaller units. As is the case with inter-organizational collaboration in general, geography can also influence personal relations within and across organizations. Some interviewees pointed out that these are easier to create and maintain in a smaller municipality. On the other hand, as one interviewee observed, a larger municipality may have more resources available than a smaller one, which can in turn enable innovation.

### **8.4.4. Process of collaborative innovation**

The previous section presents findings that are relevant for collaborative innovation by using the distinctions between operational levels of governance networks presented in the theoretical chapters. In this section, I attempt to summarize these findings with regard to the different phases of innovation listed in chapter 4. These phases are: idea generation, coalition building, development/implementation, and consolidation (Juul Kristensen and Vøxted 2009). Chapter 4 presents a table (table 5) that illustrates the relevance of collaboration and the challenges of collaborative innovation that can exist in the different phases, based on previous literature on inter-organizational collaboration and innovation. In table 7, I present what can be added to table 5 based on the analysis of this case. The aspects that are added are marked with italics for clarity.

In the idea generation phase, it is relevant for the actors who are influenced by the innovation or have something relevant to contribute to be included, but the challenge is how to identify them, when innovation is understood as a complex process that is not predictable at the outset. It can also be asked whether a history of collaboration is needed in order for the actors to be motivated to make joint projects. A challenge can also be not only generating ideas, but identifying why the issue demanding innovation is in fact a shared problem for these particular actors. Finally, in frontline bureaucracies, the frontline bureaucrats are important actors and it could be important to involve them already in the early stages of innovation, as pointed out by Funder and Sørensen (2011).

<b>Innovation phase</b>	<b>Relevance of collaboration</b>	<b>Challenges of collaborative innovation</b>
<b>Idea generation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Including a broad set of actors in order to come up with relevant ideas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creativity vs. relationality and challenges of implementing the ideas generated</li> <li>• <i>Identifying who the relevant actors in fact are in relation to an innovation</i></li> <li>• <i>Need for personal relations to motivate actors to join</i></li> <li>• <i>Identifying the rationale of why the issue demanding innovation is a shared problem</i></li> <li>• <i>Involving and creating ownership among different levels of administration and especially frontline workers</i></li> <li>• <i>Including a citizen perspective</i></li> </ul>
<b>Coalition building</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Winning support from politicians and other relevant actors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need for linking capital</li> <li>• <i>Dependence on political tendencies for gaining support</i></li> </ul>
<b>Development/ implementation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to a broad set of resources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Power asymmetries</li> <li>• Resource imbalance</li> <li>• Shared vs. individual organizational goals</li> <li>• Need for mutual adjustment</li> <li>• <i>Need for building interpersonal relations for implementation</i></li> <li>• <i>Need to mediate in both horizontal and vertical directions</i></li> </ul>
<b>Consolidation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continuous commitment to the innovation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continuous financing</li> <li>• <i>Vulnerability to political and organizational changes</i></li> </ul>

Table 7. Challenges of collaborative innovation in different phases of the innovation process.



In the coalition building phase, it could be argued that linking capital (Woolcock 2001) is necessary to obtain resources and the necessary political support for the innovation. However, it is likely that relative ease in obtaining resources also depends on the policy field in question. The interviewees argued that in crime prevention, more financing is available than in some other policy fields.

In the development/implementation phase, negotiations are necessary regarding the goals of the collaboration vs. those of the participants' agencies and possible challenges related to power and resource imbalance. During this phase, there is also a need for interpersonal relations across the participating agencies. Linking capital can be needed in this phase as well, to create ownership to the innovation at the different levels of administration in the organizations involved in the innovation. In addition to ownership, there is also a need for feedback loops between levels of administration in order to pass on problems or development needs identified over the course of the implementation, since it is likely that there is need for adjustments. In the YAP case, the NAO employees played an important role in mediating not only on the horizontal level, between agencies, but also between levels of administration in the vertical direction.

The fourth and last phase of innovation, the consolidation phase, demands first of all continuous financing for the innovation to the extent that it is not possible to finance it from the existing budget. It is also relevant that innovations in the long run are vulnerable to changes and reorganizations at higher levels of administration.

Summing up, collaborative innovation is a process that demands connections both between different levels of administration and on the horizontal level, and it is characteristic for these connections that they are not only between agencies or organizations but also between individuals. It is also important to distinguish between tangible and intangible knowledge resources as innovation assets, since the preconditions for sharing these are very different. Finally, the character of frontline bureaucracies entails not only organizational relations but also relations to citizens; therefore, any collaborative innovation needs to focus not only on inter-organizational challenges but also on how the innovation actually helps the citizens.

## 8.5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The research question addressed in this chapter is:

**What incentives, disincentives and preconditions for collaborative innovation in crime prevention can be found based on the YAP case?**

This chapter concludes first of all that the interviewees clearly have different views on innovation, and that the examples of innovation mentioned range from rhetorical innovations to service innovations and even ad hoc innovations.

The analysis in this chapter points out that the interviewees typically see innovation as a needs-driven activity rather than a necessity *per se*. Some interviewees articulate the need for innovation because the character of the problem field is such that it is necessary to think of new ways of working. The interviewees also mention the importance of taking their point of departure in the clients' situation. Hence, it can be said that this in fact serves as an incentive of innovation. Some of the interview responses also indicate a view of innovation as something positive *per se*. To the extent this is the case, it can also be slightly concerning, if innovativeness becomes a characteristic that is expected of frontline workers.

It is also clear that the different levels of administration have different roles in innovation, which manifest themselves in somewhat different incentives and disincentives for innovation. Management is more concerned with budget and other frames and strategic decision making, while frontline workers have a more hands-on approach to innovation and can be frustrated by the limitations posed by these frames.

Although a division of tasks can be expected as well as different roles in innovation at different levels of administration, I argue that this division has a particular character in frontline bureaucracies. The interviews highlighted some tensions between levels of administration in innovation. The interviewed frontline workers emphasized the importance of a citizen perspective in the work and in innovation in this field as well, and some were also skeptical about the administrative personnel's understanding of the problem field and rather saw themselves as having the most knowledge of it. This view was also shared by some of the interviewed leaders, who thought frontline workers have a more hands-on knowledge of the problem field. The interviewees on different levels also pointed out that it is important that frontline workers feel ownership of the innovations created in order to actually carry them out. The analysis indicates therefore that frontline workers are not seen as only implementers of policy or top-down innovations but also as active actors who want to have influence on what is done in the field. All this points out that innovation in this policy field has some specific characteristics that need to be taken into account, such as the relation between clients and frontline workers, and frontline workers are an important mediator between the state/the public sector and the citizens. The division into a citizen-agent and state-agent perspective (Maynard-Moody and Musheno 2003) is relevant also here.

To my knowledge, the characteristics of frontline bureaucracies and the citizen- agent vs. state-agent perspective have not been previously addressed with regard to innovation. This perspective questions some of the ways of conceptualizing preconditions for innovation. As mentioned in chapter 4, seeing innovation as something desirable *per se* can come to portray any resistance to innovation as a barrier to be overcome. Willingness to take risks was found to be characteristic for organizations that engage in innovation by Borins (2001a). However, as Brown (2010) points out, risk in innovation in social services cannot be seen in a straightforward manner but needs to take into account the particularities of the problem field. It is therefore a conclusion of this thesis that risk-aversion or reluctance to innovate should not be seen as categorically negative in this problem field, It should rather be questioned what innovation resistance indicates – for example fear of putting clients at risk.

This analysis also indicates that disincentives of innovation are a sum of a number of factors on various levels of administration, from departmental budget frames to national political goals. Some say that opportunities for innovation are limited because of politics and legislation, but at times it is not clear what this means. It was also said by some interviewees that the YAP collaboration was started because of political demand. Politics and legislation are thus both an incentive and a disincentive. This illustrates the complexity and ambiguity of the preconditions for innovation.

Finally, regarding collaborative innovation in particular, it was concluded that collaborative innovation and inter-organizational collaboration are not essentially two different things. Rather, collaborative innovation is one type of inter-organizational collaboration and vice versa. Collaborative innovation can be understood by using the concept of integration; innovation entails a high degree of integration (Keast et al. 2007) with the associated challenges.

Different aspects pertinent to inter-organizational collaboration are relevant in different phases of innovation. For idea creation, the relevant questions are who is involved and why is the issue at hand a shared problem for the involved participants. It is also important to involve frontline workers, preferably in the early phase of the innovation. In the next phase, it is important to make connections in the vertical direction, in order to gain resources and political support, i.e. linking capital (Woolcock 2001). There is also a need to build up interpersonal relations, as this can be important for implementing the innovation and also for making the initial decision to create innovation across organizational boundaries. Linking capital is important also in the implementation phase, but here the linking capital is needed to connect different levels of administration inside the collaboration. Finally, in the consolidation phase, it is important that continuous financing is secured. It is also important to realize that collaborative innovations are vulnerable to political and organizational changes.

To create and implement collaborative innovation, both the horizontal and vertical relations are important. The horizontal relations consist of not only relations between organizations but also interpersonal relations. They are important for working in collaboration but can also create stress in the employees who need to share their scarce time between the collaboration and working in a home agency. Vertical relations are relevant for

implementing innovation, as mentioned earlier, but also for incremental development of the innovations already made and identifying new needs.

Summing up this chapter, frontline bureaucracies must be seen as a specific case, not only in inter-organizational collaboration but also in innovation and collaborative innovation. This is so because of the character of frontline bureaucracies as mediators between the citizens and the state.

It is also the view of this thesis that innovation should not be seen as something necessary *per se*; the focus should rather be on how to create desirable outcomes in the problem field. It is also argued in this thesis that the incentives and disincentives of innovation depend on the vantage point. It is therefore not necessarily possible to make general statements of preconditions for innovation. Furthermore, incentives, disincentives and preconditions for innovation need to be seen in a systemic way and not merely by focusing on either environmental, organizational or individual/interpersonal factors, as is typically done in innovation literature. This way of analysing innovation in this thesis takes into account the way in which service innovations are embedded in the public sector, rather than seeing them as a kind of artefact isolated from their context.

# CHAPTER 9. CONCLUSIONS

## 9.1. INTRODUCTION

This thesis set out to analyze how new solutions (i.e. innovations) are created in the field of crime prevention in a collaboration between different agencies and how public sector actors perceive of the need to create new solutions. To accomplish this, a single case study was made of a program that aims to reduce recidivism among young adults. The thesis utilizes theories on network governance, frontline bureaucracies and public sector innovation in order to address this issue.

The thesis addresses the overall research questions:

**What are the incentives and disincentives to inter-organizational collaboration and collaborative innovation in crime prevention, understood as a field characterized by frontline bureaucracies?**

**How do leadership of inter-organizational collaboration and factors on the interpersonal, organizational, and environmental levels influence inter-organizational collaboration and collaborative innovation?**

It is the assumption of this thesis that it is necessary to focus first on the interviewees' views regarding the incentives, disincentives and challenges of collaboration, and what they understood to be relevant factors that influence the collaboration in order, then, to move on to discuss collaborative innovation. Hence, the analysis separates these overall questions into three specific questions about the YAP case, each of which further develops the analysis:

- 1. What challenges, incentives and disincentives to collaboration across professional and organizational barriers in crime prevention can be found based on the YAP case?**
- 2. What is the role of interpersonal relations and leadership through structures, participants and processes in interagency collaboration in the YAP, and what factors influence these leadership media?**
- 3. What incentives, disincentives and preconditions for collaborative innovation in crime prevention can be found based on the YAP case?**

The structure of this chapter is as follows. First, I present the conclusions made in each chapter based on the three specific questions and then sum up by presenting the main contributions of this thesis to existing literature. Second, I present suggestions for further research. Third, I reflect upon the choices made regarding theoretical approach and empirical material in the thesis, and discuss what could have been done otherwise.

## **9.2. MAIN FINDINGS**

This section presents the conclusions of the thesis and a brief general discussion of the main findings and how they contribute empirically to knowledge about inter-organizational crime prevention and theories of network governance and collaborative innovation. As mentioned, the three analysis chapters build on each other, but also present individual conclusions on interagency collaboration and collaborative innovation.

### **9.2.1. Challenges, incentives and disincentives in relation to collaboration across professional and organizational barriers**

The first question was:

*What challenges, incentives and disincentives to collaboration across professional and organizational barriers in crime prevention can be found based on the YAP case?*

The case study shows essentially two different sets of challenges, incentives and disincentives in relation to collaboration: 1) the issues pertinent to collaboration on the frontline level specific to this policy field and to frontline bureaucracies; and 2) issues that are pertinent to collaboration as an inter-organizational process, which can be analyzed through the concepts employed in the study of inter-organizational collaboration presented in chapter 3.

At the frontline level, *incentives* for collaboration for frontline workers seem to be that collaboration enables a holistic view of the clients, and also that because the clients are assumed not to be able to manage the contacts they need in different agencies by themselves, the YAP program helps carry out this coordination on behalf of the clients.

As for *challenges* to collaboration, it was initially assumed that inter-professional differences would pose a challenge to inter-organizational collaboration and that individuals representing different professions would be ‘speaking different languages’. Contrary to what might have been expected based on previous literature on inter-professional collaboration, rather few inter-professional conflicts seemed to arise among the frontline workers participating in the YAP program. Instead, it turned out that inter-professional collaboration was characterized by a perception of difference as something

positive and that collaboration between professionals from different agencies generates a positive synergy effect.

The 'lack' of conflict can have many causes. First, it can be that the professions involved in the collaboration are in fact rather similar. Secondly, it can be that due to the fact that the police are not involved in the program, the potential for conflict is reduced and the punitive vs. social distinction typically found in inter-organizational collaboration in crime prevention is less relevant. Another explanation offered by one interviewee was that there is in fact rather little scope for disagreement, because the work done in the YAP is largely defined by the policy goals of the participating agencies

Despite the generally positive experience of the inter-professional work and a low degree of conflict, another dimension of conflict or difference seemed to exist that could potentially be a challenge to collaboration. This dimension has to do with the character of frontline bureaucracies. This thesis finds that frontline bureaucrats serve as middlemen between the citizens and the state, and this role can at times be challenging. The analysis shows that according to some interviewees, a distinction exists between employees as public servants with formal responsibilities for the clients, and those who do not have this kind of responsibility. The latter play a more informal role in their relations with their clients, whereas the former are expected to make demands on the clients and make decisions based on the rules their organizations abide by. The few times professional conflicts were mentioned or observed, they had to do with this division, which represents an inherent challenge in frontline bureaucracies that is related to the dilemma of having close relations with citizens while acting as a representative of the state.

Although interviewees at all levels of administration could agree that the YAP collaboration has positive synergy effects, the interviews revealed that the only disincentive in collaboration on the frontline level has to do with concern about discussing the lives of the clients with a large group of other professionals. Some interviewees also pointed out that far from everyone who is potentially in the target group of the program is in fact interested in participating, because many are 'fed up with the system' by the time they turn 18. A couple of the interviewees noted that street-level workers might be cautious about referring clients to YAP due to a fear of being seen as snitchers.

These findings illustrate that not only horizontal relations between frontline workers but also relations between frontline workers and citizens are relevant for inter-organizational collaboration. Incentives, disincentives and challenges in relation to inter-organizational collaboration in crime prevention should not only be seen as just organizational or inter-professional issues. Relations between clients and the frontline bureaucrats are also a relevant factor that can be a challenge to collaboration between frontline employees and also a potential disincentive to collaboration that can compromise relations between employees and citizens. Theories on inter-organizational collaboration must therefore take citizens into the equation.

The investigation of the YAP collaboration as a case of inter-organizational collaboration – i.e. from the point of view of the participating organizations – made another set of incentives, disincentives and challenges apparent. It was generally acknowledged by the leaders and frontline employees involved in the YAP that interagency collaboration is relevant. However, the views of the collaboration's challenges, incentives and disincentives

are not unambiguous. This case illustrates, first of all, that participants in governance networks are a heterogeneous group and inequalities between the participants are not only related to resource or power imbalance, in the sense that one agency has power over another, but also to the different agencies' different tasks in relation to the work of the collaboration. Therefore, some agencies have more pressure put on them than others, which means that the challenges to the collaboration need not be similar for all participating agencies.

The findings from this case study also lead to the question of whether interagency collaboration is always relevant, and whether it is always possible for different actors to find a common goal. Although all of the interviewees were generally positive about inter-organizational collaboration, the view was also expressed that it was not always clear that the YAP clients should be the clients of all the currently participating agencies. These cases involve individual citizens, and not every citizen might need a coordinated effort, or the same kind of coordinated effort. The point can be made that an explicitly optimistic view of interagency collaboration can pose some dangers as well, and also that a theoretical perspective that sees successful collaboration as a goal in its own right can lead to a failure to understand that collaboration is not necessarily relevant in a specific case.

Incentives and disincentives to collaboration from an inter-organizational perspective are also related to the degree of integration between the collaboration participants. A close integration demands adjustment by the collaborating partners. The case illustrates that something of a dilemma exists between having a clear rationale in relation to interagency collaboration and the fact that the participant agencies are still separate agencies with their own budgets and organizational goals. A cause of conflict in the YAP is that it has not always been clear how responsibilities should be divided between the agencies and how many resources should be invested in the collaboration.

Other disincentives to the collaboration are also related to the degree of integration. Specialization in different professions and agencies can require coordination in order to create holistic solutions, but too close integration can also be a risk among frontline workers, because they can lose touch with their professional specializations. What is more, a trade-off might take place between the benefits of collaboration and the costs involved; these costs involve not only investment in the work of the collaboration, but also investment in personnel to carry out the work. The frontline employees who must work in both the home agency and the collaboration can experience a tension between commitment to the collaboration and commitment to the home organization.

To sum up, incentives, disincentives and challenges in relation to inter-organizational collaboration are not entirely unambiguous. They relate to the characteristics of frontline bureaucracies as well as to the inter-organizational factors and degree of integration. In spite of the interviewees' generally positive view of inter-organizational collaboration, a source of conflict emerged that was not expected based on previous literature, namely a division between citizen agent and state agent perspectives. This part of the analysis also suggests that it is problematic to treat inter-organizational collaboration as something necessary *per se*, because it is not necessarily the case that collaboration between any given set of actors is relevant, and also because close integration between organizations demands investment of resources and may also compromise the participating



organizations' specializations. Hence, it is important to be aware of the underlying premises of the applied theories when analyzing inter-organizational collaboration. Some of these theories have an inherently optimistic view of inter-organizational collaboration.

### **9.2.2. Leadership of inter-organizational collaboration**

The second question was:

*What is the role of interpersonal relations and leadership through structures, participants and processes in inter-organizational collaboration in the YAP, and what factors influence these leadership media?*

The analysis of how the YAP collaboration works took its point of departure in the leadership concept of Huxham and Vangen (2000), who divide leadership of interagency collaboration into three different media: structure, participants and processes. Their assumption is that not everything that influences interagency collaboration is an outcome of intentional action by the collaboration's participants, and not everything is under the control of any given participant.

The structure of the collaboration – meaning the way in which the agenda of the collaboration is set, how new actors enter the collaboration, and how decisions are made – is partly determined by the fact that the YAP collaboration is an implementation network. Therefore, the agenda of the collaboration is largely not subject to negotiation by the participants but rather steered by political agendas outside the scope of decision-making processes in the YAP. Entry of new actors seems to be based on what is perceived to be required in order to do the work in the frontline groups. During the period of data collection, negotiations were going on with new participants about to join. Decision making in this collaboration is carried out in collaborative organs on different levels of administration and mediated by employees in a Network Administrative Organization (NAO). The YAP and the SSP collaboration in the municipality, of which the YAP is a part, is rather institutionalized and formalized in its mode of decision making. The existence of the NAO also means that no one agency is in charge of the collaboration, and in principal, decisions are made based on equality.

In relation to leadership through participants, relevant findings relate to the way in which the NAO functions and the role of individual actors vs. formally appointed leaders in the YAP collaboration. It is characteristic of governance networks that they are based on horizontal relations; therefore, leadership of governance networks by the participants cannot be based on traditional, hierarchical leadership. This is also true in the YAP, but in this case, the function of the NAO displays both hierarchical and horizontal characteristics. The YAP collaboration is a kind of system that consists of collaborative arenas of decision making on different levels of administration, and the NAO staff mediates between these different levels. The case study indicates that the head of the NAO shifts between a leadership role and a non-hierarchical coordinator role, depending on the situation. The head of the NAO thus acts as a leader for the frontline workers in the SSP and the YAP, but

as a coordinator in relation to the leaders and accountable to the SSP board that supervise the YAP and other SSP functions.

The coordinators of the YAP program have in turn a particular role in relation to the YAP frontline groups. The concept of linking capital is introduced in chapter 3 to denote a form of social capital that is needed to connect different levels of administration. At the frontline meetings, I observed that the coordinator shifted between the role of frontline worker and the role of NAO representative, by shifting between “frontline worker language” and “SSP language”. I argue that this ability to shift between roles may be an indicator of linking capital.

Another conclusion regarding leadership through participants relates to the role of the individual participants in the YAP collaboration. Although previous literature emphasizes the role of network brokers/collaboration leaders, in this case, there seems to be a great deal of ambiguity in terms of how the employees actually saw the role played by the coordinators from the NAO in the collaboration. In the frontline meetings, only two employees mentioned spontaneously the role of the coordinators in coordinating the work, and only one thought the coordinators were important for the actual decision-making process. This finding might be related to a methodological difficulty that meant that the interviewees were either not aware of the role of the coordinators, or that the results would have been different had the interviews been made during the start phase of the YAP. It could be that the interviewees were more aware of the role of the coordinators in the early phase of the YAP, when it was necessary to adjust and learn to work together. Yet another interpretation is that because a great deal of the NAO employees’ work is in fact done ‘behind the scenes’, the collaboration participants are not aware of it all. Finally, another possible interpretation is that the collaboration participants see themselves – and not only the coordinators – as possessing agency. Not only a formally appointed coordinator but also the participants in a collaboration can exercise leadership, in the sense that they participate in joint decision making and negotiating collaborative solutions.

Regarding leadership through processes, there are three main findings – two that relate to the organization of the frontline meetings and other face-to-face interaction in the YAP, and one related to the role of geographic proximity in the collaboration. The first main finding relates to the role of face-to-face interaction in the frontline collaboration. It was argued by the frontline employees that face-to-face interaction in the frontline meetings has a beneficial influence on collaboration, because it helps alleviate misunderstandings between agencies and increases knowledge about the other agencies. It was also said that other forms of face-to-face interaction, such as seminars, had an indirect function for team building.

The second finding is that there can be a dilemma between organizational efficiency and the client perspective in interagency collaboration. The interviewees thought that workers who know the citizens best should attend the YAP frontline meetings. At the same time, the frontline workers have heavy workloads and attending meetings demands time. It could be argued that it is necessary to find a balance between not having too many meetings and keeping the collaboration relevant in relation to the work being done. This could mean that the most relevant participants, especially those who know the clients best, should be involved in the frontline meetings.

Due to the fact that the different agencies are organized in different ways – some are citywide, while others are divided into smaller districts – it has been difficult to arrange the work in the YAP so that employees who actually work with the clients being discussed at meetings in the participating agencies could attend. This finding illustrates yet another way in which frontline bureaucracies face specific challenges with regard to collaboration, due to the importance of relationships with citizens.

The third main finding in relation to leadership through processes involves the size of the municipality and geographic proximity. Some interviewees pointed out that these factors are important for collaboration. They noted that since the municipality in question is rather large, collaboration is more complex than would be the case in a smaller municipality. Some interviewees also related experiences of collaboration with employees working in the same building. Not all previous research argues that geographic proximity is important. It could therefore be assumed that collaboration in this policy field is especially dependent on geographic proximity. Previous literature does argue that face-to-face interaction is especially relevant in decision-making processes, and in the YAP frontline groups, some decisions and plans need to be made in the client cases.

Finally, the analysis indicates that not only different leadership media – formal or informal – are pertinent. First of all it is concluded that trust, respect and commitment are important for these relations. However, the characteristics of trust may be different in pure public sector collaborations compared to for example private sector collaborations, as the risk of opportunist behavior is less prevalent. Instead trust is described as trust in the other actors' professional competence and that they fulfill their commitments in the collaboration. Interpersonal relationships are important for the functioning of the collaboration, and these are formed in the interaction with other participants. The role of interpersonal relations has already been pointed out in previous literature, but this case study indicates that interpersonal relations are in fact pertinent to outcomes of collaboration. In the YAP meetings, participants are able to put together combinations of services that their home organizations have to offer. The interviewees argue that even though the services available in different agencies are the same for all clients, a greater effort is made within the YAP to combine services than outside the YAP, and that some of the ideas generated at YAP meetings would not have been arrived at otherwise. Work at the YAP frontline group meetings can thus lead to outcomes that would not have been arrived at otherwise; and according to the interviews, the relations between the YAP participants are a crucial factor here. It can therefore be argued that interpersonal relations are important for achieving the potential synergy effects of collaboration, the so-called collaborative advantage.

Although this thesis did not set out to study outcomes of collaboration, it can nevertheless be concluded that the character of the process of collaboration can in fact influence collaboration outcomes in the sense that the services offered to the clients through this collaboration are qualitatively different due to the way the collaboration is organized. No conclusion can be made about whether this has an effect on the ultimate goal of the collaboration of reducing recidivism among offenders; nevertheless, the actual services provided to the clients can be said to be different than they would have been in the absence of this form of interagency collaboration.

Regarding interpersonal relations, the view was also expressed that informal social networks in fact provide a faster and less bureaucratic way of doing the same work that is done in the YAP, but one interviewee saw a potential risk because individuals might tend to choose contacts on the basis of friendship rather than choosing the person with the most knowledge about the issue in question.

Summing up the main conclusions, the preconditions for leadership in the YAP are influenced by the fact that it is an implementation network and its agenda is largely outside the influence of its participants. However, what is interesting in this case is the way in which decision making works inside the collaboration. The system for making decisions in the YAP consists of collaborative organs on different levels of administration with the NAO staff mediating between these levels. The ability of the NAO staff members to shift between different roles seems crucial for their ability to mediate between levels of administration. Another conclusion regarding leadership through participants is that not only employees of the NAO, but also the participants in the YAP, can be seen to exercise leadership and should be acknowledged as active subjects. With regard to leadership through processes, frontline bureaucracies are a special case, since the organization of the work needs to take into account both organizational effectiveness and the citizen perspective. Finally, it is concluded that interpersonal relationships can have a direct influence on outcomes of collaboration, as they help realize the positive synergy effect of collaboration and enable solutions to be created that would not have been arrived at otherwise.

### **9.2.3. Incentives, disincentives and preconditions for collaborative innovation**

The third and final question was:

*What incentives, disincentives and preconditions for collaborative innovation in crime prevention can be found based on the YAP case?*

The point of departure for this thesis is that innovation is a broad concept that can encompass everything from large-scale radical innovations to small *ad hoc* innovations. As concluded in chapter 4, the point of view taken in this thesis is that it is important not to overlook small-scale innovations, as these can also be relevant to the work done in frontline bureaucracies.

Indeed, it became clear that the interviewees understood innovation very differently. Examples of innovations provided by the interviewees ranged from rhetorical innovations to *ad hoc* innovations on the frontline. As for incentives for innovation, the interviewees generally see innovation as a needs-driven activity rather than something important in its own right. The problems the citizens face can function as an incentive for innovation, because the frontline workers feel a need to come up with new ways of dealing with them.

The analysis revealed some tensions between levels of administration and certain roles with regard to innovation. Although the division of roles between levels of administration is not a new finding as such, it can nevertheless be argued that frontline

workers in this particular field have a specific role. It seems clear that the frontline workers emphasize including the voice of the citizens and have a practice-oriented approach to innovation, while the administrative level is more focused on economic and other frames. It also seems clear that reconciling these two approaches can cause some frustration. Some frontline interviewees, and also leaders, seemed to think that frontline workers have hands-on knowledge of the problem field that the leaders do not possess. According to interviewees on different levels of administration, it is also important that the frontline employees feel ownership of the innovations they are expected to implement. All in all, many interviewees on different levels of administration seem to see frontline workers not only as implementers of policy but also actors who should also exert an influence on what is done in this field. The analysis also gives reason to conclude that frontline workers are important middlemen between the state/the public sector and the citizens. Connections between levels of administration are therefore important when making innovations.

It is also clear that incentives and disincentives for innovation are different on different levels of administration. As stated in chapter 4, innovation at the frontline level is relevant in this problem field, and what seemed to challenge innovation at this level were the financial and political constraints reported by the employees, which impacted what it was possible for them to do for this group of citizens. Frontline interviewees reported a number of innovations in which they had participated. Typically, these had to do with bridging organizational barriers or otherwise collaborating with other organizations. These innovations also illustrate another aspect pertinent to frontline innovation. Innovations at the frontline level seem very vulnerable to decisions made at levels higher up, as these innovations can be wiped away by decisions at higher levels of administration.

Regarding collaborative innovation in particular, the conclusion is that many of the same factors that are pertinent to inter-organizational collaboration are also relevant for collaborative innovation, especially negotiating how many resources each party should invest in the collaboration, and the balance between the goals of the involved organizations and the demands posed by the innovation. Collaborative innovation can be understood as inter-organizational collaboration with a high degree of integration. For collaborative innovation, as well as for interagency collaboration in general, interpersonal relations and a history of collaboration are important preconditions. As in the case of innovation and inter-organizational collaboration, it is also clear that collaborative innovation cannot be understood without understanding the special character of frontline bureaucracies. Any innovation needs to take into account not only inter-organizational factors but also relations with citizens. Finally, it can also be asked whether frontline *ad hoc* innovation or other small-scale innovation should be preferred, since collaborative innovation causes disruption in the participating organization. As noted earlier, however, *ad hoc* innovation in the frontline may be more vulnerable to organizational and other changes at higher levels of administration.

Summing up, the case study shows variation in how the interviewees define innovation, and they also mention small-scale innovations as examples of innovation. Citizens and the social problems they deal with are mentioned as an incentive for innovation. All in all, the characteristics of frontline bureaucracies and the role of citizens are pertinent to collaborative innovation as much as for inter-organizational collaboration.

Different levels of administration have different preconditions and different roles in innovation. The preconditions for collaborative innovation can be understood in much the same way as for inter-organizational collaboration, and I argue that theories on inter-organizational collaboration are very relevant for analyzing collaborative innovation as well. Seeing collaborative innovation as inter-organizational collaboration enables taking into account the whole process of innovation, including its implementation and the challenges that might arise in connection with negotiating the investment of resources in the collaboration as well as the interpersonal relations required to convince the participating actors to engage in the innovation in the first place.

#### **9.2.4. Reflections on main findings in relation to previous literature**

There are two sets of conclusions that I would like to highlight that have not been explicitly addressed in previous literature. First of all, there is a set of conclusions that are related to the special character of frontline bureaucracies and are pertinent to inter-organizational collaboration, collaborative innovation and specifically to inter-organizational collaboration in crime prevention. Secondly, there are some conclusions on theory and practice of network governance and leadership of governance networks.

The findings related to frontline bureaucracies have to do with how frontline bureaucrats function as mediators or middlemen between the citizens and the state, and the challenges this function involves. As stated in chapter 1, literature on network governance/inter-organizational collaboration does not typically deal with a specific policy field but is more general. It is argued in this thesis that inter-organizational collaboration and collaborative innovation in frontline bureaucracies should not be understood as only an inter-organizational process, but also as a process where this special character of frontline bureaucracies is taken into account.

With regard to inter-organizational crime prevention, the case study concludes that in contrast with previous research, the challenge to collaboration in this case is not the division between punitive and preventive camps, partly because the police are not involved in the YAP. Instead, a division was found between employees with official responsibility (Danish: myndighedsansvar) and employees without this kind of responsibility. This distinction reflects a citizen agent vs. state agent division in the role of the frontline bureaucrats.

Incentives for inter-organizational collaboration in crime prevention are thus ambiguous. On the one hand, citizens are deemed to have difficulty coordinating their contacts with the public sector on their own and may need help in order not to ‘fall between chairs’, as argued by the interviewed frontline workers. On the other hand, citizens are not always unreservedly positive about the services offered, due to distrust of the public sector system, and public sector employees may find themselves in the difficult position of having to maintain a balance between their relations to the clients and their collaboration with other public servants with official responsibilities towards these clients. The special character of frontline bureaucracies can also pose demands on the leadership of inter-organizational

collaboration, which has to reconcile both organizational efficiency and a citizen perspective in the organization of the collaboration.

With regard to innovation and collaborative innovation, this case study indicates that different levels of administration not only play different roles in innovation, but also have different views on preconditions for innovation. What is more, frontline employees emphasize the importance of taking citizens into account when creating innovation. As argued in this thesis, it is important not to see all resistance to innovation as something negative *per se*. It should also be asked why frontline workers resist any given innovation. It could be, for example, that innovation resistance is an indicator that an innovation would cause risks for the client group that have not been adequately taken into account.

The second set of conclusions deals with theory and practice of network governance. The findings from the case study indicate that collaboration, innovation or collaborative innovation should not be seen as something desirable *per se*. Their usefulness should be evaluated from case to case. This is also relevant for theory of inter-organizational collaboration, as an overtly optimistic view may fail to problematize the need for a given collaboration. If collaboration is seen as something desirable *per se*, the danger arises of only focusing on how to reach a common goal and focusing less on whether the collaboration is relevant in the first place, and whether a common goal even exists between the actors involved. The view of collaboration as something positive *per se*, should also be seen in the light of the finding that a trade-off can be made between investing in a collaboration and investing in work in the home agency. This is not only the case for the organization as a whole but also for the individuals engaging in the collaboration, as they must negotiate their time between the collaboration and the home agency.

With regard to leadership of governance networks, two main conclusions were made. First of all, the case study suggests that although inter-organizational collaboration is essentially about horizontal relations, some types of vertical relations are also in place. The employees of the NAO shift between vertical and horizontal relations with the employees from the participating agencies. In particular, it was noted that a form of linking capital is utilized in order to mediate between levels of administration inside the YAP collaboration. This linking capital was interpreted as the ability to shift between the role of frontline worker and the role of YAP representative. In previous literature, the ability to 'speak different languages' is pointed out as an important characteristic of a network broker. This study suggests that a similar ability can also serve the function of mediating between levels of administration in inter-organizational collaboration. Secondly, the case indicates that not only formally appointed leaders but also individual participants in a governance network should be attributed agency in influencing governance networks.

Finally, the analysis also suggests that not only formal management practices but also interpersonal relations are relevant for interagency collaboration, and that interpersonal relations should be understood as a factor in their own right, as a shaper of interagency collaboration. Although the importance of interpersonal relations has already been established in the literature, one contribution that can be made is that interpersonal relations can have direct influence on outcomes of collaboration, since it is shown that they contribute to qualitatively different solutions in inter-organizational collaboration. The risk is also shown to exist, however, that the commitment demanded of the participants in order

to maintain relationships also leads to stress, because the participants themselves are expected to negotiate their double role of working both in the collaboration and in the home agency. This is especially so, if sufficient time is not available for work in the collaboration.

### **9.3. SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

Based on this case study, it is concluded that interpersonal relations are very important for interagency collaboration; therefore, one suggestion for further research is a deeper analysis of interpersonal relations, the microsociology of collaboration and its implications for network governance – for example, by focusing on how individuals working in interagency collaborations characterize their relationships with others in the collaboration, and what implications these relationships have. This case study indicates that individuals make a more extensive effort after repeated collaboration with the same individuals, and this would also be a relevant subject for further research.

Another area that could use more focus is the role of citizens as clients in service programs based on coordination of efforts from different agencies, especially in the field of crime prevention or other fields where the relationship between the clients and the public sector agencies can be problematic. Interesting questions would be whether the clients see a collaboration like this as a threat to their privacy, and whether clients experience the collaboration to have benefits for their own situation.

### **9.4. WHAT COULD HAVE BEEN DONE OTHERWISE?**

In this final section, I reflect on what could have been done otherwise, in terms of choice of method and theoretical perspective as well as choice of research problem.

One limitation of this study is clearly that the ambition to arrive at a comprehensive picture of the YAP as a case of inter-organizational collaboration was maybe achieved at the cost of developing and problematizing the concepts employed on a more profound level. In addition to this, the attempt to be open to an interdisciplinary and mixed-methods approach led me into many different debates on interagency collaboration, innovation, and public administration. With the benefit of hindsight, it could be asked whether the research problem should have been formulated otherwise, more narrowly in terms of both the research problem and the choice of theoretical framework.

The intention of the thesis was to be on the explorative side, and the central concepts were not defined precisely at the outset. With hindsight, I can see that defining concepts more precisely would have had some benefits. This is the case especially in relation to the concept of innovation. It turned out that the interviewees' understanding of the concept showed very broad variation, and it is also possible that an interviewer effect was at play.



The interviewees may have felt pressed to come up with examples of innovations when asked. What is more, it might have made the research focus sharper, if it were aimed more explicitly at a particular type of innovation. On the other hand, this form of case study raised a number of issues regarding collaboration and collaborative innovation and the interplay of different factors.

The choice of case study could have been made differently. It turned out that the participants in the collaboration had different conceptions of what happened in the collaboration and why, and this in itself could have been an interesting issue on which to focus. It might have been better to focus on only one particular event, such as a particular implementation process. This would have made it possible to use a narrative approach to analyze different narratives of the same situation.

Another option could have been to go deeper into studying one aspect of interagency collaboration – for example, interpersonal relations – and employ different methods such as shadowing, and ask more profoundly about relations between employees etc. It is possible that this would have demanded making a different kind of research design, maybe interviewing individuals from different cities to make anonymization easier. However, the relevance of such a focus was not clear at the outset; what is more, this strategy would also have led to a different and more narrowly focused research question.

# SUMMARY

This thesis deals with inter-organizational collaboration and collaborative innovation in crime prevention. The focus is on so called social crime prevention, the different social reasons behind criminality. The point of departure is that inter-organizational collaboration is typically seen as relevant in the context of crime prevention and therefore it is also relevant to study inter-organizational collaboration and how new solutions to the problem of crime can be created in collaboration with different organizations. The thesis takes its point of departure from two overarching research questions:

**What are the incentives and disincentives to inter-organizational collaboration and collaborative innovation in crime prevention, understood as a field characterized by frontline bureaucracies?**

**How do leadership of inter-organizational collaboration and factors on the interpersonal, organizational, and environmental levels influence inter-organizational collaboration and collaborative innovation?**

This thesis is a case study on a program that focuses on preventing recidivism among young adults who have been involved in violent or other serious criminality. In the program, in this thesis called the Young Adults Program (YAP), individual action plans are created for the abovementioned group of citizens by teams of frontline workers from different municipal agencies. The program is organized within the confines of the local inter-organizational collaboration, so called SSP, in a Danish municipality and coordinated by a Network Administrative Organization (NAO). The thesis employs a mixed methods design with an emphasis on qualitative methods. The data consists of interviews with employees involved in the program on different levels of administration, meeting observations and Social Network Analysis although the main emphasis is on the interviews.

In chapters 2, 3 and 4 literature reviews are presented on crime prevention as a policy field, inter-organizational collaboration in crime prevention, inter-organizational collaboration in general and leadership of the same and on public sector innovation with emphasis on collaborative innovation as a particular type of public sector innovation.

In chapter 2 it is stated that frontline bureaucrats are important actors in social crime prevention and that the involvement of frontline bureaucrats also means that there is a special dynamics between actors from different levels of administration as frontline bureaucrats have an important role as middlemen between the citizens and the state. The chapter also states that three factors make inter-organizational collaboration in crime prevention challenging: the fact that crime prevention is a very politically charged area, professional disagreements between different professions participating in crime prevention work, and a dilemma between confidentiality and the need to share information between collaboration participants. Finally the chapter presents the case focused on in more detail.

Chapter 3 discusses inter-organizational collaboration by employing the concept governance network. The point of departure is that governance networks consist of not only inter-organizational but also interpersonal processes and finally that inter-organizational collaboration always takes place in and is influenced by a wider context of societal developments. The chapter also discusses leadership of governance networks that is in this thesis understood in a broad manner as something that can be exercised through three different leadership media: individual participants, the structure of the collaboration and the ways of interaction between the collaboration participants. This definition also entails that no single actor has full control over a governance network.

Chapter 4 reviews literature on public sector innovation, the process of how innovation comes about and different phases that innovation processes typically consist of. In the chapter it is stated that different levels of administration typically have different roles in innovation. Collaborative innovation is defined as a specific form of innovation, involving actors from different organizations. It is also stated that theories on inter-organizational collaboration presented in chapter 3 can be used to conceptualize collaborative innovation, as collaborative innovation can be seen as one type of inter-organizational collaboration.

The conclusions of the thesis are presented in the three analysis chapters, 6, 7 and 8. The first analysis chapter discusses challenges, incentives and disincentives of inter-organizational collaboration from the point of view of on the one hand the work done by frontline employees and on the other hand from the point of view of the participating organizations. The chapter concludes first of all that despite of what could have been expected, there are rather few inter-professional disagreements among the frontline workers in the program. This can be explained by the fact that the police is not participating in the operational work of the program, as a division typically exists between a punitive and social/preventive approaches to crime prevention. It is also the case that the employees in the program according to interviews have very similar educational backgrounds. Some tension that could however be found has to do with a division between employees with a formal responsibility with regard to this group of citizens (Danish: myndighedsansvar) and those with more informal role.

The frontline workers are overall positive to the collaboration and say it enables more holistic solutions from the point of view of the citizens and is needed in order to coordinate the services available for this group of citizens. There is, however, no full agreement on the incentives of collaboration in this case. A view was expressed that it is problematic to discuss client cases with a broad group of others, despite the fact that consent of the citizens is required. It was also said by some of the interviewees that not all citizens potentially in the target group of the YAP are interested in participating, as participation is voluntary. The challenges and disincentives of collaboration pointed out in the interviews illustrate a dilemma present in frontline bureaucracies. Frontline bureaucrats are middlemen between the citizens and the state and are in a potentially difficult position, balancing between these two. Hence it is not enough to focus on inter-organizational relations in collaboration but focus needs to be put also on the relations between citizens and public sector employees.

Another set of incentives and disincentives is revealed if the YAP collaboration is analysed by drawing on theories on inter-organizational collaboration. First of all, it is clear that the participating agencies are not a homogeneous group, as different agencies have different roles and are expected different contributions in the YAP. It was also found that the participating organizations' responsibilities towards this group of citizens was not completely clear. Although there is a general agreement on that inter-organizational collaboration is relevant, there is no complete agreement on the relevance of the involvement of each of the participants. The conclusion drawn is that inter-organizational collaboration should not be seen as something necessary *per se*, and that theories on inter-organizational collaboration should not perceive inter-organizational collaboration in this manner, but rather problematize the incentives of collaboration in any given case.

Finally, it can be argued that disincentives of collaboration have to do with the degree of integration between the participating agencies; the closer the collaboration, the more adjustment is needed from the participants. There is a dilemma between a clear rationale for collaboration, and being separate agencies with each their own budgets and legislative frameworks. Challenges arise when inter-organizational collaboration materializes into concrete practices and resources need to be invested. For the frontline employees there is also a dilemma of finding a balance between working in the collaboration and working in the home agency.

The second analytical chapter builds upon the previous one and discusses the role of leadership and interpersonal relations in collaboration. As for the structure of the collaboration, that is, the way decision-making, agenda setting and entry of new participants takes place, these are in this case to a large extent influenced by the fact that the YAP focuses on implementation and not policymaking and its agenda is largely decided on higher levels of decision-making.

As for leadership through participants, it is concluded that despite that inter-organizational collaborations are typically seen to consist of horizontal relations, also vertical relations are important. The Network Administrative Organization (NAO) seems in this case to be relevant in mediating these vertical relations as the NAO employees mediate decisions and feedback between levels of administration and have also worked to alleviate some of the challenges of collaboration encountered. Important for mediation between levels of administration is an ability to shift between hierarchical and horizontal positions towards the collaboration participants. One way this can be done is through possessing a type of linking capital, an ability to both speak the language of the frontline workers and that of the SSP collaboration.

Contrary to what could have been expected, the frontline employees typically did not mention the role of meeting coordinators employed at the NAO for the collaboration. There were in fact very different views among the frontline workers on the role and need for meeting coordination. This can be a sign of methodological problems, such as failure to ask the appropriate questions in interviews, but can also indicate that the frontline workers see themselves to a high degree as actors having influence on the collaboration. As for leadership through processes, face-to-face interaction was argued to be important for both carrying out the actual work in the YAP, but also for alleviating misunderstandings

between employees from different agencies and increasing knowledge of the other participants.

It was also found that there can be a trade-off between organizational efficiency and a citizen perspective in organizing the YAP frontline meetings.. It was argued by interviewees that it would be best if the employees who know the citizens best participate in the meetings where action plans for citizens are made. This was according to interviewees difficult to realize in practice, as it was argued that it would take too much time to send the most relevant persons for each citizen's case to the meetings. This finding illustrates again the importance of incorporating both a citizen perspective and organizational perspective in inter-organizational collaboration.

Finally the second analysis chapter points out that factors that influence inter-organizational collaboration are not only formal or informal acts of leadership. Also interpersonal relations are important for inter-organizational collaboration to the extent that it can be said that interpersonal relations are a factor in its own right. According to interviews solutions that would not have been arrived at otherwise are created in the frontline meetings between employees with established working relations. Therefore the outcomes of inter-organizational collaboration are qualitatively different in this program compared to having less close working relations. Hence interpersonal relations are important for the realization of so called collaborative advantage, that is, the positive synergy effect inter-organizational collaboration potentially has.

The third analytical chapter that builds upon the two previous ones starts by concluding that there is among the interviewees a variety of views on what constitutes public sector innovation. As for incentives of innovation the character of the problem field, the problems the individual citizens face, is as such an incentive of innovation according to some interviews.

It was also found that the preconditions of innovation are perceived differently in different levels of administration, and there is also some tension between levels of administration. According to interviews, leaders are more focused on keeping economic and other frames, while frontline workers may be frustrated by the same. Frontline workers emphasised the citizen perspective in innovation, and felt constrained by economic and legal frameworks. Overall the interviewees seemed to think that frontline workers should not be seen as mere passive implementers of policy, but that they can contribute with important knowledge on the problem field. There were also examples given of innovations created at the frontline level. However, these frontline innovations are also vulnerable to organizational changes and changes in priorities on higher levels of administration. This means that although frontline innovations may be seen as positive from the point of view of the work done in frontline bureaucracies, their vulnerability can also make services available to citizens less predictable and comprehensible.

Finally, it is concluded that many of the issues pertinent to inter-organizational collaboration are also relevant as preconditions of collaborative innovation. Especially the need to negotiate investment of time and economic resources in the collaboration, while remaining separate agencies, and interpersonal relations are important for both creating and implementing innovation. It can also be noted that the special character of frontline bureaucracies is also pertinent to collaborative innovation. Not only inter-organizational

factors, but also relations to citizens need to be taken into account in collaborative innovation.

To sum up, the case study concludes that inter-organizational collaboration and consequently also collaborative innovation should not be seen as something necessary *per se*, and that the necessity of collaboration, what collaboration is good for and what kind of collaboration is good, is dependent on the vantage point one looks from. Inter-organizational collaboration is in this case based on both horizontal and vertical relations and the role of vertical relations is especially important in a field involving frontline bureaucracies. However, not only inter-organizational relations and connections between levels of administration are important, but also relations and connections between citizens and the public sector.

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# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX 1.INTERVIEW GUIDES

### Frontline workers

#### Background information

1. Can you briefly tell about your role in the SSP organization, what do you work with and how long you have been working at SSP?
2. Which department (forvaltning) do you formally belong to and what are your main work tasks there?
3. Can you tell me briefly about your educational background, what degree do you have and in which discipline?

#### On inter-professional work

4. Can you tell me briefly about what kind of interaction between different professions in SSP you are involved in? Which professions are involved? What kinds of tasks do you work with and why do you work with those particular tasks?
5. How does your work in SSP differ from working within the department you belong to?
6. Can you tell me about the difference between only working with representatives of one profession and working together with representatives of different professions?
7. Do you think you do something differently when you work with representatives of other professions than your own?
8. How would you describe situations where you in the YAP group have different opinions on how to deal with a case? When does it typically occur and what do you do about it?

## On collaboration

9. Can you describe what kind of collaboration you are involved in within SSP?
10. Can you tell me about SSP as a collaborative arena? From your point of view, what ingredients make collaboration work well and what ingredients makes it work less well than it could? Can you give examples?
11. What factors do you think have good impact on collaboration between people with different professional backgrounds and from different departments? What factors have less good impact?
12. What factors do you think have good and bad impact respectively on collaboration between people from different administrative levels?

## On innovation

13. What do you think is the best way to find new solutions to the kinds of issues you are working with in the SSP?
14. What role should different parts of the organization have in developing the work you do and finding new solutions? What role should frontline workers, administrative staff, leaders, politicians etc. have?
15. Can you give examples on how you yourself have been involved in developing/finding new solutions in SSP?
16. Do you think that the solutions created within SSP are somehow different than the ones you would arrive at if you only worked within your own department? If so, why do you think it is the case?

## Leader group

### Background information

- 1. Can you briefly tell me about your role in the SSP organization, what do you work with and for how long you have been working at SSP?
- 2. Which department (forvaltning) do you formally belong to and what are your main work tasks there?
- 3. Can you tell me briefly about your educational background, what degree do you have and in which discipline?

### Inter-professional work

4. Can you tell me briefly about what kind of interaction between different professions in SSP you are involved in? Which professions are involved? What kinds of tasks do you work with and why do you work with those particular tasks?
5. How does work in SSP differ from working within the department you belong to?
6. Can you tell me about the difference between only working with representatives of one profession and working together with representatives of different professions?
7. Do you think you do something differently when you work with representatives of other professions than your own?
8. How would you describe situations where you in the leader group have different views about how to deal with a case? When does such situation typically occur and what do you do about it?

### On collaboration

9. Can you describe what kind of collaboration you are involved in within SSP?
10. Can you tell me about SSP as a collaborative arena? What ingredients make collaboration work well and what ingredients makes it work less well than it could? Can you give examples?
11. What factors do you think have good impact on collaboration between people with different professional backgrounds and from different departments? What factors have less good impact?

12. What factors do you think have good and bad impact respectively on collaboration between people from different administrative levels?

On innovation

13. What do you think is the best way to find new solutions to the kinds of issues you are working with in SSP?
14. What role should different parts of the organization have in developing the work you do and finding new solutions? What role should frontline workers, administrative staff, leaders, politicians etc. have?
15. Can you give examples on how you yourself have been involved in developing/finding new solutions in SSP?
16. Do you think that the solutions created within SSP are different than the ones you would arrive at if you only worked within your own department. If so, why do you think it is the case?

## **YAP coordinators**

### Background information

1. Can you briefly tell me about your role in the SSP organization, what do you work with and how long you have been working in SSP?
2. Can you tell me briefly about your educational background, what degree do you have and in which discipline?

### Inter-professional work

- 3.. Can you tell me about the difference between only working with representatives of one profession and working together with representatives of different professions?
4. Do you think you do something differently when you work with representatives of other professions than your own?
5. I have understood that your task as coordinators is to coordinate the YAP meetings. Can you tell me about situations where there are different professional opinions about how to deal with a client case? When does this typically occur and what do you do in such a situation?

### On collaboration

6. Can you tell me about being a coordinator in the YAP? What do you think is important for working as a coordinator? Is there something that limits your work? If yes, what and how?
7. Can you tell me about SSP as a collaborative arena? What ingredients make collaboration work well and what ingredients makes it work less well than it could? Can you give examples?
8. What factors do you think have good impact on collaboration between people with different professional backgrounds and from different departments? What factors have less good impact?
9. What factors do you think have good and bad impact respectively on collaboration between people from different administrative levels?

## On innovation

10. I have understood that one task for the NAO is to gather knowledge about the SSP work and evaluate the work done. Can you tell me about that work?

11. What do you think is the best way to find new solutions to the kinds of issues you are working with?

12. What role do you think different parts of the organization should have in developing the work you do and finding new solutions? What role should frontline workers, administrative staff, leaders, politicians etc. have?

13. Can you give examples on how you yourself have been involved in developing/finding new solutions in SSP?

14. Do you think that the solutions created within SSP are different than the ones you would arrive at if you only worked within your own department. If so, why do you think it is the case?

## **YAP steering group**

### Background information

1. Can you briefly tell me about your role in the SSP organization, what do you work with and for how long you have been working at SSP?
2. Which department (forvaltning) do you formally belong to and what are your main work tasks there?
3. Can you tell me briefly about your educational background, what degree do you have and in which discipline?

### On innovation

4. What do you think is the best way to find new solutions to the kinds of issues you are working with?
5. Can you give examples on how you yourself have been involved in developing/finding new solutions in SSP?
6. Do you think that the solutions created within SSP are different than the ones you would arrive at if you only worked within one department? If so, why do you think it is the case?

### Organization of SSP

7. What role do you think different parts of the organization should have in developing the work you do and finding new solutions? What role should frontline workers, administrative staff, leaders, politicians etc. have?
8. What is your view on the need for coordination and leadership in SSP? What factors are important? Is there something you think should be different with regard to for example regulations, division of tasks or something else?

## APPENDIX 2. SNA QUESTIONS

1. Within the past 6 months, how frequently have you had contact with a person in the following organizations in order to discuss and idea about how to develop the work in the YAP?

Organisation	At least once a week	At least once a month	More seldom	Never
Job Centre				
Educational counselling				
The Police				
The Adult Unit				
The Children and Family unit				
The unit that pays social welfare benefits, sickness benefits, etc.				
The Reception Unit, all new clients of social department go through this unit first				
The Homeless Unit				
Danish Prison and Probation Service				
Youth Counselling				
The Young Adult Unit				
The Substance Abuse Unit				
Your YAP frontline group if you are a member of one				
The YAP leader group				
The YAP steering group				
The NAO				



2. Within the past 6 months, how frequently have you had contact with a person in the following agencies to discuss or ask for advice in a work related question?

Organisation	At least once a week	At least once a month	More seldom	Never
Job Centre				
Educational Counselling				
The Police				
The Adult Unit				
The Children and Family unit				
The unit that pays social welfare benefits, sickness benefits, etc.				
The Reception Unit, all new clients of social department go through this unit first				
The Homeless Unit				
Danish Prison and Probation Service				
Youth Counselling				
The Young Adult Unit				
The Substance Abuse Unit				
Your YAP frontline group if you are a member of one				
YAP leader group				
YAP steering group				
The NAO				