

Universität



Potsdam

COST Action IS1207:

Local Public Sector Reforms: An International Comparison - LocRef -

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1. Who/What is LocRef?
2. The Research Issue
3. Governance and Scientific Strategy
4. Next Steps and 4-Years Perspective

Who is LocRef?

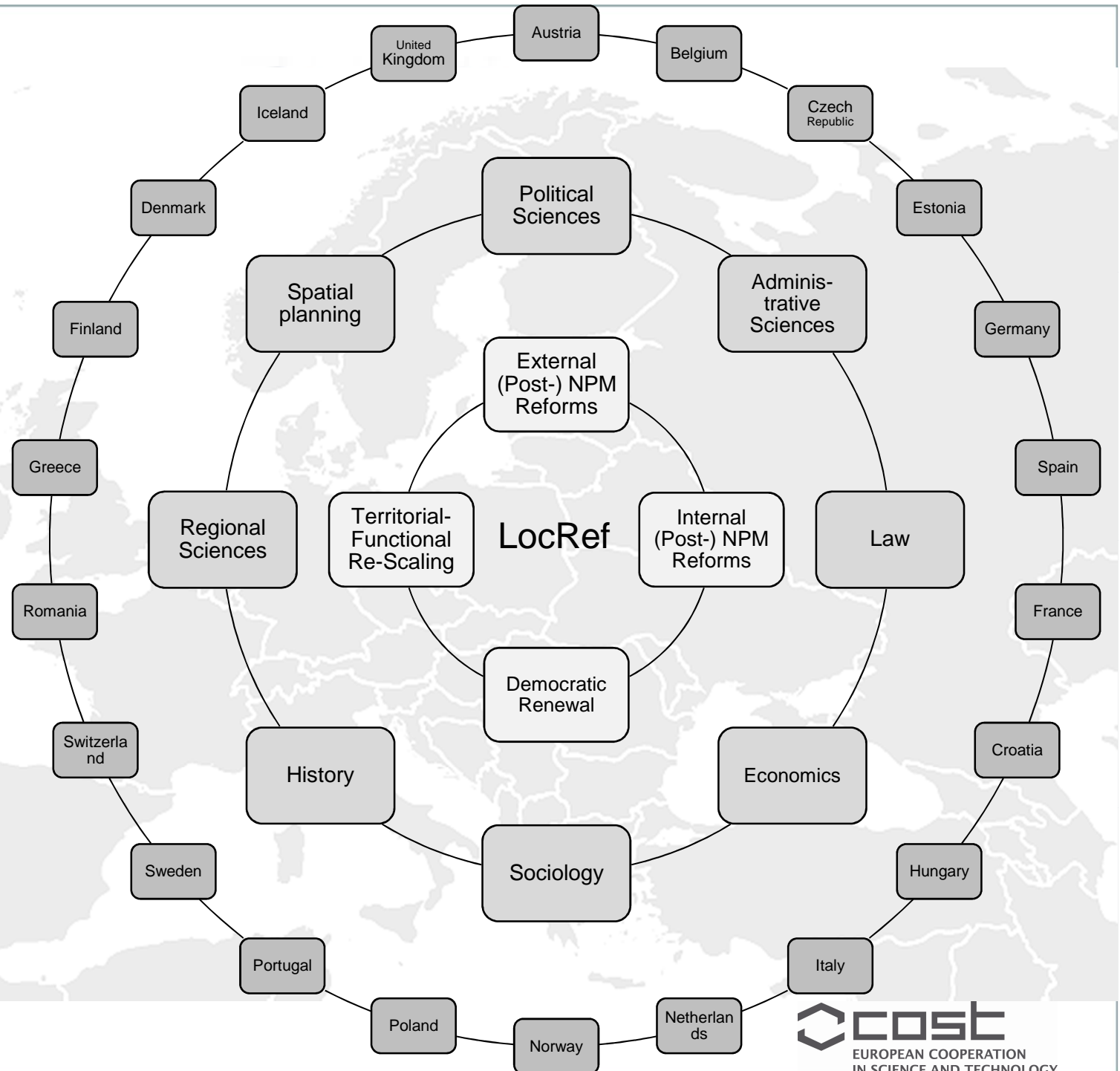


What is LocRef?

- COST Action IS 1207 “LocRef” is a EU-funded international research network on “local public sector reforms” (2013-17)
- Funded by COST (European Cooperation in Science and Technology); EU RTD Framework Programme, the Council of the European Union and the European Social Fund
- Grantholder Institution: Potsdam University; Germany
- Brings together researchers and practitioners of all stages of local public sector reforms
- Networking activities: PhD training schools, international workshops and conferences, high level seminars, research stays in partner institutions (STSM), joint publications, policy papers
- Platform for PhD/early stage researchers

Aim

Bundle and integrate the fragmented European research activities and knowledge bases about public sector reforms on the local level of government



Participating Countries: 27

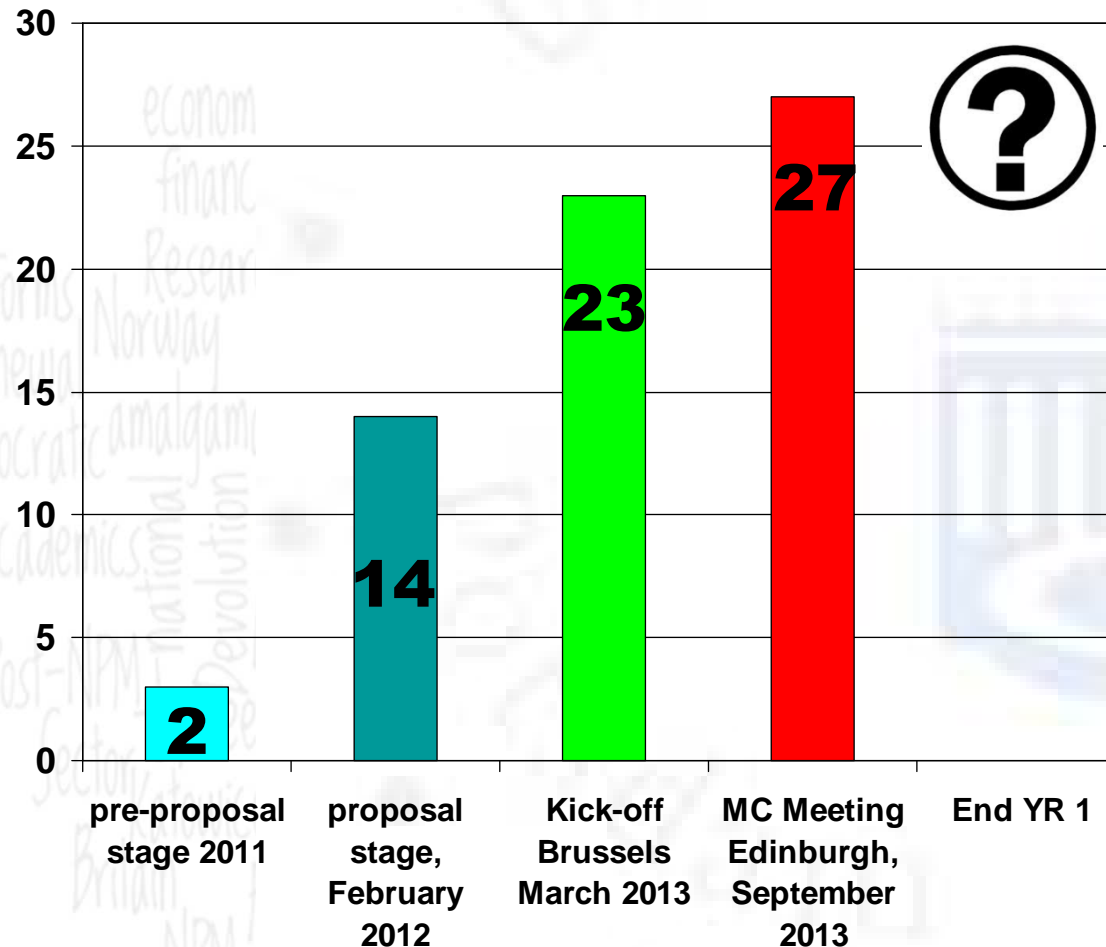
- At the kick-off meeting (28-03-13): 23 countries

AT , BE , CH , CZ , DE , DK 
ES , EE , EL , FI , FR , HR 
HU , IC , IT , NL , NO , PL 
PT , RO , SE , UK 

- After the kick-off meeting: 4 new countries:

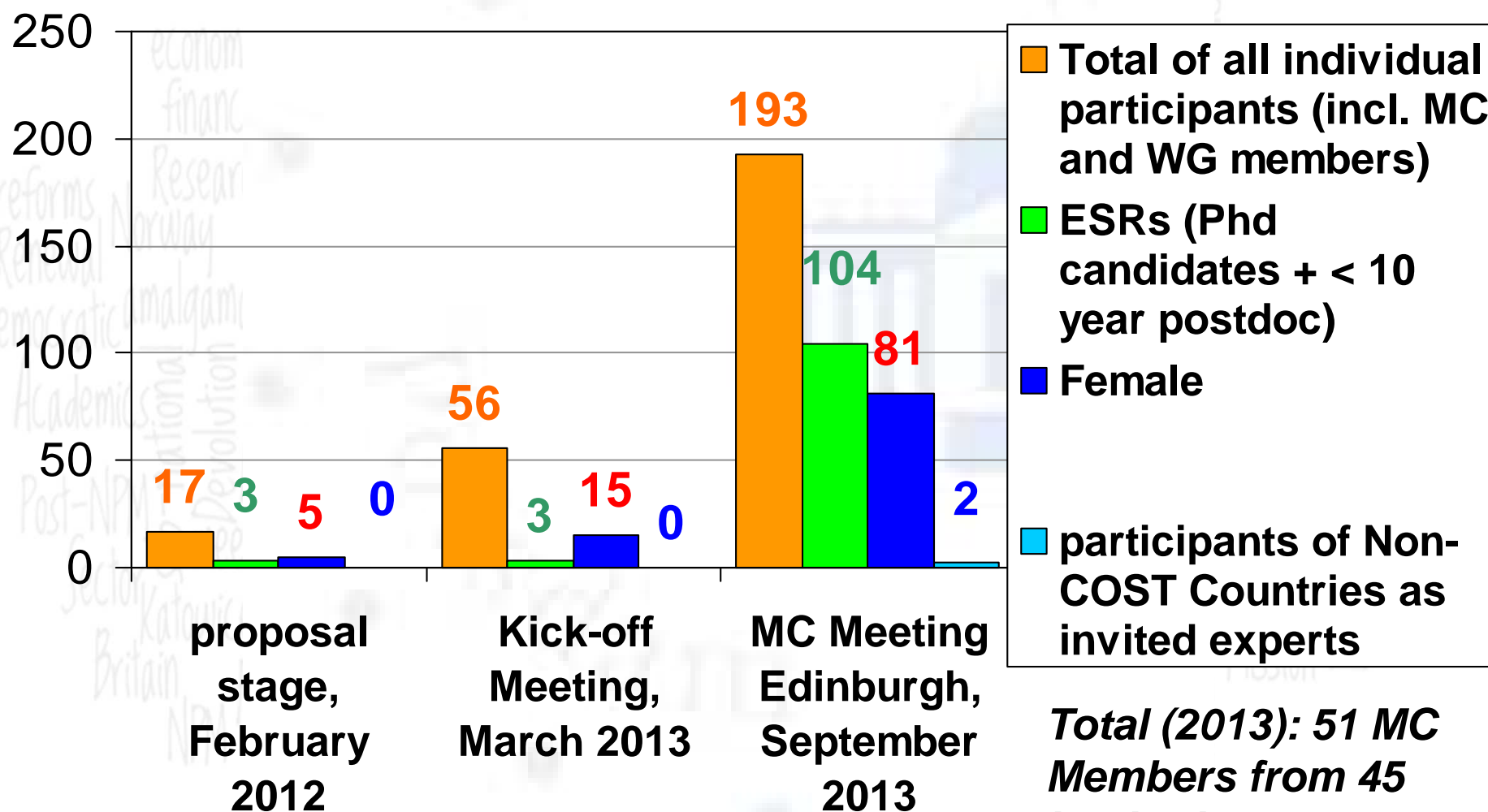
CY , SK , SL , TR 

Participating Countries



- 2 Countries were involved at pre-proposal stage
- 14 countries were involved at proposal stage
- 23 countries formally joined already until the kick-off meeting on 28 March 2012
- 27 countries are involved in the Action, Bulgarias application is pending

Participating Scholars



Total (2013): 51 MC Members from 45 institutions



The Research Issue

Central Research Issue

Starting position:

- Growing relevance of local self-government in the EU integration process (legally recognized in the Lisbon Treaty)
- LGs ensure proximity to the citizen/of political decision-making; “grass roots democracy”
- High level of institutional trust → stability of the EU political system(s)

Problem:

- Increasing reform pressures at the local level of government
- LGs most seriously affected by the global fiscal crisis
- Perceived performance and democracy deficits
- Conflicting demands: e.g. enhancing democracy *and* efficiency

Solution:

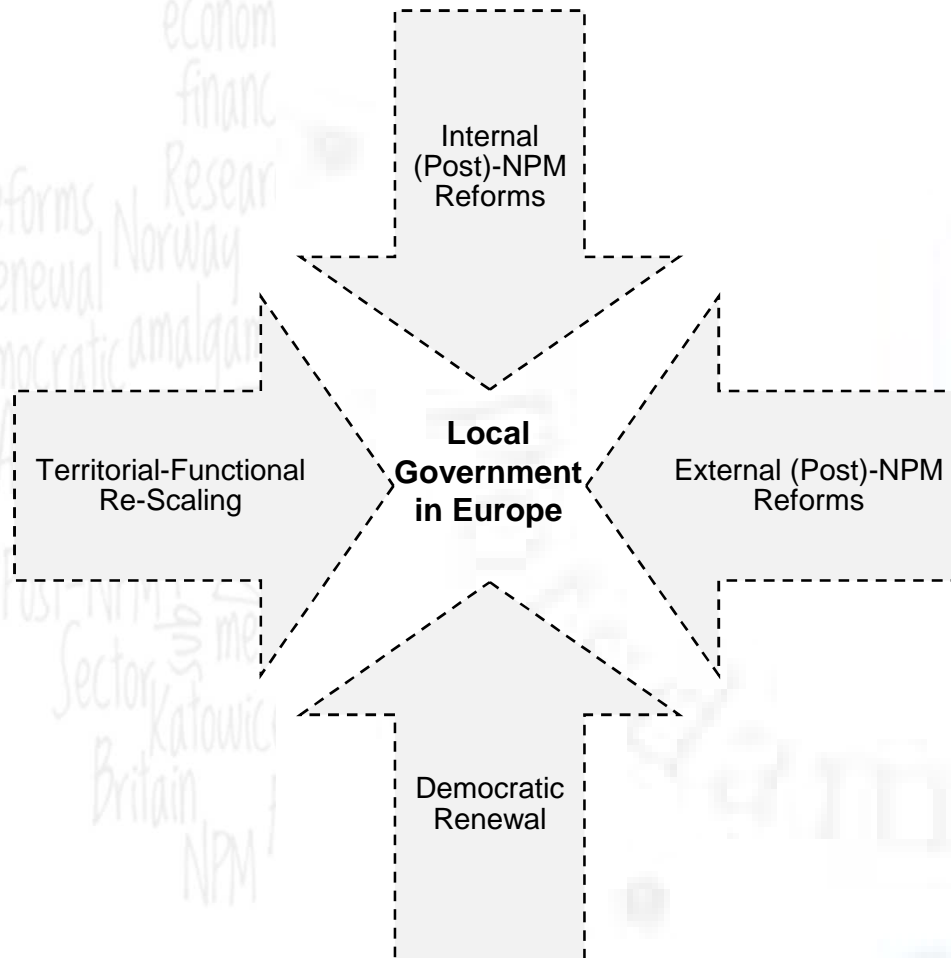
- Intense local reform activity all over Europe (different trajectories)
- Variety of (national/local) reform approaches at the same time

State of the Art – Research Gaps

- Limits of current research on LocRefs:
- *Local level absent* in current *comparative* research on public sector modernization; under-developed trans-European perspective (Anglo-American predominance)
- *Fragmentation* in current research:
 - Concepts, Theories, Methodologies
 - Data bases; Research capacities
 - Research mostly case-based
- *Reform areas* separately researched (although effects accumulate at the local level)
 - No integration of various reform trajectories in the analysis of (national) LocRefs
 - Not all reform areas are researched in every country

Local Government in Europe

Which approaches and effects of local public sector reform can be identified from an international comparative perspective; how can these be explained and what lessons can be drawn for policy making?



- **What/How-question:** What kind of reforms have been implemented to what extent? (modes, degrees, trajectories of reform; country-clusters) → **descriptive knowledge**
- **Why-question:** Why have local governments embarked on reforms? (driving forces, stakeholders) → **explanatory knowledge**
- **Do reforms make a difference?:** What are the effects/outcomes? (efficiency, effectiveness, quality of service delivery, gender balance) → **evaluative knowledge**

Research Design

**Explanatory
knowledge**

**Descriptive
knowledge**

**Evaluative
knowledge**

**External and Internal
Explanatory Factors**

Institutional Change

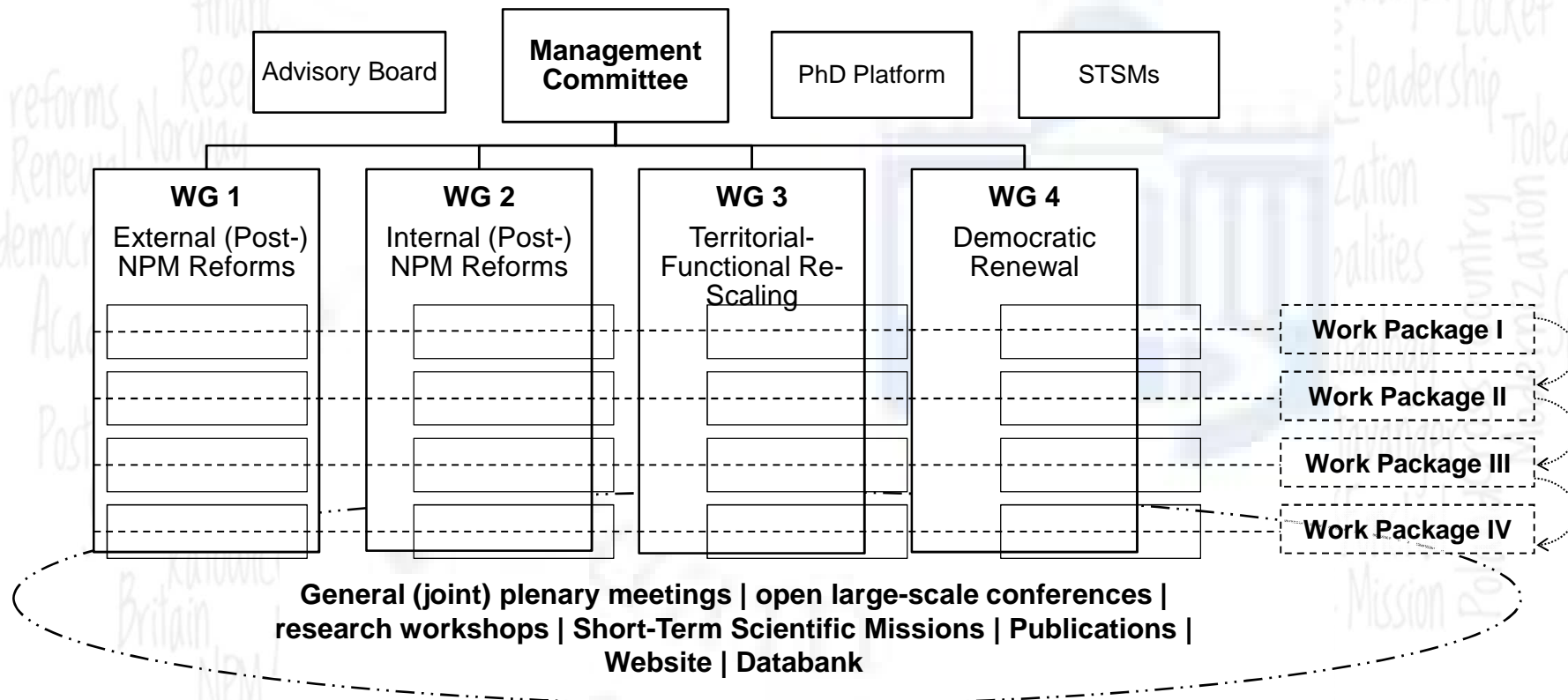
**Performance
Evaluation**

Knowledge Transfer/ Evaluating Utilization



Governance and Scientific Strategie

Organisation



Academic Project Coordination

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Management Committee

WG I: External(Post-) NPM		WG III: Territorial/Functional Re-Scaling	
Name	Country	Name	Country
Ivan Kopric	HR	Nikolaos Hlepas	EL
Helmut Wollmann	DE	Ellen Wayenberg	BE
Gerard Marcou	FR	Reto Steiner	CH
Niels Ejersbo	DK	Benedikt Speer	AT
Jarmo Vaakkari	FI	Sabine Kuhlmann	DE
Theodore N. Tsekos	EL	Martin Bakgaard	DK
Annamarija Musa	HR	Carmen Navarro	ES
Magnus Ami Magnusson	IS	Pekka Kettunen	FI
Andrea Lippi	IT	Trui Steen	NL
Stig Montin	SE	Pawel Swianiewicz	PL
Yüksel Demirkaya	TR	Lukasz Mikula	PL
		Filipe Teles	PT
		Martin Laffin	UK
		Kalliope Agapiou-Josephides	CY
		Irena Bačija	SL
WG II: Internal (Post-) NPM		WG IV: Democratic Renewal	
Name	Country	Name	Country
Riccardo Mussari	IT	Colin Copus	UK
Emil Turc	FR	Bas Denters	NL
Renate Meyer	AT	Anders Lidström	SE
Hilde Bjørna	NO	Andreas Ladner	CH
Geert Bouckaert	BE	Michal Illner	CZ
Isabella Proeller	DE	Daniel Klimovsky	SK
Tina Randma-Liiv	EE	Ángel Iglesias	ES
György Hajnal	HU	Ringa Rauda	EE
Isabella Stecne-Baraši	HU	Eva Marin Hlynisdóttir	IS
Filipe Ferraz Esteves de Araújo	PT	Harald Baldersheim	NO
Calin Hintea	RO	Jana Gasparikova	SK
Constantin Marius Proftroiu	RO	Miro Haček	SL
Vitalis Nakosis	LT		

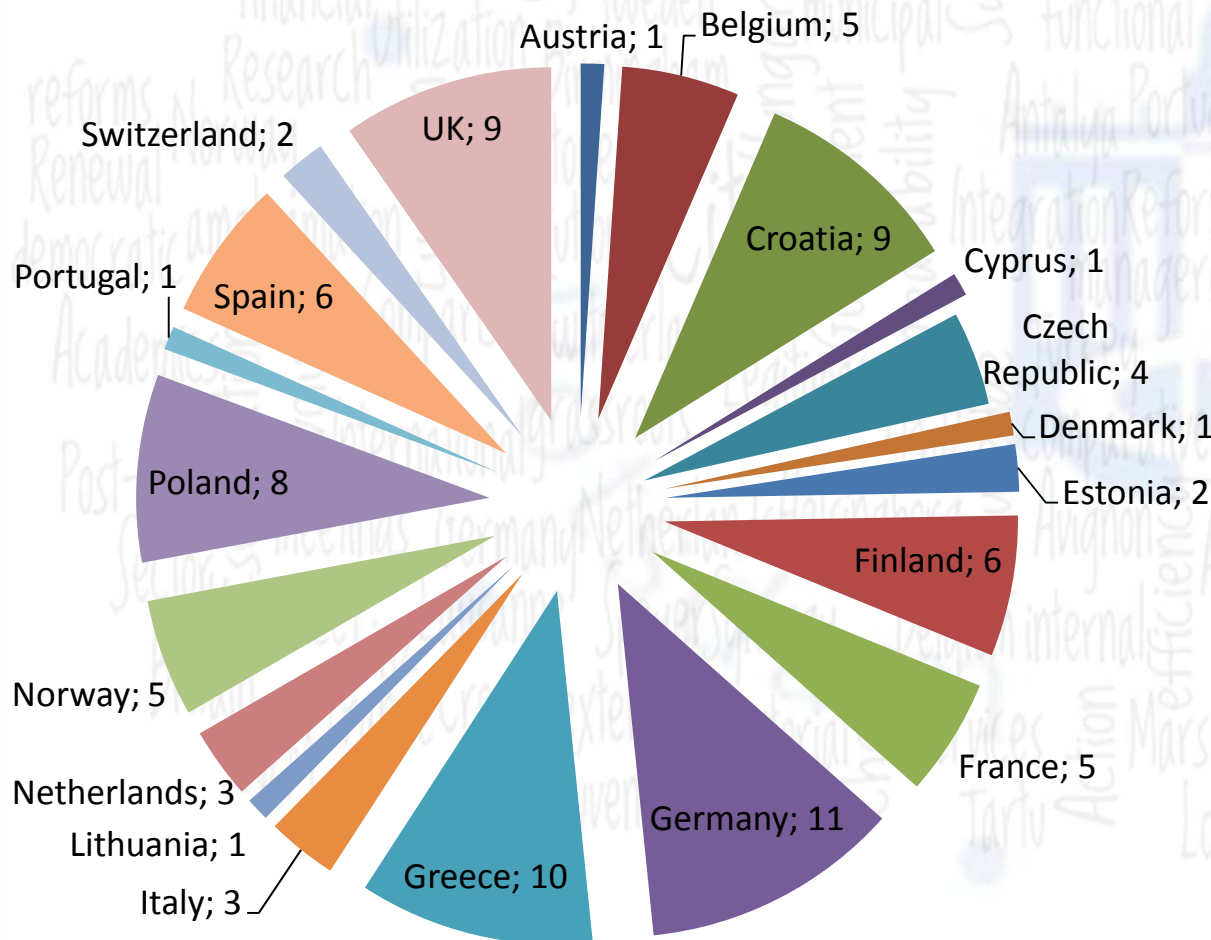
Working Groups

WG I: External (Post-) New Public Management (10 MC; 19 WG)	WG II: Internal (Post-) New Public Management (14 MC; 10 WG)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on changes in the provision of public services • Out-/insourcing, privatization, re-municipalization (e.g. in water, waste, hospitals) • Accumulate/ synthesize/ synergize existing (non-English) research 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on internal changes of local administrations • New steering instruments; performance measurement/ management/comparison • Organization: re-structuring, whole of government, bundling/fragmentation; HRM, PRP, employment/recruitment, training
WG III: Territorial/Functional Re-Scaling (15 MC; 12 WG)	WG IV: Democratic Renewal (12 MC; 6 WG)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on up-scaling/down-scaling/trans-scaling + re-allocation of functions • Amalgamations; inter-local/level cooperation; Territorial/functional fragmentation vs. consolidation • Decentralization, devolution, de-concentration; • Survey; case studies; evaluation; decentralization index 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on democratic innovations, new forms of participation, local leadership • Representative/direct democracy, public engagement • democratic renewal, local government, neighborhood governance • impacts on accountability • Explorative approach; databank; literature review

Country /Partners (Experts)	WG I (Kopric, Marcou, Wollmann)	WG II (Mussari, Turc, Bjørna)	WG III (Hlepas, Steiner, Wayenberg)	WG IV (Copus, Lidström, Denters)
(A) Austria (Meyer / Speer)				
(BE) Belgium (Bouckaert / Wayenberg)				
(CH) Switzerland (Steiner / Ladner)				
(CY) Cyprus (Kalliope Agapiou-Josephides)				
(CZ) Czech Republic (Illner / Bernard)				
(DE) Germany (Kuhlmann/Wollmann/Proeller)				
(DK) Denmark (Baeckgaard / Ejersbo)				
(EE) Estonia (Randma-Liiv / Raudla)				
(EL) Greece (Hlepas / Tsekos)				
(ES) Spain (Iglesias / Navarro)				
(FI) Finland (Kettunen / Vakkuri)				
(FR) France (Marcou / Turc)				
(HR) Croatia (Kopric / Musa)				
(HU) Hungary (Hajnal / Stecne-Barati)				
(IC)Iceland (Hlynisdottir / Magnusson)				
(IT) Italy (Mussari / Lippi)				
(LT) Lithuania (Vitalis Nakrosis)				
(NL) Netherlands (Denters / Steen)				
(NO) Norway (Baldersheim / Bjorna)				
(PL) Poland (Swiniewicz / Mikula)				
(PT) Portugal (Teles / Araújo)				
(RO) Romania (Hintea / Profiroiu)				
(SE) Sweden (Lidstrom / Montin)				
(SK) Slovakia (Klimovsky / Gasparikova)				
(SL) Slovenia (Haček / Bačlija)				
(TR) Turkey (Yüksel Demirkaya)				
(UK) United Kingdom (Laffin / Copus)				

LocRef as a Young Researchers' Platform

- **93 YRs manifested interest for LocRef/YR-platform!**
- Aim: Promote young researchers in a gender-balanced network;
- Foster a European community of YR in the field of local government



PhDs
86%

Affiliation to WGs

YR platform (COST website; Facebook)

Publication Opportunities

Conference Participation

PhD Schools:

- **Siena/Italy;**
- **Bern/Switzerland**

Thank you for your attention!

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