

## Notitie

**Datum** 17 november 2021

**Onderwerp** Managementsamenvatting: Managing from the middle: the balancing act between flexibility and stability

**Purpose** – This study aimed to create a fundamental understanding of the prevailing dimensions of the flexibility and stability tension, present within Dutch municipalities. Moreover, this study gained insights into how four public management roles are used in order to deal with the flexibility and stability tension.

**Methodology** – This study employed a qualitative exploratory research design where programme manager have been interviewed and in order to create a comprehensive understanding of the research topic. Experts in the field have been interviewed accordingly.

**Findings** – Four dimensions of the flexibility and stability tension have been identified, which are; goal setting, identity and organizational policy and processes. Programme manager shifted in accountability-, network governance-, political loyalty and rule-following management in order to deal with the dimensions of the flexibility and stability tension. On top of that, this study revealed that the programme manager make an appeal to the top management team, by holding them accountable as well in managing the flexibility and stability tension.

**Practical implications** – The flexibility and stability tension was shown to be omnipresent in Dutch municipalities. Hence, several practical implications have been focused on integrating the two poles. These implications include creating continuous learning environments in order to develop flexible work skills, stimulating alignment between different layers of the organization as well as increasing psychological empowerment for programme manager in terms of resource allocation and goal setting processes.

**Value** – By empirically exploring the flexibility and stability tension, present in Dutch municipalities, as well as investigating how programme manager deal with the tension using four public management roles, this paper increases the scientific understanding regarding the flexibility and stability tension as well as tension management literature in general.

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