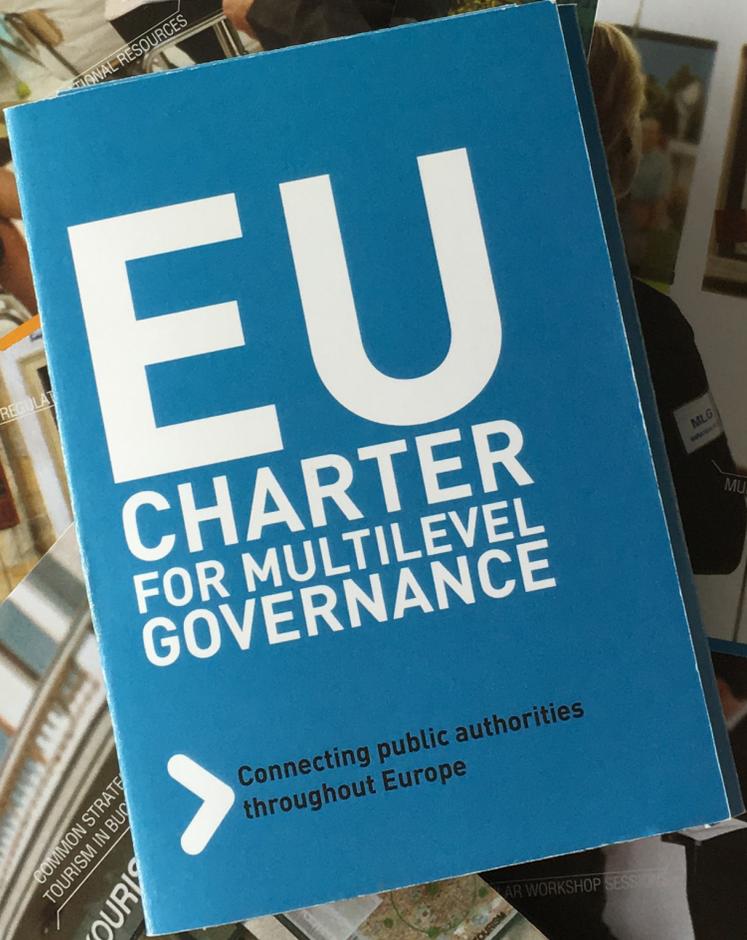


Jégou F., Vincent S., Thevenet R., et al.

**"Friendly hacking into public sector:
co-creating public polices within
regional governments"**, Co-create

Conference, Aalto University, Helsinki, 2013.



EU CHARTER FOR MULTILEVEL GOVERNANCE

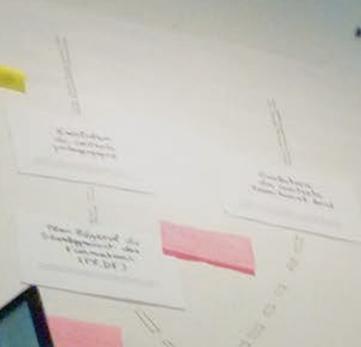
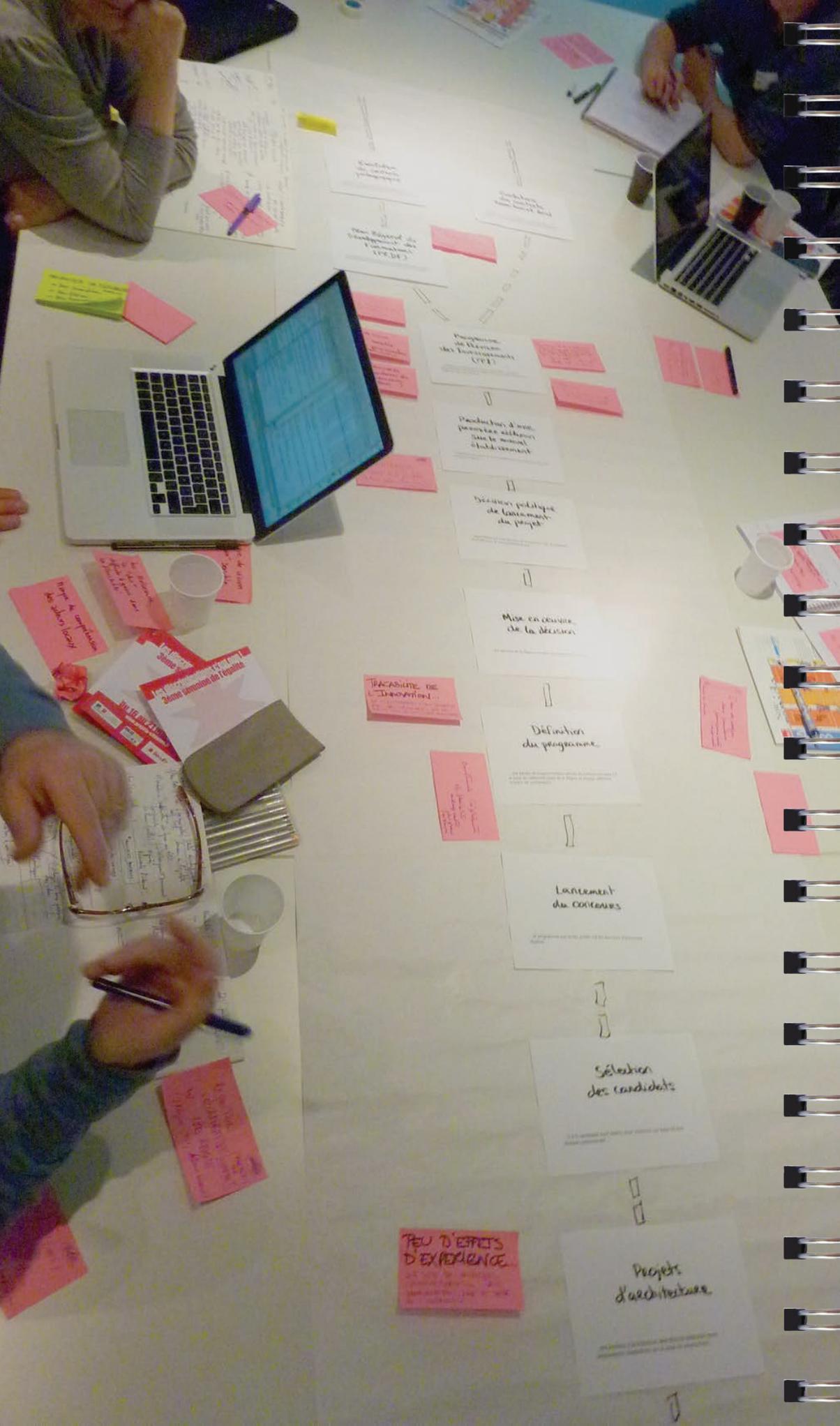
Connecting public authorities
throughout Europe

This booklet has been made from a paper titled: “Friendly hacking into the public sector: co-creating public policies within regional governments” by François Jégou, Stéphane Vincent, Romain Thevenet and Anna Lochard presented at the Co-create Conference organized by Aalto University, Helsinki, June 2013 and published in the proceedings of the conference pp 421-431.

The initial article was provided in a text format only. Illustrations have been handed after for the realization of this booklet.

Abstract

La 27e Région, a French NGO, has played the role of a public innovation lab since 2008, in particular for regional administrations. The challenge of modernizing public administrations has grown over the past few decades to become an issue on the forefront of the political scene. The public sector has been transformed by reforms inspired by the so-called New Public Management, often criticized today. Partly in response to these reforms, institutions worldwide, including La 27e Région, are trying to bring co-creation values and methodologies to public administrations to radically change the way public policies are designed, inspired by social innovation. La 27e Région has conducted fifteen experiments focused on co-creation processes with ten regional administrations. The co-creation processes implemented have been guided by a framework called “friendly hacking”, which has been developed, documented and improved by La 27e Région during the experiments employing Participatory Action Research. The key components of friendly hacking are: the inside-out posture, the neutral-activist role, the doing before thinking, multilevel interactions, the envisioning perspective and hacking documentation. Some tensions and risks, inherent in co-creation processes, still subsist but the friendly hacking framework appears to be an effective way to implement radical innovation in the very specific context of public administrations.



Programme de l'élection des Investisseurs (PEI)

Pratiques d'investissement sélectionnées sans le moindre arbitrairement

Pratiques politiques de l'investissement du projet

Mise en œuvre de la décision

Définition du programme

Lancement du concours

Sélection des candidats

Projet d'architecture

PRAGMATISME DE L'INNOVATION

PEU D'ESPERS D'EXPERIENCE

Il y a une complémentarité entre les deux idées

Il y a une complémentarité entre les deux idées

Il y a une complémentarité entre les deux idées



INTRODUCTION

La 27e Région is a French, public-sponsored but neutral NGO that has acted as a public innovation lab since 2008. Like other public innovation labs in various countries, its ambition is to change the culture of public administrations based on the idea that administrations are full of opportunities for innovations and are not the archaic and bureaucratic institutions they are often considered to be. One of the core assumptions of La 27e Région is that co-creation processes, associated with specific methodologies and strong values, are key to developing innovations within administrations (Bason 2010), innovations that would improve both the quality of public services for citizens and the way administrations function internally.

To set up this transformation process with and within public administrations, La 27e Région is conducting various experiments of co-creation processes, which are described below. All the experiments share the same framework, called “friendly hacking” by La 27e Région; this common framework serves as the basis for establishing a co-creation process during the experiment that takes into account the specificities of the public sector. This article describes the key components of this framework and also discusses tensions and risks related to friendly hacking.

◀ Fig 1: The mapping of the entire process of development of a high school from the initial political decision to the opening of the new building revealed a long and complex series of procedures with very little creative input and hardly any contact with users (Mon Lycée Demain, La 27e Région, Strategic Design Scenarios, Champagne-Ardennes and Nord Pas-de-Calais regions, ENSCI, Les Ateliers, PERL, 2011)

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The question of modernizing public administrations has grown over the past few decades to become an issue on the forefront of the political scene, not only in France (Pallez 2001; Bezes 2006), but also abroad (Aucoin 1990; Hood 1991; Pollitt & Bouckaert 2006). Public administration reforms, often inspired by management methodologies used in the private sector, are often grouped under the heading “New Public Management”, even if their characteristics vary from one country to another. Baselines of “New Public Management” reforms comprise:

- Separating conception functions, retained within the “strategist State” (Bezes 2006), from execution functions, often assigned to government agencies or outsourced
- Increasing the accountability of civil servants
- Making a commitment to the rationalization and instrumentation of public actions in order to develop and measure efficiency: monitoring charts, management performance indicators, evaluation of financial gains, etc.
- Opening some services to competition and developing competition among public services in-house

At present, mixed feedback and criticism regarding these reforms have been compiled both in France and abroad. Beyond the academic world, such reforms often receive negative media coverage and some criticism has begun to emerge at the top political level. For example, the French National Assembly has produced a report stating that one reform, strongly inspired by New Public Management, has “lost five years”. Administrations themselves are changing their semantics, and are urging for more cross-entity interactions among services and for the increased involvement of citizens, while often being incapable of applying these concepts themselves in their organization and management.

Partly in response to this context, various ideas have emerged that attempt to rethink the modernization of public administrations. One of them is inspired by the rise of social innovation and its practices.



Here, co-creation and co-conception of public policies become practical methodologies to achieve specific theoretical aspirations of the public sector, such as transversality and participation (Bason 2010). For Michael Harris and David Boyle, co-conception in the particular case of the public sector implies three basic assumptions: the first is that citizens-users (e.g. beneficiaries or patients) possess considerable information that could drastically improve the quality of public actions. The second is that families, neighborhoods, and communities are “operating systems” that cannot be ignored. The third is that some of the power, responsibility and resources should be switched from public institutions or providers to individuals (Boyle and Harris 2009). This emerging field does not have a stable and established name as yet; however, these initiatives are all “public innovation” actions, a term that is used henceforth in this article. Public innovation initiatives can be supported by public organizations (e.g. Mindlab in Denmark), private companies (e.g. Demos in the United Kingdom), as well as structures in the third sector, such as La 27e Région, one of the main representatives of public innovation in France.

French regional administrations are in charge of an increasing number of public policies while having to restrict and control their expenses at the same time. This explains why their modernization currently represents a major challenge. La 27e Région primarily works with regional administrations, developing with them experimental programs for co-creating public policies.

DATA AND METHODOLOGY

Fifteen past and ongoing experiments

The results of this article are based on the two experimental programs conducted by La 27e Région with regional administrations: Territoires en Résidences (“in-residence territories”) includes eleven experiments conducted between 2009 and 2011, and La Transfo is a two-year long ongoing program that has been launched in four regions and was started in 2011.

Territoires en Résidences consists in immersive-oriented sessions contracted with regional authorities that wish to find an alternative way for reframing a specific policy. First, a partnership and financial agreement is signed between La 27e Région, the Region involved and the place of the residency (e.g. a railway station, an university, a library, etc.). Then a multi-disciplinary team is set up by La 27e Région and works closely with the local community for three to six months, including three weeks of total immersion involving ethnographic, co-design and prototyping activities. The lessons learned benefit the local community and regional governments as well as the national network of regional governments (Jégou et al. 2011). Table 1 presents the characteristics of the eleven experiments carried out and Figure 1 identifies where the experiments took place.

La Transfo consists in prototyping innovation labs inside regional administrations. After testing residencies, some Regional Councils expressed the wish to build their own capacity to use such methods. To accomplish this, a multi-disciplinary team is spending a total of ten weeks over a two-year period within the regional organization to empower a group of civil servants. They use practical cases on a specific theme to co-create the future lab. Table 2 summarizes the four ongoing experiments.



A methodology based on Participatory Action Research

Both La Transfo and Territoires en Résidences have been designed using the principles of Participatory Action Research (Whyte 1991), inspired by action research (Lewin 1948). They are indeed collective processes of self-investigation within public administrations with the explicit objective of their transformation, based on the idea that action and research must be conducted with civil servants and elected representatives, and not for them. Participants in La 27e Région experiments include researchers from various disciplines such as sociology, urban planning, design and management sciences, who do not remain neutral observers but who participate in the co-creation of collective actions (David & Hatchuel 2008). Therefore, the process itself is the source of research material and knowledge, in particular thanks to documentation through blogs, videos, notebooks etc. These documents are public, following Open Science principles of collaborative research and copyright-free research materials. Participatory Action Research is inherent in each experiment and is included in the contract signed before between La 27e Région and the Region where the experiment takes place.



THE “FRIENDLY HACKING” FRAMEWORK

All the experiments conducted are based on a framework called “friendly hacking” by La 27e Région. This framework includes six key components that enable co-creation processes to happen within public administrations with civil servants, elected representatives and various partners.

Why “friendly hacking”?

The apparent contradiction between the two terms can be explained as follows: hacking signifies the intent to challenge the robustness of public policy instruments and services, and to identify and acknowledge weak points to allow for improvement. Here, the hacking is friendly, not destructive. The approach, agreed by public authorities, represents an innovation strategy that is disruptive enough to question public structures known for their inertia and conservatism. The term was selected because of the positive culture of hackers, who are innovative, curious and playful handymen possessing the capacity to achieve promising results, in this case in public structures. Hackers are adept in quickly recombining the existent, and thus help build trust among stakeholders both inside and outside the institution, serving to kick-start structural shifts in the culture of innovation and the practices of public authorities.

The inside-out posture

Friendly hacking relies on the confrontation of various cultures that are found at the border of the institution but which are nonetheless internal and sufficiently immersed to engage the institution’s civil servants, but which are also sufficiently detached to preserve a critical point of view and relative freedom of action. The privileged mode of intervention is an immersion

◀ Fig 2: To kick-off the development of a Multilevel Governance Charter, the first Steering committee of the project lead by the Committee of Region was organised as an accelerated version of the 6 months process in 4 hours: this “doing before thinking” approach allowed the Steering committee to experience and test the unusual design-driven methodology first in order to be able to play its steering role in the best way all along the project development (Strategic Design Scenarios, La 27e Région, Committee of Region, 2012)





posture: by setting up the hacking team in a school, a library or even in the Region's offices themselves for a period of several weeks, in-depth collaboration comes about, trust is built and how the institution functions internally is clearly identified, far beyond conventional formats of participative design (Jégou et al. 2009). Long periods of immersion also mean that the team remains suspended in regard to periods of emersion, metabolizing the experience from the inside, stepping back and rebuilding from a critical distance. The inside-out posture creates benefits for civil servants both by allowing them to feel that they are involved as a quasi-new employee and at the same time as an external observer, free to rethink, at least partially, the public institution in question.

The neutral-activist role

Friendly hacking requires a subtle balance between neutrality (when it comes to getting people from different statuses to work together) and activism (when it comes to defending strong values promoted as a manifesto, such as freedom of speech in regards to the duty of self-restraint of civil servants). In many cases, when confronted with a mix of internal inertia, bureaucratic silos and external social, economic and environmental challenges, the public sector calls for neutral activism, driven by a set of constructive public values. La 27e Région works to build and maintain a position of relative independency, insisting that it is a partner and not a subcontractor. This role is materialized by a contract signed between La 27e Région and the Region itself before the experiment takes place; the agreement covers co-funding, specifies means but not outcomes, identifies political backing, the necessity of open source documentation etc. This agreement is a powerful tool used by La 27e Région to keep the spirit of the experiment on track until the end.

◀ Fig 3: Stakeholders from various departments of the Regional council of Bourgogne were first involved in a envisioning workshop focusing the futur of rural villages. The day after a bench was booked in the street market of a local village nearby where they could confront their visions with the perspectives of inhabitants (La 27e Région, Strategic Design Scenarios, Région Bourgogne, 2011)



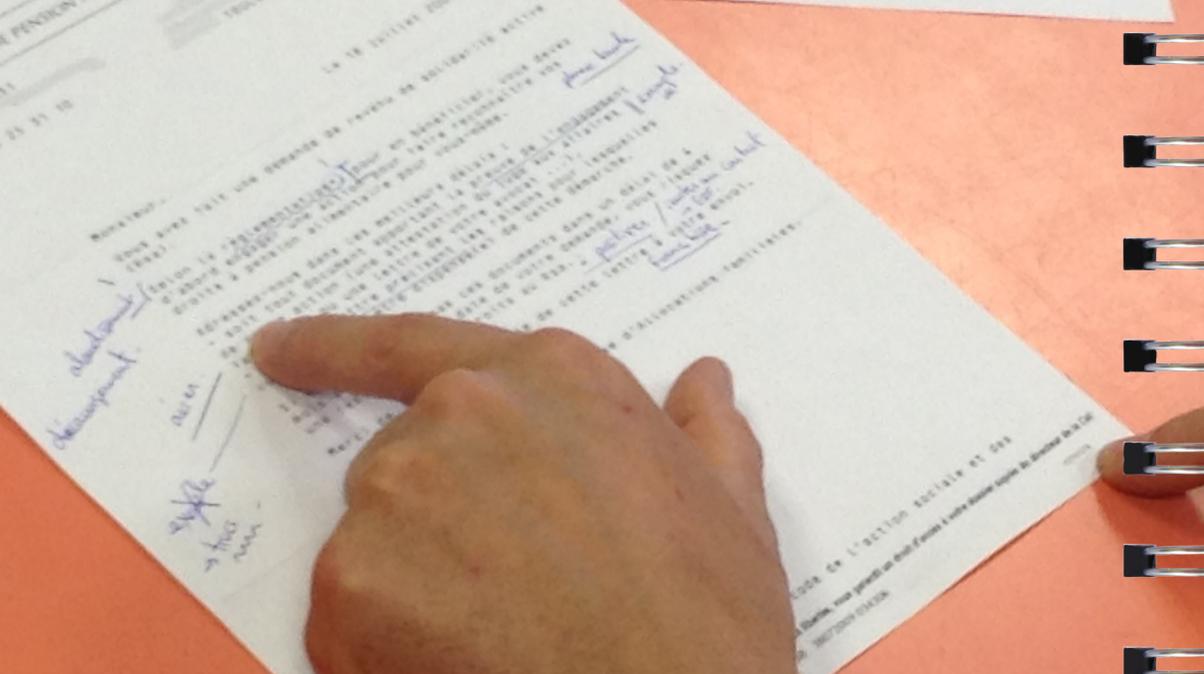
The doing before thinking

The customary local public development process tends to be based on in vitro project engineering, followed by large-scale deployment throughout the territory. It often lacks field studies involving users and especially experimentation with the implementation of the solutions proposed. For instance, via a particular experiment conducted between La 27e Région, Strategic Design Scenarios and two French regional Education Departments (Champagne-Ardenne and Nord Pas-de-Calais), it was possible to map the process and stakeholders involved over 2-3 years in the construction of a new high school (Jégou, Vincent & Thoresen 2011). The mapping revealed, from the political decision to build the school through its inauguration, the quasi-absence of involvement of the school's future users, i.e., the students, professors and technical and administrative staff. However, it is just as necessary to involve, at the very early stage of the process, persons who are key to scaling up and implementing the project in the future (Leadbeater & Wong 2011). For example, one of the first Territoires en Résidences experiments was the co-creation of a nursing home. However, this experiment was carried out without the participation of the home's future director, substantially reducing the ease of implementation.

Multilevel interactions

Hacking is not the action of a single instigator, but requires the involvement of a supportive community. Similarly, transformation of the public sector calls for cooperation among territories and various levels of government along with cross-fertilization within a heterogeneous community of interest. Working with partners from diversified backgrounds allows participants to slightly change the way in which they consider a problem, which is key to allowing the co-creation processes to occur. Continuous

◀ Fig 4: URBACT thematic networks are based on a partnership of 8 to 12 European cities exchanging on local stakeholders' practices and their respective governance regarding these specific practices. The network is managed by one of the cities working as lead partner. A Lead expert facilitating the exchanges between the cities is referring to the Lead partner but is paid by the URBACT programme. His "inside-out" posture generate an interesting posture at the same time involved but still keeping a certain distance (URBACT III, Strategic Design Scenarios, 2015).



**HYPOTHÈSE:
ET SI UNE ADMINISTRATION ENVOYAIT UNE
LETTRE À UN POTE?**

**SI CA POUVAIT SE PASSER
COMME CELA SE SERAIT
FORMIDABLE ...**

NON PEUT-ÊTRE ...

Patrick,

Tout d'abord, j'espère que tout va bien pour toi.

Depuis juillet 2009, nous entretenons une très bonne relation ensemble, et nous en sommes très contents. Mais, dernièrement, en regardant de plus près votre dossier, nous avons remarqué que tu n'as pas déclaré ton nouvel emploi, que tu as apparemment commencé en octobre 2013.

Tout d'abord félicitations pour ce boulot ! Nous espérons que tu t'épanouis pleinement, mais cela fait quand même deux mois que nous le venons une allocation réservée aux personnes sans emploi...

Cela ne nous fait absolument pas plaisir, et même de la peine, mais tu nous dois 140,70 €.

Nous espérons que tu pourras régler cette somme rapidement (grâce à ton nouveau boulot) pour que nous puissions reprendre une relation privilégiée avec un de nos allocataires préférés.

Passes le bonjour de notre part à la femme et les enfants.

Bien sûr.

IL Y A DE

Bonjour,

Nous vous écrivons pour vous dire que jusqu'à maintenant, nous ne sommes pas parvenus à vous contacter. Cela vous semblera peut-être étrange mais nous écrivons aussi à votre famille pour leur dire que les choses vont bien quand c'est le cas et nous avons depuis la déclaration de grossesse de votre premier enfant il y a un allocataire exemplaire.

En revanche, il semble que vous ayez oublié de déclarer votre situation familiale qui se traduit par un trop versé de 140,70 €.

Merci de régulariser votre situation dans les meilleurs délais en nous renvoyant cet exemplaire!

Votre conseiller.

**ÇA SERAIT BIEN DE
RECEVOIR DES
COURRIERS COMME
CELA, ON REÇAIT
TELIEMENT DE
MILIEUX NOUVELLES**



interplay between this “macro-scope”, used to enlarge the focus and rephrase a problem, and the investigations at micro-level described above facilitates the breaking-up of technocratic silos and opens the door for multilevel governance and inter-territoriality perspectives (Vanier 2008).

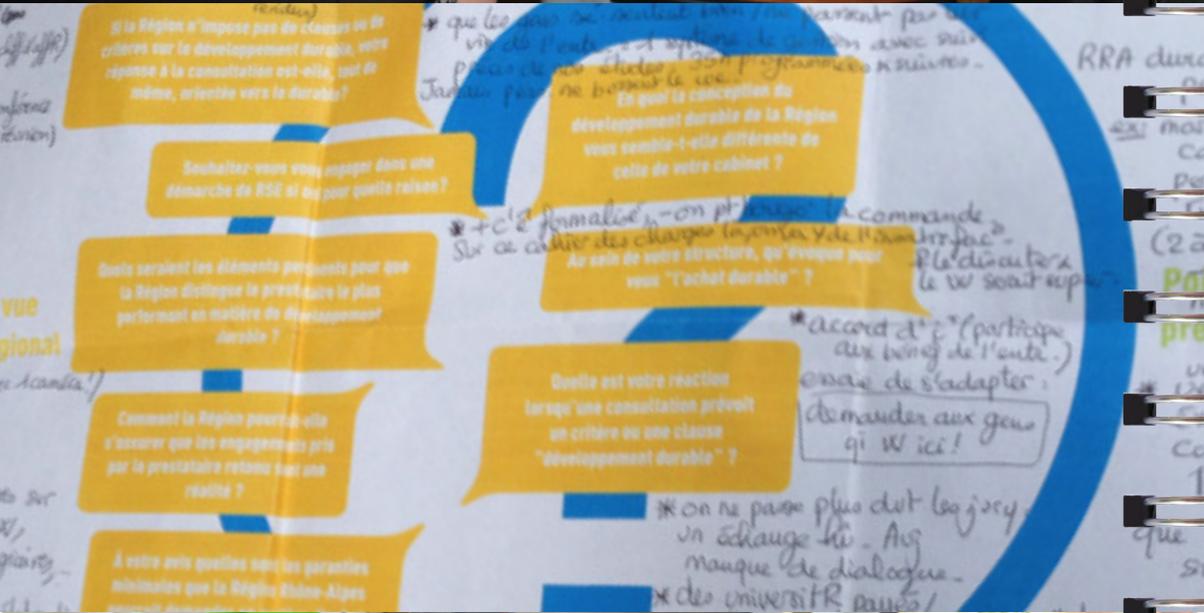
The envisioning perspective

Friendly hacking is by essence oriented toward the collective construction of a desirable future. Both Territoires en Résidences and La Transfo point to the necessity to step back from the urgency of the present and take the time needed to build an image of the future and collectively agree on it. Design capabilities that simulate in tangible, realistic (feasible) fashion (by visualizing, rapid prototyping) possible alternative futures facilitate concretization of the vision into a range of ideas, projects and solutions. These capabilities also stimulate strategic interchanges among stakeholders. In this approach, foresight is no longer a theoretical exercise but a way to build actionable proposals.

Hacking documentation

Like the open-source software community, friendly hacking focuses on “opening the administration’s black box” to promote the systematic capitalization and dissemination of lessons learned for further friendly hacking and also produce high quality research material. This requires confronting administrations, which are often reluctant to publish and share real experiences, such as failures and the hidden “dirty” face of a given experiment, and not just the so-called “best practices”. Each experiment must find the most appropriate suitable type of documentation: blog, book. For example, documentation of Résidences consists of a day-to-day blog and an illustrated booklet published at the end of each experiment.

◀ **Fig 5: A group of social beneficiaries and a group of managers from local public social services were engaged in a redesign process of standard administration letters. In order to stimulate this original “writing workshop” a series of extreme letters (i.e. if the administration would talk to you as a friend; if it would be rude or in love with you; etc.) as a stretching exercise to enlarge participants scope (La 27e Région, Strategic Design Scenarios, 2014)**





TENSIONS AND RISKS IMPLIED BY THE CO-CREATION PROCESS OF FRIENDLY HACKING

The friendly hacking process is often described by participants, and especially by civil servants, as a completely new way of imagining their day-to-day work. Friendly hacking experiences cannot be easily forgotten since civil servants have been fully involved in the co-creation process, not only as observer but as player responsible of it. This can, however, create tensions and risks. One risk is related to the fact that the friendly hacking framework, which paves the way for radical innovations, is a highly specific environment that is difficult to reproduce. A tension concerns the desire of civil servants to use the methodologies learned during the experiment in an organization that is not familiar with this way of working.

The risk of “friendly-hacking” neutralization

The co-creation of radical innovations requires both a hacking capability to effectively break down the established, heavy public structure, as well as a strong capability to compensate for the disruption caused by co-designing pertinent and innovative solutions. The temptation of repeating the process without the appropriate framework of friendly hacking and without the participation of a trained, multi-disciplinary team can lead to a “do-gooder” attitude, which is weak and flat and which results in patching projects rather than in the in-depth collective rethinking of public infrastructure and policies.

◀ Fig 6: Civils servants from the Rhône-Alpes Regional council constrained by very strict and highly regulated public procurement procedures where involved in a field trip in Lyon the city where they are based to visit the applicants to the Region’s bid from which they receive offers but that they had nether seen face-to-face. (La 27e Région, Strategic Design Scenarios, 2012)

The tension due to lack of co-creation culture

The positive, constructive and “look at old problems with new eyes” attitude developed by civil servants during the experiment is not always easy to bring back into the day-to-day work of the administration. Even if in some rare cases, the motivation and hierarchical position of some civil servants allow them to suggest and teach new principles of work to their colleagues, civil servants usually feel frustrated to be “stuck in the old way of doing things” once the experiment is over. However, two or more persons who were part of the same experiment customarily drastically change the way they work together, recreating the methods and attitudes learned during the experiment once they return to their normal work routines.





CONCLUSION

Since 2008 and during fifteen experiments, La 27e Région has developed, documented and improved a powerful friendly hacking framework using Participatory Action Research. At present, results are far from negligible in terms of changing the view of civil servants and representative elected involved in the experiments, but also in concrete change of some public policies. However, goodwill and methods are still not enough if a systemic transformation is the target, since friendly hacking takes time and long-term investments supported by diversified and patient stakeholders.

Beyond the current disruptive capacity of friendly hacking, there is a need in the future for new kinds of agreements and contracts that could improve the framework. They could support new structures (e.g. independent design labs working for and with multiple partners or cooperative design companies), new business models (e.g. based on crowdsourcing) and new governance patterns that could enable the independency required in an alternative approach to the traditional suppliers/clients approach.

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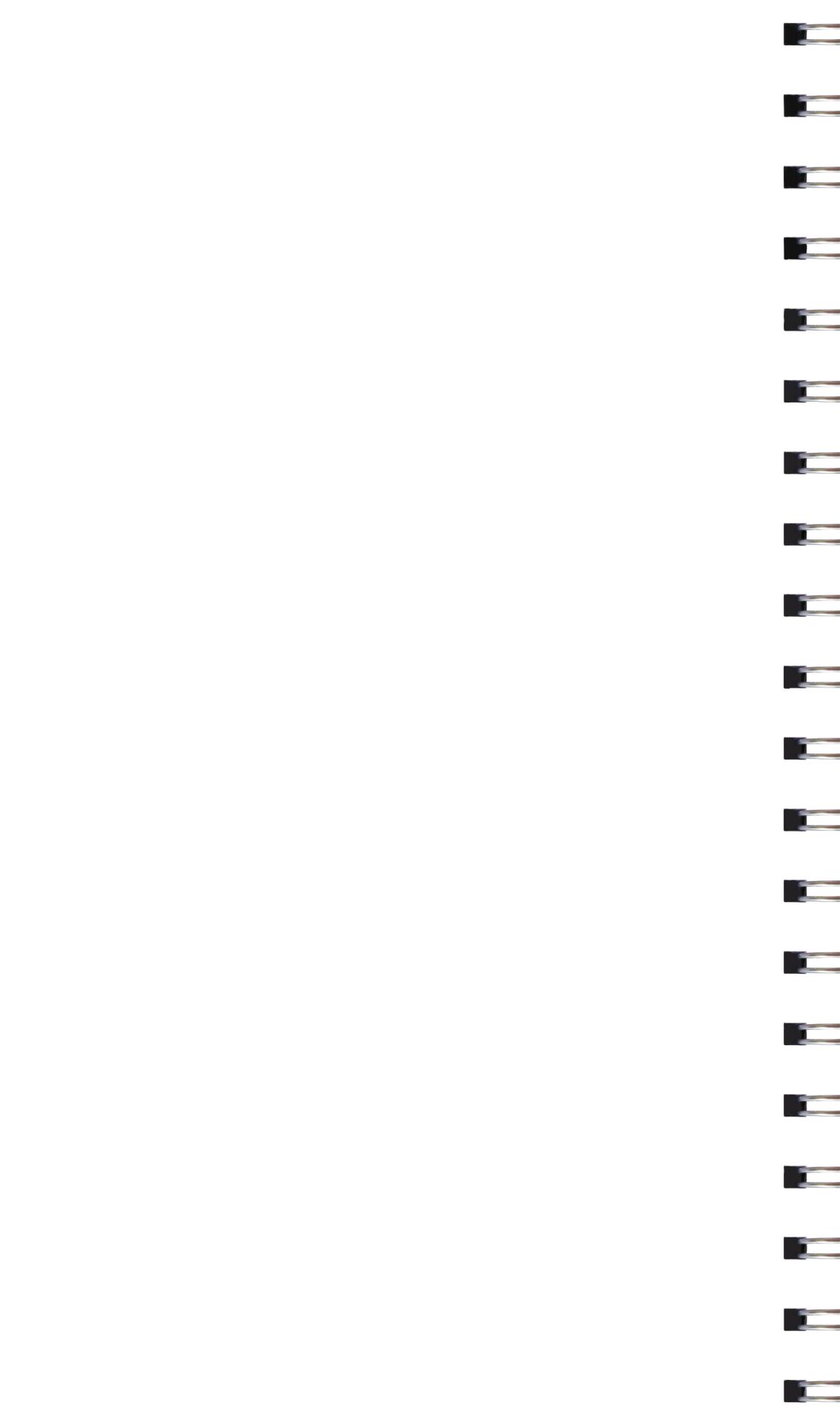
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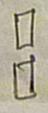
PRECISION DE L'USAGE (S)
VS
POLYVALESC
→ ~~Précision~~ Niveau social inférieur



Sélection des candidats

... 3 à 5 candidats sont retenus pour concourir sur base de leur dossier administratif.

PEU D'EFFETS D'EXPERIENCE...
UNE SUITE DE PROPOS
PROPOS ARCHITECTURAUX... DANS
S'ENVAISONNEMENT... MAIS EN SUIVANT
LES...
LES...
LES...



Projets d'architecture

les bureaux d'architecture sélectionnés élaborent leurs propositions respectives sur la base du programme.

les Réseaux
le "dur"
difficile à gérer dans
la flexibilité

REGIME TRANSITOIRE
PAR MANZUT
→ cherche l'équilibre entre
qualité et coût



Jury de sélection

un jury constitué d'élus, de représentants du conseil de l'Ordre des Architectes et des représentants des services choisissent un projet sur la base des évaluations d'experts (économie de construction, normes HQE, fonctionnalité, etc.)

L'INNOVATION "Le-projet"
simplifier le processus de
travaux de l'architecte
de l'équipe
↓
Pb: les programmes sont
trop complexes



Document de Consultation des Entreprises (DCE)

le bureau d'architecture sélectionné élabore le projet jusqu'au DCE.

André Lévesque
consultant
→ l'avis de l'architecte



Travaux

déroulement des travaux jusqu'à la phase de réception/inauguration...

+6ans

+12ans