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*...is a forum that encourages debate on a wide range of research findings, with the overall aim of promoting evidence-based policy and law-making within Northern Ireland*

# Public service reform in a time of cutbacks: Collaboration and the role of parliament

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## Overview


Context: Budgetary cutbacks and administrative reform

New modes of public service organisation

The challenge of collaboration

The roles of parliament

Conclusions



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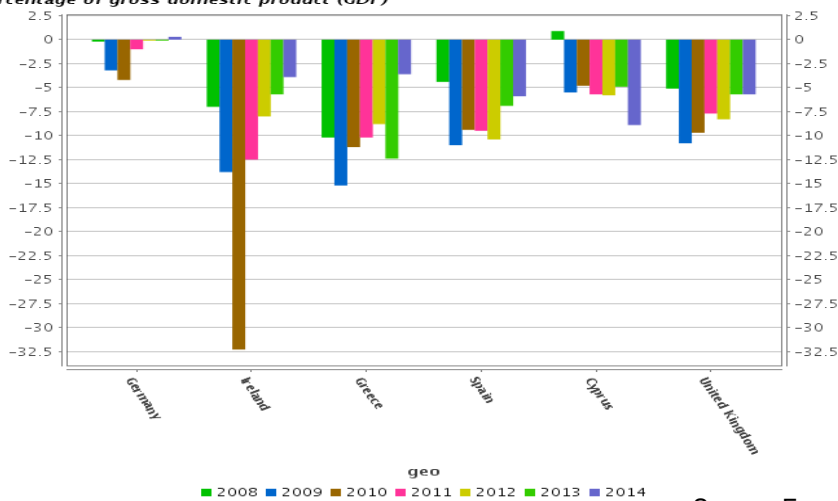
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## Context: Budgetary cutbacks & administrative reform

### General government deficit/surplus

% of GDP and million EUR

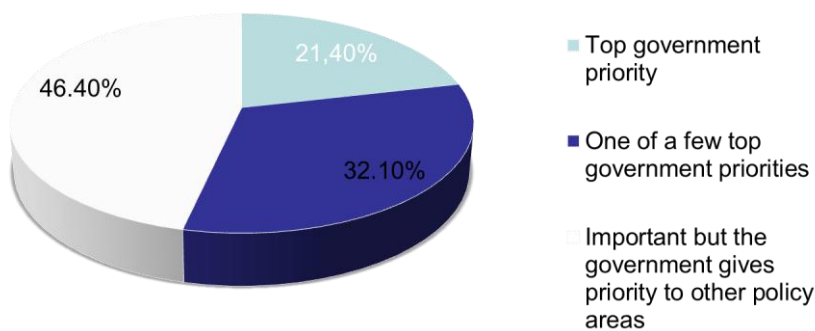
Percentage of gross domestic product (GDP)



Source: Eurostat

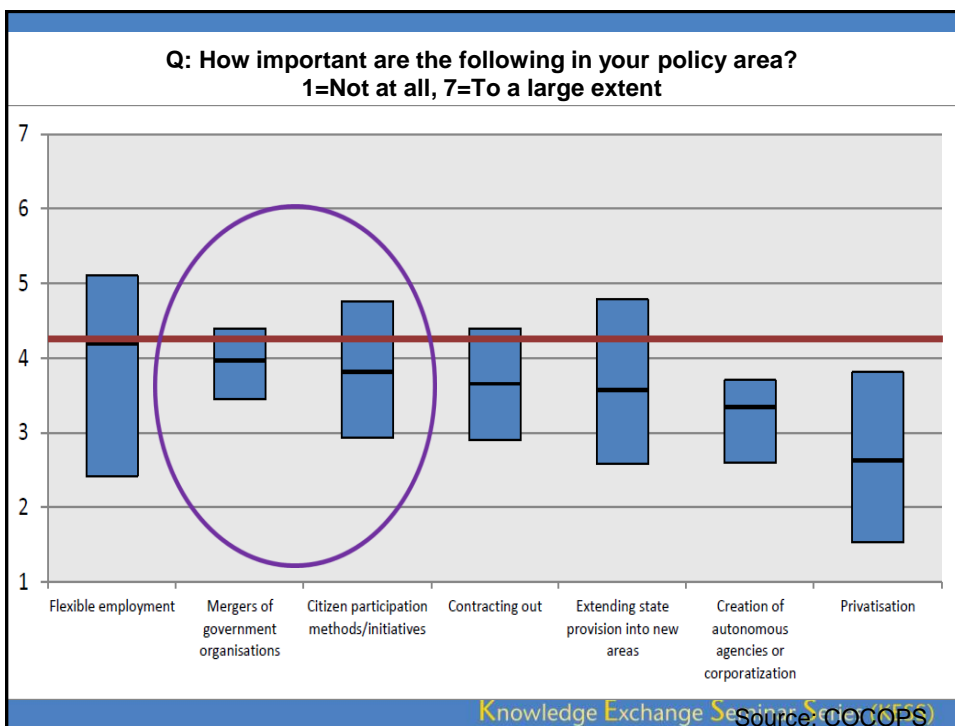
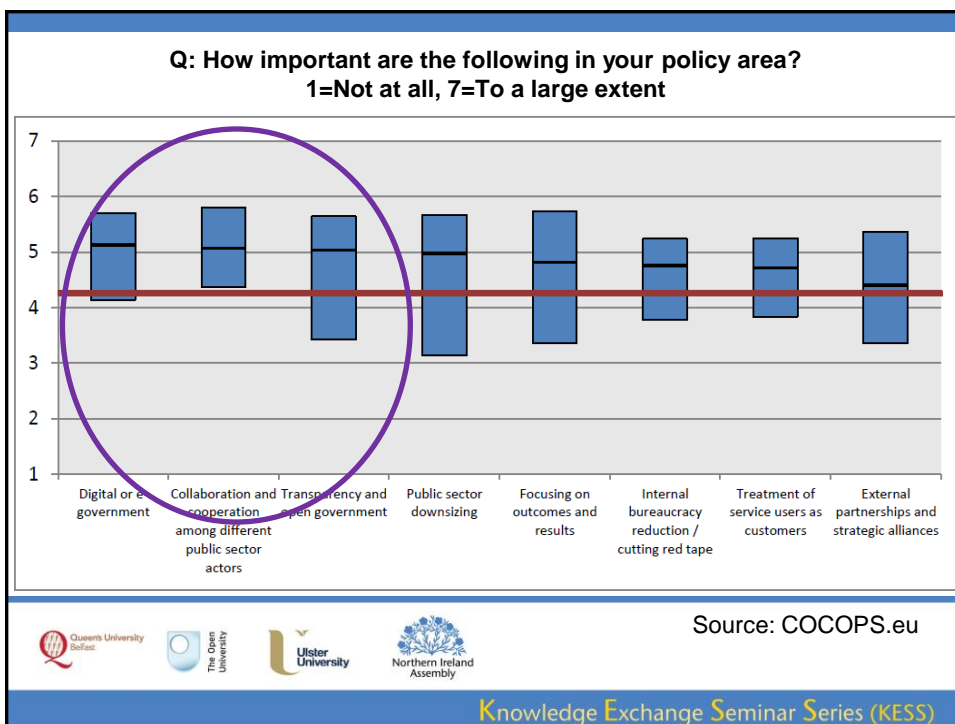
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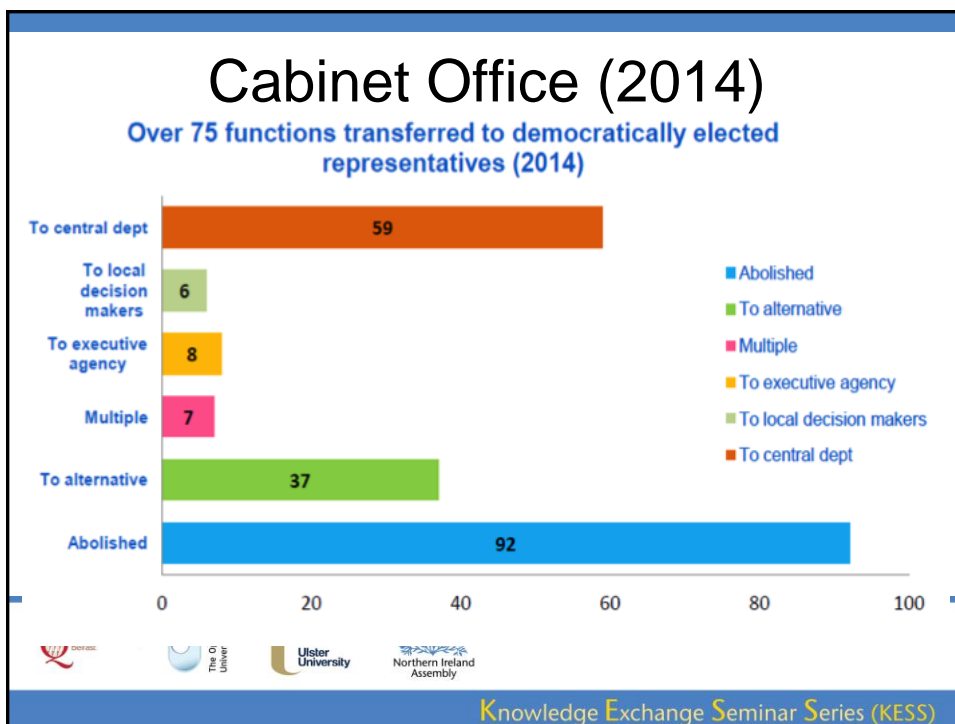
## Importance of public administration reforms in government priorities



Source: EUPAN 2013

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## Collaborative public management

- Much literature about interdependencies *within* organizations
  - Different stages of a production process or between functional departments
- But also *between* organisations as production processes changed
- Huxham & Macdonald (1992): 'collaborative advantage':
  - 'meeting an objective which no individual organization could have met alone'
- Agranoff and McGuire (2003):
  - 'the process of facilitating and operating in multi-organizational arrangements to solve problems that cannot be solved, or solved easily, by single organizations'



## New (re)organisations

- Centralisation...
- Closures and mergers
- But also new forms of **collaboration**
- Shared services (co-governance)
- Digital consolidation
- Joint activities (inspections, surveys)
- Inter-municipal companies



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## The challenge for parliament

Accountability

'Line of sight'

Performance

How to assess?

Budgetary

Transparency



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# Budgetary Transparency (OECD 2015)



## Of what?

Revenues  
Expenditures  
Liabilities

## To whom?

Citizens  
Parliament

## For what?

“The public interest”  
Trust

- Processes
- Plans
- **Performance**
- Risks
- Peers
- Int'l bodies
- Markets
- Auditors
- **Participation**
- Lower costs
- Integrity
- Better decisions
- Impacts



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