

PPP Knowledge Centre: Advisor and Think-tank

Ministry of Finance
PPP Knowledge Centre
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The PPP Knowledge Centre with its Advisory Council and Steering Group is part of the Ministry of Finance

I. The PPP Knowledge Centre combines knowledge and experience, makes this information widely available and examines ways in which the government can enter into alliances with the private sector. Government department and agency project leaders can approach the Centre for advice and assistance. At the PPP Knowledge Centre, policy and implementation are found under the same roof, very much as extensions of each other. Here, practical experience has a direct impact on policy and other recommendations. The efficiency and synergy benefits that this confers can be translated immediately into the projects. No one has to re-invent the wheel, and at the same time pitfalls that have already been identified are easily avoided. In other words, bringing in the Knowledge Centre pays immediate dividends.

II. The PPP Knowledge Centre, which is part of the Ministry of Finance, was established on 1 January 1999 and has two main functions: to gather knowledge and experience, and to assist in the formulation of government policy on partnerships between the public and private sectors. A closer relationship between the public and private sectors calls for unambiguous and effective rules. The PPP Knowledge Centre is the think-tank that is assisting the government along his new path. This it does in a number of ways which include translating practical experience into clear regulation, making proposals for attractive projects, and regularly reporting on the knowledge acquired and insights gained. The Knowledge Centre is staffed by experts with an industry background together with policymakers appointed by the government. The Knowledge Centre has an Advisory Council and a Steering Group to give counsel and advice.

III. The third task of the PPP Knowledge Centre is to act in an advisory capacity. The chief focus of these activities is the assessment of the quality of PPP proposals. As the finishing touch to an active dialogue, often mainly with the government's executive departments, the Knowledge Centre delivers recommendations in which it sets out its findings as to whether a given PPP proposal meets the government's standards of quality: will the stated goals be reached, will the desired added value be achieved, is the proposal suitable for making an approach to the market, and does the plan meet the requirements of current PPP policy? The analytical instruments that the Knowledge Centre has at its disposal contribute to the answering of these questions. To obtain an early clear picture of the feasibility of PPP proposals, two comparators have been developed: the public-private comparator and the public sector comparator. The Knowledge Centre also develops standards for preparatory procedures and for tendering and contracting procedures, in addition to working on checklists for risk and contract management.

The Advisory Council of the PPP Knowledge Centre

The Advisory Council of the PPP Knowledge Centre consists of experts drawn from the private sector in the Netherlands and abroad. The purpose of the Council is to critically monitor the activities initiated by the Knowledge Centre in the area of public-private collaboration and to make recommendations concerning them. These are then discussed with the PPP Steering Group, which consists of representatives of government departments. This ensures good interaction between the public and private sectors. Together, the Advisory Council and the Steering Group are tasked with setting a workable course for successful PPPs in the Netherlands. The Advisory Council is an informal body, meeting two or three times a year, in which experts in the field of public-private collaboration acting in a personal capacity make recommendations and identify important developments, and in which policies developed by the Knowledge Centre and others can be scrutinised in the light of practical experience. The Chairman of the Advisory Council is Mr. G.J. Wijers, former minister of Economic Affairs, and now working as Senior Vice President at the Boston Consulting Group. Mr. W.L. Moerman, Director Financing Directorate of the Ministry of Finance where the Knowledge Centre is part of, will be the Secretary. The following national and international experts have declared themselves willing to participate in the Advisory Council:

- Dr. J.M.G. Frijns, Chief Executive Investments, Stichting Pensioenfonds ABP/USZO
- H.J. Hazewinkel RA, Chairman of the Board of Directors, Koninklijke Volker Wessels Stevin NV
- Mr. A. Montague, Deputy Chief Executive designate of Partnerships UK, HM Treasury
- Mr. D. Higgins, Chief Executive, Lend Lease Corporation
- Mr. J.D. Carter, Executive Vice President and Director, Bechtel Group, Inc.
- Prof. dr. S.J.G. van Wijnbergen, Professor, University of Amsterdam
- C. van Dijkhuizen, chairman (Treasurer General, Ministry of Finance)
- F.H. Lemmink, secretaris (deputy director PPP Knowledge Centre, Ministry of Finance)

The Steering Group of the PPP Knowledge Centre

The Steering Group determines the programmes of work and projects to be carried out by the Knowledge Centre. Policy documents and progress reports preparatory to decision-making by the Council of Ministers must be approved by the Steering Group. Finally the Steering Group also meets for consultations with the Advisory Council. The progress of decision-making on individual projects is not, therefore, one of the Steering Group's responsibilities: responsibility for individual projects rests with the executive ministries. Individual members of the Steering Group are responsible for ensuring that PPP activities within their departments are coordinated with the activities of the PPP Knowledge Centre. This in turn ensures that all relevant information is shared, that unnecessary duplication of work is avoided, and that knowledge and experience within central government are efficiently distributed and built upon. The Steering Group consists of the following members:

- C. van Dijkhuizen, chairman (Treasurer General, Ministry of Finance);
- W. Moerman, deputy chairman, (director of Financing, Ministry of Finance);
- M.M.D. Eeghden, lid (DG for Passenger Transport, Ministry of Transport, Public Works & Water Management);
- C.J. Vriesman, lid (DG Ruimtelijk Planning, Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning & Environmental Planning);
- J.F. de Leeuw, lid (DG, deputy SG, Ministry of Agriculture, Nature Management & Fisheries);

- J.W. Oosterwijk, lid (SG, Ministry of Economic Affairs);
- H. Borstlap, lid (DG Strategy and Labour Market, Ministry of Education, Culture & Science);
- L.A.M. van Halder, (director of Urban Policy & Integration of Ethnic Minorities, Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations);
- G.N. Roes, (director of Legislation, Ministry of Justice);
- F.H. Lemmink, secretary (deputy director PPP Knowledge Centre, Ministry of Finance).