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## **The Mechanisms Behind the Effects of Organisational Centralisation on Public Service Motivation: The Case of The Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs' 24/7 Contact Centre**

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**The Mechanisms Behind the Effects of Organisational Centralisation on  
Public Service Motivation**

The Case of The Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs' 24/7 Contact Centre

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## **Abstract**

**Purpose:** This thesis aims to understand the causal mechanistic relationship between organisational centralisation and Public Service Motivation (PSM). It tests and explains one existing causal mechanism based on PSM theory and explores an alternative causal mechanism based on the logic of Self-Determination Theory (SDT).

**Design and methodology:** This qualitative, single-case deductive study includes some explorative elements to explain and probe causal mechanisms. Nine semi-structured interviews provide the data which this study transcribed, coded, and analysed.

**Findings:** The results find that organisational centralisation indeed creates stark hierarchical structures and a certain degree of autonomy loss for individual employees. This negatively impacts PSM. However, centralisation of more services in organisations such as contact centres also makes their job more varied and rewarding due to direct contact with service beneficiaries and therefore satisfies four basic universal psychological needs. In turn, this positively impacts employee motivation (PSM).

**Originality/value:** Although not a first, this thesis brings the PSM and SDT literature closer by using the latter as a logic through which the effects of an independent variable (organisational centralisation) on the former can be explained. Furthermore, organisational centralisation has barely been studied alone as an antecedent of PSM. This thesis also shifts the continued focus from quantitative PSM studies to qualitative research. Thusly advancing the internal validity of the theory and passed research.

**Practical implications:** The findings are especially relevant for foreign affairs ministries wishing to establish a 24/7 contact centre resembling that of the Netherlands. Centralised provision of consular and other information can be excellent for providing uniform and high-quality information to people abroad. Moreover, since good public service depends on the motivation of public employees, centralised or centralising (public) organisations should balance hierarchy creation whilst maintaining high levels of employee need satisfaction.

**Keywords:** Organisational Centralisation, Causal Mechanism, Hierarchy, Autonomy, Need Satisfaction, Public Service Motivation, Self-Determination Theory

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## Acronyms

- **APS** – Attraction to Public Service
- **CIO** – Consular Information Officer
- **COM** – Compassion
- **CPV** – Commitment to Public Values
- **FA** – Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- **FACC** – Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs’ 24/7 BZ Contact Centre
- **H1** – Hypothesis 1
- **H2** – Hypothesis 2
- **I** – Informant (referenced)
- **LBP** – *Loket Buitenland* project
- **PA** – Public Administration (the field of study)
- **PSM** – Public Service Motivation
- **R** – Respondent (referenced)
- **SDT** – Self-Determination Theory
- **SS** – Self-Sacrifice

## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

### **1.1 | Research Question**

The public service provision sector has been experiencing a move towards centralisation thanks to electronic tools available (Torfing et al., 2020). This new Digital-Era Governance paradigm of public administration aims to make the public service sector more efficient and effective and streamline the public administration's operations (Dunleavy et al., 2006; Torfing et al., 2020). It does so through holistic solutions such as intra-institutional cooperation and coordination and organisational centralisation (Margetts & Dunleavy, 2013; Torfing et al., 2020). One example of centralisation can be found in the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (FA). Since 2016 it has been centralising the provision of different information to Dutch expatriates, foreigners wishing to come to the Netherlands, and all Dutch travellers through its 24/7 Contact Centre (FACC) in The Hague – reachable through various forms of telecommunication (BZ, 2016; 2019). Consequently, clients might be happier with this centralised, efficient, and accessible form of service provision. But government service provision ultimately relies on public employees to perform their jobs effectively and efficiently.

Since the conception of Public Service Motivation (PSM) theory by Perry & Wise (1990), researchers have found that PSM is positively related to various outcomes, such as job satisfaction (Breaugh et al., 2018; Demircioglu & Chen, 2019; Homberg et al., 2015; Prysmakova, 2020), and organisational performance (Christensen et al., 2017). Therefore, it is worth looking further into employee PSM as an outcome variable that subsequently has great impacts on organisational outcomes (Christensen et al., 2017; Homberg et al., 2015; Perry, 1996, 1997; Perry & Wise, 1990). Accordingly, the PSM literature has looked into the antecedents affecting PSM and their correlation with PSM levels (Camilleri, 2007; Charbonneau & Van Ryzin, 2017; Pandey & Stazyk, 2008; Perry, 1996, 1997; Perry et al., 2008; Schott & Pronk, 2014; Vandenabeele, 2011; Vinarski Peretz, 2020). Yet many authors argue that there is a lack of research into the exact relationships or mechanisms between these antecedents and PSM (Pandey & Stazyk, 2008; Schott & Pronk, 2014; Vandenabeele, 2011). For example, Prysmakova (2016) found an overall negative correlation between organisational centralisation and PSM in her Polish case. However, the exact mechanism behind this correlation is yet to be explained and discovered. Little to no research has been conducted on the specific relationship. So, it is an interesting mechanism to study and explore. Most PSM

studies are quantitative or are comparative case studies, making the field barren of qualitative, in-depth, single-case research (Perry & Vandenabeele, 2015; Prebble, 2016; Vinarski Peretz, 2020). Furthermore, considering that technology is making centralisation easier, it is important to know the effects of this on employee PSM. Public administrators could mitigate its adverse effects, or conversely, intensify its positive effects. This thesis aims to fill in these gaps of knowledge by explaining and further exploring this relationship using a qualitative, single-case study based on self-gathered interview data. It does so through the logics of PSM theory and Self-Determination theory (SDT). Accordingly, this work aims to answer the following research question: How does organisational centralisation affect Public Service Motivation?

To be more specific to the case at hand: Through what mechanism does the centralisation of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign affairs (creation of the 24/7 Contact Centre) affect its employee's Public Service Motivation negatively, and under what conditions does it affect it positively?

## **1.2 | Contribution**

### **1.2.1 – Academic Relevance**

In answering this question, this thesis makes a few contributions to the field of Public Administration (PA) through its deductive, explanatory research design. To be sure, it includes some inductive, exploratory elements as well. Firstly, this thesis contributes to the literature on what factors affect PSM. More specifically, how organisational and subsequent task-related factors influence an individual's PSM. As explained hereabove, much of the PSM literature has focused on public service employee motivation as an independent variable (Breugh et al., 2018; Christensen et al., 2017; Demircioglu & Chen, 2019; Homberg et al., 2015; Perry, 1996; Prysmakova, 2020; Vinarski Peretz, 2020). However, other studies have tried to uncover the antecedents and mechanisms behind PSM (Camilleri, 2007; Charbonneau & Van Ryzin, 2017; Pandey & Stazyk, 2008; Perry, 1997; Perry et al., 2008; Schott & Pronk, 2014; Vandenabeele, 2011). Most authors point to the lack of research into precisely these antecedents and mechanisms, hoping that future research picks this up (Pandey & Stazyk, 2008; Schott & Pronk, 2014; Vandenabeele, 2011). This thesis aims to do just this. In the end, "PSM is not limited to the public sector" and, therefore, it has a broader societal relevance (Homberg et al., 2015, p. 713). PSM is a concept worth developing further (Christensen et al., 2017; Homberg et al., 2015; Perry, 1996, 1997; Perry & Wise, 1990).



Secondly, this thesis engages in theory testing through a qualitative study, which is not the norm in PSM literature. Empirical PSM research is dominated by quantitative research methods (Vinarski Peretz, 2020). Most research on PSM engages in large-N studies, mostly gathering their data through surveys (Prebble, 2016). Some examples include Camilleri (2007), Prysmakova (2016), Schott & Pronk (2014) and Vandenabeele (2011). This thesis answers the call by authors like Perry & Vandenabeele (2015), and Vinarski Peretz (2020). They call for more qualitative studies to advance the internal validity of PSM instead of a continued focus on its generalizability and measurement. Hence the interview-based methodology of this study. Thirdly, single-case studies can be very relevant for theory (Lamont, 2015; Toshkov, 2016). They delve deeper into empirics and show, understand, or explain whether what is expected from a theory or causal mechanism happens or not, and why – i.e., conduct theory testing. PSM studies that do engage in qualitative research tend to conduct comparative case-study analyses, such as Prysmakova (2016). Only a few qualitative PSM studies conduct single-case studies, such as Vinarski Peretz (2020). This thesis uses the FACC as its case to study, understand, clarify, and explore the underlying mechanism(s) behind the relationship between organisational centralisation and PSM. Lastly, other than Prysmakova's (2016) work, PSM literature has barely tapped into the consequences of organisational centralisation, and the organisational structure and tasks that come with it, especially in an organisation like the FACC, on PSM. The case at hand is not so much about decision-making (*power*) centralisation. Instead, it is about the *geographical* centralisation and centralisation of services in one government agency made possible through new digital solutions. Think of beneficiary contact through WhatsApp or Twitter.

### 1.2.2 – Societal Relevance

The societal relevance of this thesis is threefold. For one thing, digital solutions allow government services to become more effective and perhaps even centralise (Torfing et al., 2020; UNDESA, 2020). However, centralisation might be overall detrimental for employee PSM. Prysmakova (2016) found a negative correlation between these variables in her Polish case. If this is indeed the case, government organisations should avoid engaging in further centralisation, especially considering the positive correlations between PSM and employee performance and organisational outputs, as previously mentioned. For another thing, many countries have embassies or consulates that provide information and assistance to their travellers, expatriates, and incomers. The United Kingdom, for example, also has 24/7 consular assistance offices (I-1). However, the Dutch model (FACC) is the first of its kind to provide

information about as many topics under one centralised contact centre. The findings of this thesis could provide an argument for whether other countries should adopt this Dutch model since it might be beneficial and positively affect PSM, and consequently, organisational output. Lastly, by understanding the relationship better between organisational centralisation and PSM, leadership and management can more easily consider how to maintain high motivation in a highly centralised context. More on the societal relevance of this work is elaborated in the practical implications section (Chapter 4.3.5). The ultimate goal of this thesis is to elaborate on what conditions are necessary to positively affect and maintain public employee motivation in centralised public organisations.

### **1.3 | Design, Method, Theoretical Framework, and Findings**

This thesis uses a qualitative single-case study design and collects empirical data through interviews. A total of nine individual interviews were conducted. These included one informant and eight respondents. The respondent interviews took between 30 minutes to 40 minutes. The FACC serves as a most likely case – where something expected should probably be realised (Toshkov, 2016). This thesis tests whether Prysmakova's (2016) logic about organisational centralisation being overall detrimental for employee PSM holds in the FACC. Most importantly, this thesis proposes and explores an alternative hypothesis. This being a mechanism resulting from centralisation in specific types of organisations that engage in information provision that might positively affect PSM. This alternative mechanism, or second hypothesis, is based on the psychology-based motivational theory: Self-Determination theory (Deci, 2017). SDT serves as a lens that can better explain the actual relationship between organisational centralisation and PSM in contexts where there is a lot of beneficiary contact, and the nature of the tasks are rewarding. The empirics allow this thesis to test, analyse and explain how the hypothesised effects of organisational centralisation on PSM are obtained or not (Toshkov, 2016). PSM is thusly used as an outcome variable.

This thesis concludes that PSM is negatively affected by the hierarchical structures and reduced individual autonomy that result from organisational centralisation – confirming H1. Yet, contrary to Prysmakova's (2016) findings, centralisation is not necessarily detrimental for employee PSM. If we consider *the bigger picture*, especially in contact centre type organisations, another mechanism holds (H2). FACC employees report that their tasks (beneficiary contact) become more varied and therefore rewarding as a result of further

organisational centralisation. This satisfies their four basic psychological needs as laid out in SDT, and thusly positively impact their motivation (PSM).

## **1.4 | Thesis outline**

The thesis is structured as followed. Chapter 2 presents the theoretical background that informs this study. The theoretical framework starts by describing the PSM theory and highlights what has already been done regarding this thesis' topic. A first hypothesis based on Prysmakova (2016) is presented. Following this, SDT is presented and evaluated in terms of its compatibility with PSM theory. Then, a second hypothesis (H2) is laid out using the typology of previous works. Chapter 3 then lays out the research method and design used in this thesis. This includes the operationalisation of the concepts presented in Chapter 2, the selection criteria for the case to study, further information about the case, and the data collection and analysis process of the gathered data. The limitations of the research design and method are also presented here.

Finally, Chapter 4 presents the empirical findings of the interviews. These findings are then analysed in light of the theoretical framework from Chapter 2 and through the methods from Chapter 3. A summative conclusion with an answer to the research question is then offered. This is followed by a discussion of the strengths and weaknesses of the analysis. The Chapter closes with recommendations for future research and the practical implications of the findings. Finally, a list of the referenced works is provided in the Bibliography. The appendices can be found thereafter.

## **Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework**

This chapter first delineates PSM as previously theorised and conceptualised. It also explains the logic of the negative correlation found in Prysmakova (2016) between organisational centralisation and PSM. Organisational centralisation is then conceptualised before presenting Hypothesis 1 (H1) which is based on the aforementioned. Afterwards, SDT is presented as the logic through which we would expect – as will be theorised – that public sector employee PSM would be positively affected by centralisation, contrary to previous expectations. A second hypothesis (H2) based on this logic serves as an alternative explanation about the mechanism that could hold, most notably in public sector organisations like the FACC.

### **2.1 | Literature Review: From Theory to Conceptualisation**

#### **2.1.1 – Conceptualising Public Service Motivation**

Defining, conceptualising and assessing or measuring motivation is a complex endeavour (Rainey, 2014b). The field of Public Administration (PA) was revolutionised by Perry & Wise (1990), who laid out the theoretical concept of PSM (Deci, 2017; Perry, 2017). Essentially, PSM theory explains the motives related to serving society and doing good for others (Breugh et al., 2018; Corduneanu et al., 2020; Perry et al., 2010). Perry & Wise (1990) defined it as “an individual’s predisposition to respond to motives grounded primarily or uniquely in public institutions and organizations” (p. 368). Later, Perry et al. (2010) redefined PSM as “a particular form of altruism or prosocial motivation that is animated by specific dispositions and values arising from public institutions and missions” (p. 682). This thesis uses the definition by Perry & Hondeghem (2008): “an individual’s orientation to delivering services to people with a purpose to do good for others and society” (p. vii). PSM accounts for a public sector employee’s sense of obligation, passion and duty towards society (Breugh et al., 2018; Perry & Wise, 1990). This is what drives public sector employees to do their work. PSM recognises that having motivated employees is vital for a well-functioning, efficient and effective public service (Perry & Wise, 1990).

Perry & Wise (1990) sought to understand the underlying factors behind public civil servants’ motivation. They identified four different motives, or dimensions, related to PSM (Breugh et al., 2018; Perry, 1996). One dimension, attraction to public service (APS), is related to an individual’s rational need to improve, provide, or participate in providing services

through a public administration institution (Breugh et al., 2018; Perry & Wise, 1990). Another dimension is an individual's commitment to public values (CPV) (Breugh et al., 2018). This relates to a person's norm-based beliefs, or motives, about their commitments to society and its public values and interests, and the state's duty to provide services (Kim & Vandenabeele, 2010; Perry & Wise, 1990). The third PSM dimension is an individual's level of compassion (COM) which is related to his/her affective motives (Breugh et al., 2018; Perry & Wise, 1990). Meaning that an individual's public service behaviour is motivated by the emotional empathy he/she has towards other individuals. The fourth dimension of PSM is the idea of self-sacrifice (SS). Here, motivation stems from an individual's prosocial or altruistic values. This dimension is what people usually associate with PSM. Motives are commonly considered entirely altruistic and prosocial, while they can also be rationality-based, normative-based, or affective-based (Perry & Wise, 1990). Combining these four dimensions indicates how motivated a public employee is to work in the public service sector – i.e., his/her PSM level.

Perry & Wise's (1990) work and plea for further exploration into the theory (Perry, 1996, 1997) kick-started decades-long worth of research into the composition, origins, and effects of PSM. By now, "PSM is the core motivational construct in public sector research" (Corduneanu et al., 2020, p. 1071). The copious amount of research done into the concept indicates its relevance for developing efficient and effective public services that benefit the broader citizenry (Christensen et al., 2017; Kim & Vandenabeele, 2010; Perry & Wise, 1990). For example, researchers have found that PSM is positively related to various outcomes, including job satisfaction (Breugh et al., 2018; Demircioglu & Chen, 2019; Homberg et al., 2015; Prysmakova, 2020), organisational performance (Christensen et al., 2017), work engagement (Vinarski Peretz, 2020), and job performance (Perry, 1996). However, the mechanisms behind PSM are still somewhat blurry (Vinarski Peretz, 2020). Therefore, and precisely because PSM greatly influences overall organisational outcomes, it is worth looking further into employee PSM as an outcome variable and uncovering the mechanisms of how various antecedents affect it (Christensen et al., 2017; Homberg et al., 2015; Pandey & Stazyk, 2008; Perry, 1996, 1997; Perry & Wise, 1990; Xu & Chen, 2017).

It has been established that PSM can be considered either as non-malleable, stable, static, and as a "trait", or as malleable, dynamic, and as a "state" (Christensen et al., 2017; Perry & Wise, 1990; Prysmakova, 2020; Vinarski Peretz, 2020). PSM as a trait refers to PSM as an innate characteristic of individuals. Public sector employees have either high or low PSM, depending on their socio-historical or socio-demographic background (Christensen et al., 2017; Pandey & Stazyk, 2008; Xu & Chen, 2017). Considering PSM as a trait implies that it could

only be used as an independent variable that does not change. The latter way of looking at PSM – as a state – considers an individual’s motivation as an attribute that can be changed through management practices, an organisation’s context and environment, or by an employee’s job or tasks (Camilleri, 2007; Christensen et al., 2017; Davis & Stazyk, 2014; Perry, 1997; Perry & Wise, 1990; Prysmakova, 2016, 2020; Rainey, 2014b; Vinarski Peretz, 2020). PSM can thusly be influenced by contextual organisational factors such as bureaucratic red tape and hierarchical structures. The present thesis focuses on one organisational factor, organisational centralisation, and the consequences and mechanisms through which it affects PSM. So, it considers PSM as a state or outcome variable which institutional structures and job characteristics can influence.

### 2.1.2 – Conceptualising Organisational Centralisation

As aforementioned, organisational structures can affect PSM since the structure of institutions determine the context in which civil servants work (Hou et al., 2000). As Prysmakova (2016) put it, “[t]he centralization of public service delivery is one of the crucial contextual aspects affecting individual behaviour and work attitudes of public sector employees” (p. 878-879). However, research on the effects of organisational centralisation as an organisational factor is minimal. Especially when it comes to the mechanism through which it affects PSM. It is therefore interesting and important to look into this subject. To do so, we first have to determine what is meant by organisational centralisation.

Researchers have developed various concepts that aid in explaining the subject of organisational structures (Rainey, 2014a). One dimension that is often used to define organisational structure is centralisation. Rainey explained “[t]he degree of centralization in an organization [as] the degree to which power and authority concentrate at the organization’s higher levels” (p. 216) – thusly considering centralisation as only regarding the pooling of decision-making powers into the upper echelons of an organisation. Nevertheless, centralisation can also be defined in English as “the act or process of centralizing a system, company, country, etc. (= removing authority to one central place)” (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.). Likewise, another dictionary provides the following definitions for *centralise*: (1) “to form a center: cluster around a center,” (2) “to bring to a center: consolidate,” and (3) “to concentrate by placing power and authority in a center or central organization” (Merriam-Webster, n.d.). These definitions also include the fact of combining or consolidating multiple *things* into one single coherent whole.

Prysmakova (2016) follows the distinction made by Hou et al. (2000), who recognise that in PA, two types of centralisation are often cited. The first is the “centralization of authority and power based on the level of government”, and the second is the “concentration of power within a specialized functional agency” (p. 10). In her article, Prysmakova mainly considers centralisation as the second type, meaning the centralisation of functions and tasks into one governmental agency or office. This thesis also employs this second type of centralisation. In conceptualising organisational centralisation, this study also incorporates other dimensions that the dictionary definitions include, namely (a) the act of relocating offices from different locations to one central location for providing services and (b) the consolidation of multiple services or products into one central organisation. Simply put, centralisation here includes *power*, *geographical* and *service* centralisation.

According to Prysmakova (2016), centralisation creates more hierarchical structures within a given organisation. This makes it difficult for employees to contribute to decision-making and see their contribution to the broader organisational outputs. As a result, employees sense a loss of autonomy and decision-making authority. According to her research and previous research on the relationship between organisational structures and contexts and PSM (Camilleri, 2007; Pandey & Stazyk, 2008; Perry, 1997), this mechanism explains the overall negative correlation of organisational centralisation and PSM. Relatedly, Breugh et al.'s (2018) research “suggest[s] that organizational changes that reduce the visual impact of public sector work could lead to negative employee outcomes” in terms of motivation (PSM) (p. 1436). So, public-sector employees should see or hear about the impact of their work on society to feel more work motivation (Breugh et al., 2018; Camilleri, 2007).

Prysmakova (2016) found a mostly negative relationship between centralisation and PSM levels in her Polish social care and labour market sector case. More specifically, organisational centralisation and the subsequent greater hierarchy and loss of autonomy were negatively correlated with the COM and APS dimensions, but positively correlated to the SS dimension.<sup>1</sup> Her research proposed and tested the following hypotheses. (A) “Organizational centralization is likely to be negatively correlated with [COM]” (p. 882). The reasoning behind this is that centralisation essentially hampers rapport building between public sector employees and service beneficiaries due to the distance between them and hampers their feeling of being part of decision-making. (B) “Organizational centralization is likely to be positively correlated

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<sup>1</sup> The available data did not allow Prysmakova (2016) to find results for the relationship between centralisation and the CPV dimension.

with [SS]” (p. 882). The reasoning behind this is that autonomy is a selfish psychological need. People willing to self-sacrifice are more acceptant of hierarchy and authority. So, the loss of autonomy through centralisation for executing one’s civil duties more efficiently will positively affect a public servant’s level of SS. (C) “Organizational centralization is likely to be negatively correlated with [APS]” (p. 882). This is because previous PA studies have recognised that organisational centralisation may negatively affect APS. This is probably because individuals seem to be attracted to more open work cultures rather than hierarchical structures (Prysmakova, 2016; Schaubroeck et al., 1998). In such public offices, public sector employees might feel like they cannot contribute much to society.

Her findings confirmed her three hypotheses. Still, the exact proposed mechanisms behind these assumptions/logics have not been tested or explained further. This thesis checks whether Prysmakova's (2016) mechanisms work as expected in the case of the FACC. Having said this, and considering all the aforementioned, the first hypothesis this thesis uses to answer the research question is the following (*see Figure 1 for a visual representation*):

**Hypothesis 1:** *Through the mechanism of the more hierarchical structures and reduced autonomy for individual employees, organisational centralisation negatively impacts public service motivation.*

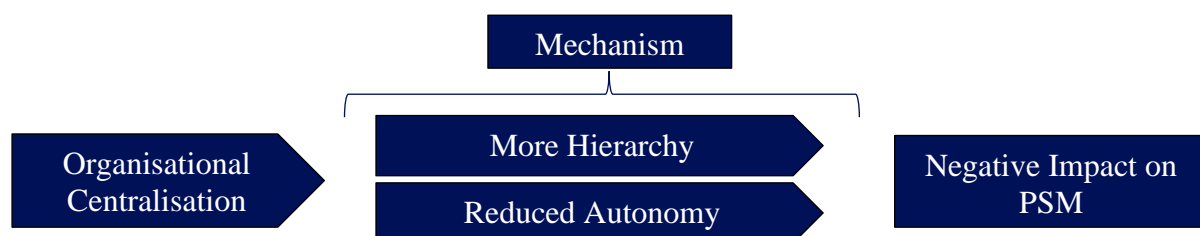


Figure 1: Hypothesis 1

### 2.1.3 – The Other Side of Centralisation and the Limitations of PSM

Prysmakova (2016) recognises that centralisation also has benefits, especially in terms of better coordination within an organisation. This translates into better and more streamlined service provision for the citizenry, which has the potential to impact employee motivation positively. This thesis argues that certain organisations might have alternative mechanisms in play that change the effect that centralisation has on PSM. However, an alternative mechanism to H1 cannot solely rely on PSM. Even though there is significant consensus within the PSM literature that the concept has to do with other-regarding behaviour that focuses on enhancing



the wellbeing of others (Perry et al., 2010; Vinarski Peretz, 2020), the concept is not clear-cut, and its definition and measure has faced many criticisms (Kim et al., 2013; Xu & Chen, 2017).

PSM has been defined in over 23 different ways and has been measured with over 42 different measures (Homberg et al., 2015; Prebble, 2016; Vinarski Peretz, 2020). Scholars use PSM measures that “may consist of a single item, a single dimension with many items or multiple dimensions with multiple items. As a result, scholars may not measure the same concept” (Xu & Chen, 2017, p. 3). Still, both unidimensional and multidimensional measures have been found to accurately correlate with PSM (Wright et al., 2013). Some researchers also point to the difficulties relating to the potential overlap between dimensions and issues related to the reliability of some dimensions or measurement items in different contexts. PSM’s meaning and measurement remain context, language, and culture-specific (Kim et al., 2013). The original 24-item scale developed by Perry (1996) has thusly been widely used and validated but also often revised. What is more, PSM fails “to consider the egoistic dimension of public service behavior” (Xu & Chen, 2017, p. 4). Xu & Chen propose looking beyond altruistic and intrinsic motives related to PSM, and also research the extrinsic and egoistic motives behind an individual’s PSM. SDT can therefore prove to be helpful as a logic to explain mechanisms behind PSM since it includes extrinsic and more psychological elements to the notion of motivation (Demircioglu & Chen, 2019). SDT can thusly aid this research in presenting another mechanism that might explain a different relationship between organisational centralisation and PSM.

#### **2.1.4 – Conceptualising Self-Determination Theory**

SDT can explain motivation dynamics within all types of organisations, including public ones (Demircioglu & Chen, 2019). Hence, the theory has increasingly been used in PA research (Breugh et al., 2018). At its most basic, SDT is interested in the types of motivation and the factors that influence people’s motivation to work (Deci, 2017).<sup>2</sup> These factors range from the sort of tasks that individuals fulfil to the environment and context in which an individual performs a given activity.

The first main component of SDT concerns the different types of motivation that exist. Controlled motivation is when an individual does something because he/she feels externally obliged, pressured, or demanded to do so. Certain types of externally regulated (extrinsic) motivation can be internalised to such an extent that they can be considered forms of

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<sup>2</sup> See Appendix 1 for a further understanding of SDT and the different types of motivation.

autonomous motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2000). People who perform an action with real enjoyment, sense of value, or interest are likely to be autonomously motivated or even intrinsically motivated (Deci, 2017). The second main component of SDT is that all human beings have a set of basic, universal psychological needs that should be satisfied for optimal performance and wellness (Breugh et al., 2018; Deci, 2017). These needs are competence, relatedness and autonomy (Deci, 2017; Deci & Ryan, 2000; Demircioglu & Chen, 2019). Autonomy is the psychological desire of individuals to feel like independent agents who can make choices and feel free when performing an activity (Broeck et al., 2010; Demircioglu & Chen, 2019). Competence is “individuals' inherent desire to feel effective in interacting with the environment” and with people (Broeck et al., 2010, 982). Competence and autonomy are generally considered the most important psychological needs that influence intrinsic motivation. Still, relatedness remains vital in maintaining the level of motivation. Relatedness has to do with one's psychological need to feel connected and as part of a group, care and be cared for, and love and be loved. When an individual's psychological needs are satisfied, the individual will internalise the value of his/her tasks and feel more self-determined (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Demircioglu & Chen, 2019). As a result of this value internalisation, their motivation can move from more extrinsic towards a more autonomous or intrinsic type of motivation, or internal regulation. So, greater need satisfaction ultimately leads to higher motivation.

To achieve greater need satisfaction, Xu & Chen (2017) propose fulfilling the desire for autonomy by allowing employees to arrange their actions by themselves through, for example, little hierarchical control. Likewise, the authors propose that to satisfy the need for relatedness, public employees should feel important, helpful, and connected to the citizens they serve. They also should receive some positive reinforcement or feedback for their work to ultimately feel more motivated. Think about public servants having contact with service beneficiaries (Corduneanu et al., 2020). Relatedness can also be satisfied through heightened (social) support from managers and colleagues. Lastly, Xu & Chen (2017) argue that to satisfy the need for competence, public employees need to feel like they have the knowledge and emotional skills necessary to perform their tasks. Therefore, relevant trainings and knowledge sharing are essential for public servants to be motivated. Beneficiary contact can also enhance the feeling of competence (Corduneanu et al., 2020).

### 2.1.5 – Conceptualising the Relationship Between PSM and SDT

How exactly can SDT provide the logic of an alternative mechanism behind the relationship between organisational centralisation and PSM? Ultimately, PSM and SDT are conceptually different motivation theories (Breugh et al., 2018; Papadopoulou & Dimitriadis, 2019). For instance, (1) PSM focuses on *others* and not on the *self* as the main objects of interest (Christensen et al., 2017). PSM also emphasises (public) values and norms, and societal outcomes, rather than extrinsic control and incentives, and personal fulfilment through the nature of a task, as SDT does (Breugh et al., 2018; Christensen et al., 2017; Perry et al., 2010; Vinarski Peretz, 2020). (2) SDT refers to *intrinsic motivation* rather than *PSM* (Corduneanu et al., 2020). Lastly, (3) whereas PSM is considered a linear aggregate measure, SDT is considered a continuum (Breugh et al., 2018). The higher a person scores in each PSM dimension, the higher total PSM an individual has (Breugh et al., 2018; Perry, 2017). So, individuals can have equal levels of PSM yet score differently per dimension. Meanwhile, the types of motivation for SDT depend on the degree to which the psychological needs are fulfilled (Breugh et al., 2018; Deci, 2017).

Notwithstanding the aforementioned, various PA studies have used both theories in a complementary fashion or have pointed out their compatibility. For example, Prysmakova (2016) points to PSM as being an “integral part of individuals’ intrinsic work motives” (p. 879). She also explains that institutional factors provide employees with intrinsic and extrinsic motives that affect their PSM, which means that she considers PSM as a malleable concept (Christensen et al., 2017). Most importantly, however, this shows that even though Prysmakova (2016) does not even acknowledge SDT, PSM is related to the various notions embedded in SDT logic (Corduneanu et al., 2020). Papadopoulou & Dimitriadis (2019) explicitly found that PSM is related to SDT’s autonomous and intrinsic motivations. Perry & Vandenberg (2015) observed how the dynamics of PSM could be understood through the logic embedded in SDT. Andrews (2016) concluded that SDT and PSM are complementary theoretical approaches. He noted that SDT can explain how contextual factors can affect PSM. Even before that, Vandenberg (2007) argued that the three psychological needs as originally laid out by SDT have to be satisfied by public organisations in order for PSM to emerge. Later, Schott & Pronk (2014) confirmed that “all three basic psychological needs are antecedents of PSM” (p. 44). Accordingly, need satisfaction creates more autonomous and intrinsic motivation and, therefore, more PSM (Corduneanu et al., 2020; Vandenberg, 2007).

Same as it has been suggested for the needs of relatedness and competence from SDT (Xu & Chen, 2017), direct contact with service beneficiaries has been found to increase

employee PSM (Christensen et al., 2017; Prysmakova, 2020). As Prysmakova (2020) notes, "[r]elational job design theory suggests that interactions with citizens is an important motivational factor for public service employees" (p. 1). Knowing about one's positive impact on society has been found to be positively related to PSM levels (Camilleri, 2007). Having direct service beneficiary contact allows public employees to get instant feedback and hear about or see their real impact on citizens and the organisational output. In any case, the amount of contact a civil servant has with its beneficiaries ultimately depends on the nature of the tasks that he/she fulfils (Camilleri, 2007; Prysmakova, 2020). A job might also include tasks that employees may consider as vital or emergency-like that are important and feasible, which enhance an employee's work motivation (PSM), i.e., rewarding tasks (Prysmakova, 2020).

Psychologists Martela & Riekkari (2018) and Martela & Ryan (2016) expanded SDT by including a fourth psychological need that facilitates intrinsic motivation. Building on them and Andrews (2016) and Vandenabeele (2007), Corduneanu et al.'s (2020) recent addition to the PA literature effectively renders PSM and SDT closer to each other and more compatible. The newly introduced psychological need, *beneficence*, concerns an individual's need for having a positive prosocial impact. Accordingly, both theories now consider altruism as a behavioural motive. If the need for beneficence is satisfied through a task that allows individuals to have the subjective feeling that they make positive contributions to society, their motivation (PSM) will increase. Beneficiary contact could help satisfy this need, same as with relatedness and competence, by observing or hearing about the positive impact of one's work on another individual.

With this new addition to SDT as an analytical lens, we could more effectively explore and explain an alternative mechanism behind the relationship between organisational centralisation and PSM. Especially in public service organisations where beneficiary contact is key. Perhaps the hierarchical structures and reduction of autonomy resulting from centralisation are not the only mechanisms through which PSM might be affected. Prysmakova (2016) considered centralisation as mainly, or only affecting autonomy negatively and, therefore, PSM likewise. However, she overlooked how centralisation affects the other psychological needs and hence PSM. Other factors may result from organisational centralisation, such as (more rewarding) tasks that include beneficiary contact. This may satisfy the three other psychological needs (beneficence, competence, and relatedness). Thusly making the effect of centralisation a positive one on PSM. Then taking all the aforementioned into account, the following hypothesis is generated:

**Hypothesis 2:** *Through the mechanism of contact with beneficiaries, organisational centralisation can satisfy three psychological needs and therefore positively impact public service motivation.*

In the present study, organisational centralisation includes the consolidation of more services. In information providing public organisations, employees would get a wider array of information that they can now provide to their clients. So, their contact with beneficiaries will be more varied. Beneficiary contact, as mentioned earlier, could be deemed rewarding and could satisfy the psychological needs of individuals. Need satisfaction, in turn, fosters autonomous or intrinsic motivation – i.e., positively affects PSM. See Figure 2 for a visual representation of this hypothesised mechanism.

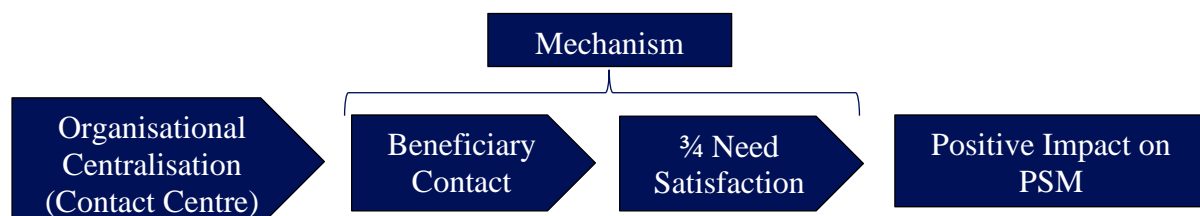


Figure 2: Hypothesis 2

Admittedly, SDT could play a part in testing and explaining H1 as well. Hierarchy as a result of centralisation could hamper self-determination, resulting in a negative effect on PSM. However, SDT logic is purposefully kept out of H1 because H1 checks whether Prysmakova's (2016) mechanistic logic is correct. Namely, if we consider only hierarchy and autonomy loss, then PSM will most likely be negatively affected. Indeed, autonomy is part of SDT, but Prysmakova does not consider the other three psychological needs from SDT: competence, relatedness, and beneficence. Hence why H2 expects only these three needs to be satisfied in a centralised organisation – effectively excluding autonomy. Moreover, in focusing on PSM theory, Prysmakova overlooks the *nature of the job* as an essential factor for need satisfaction and motivation. Simply put, Prysmakova disregards SDT logic in her expectations. Therefore, this thesis does not mix this *new theoretical addition* with the existing hypothesised mechanism (H1) since this study aims to test and explain precisely this mechanism. Hence why SDT is presented as the logic behind the alternative mechanism (H2).

## **Chapter 3: Research Method**

Having introduced the two hypotheses, this chapter presents the research methods used in this deductive research study. This includes the operationalisation of the concepts introduced hereabove. This allows this thesis to test the hypotheses by finding evidence from the interviews. Afterwards, the data collection and analysis are explained, and the methodological limitations are laid out.

### **3.1 | Design, Method and The Case**

#### **3.1.1 – Design and Method**

Previous research offers some prior theorisation and expectations regarding how organisational centralisation may affect PSM. However, beyond Prysmakova (2016), literature on this specific subject is scarce. This thesis thusly aims to test her causal mechanistic logic through a qualitative explanatory research design. Qualitative studies are not the norm in the PSM literature (Vinarski Peretz, 2020). Nevertheless, some authors suggest advancing the internal validity of PSM findings through qualitative, theory testing studies (Perry & Vandenabeele, 2015; Vinarski Peretz, 2020). The caveat is that this shifts the focus away from building further on the generalisability and measurements of PSM.

This study recognises the utility of within-case analysis for explaining causal mechanisms and therefore engages in such a research design. Single-case studies can prove helpful for explanatory theory testing (Lamont, 2015; Toshkov, 2016). As Toshkov (2016) put it, “[w]ithin-case explanatory analysis does not only focus on the relationship between one outcome variable and one main explanatory variable, but explores the alternative predictions and mechanisms of competing theories/explanations about a multitude of observable aspects [or evidence] related to a single case” (p. 285). By delving deeper into empirical data, single-case research can find and clarify mechanisms underlying relationships between concepts and show whether and how expected relationships work (or not). This means that this thesis also includes elements of inductive, exploratory research.

To test the hypotheses and, therefore, the theory it is appropriate to use a case where something expected should occur – i.e. a most likely case (Toshkov, 2016). If the empirics of the case show that especially the newly theorised mechanism (H2) does not hold, this will be very consequential for this thesis. The empirical data aids this study in testing and explaining

whether the hypothesised mechanisms occur or not. The data collection method (interviews) is explained shortly, but first, the case selection is justified.

### **3.1.2 – Selection Criteria and Case Description**

#### Selection Criteria

To test whether the H1 and H2 hold, the case selected must be a most likely case. It should be a public organisation that is centralised. Following the theoretical framework and especially considering H2, it must also be a case where the tasks themselves may be considered rewarding. This criterion can be challenging to concretise. It essentially means, a job that could give employees the subjective feeling of satisfying their four basic psychological needs. This includes tasks that employees may regard as vital or emergency-like that are important and feasible, which enhance employee work motivation (Prysmakova, 2020). Rewarding, in this sense, includes tasks where individuals can help people and get instant feedback from these beneficiaries. One such example, according to theory, is a job that includes a lot of service beneficiary contact.

The case should also be representative. A case should ultimately be a unit of analysis from a larger population of units or phenomena (Lamont, 2015; Toshkov, 2016). The conclusions drawn from the case at hand should be generalisable to this broader population. Whatever the conclusion, it should be equally applicable to similar public service organisations. This thesis uses the FACC as its case study. It forms part of a wider population of public organisations or agencies that provide information to the citizenry that are centralised or plan to centralise. Think about other consular information centres, municipality offices that merge into one, or other public information contact centres such as the Dutch government's phone line during the COVID-19 pandemic.

#### The Case: FACC

On January 12<sup>th</sup>, 2016, the FA launched a central all-year-round contact centre for foreigners wishing to come to the Netherlands and for all Dutch travellers and expatriates (BZ, 2016). The FACC provides tips and assistance to all those who contact it. As such, it is a government organisation that delivers a public service: information provision. Since July 16<sup>th</sup>, 2019, the FACC is reachable through WhatsApp and Facebook, aside from telephone calls, e-mail, and Twitter (BZ, 2016; 2019). By centralising this service provision in The Hague through the aid of digital solutions, the FACC “aims to provide a better and faster service for the public” (BZ, 2016). This centralisation is crucial for the need for correct and unified information provision

to its clients. Especially considering that the service provided by the FACC ranges from answering simple questions regarding travel advice or passports to more emergency-type and severe circumstances like hospitalisations, imprisonments, or forced marriages (BZ, 2017). The main objective and task of the FACC remains providing information directly to its clients (Klantcontact, 2020; I-1). The provision of information is personal and dependent on the circumstance of the person contacting the FACC.

The organisation has been expanding its services since March 2020 (BZ, 2020). We can observe a centralisation of information of government services into the FACC. Beyond providing consular-related information, it has become a *de facto* ‘municipality information centre’ for Dutch expatriates. People can now also contact the FACC with questions related to DigiD<sup>3</sup>. This includes, among others, information about pensions, study loans, and voting from abroad.

Considering the aforementioned, the FACC is interesting for this thesis. It is a case where we can most likely expect organisational centralisation to be in place – *geographically* and in terms of decision-making and pooling of services into a single entity. Accordingly, this organisation is also expected to have a hierarchical structure where individuals have little autonomy or decision-making authority. We can thusly expect PSM to be negatively affected when considering these effects from centralisation (H1). However, the nature of the service that the FACC provides and the consolidation of different information that its employees now also provide might tell us a different story. The approximately 100 FACC employees constantly interact with clients regarding a multitude of different subjects. Consequently, the nature of their job could be classified as rewarding. Hence, we can expect feelings of need satisfaction, and therefore motivation (PSM) to be positively affected as a consequence of the FACC’s centralisation (H2). So both hypotheses are likely to hold in this case. If they are disconfirmed, this would be consequential for this study.

## 3.2 | Operationalisation

To be more confident in the hypotheses and make stronger inferences, this research has to find appropriate evidence (Toshkov, 2016, p. 295). The evidence this thesis looks for is that which points to the causal mechanisms that form the basis of the two hypotheses. Any evidence that would otherwise disprove the hypotheses is also emphasised, as this can also give us a better

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<sup>3</sup> The Dutch digital identification verification and management platform (Rijksoverheid, n.d.).



understanding of the actual mechanisms at play. The pieces of evidence are identifiable through the indicators introduced hereafter. These indicators are based on the operationalisation of the concepts introduced in Chapter 2.

As previously mentioned, PSM can be operationalised in multiple ways (Xu & Chen, 2017). The way one chooses to operationalise the concept has to fit the purposes of the research at hand. Considering that this thesis bases itself on and departs from Prysmakova's (2016) research, it reproduces her operationalisation of PSM. This is also done for operationalising centralisation as the independent variable. The four psychological needs of SDT are operationalised in their own terms. First up is the operationalisation and indicators of the independent variable.

### 3.2.1 – Organisational Centralisation

Organisational centralisation is considered here to mean the centralisation of functions and tasks into one governmental agency or office. This includes moving towards having only one service-provision location (*service* and *geographical* centralisation) and, most importantly, creating clearer hierarchical lines of decision-making authority (Hou et al., 2000; Prysmakova, 2016; Rainey, 2014a). As a result, reduced autonomy for individual employees is also considered an indicator of high levels of centralisation. Prysmakova (2016), used the following three-item scale from Aiken & Hage's (1968) that is measured through a five-point Likert-type scale:<sup>4</sup>

- **CEN1:** there can be little action taken here until a supervisor approves a decision.
- **CEN2:** in general, a person who wants to make his own decisions would be quickly discouraged in this organization.
- **CEN3:** even small matters have to be referred to someone higher up/supervisor for a final answer.

The present study is qualitative by nature and uses semi-structured interviews to gather its data and, therefore, does not ask scaling questions. However, the leading questions regarding the centralisation of the FACC are based on this scale. If the respondents make comments that mention hierarchical authority structures or clearly resemble these three statements, this will indicate that the FACC is highly centralised. Likewise, any mention of physical centralisation is coded as such.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> CEN1 was not used in Prysmakova (2016) due to issues with the data collection thereof.

<sup>5</sup> See Appendix 2 for a list of the codes (indicators) used in this study.

### 3.2.2 – Public Service Motivation

Following Kim et al. (2013), Prysmakova (2016) operationalised PSM as “an individual’s orientation to delivering services to people with a purpose to do good for others and society” as defined by Perry & Hondeghem (2008, p. vii). Based on this definition, Kim et al. (2013) developed a four-dimensional 16-item index to measure PSM. Even though these four dimensions highly correlate among each other, they represent distinct yet related aspects of PSM that can be affected differently by different antecedents and can have varying consequences on themselves. A multidimensional measure of PSM allows us to dig deeper and understand through what mechanisms and how organisational centralisation affects the different PSM dimensions (Kim & Vandenabeele, 2010; Wright et al., 2013). For example, Prysmakova (2016) found that organisational centralisation is differently correlated with COM and APS (negative) than with SS (positive). She measured PSM by using (most of)<sup>6</sup> the four dimensions and 16 items from Kim et al. (2013):

#### ■ Attraction to public service (APS)<sup>7</sup>

- APP5: I admire people who initiate or are involved in activities to aid my community.
- APP7: it is important to contribute to activities that tackle social problems.
- CPI1: meaningful public service is very important to me.
- CPI2: it is important for me to contribute to the common good.

#### ■ Commitment to public values (CPV)

- CPV1: I think equal opportunities for citizens are very important.
- CPV2: it is important that citizens can rely on the continuous provision of public services.
- CPV6: it is fundamental that the interests of future generations are taken into account when developing public policies.
- CPV7: to act ethically is essential for public servants.

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<sup>6</sup> Prysmakova (2016) could not collect data, or the data did not fit the final model for CPI1, COM5, and SS2. Furthermore, the data and model-fit of three out of the four CPV items were problematic to collect in her study (CPV1, CPV6, CPV7). Hence, she omitted CPV from her findings.

<sup>7</sup> “To address concerns regarding discriminant validity”, APS is a combination of one sub-dimension from CPV – *commitment to public interest* (CPI) – and *attraction to public participation* (APP) (Kim et al., 2013, p. 87). CPI comes from Perry’s original 1996 work. APP is an ameliorated version of Perry’s (1996) *attraction to policy making* dimension as it better represents instrumental motives (Kim & Vandenabeele, 2010). To better grasp this multidimensional measure and the changes of the different dimensions of PSM through time it is recommended to read Kim et al. (2013) and Kim & Vandenabeele (2010). In hoping to advance a universal measure for global use, Kim & Vandenabeele (2010) introduced various changes to the classical PSM multidimensional measure.

### ■ Compassion (COM)

- COM2: I feel sympathetic to the plight of the underprivileged.
- COM3: I empathize with other people who face difficulties.
- COM5: I get very upset when I see other people being treated unfairly.
- COM6: considering the welfare of others is very important.

### ■ Self-sacrifice (SS)

- SS2: I am prepared to make sacrifices for the good of society.
- SS3: I believe in putting civic duty before self.
- SS4: I am willing to risk personal loss to help society.
- SS7: I would agree to a good plan to make a better life for the poor, even if it costs me money.

These items are usually used in surveys to measure PSM in quantitative studies. Prysmakova (2016) measured them through a five-point Likert-type scale. For the present case, the leading interview questions are based on the definition of each dimension (see Chapter 2.1.1). Probing questions are based on these 16 items hereabove. If respondents make comments that resemble or relate to these, they are coded as such and considered evidence for their respective dimension. So, these items are used to see through what mechanism and how organisational centralisation affects the different PSM dimensions and thusly PSM as a whole. Note that the different dimensions are not quantified or calculated in this thesis. Instead, they are used to determine *how* organisational centralisation affects them: positively or negatively, not *by how much*. This study analyses through which causal pathway(s) individuals feel like centralisation affects their motivation (PSM) and *how*. In other words, centralisation and its consequences makes them feel either *more* oriented and motivated to help people, or *less* oriented and motivated to help people. Establishing or measuring the exact effect or degree to which organisational centralisation affects PSM lies outside of the scope of this study. This aspect returns in both limitation sections of this thesis.

### 3.2.3 – Self-Determination Theory

To explore and confirm whether H2 holds, this thesis operationalises the four psychological needs that, if satisfied by the consequences of centralisation, positively affect motivation (PSM). These indicators are based on the definitions provided in Chapter 2.1.4 and 2.1.5. Drawing primarily from Demircioglu & Chen (2019), Corduneanu et al. (2020) and Broeck et al. (2010). The indicators for each need are the following:

- **Autonomy:** the interviewees mention that they feel like independent agents who can make choices and decisions and feel free when deciding how to perform an activity.
- **Competence:** the interviewees feel effective and useful when they interact with people and their environment. They also feel like their workplace allows them to learn and develop.
- **Relatedness:** the interviewees feel connected and as part of a group, to care and be cared for, and love and be loved.
- **Beneficence:** the interviewees feel like they have a positive impact on society.

If these needs are satisfied due to – or even in – this centralised organisation, this will positively impact their motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Demircioglu & Chen, 2019). The mechanism behind this positive effect resulting from centralisation would not only be that of more hierarchy and loss of autonomy, but also that of the rewarding nature of the job (beneficiary contact) in a centralised information-providing public organisation.

### 3.3 | Data Collection and Data Analysis

#### 3.3.1 – Data Sources and Collection

Nine semi-structured interviews serve as this study's primary source of data. One informant interview granted this thesis further insights into the overall workings, structure, and centralisation of the FACC. The eight respondents served as the data points for studying the case at hand. The informant interview lasted 25 minutes due to the person's tight schedule, while the eight respondent interviews took, on average, 35 minutes. Two interviews were conducted in English and seven in Dutch. The author and interviewer of this work, both the same person, translated the relevant quoted passages used in Chapter 4. The interviews were transcribed and then coded in Atlas.ti according to the indicators presented in Chapter 3.2 and informed by the theoretical framework (Chapter 2) (*see a complete list of codes in Appendix 2*). Each interview was coded separately as not to influence the coding of each other. They were then compared to uncover larger themes or mechanisms. All this allows us to make valuable data from the interviews.

Through semi-structured interviews, reliable qualitative data could be obtained from the different individuals (Vinarski Peretz, 2020). The same leading questions were purposefully asked in a specific order to all respondents, but respondents were allowed and encouraged to freely bring up other relevant issues (Suzuki, 2017; Vinarski Peretz, 2020). Follow-up

questions were asked for further elaboration on answers. The interviewees could express themselves in their own way and thusly gave the researcher a look into their subjective views and experiences. Essentially, the interviewer asked questions about how they feel like centralisation affects their motivation positively and how it affects it negatively. In doing so, the interviewees provided in-depth knowledge of how they subjectively see the mechanism(s) behind how centralisation affects their PSM.

The interview guide used during the interviews can be found in Appendix 3 (both the English and Dutch versions are included for comparison). This guide served as the script for the interviewer to pose questions and use the follow-up questions in case necessary. The third set of questions directly relates to the operationalisation (Chapter 3.2) of the concepts developed in the theoretical framework (Chapter 2). By including the operationalisation of the variables, codes, and the interview guide in the appendices, this thesis aims to ensure the validity and replicability of this study.

All, except one interview took place through Microsoft-Teams videocall. All interviews were recorded to have them at hand for re-watching and transcription. During the interviews, notes were taken by the interviewer. Interviewees were explicitly asked their consent to be recorded and if they wished to remain anonymous. Most said they wanted to stay anonymous, so the author decided to anonymise them all. The utmost confidentiality was also guaranteed to the interviewees. The interviewer did not share the questions with the interviewees in advance. The interviewer did his best to keep the interviews neutral and tried to steer the conversation as little as possible while building enough rapport to ensure that the conversation was candid and highly personal.

### **3.3.2 – Interviewees**

Same as with Prysmakova (2016), “the unit of analysis [here] is a staff member of a public organization that provides services” (p. 883). The respondents for this thesis were those FACC employees who work as or have worked as a “Consular Information Officer” (CIO). These are those in contact with service beneficiaries, answering their questions and providing them with information. Respondents were chosen through purposive sampling. Personalised invitations were sent to all CIOs and management-level bureaucrats found on LinkedIn and then through email to partake in an interview. The invitation included general information about the goal of this thesis. Those who accepted the invitation were then asked to schedule a video call with the interviewer at their most convenient time. After their interviews, some respondents recommended or invited other colleagues to contact the author.

As shown in Table 1 on the following page, the sample of respondents varies in terms of how long they have served as CIOs. Four of them have worked as a CIO longer than two years, two for just over a year, and two have worked at the FACC for less than a year. Considering that the main selection criterium for respondents was that they should work at the FACC answering questions from citizens, they all work (at least some of the time) as CIOs. Some fulfil other roles next to that. The two *Vraagbaken*<sup>8</sup> provide this thesis with extra insights as they get to hear about the experiences of their colleagues. As a *Customer Questions Researcher*, R-7 has more significant insights than her peers regarding the wants and needs of the FACC's clients and employees. Another observation is that a quick search by function on LinkedIn shows that CIOs are mainly female, but not by a lot. Still, six out of the eight respondents were female. As the sampling was not purposeful, this occurred at random. Evidently, a larger sample would have been ideal. This limitation is elaborated upon in the next section.

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<sup>8</sup> *Vraagbaak* (plural: *Vraagbaken*): person to whom people turn to with difficult questions (Van Dale, n.d., translated from Dutch).

Informant / Respondent	Function + Extra Language	How long have they actively worked answering questions	Extra Function	Sex	Birthplace and/or Childhood home	Age	Highest Educational Degree	Interview in English or Dutch?	Interview
Informant 1	Head of the FACC	4 years	x	Male	Netherlands	43	x	Dutch	Monday, May 10th, 13:00, MS-Teams
Respondent 1	Consular Information Officer (Spanish)	1 year and 3 months	x	Male	Colombia - Aruba	27	University Masters International Relations and Affairs	English	Wednesday, May 5th, 13:00, in-person
Respondent 2	Consular Information Officer (Spanish)	2 years and 1 month	x	Female	Netherlands	40	HBO Bachelors Tourism Management and Commercial Economics	Dutch	Thursday, May 6th, 11:00, MS-Teams
Respondent 3	Consular Information Officer (Spanish)	2.5 years	Vraagbaak	Female	Peru - Aruba	30	HBO Bachelors International and European Law	English	Friday, May 7th, 11:00, MS-Teams
Respondent 4	Consular Information Officer (Spanish)	3.5 months	x	Female	Netherlands	26	University Masters Latin-American Studies and Journalism	Dutch	Friday 7 Mei, 13:00, MS-Teams
Respondent 5	Consular Information Officer (Spanish)	2 years and 4 months	x	Female	Netherlands	37	University Doctoral Latin-American Studies	Dutch	Friday, May 7th, 20:00, MS-Teams
Respondent 6	Consular Information Officer (French)	1 year and 2 months	x	Male	Netherlands	32	HBO Bachelors Communications	Dutch	Tuesday, May 11th, 10:30, MS-Teams
Respondent 7	Consular Information Officer (Spanish)	10 months	Temporarily working as "Customer Questions Researcher" ( <i>Klantvraag Onderzoeker</i> ) for the Loket Buitenland project	Female	Netherlands	27	University Masters Latin-American Studies	Dutch	Tuesday, May 11th, 14:00, MS-Teams
Respondent 8	Consular Information Officer (Spanish)	3 years	<i>Vraagbaak</i>	Female	Netherlands	40	University Bachelors Latin-American Studies	Dutch	Thursday, May 12th, 13:00, MS-Teams

Table 1: Interviewees

## 3.4 | Limitations

No study is without limitations. The following two sections highlight this thesis's limitations regarding its methodology, the case selection, and the data collection (interviews). Other limitations pertaining to this thesis are presented at the end of Chapter 4.

### 3.4.1 – Limitations of Methodology

Single-case studies come with various limitations (Toshkov, 2016). The most pertinent is generalisation beyond the case studied – i.e., the external validity of the research. Single-case studies are often chosen because they are a specific case that is interesting for one or another reason, thusly making the generalisability a bit dubious. More on this in the next section. Another limitation is the limited range of tools at a researcher's disposal for collecting data: observations, interviewing, or document analysis (Toshkov, 2016). This thesis only used interviews to explain and explore mechanisms. A third limitation for deductive single-case studies is the need to rely on a lot of existing theory. However, the PSM and SDT literature is quite extensive. This means that the hypotheses rely on a considerable number of existing research and theories that have been tested repeatedly. Therefore, this thesis' theoretical validity can be ensured.

Another limitation to the validity of this thesis is related to the operationalisation of PSM. Even after decades of research into an international measurement for PSM, researchers still note the issue with universal measurements (Kim et al., 2013). “The exact meaning and scaling of PSM dimensions are likely to differ across cultures and languages” (p. 97). Prysmakova (2016) confirmed her correlations in Poland while this study looks at a Dutch case. So, some differences in the measurement might be overlooked. Moreover, since this thesis uses qualitative methods, collecting data through semi-structured interviews, this study does not or cannot ask scaling questions to its respondents. PSM levels are not calculated to determine the exact effect of organisational centralisation. Nonetheless, calculating PSM levels is unnecessary to test the hypotheses or answer the main research question. Accordingly, since this thesis does not calculate or measure PSM levels, this limitation of not having an international measurement for PSM is not necessarily applicable and, therefore, not detrimental for this study. Ultimately, this thesis uses PSM as a general outcome variable – *an individual's orientation to do good* – whose four dimensions can be positively or negatively affected by (the consequences of) organisational centralisation. Additionally, to cope with the limitation of



cultures or language, the interview guide was carefully translated into Dutch so that the essence would remain the same (*see Appendix 3*).

A final limitation of this study's methodology is that some authors, such as Prysmakova (2020), do not distinguish between in-person beneficiary contact and contact with citizens from a distance. While she includes all forms of contact, this thesis only looks at employee-beneficiary contact through telecommunication technologies. There might be a different relationship between her conceptualisation of contact, which includes in-person contact, and PSM, versus this thesis' conceptualisation of contact and PSM. Researching this, however, lies outside the scope of this study.

### **3.4.2 – Limitations of Case Selection and Interviews**

#### Case Selection

As mentioned hereabove, generalisation beyond the case at hand can be an issue for single-case studies. The FACC is indeed a niche type of organisation. However, as mentioned in the introduction, other governments have similar consular contact centres in place (I-1). In fact, France, Spain, and Belgium (among others) are researching whether they should adopt a similar model as the Dutch one. Other types of public contact centres that provide information can also be considered part of the broader population to which the FACC belongs. Furthermore, by being embedded in a large body of well-established theory, this case study could lead to some generalisation beyond itself and contribute knowledge to the PA literature concerned with PSM and SDT. Beyond generalisability, another issue with a single-case study is that we cannot compare different organisations to make stronger inferences.

#### Interviews

Using interviews to collect data has its own limitations (Toshkov, 2016). Firstly, there is the issue of replicability. Interviews are difficult to replicate simply because they are difficult to obtain. An interviewees' context and mood can change and thusly their answers. Moreover, depending on the phrasing of questions and coding of answers, the conclusions might be different. Nevertheless, other researchers could replicate this study by using the interview guide and codes included in the appendices here. Of course, the analysis remains at the discretion of the interviewer/author. As with all qualitative studies, he has a monopoly of interpretation (Suzuki, 2017). Secondly, access to data beyond the interviews is difficult, especially when the study focuses on the subjective answers of its respondents and somewhat objective answers of an informant. Thirdly, and relatedly, interviewees might not always disclose information.

Especially information that is deemed socially unacceptable or undesirable. Trust or rapport building can be complicated, especially during short interviews. Interviewees are more prone to give honest and in-depth answers when assured a high degree of confidentiality, discretion, and anonymity. This was the case during this research study. Pleasantries were exchanged before the recording started to ensure that respondents would not feel restrained to answer questions about their real feelings and motivation. Lastly, the author/interviewer did not have any prior experience in collecting data through interviews. Nevertheless, he aimed to go about it carefully and systematically, following the interview guide, based on the general guided interview structure from Vinarski Peretz (2020).

The most prominent limitation of the sampling method is that purposive sampling is susceptible to researcher bias (Purposive Sampling 101, 2021). Instead of having a randomised sample, the author chose the sample of respondents based on his personal judgement. However, this judgement considered the research question and purpose. The interviewees had to be relevant for the study. The purposefully sampled respondents had to fit the criteria of working (or have worked) as a CIO in the FACC. Especially considering that CIOs are the ones who have the experience in and knowledge about delivering the service of the FACC – they are the ones who interact with clients. Hence why only these individuals were sought after through LinkedIn and by snowball sampling.

As for the sample itself, individuals who identify as being oriented “to delivering services to people with a purpose to do good for others and society” (Perry & Hondeghem, 2008, p. vii) are more likely to work at a public organisation such as the FACC. In the end, their job is *to help people*. Furthermore, those who agreed to be interviewed are probably those with higher PSM scores. As R-6 mentioned, he likes to help people, which is why he said “yes” to the interview. Nevertheless, this argument could be made about all studies that look at self-reported PSM. Therefore, the sample in this study cannot be deemed as more biased than other studies. Moreover, this study does not measure their PSM scores. It instead looks at how centralisation affects their PSM: positively or negatively. More on this in Chapter 4.3.3. For another thing, Table 1 shows that there was a lack of demographic variation in terms of educational degrees. All respondents have a university (of applied sciences) degree. However, this is a requirement for their position as CIOs (I-1).

Regarding the sample size, the goal was to get as many respondents as possible and have one or two respondent focus groups. However, due to time constraints CIOs were hesitant to yield 30 minutes of their time for an interview – let alone one hour. One respondent mentioned off the record (after the recording stopped) that some colleagues might have been

wary of being interviewed since not long ago, about ten colleagues were laid off. Still, the author could pose all crucial questions to the participating respondents. Moreover, the point of theoretical saturation was most likely reached. The last respondent (R-8) gave similar answers to the prior respondents: no new information was added, and many themes were repeated. A 10<sup>th</sup> CIO was invited and scheduled in but ended up not showing up to the interview.

## **Chapter 4: Results and Discussion**

### **4.1 | Empirical Findings**

The following two segments present the empirical findings of the case collected during the interviews. This data can be considered objective information about the case that the interviewees brought up. This allows the reader to understand better how the FACC works and what CIOs do. Afterwards, Chapter 4.2 analyses the empirical evidence directly related to each aspect of the hypotheses to support or reject them. Before continuing, a note on the referencing style: The author uses *eights* to represent how many respondents said something or argued a specific point. For example, (3/8) indicates that three of the eight respondents supported or said *this* argument. This would mean that the rest, in this case the other 5/8, did not mention anything related to the given topic. It is otherwise mentioned if someone disagrees with the rest.

#### **4.1.1 – The FACC**

Before the FACC was established in The Hague in 2016, the provision of services (information) was decentralised (I-1). Each embassy or consulate had its own phone number and website. As a result, “the quality of service [...] was not good in all cases” (I-1). For example, embassy personnel could be “called out of bed at three o'clock in the morning by one of those annoying citizens” with a question or issue (I-1). The quality of service would not be ideal in such situations (I-1; 2/8). Besides better service provision, as I-1 put it, “[t]here is a business case that simply says: it is cheaper to centralise it in one place.” The FA soon realised that it was very successful “in the sense that [they] could deal better with the customers, [they] could organise better, and one important conclusion was that by having it in one place, [...] you can also make sure that you manage your services centrally” (I-1). By being centralised, the FACC can give quality uniform answers to citizens on behalf of the FA and the government (I-1; R-2).

The FACC undergoes continuous restructuring. The centralisation of more services and products led the head of the FACC to recently create a new layer of management (hierarchy) to cope with the amount of work (I-1). There is now “an operations manager under [him], who manages four team managers, and there, they all have a team of about 25 [CIOs] under them” (I-1). Furthermore, the 2017 Government Agreement mandates the FACC to “continue to develop [its] services so that soon [it] will not only be the central point for the Dutch abroad

for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, but for all the products and services of the Dutch government. This is called *Loket Buitenland*<sup>9</sup> (I-1). Accordingly, the FACC is “now working with all the major implementation organisations to create a single front office, both by telephone and online, for Dutch citizens abroad” (I-1). This project has been ongoing since mid-2020. New products and services are implemented every quarter into the FACC. The *Loket Buitenland* project (LBP) can be explained more concretely as follows:

[N]ow we give people mainly advice and information on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs itself. There are a lot of people that live abroad that would like a more centralised point and institution that they can call where they can get all of the information. And now we are getting other government institutions within our centre. Before, we already had a little bit about DigiD and about rijbewijs<sup>10</sup> and such, but that was very, very surface level information. And we would just tell them, ‘oh, you can contact this person or this institution.’ But now they are making it bigger. And now we are getting SVB<sup>11</sup>, we are getting more about the rijbewijs, so the RDW<sup>12</sup>, and about Belastingdienst<sup>13</sup>. And many other institutions are now going to be all centralised through our contact centre so that people do not have to contact many institutions. That they can only contact us and get all of the information at once. (R-3; similarly, 3/8)

R-7 explained that people abroad experience difficulties when it comes to certain administrative issues. Here she gives an example about applying for study financing:

To log into mijnDUO<sup>14</sup> you need a DigiD. Suppose you have worked or lived abroad your whole life. [...] Then you do not get a BSN number<sup>15</sup>, but to apply for a DigiD you need a BSN number. But you do not just get a BSN number abroad. But you have all these steps. And we are actually trying to map out the entire journey that these customers have to make. So, with which organisations they will come into contact. Because the BSN remains at the RvIG, the National Service for Identity Data. And then DigiD is at Logius. And then, of course, DUO is responsible for study financing. These are the three steps where customers living abroad do not know this at all. So, what we are trying to do is to indicate where these customers need to go and what they need to do. But those services remain with those organisations. So, the only thing we do is actually structure the information [...].

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<sup>9</sup> *Loket Buitenland* roughly translates to ‘foreign office’.

<sup>10</sup> Driver’s licenses (translated from Dutch)

<sup>11</sup> *Sociale Verzekeringsbank* = the Dutch Social Insurance Bank

<sup>12</sup> *Rijksdienst voor het Wegverkeer* = the Dutch State Road Administration

<sup>13</sup> The Dutch Tax Authority (translated from Dutch)

<sup>14</sup> The self-service website of *Dienst Uitvoering Onderwijs* = The Dutch Executive Education Agency.

<sup>15</sup> *Burgerservicenummer* = Citizen service number

As most respondents said, CIOs now give more information on a broader spectrum of topics as a consequence of centralisation (7/8). Meanwhile, the actual service provision remains at each respective government agency. For example, “applying for a BSN number continues to be done at RvIG” (R-7). In sum, the FACC is *geographically* centralised in The Hague. As well as in terms of the services or information it consolidates and now provides through the LBP. The decision-making powers remain at higher levels of the broader FA structure (vertical centralisation) or at the partner organisations that deal with the provision of the actual products (horizontal decentralisation) (Rainey, 2014a).

#### 4.1.2 – The Tasks of the CIOs

Notwithstanding the centralisation, the tasks of CIOs remain relatively unchanged (R-2). As all respondents said, what they do foremost is inform people (8/8). They are responsible for the direct communication between the Dutch government and people (wanting to go) abroad who contact it (R-1). Per shift – morning, mid-day, evening, or night – they could have over 80 interactions through phone calls, WhatsApp, email, Twitter, or Facebook (2/8).

Their responsibilities can be roughly divided into four types of tasks. Firstly, CIOs are responsible for pointing out, structuring, and giving information to those contacting the FACC (3/8). “[F]or example, with a simple advice to travel at the moment. Because no one else knows the rules better than the Netherlands itself” (R-1). Secondly, CIOs guide their clients to where they have to go; to the required agency, office, embassy, or consulate, depending on the question or issue (4/8). One CIO mentioned that he sometimes feels like a receptionist, telling people where they have to go or what they have to do (R-6). Thirdly, the FACC’s “service often consists not of giving concrete answers, but rather of offering a listening ear” (I-1; similarly, 4/8). CIOs “really take the time for people [...] no matter at what time [a client] calls” (R-2). Sometimes CIOs have to calm people down in certain situations, give them negative answers, or bring bad news to them, all the while empathetically listening to them (4/8). R-3 said that this sometimes comes with some downsides:

[S]ometimes you even feel like you are emotional punching bag sometimes with some people that you really cannot give a solution to. And they are just trying to come to terms with the fact that what they need to do is what they need to do and the only solution that they are going to get.

CIOs do not partake in decision-making, nor can they solve problems or arrange things for their clients (5/8). This has to do with their position within the larger FA organisational structure. R-8 explained this:

[L]ook, as far as decisions are concerned, and organisationally... [...] you are at the bottom of the chain. And that is just the way it is. [...] But that has to do with the fact that you have an executive task, an executive function. You are not a decision-maker.

However, CIOs do have some sort of influence in problem-solving. They can point out issues that clients struggle with (4/8). As R-8 put it:

As a [CIO], you do not have any decision-making influence, of course, but management understands very well that we are [...] actually the eyes and ears of what the customer wants, needs, does not want, likes, dislikes... So, they often ask for our input and that is nice.

This brings us to the fourth responsibility that CIOs have: They can bring issues to the attention of the rest of the FA structure. Suppose CIOs get questions or feedback about a particular situation or policy that is not going quite well. In that case, they can flag this information and share this with their colleagues higher up or in other offices or agencies to see whether something can be done (3/8). CIOs indicate such issues, or rather notifications, with a rank of emergency (R-3). Low-ranking issues are those like spelling mistakes on the FACC's website.<sup>16</sup> High-ranking issues are those like where countries change their stance on travel restrictions. This responsibility is especially part of a *Vraagbaak's* job since they get to hear about the issues that CIOs encounter.

[I]f anybody [...] is having questions and does not know exactly how to answer a question, does not know certain information or simply has trouble communicating with one of [the FACC's] clients, then they come and ask [the *Vraagbaak*] what they can do, how they can solve their issue [...]. (R-3; similarly, 3/8)

During the COVID-19 pandemic, CIOs' work has become more like that of a "travel agency" (R-6). To some degree, this monotony of tasks has always been the case. CIOs mainly deal with three sorts of questions (R-6). These relate to (1) coming or moving to the Netherlands, (2) renewing passports or how to get the Dutch nationality, and (3) PCR tests for travel. As R-

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<sup>16</sup> [www.nederlandwereldwijd.nl](http://www.nederlandwereldwijd.nl)

I put it, sometimes “[i]t feels as if you are kind of like a robot.” R-2 said something similar. However, as a result of the LBP (centralisation), it now “seems like [there] are two very different subjects” that CIOs handle (R-7). On the one hand, there are questions related to consular help for those in need – births, passports, visas, deaths, or imprisonments. On the other hand, there are questions about paying taxes, getting pensions, or changing insurances – the LBP topics (I-1; 5/8).

The FACC employs individuals with minimally a Bachelor’s degree because they are expected to master at least three languages: Dutch, English, and Spanish or French (Klantcontact, 2020; I-1). They also need to be flexible enough to adapt the information for each question and context and be able to switch the information they provide at a moment’s notice without using scripts. This includes being able to deal with missing information. CIOs should also be able to handle challenging or emotional subjects that can be psychologically impactful (Klantcontact, 2020; (3/8). Here follows a short anecdote to exemplify this:

I have only once, in all these two years, slept badly because of a situation. [There] was a girl who said she was not safe with her boyfriend in Morocco. She really felt unsafe... and oh, no, sorry. I get two conversations mixed up. So, there were two [instances]. But one of them actually showed pictures on WhatsApp of how she had been abused. We are not trained for that, and this situation really bothered me. (R-2)

Their job gets rewarded through good salaries and with quite a bit of freedom in terms of their work schedule (Klantcontact, 2020; 3/8). CIOs plan in their own breaks and can switch shifts as long as all contact lines are manned as necessary.

## 4.2 | Analysis

Having presented the empirical findings, this section presents a theory-based analysis of the findings from the collected interviews data. It does so separately for each hypothesised causal mechanism from Chapter 2. This analysis consists of arguments that multiple respondents conveyed. The arguments and quoted passages are those where the message and essence were supported or likewise said by at least two respondents. A discussion about the analysis is presented thereafter. However, before moving on, it is worth mentioning that R-7 hesitated when asked whether and how she sees centralisation affecting PSM. She answered that the interview questions made her notice that there *is* some sort of relationship there, that “maybe



that it works through onto the motivation. That there is an intermediate step in between” (R-7). Thusly confirming the general idea of this thesis that a direct influence from centralisation on PSM unlikely. Instead, there must be a mechanism or causal pathway between these two variables. This mechanism is what this analysis hopes to shed light upon.

#### 4.2.1 – Hypothesis 1

*Through the mechanism of the more hierarchical structures and reduced autonomy for individual employees, organisational centralisation negatively impacts public service motivation.*

##### Organisational Centralisation → More Hierarchy & Reduced Autonomy

Interestingly, all respondents seemed to avoid using the word *hierarchy*. R-2 went as far as to say, “[n]o, we have nothing to do with hierarchy in that respect.” Meanwhile, at some point before this, she said: “We are a bit like the neglected child in the whole consular affairs happening. And we are certainly not the first to be informed, [we] often feel that we are the last to be informed.” In fact, all respondents do accept that there are rigid structures of how decisions are made (8/8). They acknowledge that CIOs are the lowest in the (hierarchical) chain of command. Most respondents focused on centralisation in terms of *geographical* centralisation and the consolidation of more services into the FACC rather than in the sense of hierarchical decision-making structures. This avoidance of using the word *hierarchy* might be due to the Dutch work culture where the term is not often used. Still, when presented with the term, all respondents agreed and elaborated further on the existence and consequences of hierarchy within the FACC. The further centralisation of the FACC means embedding it into a larger hierarchical structure. Especially considering that the FACC has no decision-making powers in terms of the information it provides, and the actual services remain at the different government agencies for which the FACC informs its clients (6/8). Furthermore, I-1 mentioned that the creation a new layer of management (hierarchy) underneath him, effectively made the hierarchical line of management longer. So due to centralisation and hierarchy, CIOs only perform their responsibility of information provision and never directly become part of decision-making.

Furthermore, resulting from this centralised, hierarchical structure, CIO’s tasks are highly regulated (I-1). They have solely executive functions, which can negatively affect their feelings of autonomy (I-1; R-8). This can be a challenging issue to tackle since CIOs are “university-educated people. These are people who precisely need autonomy in order to enjoy

their work a little. So, the difficult balance [that management is] always looking for is: How much do you regulate, how much do you framework, how much freedom do you give people?” (I-1). Working at the FACC, as part of a larger structure with clear (hierarchical) lines and little individual autonomy, means that most – emergency-like – consular situations have to be referred to specialized colleagues in the FA or an embassy (4/8). When asked whether she felt a sense of autonomy within the FACC structure to make decisions on issues, R-7 answered with “Pooh... not so much.” She explained that “in the end, there are really many people who have something to say [...]. So many that you do not know how long it will take or how far your idea might get. And that does not feel like you have a lot of autonomy. [...] You very often have to consult with people, or you just have to follow the line a bit. You cannot just make your own plan. No.”

Considering the aforementioned, we can establish that the FACC is centralised in terms of the information that it now provides to clients, how this information is centrally stored, how it is physically in one location, and, in the sense that decision-making is rather vertically ordered. CIOs work with information that gets passed on to them. Therefore, as a consequence of the FACC’s centralisation, it seems like it became more hierarchical, with clear decision-making structures. This allows for little decision-making authority and limited feelings of autonomy for the individual public service employees. How does this then have an impact on the four different PSM dimensions?

#### Hierarchy and Less Autonomy → Negative Impact on PSM

**APS** – Some respondents essentially said that working in the FACC, where their functions do not allow them a significant degree of autonomy and decision-making authority, negatively impacts their rational need or orientation to improve, provide, or participate in the provision of services through a public administration institution (3/8). The other respondents (5/8) did not say whether this structure positively or negatively affected their APS. They did; however, mention feeling like they do participate in the provision of public services. Nevertheless, they know that they cannot really improve this provision of services due to their position within the organisational structure. As R-8 said: “I do not think you can really change much. From this position. For me, it is a bit frustrating.” As this dimension includes the orientation to improve public service provision, this means that respondents’ APS is not positively affected by the FACC’s centralised structure.

R-2 believes that centralisation helps with the professionalization of the FACCs services by providing uniform information to their clients. Nevertheless, she recognises that

individuals working as CIOs cannot take the lead in changing processes or information that they consider unreasonable or disorganised. Likewise, R-6 explained that sometimes both CIOs and their clients get annoyed at how the FACC is set up. People often call expecting to speak with an embassy. Meanwhile, in reality, they are calling with a CIO in The Hague who cannot answer all sorts of questions – questions as simple or practical as: “I am in the street, but which door is it, of the embassy?” (R-7). So, due to the centralisation of services, CIOs can sometimes effectively block the efficient provision of services (R-6). This can irritate them and make them less attracted to work in this public office. This fits with the theoretical expectations. Public sector employees are expected to be less attracted or negatively motivated by hierarchical public offices since they might feel they cannot contribute much to society (Prysmakova, 2016; Schaubroeck et al., 1998).

*CPV* – All CIOs reported that their position and job does not allow them to help their customers fully (8/8). This seems to frustrate them and negatively impact the CPV that they possess.<sup>17</sup> Seemingly CIOs want to help as much as possible (8/8). All respondents mentioned that they believe it necessary for them and other people to help others in society when possible. They believe that they are committed to the values and interests of society when it comes to lending a hand or providing services. For example:

I feel very, indeed, very responsible for the person that I get to help. Because I feel I should be able to give them the best possible help that I can give. (R-3)

However, the CIOs understand that there are limits as to how much they can actually do. All respondents reported some frustration, annoyance or dissatisfaction when considering the hierarchical structure in which they work and the regulated role they fulfil. For example, asked whether this hierarchy or weak decision-making authority affects her ability or will to help others, R-5 responded by saying: “Of course it is difficult that you cannot help someone fully...” Another respondent gave an example of this frustration or conflict between her normative beliefs and her highly regulated job:

I once had a manager who listened in on conversations with me who said: 'jeez what, what are you thinking? Are you "air-[NAME]"? Are you going to send the customer a plane? That is not

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<sup>17</sup> Prysmakova (2016) did not advance any theoretical expectations for the CPV dimension as the data and model-fit of three out of the four CPV items were problematic to collect. Therefore, she omitted CPV from her findings.

possible, heh, girl. You have to stay in your circle and that customer, you are the government, you keep the customer away.' No. I have troub-... my intention is that I want to help everybody.  
(R-2)

**COM** – Following the theoretical expectations, hierarchy and reduced autonomy seem to negatively impact a CIO's motivation based on the emotional empathy that they (can) have toward others, albeit not too obviously. No respondent explicitly said that they feel less compassion due to the hierarchy or autonomy loss as a result of centralisation. Nevertheless, because they have no decision-making powers within the regulated hierarchy where they work, they cannot help people fully. Accordingly, many CIOs are wary about becoming too emotionally attached to their clients (5/8). Furthermore, the fact that they are physically alienated from their clients may also play a role in the extent to which centralisation negatively impacts their ability to build rapport with their clients, and therefore their COM.

R-4 explained how difficult it can be to work as a CIO with no power to help directly:

Sometimes, I do find it difficult to get someone on the phone with a pretty intense story, or someone who is completely panicking, or upset. Yes, I can listen to that person, I can ask them questions, try to calm them down. But I cannot offer direct help, and that is what I find difficult sometimes, because I really do want to help someone, and because I also feel very much for that person, and sometimes their stories are quite moving. That is what I find difficult.

R-7 did say that "very often you can help," she continued, "but the times when you cannot help, I find that more difficult because you actually hope to come up with a solution." However, considering that their function is an executive one (R-8), solutions are not for them to come up with. The compassion or empathy that CIOs claim to have is often put to the test.

[Y]ou notice that this decision structure [...] is very far away from you because other organisations make the decisions. So, you do provide the information of another government organisation, but you are not at all involved in how the process is organised and that can sometimes feel troublesome. Because then [...] you are the messenger of a bad message. (R-7)

So, CIOs realise that they work in a hierarchy with little to no autonomy or decision-making capacity. This reminds them that they should keep some emotional distance from their clients. R-3 explained this:

I guess I have to keep in mind that there is only so much I can do, and I cannot emotionally get affected by every person that calls me. Because of course there are people that call for just information about a specific document. But there are also people that call because somebody [...] passed away, because they are in a difficult situation abroad, they have children, no money, etc. And sometimes it is very, very tragic. And I have to make sure in my head that, of course, that I am being empathetic, that I am giving the best help that I can, best advice, best information, but also that I do not keep this inside of me throughout the day and then building up through the days, because otherwise it would, emotionally, it would not be very good for myself.

*SS* – The hierarchical structure and reduced autonomy as a consequence of centralisation do not seem to affect the respondents' orientation towards self-sacrifice negatively. These factors seem to have either a neutral, or perhaps a positive effect, but certainly not a negative effect on the CIOs' orientation to (selflessly) care for others. As explained in Prysmakova (2016), autonomy is a selfish need. All CIOs mentioned that they do not mind working in a place where they have to surrender their idea or ideal of helping people all the way (8/8). The respondents understand that they have to do their work as regulated to execute their jobs or civic duty effectively.

Their selflessness becomes more vivid when considering that CIOs sometimes work nightshifts (I-1; 3/8). Even if they are well-paid, this demands a certain degree of selflessness to accept such working conditions. Especially when all they do is listen to people, inform them whilst not making decisions, or direct them to other offices (R-6). As R-1 said, "I have this position. And this maybe does not allow me to make a decision on my own, but that is also the position. I mean, we all applied for a certain position." CIOs accept that they have reduced autonomy and decision-making powers because they can still help people by providing information (8/8). Moreover, they know that some conversations or calls could become very emotionally laden or outright difficult (3/8). As R-3 said, she sometimes feels like an emotional punching bag for those who contact the FACC. Yet CIOs still do the work.

This idea of self-sacrifice does not seem to be difficult to grasp for them. All respondents mentioned something similar to what R-8 said about her own ideals: "People should indeed help each other a little more. Unselfishly too sometimes, I think." Another respondent said he likes it when he can really help people, and even when sometimes he cannot help them, because this is part of their job (R-6). R-5 went as far as to say that she "do[es] not think that [CIOs] are very important. But, to [her], everyone who cooperates in this is important." CIOs accept that they are simply part of a larger centralised, hierarchical structure.

They are also aware of and accept that the centralisation and the subsequent hierarchy of the FACC mean that:

Sometimes processes do not run so smoothly, or there is some information supply that lags behind. So, our information supply actually has to catch up to the news. People then call us about it. We cannot confirm [the news] yet because a department has not confirmed it yet. These are things you notice. It can be frustrating sometimes. [...] But it is also part of the development of the contact centre. (R-8)

### Concluding Hypothesis 1

Following the theoretical expectations, the FACC's centralised structure creates more hierarchy that hinders the feeling of autonomy for CIOs. In turn, this adversely affects three of the four PSM dimensions: APS, CPV, and COM. Not SS. So, PSM is overall affected negatively if we consider this causal mechanism. In conclusion, H1 can be confirmed. Nevertheless, suppose we acknowledge other aspects related to the centralisation of the FACC, especially the services or information that CIOs now provide. In that case, we could conclude that another mechanism is in play. Perhaps this alternative mechanism is even more influential in its overall effect on motivation (PSM).

### **4.2.2 – Hypothesis 2**

*Through the mechanism of contact with beneficiaries, organisational centralisation can satisfy three psychological needs and therefore positively impact public service motivation.*

#### Organisational Centralisation (More Services) → Beneficiary Contact (Rewarding Tasks)

Since 2016, virtually all enquiries to the FA now go through the FACC in the Hague, be they via phone call or instant messaging platforms. More interestingly, CIOs now provide more information about different subjects to their clients. This is a result of the FACC's centralisation of more government services through the LBP. This centralisation does not change the types of tasks that CIOs perform – it remains information provision. However, according to all respondents, it does broaden their knowledge and the range of information they provide (8/8). This makes their job more varied in that sense, and therefore more engaging and rewarding – or 'fun' to use their own words (4/8).

R-3 explained what centralisation in terms of the LBP has meant for the CIOs: "The tasks have not changed, as for the subjects have changed somewhat. [...] Maybe the tasks changed a little bit in the last year and a half; we have also gotten new channels of

communication.” CIOs can now inform their clients about more topics and in more depth. R-1 said that the LBP

changes the amount of information that [CIOs] have to manage and also the amount of [...] subjects that [CIOs] should know about. But that makes it a bit more challenging and fun to actually do. [...] It is fun, because for example, if somebody is calling for a passport renewal. But is also telling you that in the future he or she or they are moving to another country, then you can basically immediately give them also more information that they did not know about. [...] So, you are not only providing them to an answer to one question, but you are also providing them with a whole package of information that is very useful for them to know. [...] In my case, I find it fascinating, and it motivates me to actually learn more about these services to be able to of course, provide this information to another.

CIOs sometimes feel like their job can be quite monotonous (4/8) and, according to R-1 and R-2, make them feel like *robots*. Therefore, the centralisation of more government services into the FACC’s repertoire is very much welcomed since it adds a variety of information that CIOs can now provide. The variation also stems from the fact that as a *geographically* centralised organisation, the FACC gets contacted from all over the world with a multitude of different questions (4/8).

It is very special that one second you have someone from Latin America who wants to go to the Caribbean and wants to know if they do not need a visa. And the other time you have someone from Macau on the line who wonders, ‘what about passports in China, because I just had a baby and how can I apply for them?’ And that is very interesting. (R-7)

This diversity of issues that CIOs now handle, mainly due to the LBP, makes their job much more interesting (5/8). As R-6 bluntly said, “look, it is, of course, nice to have a job that is varied.” Or as R-2 put it:

I personally find it more fun not to have the same passport conversation 20 times, but also once about DigiD, or once about a diploma that needs to be legalised. I like it, yes. [...] Our service therefore becomes much better and the conversations more pleasant. The conversations also become longer. But you can help someone much better. [...] I sometimes referred people [to another place] who I can now help. And that is also nice.

Likewise, this centralisation of services makes their job more interesting and rewarding because they gain more knowledge from trainings they follow before engaging with the new

subjects (3/8). R8 said: “[I]t motivates me when more and more services are added that I need to know about.” R-4 also mentioned that due to the variety of questions that they get, essentially, there is never a day where she does not learn something new. R-1 also said that “that is just the beauty about [the job]; that you never know what you will be expecting when you arrive at your job. Each call is just as surprising as they can be.”

Contact with Beneficiaries (Rewarding Tasks) → Need Satisfaction (Motivation)

**Autonomy** – Chapter 4.2.1 indicated how centralisation, by creating hierarchy, negatively influences individual autonomy. R-2 even mentioned at some point: “I often say: ‘We are just a bunch of sheep in the meadows, and we should behave like that.’” The others did not say anything this extreme but did acknowledge that they cannot make any decisions content-wise (7/8). Nevertheless, it became apparent during the interviews that even though CIOs have little decision-making authority in terms of content, their job allows them to choose how to deal with this content and their clients. In this respect, there is *de facto* little (hierarchical) control over them. Employees can arrange their actions by themselves (Xu & Chen, 2017). Therefore, we can establish that CIOs’ need for autonomy is satisfied through the nature of their job (contact with people) that results from this centralised organisation.

CIOs are left to their own devices to some degree. Probably because they are highly educated individuals (I-1). R-2 explained that their managers are more like work coordinators and that a CIO’s “work is not assessed in terms of content. [...] But it is measured. How do we deal with the interview techniques? But the answer itself is not tested. They assume that you know [what information to give], but nobody tests that.” Some CIOs said they do feel some sense of autonomy (5/8). “[Y]ou can show autonomy in the conversation by taking the lead with the information you have” (R-8). CIOs choose how to handle situations, what information they provide, and how they guide or where they send their clients.

I can very well make decisions. We have people who have more experience, and we can call them when we have doubts [...] then you consult with the *Vraagbaak*. [...] [W]e do have procedures, of course. You follow that, but there is room for interpretation. And [...] if it is indeed an emergency, if it has to be now, 'now he needs to speak to someone,' then we may decide if that is so. Then we can put [the call] through. (R-6)

Some CIOs stressed that they can choose how to approach people, whether they want to be more personal or not with their interactions (3/8).



It does not have to be purely business-like, just giving information. [...] I also think it is important to have a friendly chat when someone says 'I want to visit my daughter because her birthday is next week. What do I need to cross the border?' – 'Yes, how nice, congratulations in advance, how old is she turning?' That sort of thing. Just the little things. I think they are very important, and I notice that customers also like that, just to be treated a bit humanely. (R-4)

Management encourages this personalised style of approaching clients (I-1). I-1 believes that everyone should be autonomous enough to provide their service in a personalised manner. This gives more meaning to their job and allows CIOs to be more engaged with their job. What is more, CIOs enjoy flexibility in terms of their schedule – they can freely swap shifts with one another (Klantcontact, 2020; 3/8).

**Competence** – Resulting from the centralised nature and tasks of the FACC, there are resources available that seem to allow the CIOs to feel like they have the knowledge and emotional skills necessary to perform their tasks effectively and efficiently (Xu & Chen, 2017). The available initial trainings, information database, the *Vraagbaken*, and the overall emotional support system, together with the nature of their task, seem to satisfy the CIOs need to feel competent.

CIOs can now help their clients with more information about different services. For the respondents, learning about and providing these new services makes their job more appealing (5/8).

I mean it really depends on the person itself, on how he or she or they [...] identifies with the development or the centralisation. But in my case, I find it fascinating, and it motivates me to actually learn more about these services to be able to, of course, provide this information to another [person]. (R-1)

CIOs go through trainings to learn about all the information the FACC provides, especially during the first weeks of their employment (I-1; 3/8). As time goes by, they learn to understand and somewhat foresee what questions can be expected when someone contacts them from a certain country (R-7). This knowledge acquired through time allows them to feel more confident in being able to help their clients (2/8). So, the longer their tenure, the more knowledge they have, and the more competent they might feel. One respondent also mentioned

that the almost daily briefings about information changes before their shift begins help her feel more effective (R-5).

Nevertheless, no matter how much they learn, CIOs do not feel like they have the expert knowledge to actually fully help people (R-6). Think about questions regarding filing tax returns which can be very complicated. CIOs can only provide superficial information regarding such questions since this type of product or service remains at the partner organisations (2/8). So, their feeling of competence only goes so far. Nevertheless, all CIOs accept the fact that they can help until a certain limit (8/8). The FACC works with a central website and an internal knowledge base (*kennisbank*), which provides the CIOs with the information necessary to help their clients (R-4). The *Vraagbaken* also aid in making their colleagues feel competent by answering any uncertainties about the content of their work (3/8). *Vraagbaken* are “direct colleagues of [ours], who earn the same, who have the same status, but who have more substantive knowledge and with whom you can consult with” (R-2).

Furthermore, CIOs are encouraged to talk to each other or take an extra break for (emotional) support when they just had a difficult conversation with a client (3/8). R-8 mentioned that the FA has psychologists available. CIOs also need to be or feel emotionally competent enough to enjoy their tasks since they are continuously interacting with people, especially in an environment where the clients or the issues they deal with might be (emotionally) demanding (3/8).

[We] get a lot of different personalities and you have to learn how to deal with somebody that is very mad, or somebody that is very happy, somebody that does not want to listen to you and already has an answer in their head. [...] I have to also protect myself, because sometimes even people that are mad do get very mean on the phone, to put it nicely, and very offensive sometimes. (R-3)

***Relatedness*** – Most respondents reported that the nature of the FACC and their work fosters feelings of connectedness or solidarity with their colleagues and, or clients (7/8). Likewise, the feedback they get from clients through the optional KTOs<sup>18</sup> is generally positive and therefore motivating (I-1; R-7). For some, negative feedback is seen as a motivational factor to do better for their clients (I-1; R-8). This leads us to believe that CIOs feel helpful, important and connected to the citizens they serve (Xu & Chen, 2017). Most importantly, CIOs need for

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<sup>18</sup> *Klanten Tevredenheidonderzoeken* = Customer Satisfaction Surveys

relatedness is satisfied through the support they get from one another in this centralised organisation.

R-8 believes that the FACC is the only government organisation with such a strong focus on the client. R-2 echoed this by stating: “We really do answer more than just the question: We really do go deeper. [...] [A]nd we really take the time for people.” For many CIOs, their job is motivating, especially when they consider that there is always a person behind the question. Many CIOs have spent time abroad, so they know what it is like to be abroad and simply need a listening ear that could calm them down and help them with information (4/8).

While R-6 and R-7 mentioned not feeling related to their colleagues in the other agencies or embassies with whom they connect their clients, as mentioned previously, CIOs do tend to support each other, at least emotionally. This atmosphere of relatedness or collegiality seems to be very present within the FACC (I-1; R-8). As R-8 put it, “everyone has an attitude to help customers, [and] to support colleagues where necessary. So, I really like our department. Colleagues also make the work fun.” Almost every respondent mentioned how their colleagues are great and one of the main reasons they like their job (5/8). For example, R-1 said: “What motivates me to go to work are first of all my colleagues. They are the best ones that you can imagine.” Part of the reason for this feeling of relatedness within the FACC is that, as R-8 said: “You can always make your point, and there is a very open communication atmosphere. So, everything is open for discussion [...] So, you certainly have support from each other, from your colleagues.” According to her, the fact that management and CIOs work towards the common goal of providing a good service may contribute to this feeling of solidarity or relatedness.

**Beneficence** – Having beneficiary contact seems to make CIOs feel helpful. Their need for having a positive prosocial impact is satisfied due to the nature of their tasks (Corduneanu et al., 2020). This is essentially what most respondents said during the interviews (7/8). Because of the centralised way the FACC is set up, CIOs talk to people in different places, experiencing different issues. All of whom CIOs can help to some extent with the information that they possess, especially through the LBP. CIOs favour the LBP because they notice the added value it has for the (Dutch) people abroad (4/8). Ultimately, their job is to help those who contact the FACC. It makes the respondents “feel good to be able to help them”, R-3 continued, “because I know in certain situations, especially when coming to the Netherlands, I had no idea what I was doing, and I felt like nobody really helped me.” Now, CIOs are the first point of contact

for many people (4/8). R-4 said: "I like the fact that I am a first point of contact and can help someone further."

Most CIOs like the fact that they provide a service that helps people further. They often feel like they positively impact people, even if the answer to their questions is unexpected or negative (R-6). Because even in such cases, clients feel thankful that they were helped further (R-8). Clients are helped primarily due to the consolidation of different information into the FACC (2/8). As R-2 put it: "I think we can help 90 per cent of customers much better in this way than before." She refers to this centralised service provision versus a decentralised one. Another respondent said:

I just find it very beautiful that [we] are trying to bring all the processes into one place, because that will make it very nice and very accessible for the people living abroad. Let us say the citizens living abroad. It is very nice when you can just enter one place and find all the information that you need. (R-1)

However, with further centralisation, it seems like CIOs now handle two different types of subjects (R-7). On the one hand, subjects related to – more emergency-like – consular cases. "I think that is where [CIOs] can help the most" (R-7). On the other hand, subjects related to the LBP. These remain

with the other government organisations and it does not feel as if you can be of any extra help, because it feels a bit like all you do is tell the person where they need to be. And then I sometimes doubt whether you are really helping that person, because they then end up having to call again. (R-7; similarly, R-6)

Still, it generally seems like centralisation does not hamper the CIOs' feeling of beneficence.

[Y]ou can get quite a lot of contact during just one day. A lot of interactions from a lot of places in the world. But it also gives you the satisfaction of knowing that not because you are not there at that certain moment, that does not mean that you will not be able to provide them with the information or help needed. (R-1; similarly, all other respondents except R-5 who did not mention anything related to the feeling of beneficence)

### Concluding Hypothesis 2

The FACC's centralisation has kept the tasks of CIOs virtually the same, providing information via telecommunication technologies. However, with the centralisation of more services into the

FACC through the LBP, CIOs now have more variation in terms of the questions they can answer to help people. They can now also provide their clients with more (in-depth) information. The FACC's structure is hierarchical when it comes to decision-making. Nevertheless, CIOs feel as if they help people with a certain degree of autonomy and at their discretion. They choose how to deal with conversations and get the satisfaction of helping people. Moreover, they feel a considerable degree of relatedness in the workplace. Considering that they can help their clients further than before, CIOs feel that their job is becoming more rewarding. Hence, they all indicated experiences of need satisfaction and feel happy and motivated to do their job (8/8). We can thusly confirm H2.

Admittedly, H2 only expected three needs (competence, relatedness, and beneficence) to be satisfied. It did not expect the need for autonomy to be satisfied in a centralised, hierarchical organisation, especially after having confirmed H1. Nevertheless, the analysis demonstrates that all four psychological needs are satisfied – effectively going beyond H2's expectations. This comes to show how the nature of the task is imperative for need satisfaction. Furthermore, as established in Chapter 2, need satisfaction positively impacts motivation (PSM).

## 4.3 | Discussion

### 4.3.1 – Two Mechanisms, One Truth?

Confirming both hypotheses makes the whole picture somewhat blurry. H1 contends that if an organisation is centralised, this will negatively impact individual PSM. This is owed to centralisation's subsequent creation of hierarchical structures that hamper employees' sense of autonomy and decision-making authority. As the analysis concluded, this mechanism occurs and has an overall negative impact on three of the four dimensions of PSM (APS, CPV, COM). Thusly confirming H1. Nevertheless, this hypothesised mechanism disregards the type of job that one does as a result of organisational centralisation. Moreover, a work environment that supports autonomy is indeed essential for (intrinsic) motivation (Papadopoulou & Dimitriadis, 2019), but so are the other three psychological needs (competence, relatedness, beneficence).

This is where H2 comes in. If we consider a public organisation where contact with service beneficiaries plays a central role, the mechanism through which organisational centralisation affects PSM becomes different. The FACC is an example of a centralised organisation in terms of *geographical* and *service* centralisation. Due to this nature and its

continued centralisation through the LBP, CIOs directly serve a worldwide public on a wide array of topics. These employees immediately get a sense of what they do: help people. All the while choosing how to perform their task and with a strong sense of support. This feeling of need satisfaction that respondents reported during the interviews, including autonomy, can account for the enthusiasm and motivation that they have for their job (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Demircioglu & Chen, 2019). As the theoretical framework in Chapter 2 contends, SDT can very well complement PSM theory. Need satisfaction is considered to create more autonomous and intrinsic motivation and, therefore, more PSM (Corduneanu et al., 2020; Vandenabeele, 2007). So, by feeling need satisfaction, CIOs experience that the centralisation of the FACC and the subsequent broadening of their tasks positively impacts their perceived motivation (PSM) (H2).

Before moving on to the conclusion, some caveats to the confirmation of both hypotheses are warranted. Firstly, H1 does not consider the tasks that CIOs fulfil. Likewise, H2 does not fully consider the hierarchical structure that results from centralisation. R-8 and R-5 noted that the long lines of communication resulting from the FACC's hierarchy sometimes comes at the cost of feeling helpful (beneficence) or feeling competent. CIOs sometimes need to wait for approval or confirmation before providing clients with certain information when things change. This can be experienced as frustrating for some (2/8). Nevertheless, all respondents understand that this is part of the job and does not always occur (8/8). Overall, CIOs still feel competent and helpful. For R-4, this hierarchy means that there is a strict, clear line of communication that mainly is helpful for them and their clients.

Secondly, because of the physical (*geographical*) centralisation of the FACC, CIOs do not know how some processes actually occur. For example, how passports are given out at embassies in reality (R-7). This makes the information they provide lack real substance. CIOs sometimes also feel like they are in the client's way to receive the product or service they want (3/8). They might not feel so competent in such cases. Thirdly, this centralisation also means that CIOs do not know their colleagues working at the embassies or consulates or partner government organisations (R-7). This could hinder the satisfaction of their need for relatedness. However, as we saw in the previous section, CIOs do get the feeling of relatedness with their direct colleagues and with their clients. Lastly, and perhaps most importantly, even after so much support has been found for the interrelationship between SDT and PSM, Corduneanu et al. (2020) specifies that need satisfaction is *not* the *only* PSM predictor. Institutional factors, like value promotion, can also affect PSM levels. However, looking into this and other variables affecting PSM falls outside of the scope of this thesis.

### 4.3.2 – Conclusion

With the advent of digital solutions, some public organisations opt to digitise or centralise their service provision (Dunleavy et al., 2006; Torfing et al., 2020). The FA saw the opportunity to centralise its direct client services to streamline its provision of information and maintain high-quality standards of service provision (I-1). The result was the creation of the FACC in 2016 – the *geographical* centralisation of the service provision. For a few years, the LBP has caused a further centralisation of different government services into the FACC. Meanwhile, as an executive organisation, the FACC has not centralised in terms of decision-making powers. Decisions are made in other agencies or offices within the larger FA structure. So, the FACC is at the bottom of a larger organisational hierarchy. To be sure, the FACC has become more hierarchical in itself because of the broader package of services or information that it now provides.

H1 contends that centralisation negatively affects PSM through the creation of more hierarchy and reduced autonomy. If we only consider these two consequences of centralisation, then H1 is confirmed. However, this research concludes that this is not necessarily the case. Centralisation of the FACC, especially the centralisation of more services through the LBP, also causes more (varied) beneficiary contact. This can be considered rewarding. The respondents' four basic needs seem to be satisfied by the centralisation of the FACC. Notably, this also means that centralisation has a different effect on PSM depending on the (type of) organisation we focus on. In the present case, beneficiary contact is key for the FACC. Suppose we were to look at another organisation where this is not so. In that case, we might find that need satisfaction is not achieved, and therefore conclude, same as with H1, that PSM is negatively affected by organisational centralisation. This means that the same independent variable (organisational centralisation) might have a different mechanistic effect on the dependent variable (PSM) depending on the context in which we study this mechanism – i.e., causal heterogeneity (*Within-Case Analysis: Research Design*, n.d.).

The interviewees responded that they felt more autonomy than what the FACCs centralisation took away through its hierarchical structure (5/8). This leads us to believe that organisational centralisation does not only lead to hierarchy and reduced individual autonomy. Instead, that another effect or mechanism results from centralisation. As aforementioned, centralisation causes the CIOs tasks to become more rewarding and satisfactory for them as they can now help more people with more subjects. Their tasks and work relations allow them to satisfy their four psychological needs (autonomy, competence, relatedness, beneficence). This, in turn, positively impacts their motivation (PSM) (Corduneanu et al., 2020;

Vandenabeele, 2007). According to Corduneanu et al. (2020), organisational contexts that favour autonomy are positively related to higher motivational levels. Hence, it is good to notice that CIOs do feel a sense of autonomy to a certain degree, even if their job is highly regulated (I-1; 5/8). For another thing, centralisation brings an accumulation of information, and therefore knowledge, that the CIOs learn to use. All respondents reported that learning about new subjects through time makes them feel more competent in their job and make their tasks more enjoyable (8/8). Furthermore, their need to feel relatedness is satisfied by both their colleagues and clients. Finally, their ultimate goal is to help people (R-6). This satisfies their need for beneficence.

Coming back to answering the main research question: *How does organisational centralisation affect Public Service Motivation?* In short, organisational centralisation creates hierarchy. This hierarchy can frustrate individual employees as it makes them feel less autonomous and less able to make decisions to help people in need of immediate answers or solutions. This negatively impacts their overall PSM, thusly confirming H1. However, under certain conditions, centralisation follows another causal pathway. This is when we consider a specific type of organisation. Centralising contact centres – physically (*geographically*), in terms of power structures, and more services – creates an environment where individual employees can feel the satisfaction of four basic psychological needs (autonomy, competence, relatedness, and beneficence). This allows for more self-determination, and therefore more motivation (PSM) (Corduneanu et al., 2020; Deci & Ryan, 2000; Demircioglu & Chen, 2019; Vandenabeele, 2007). In organisations such as the FACC, this second causal mechanism (H2) seems to take precedence over the adverse effects from centralisation as expected by H1. The consequences of organisational centralisation positively impact PSM. Therefore, H2 is confirmed. This is at least the case for the FACC, as revealed in this thesis.

### 4.3.3 – Strengths and Limitations

Notably, this thesis is one of the first studies in PA which sheds light upon this relatively new move towards centralisation. This thesis aims to explain and uncover the complete picture of the mechanism between centralisation and PSM. It does so by engaging in a theory-testing, single-case qualitative study. This type of study design is not usual in the PSM literature (Perry & Vandenabeele, 2015; Prebble, 2016; Vinarski Peretz, 2020). Nevertheless, it has great potential in advancing the internal validity of previous PSM research and SDT research, for that matter (Lamont, 2015; Toshkov, 2016).



What is also different is that this study engages in explaining and exploring the causal mechanisms behind an antecedent affecting PSM, organisational centralisation in this case – thusly expanding on the knowledge that others have worked on (Camilleri, 2007; Charbonneau & Van Ryzin, 2017; Pandey & Stazyk, 2008; Perry, 1997; Perry et al., 2008; Schott & Pronk, 2014; Vandenabeele, 2011). This thesis also expands on PSM research by considering an alternative mechanism through the logic of SDT. Furthermore, by using interviews, this study gains a deeper understanding of what employees subjectively perceive as the mechanism that connects organisational centralisation and PSM, and whether this connection is primarily positive or negative, and why. In the end, PSM is an important variable to look at as previous studies have found that it has many positive organisational outcomes (Christensen et al., 2017; Homberg et al., 2015; Perry, 1996, 1997; Perry & Wise, 1990).

The limitations pertaining to this study's methodology, case selection and data collection are laid out in Chapter 3.4. Here the thesis advanced that the generalisability and external validity of the results of this research are somewhat side-lined. This work focuses instead on advancing the internal validity of previous theoretical arguments in the PSM literature. Additionally, this thesis' replicability, and therefore its reliability, are both safeguarded through the transparency with which the author worked. For example, the interview guide (Appendix 3) could be used by another researcher to study another centralised organisation, and the codes (Appendix 2) can be employed to analyse the answers. Other previously unaccounted limitations are presented here.

Firstly, this thesis does not include alternative explanations for the impact of organisational centralisation on PSM and the mechanism between this negative or positive relationship. For example, contrary to other contact centre jobs, CIOs are paid quite well, with salaries starting at 2.500 euros, excluding benefits (Klantcontact, 2020). This might be an incentive set up by the FA to attract and motivate their employees. Likewise, this thesis does not consider what happens as the result of centralisation in terms of administrative red tape, whether centralisation cuts or enhances red tape, and whether this positively or negatively influences employee PSM (Davis & Stazyk, 2014; Kaufmann et al., 2019). However, including other mechanistic explanatory variables lies beyond the scope of this thesis.

A second limitation is that deductive reasoning demands the researcher to have prior expectations based on theory about the case(s). Therefore, evidence might be purposefully looked for or selected (Vinarski Peretz, 2020), which means that other unexpected or contradicting evidence might be overlooked. This can be detrimental for research projects that explore new or unexpected causal mechanisms, such as the present thesis. Nevertheless, the

author was open to creating new, not previously theorised codes and open to finding new mechanisms that respondents might have identified. Thirdly, and relatedly, as with most qualitative research, the interview questions, transcription, translation, and the usage of quotes to build up arguments lie at the author's discretion who chooses how to present what information (Vinarski Peretz, 2020). Therefore, this research only provides one perspective on this subject and its conclusions. Notwithstanding this, the author aimed at working transparently, ethically, and responsibly with the data he used. Fourthly, the researcher notes that more time with each respondent would have been ideal to ask more in-depth questions about what they think an answer to the main research question might be. However, it was beyond the author's control to have longer conversations.

Lastly, how organisational centralisation affects PSM may depend on an individual's base PSM level. For example, centralisation, and the consequences thereof, might positively or negatively affect only those individuals with high levels of PSM whilst not affecting those with low PSM levels. Therefore, this research should have ideally measured employee PSM levels. This thesis does not do this. By using a qualitative method with semi-structured interviews, the researcher could not ask scaling questions for a self-assessment of the respondents' PSM levels. Furthermore, this would not have been possible considering the time that the respondents granted the researcher for interviewing them. Considering all of this, this thesis cannot make any conclusions about who gets affected by organisational centralisation and by how much (if at all). Future research could help fill in this gap. Nevertheless, this thesis makes a first step towards understanding through what mechanism(s) centralisation affects motivation and in what way: positively or negatively.

#### **4.3.4 – Agenda for Future Research**

Various aspects of this thesis open doors for future research. (1) This study did not calculate by how much PSM levels change per hypothesised mechanism. As a result, future studies could consider doing quantitative research into this topic to make stronger causal inferences. For example, surveys could be used to discover more about the mechanisms and actual effect of organisational centralisation on PSM and its four dimensions in (public) organisations similar to the FACC. (2) This thesis looked at the effect of the H1's causal mechanism on each PSM dimension. Meanwhile, it did not do this for H2. Future research could look at how beneficiary contact affects each PSM dimension through the logic of SDT. (3) Centralisation also includes the physical alienation of employees from their beneficiaries (*geographical* centralisation). This reduces the degree to which employees can visualise the impact of their work. This might

negatively affect employee motivation (Breugh et al., 2018; Camilleri, 2007). Future studies could explore the relationship between physical alienation, need satisfaction, and motivation. (4) Future research could research the effect of different communication strategies or technologies for public service provision on PSM and job satisfaction (Demircioglu & Chen, 2019; Prysmakova, 2020). For example, researching whether public employee PSM levels differ depending on how they have beneficiary contact: via phone calls, instant messaging platforms or in-person. (5) More generally, PA literature should keep tabs on this new Digital-Era Governance paradigm regarding its consequences on public organisational structures and how this affects PSM (Dunleavy et al., 2006; Torfing et al., 2020).

#### **4.3.5 – Practical Implications**

As Rainey (2014a, p. 216) put it, “organizational structure and its design and management remain key challenges for public managers.” Furthermore, “motivating employees and stimulating effective attitudes in them become crucial and sensitive challenges for leaders” (Rainey, 2014b, p. 258). Therefore, practitioners should focus on fulfilling the four basic psychological needs of individual employees in highly centralised and hierarchical organisations. This positively affects employee motivation (PSM) and in turn has positive effects on various organisational outcomes (Christensen et al., 2017; Deci & Ryan, 2000; Demircioglu & Chen, 2019; Homburg et al., 2015; Perry, 1996, 1997; Perry & Wise, 1990). Considering that managers can affect individual PSM (Andersen et al., 2014; Jacobsen et al., 2014; Vinarski Peretz, 2020), they should work with their employees to enhance their PSM. For the present case, one way could be through the inclusion of CIOs’ input in the FACC’s organisational decision-making. Management should be aware that CIOs know what is best for or the needs of their clients. This enables CIOs to use their APS; their orientation to improve the provision of public services (Breugh et al., 2018).

Furthermore, autonomy should remain a focal point (Corduneanu et al., 2020). Employees should be granted a certain degree of autonomy and decision-making authority when choosing how to handle clients or situations (Shafritz et al., 1992). In contact centres, management should allow for enough interaction time per client so employees can build rapport with them (Christensen et al., 2017). Both sides would benefit from greater feelings of relatedness and empathy, and the organisation will provide its services better. Connected to this, relatedness among colleagues is imperative to keep motivation levels (Broeck et al., 2010). Even during the COVID-19 pandemic, employees should be able to work from the office to spend time with and feel supported by their colleagues.

Overall, organisational centralisation does not seem to affect PSM negatively. At least not in consular contact centres. Therefore, other countries could implement a contact centre modelled after the FACC for their foreign affairs ministries. The LBP could serve as a blueprint. Most countries have an extensive diaspora that would benefit from a central point that could answer all their questions and doubts regarding administrative or consular issues. According to I-1, creating a centralised, *municipal style* information office has proved successful in terms of quality of service and cost-effectiveness. Centralising many services into one organisation might warrant differentiation or specialisation among employees based on the subjects they handle. No one can be an expert on all subjects. However, considering that it is precisely this variation in subjects and continuous learning cycle that CIOs find attractive, this thesis advises the FACC and other contact centres against departmentalising subject matters with specialised employees.

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## Appendix 1: SDT and the Types of Regulation

SDT emerged in the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century as a psychological theory about motivation (Deci, 1971, 1985, 2017). This prominent theory has been applied and tested in many fields, from health, to education, to human resources (Breugh et al., 2018; Papadopoulou & Dimitriadis, 2019).

Motivation can be divided into two types. (1) Intrinsic motivation is when an individual performs an action because he is interested in or enjoys performing the action itself (Deci, 2017; Deci & Ryan, 2000; Demircioglu & Chen, 2019; Xu & Chen, 2017). Meanwhile, (2) extrinsic motivation is where people are driven to act in return for an external reward, such as a promotion, or to avoid any (physical or psychological) punishment. Then, as explained in Chapter 2, there is another central distinction between types of motivation; autonomous versus controlled (Deci, 2017).

Deci & Ryan (2000) distinguished the different dimensions of motivation further. On the far left of the *motivation spectrum*, we would find complete amotivation where there is no regulation of motivation whatsoever – i.e., no forcing of behaviour. Then, to the right of amotivation, under extrinsic motivation, we would find two types of controlled motivation – external and introjected regulation – and two types of autonomous regulation – identified and integrated regulation. At the far right of the spectrum, we find intrinsic motivation, which is autonomous and internally (self-)regulated.

Here follows an explanation of the different types of regulation, as explained by Demircioglu & Chen (2019), who based their definitions on Deci & Ryan (2000):

- **External regulation:** behaviour is done to gain material rewards or avoid physical punishments.
  - Example: an employee files his call logs to not get fired.
- **Introjected regulation:** behaviour is done to avoid psychological punishment. Think of avoiding a sense of anxiety, shame, or guilt.
  - Example: an employee coming to work dressed in uniform to avoid being criticised by colleagues.
- **Identified regulation:** a task is completed because the individual identifies the task as useful for himself.
  - Example: an employee follows the introduction training because it will help him/her to learn new skills.

- **Integrated regulation:** individuals perform tasks because the actor deems the action is in line with his/her deep beliefs.
  - Example: an employee helps a service beneficiary who lost someone to a natural disaster.
- **Internal (self-)regulation:** an individual initiates his/her own behaviour because the task is rewarding in and of itself.
  - Example: an employee calls with service beneficiaries worldwide because the act of calling and talking to people on the phone is enjoyable in itself and makes the worker feel accomplished.

## Appendix 2: Codes Used in Atlas.ti

Category	Code	Definition or Explanation of use
<b>Hierarchy</b>	Hierarchy	Interviewee mentions hierarchy in terms of organisational structure or management.
	Less hierarchy	Interviewee mentions there being less hierarchy in terms of organisational structure or management as a result of organisational centralisation.
	More hierarchy	Interviewee mentions there being more hierarchy in terms of organisational structure or management as a result of organisational centralisation.
	Same hierarchy	Interviewee mentions there being neither less nor more hierarchy in terms of organisational structure or management as a result of organisational centralisation.
<b>PSM</b>	APS	Interviewee refers to an individual's rational need to improve, provide, or participate in the provision of services through a public administration institution.
	COM	Interviewee refers to an individual's public service behaviour as motivated by the emotional empathy they have towards other individuals.
	CPV	Interviewee refers to a person's norm-based beliefs, or motives, about their commitments to society and its public values and interests, and the state's duty to provide services.
	SS	Interviewee refers to an individual's willingness to self-sacrifice for the sake of serving others.
<b>SDT</b>	Autonomy	Interviewee refers to the psychological desire of individuals to feel like independent agents who can make choices and feel free when performing an activity.
	Beneficence	Interviewee refers to an individual's need of having a positive prosocial impact.
	Competence	Interviewee refers to individuals' inherent desire to feel effective in interacting with the environment and with people.
	Relatedness	Interviewee refers to the psychological need to feel connected and as part of a group, to care and be cared for, and love and be loved.
<b>CIOs</b>	Decision-Making	Interviewee mentions or refers to decision-making in the organisation.
	Frustration	Interviewee expresses a sentiment of frustration, annoyance or dissatisfaction about a certain issue.
	Influence	Interviewee mentions or refers to the influence that employees have within the organisation.
	Rewarding tasks	Interviewee expresses a sentiment of fulfilment about a task that he/she has to do.
	Their Tasks	Interviewee refers to what their tasks as CIO entail.
	Things they dislike	Interviewee refers to the tasks and attributes of the FACC that they dislike or disagree with.
	Things they like	Interviewee refers to the tasks and attributes of the FACC that they like or agree with.
	Vraagbaak	Interviewee mentions or refers to a Vraagbaak.
<b>Other</b>	Centralisation	Interviewee explains that the organisation is centralised or centralising.
	Feedback	Interviewee refers to feedback in any way.
	Loket Buitenland	Interviewee mentions or refers to Loket Buitenland.
	The FACC	Interviewee refers to the establishment, structure, or workings of the FACC.
	Visual impact	Interviewee mentions or refers to the visual impact they have on their beneficiaries.

## **Appendix 3: Interview Guide**

### **English Version**

#### Respondent Questions

**Prioritized questions, follow-up questions, *supplementary questions***

The first set of questions related to the interviewees' demographic background:

- **Can you introduce yourself?** In terms of:
  - Name, age?
  - Where do you come from originally?
  - What is your highest obtained educational degree?

The second set of questions, relating to his/her Job:

- **What is your current (official) position in the FACC (and department, regions)?**
- **For how many years have you worked at the FACC in this position, and how many years in the FACC in general.**
- **What do you like about your job?**
  - What do you like less about your job?
- **To what extent do you believe that you, specifically in your function and in this structure, can serve the public?**

The third set of questions is the most important. The Leading questions are numbered 1-5

1. **Can you tell me about the FACC as a centralised public organisation? In what ways, according to you, is it centralised?**
2. **Can you explain to me whether you are “oriented to deliver services to people with a purpose to do good for others and society”?**
  - a. APS: do you feel the need to improve, provide, or participate in the provision of services through a public administration institution? Can you give an example?
    - i. *I admire people who initiate or are involved in activities to aid my community.*
    - ii. *It is important to contribute to activities that tackle social problems.*
    - iii. *Meaningful public service is very important to me.*

- iv. *It is important for me to contribute to the common good.*
  - b. CPV: do you believe that you are committed to the values and interest of society, and that the state should provide services? Can you give an example?
    - i. *I think equal opportunities for citizens are very important.*
    - ii. *It is important that citizens can rely on the continuous provision of public services.*
    - iii. *It is fundamental that the interests of future generations are taken into account when developing public policies.*
    - iv. *To act ethically is essential for public servants.*
  - c. COM: do you believe that you are motivated to work in the public service due to your emotional empathy towards other individuals? Can you give an example?
    - i. *I feel sympathetic to the plight of the underprivileged.*
    - ii. *I empathize with other people who face difficulties.*
    - iii. *I get very upset when I see other people being treated unfairly.*
    - iv. *Considering the welfare of others is very important.*
  - d. SS: would you say that you are generally someone who can selflessly care for others? Can you give an example?
    - i. *I am prepared to make sacrifices for the good of society.*
    - ii. *I believe in putting civic duty before self.*
    - iii. *I am willing to risk personal loss to help society.*
    - iv. *I would agree to a good plan to make a better life for the poor, even if it costs me money.*
- 3. **Can you explain to me in what way, or how does working in a structurally centralised organisation, like the 24/7 BZ, affect your “orientation to deliver services to people with a purpose to do good for others and society”?**
  - a. Can you explain to me how it affects it positively and/or negatively?
    - i. APS
      - 1. Does the hierarchy allow you to improve, provide, or participate in the provision of services through a public administration institution? How about the tasks you perform?
    - ii. CPV



1. Does the hierarchy change your mind set about being committed to the values and interests of society? How about the tasks you perform?

iii. COM

1. Does the hierarchy allow you to empathise with people who face difficulties? How about the tasks you perform?

iv. SS

1. Does the hierarchy allow you to be self-sacrificial in order to help others? How about the tasks you perform?

**4. How, or in what ways does the centralisation of the contact centre affect the tasks you have to do?**

- a. Does more centralisation (f.e. DigiD) make you have to come more in contact with people?
- b. Do you get more feedback as a result from the centralisation?

**5. How does the centralisation of the contact centre and your tasks at the contact centre make you feel in terms of:**

a. **Autonomy**

- i. How does the centralisation (hierarchy) (1) make you feel and (2) affect the tasks you can do?

b. **Competence**

- i. How does your job (your tasks) make you feel competent and effective in terms of the information and knowledge that you have and that you get to share with your clients?
- ii. How does the hierarchy affect the information that you can share to your clients?

c. **Relatedness**

- i. How does your job (your tasks) make you feel in terms of your relationship with clients and also in your office?
- ii. How does the job you do affect the type of support or feedback you get?

d. **Beneficence:** that you benefit the wider society

- i. How does your job (your tasks) make you feel in terms of the amount of help you are giving society as a whole?

The fourth set of questions:

- **Ask the research question: In what way, or how, does centralisation affect your Public Service Motivation?**
  - So not only + or – , but how come? What is the mechanism behind it?
  - Maybe: what factors, related to organisational centralisation, affect your Public Service Motivation?
- **Any things you may want to add?**
- **Would you like to stay anonymous?**

#### Questions Informant (English version was not used)

The first set of questions related to the interviewees' demographic background:

- Can you tell me a bit about you? In terms of your:
  - Name, age?
  - Where do you come from originally?
  - And What is your highest obtained educational degree?

The second set of questions, relating to his Job:

- What is your current (official) position in the FACC?
- For how many years have you worked at the FACC in this position, and how many years in the FACC in general.
  - Follow-up: Were you working here before the changes – the centralisation of more services, like DigiD etc.
- What do you like about your job?
  - What do you like less about your job?
- To what extent do you believe that you, specifically in your function and in this structure, can serve the public?

The third set of questions relate to the FACC's work and employees

- What is the structure of the FACC (regions, departments, etc.) and how many people work here as Information Officers (*Consulaire voorlichters*)?
- What is, according to you, the main objective and task of the FACC and its employees?

- Why did FA centralise the information provision?
  - Where did people call/message before if they needed information?
  - Is the FACC a novel model around the world – or other countries or ministries have a similar information contact centre?
- Can you tell me more about the consequences of having an office that is centralised?
  - To what degree do you think it is centralised (physically and perhaps even hierarchically)?
- How do you think this centralised structure affects the work that your employees do?
  - In terms of their freedom to perform their tasks and how much help they can offer.
- In your experience, how *motivated* FACC employees feel when working in a centralised environment?
- How do the beneficiaries get to give Information Officers feedback on their work?
  - Is it mainly positive and instant feedback?
- Overall, what do you believe are the benefits or drawbacks of a centralised office (the FACC), especially in terms of the motivation or satisfaction of your employees? How?
  - I read in an interview (October 16th, 2020 → [klantcontact.nl](https://klantcontact.nl)) that workers at the contact centre seldom leave (laag verzuim percentage). Do you think this has to do with their motivation to serve the public, or their work, or what other factors?

## Dutch Version

### Vragen Respondenten

**Leidende vragen**, vervolgvragen, *aanvullende vragen*

De eerste reeks vragen had betrekking op de demografische achtergrond van de ondervraagden:

- **Kunt u zich voor stellen?** Qua:
  - Naam, leeftijd?
  - Waar komt u oorspronkelijk vandaan?
  - En wat is uw hoogst behaalde onderwijs diploma?

De tweede reeks vragen, die betrekking hebben op zijn functie:

- **Wat is uw huidige (officiële) functie in het Contactcenter (en afdeling, regio's)?**
- **Hoeveel jaar werkt u al in deze functie bij het Contactcenter, en hoeveel jaar bij het Contactcenter in het algemeen.**
- **Wat bevalt u aan uw baan?**
  - Wat vindt u minder leuk aan uw baan?
- **In hoeverre denkt u dat u, specifiek in uw functie en in deze structuur, het publiek van dienst kunt zijn?**

De derde reeks vragen is de belangrijkste. De leidende vragen zijn genummerd 1-5

1. **Kunt u mij iets vertellen over het FACC als gecentraliseerde publieke organisatie? In welk opzicht, volgens u, is het gecentraliseerd?**
2. **Kunt u mij uitleggen of u "georiënteerd bent op het leveren van diensten aan mensen met het doel om goed te doen voor anderen en de samenleving"?**
  - a. APS: voelt u de behoefte om diensten te verbeteren, te leveren of eraan deel te nemen via een instelling van openbaar bestuur? Kunt u een voorbeeld geven?
    - i. *Ik heb bewondering voor mensen die het initiatief nemen tot of betrokken zijn bij activiteiten om mijn gemeenschap te helpen.*
    - ii. *Het is belangrijk om bij te dragen aan activiteiten die sociale problemen aanpakken.*
    - iii. *Zinnvolle openbare dienstverlening is erg belangrijk voor mij.*
    - iv. *Het is belangrijk voor mij om bij te dragen aan het algemeen welzijn.*

- b. CPV: bent u van mening dat u zich inzet voor de waarden en het belang van de samenleving, en dat de staat diensten moet verlenen? Kunt u een voorbeeld geven?
- i. *Ik vind gelijke kansen voor burgers heel belangrijk.*
  - ii. *Het is belangrijk dat de burgers kunnen vertrouwen op de voortdurende verstrekking van openbare diensten.*
  - iii. *Het is van fundamenteel belang dat bij de ontwikkeling van overheidsbeleid rekening wordt gehouden met de belangen van toekomstige generaties.*
  - iv. *Ethisch handelen is essentieel voor overheidsambtenaren.*
- c. COM: denkt u dat u gemotiveerd bent om in de openbare dienst te werken door uw emotionele empathie voor andere personen? Kunt u een voorbeeld geven?
- i. *Ik voel sympathie voor de strijden van de kansarmen (mensen)*
  - ii. *Ik leef mee met mensen die moeilijkheden ondervinden.*
  - iii. *Ik word verdrietig als ik zie dat andere mensen oneerlijk behandeld worden.*
  - iv. *Rekening houden met het welzijn van anderen is heel belangrijk.*
- d. SS: zou je zeggen dat je over het algemeen iemand bent die onbaatzuchtig (niet egoïstisch, selfless) voor anderen kan zorgen? Kun je een voorbeeld geven?
- i. *Ik ben bereid opofferingen te maken voor het welzijn van de samenleving.*
  - ii. *Ik geloof in het stellen van burgerplicht boven het eigenbelang.*
  - iii. *Ik ben bereid persoonlijk verlies te riskeren om de maatschappij te helpen.*
  - iv. *Ik zou instemmen met een goed plan om de armen een beter leven te geven, ook al kost me dat geld.*

**3. Kunt u mij uitleggen op welke manier, of hoe, het werken in een structureel gecentraliseerde organisatie, zoals de 24/7 BZ, invloed heeft op uw "oriëntatie om diensten te leveren aan mensen met een doel om goed te doen voor anderen en de samenleving"?**

- a. Kunt u mij uitleggen hoe de gecentraliseerde structuur dit positief en/of negatief beïnvloedt?
- i. APS

1. Stelt de hiërarchie u in staat diensten te verbeteren, te verlenen of deel te nemen aan het verlenen van diensten door een instelling van openbaar bestuur? Hoe zit het met de taken die u uitvoert?
  - ii. CPV
    1. Verandert de hiërarchie uw instelling om zich in te zetten voor de waarden en belangen van de samenleving? Hoe zit het met de taken die u uitvoert?
  - iii. COM
    1. Stelt de hiërarchie u in staat om empathie te voelen met mensen die moeilijkheden ondervinden? Hoe zit het met de taken die u uitvoert?
  - iv. SS
    1. Staat de hiërarchie u toe zelfopofferend te zijn om anderen te helpen? Hoe zit het met de taken die je uitvoert?
- 4. Hoe of op welke manier beïnvloedt de centralisatie van het Contactcenter de taken die u moet uitvoeren?**
- a. Zorgt meer centralisatie (b.v. DigiD) ervoor dat je meer in contact moet komen met mensen?
  - b. Krijgt u meer feedback als gevolg van de centralisatie?
- 5. Hoe voelt u zich door de centralisatie van het Contactcenter en door uw taken in het Contactcenter op het gebied van:**
- a. **Autonomie**
    - i. Hoe doet de centralisatie (hiërarchie) (1) u zich voelen en (2) de taken die u kunt uitvoeren beïnvloeden? Beslissingen nemen, etc.
  - b. **Competentie**
    - i. Hoe laat uw baan (of uw taken) u competent en effectief voelen in termen van de informatie en kennis die u hebt en die u mag delen met uw klanten?
    - ii. Hoe beïnvloedt de hiërarchie de informatie die u met uw klanten kunt delen? En wat u kan leren?
  - c. **Verbondenheid**
    - i. Hoe voelt u zich in uw baan (of uw taken) in de zin van uw relatie met uw klanten en ook met uw kantoor?

- ii. Hoe beïnvloedt het werk dat u doet het soort steun of feedback dat u krijgt?
- d. **Beneficence:** dat u ten goede komt (wilt komen) aan de bredere samenleving
  - i. Hoe voelt u zich in uw baan (of uw taken) in de zin van de hoeveelheid hulp die u de maatschappij als geheel biedt?

De vierde reeks vragen:

- **Stel de onderzoeksvraag: Op welke manier, of hoe, beïnvloedt centralisatie uw Motivatie voor de Publieke Dienst?**
  - Dus niet alleen + of - , maar ook hoe komt dat? Wat is het mechanisme erachter?
  - Misschien: welke factoren, gerelateerd aan organisatiecentralisatie, beïnvloeden uw Public Service Motivation?
- **Zijn er dingen die u zou willen toevoegen?**
- **Wilt u anoniem blijven?**

#### Vragen Informant

De eerste reeks vragen had betrekking op de demografische achtergrond van de Informant:

- Kunt u zich voor stellen? Qua:
  - Naam, leeftijd?
  - Waar komt u oorspronkelijk vandaan?
  - En wat is uw hoogst behaalde onderwijs diploma?

De tweede reeks vragen, met betrekking tot zijn functie:

- Wat is uw huidige (officiële) functie in het FACC?
- Hoeveel jaar werkt u al in deze functie in het FACC, en hoeveel jaar in het FACC in het algemeen.
  - Follow-up: Werkte u hier vóór de veranderingen - de centralisatie van meer diensten, zoals DigiD, enz.

De derde reeks vragen heeft betrekking op het werk en de werknemers van het FACC

- Wat is de structuur van het FACC (regio's, afdelingen, enz.) en hoeveel mensen werken er als Consulaire voorlichters?
- Wat is volgens u de belangrijkste doelstelling en taak van het FACC en zijn medewerkers?
- Waarom heeft BZ de informatievoorziening gecentraliseerd?
  - Waar belde/stuurde berichten men vroeger naartoe als men informatie nodig had?
  - Is het FACC een nieuw model in de wereld - of hebben andere landen / ministeries een soortgelijk Contactcentrum?
- Kunt u mij meer vertellen over de gevolgen van een gecentraliseerd kantoor?
  - In welke mate denkt u dat het gecentraliseerd is (fysiek en misschien zelfs hiërarchisch gezien)?
- Hoe beïnvloedt deze gecentraliseerde structuur volgens u het werk van uw werknemers?
  - In de zin van hun vrijheid om hun taken uit te voeren, en hoeveel hulp zij kunnen bieden, etc.
- Volgens uw ervaring, hoe gemotiveerd voelen de medewerkers van het FACC zich, aangezien zij in een *zeer* gecentraliseerde omgeving werken?
- Hoe geven de “klanten” (dus mensen die bellen/contact opnemen met de FACC) de Consulaire Voorlichters feedback over hun werk?
  - Is die voornamelijk positief en directe feedback?
- Wat zijn volgens u in het algemeen de voor- of nadelen van een gecentraliseerd organisatie (het FACC), met name wat betreft de motivatie of de tevredenheid van uw medewerkers?
  - Ik las in een interview (16 okt, 2020 klantcontact.nl) dat werknemers van het Contactcenter zelden weggaan (laag verzuimpercentage). Denkt u dat dit te maken heeft met hun motivatie om het publiek te dienen, of hun werk, of welke andere factoren?