

**NETWORKS NEVER WALK ALONE:  
THE MANAGEMENT OF NETWORK PORTFOLIOS**

**Tamyko Ysa**

Institute of Public Governance and Management

[tamyko.ysa@esade.edu](mailto:tamyko.ysa@esade.edu)

## Networks Never Walk Alone

- Governments and public institutions belong to **several networks simultaneously**
- Governments **play different roles** in them, and look for different objectives and methodologies of work
- **Public managers** thus adopt a **new role**: it is not only how a network is managed but how they manage network portfolios

### RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

How can incorporating **Public Network Portfolio analysis** help the study of network management?

How can network portfolio focus help **improve** network **management**?

**ESADE**

Working definition  
Provan and Kenis (2007) JPART

**“NETWORK”**

**Groups of 3 or more legally autonomous organizations that work together to achieve not only their own goals but also a collective goal.**

- Goal directed
- Multilateral collectivities
- May be self-initiated, mandated or contracted

APPROACH:  
**Network as a form of governance:**

- Network as the unit of analysis

**WHOLE NETWORKS**

**ESADE**


**Collaborarchies**

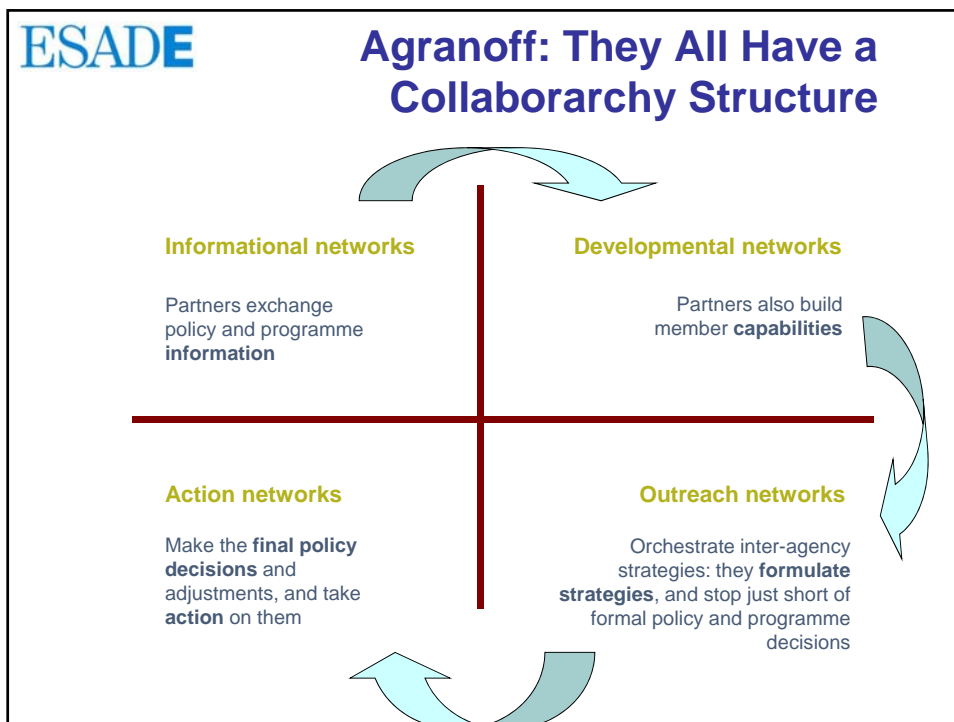
**Robert Agranoff**  
Indiana University

The **boundaries** between models have **become blurred**

**Increasing use of management tools** based on principles inherent in the **three paradigms**

Current models of public governance are combinations of all three







**ESADE**

## Network Governance

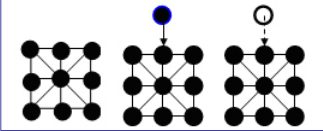
**Patrick Kenis**  
Tilburg University

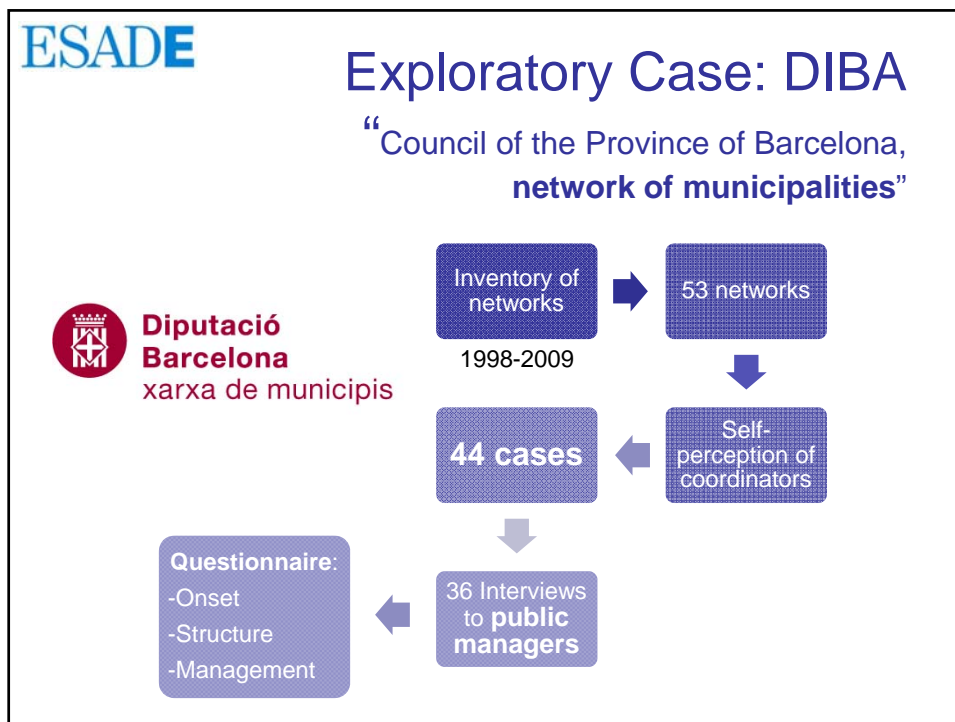
**Keith Provan**  
University of Arizona

**Holistic**

Focus on the different forms of network governance



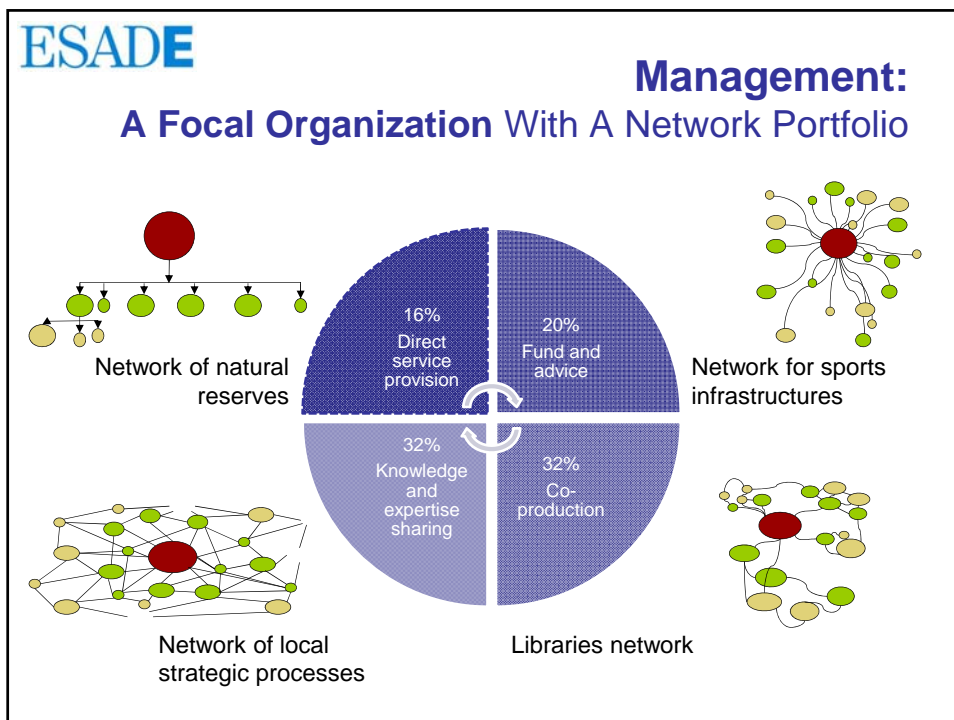
- Participant-governed networks
- Lead-organization-governed networks
- Network administrative organization (NAOs)



**ESADE**

## Discussion


ONSET	CONFIGURATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encouragement of <b>network</b> management model as an instrument for the provision of services</li> <li>• <b>No rational strategic process</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>44 networks</b> (27 corporation networks, 17 international networks) for the accomplishment of local public services</li> <li>• 27: All members from the province of Barcelona</li> <li>• <b>Vary greatly in size and objectives</b></li> </ul>



**ESADE**

## Discussion

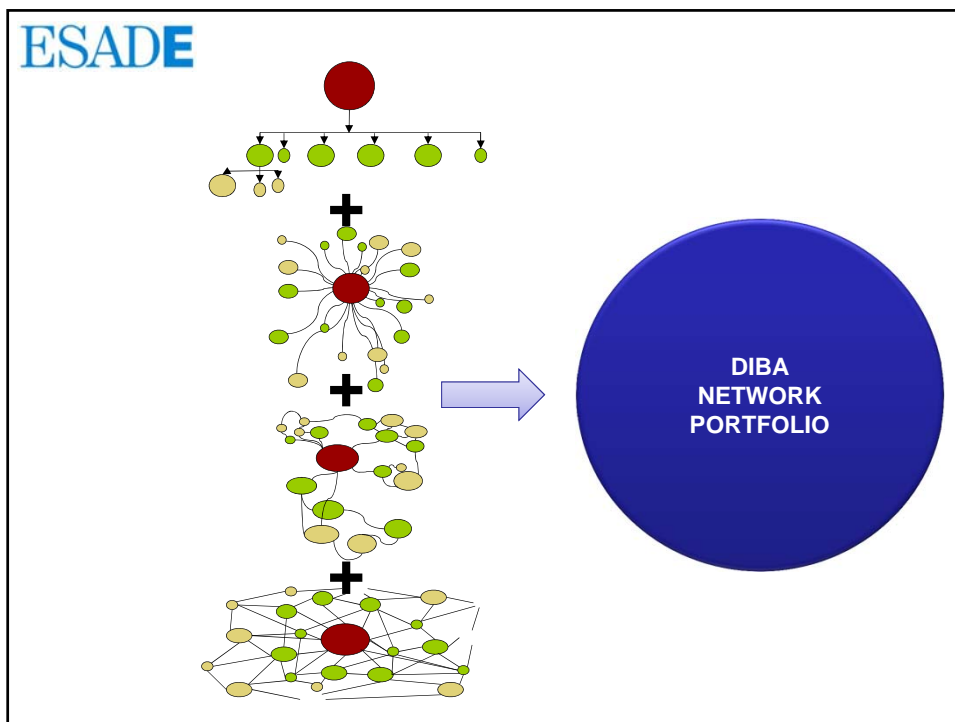
1. **All: lead-organization-governed networks**
2. They all **shared power hub**
3. But, **involvement varies** across sectors



**Diputació  
Barcelona**  
xarxa de municipis

**DIBA leading role:**  
creation,  
management, co-funding and external representation

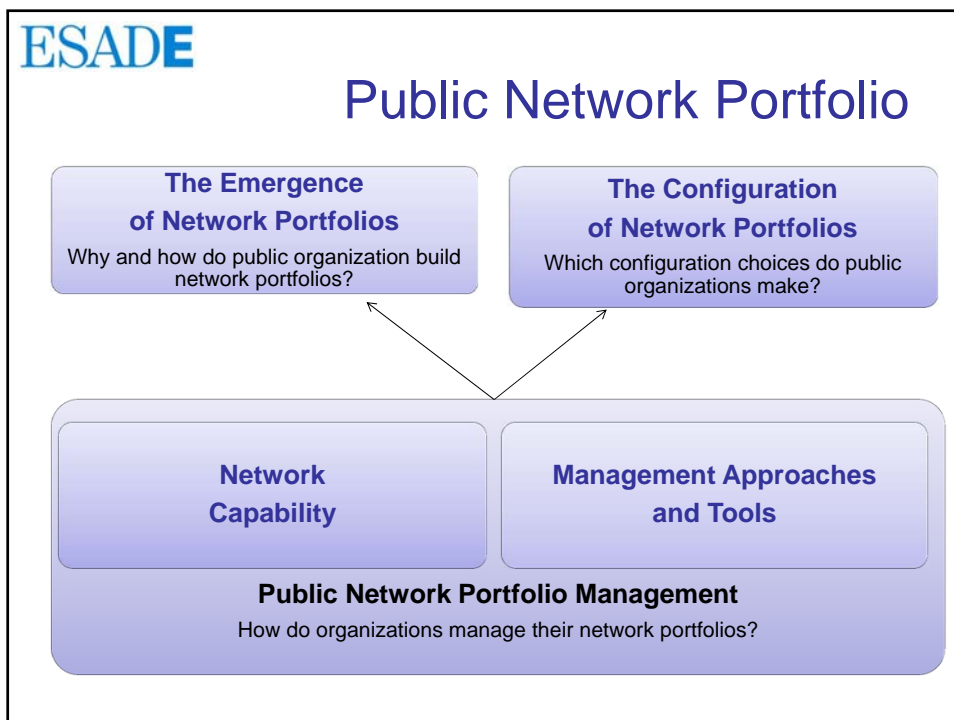
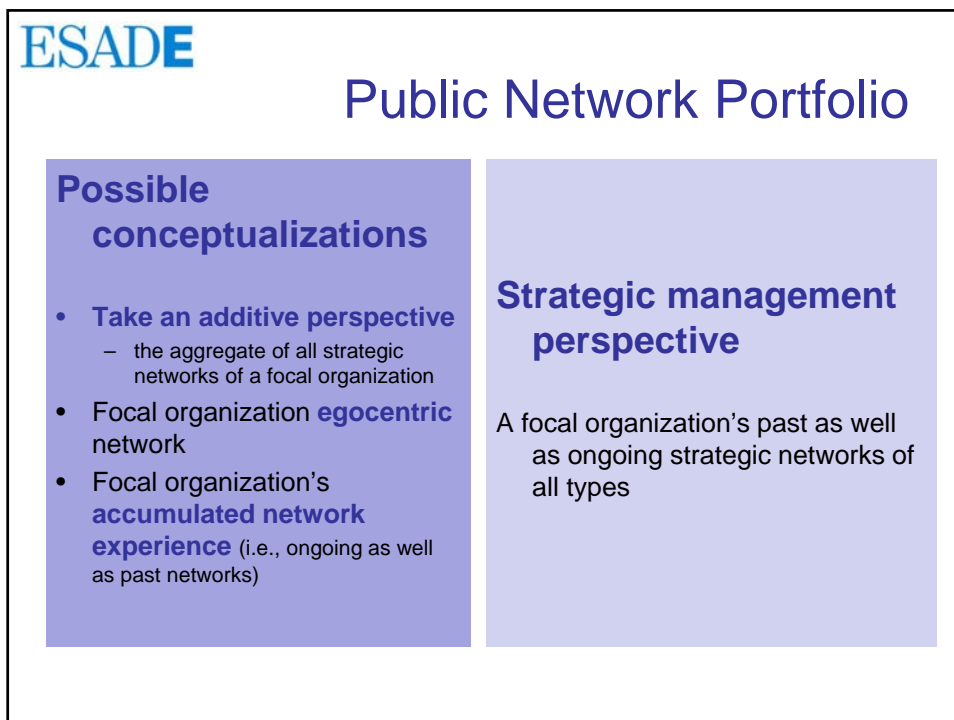
It might be advisable to analyse these networks not separately but by studying **the power hub they share**



ESADE

Lead-organization governed networks + common power hub

**PUBLIC NETWORK  
PORTFOLIO**

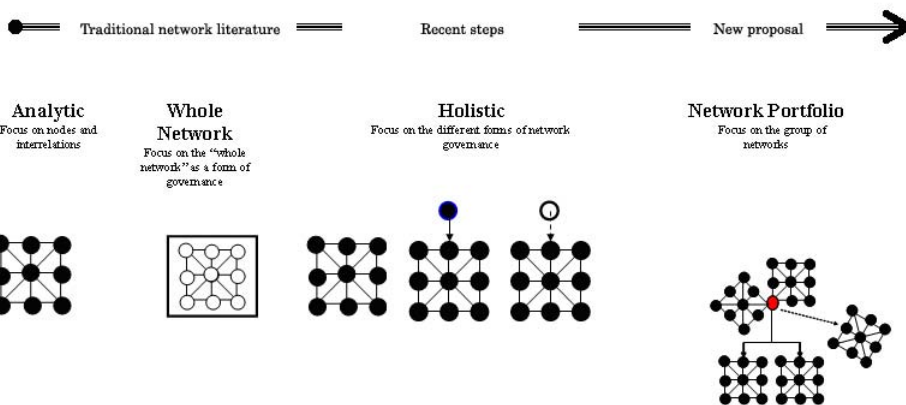


## Conclusions from the Case

How can network portfolio focus help improve network management?

- **Increased rationalization**
  - Generated benefits vs. level of effort
  - Dealing with **risk** and uncertainty
  - Better access to **information** and knowledge
  - Filling **structural voids**; shared opportunities
- **Enables distinctions to be made between all the networks** one manages (aims and forms of governance)

## Advantageous Because

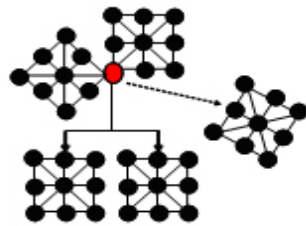




## How can Incorporating Public Network Portfolio Analysis **Help the Study of Network Management?**

### Network Portfolio

Focus on the group of networks



- Identify **determinant factors** of network governance that lie **outside** the networks themselves
- Improve the conceptualisation of different classifications by means of **comparative analyses**
- **Unless you follow a qualified advice you'll have fewer benefits (perverse- scale, cost involved)**

## BUT...

- Need for Portfolio-Level competencies
  - **Nature of the task** being performed by members (interdependent, specialty, etc.)
  - **External demands and needs faced by the network** (buffering, protecting the network, funding, external legitimacy)
- Recognize and respond to tensions:
  1. Efficiency vs. inclusiveness (burden vs. commitment: effectiveness?)
  2. Internal vs. external legitimation
  3. Flexibility vs. stability
- Evolution of Portfolio governance

**ESADE**

**NETWORKS NEVER WALK ALONE:  
THE MANAGEMENT OF NETWORK PORTFOLIOS**

**Tamyko Ysa**

Institute of Public Governance and Management  
[tamyko.ysa@esade.edu](mailto:tamyko.ysa@esade.edu)