

**STRATEGIC PLANNING IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR:  
THE CASE OF THE TURKISH MINISTRY OF INTERIOR**

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**Thesis submitted to the University of Nottingham  
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

**SEPTEMBER 2015**

*Knowledge is a full grasp of knowledge*

*Knowledge is knowing 'the self', heart and soul*

*If you have failed to understand 'the self',*

*Then all of your reading has missed its call*

***Yunus Emre***

## **ABSTRACT**

This thesis investigates the difficulties and challenges experienced in the first strategic planning process of the Turkish Ministry of Interior (MoI) between the years 2007 and 2013 through case study method. Specifically, it documents how and why top-down, mandatory and formal strategic planning in a one-size-fits-all fashion can be poorly implemented through an authoritative and bureaucratic ministry located in the Turkish central government, within the context of a highly centralised and dynamic policymaking environment. Triangulating data from multiple sources, the research applies the theories of rational planning and incrementalism to the case through a pattern-matching approach along with a rival explanation logic in order to explain the structures and mechanisms that lead to ineffective practice in strategic planning in the MoI. The research proposes a variety of underlying mechanisms for ineffective strategic planning that originate from; the formal-legal strategic planning framework, environmental and institutional contingencies, socio-political factors, cultural tendencies, practitioners' actual practice, culture of democracy, public service and domain characteristics, organisational memory, leadership, values, external powers and tendencies. The research argues that no single theory fully explains the strategic planning process and practice of the MoI, although incrementalism fits better than rational planning. It proposes a rule-based decision-making mental model as a generative mechanism that leads, in interaction with other mechanisms, to incremental analysis. It demonstrates that incremental decision-making may still continue in a public organisational setting while formal strategic planning is in force and legally binding. The research concludes that the application of strategic planning does not produce automatic results, at least in the short-run, and effective strategic planning requires transformation of mental models from rule-based to goal-based, which can be made possible by the effective intellectual preparation of strategy practitioners. Thereby, the research calls for increased attention on strategy practitioners and their actual practice in strategic planning processes.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This thesis is the outcome of my unique journey aimed at discovering some aspects of the social world. Interestingly, I have discovered as much about ‘the self’ as I have about the phenomenon that I examined in this journey. The more I have learned, the more I have become aware of how little I know. In this bewildering journey, I was not alone. Hereby, I would like to recall the names of those compassionate people who did not withhold their kind support from me.

I am truly thankful to the Turkish Ministry of Interior and to the Republic of Turkey for giving me such a unique opportunity of doing a PhD in the UK. I will always feel indebted to my country and acutely aware of my responsibility to serve my fellow Turkish citizens.

I would like to express my deepest gratitude and appreciation to my supervisors Associate Professor Stephen Cope and Dr. Pauline Jas for their endless patience, tireless support and expert guidance throughout my PhD journey. I cannot express in words how much you have contributed to this study by kindly sharing your knowledge and experience with me. Thank you for your generosity and thank you for everything you have done for me.

I am deeply grateful to our postgraduate convenor, Associate Professor Amal Treacher-Kabesh and to our postgraduate administrator, Mrs Alison Haigh for their immense support. I was lucky to have such a supportive team who were always present when I needed them.

I am thankful to the participants of this research: the managers and planners of the MoI, without whom this thesis could not be completed.

I would like to express my deep appreciation for University colleagues Kürşat Çevik, Ender Faruk Uzunoğlu, Ercan Eser, Ethem İlbiz, Duran Akbulut and Sami. Special thanks to Agnes Bezzina, who showed incredible patience in the face of my never-ending questions in the office; and to Mehmet Bedii Kaya, who always taught me new things; and to Anisa Mustafa for supporting me in developing my English language skills. Thanks also to my colleagues Jenelle, Olumide, Stephen, Asslykhan, Kezia and Aray for their kind friendship.

I am deeply grateful to my wife Şeyda and my lovely sons Kağan and İhsan Buğra for their endless patience during my absence from home and for their lovely companionship. Şeyda, I sincerely believe that I could not have achieved this level without your presence. And, I will never forget how Kağan and İhsan Buğra ran down the stairs and cheered every time I came home from the University, late in the evenings.

And finally, my deepest appreciation is for my lovely Mom. I am proud of you Mom, and I hope you too feel proud of your son.

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## List of Abbreviations

BIMER	Prime Ministry Communication Centre
CA	Court of Accounts
CfRS	Centre for Research and Study
DoT	Department of Transportation
EC	European Commission
EEOC	Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
GPRA	Government Performance and Results Act
MERNIS	Turkish Central Registry System
MIAPER	The Project for Performance Appraisal of Prefects
MoF	Ministry of Finance
MoI	Ministry of Interior
MoD	Ministry of Development
MPSPP0	Methods and Principles of Strategic Planning in Public Organisations
NPC	National Productivity Centre
NSWC	Naval Surface Warfare Centre
PFMCL	Public Financial Management and Control Law
RIA	Regulatory Impact Assessment
RPCU	Research, Planning and Co-ordination Unit
SDB	Strategy Development Board
SDU	Strategy Development Unit
SPO	State Planning Organisation
SWOT	Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities and Threats
UfPOS	Undersecretariat for Public Order and Security

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

“Intelligence is the ability to adapt to change” - Stephen Hawking

(Girod, 2014, p. 235)

Intelligence has been defined in many ways depending on the disciplinary field and background of those who are defining it and their philosophical viewpoint of the social and physical world. No definition of intelligence could be more relevant to the concept of strategy than the one offered by the great physician Stephen Hawking cited above. Indeed, strategy has traditionally been seen as the product of intelligence that is deployed by armies, for-profit, public and non-profit organisations and even by the ordinary people in their lives to adapt to changes in their surroundings.

Strategy is widely used as a military- and war-related concept (Nutt and Backoff, 1992; Quinn, 1980; Steiss, 2003). This is perhaps because human agents make the most of the faculties of their intelligence when a close threat of extinction invokes their basic instinct of survival. Similarly a passion to dominate wealth and other people may operate through the same mechanism. In both situations, human beings evaluate all possible scenarios considering the limits of their power and resources, and of their opponents, to survive or to dominate. And they come up with strategies that will make them achieve their goals. Regardless of the underlying reasons, scholars converge on the idea that strategy has stemmed from military practices. Most strategic planning and management scholars refer to Greek Mythology and even to the seminal writing of Sun Tzu on war strategies, ‘The Art of War’ (Mintzberg, 2000, p. 6; Quinn, 1980, pp. 156-157), as the origins of contemporary strategy.

Despite the overlap between intelligent behaviour and strategy, however, it would be misleading to think of strategy as solely a linear cognitive product of the human intellect. As it has become more widely accepted in recent theorisation, strategy has been seen as a “physical, social, emotional, even spiritual” and complex human activity (Bryson *et al.*, 2010) and as artful in the real sense (Whittington, 2006, p. 620). This perspective values the tacit, informal, and unconscious dimensions of strategy and recognises the role of interaction, intuition, improvisation and creativeness in its generation (Bryson *et al.*, 2010; Jarzabkowski and Paul Spee, 2009; Whittington, 2006).

Research suggests that within strategic planning and management the use of the concept of strategy spread from military to for-profit sector and from for-profit sector to public and non-profit sectors (Osborne and Gaebler, 1993, p. 18). Starting from 1960s, governments started to introduce strategic planning, and later strategic management into the public domain, as a practical tool for rational and better public management. Introduction of strategic planning was a response to the high demands and challenges of ever-changing social life as a consequence of technological development, globalisation, scarcity of public resources (Bryson, 2011) and the uncertainties this created for the public sector. Since then, it has been introduced and applied in various public services (Poister *et al.*, 2013) from space to agriculture policies, and implemented at all levels of government, from armies to municipalities, in different public settings. While strategic planning continued to proliferate throughout 1980s, 1990s and 2000s, it started to draw the attention of researchers from the 1980s (Bryson and Roering, 1987; Bryson and Roering, 1988), when, scholars of public administration focused their efforts on understanding and theorising around this area of study. Scholars hoped to come up with better prescriptions of strategic planning for governments and public managers (Bryson and Roering, 1988) in order to contribute to the sustained creation of public value (Moore, 1995). Early studies of public strategic planning and management constituted the basis for the contemporary literature (Joyce *et al.*, 2014). These focused mainly on understanding: different practices of public strategic planning in different organisational contexts; difficulties and challenges of applying strategic planning in government; the role of strategic planning in the creation of public value (and thereby the relation between strategic planning and organisational performance); and the role of strategic planning in network governance at different levels of government (Joyce *et al.*, 2014, pp. 23-24).

This thesis aims to understand the difficulties and challenges of applying strategic planning in a central governmental setting by taking an in-depth look into the strategic planning process and practice of the Turkish Ministry of Interior (MoI) as a case study. Hence, this research as both draws on and contributes to the second stream of research according to the classification by Joyce described above; namely the difficulties and challenges of implementation.

## **1.1. Defining the Concepts**

### **1.1.1. The Concept of Strategy**

The concept of strategy is central to this research and it requires elaboration of how it is understood within the context of this research. The word ‘strategy’, etymologically, stems from the Greek word ‘strategos’ that means ‘general’ (Steiss, 2003, p. 1). In the military context and in line with the view of strategy reflected in the introduction, strategy is defined as; “a general set of manoeuvres carried out to overcome an enemy during combat” (Nutt and Backoff, 1992, p.56). Again in the military sense, strategy involves the planning and directing of battles or campaigns on a broad scale, which is the responsibility of a general in military ranks (Steiss, 2003). Therefore, strategy is related to the broad and the general, rather than the specific. At the same time it is mainly related to a high rank, rather than a low one, suggesting that strategy is mainly the responsibility and within the power of top officials or “the dominant coalition” (Miles and Snow, 1978).

In the organisational context, strategy is described as “a pattern in a stream of decisions” (Mintzberg, 1978, p. 935). Similar to the rationale for deploying strategy in the military context, strategy is defined as the manoeuvres executed by a firm in order to achieve its goals (Nutt and Backoff, 1992). Goals that are comprehensive, broad, and visionary are, from time to time, referred to as strategies (Christensen *et al.*, 2007). The conventional approach, however, considers goals as ends, and strategies as means. The following definition reflects this perspective:

“Objectives are the “ends” and strategy is the “means” of achieving them. In effect, strategy is the pattern of actions managers employ to achieve strategic and financial performance targets ...” (Thompson and Strickland, 1996 cited in Steiss, 2003, p. 2).

Unlike day-to-day decisions, strategic decisions are ones with far-reaching impact that determine antecedents of future decision-making; require commitment to a course; and are

difficult to retract once taken (Poister *et al.*, 2013). Following the military analogy, strategy refers to particular actions taken to neutralise or pre-empt the real or potential actions of competitors (Steiss, 2003, p. 1). Hence, it is employed in the for-profit sector as a means of overwhelming, or at least suppressing, the competitors (Walker *et al.*, 2010, p. 185). What makes strategy important when employed successfully is that it enables an organisation to get into the right position in order to meet the demands of a highly ambiguous and uncertain future (Nutt and Backoff, 1992, p. 59). Strategy helps co-ordinate efforts and activities within an organization towards an agreed course or direction.

Strategy looks paradoxical because it encapsulates stability and flexibility concurrently (Nutt and Backoff, 1992). Boyne highlights the importance of flexibility and adaptability of strategies within the context of rational planning (2004) and this subject is increasingly gaining importance in the public strategic management scholarship (Poister *et al.*, 2013). An important characteristic of strategy is that it is observed to be emergent as well as planned (Bryson, 2011; Joyce *et al.*, 2014; Mintzberg, 1978; Nutt and Backoff, 1992).

### **1.1.2. Planning, Strategic Planning and Strategic Management**

Strategic planning is one form of planning and general planning theory underlies strategic planning. Understanding planning theory in general, therefore, is essential for strategic planning research. Planning is understood to be about anticipating and controlling the future and is defined as: “a formalized procedure to produce an articulated result, in the form of an integrated system of decisions” (Mintzberg, 2000, p. 7). Planning is forethought and aims at determining the future by predicting developments within and out of the organisation; shaping organisational goals; and, formulating strategies in the form of a plan to reach those goals (Boyne, 2001). Therefore, planning is related to decision-making in consideration of the future and future courses of action (Faludi, 1996). Planning is defined by Robinson and Faludi as the art of rational decision-making on social issues (cited in Friedmann, 1987, p. 36). Planning is associated with rational and intelligent behaviour, as is strategy.

One can simply define strategic planning as ‘planning strategically’. Strategic planning is the process in which various strategy options are evaluated and formulised within a comprehensive plan. In a highly influential account by Bryson, strategic planning is defined as:

“[a] disciplined effort to produce fundamental decisions and actions that shape and guide what an organisation (or other entity) is, what it does, and why it does it” (Bryson, 2011, p. 12).

Strategic management goes beyond mere strategy formulation and is described as a preferred mode of planning within contemporary organisations (Koteen, 1997, p. 21). It is seen as an integrative management framework that coalesce other management functions of organisations around a strategic agenda that is driven by the mission, vision, and fundamental values of the organisation (Ingraham and Donahue, 2000; Poister and Streib, 1999). From an all-encompassing point of view and with regard to the creation and execution of a strategic agenda, strategic management is argued to be identical with “managing for results” (Poister and Streib, 1999, p. 323).

There is a multitude of definitions of strategic management in the public sector strategic management literature and the variation mostly stems from the theoretical positioning of the authors (Joyce, 2001). Chapter 2 explains how different theoretical views lead to different insight of strategy, strategic planning and management. The multiplicity of views enriches theoretical arguments; however, it concurrently leads to confusion and misunderstanding of the term, which subsequently prevents its effective employment in public organisations (Vinzant and Vinzant, 1996). Strategic management at the same time is a more abstract, fluid, and contingent rather than tangible and solid term, and it is an ever-evolving phenomenon, which puts constraints on reaching consensus on a specific definition (Eadie, 1983; Joyce, 2001).

The use of terms in this thesis needs clarification at this point. The concepts of strategic planning and strategic management are frequently used interchangeably in the public strategic management literature (Eadie, 1983; Poister and Streib, 1999). While some authors (Berry and Wechsler, 1995; Eadie, 1983; Streib and Poister, 1990) prefer the term ‘strategic planning’ to refer to a complete strategy process, others opt for strategic management to refer to the same processes (Andrews *et al.*, 2009; Joyce, 2001; Koteen, 1997; Vinzant and Vinzant, 1996). In addition, other terms are employed to explain the same phenomenon. For example, in the UK, the concepts of ‘corporate planning’ and ‘business plan’, rather than strategic planning, are preferred. For the sake of the existing research, the terms strategic planning and management are mostly used interchangeably.

## **1.2. The Problem Addressed by the Research**

Strategic planning and management practices of public organisations, particularly in the US and the UK, have been the dominant subject of strategic management research in the last three decades. Continental European government practices have begun to be the subject of intensive inquiry recently (Joyce and Drumaux, 2014b), particularly through the contribution of the European Group for Public Administration (EGPA) which brings together scholars and practitioners of strategy from all around Europe and the World on an annual basis. While the number of governments that adopt strategic planning and management has increased recently, most attempts to apply such reforms in public organisations demonstrated limited or no success at all (Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2011; Bryson and Roering, 1987). Hence, one main problem within public strategic planning scholarship has been to understand the difficulties and challenges before the implementation of strategic planning in the public sector. (Joyce *et al.*, 2014). The aim of much of the scholarship has been to identify and propose common success factors gleaned from best practices and to prescribe better formulas. One weakness of the existing research endeavour has been its focus on success and neglect of failure. Through reviewing the empirical literature from a success and failure perspective, Chapter 3 demonstrates how case study research, in particular, focuses on successful cases in order to prescriptively theorise effective strategic planning. The tendency of case study research to focus particularly on the US and on successful cases leaves a lot to be desired in terms of researching the difficulties and challenges to application of strategic planning in different public administration contexts. Theorising public strategic planning requires sensitivity to context-specific and situated factors, structures and mechanisms as well as common ones that cause strategic planning to fail in different public administration contexts.

This research intends to contribute to the theory and practice of public strategic planning, through a case study that looks into the subject by not only focusing on success factors, but also examining the root causes of ineffectiveness and failure, within the Turkish Ministry of Interior (MoI). As failure is thought to be more informative than success (Altman, 2015), researchers are likely to learn more about the different dimensions of strategic planning from failing cases.

### **1.3. The Context of Turkey**

Strategic management reform in Turkish Public Administration has been precipitated as a consequence of the fiscal and economic crises in early 2000s. In 2000 the Turkish economy was hit by a balance of payments crisis that disrupted all macro-economic indicators and financial accounts (Alper, 2001). Under these adverse circumstances, the then coalition government reached an agreement with the World Bank in order to provide financial support to overcome imbalances in public accounts (Ertürk, 2003). A conditionality of the loan was the rationalisation and prioritisation of public investments and determination of a set of global criteria to guide public organisations in line with these aims (Ertürk, 2003). This launched the reform process towards restructuring of the budget and the financial management system.

The Justice and Development Party, which ruled the country until mid-2015, won the 2002 elections and resumed power as a one-party government. The Justice and Development Party government adopted strategic planning reform along with some components of the new public management paradigm both of which were included in their Urgent Action Plan (2002). Accordingly, strategic planning was introduced into public administration by the legislation of the Public Financial Management and Control Law (PFMCL) 2003, as part of a wider public financial management reform. The then Undersecretary to the Prime Minister Ömer Dinçer<sup>1</sup> acted as the champion of strategic planning and led the reform for the whole public sector enthusiastically. Ömer Dinçer was the head of the civil service and was working next to the Prime Minister, which significantly facilitated the realisation of his plans. Eventually, a number of factors resulted in the introduction of the strategic planning reform in a top-down and one-size-fits-all fashion into the Turkish public sector. These included the economic and financial crisis as the triggering factor; the subsequent peer pressure by the World Bank as an external coercive factor; and the adoption of strategic planning reform by the AKP government as voluntary factor. A strategic planning guide was prepared and published for the first time in accordance with the agreement in 2003 by the State Planning Organization (SPO, which is currently called the Ministry of Development) which was updated in 2006.

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<sup>1</sup> Ömer Dinçer was a professor of organisation and business management in the University of Marmara before he was appointed as the Prime Minister's Undersecretary, and strategic management was one of his special interests in his academic studies in the context of the for-profit sector.

## 1.4. Research Aims and Questions

Strategic planning reform came into the agenda of the Turkish Ministry of Interior (MoI) through a legal mandate as discussed above. The PFMCL 2003 mandated rational planning processes that are similar to that of the GPRA in the US based on formal strategic planning. The PFMCL 2003 aimed at rationalisation of strategy-making processes in the MoI through a series of steps including: conducting formal analyses of strengths and weaknesses and opportunities and threats; preparing a formal strategic plan for a five-year period; preparing annual performance budgets; and monitoring implementation and annual performance reporting. The formal strategic planning model mandated by the PFMCL 2003 is referred to by the author of this research as ‘the formal PFMCL framework’ throughout the thesis to ensure coherence in the use of terms.

The first focus of the research is practice. Public management reform stipulates the deliberate alteration of the structures and processes of public services to enhance their performance (Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2011). Reforms that occur in a top-down direction, as in the case of the MoI, and the force towards change they bring about can very likely receive resistance from the members of the reformed organisation (Boyne *et al.*, 2003). There can be a time lag between the formal introduction and implementation of reform measures and the impact of reform may still be minor although the extent of the reform is formally major. As noted by Boyne and his colleagues “[S]ubstantial changes in policy principles can co-exist with trivial changes in management practice” (Boyne *et al.*, 2003, p. 29). The administrative reform history of Turkey abounds with such stories of failure (Berkman and Heper, 2001; Sözen, 2005). Hence, what has been the case for the MoI is one area of focus of the inquiry.

The second area of interest for the research is theory. The formal strategic planning framework mandated to the MoI by the PFMCL was based on rational planning principles. The pursuit of the prescriptions of rational planning is expected to enhance the degree of procedural rationality in the management processes of the MoI. However, early findings of other research show that strategic planning practice in the Turkish public sector is not in line with prescribed rational procedures (Canpolat and Kesik, 2010). Some examples of poor procedures in Turkish public organisations include the continuation of input-based budgeting; routine activities, rather than strategic issues, being included in strategic plans; cost-benefit analyses are not conducted; monitoring implementation is carried out merely to meet the formality of the legislation; and the results of activities and programmes are not evaluated

systematically (Canpolat and Kesik, 2010). The technical complexity of rational planning and inadequacy of resources are reported to be the most frequent obstacles facing successful implementation of rational planning in the public sector (Boyne *et al.*, 2004). If rational planning does not suffice to explain the strategic planning process and practice of the MoI, then incrementalism be a good rival theory, since it is claimed to be the most influential decision-making approach in public organisations (Braybrooke and Lindblom, 1970; Lindblom, 1959a). The thesis investigates this as a second subject.

In light of the above discussions, the aims of the research are:

- To present an account of the first strategic planning practice of the MoI as an original case of strategic planning in central government.
- To analyse the causes and underlying mechanisms of failure of strategic planning practice of the MoI, with reference to a set of practice-based criteria.
- To examine what mechanisms make rational planning or incrementalism theory more relevant in explaining the strategic planning process of the MoI.

With an intention to achieve the above aims, the research questions are:

**Research Question 1:**

‘How was strategic planning practiced in the MoI; and why did or didn’t it generate the expected change and results?’

**Research Question 2:**

‘To what extent and how and why do theories of rational planning or incrementalism explain the strategic planning process and practice of the MoI?’

The first research question requires an approach that considers strategy as a human activity and that values the role, attitude, behaviour and interaction of the practitioners of strategy. It involves consideration of non-analytical and social dimensions, as well as the analytical dimensions of strategy (George and Desmidt, 2013).

Theory-related curiosity raises the second question. Eighteen years ago, Vinzant and Vinzant (1996, pp. 140-141) wrote, with regard to implementation of strategic planning, that there were no objective criteria at that time to judge ‘what a successful strategic planning looks like’. The problem is still relevant and the question is yet to be answered (Bryson *et al.*, 2010; Poister *et al.*, 2010). A conceptual framework is developed within this context in Chapter 2 in an effort to answer the second research question.

The next section signposts the reader towards the content of the thesis in order to aid navigation between chapters.

## **1.5. Outline of Chapters**

To the ends argued above, Chapter 2 reviews theories of strategic management. First, it presents the rationale for the relevance of the theories of rational planning and incrementalism to the case study of the MoI. Then it critically reviews two dominant process theories, rational planning and incrementalism, in order to derive theoretical patterns for theory-testing. Finally, it presents the theory-based conceptual framework developed for this case study.

Chapter 3 presents a review of the descriptive and empirical literature; first, to present the initiation, development and current situation of public strategic planning, and second, to assess the success factors in public strategic planning, as well as causes of failure. The first part of the review particularly looks into the background and basis of public strategic planning, its' use in the world, differences between the public and for-profit sectors, and a conceptual framework of public strategic planning processes by Poister *et al.* (2010). With reference to the conceptual framework presented in the first section and in order to derive practice-based success and failure factors, the second part looks into the empirical literature from the perspective of the contingencies, preparation, strategy formulation, implementation and outcomes of strategic planning. The chapter presents a summary of success and failure factors, which are later deployed in Chapter 8 to discuss the practice of the MoI.

Chapter 4 gives an account of methodological themes. This chapter justifies the research design, sources of data and data collection processes, and presents the reflections of the researcher, who as a district governor in the MoI, is a member of the case organisation examined.

The 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Chapters of the thesis are data analysis chapters. Chapter 5 presents a holistic account of the strategic planning practice of the MoI management with a view of strategy as a human activity, in which analytical and social practices, power relations and different kinds of interaction transpire in the organisational setting. This chapter presents contextual information, including environmental and organisational specificities to demonstrate how strategy-making is influenced by external forces and pressures. Then, it looks into the strategic planning activity, particularly into organisational and re-structuring practices, situation analysis, definition of vision and mission, goal-setting, strategy content,

costing and budgeting, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and feedback in the MoI to reveal how external factors and internal dynamics interplay in strategy formation and how the persistence of the existing organisational culture plays an important role for continuity.

Chapter 6 applies the patterns of rational planning derived in Chapter 3 as a conceptual framework; which comprise (1) comprehensive analysis of strategies, (2) formality (3) implementation and (4) integration and co-ordination; to the practice of the MoI to highlight and explain the degree of pattern-matching between theory and practice. Findings from pattern-matching are presented through tabulation in the conclusion of the chapter.

With the same approach, Chapter 7 applies the patterns of incrementalism developed in Chapter 3; comprising (1) partisan mutual adjustment, (2) agreement as criterion for good strategy (3) simple incremental analysis (4) trial-and-error and (5) flexibility and dynamism; to evince and explain the extent of pattern-matching between the theory and the case in question. As in Chapter 6, the root causes of practice are traced to the end to examine and explain which factors and mechanisms led to the management practice observed in the MoI.

Chapter 8 concludes the thesis. Addressing the first research question, it discusses findings related to the practice of the MoI vis-à-vis the success and failure factors criteria derived from the existing empirical research in Chapter 3. Addressing the second research question, it debates the results of theory-testing. Third, it discusses the contribution of the study to the literature and methodology in studying public strategic planning. The thesis concludes by outlining the projections of future research.

# **CHAPTER 2**

## **LITERATURE REVIEW 1: THEORIES OF STRATEGIC PLANNING AND THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF THE RESEARCH**

“Nothing is so practical as a good theory”

(Lewin, 1945)

The previous chapter argued that the description of strategy and strategic planning varied according to the theoretical viewpoints of the researchers. Hence, theory is central to public strategic planning research. The second question of this research listed in Section 1.4 has a theoretical focus that aims to investigate whether the theory of rational planning or incrementalism has the power to explain the MoI’s strategic planning practice. Contributing to this goal of the research, this chapter reviews rational planning and incrementalism theories for a couple of aims. First, it explains the state of the two enduring theories of public strategic planning within the wider strategic planning field and discusses the grounds for the relevance of these two competing theories for the case of the MoI. Second, it develops a conceptual framework based on the dimensions and patterns of the two theories as part of the rival explanation strategy adopted for this research. By doing so, the chapter lays the foundations for theory-testing of rational planning and incrementalism through a pattern-matching approach (Yin, 2003) in empirical chapters 6 and 7. The chapter is structured as follows:

- 1) The relevance of rational planning and incrementalism,
- 2) The theory of rational planning,
- 3) The theory of incrementalism,
- 4) Conclusion.

## **2.1. The Relevance of Rational Planning and Incrementalism**

Strategic planning was examined mainly from the process and content theoretical viewpoints (Alford, 2001; Andrews *et al.*, 2009). Strategy content is a pattern of actions formulated for the achievement of organisational goals (Boyne and Walker, 2004). Content theorists seek to explain the content of strategies or “What an organisation is [or should] to do” (Alford, 2001, p. 2). Content is the outcome of the strategy process, and content theorists posit that strategy content, as well as strategy process, impacts on organisational performance (Andrews *et al.*, 2006; Boyne and Walker, 2004).

This research is mainly looking into the strategy process in the MoI. It basically aims to explain the ‘whys’ and ‘hows’ of strategy formulation as well as strategy execution and assessment in the MoI. Theories related to process are central to planning theory (Alexander, 1992) and are developed to explain how strategy is, or should be, formulated and implemented (Furrer *et al.*, 2008). Rational planning and incrementalism have been the most debated and enduring process theories in the planning literature (Andrews *et al.*, 2009). Faludi (1973) argues that any instance of planning practice will find a place somewhere in between rational planning and incrementalism theories. Incrementalism is a derivative theory that is built on a critique of rational decision-making and provides an alternative explanation for the strategy process in the public sector, as well as the private. As will be discussed at length in the following sections, the two theories diverge in their basic assumptions, for example with regard to pure vs. bounded rationality, infinite vs. limited resources, ends-means distinct vs. ends-means interdependent. They also deviate in their premises, for example comprehensive vs. limited analysis and integrated system vs. fragmented system. The contrast between the two theories of strategy provides a convenient context for the application of a rival explanation strategy in the MoI case. Adopting the rival explanation strategy, the research aims to investigate whether incrementalism (rival theory), rather than rational planning (original theory) explains the patterns of practice observed in the MoI better (Yin, 2003). Chapters 6 and 7 fulfil this aim through testing the two theories successively.

The research takes rational planning as the original theory for the case, since the management reform that the MoI has undergone is based on rational planning theory. As in the case of the

GPRA 1993 in the US, the PFMCL 2003 in Turkey mandated rational procedures such as setting quantified goals for a five-year term, evaluating alternatives, choosing the optimum option, implementation, performance monitoring and evaluation. Hence, the expectation and hypothesis is that a significant amount of rationalisation should be observed in the MoI's structures, procedures and in the managements' behaviour with regard to strategy formulation and implementation. Therefore, testing rational planning theory is expected to demonstrate the extent to which the structures, processes and patterns in management behaviour are rationalised in the MoI and thus, the strength or weakness of the original theory to explain the case. Second, as reforms most often do not produce expected results (Boyne *et al.*, 2003), incrementalism, as a rival theory, has the potential to generate an alternative explanation for MOI practice. As argued in Chapter 5, the MoI did not have explicit strategy formulation processes in place prior to the PFMCL 2003 reform, which constitutes a state of 'strategy absence' (Walker, 2013, p. 680). Organisations mostly grope in the dark in the absence of deliberate strategy processes, and the theory of incrementalism, which is defined as muddling through (Lindblom, 1959a), is a convenient theory to explain such states. Being an explanatory case study, the research not only presents a descriptive account of theory-testing, it also links the observed patterns to the forces and mechanisms that generate the observed effects through causal logic. The following two sections review rational planning and incrementalism theories and develop the conceptual framework for empirical theory-testing.

## **2.2. The Theory of Rational Planning**

As a normative-prescriptive theory (Bell *et al.*, 1988; Mintzberg and Lampel, 2003) rational planning is employed as the primary theory to be tested in this research because of the rationale laid out in the previous section.

It is suggested that any planning activity, by all means, is a rational one (Alexander, 2000). Accordingly, planning has been interpreted as acting rationally (Faludi, 1973). With regard to its foundations, planning is seen at times as synonymous with decision-making (Mintzberg, 2000). The theory makes claims about comprehensive rationality (Dror, 1968; Faludi, 1973). It is premised on the existence of complete information about alternatives and consequences; complete baseline data; and completely sufficient time, capability and other resources (Bell *et al.*, 1988; Forester, 1984; Lindblom, 1959b; Steiss, 2003). Rationality is associated with a

scientific approach to analysis and problem solving in the decision-making and planning context (Alexander, 1992).

Rational planning comprises the basis for conventional strategic management in which formal strategic planning is central and decision-making is analytical (Andersen, 2000). The assumption of rationality dominates the strategic management literature (Dean and Sharfman, 1993). Rational, or classical (Joyce, 2001), planning theory considers strategy as: “a rational process of deliberate calculation and analysis, designed to maximize long-term advantage” (Whittington, 2001, p. 2). Similarly, rational planning is described in its relation to strategy as follows:

“It is characterised as a sequence of analytical, logical and rational procedures, followed precisely to formulate an intended strategy.” (Collier *et al.*, 2001, p. 18)

According to the theory, strategy is formal, intended and deliberate and the planning process is unambiguous and rigorous (Boyne and Gould-Williams, 2003). It is at the same time highly analytical, mechanistic and linear. Formal strategic planning typically involves the employment of quantitative methods. It stipulates the centralisation of systems and demands for high co-ordination and integration. It is a cyclical process, where the stages are reiterated once a plan is implemented and its period is completed. With similar premises to rational planning theory, a typical formal strategic planning process involves the following steps (Bryson, 2011; Poister *et al.*, 2013):

- Clarification of mission and mandates,
- Identification of essential values,
- Building organisational vision for the future,
- Analysis of internal strengths and weaknesses,
- Conducting environmental scanning to identify opportunities and threats in the external milieu,
- Setting strategic goals and objectives,
- Analysing and formulating strategies for the achievement of goals,
- Implementing strategies,
- Monitoring implementation and evaluating results,
- Reviewing and revising strategies in light of developments.

There have been several attempts to adapt the for-profit, sector-oriented strategic planning model to the field of public management (Bryson and Roering, 1987; Eadie, 1983; Nutt and Backoff, 1992; Olsen and Eadie, 1982; Poister and Streib, 1999). As a result, it has spread to numerous public sectors in the world, increasingly from the 1980s replacing the classical

long-range planning. Some differences between the comprehensive long-range planning of 1960s, which is also based on a rational model, and strategic planning are underlined by different authors (Ansoff, 1984; Bryson, 2011; Bryson and Roering, 1987; Kaufman and Jacobs, 1987). For example, it is argued that long-range planning assumes the future is predictable by means of continuities with the past; whereas strategic planning takes the future to be unpredictable due to uncertainties (Ansoff, 1984; Eadie, 1983). It is also argued that strategic planning stresses more on:

- Finding and responding to essential (strategic) issues (Poister and Streib, 1999),
- Action, results, implementation (Bryson and Roering, 1987; Kaufman and Jacobs, 1987),
- Feedback (Vinzant and Vinzant, 1996),
- Organisational change (Eadie, 1983),
- Deliberation with wide and varied groups of stakeholders (Bryson, 2010),
- More participation (Kaufman and Jacobs, 1987),
- Awareness of internal strengths and weaknesses and external opportunities and threats (SWOT) in a changing environment (Bryson and Roering, 1987; Kaufman and Jacobs, 1987; Poister and Streib, 1999; Quinn, 1980),
- Awareness of current or candidate rivals (Bryson and Roering, 1987).

Organisations carry out formal strategic planning in order to synchronise their activities and to act rationally (Mintzberg, 2000). The proponents of formal planning argue that it helps with clarification of goals and objectives; facilitates communication of mission and goals throughout the organisation and provides bottom-up staff support (Boyne, 2001; Poister and Streib, 1999). It brings internal and external strengths and weaknesses into consideration; serves as a basis for analytical decision-making; stimulates co-operation and promotes unity; and as a result enhances organisational performance. Rational planning is not only prescribed as the best way of achieving goals, but as the most appropriate framework for the justification, legitimacy, and accountability of decisions to both internal and external audiences (Alexander, 2000; Dean and Sharfman, 1993; Faludi, 1973). Alexander puts this as follows:

“Rational planning is not good planning because it produces better decisions: It is good planning because it can account for the proposed courses of action.” (2000, p. 243)

This view of rational decision-making has been systematically criticised for being an idealistic theory that lacks practical value (Dror, 1968; Etzioni, 1967; Lindblom, 1959b, 1979; March and Simon, 1958; Simon, 1956). Critics have based their contention on the argument that the problems in the real world are often unclear, poorly defined and complete availability

of information is impossible for decision-making (Forester, 1984). Simon and many other scholars have discussed constraints to human computational and predictive capabilities which put limits on and cripple the procedures of rationality (Faludi, 1973; Forester, 1984; Lindblom, 1959b; Miner, 2005; Simon, 1955; Whittington, 2001). From this point of view, institutions or individuals are biased in making sense of information and do not investigate all the possible alternatives available to them to maximise goal achievement (Rothblatt, 1971; Steiss, 2003; Whittington, 2001). This view asserts that there is a restriction on the comprehensive search process of limitless alternatives prescribed by formal rationality (Alexander, 2000).

Rational decision-making has been viewed by some scholars as a utopian theory (Etzioni, 1967) and implementation of pure-rational theory is seen as impossible except from some quantifiable fields such as information and communication technologies policies (Dror, 1968). At the very least, rational strategy formation has been seen as difficult, if not impossible, to be practiced in the public sector (Boyne *et al.*, 2004) because it drains resources; requires technical expertise and generates conflict in organisational politics (Boyne *et al.*, 2004). It is criticised for approaching a policy matter as an intellectual problem and ignoring the influence of political powers on the subject matter (Braybrooke and Lindblom, 1970; Bryson, 2011). From this perspective, any rational technique in order to be adopted by public organisations has to be inspired from and ensure political rationality, since public organisations themselves exist in highly politicised environments (Bryson, 2011). Rittel and Webber (1973) contend that the approach has proved inadequate in coping with the intrinsically “wicked” problems of society (1973, p. 160). Rational decision-making is accused of stunting creativity and innovation due to its extensive quantitative and analytical focus (Alexander, 2000; Lenz and Lyles, 1985). This critique of rationality provokes new approaches to theories of choice. An adapted definition of rational decision-making with reference to planning comes from Banfield:

“A rational decision is one in which alternatives and consequences are considered as fully as the decision-maker, given the time and other resources available to him, can afford to consider them.” (1959, p. 362)

Despite intensive critiques for over decades, rationality has served as the general theory underpinning planning while precipitating the exploration of many methods for effective decision-making (Alexander, 1996). Some planners in the tradition continue to see the limitations of rationality as obstacles to be overcome (Faludi, 1973). According to advocates

of rationality, its value is not in its full applicability but rather in its being "... an ideal that is worth striving for" (Faludi, 1996, p.68). Although there have been other approaches in different governments, a rational planning approach to strategic management has been the most widely prescribed one (Alford, 2001).

### **2.2.1. Dimensions of Rational Planning**

With the aim of constructing the first pillar of the bi-partite conceptual framework for this case study, this section presents the dimensions of rational planning to be deployed. The pattern-matching approach adopted by this study requires the specific description of theoretical dimensions of rational planning. A review of the literature shows that some distinctive dimensions and operational measures of rational planning have been put forward (Boyne, 2001). These dimensions are (1) comprehensive analysis of alternative strategies, (2) formality (3) implementation and (4) integration and co-ordination.

#### **2.2.1.1. Comprehensive Analysis of Alternative Strategies**

This dimension specifically relates to cost-benefit analysis of strategy alternatives in the process of strategy formulation for optimum choice (Faludi, 1973). Analysis takes place in the form of a cost-benefit or cost-effectiveness evaluation in rational planning, which takes into account all effective factors to judge the feasibility of alternatives. Analysis of alternative strategies in regard to range or feasibility involves both information gathering and the use of information related to intra-organisational factors, such as resources and skills, and extra-organisational factors (Dean and Sharfman, 1993). In this regard, conducting situational analysis for strengths and weaknesses (Poister *et al.*, 2013) and scanning the environment (Eadie, 1983; Kaufman and Jacobs, 1987) for opportunities and threats, or challenges, in the external milieu of the public agency are critical (Bryson, 2011). The scope of environmental scanning is comprehensive with regard to both level and substance. The range of scanning includes the exploration, identification and analysis of the sources of influence, developments and trends at the local, state, regional, national and also international levels vis-à-vis the mission and purpose of the organisation (Eadie, 1983). The analysis unfolds explicitly and formally in rational planning and formal analytical methods, such as cost-benefit analysis, Regulatory Impact Assessment and others are used in examinations. While the application of a working theory is required for the success of rational planning, piloting is proposed as a remedy when organisational goals or problems require new approaches rather than pre-tested

theories (Dror, 1968). Efficiency, which is defined by Simon as “the attainment of maximum values with limited means” (1997, p. 75), is the overarching criterion for choosing alternatives for the attainment of rationality. This requires, at the stage of the evaluation of alternative strategies, to inquire into the negative factor of ‘cost’, and the positive factor of ‘outcomes’ expected (Simon, 1997, p. 267). The application of the efficiency rule to a decision may result in minimising the cost when outcomes/benefits of alternative strategies are fixed; or maximising the outcome/benefit when the costs of the alternatives are fixed (Simon, 1997). Hence, this dimension subsumes (1) information gathering and use (2) consideration of a range of alternative strategies including innovative ones (3) use of piloting and formal analytical methods and (4) the employment of the ‘efficiency rule’ in strategic choices within the MoI.

#### **2.2.1.2. Formality**

The second dimension of rational planning is formality. Strategic plans based on the rational model are also named formal strategic plans (Armstrong, 1982). Formality is essential for the rational mode of planning and it entails the commitment of explicit objectives and strategies in a written plan (Boyne, 2001; Whittington, 2001). The rational planning process is deliberately unambiguous, precise and logically organised (Whittington, 2001). Formality surrounds the structures formed for planning purposes and any activity within the strategic planning framework, from the review of the mission to the development of strategies (Vinzant and Vinzant, 1996). Formality is conceived of in such a way that the procedures employed in planning are preordained and that the advancement of the process is checked against a pre-determined timetable or a preparation programme (Boyne, 2001; Favoreu *et al.*, 2015). Therefore, the dimension of formality comprises (1) the existence of a written strategic plan, (2) formality of planning structures and processes and (3) the existence of a preparation programme in the MoI.

#### **2.2.1.3. Implementation**

The third dimension of rational planning is implementation. Implementation, first, refers to the implementation of strategies. Implementation is a distinct stage of the rational strategy process and defined as “the communication, interpretation, adoption, and enactment of strategic plans” (Andrews *et al.*, 2011b, p. 2). Actions in the short-term vis-à-vis the strategies in the long-term and plan implementation are stressed as these determine the practice of

planning in the organisation involved (Boyne, 2001). As generally argued in the literature, “planning matters for implementation” (Elbanna *et al.*, 2015, pp. 2-3). Within this context, the necessity of central control mechanisms (Andrews *et al.*, 2011b), such as monitoring and feedback, in strategic planning and management is stressed by several authors (Poister and Gregory, 1999; Vinzant and Vinzant, 1996). Monitoring and feedback is a process through which implementation of a plan is evaluated; deviations and defects are spotted; necessary actions for correction and adjustment are considered; and top management is informed through feedback (Faludi, 1973). Evaluation of implementation includes the assessment of programme outcomes as well as programme outputs. Performance measurement and management systems have been developed to increase the capacity of organisations for effective implementation, monitoring and feedback (Poister, 2003), which are based on rational planning theory. The development and use of action plans (Andrews *et al.*, 2011b), performance budgeting, re-structuring and programme and project management are also found to be effective in this regard (Poister and Gregory, 1999).

Second, implementation refers to the overall application of the formal strategic planning model. Whether the components of the model are applied appropriately (Boyne, 2001) matters within this context. An indicator of effective application of the model is the attainment of the expected outcomes from formal strategic planning in the MoI, such as an increase in the degree of rationality of management. While it is generally overlooked in the literature, this case study draws conclusions regarding this dimension in the concluding chapter.

#### **2.2.1.4. Integration and Co-ordination**

Integration and co-ordination is the fourth dimension of rational planning. This dimension relates to the mission and vision of public agencies. Rational planning requires the inclusion of all units, such as divisions or departments, or related agencies of a multi-agency department, within the plan and the planning process around the mission of the organisation (Boyne, 2001). Mission plays an integrative role for different and fragmented departments in a multi-department organisation. Development of an organisational vision for the future is also thought to perform an integrative function. Formal strategic planning stresses the integration of all organisational resources and processes for the achievement of strategic goals (Vinzant and Vinzant, 1996) and vision. As for co-ordination, strategic planning is a natural result of effective co-ordination in government; among agencies related to a department (Faludi, 1973) or among units of a single organisation. Formal strategic planning occurs when

the need to co-ordinate a considerable number of organisations emerges (Bryson, 2011). Rational planning amalgamates all strategic planning-related activities, from strategy development to evaluation and feedback. This dimension, therefore, comprises (1) the existence and degree of integration of all departments in a strategic plan around an explicitly defined mission and a common vision and (2) the degree of co-ordination within an organisation and between the involved organisation and other public bodies.

### **2.3. The Theory of Incrementalism**

Incrementalism is employed in this research as the alternative of the original theory of rational planning to interpret the evidence from the MoI. Chapter 7 tests the patterns of incrementalism in line with this aim. This section critically reviews incrementalism and completes the bi-partite conceptual framework by presenting its second pillar: the dimensions of incrementalism.

Incrementalism provides a conceptual framework for explaining the drawbacks of rational decision-making and planning, such as in means-ends analysis in policymaking, and offers new insights for a better understanding of actual public decision-making and problem solving. Thus, it provides analysts with an alternative way of simplifying the analysis of complex policy problems (Mintzberg, 1978; Ring and Perry, 1985). It draws attention to the political nature of the internal and external environments of public organisations, which is generally overlooked by rational planners, highlighting the interplay between the two and how interactions, tensions, and partisanship lead to agreement on policies and co-ordination amongst various politically motivated agents (Lindblom, 1979; Quinn, 1980).

Unlike rational planning, incrementalism has an ambiguous view of the goals and values of public organisations and claims thereupon that decisions are widely made in the absence of consensus and clearly defined objectives and values in the public realm (Lindblom, 1959). The theory asserts that public policymaking and analysis builds upon existing circumstances, gradually, in small, incremental degrees (Lindblom, 1959), and with a repetitive sequence of trial-and-error (Lindblom, 1979). Changes along with deeper understanding of policy issues do and should occur incrementally, according to this perspective (Braybrooke and Lindblom, 1970). Theorists argue that these linked and quick sequential moves may still have superiority over more far-reaching manoeuvres in altering the *status quo* (Lindblom, 1979). The distinctive trait of incrementalism is its restriction of analysis to a limited number of policy

alternatives that are marginally different from each other and from the *status quo* (Alexander, 1992; Lindblom, 1959b). Such method is initially called as “successive limited comparisons” by Lindblom (1959, p.81) and it is later developed as “disjointed incrementalism” (1979, p. 517).

The theory suggests some rationales for the simplification of the search process. First, it considers the constraints on the intellectual capacity of human analysts and on resources, such as information, time and finances. Second, it views a deductive means-ends analysis impossible and claims that institutional-behavioural aspects of organisations force them to adopt similar and relevant policies (Leach, 1982).

For some, the logic of incrementalism, which is marked by exploration and trial-and-error, excludes any attempt for long-range planning (Leach, 1982). Incrementalism considers such planning as irrelevant as it demands allocation of high levels of time and financial resources to policies, whereas often these resources are limited (Boyne *et al.*, 2004; Lindblom, 1959b). It does not completely rule out planning; however, it favours a highly flexible form. For example, Braybrooke and Lindblom argue:

"Often a plan is no more than a loosely stated set of goals and possible steps. It is relevant to the kind of actual decision-making we have been describing, but its goals and steps ordinarily have to be reformulated with each policy move." (1970, p. 77)

From an incrementalist point of view: “[Rational] planning itself is simply a routine or ritual with no real impact on performance” (Boyne and Gould-Williams, 2003, p. 118). Recognising the highly political milieus of public organisations, planning with an incrementalist approach is one of the later stages of strategy development which can preempt the formation of opposition against the strategies envisaged (Quinn, 1980). This last point resonates with Lindblom’s ideas:

“[Incremental steps] do not rock the boat, do not stir up the great antagonisms and paralyzing schisms as do proposals for more drastic change.” (Lindblom, 1979, p. 520)

Unlike the cyclical pattern in the rational planning process, strategy, from the point of incrementalism, is a continuous and ongoing process with no exact beginning or end in an ever-changing environment (Eadie, 1983; Quinn, 1980). According to Eadie:

“... environmental scanning and strategy formulation must be ongoing activities if an organisation is to respond effectively both to threats and opportunities.” (1983, p. 451)

Thus, having a very different outlook from rational planning, implementation is characterised by flexibility and dynamism within strategies and plans. Incrementalism rejects a one-size-fits-all approach and favours contingency planning (Quinn, 1980). Strategy-making is a process of learning, in which strategy execution feeds back strategy formulation for adjustment; and intended strategies are revised and turned into emergent or unintended strategies during the course (Mintzberg, 1978). The formulation and implementation dichotomy is irrelevant and even false as it impedes strategic learning in organisations, according to this perspective (Mintzberg, 1978). Strategy cannot be easily formulated, since strategy, as patterns of decisions, includes unconscious and random mental activity (Mintzberg, 1978). Therefore, organisations pursue an adaptive mode or the incrementalist approach, rather than rational planning, for strategy formation.

Incrementalism can be observed in strategic management. It has been observed, for example, that the patterns of strategy develop incrementally through informal learning and most times without conscious and deliberate actions by the strategists (Mintzberg, 1978). In another situation, incrementalism has been witnessed as a conscious and intentional strategy, which is employed to manage strategic change in private companies. This type of incrementalism is referred to as 'logical incrementalism' (Quinn, 1980).

Logical incrementalism, offered a new perspective for strategy development in organisations. The proponents stressed the importance of experimentation, organisational learning, continuous adaptation to changing environments, inclusion and management of stakeholders, organisational politics and conflict, coalition building, timing, and many other aspects of strategy development (Mintzberg, 1978; Quinn, 1980). Although there are many overlapping ideas between the logical and disjointed modes of incrementalism, logical incrementalism has been claimed to be a 'purposive' or 'conscious' incrementalism (Quinn, 1978, p. 19), as opposed to muddling through, and in contrast to disjointed incrementalism it has prescribed a wider alternative inquiry into available strategy options. Some authors argue that logical incrementalism fits best with public, variable and volatile milieus (Johnson and Scholes, 2001; Walker, 2013), while others advocate that this way of strategy formulation could only be efficient in uncomplicated and stable environments (Boyne, 2001). Considerable empirical evidence from the tests of the Miles and Snow (1978) model demonstrates that incremental implementation of strategies perform better in tackling complex and dynamic environments (Walker, 2013).

Studies on incremental strategising have come to have an affect on the approach to rational planning, for example, with regard to the flexibility vs. rigidity of planning and plans (Wolf and Floyd, 2013). Following the early advice of scholars (Nutt and Backoff, 1992; Ring and Perry, 1985) authors increasingly prescribe more flexible models that consider contingencies, which enable managers to adapt public organisation strategies to changing environments (Boyne, 2001; Bryson, 2011; Eden and Ackermann, 2013; Poister *et al.*, 2013). Recent empirical research provides evidence for the superiority of a mix of rational and incrementalist models over formal strategic planning (Poister *et al.*, 2013). Such an approach introduces flexibility to strategic planning processes, through which goals and strategies can be continuously reviewed and adjusted to new circumstances (Poister *et al.*, 2013), in light of ongoing environmental scanning and information gathering (Eadie, 1983). Similarly, the ‘one-size-fits-all’ (Poister *et al.*, 2010, p. 527) or ‘blueprint’ approach (Eden and Ackermann, 2013, p. 7), which has been rejected all along by incrementalism, is now increasingly being criticised in the literature and scholars are appreciating the notion of emergent strategies (Mintzberg, 1978), as well as intended strategies, and asking for more contingency planning due to differences in the contexts of public agencies (Bryson *et al.*, 2010; Eden and Ackermann, 2013; Joyce and Drumaux, 2014a; Walker *et al.*, 2010).

At the same time several limitations of the theory are highlighted by its critics. For example, Etzioni (1967) advocates that incremental decisions anticipate more fundamental decisions and function as generators of non-incremental decisions once they were made. The total value of incremental moves is determined by more far-reaching decisions. At the centre of the critique, however, is the claim that the theory favours the *status quo* by encouraging adaptive moves at the cost of far-reaching or innovative ones (Atkinson, 2011; Etzioni, 1967). For that reason, incrementalism is claimed to be ineffective in tackling complex and deep-rooted public policy problems that demand more radical and creative approaches (Steiss, 2003). Another reason for rejection is linked to the notion of partisan mutual adjustment, which has the potential to overlook the values and preferences of the weak and unorganised groups (Etzioni, 1967), either in the societal or organisational contexts. Where claims have been made that attribute a normative value to incrementalism (Braybrooke and Lindblom, 1970) these have been criticised for not being grounded in sound evidence (Alexander, 1992).

In contrast to the proponents of incrementalism, it is argued that both disjointed and logical incrementalism bear “a chronic sub-optimisation” of performance which leads to bad service provision and dissatisfaction among insider and outsider key stakeholders (Bryson, 2011, p.

19). This view is supported by some empirical findings, such as a recent study measuring the effects of logical incrementalism over organisational performance in local governments, which found that incrementalism, as well as absence of strategy, had negative consequences (Andrews *et al.*, 2009). Yet, this is the result of a single research and further research is needed to support this argument. Recognising the shortcomings of the theory, Lindblom (1979) advocates that incrementalism is closer to the actual experience of organisational planning and should be employed consciously due to the limitations of rationality and because of the dynamic nature of public policy problems. The application of such a computed and thoughtful method constitutes “strategic analysis” in his view (Lindblom, 1979).

### **2.3.1. Dimensions of Incrementalism**

This section presents the second pillar of the conceptual framework of this research by presenting the dimensions of the theory of incrementalism. The distinctive theoretical dimensions of incrementalism discussed in this section are: (1) partisan mutual adjustment, (2) agreement as criterion for good strategy, (3) simple incremental analysis, (4) trial-and-error and (5) flexibility and dynamism.

#### **2.3.1.1. Partisan Mutual Adjustment**

Partisan mutual adjustment describes a fragmented system of shared powers of politically motivated actors who interact with other stakeholders to reach an agreement on goals and actions (Braybrooke and Lindblom, 1970). It represents an inductive form of decision-making, as opposed to the deductive approach of the rational planning model, in which a consensus is assumed to have been reached over goals (Bryson, 2011). Public organisations operate in political environments and they interact with different stakeholder groups, and their decisions are affected in varying degrees by those stakeholders and power centres. In contrast to a comprehensive approach, analysis and evaluation of policy is disconnected; they take place in diverse centres in the society over diverse policy problems, showing the patterns of explicit disorganisation and weak communication (Braybrooke and Lindblom, 1970). Such a decision-making setting is mainly characterised by conflict and bargaining (Forester, 1984). Conflict and bargaining are common in organisational settings, as well as in government and are very likely to occur in the process of goal-setting and allocation of organisational resources in the context of strategic planning. Hence, the dimension of partisan mutual adjustment is relevant to (1) whether prioritisation of goals and targets occur in a highly

political environment and (2) whether resources are allocated upon and through conflict and bargaining in the involved organisation.

### **2.3.1.2. Agreement as a Criterion for Good Strategy**

In relation to the dimension of partisan mutual adjustment, incrementalism posits that agreement on means is superior to procedural rationality in the highly political environment of public organisations, where the ends or values of the stakeholders are as diverse as the stakeholders themselves and in which a clear-cut distinction between ends and means can be problematic (Lindblom, 1959). In such decision-making conditions the criteria for a good strategy is whether it is agreeable rather than whether it is procedurally rational.

### **2.3.1.3. Simple Incremental Analysis**

Within the practice of incrementalism, the analysis of alternative strategies is non-comprehensive as the alternatives considered are marginally different from each other and from the *status quo* (Lindblom, 1959). Analysis does not involve a comparison of, for example, the values of security and freedom in a broad sense but of the increments of these values offered by different policy options and the future states that these options stipulate (Braybrooke and Lindblom, 1970). Therefore, the decision-maker needs to determine the extent to which an increment in one value is more worthwhile than an increment in the other. Whether or not an increment in one alternative is more worthy than the other will consequently determine the decision-maker's choice. Therefore, the analysis of options is comparative (Lindblom, 1959) and the choice among alternatives is made through "ranking in order of preference the increments by which social states differ" (Braybrooke and Lindblom, 1970, pp. 85-86). Incrementalism prescribes consideration of a small set of alternatives which are very close to each other and to the *status quo*. The inadequacy of theory or experience in resolving complex social problems compels the consideration of familiar policies, while encouraging the negligence of non-incremental options (Lindblom, 1959). Far-reaching options are overlooked "because they are impractical in their requirements or unpredictable in their consequences" (Atkinson, 2011, p.10). Simple incremental analysis is argued to be widespread within public organisations (Lindblom, 1959).

#### **2.3.1.4. Trial-and-Error**

Incrementalism suggests that no single best or right solution exists for solving policy problems (Etzioni, 1967). Public organisations will repeat incremental moves continuously, with trial-and-error, as their ambitions and circumstances change and as they gain new insights into the problem in question (Atkinson, 2011; Lindblom, 1959). The expectation of the public body is a partial achievement of objectives through incremental moves. This strategy enables the decision-makers to test their preferences, to become cognizant of its consequences, refrain and recover swiftly and easily from its detriments, if any, as their minor moves remain retrievable (Lindblom, 1959). As with the simple incremental analysis pattern, trial-and-error is claimed to be employed frequently in governments (Atkinson, 2011).

#### **2.3.1.5. Flexibility and Dynamism**

Incrementalism hypothesises that ends and means, or values and policies, are defined synchronously and concurrently in the decision-making process (Lindblom, 1959). The process of analysis progresses reciprocally and concurrently through the analysis and formulation of means and ends towards the adjustment of the two in a continuous, flexible and dynamic manner (Braybrooke and Lindblom, 1970). In other words, goals and strategies are dynamically reviewed and revised after every move during progress for the adjustment of both (Quinn, 1980). Incrementalism does not favour planning although it does not totally reject it, as discussed earlier. A plan would be a flexible, dynamic and an ever-changing document if it existed (Mintzberg, 1978), because continuous adaptation of means and ends is required to be responsive to changes in the internal and external environments.

### **2.4. Conclusion**

This chapter has reviewed two prominent process theories of strategic planning in order to build a dual conceptual framework that is empirically tested in chapters 6 and 7. The chapter presented its argument in three sections.

The first section addressed the relevance of rational planning and incrementalism for this case study, which embraced a rival explanation method as an analytical strategy for the interpretation of case evidence. It argued that the strategic planning reform that the MoI underwent was based on the theory of rational planning. Hence, rational planning is selected

as the original theory to be tested. Incrementalism is employed as a competing theory for at least two reasons. Firstly, incrementalism is reverse rational planning and these two theories are mutually exclusive. In other words, incrementalism presents a contrasting account of what rational planning presents, which renders it a rival theory. Secondly, the absence of explicit strategy formulation procedures in the MoI before the strategic planning reform opens up some space for incrementalism since it is widely accepted in the public management literature that legal reforms do not straightforwardly bring about change in practice due to a number of prevalent factors, including organisational culture. This kind of situation can be best explained through the premises that underpin incrementalism, such as trial-and-error (non-purposive) or simple incremental analysis.

The second and third sections critically reviewed rational planning and incrementalism theories in order to complete the dual conceptual framework for this case study. Section two discussed the fundamentals and main precepts of rational planning. It revealed that rational planning comprises the basis for formal strategic planning and that strategy in rational planning is formal, analytical and mechanistic, analysis is comprehensive, integration and co-ordination is high and the implementation of strategy is explicit. The proponents of the theory argue that rational planning provides a justification for organisational strategy, enhances organisational capacity and performance, as well as relations with stakeholders. Later, the section demonstrated how the claim of comprehensive rationality was challenged by critics because of the shortcomings of human rationality due to limited cognitive capacity and organisational resources. Opponents' arguments focused on the impracticality of the theory, its neglect of the role of politics in public strategy-making, and its difficulty to address the complexities of social problems in public administration. Finally, as the first dimension of the conceptual framework of this case study, the section presented the dimensions of rational planning. These dimensions are presented in Table 2.1 below as patterns of rational planning.

**Table 2.1. Conceptual Framework of the Research**

	<b>Patterns of Rational Planning</b>	<b>Patterns of Incrementalism</b>
1	Comprehensive Analysis of Strategies	Partisan Mutual Adjustment
2	Formality	Agreement as Criterion for Good Strategy
3	Rational Implementation	Simple Incremental Analysis
4	Integration and Co-ordination	Trial-and Error
5	-	Flexibility and Dynamism

In a similar approach, section three discussed the basics and principles of incrementalism critically. It argued that incrementalism introduces a new perspective in public decision-making by contrasting it with the theory of rational planning. Incrementalism stimulates a field of public strategic management by challenging a purely analytical view of strategy with a one-size-fits-all approach. Rigid planning is rejected and instead contingencies are considered and organisational conflict and reconciliation is incorporated into the equation. The theory hypothesised that public organisations should limit their search for alternative strategies to a few feasible and familiar options due to the limitations of rationality and that they should advance through learning-by-doing dynamically and flexibly. It was argued that logical incrementalism is developed as purposive incrementalism, as opposed to muddling through, blending the analytical and non-analytical dimensions of strategy. Once more, logical incrementalism stressed organisational politics and organisational learning in strategy development. From the perspective of critics of incrementalism, the section discussed that the theory is blamed for preserving the *status quo* and overlooking the voices of the weak in society by prioritising partisan mutual adjustment, in which the powerful often dominate strategy-making. Another point made in the arguments was that the theory was crippled with sub-optimisation and that it deteriorates organisational performance in the public sector. Finally, section three presented the patterns of incrementalism to be tested as the second dimension of the conceptual framework.

Table 2.1 presents the conceptual framework for this case study. The conceptual framework combines the patterns of rational planning (see Section 2.2.1) and incrementalism (see Section 2.3.1), which are derived from the review of the two theories above. Chapters 6 and 7 empirically test these two theories successively.

# **CHAPTER 3**

## **LITERATURE REVIEW 2: THE DESCRIPTIVE AND EMPIRICAL DIMENSIONS OF STRATEGIC PLANNING**

The first research question presented in Section 1.4 asks whether strategic planning has been effective in the MoI, and is aimed to assess how and why this is the case. Hence, one main purpose of this research is to explain what mechanisms and forces lead to success or failure in strategic planning within the context of the Turkish MoI. This chapter first expands the review of descriptive public strategic management literature by addressing the background of strategic planning in the public sector, its worldwide application, implications of the difference between public and private sectors, and by presenting a rather linear public strategic management process (Figure 3.1). The second part of the chapter reviews empirical literature covering three decades to make explicit what has been found to be effective in the success or failure of strategic planning processes in public organisations so far. The second part is structured in accordance with the strategic management process presented in Figure 3.1. By recognising the ‘practice’ dimension of strategy-making (Jarzabkowski and Paul Spee, 2009; Whittington, 2006), the review touches on the role of the practitioners of strategy, as well as a preparation stage, since they are the actors whose preparedness for strategic planning is of great significance to the effectiveness of the process. Incorporating the role of practitioners in strategy aims to avoid the fallacy of viewing strategic planning as a purely logical, unsociable and unemotional set of mechanistic procedures that can be verbatim duplicated in all circumstances (Bryson *et al.*, 2010). Table 3.1, in conclusion, synthesizes the success and failure features derived from the existing empirical research. These criteria are

later utilised in Chapter 8 to judge the strategic planning practice of the MoI. To these ends, this chapter is structured as follows:

- 1) Strategic planning in the public sector: A general view,
- 2) The strategic management process: empirical perspective,
- 3) Conclusion.

### **3.1. Strategic Planning in the Public Sector: A General View**

#### **3.1.1. Background and Rationale**

Strategic planning and management originated in for-profit organisations back in the 1950s (Bruton and Hildreth, 1993; Bryson and Roering, 1987; Streib and Poister, 1990) and virtually all strategic management tools and models in circulation today have been developed for the private sector (Nutt and Backoff, 1992, p. 23). This management technique was introduced into the public sector in the 1960s, starting with the US Department of Defence under the Planning-Programming-Budgeting System (PPBS) (Boyne *et al.*, 2004; Mintzberg, 2000; Osborne and Gaebler, 1993). It occupied a prominent place in the governmental agendas of the US, the UK, and France in the early 1970s for the achievement of more rational and strategic policymaking (Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2011). Expansion of strategic planning and management across governments rose with public administration reforms in the US and parallel international reform agendas in New Zealand, Canada and Australia in the 1980s and 1990s (Bryson, 2010).

The tension between resource scarcity and demands for enhanced public service performance (Berry, 1994; Eadie, 1983), the increased external stakeholder aspirations for public service accountability and the commitment of public agency practitioners for better management (Poister *et al.*, 2013) are argued to be the main impetus for public strategic planning. From a broader perspective, the expansion of strategic planning across public administrations has been the consequence of significant changes in science and technology and many aspects of social, economic, financial, and political life (Bryson, 2011; Osborne and Gaebler, 1993; Poister and Streib, 1999; Steiss, 2003). The world has become a “super-globalised and hyper-connected” (Orr, 2015) place, in which any development at one place has the potential to reverberate unexpectedly in other parts (Bryson, 1999, p. vii). Developments in the public domain have evoked the immediate need for more cost-effective, efficient, responsive and innovative management techniques in the public sector (Osborne and Gaebler, 1993). Public

organisations that want to survive in the new conditions have to be adaptable and malleable, delivering value for money through the provision of high-quality and diversified goods and services; being responsive to constituents; being open for stakeholder participation; ensuring the buy-in of employees; and going beyond serving clients through authorizing them (Osborne and Gaebler, 1993, p. 15).

While the public are looking for better services (Eadie, 1983, p. 447), they are also asking for more transparent governance, parallel to the demands for greater democracy (Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2011). Accordingly, there is a great emphasis on output-oriented or results-focused management styles in search of an ever-effective public sector (Poister and Streib, 1999, p.308). At this point, strategic management constitutes a versatile tool for public bodies to overcome internal threats, such as poor management and performance (Joyce, 2001, p. 1). It helps to tackle external emergent menaces in the ever-changing environment and ensures long-term vitality of public organisations when used effectively (Joyce, 2001; Poister and Streib, 1999). Hence, strategic management is a practical apparatus that has the power to increase the adaptability of public organisations to an ambiguous environment and unforeseeable future (Miles and Snow, 2003; Poister and Streib, 1999; Steiss, 2003).

Strategic management underlines buy-in and better internal and external communication to emphasize the importance of determining a strategic agenda through stakeholder participation on shared values (Joyce, 2001; Poister and Streib, 1999). To stress the significance of buy-in in strategic management, Campbell wrote; “If you don’t have buy-in, you don’t have a plan” (2002, p. 433). Strategic management is a dynamic and adaptable process, rather than a static and inflexible one. It is an integrative framework on the grounds that it (Poister and Streib, 1999, p. 308):

- draws attention throughout functional units and across different organisational levels on common goals, themes, and issues;
- links management processes and programme initiatives to targeted results in the exterior milieu; and,
- associates tactical, daily-basis decisions with long term strategic goals.

Additionally, the general purpose(s) of strategic management are argued to be (Poister and Streib, 1999, pp. 311-312):

- to protect the harmony of the organisation with its environment by continuous monitoring of external trends,

- to build internally and externally a lasting commitment to the mission and vision of the organisation;
- to provide the sustenance of a strategy culture which upholds and cooperates with the mission and vision;
- to provide a sustained attention on the organisations' strategic agenda throughout its decision processes and activities.

Realisation of organisational mission, fulfilment of mandate and generating public value are the main functions of an organisation, while organisational learning acts as a supportive element for an ongoing and satisfactory realisation of the three (Bryson *et al.*, 2010, pp. 495-496; Koteen, 1997, p. 5). Strategic management is believed to help public managers to manage efficiently and cost-effectively for the attainment of public value (Joyce, 2001, p. 6; Koteen, 1997). “Do more, better, smarter with less” has been the motto of strategic management in government (Koteen, 1997, p. 6). More significantly, strategic management is employed to guarantee long-term viability and success of public agencies (Poister *et al.*, 2010; Steiss, 2003). The value of this versatile tool has been appreciated in the public domain and it is now applied all around the world by many governments (Poister *et al.*, 2010). How strategic management can successfully be applied in public organisations has been a central problem for strategic management scholarship.

### **3.1.2. Strategic Planning and Management in the World**

More than two decades ago, Bryson, as an influential public strategic planning scholar, wrote: “Strategic planning is likely to become a part of the repertoire of public ... planners” (Bryson, 1988, p. 73). In the mid-1990s public strategic planning was being promoted as an innovative approach in the public sector (Berry, 1994). Developments in the field have confirmed Bryson’s forecast as the model dominates many government policy agendas today. Some governments are revising initially introduced models, whereas others have recently introduced them for the first time. The spread of strategic management approaches started in particularly Anglo-Saxon countries such as the US, the UK, New Zealand, Canada and Australia. It later diffused to different governments all around the world from continental Europe (Germany, Netherlands and Norway) to Africa (South Africa, Nigeria, Ghana, Kenya) and Asia (South Korea, Malesia and Pakistan) (Songür, 2011). The experiences of the US and the UK are reviewed below to exemplify the rise of strategic planning.

### **3.1.2.1. The Case of the US**

Many US cities had started to exercise corporate-style strategic planning in the early 1980s (Kaufman and Jacobs, 1987). At the federal level, only two agencies in the US were identified as having strategic plans in the late 1980s (Koteen, 1997). However, by 1990, Streib and Poister (1990) found in a survey study that strategic planning was diffused countrywide across large and small cities of the US, for both in-house operational and communitywide planning purposes. This was three years before the enactment of the Government Performance and Results Act 1993 (GPRA), which obliged all federal government agencies to introduce strategic plans by the end of 1997. Another survey revealed that 60% of participating state agencies were using some sort of strategic planning by the year 1995 (Berry and Wechsler, 1995). Legislated during the Clinton administration for “restoring the confidence of the American people in the federal government” (Radin, 1998, p. 308), the GPRA had a one-size-fits-all or one-best-way approach that mandated top-down, formal strategic planning to federal public agencies (Long and Franklin, 2004). It obliged federal governmental agencies to develop strategic plans for a five-year period, a performance plan, and an annual performance report as a framework for rational strategy formulation and decision-making, with effective resource allocation, enhanced performance, accountability and inclusion of diverse stakeholders through consultation. The basic aim of the legislation was to improve service quality and public satisfaction by focusing on results (Radin, 1998). Although top-down with regard to dictating a standard formal-comprehensive strategic planning model, the GPRA stipulated a bottom-up strategy formulation approach through consultation with internal and external stakeholders (Long and Franklin, 2004). Most of the states in the US have passed parallel laws following the GPRA (Poister and Streib, 1999). Despite problems with implementation (Long and Franklin, 2004; Radin, 1998), strategic planning has become common practice following three decades of deployment in the US (Bryson *et al.*, 2010; Poister *et al.*, 2010).

### **3.1.2.2. The Case of the UK**

In the UK, rational strategy formulation was adopted as a governmental policy through a process that started with the introduction of the Next Steps Report by the Government’s Efficiency Unit in 1988 (Hyndman, 2001). The Next Steps Initiative targeted the separation of policymaking from service delivery through the establishment of autonomous agencies at

arms-length from the central government and improving efficiency and effectiveness through effective performance reporting and establishing personal responsibility for top managers (E U, 1988). In 1998, the Best Value framework announced by the Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions required local authorities to specify organisational goals and objectives for sustained advancement in the quality and efficiency of local services (Boyne *et al.*, 2004). UK local authorities were asked to undertake a number of measures to improve efficiency which included directions to conduct performance reviews; compare their own performance with other local governments; consult the public for the identification of service preferences; set clear targets on an annual basis for a five-year period and assign performance indicators to monitor progress (Boyne and Gould-Williams, 2003). Additionally, they were also obliged to publish performance plans that lay down quantitatively defined objectives and targets for better service and also to prepare action plans for programme achievement. Public Service Agreements and Public Spending Reviews were introduced as means for rational and strategic management (Songür, 2011). Under the recent coalition government public departments prepared structural reform plans and business plans that lay out the vision, priorities, structural reform plans, expenditure and transparency of business, which were due to be reviewed and revised every year in the light of new developments (HO, 2010). Departments were expected to report their performance through annual reporting and accounting (for example DfE, 2011; HO, 2013).

While strategic planning became more diffused across international governments, difficulties with application in the public sector compelled scholars to question its efficacy and relevance in the public sector, and hence raised concerns about the public-private dichotomy.

### **3.1.3. Public- Private Dichotomy in Strategic Planning**

Whether public and private (for-profit) organisations are of the same kind or different in some respects with regard to the application of strategic planning has been the subject of debates among scholars (Joyce, 2015; Nutt and Backoff, 1992; Ring and Perry, 1985). Some authors have distinguished public agencies from private sector organisations with regard to their multi-purpose character, the effect of political leadership in management, and exemption from competition in markets (Christensen *et al.*, 2007). Nutt and Backoff (1992) have outlined a wide array of differences between the two sectors consisting of environmental differences, transactional differences, and process-related differences. Similarly, Ring and Perry (1985) have argued that public and private sectors reveal differences with regard to goal ambiguity,

transparency of strategy processes, diversity of stakeholders and interests, time constraints, and lifetime of coalitions. Some frequently-cited differences between the two sectors are discussed here.

Unlike private organisations, the goals of public organisations are multiple, ambiguous, generally unquantifiable, and are often conflictual (Rainey and Jung, 2010; Stewart, 2004). Goal ambiguity is said to provide a supportive environment for public administration, since it facilitates agreement on goals and values, and encourages public managers to use personal discretion, which may not otherwise be practiced when goals are articulated precisely. On the contrary, it is revealed that managers of effective for-profit organisations concentrate on a few clearly outlined goals, such as growth and market share (Ring and Perry, 1985, p. 279). Public organisations act in an environment that is influenced by electoral outcomes, power struggles, conflict, and bargaining (Wechsler and Backoff, 1986), though to varying extents in different societies (Braybrooke and Lindblom, 1970). These organisations have to take into account diverse stakeholder groups, both internally and externally, and their views and interests in strategy formulation processes (Joyce, 2015; Dror, 1968), while their managers are not totally autonomous in their relations with stakeholders (Stewart, 2004). Although there is room for organisational politics within for-profit firms (Quinn *et al.*, 2003; Quinn, 1978), it does not amount to the level of internal and external politics that public organisations are subject to.

One of the main differences between the for-profit and non-profit sector strategy lies in the purpose of the employment of strategy. Unlike the private sector, strategy is seen as a way of enhancement of organisational performance for sustained creation of public value (Moore, 1995), rather than a means of competition or gaining advantage over (Bruton and Hildreth, 1993) or defeating rivals (Moore, 1995; Poister and Streib, 1999; Walker, 2010). Bryson, Berry, and Yang (2010) argue that the private sector employs strategic management to maximise profit, foster growth and increase the share in the market through rivalry or coalition; while in the public sector it is exploited to improve performance, citizen satisfaction and to ensure the long-term viability of organisations.

Strategic discretion is argued to be relatively restricted in the public sector because of strict *ex ante* and *ex post* control over public management, for example in terms of entering into new markets or constituencies, or abandoning existing markets (Bryson *et al.*, 2010; Pitts, 2010; Stewart, 2004). Strict control is exercised by political powers (Stewart, 2004), “higher authorities” and “monitors” (Ring and Perry, 1985, p. 280) through limiting goals and strategy

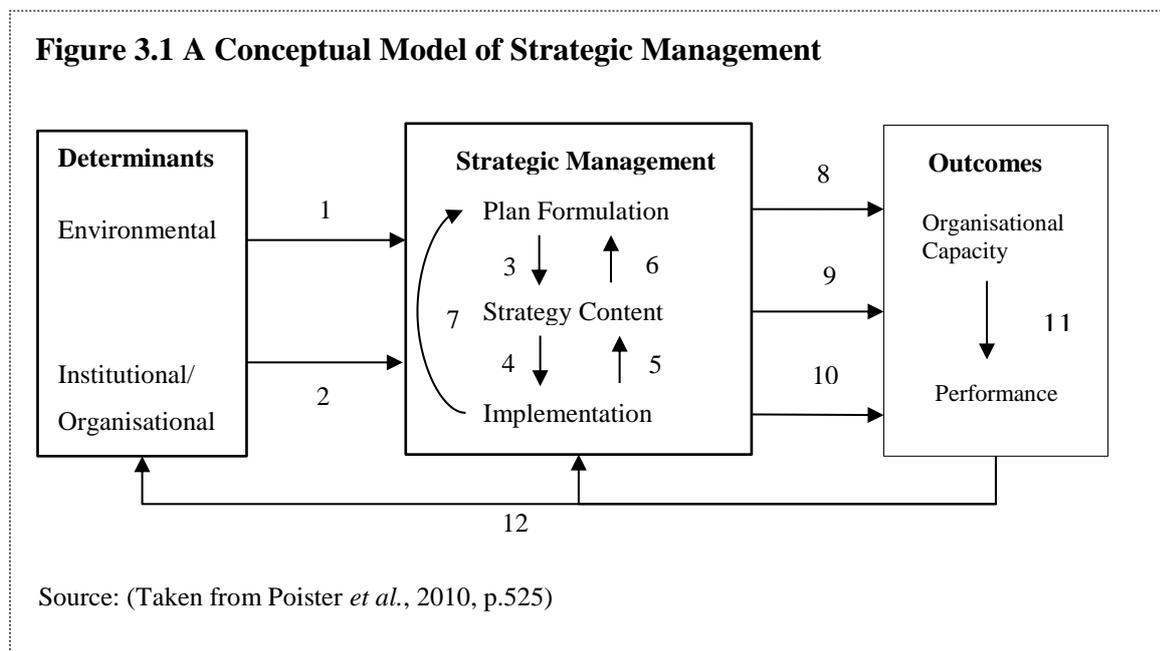
options beforehand, for example by the use of legal, political, and regulatory means (Boyne and Walker, 2010, p.186) or by the scrutiny of the final strategies through by ad hoc mechanisms. Public organisations demonstrate a highly exogenous character under the conditions of stringent external control (Walker, 2010; Wechsler and Backoff, 1986).

The differences embedded in the nature of public administration and the problems and limitations stemming from these suggest that strategic planning does not fit well with public management (Stewart, 2004; Vinzant and Vinzant, 1996) or is highly challenging to apply (Ring and Perry, 1985) and precise emulation of the model is inevitably problematic (Bryson and Roering, 1988). It is argued that strategies are largely emergent, rather than intended, in the public sector; and hence the contribution of formal strategic planning is contended to be controversial (Ring and Perry, 1985). The opponents of strategic planning contend that strict financial and political control over public agencies and the associated risk of liability suits produce risk-averse behaviours within managers, which counteracts the virtues of strategic planning in the public realm (Kissler *et al.*, 1998a). Strategic planning is even considered by some scholars and public service practitioners as an “anathema” to public agencies (Walker, 2010, p. 228), an oxymoron under conditions of goal ambiguity (Campbell, 2002, p. 430), or a kind of “statistical management” with no real effect on service performance (Boyne *et al.*, 2004, p. 346). Criticisms have mostly been directed at prescriptive rational strategy processes, as discussed at length in Chapter 2. The proponents of the model, on the contrary, see strategic planning as a framework for rational policy and decision making in government, with a clearer mission and set of goals that give strategic direction to the agency and improve public service performance, efficiency, accountability, responsiveness and ensure long-term vitality in public administration (Berry, 1994; Boyne and Gould-Williams, 2003; Bryson *et al.*, 2010; Poister *et al.*, 2010).

Although the theory of organisations does not treat public and private organisations as different entities, and early strategic management research included cases from both sectors in their samples (for example Miles and Snow, 1978), a stream of public strategic management literature that is aware of the differences and similarities between the public and private has developed (Joyce *et al.*, 2014; Wechsler and Backoff, 1986) since 1986.

### 3.1.4. Components of Strategic Planning

This thesis primarily looks into the strategy process which is defined as “the process by which a strategic decision is made and implemented and the factors which affect it” (Andrews *et al.*, 2011a, p. 2). Process-oriented authors often overlook ‘strategy content’ in their definitions, although strategy content is viewed by other authors as equally important as strategy formulation processes (Andrews *et al.*, 2006; Boyne and Walker, 2004; Koteen, 1997). Despite variations in definition, on a broader scale strategy and strategic management theories have some common components, which are (1) strategy formulation, (2) strategy content, (3) implementation, and (4) control and evaluation (Berry, 1994; Bryson, 2011; Eadie, 1989; Koteen, 1997; Nutt and Backoff, 1992; Poister *et al.*, 2010; Steiss, 2003, pp. 6-7; Vinzant and Vinzant, 1996). Chapter 2 explicates these components within the context of theory. These components overlap with the for-profit sector view of strategic management. Resource allocation, which links organisational resources with specific strategies formulated in a plan, is considered by some authors as one of the most important elements of strategic management (Poister *et al.*, 2010; Vinzant and Vinzant, 1996). A linear and mechanistic view of public strategic management processes by Poister *et al.* (2010) is presented below in Figure 3.1.



According to this figure, some environmental and institutional factors and forces motivate organisations to engage in strategic management (Links 1-2). These forces may affect strategic management process by influencing its components. The Strategic Management stage incorporates the process of strategy formulation, strategy content and implementation of

strategies (including control and evaluation), which interact with and impact on each other (Links 3-4-5-6-7). The outcomes of strategic management are enhancement in organisational capacity in the short-run, and advancement of organisational performance in the long-run (Links 8-9-10). Development in organisational capacity itself leads to better performance (Link 11). Changes in organisational capacity and performance shape the overall strategic management process, particularly with organisational learning through feedback loop represented by Link 12.

This reflects a highly mechanistic view of strategic planning and does not take into account the role of the practitioner in strategic management. Thus, the conceptual framework presented in Figure 3.1 is revisited in the conclusion of the thesis (Chapter 8) in light of the findings from the MoI case to show how the preparedness and capability of the strategy practitioners can be decisive in the effectiveness of the strategic planning process.

The next section reviews empirical literature with regard to the conceptual framework presented in Figure 3.1 above by taking into account the practice and practitioner dimensions of strategy-making.

## **3.2. The Strategic Management Process: Empirical Perspective**

### **3.2.1. Contingencies of Strategic Management**

Understanding how different environmental and organisational contingencies affect the adoption and practice of strategic planning and in what ways is valuable for a better understanding and explanation of public strategic planning processes. Environmental contingencies appear in different forms. Evidence shows that legislative and executive mandates are important factors that lead to the initiation of strategic planning in public agencies and that many agencies have adopted strategic planning willingly (Berry and Wechsler, 1995; Poister, 2005). For example, Poister (2005) reveals that among thirty US and Canadian Departments of Transportation (DoT), eight cases cite legislative and four cases mention executive mandates as determinants, while fifteen cases report that they launched strategic planning by choice, and three cases through a blend of preference and external mandate. Berry and Weschler (1995) have found that a third of the US state agencies in their sample initiate strategic planning due to the governors' preference and guidance from budget offices.

Economic and social forces surrounding public agencies shape the performance of public agencies to a considerable extent (Walker, 2013, p. 681). These forces determine the characteristics of the external environment, the extent to which it is complex, dynamic and munificent, affecting the initiation and practice of strategic planning in public organisations. Two survey studies that look into the extent of use of strategic planning in the US municipalities (Streib and Poister, 1990) and in New York state agencies (Miesing and Andersen, 1991) suggest that public managers are increasingly seeking better management models to respond to changes under the conditions of dynamic and competitive environments. Berry (1994, p. 328) surmises in her study of US state agencies that the pressure wielded by a turbulent environment upon public managers to 'reinvent government' leads them to emulate the strategic planning practices of other public agencies and of private sector organisations. In another study, Poister (2005) discloses that senior managers of state DoTs in the US and provincial DoTs in Canada perceive strategic management as crucial for their departments to tackle extraordinarily turbulent environments. According to a very recent survey study of Canadian public organisations, strategic planning performs well in dynamic (unstable or less stable) environments that are particularly marked by uncertainty since it clarifies through formal analysis, to some extent, the issues likely to confront the organisation (Elbanna *et al.*, 2015, p. 20).

The emergence of a strategic planning practitioners network, in which public agency planners, private consultants, and professional associations closely interact, is found to be an effective environmental facilitator of the diffusion of strategic planning (Berry and Wechsler, 1995). In the same research, the authors contend that the initiation of strategic planning in state agencies is motivated by an aim to be responsive to constituents; learn from others experiences; tackle financial constraints; give a strategic direction to programmes and policies; and, prioritise resources (Berry and Wechsler, 1995, p. 166).

Organisational factors are also influential. Public agencies are more inclined to adopt strategic planning if they are more business-oriented; when a new leader takes over or if there is resource abundance (Berry, 1994; Boyne *et al.*, 2004); and, through emulation when there are other near-by agencies practising strategic planning (Berry, 1994; Berry and Wechsler, 1995). Findings from the UK local authorities show that resource abundance not only affect the existence, but also the quality of planning documents (Boyne *et al.*, 2004). Services that have prior experience with aspects of rational planning; that possess a corporate planning unit; and

agencies that limit planning to fewer functions can more straightforwardly develop planning documents (Boyne *et al.*, 2004).

With regards to centralised-decentralised systems, in their study to find the development and use of planning documents in state agencies in the US, Long and Franklin (2004) determine that agencies with centralised systems develop better plans. This is consistent with the findings of Hendrick (2003) with regard to the state of Milwaukee practice, which demonstrates that strategic planning is more difficult in departments that employ decentralised processes.

Findings based on previous case study research are also often inconsistent on the effects of organisational size. Roberts and Wargo (1994) have found in their case study of the US Navy that large organisations struggle to apply formal comprehensive strategic planning because of the challenges of effective coordination of multiple units and the limitations of the model in enabling the organisation to respond to complex and unpredictable conditions in a timely fashion. The case of the US Navy demonstrates that strategic issue management, instead of comprehensive planning, leads to better performance and compensates for the limitations of formal planning in large organisations. A case study based on the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) (Kemp *et al.*, 1993) has similarly found that an adaptive strategic (issue) management approach, rather than formal planning, can be successfully applied to a relatively large public organisation. The findings of this study cannot be directly related to a specific model of strategy formulation as the author uses the concepts of the both models to define the planning process of the EEOC. While the EEOC's staff population at the time was 2800 which can be deemed as a large organisation, the US Navy constituted a 'mega' organisation with a staff population of 10,000 (Roberts and Wargo, 1994).

In contrast, a case study of the US Air Force has found that formal corporate style strategic planning can be practiced effectively in a mega public organisation; although, the author recognises that strategic planning may be challenging for federal agencies (Campbell, 2002). Comprehensive strategic planning suits the US Air Force due to its large size and its need for co-ordination of numerous functional units, as well as the immensity of its capital investment (Campbell, 2002, p. 431). Successful cases of various size demonstrate that some sort of strategic management can be effectively applied to large and mega organisations, as well as small ones.

### 3.2.2. Preparation Stage

This research puts extra stress on the necessity of preparation for strategic planning. While Chapter 5 gives a detailed account of the MoI's preparation for strategic planning, Chapters 6 and 7 analyse the effects of this factor where appropriate and Chapter 8 draws conclusions regarding the effects of the preparation stage.

Even though the importance of preparation for strategic planning is underscored in the expository literature (Bryson, 2011; Eadie, 1983; Vinzant and Vinzant, 1996; Whittington, 2006), empirical studies overlook this dimension. Successful application of strategic planning is dependent on building the management capacity for strategic planning (Favoreu *et al.*, 2015; Kemp *et al.*, 1993; Poister, 2005; Streib and Poister, 1990). For example, Poister and Streib (1990, p. 41) at the time of their research found that the high management capacity of US cities enabled city managements to successfully initiate and exploit strategic planning along with other effective techniques, such as “budgeting tools”, “trend monitoring”, and “revenue and expense forecasting”. In the successful case of the EEOC, two senior managers conducted a literature review for self-training to understand the strategic management process and to find the best available model for the organisation (Kemp *et al.*, 1993). A comprehensive literature review was undertaken also by the Naval Surface Warfare Centre (NSWC) planning team in a successful corporate planning practice, through which strategic planning was institutionalised (Baker, 1992). While training staff on strategic planning has been found to help encourage ownership of the process, it has also enabled managers and staff to participate more productively in strategic planning processes (Poister, 2005). For instance the experience of the City of Rock Hill in South Carolina, the U.S, demonstrated that the employment of external consultants as educators of the community contributed to the achievement of strategic planning on a citywide planning basis (Wheeland, 1993). The NSWC developed workbooks and other training resources in addition to holding workshops, consultant demonstrations and individual self-assistance programmes for training practitioners, who participated in corporate strategic planning for the first time (Baker, 1992). Successful preparation has been found to include a “detailed design”, or a game scenario, that illustrates the expected outcomes from strategic planning and resource requirements for the successfully execution of the process (Kemp *et al.*, 1993, p. 134).

The stage of preparation in public strategic planning and management has a direct effect on strategy implementation and results. Among other reasons, many strategic planning initiatives

fail because of insufficient preparation, as will be shown in the case of the MoI throughout this thesis. Hence, it deserves more attention from both the practitioners and scholars for the successful finalisation of strategic planning attempts by public agencies.

### **3.2.3. Strategy Formulation**

Strategy formulation is the first component and backbone of formal strategic planning, and how and why other public organisations have effectively or ineffectively formulated strategies is very relevant to the case of the MoI. It is empirically evidenced in the case of the Departmental Fire Rescue in France that the processes of goal-setting and strategy formulation are as important as the outcomes of the process (Favoreu *et al.*, 2015). An important dimension of formal strategic planning is the one-size-fits-all approach to public strategy. Many public administrations dictate a standardised model to public agencies through legislation, such as the GPRA 1993 in the US and the PFMCL 2003 in Turkey. Research findings recommend contingency planning, which takes internal and environmental contextual differences of organisations into account, rather than a one-size-fits-all approach (Poister, 2005; Roberts and Wargo, 1994). Research findings also suggest that public organisations cannot exactly replicate business-style corporate strategic planning practices because they have various stakeholders, pervasive goal conflicts, high demands for accountability and because of the difference between public and private values (Bryson and Roering, 1988). Hence, public organisations tailor business models for their own specific needs and conditions. For example, a study of public transit agencies proposes that planning models must be adapted to contextual elements such as decision-making systems and management styles of senior management for effective strategic planning (Ugboro *et al.*, 2010). Long and Franklin (2004) have found in their study of fourteen cabinet-level departments that federal agencies adapt the mandated model to their specific contexts to address challenges that are unique to the agencies. Elements of strategic planning in the US Air Force have been found to be adapted to fit the organisational context and needs, contributing to the success of planning (Campbell, 2002). It is argued that a one-size-fits-all approach in a top-down fashion impedes organisational and strategic learning and adaptation (Long and Franklin, 2004).

Flexible planning practices, rather than set-in-stone planning, is found to be much more favourable to success (Favoreu *et al.*, 2015; Poister, 2005; Wheeland, 1993). Flexibility emphasises monitoring and modernising application, through which plans become living

documents, as was the case in the Rock Hill experience (Wheeland, 1993). Formal strategic planning within a broader framework of incremental strategy-making, which allows public organisations to review and revise strategies periodically to respond flexibly to changes in the environment, is found to be far superior to any single model of strategising (Poister *et al.*, 2013). Favorue and his colleagues (2015) evidenced the advantages of evolutionary and dynamic strategic planning in the case of the Departmental Fire and Rescue Service in France.

The rest of this section focuses on formality, the use of analytical tools, the role of strategy practitioners, top-down vs. bottom-up planning, participation and creativeness of the environment which are significant factors in strategy formulation.

### **3.2.3.1. Formality**

Studies show that public organisations at different levels adopt different, but mostly private sector-oriented, approaches to strategy formulation, such as formal-comprehensive planning (Baker, 1992; Berry and Wechsler, 1995; Miesing and Andersen, 1991; Poister, 2005; Ugboro *et al.*, 2010), strategic issues planning or management (Kemp *et al.*, 1993; Roberts and Wargo, 1994), and visualisation (Kissler *et al.*, 1998a; Wheeland, 1993). The process output, with regard to producing a strategic plan, varies (Bryson and Roering, 1988). For example, in the case of city planning, different city managements in Minnesota came up with formal strategic plans, or “governmental decision packages”, or informal plans (Bryson and Roering, 1988, p. 1000), while a vision document was produced in the Oregon case (Kissler *et al.*, 1998a). The studies referred to here evidence the effectiveness of different approaches to strategic management.

The Harvard Policy Model, as a strategic planning practice that underscores SWOTs (Bryson and Roering, 1988), has been found by Berry and Wechsler to be the most common technique among the surveyed US state agencies (1995). Agencies agree on an initial scheme for planning (Bryson and Roering, 1988), scanning and evaluating the internal and external environment; define a vision of achievement, mission, and goals; investigate internal weaknesses and strengths and external opportunities and threats; analyse, select and formulate strategies and implement, monitor and evaluate preferred strategies (Berry and Wechsler, 1995; Bryson and Roering, 1988). Poister and Streib’s (2005, p. 48) findings in their research of 512 US municipal governments on the ratio of the use of strategic planning elements are presented as:

- Analysis of stakeholder preferences and concerns (72 percent),
- Formation of strategic agendas (71 percent),
- Assessment of internal strengths and weaknesses (60 percent),
- Evaluation of external opportunities and threats (57 percent),
- Clarification of organisational mandate (53 percent),
- Cost-benefit analysis of strategy options (36 per cent).

They also found that 225 out of 512 municipalities (44 percent) had formal strategic planning introduced by their jurisdiction, which was a six percent increase in a decade from their previous findings. Likewise, in the case of the City of Milwaukee Hendrick (2003) found that seven out of fourteen departments applied comprehensive planning processes in the city's strategic planning process. Berry and Wechsler (1995) discovered that planning becomes more formal and requires more resources in the US state agencies when the agency has a corporate planning unit. This finding resonates Boyne, Gold-Williams, Law, and Walker's (2004) findings in the context of Best Value regime practice in the UK local authorities. Comprehensive-planning units are found to have been perceived as good and committed planners in the context of city departments (Hendrick, 2003).

The way in which strategies are formulated by public organisations may have important implications. For example, quantitative, formal and mechanistic strategic planning produces positive results in public transit agencies (Ugboro *et al.*, 2010). Formal planning processes at all times ensure consensus on goals and strategies in New York state agencies (Miesing and Andersen, 1991). Strategic planning also benefits significantly from a number of measures that include undertaking cost-benefit analyses; adopting a corporate-level strategic planning approach; developing cascading department-level strategic plans; and adopting a customer-oriented approach (Poister, 2005). Transition from strategic planning to strategic management institutionalises strategy in organisations and is significant for success since it enables the application of the strategic agenda to direct choices and actions on a continual basis. On the other hand, the experience of the state of Oregon (Kissler *et al.*, 1998a) and the City of Rock Hill (Wheeland, 1993) at the state and city levels demonstrate that visualisation, that is focusing on broad strategies for a desired future and overlooking detailed formal planning (Wheeland, 1993, p. 68), generates successful outcomes at these levels of government. These findings underpin the idea that the appropriate mode of planning is dependent on the contingencies (level, size, environment etc.) of the organisation involved (Miesing and Andersen, 1991).

### **3.2.3.2. Use of analytical tools**

The employment of analytical tools in the strategy process, such as “trend monitoring”, “revenue and expense forecasting”, and “sophisticated budgeting tools”, during the planning process is a sign of high management capacity, which is an important factor for success of the strategic planning process (Streib and Poister, 1990, p. 41). For example, the US municipal governments employ line-item, programme, performance, results-based, and zero-based budgeting techniques to support their strategic planning processes (Poister and Streib, 2005). Organisations that utilise performance budgeting are more likely to link the agency’s resources to strategic plans, when compared to the ones that perform line-item budgeting (Poister and Streib, 2005). The capacity to link budgets to strategic plans, additionally, leads to more comprehensive forms of strategic planning in the US state agencies (Berry and Wechsler, 1995). The practice of cost-benefit or feasibility analysis, in addition to the analysis of the range of available strategy options, is a success factor in the context of the US municipal governments (Poister and Streib, 2005). In the Oregon case, linking the findings of scientifically conducted analyses to formal proposals and to benchmarks contributed to the development of a more logical plan and helped in the monitoring of progress (Kissler *et al.*, 1998a).

### **3.2.3.3. Strategy Practitioners**

It is crucial to scrutinise the attitudes and behaviours of strategy practitioners, as the agents developing and delivering the strategy, in order to understand the dynamics of the strategy process. To enable a discussion on this topic in the last chapter, this section reviews the empirical literature with a focus on the influence of practitioners on the strategic management process. Strategy practitioners are internal and external actors and the direct performers of strategy in the broadest meaning (Whittington, 2006). This section looks into the roles of process champions, process sponsors, strategic planning team, strategy development unit, managers and staff, consultants, and reform watchdogs as strategy practitioners.

A critical role for internal practitioners for effective strategic planning is acting as a process champion or leader. Having a process champion to lead strategic planning processes is generally considered to be a significant factor for effective planning (Baker, 1992; Barzelay and Jacobsen, 2009; Bryson and Roering, 1988; Poister, 2005; Ugboro *et al.*, 2010; Wheeland, 1993). Research suggests that process champions vary according to the planning

organisation. In different cases, the process champion was the city manager or the mayor (Hendrick, 2003; Wheeland, 1993), senior managers or top commanders (Baker, 1992; Campbell, 2002), the strategic planning team (Baker, 1992), strategic planning team leaders (Bryson and Roering, 1988) and theme group leaders (Wheeland, 1993). The most important characteristics needed for process champions includes their level of trust in the benefits of strategic planning; their openness to consultation; commitment to stages of the planning process (Bryson and Roering, 1988); dedication of time and personal support (Baker, 1992, p. 78; Wheeland, 1993); being creative and visionary and having planning and good public relations skills and expertise (Wheeland, 1993). The statistically significant positive association between leadership and strategic planning effectiveness in the context of government transit agencies, along with other parallel findings (for example Barzelay and Jacobsen, 2009; Bryson and Roering, 1988), explains why the role of process champions is critical to strategy formulation (Ugboro *et al.*, 2010). A process champion's role is to keep the team together and the process going, which amounts to the most critical apex of the process, as discovered by Bryson and Roering, when identifying strategic issues and generating strategies, for these are found to be the most susceptible stages (1988). In the Rock Hill citywide strategic planning experience, for example, the participants of the research defined the representative of the champions, the project co-ordinator, as "the glue that held the process together" (Wheeland, 1993, p. 67).

Equally important is having process sponsor(s) among key decision-makers, who facilitate strategic planning by giving their support to the planning team and to the whole process particularly through critical supportive decisions that they make (Bryson and Roering, 1988). Bryson and Roering's (1988) study proposes that sponsorship of key decision-makers is of great significance for the legitimization of the work undertaken to outline and inform fundamental cross-departmental decisions. They found that full sponsor support leads to a high level of strategic planning effectiveness, as observed in two cases, and inadequate sponsor support leads to ineffective practice as observed in the remaining six cases (Bryson and Roering, 1988).

With regard to the appointed-elected leaders dichotomy, it was found in the context of the UK local authorities that there was no significant difference in the attitudes of appointed managers and the elected politicians towards planning (Boyne *et al.*, 2004), and "a dialogical partnership" between the two increases the success level as shown in the example of the US Air Force (Campbell, 2002, p. 451). The study on the UK local authorities also presents

findings that undermine the widespread belief that planning changes the balance of power in favour of the appointed or at the expense of the elected (Boyne *et al.*, 2004).

Case study research that looked into efficacious cases proposes the significance of building a competent strategic planning team for better results (Baker, 1992; Barzelay and Campbell, 2003; Barzelay and Jacobsen, 2009; Bruton and Hildreth, 1993; Bryson and Roering, 1988; Kemp *et al.*, 1993). Effective planning teams are found to include actors who “understood the language of the organisation” (Baker, 1992, p.75), specifically through experience of line management and technical dimensions of service; having a focus on the external environment (externally oriented) (Bruton and Hildreth, 1993); and “the ability to engage in relational coordination” (Barzelay and Jacobsen, 2009, p. 329). Evidence also suggests that a team’s positioning close to the senior management and receiving their support is critical to the process (Ugboro *et al.*, 2010).

Strategy development units are crucial institutional practitioners of strategy-making. Empirical research shows that strategic planning units are needed to provide guidance and technical support; to co-ordinate activities; and to make things simple for the rest of the organisation (Ugboro *et al.*, 2010). Barzelay and Jacobsen (2009) explain why the application of the strategic planning model is not automatic and how effective “actor certification” of strategy unit leads to successful realisation of strategic planning reform in the European Commission. Having a key role in reform implementation, actor certification is not only the formal establishment of a strategy unit, but more importantly its actual conduct through interpreting strategic planning “practice templates into organisational routines” (Barzelay and Jacobsen, 2009, p. 331). Barzelay and Jacobsen (2009) suggest two other critical conditions that lead to successful actor certification and consequently to effective strategic planning. First, the strategic planning reform is always on the agenda of the European Commission’s Vice President and other commissioners. And second, the powerful representation and practice of the leader of the strategy unit facilitates the process through negotiation, which demonstrates his personal and organisational capability to the rest of the European Commission.

Another critical aspect is building ownership, acceptance or buy-in of lower level managers and staff. Findings suggest that widespread staff participation generates staff buy-in, which then helps keep the pace of the planning process (Kemp *et al.*, 1993). In his study of DoTs,

Poister (2005, pp. 1053-1054) presents four factors effective for ensuring manager and staff ownership of strategic planning as:

- attributing formal responsibility to high managers to simplify strategic management process,
- creating personal responsibility for achievement by linking targets, performance measures, and action plans to specific individuals,
- using micro-level goals and targets as inputs of performance management and staff appraisal,
- sharing the significance of commitment to and ownership of the process with all internal and external stakeholders incessantly.

Actors' commitment to and ownership of the strategic planning process is an element that is iteratively found critical in empirical studies (Donald *et al.*, 2001; Kemp *et al.*, 1993; Poister, 2005; Ugboro *et al.*, 2010). One dimension of the issue is the support and commitment of the leaders and senior managers to the process. Research suggest that leaders and senior managers show their commitment to strategic planning through allocating significant personal energy (Baker, 1992), time, organisational resources, such as funds and staff, to strategy formulation (Donald *et al.*, 2001; Ugboro *et al.*, 2010, p. 21), and assigning priority to strategy by including it on their active agenda (Poister, 2005, p. 1054). The amount of time dedicated by senior management gives a clear indication to other managers and staff about the degree of commitment of top management to the process, which then significantly influences the level of acceptance, or resistance, from junior staff (Ugboro *et al.*, 2010). While commitment from top management is of paramount importance for strategic planning to be institutionally embedded, commitment itself needs to be institutionalised for sustainable strategic planning, as in the case of the US Air Force and the US NSWC (Baker, 1992, p. 78; Campbell, 2002). In these cases, successive leaders maintained commitment and let strategic planning become ingrained in organisational routines. Hence, short tenures of top manager(s) (Baker, 1992) and short policy cycles pose (Berry and Wechsler, 1995) significant risks to the institutionalisation of commitment and consequently to the continuity of strategic planning. For example, in the Minnesota multiple case study, the process of strategic planning collapsed in two cities when city managers, as key players in the process, quit their jobs for other positions (Bryson and Roering, 1988). At the same time shortness of policy cycles compels public agencies to focus on short-term prospects of one to three years (Berry and Wechsler, 1995), which contradicts the long-term orientated principle of strategic planning. Interruptions, postponements and

even cancellations are likely to be the outcomes in the initial trials of strategic planning, as in the case of Minnesota (Bryson and Roering, 1988).

Consultants are another group of practitioners who play a vital role in public strategic planning, according to case study research. In a case study based on community strategic planning in Nebraska, Blair (2004) has highlighted the importance of cooperation between practitioners, including public administrators, consultants, and local people, for effective public participation and hence, for advancing efficacious planning and implementation. Kemp, Funk, and Eadie have documented that the employment of a programme consultant as “a design resource, technical advisor, coach and facilitator” (1993, p. 134) in EEOC’s strategy formation process not only bolstered employee ownership, but it also helped the Commission to enhance its organisational capacity. In the context of the City of Milwaukee most of the participating departments stated that they had utilised a model designed by Bryson (1995) as a template for their planning processes (Hendrick, 2003). Strategic planning consultants, then, may greatly influence strategic planning processes; first, through taking an active role and interacting with public administrators and other stakeholders, as revealed by Bryson and Roering (1988) in eight city government cases in the US, by Eadie (through Strategic Development Consulting Inc.) in the US EEOC case (Kemp *et al.*, 1993), by Favorrue, Carassus and Maurel (2015) in the case of a local French Departmental Fire and Rescue Service and by university consultants in Nebraska (Blair, 2004). In the first three studies, the consultants conducted different kinds of action and intervention research (Favorrue *et al.*, 2015) and presented their findings in journal articles, which are cited in this chapter. Bryson and Roering’s account of their role gives important clues on the role of experts and impact on the strategy processes:

“We were active participant observers who wanted the eight units to succeed with their strategic planning efforts. We were active teachers, consultants, and advisors at different points throughout the units’ efforts” (1988, p. 997).

Their account demonstrates the high extent to which strategy experts may impact the strategy process from the outset. Consultants also influence public bodies through their published work, such as books written by Bryson (1995) highlighting the case of Milwaukee, and by Hax and Majluf (1988; 1991), disclosing the case of the US NSW. As strategic planning experts, at individual or institutional level, they have a significant role in public strategic planning and their skills, expertise, and previous experience can be decisive for public agencies that intend to conduct strategic planning with their support. The strategy-as-practice

perspective calls for further investigation into the central role of private consultants and broader strategic management networks in strategic planning (Whittington, 2006).

In the context of strategic planning reform, the watchdogs have a responsibility for external guidance. For example, insufficient guidance by the General Accounting Office, the Congress, and the Office of Management and Budget in the US on how stakeholder consultation ought to be made by federal agencies led to inadequate consultation with external stakeholders, as found by Long and Franklin (2004).

The influence of strategy practitioners is discussed in the context of strategy formulation here; however, the arguments made in this section are equally valid for the other stages of strategic management, such as implementation.

#### **3.2.3.4. Top-down vs. Bottom-up Planning**

Findings reveal that the strategic planning practices of public organisations have high levels of variation, even if the bodies are part of the same entity, such as the departments of Milwaukee (Hendrick, 2003). In the case of Milwaukee, departments practiced strategic planning differently: as a top management activity and internal high-level decision-making process on the one hand, or on the other as a process that includes a wide range of internal and external stakeholders with a bottom-up view; as a process heavily guided by external consultants, or a process of learning-by-doing with no external guidance; and through a retreat perspective or an activity that is extended long-term (Hendrick, 2003). Among fourteen US federal agencies eleven were reported to follow an integrated approach, in which cross-departmental strategies are developed, while the remaining adopted a holding-company approach, in which sub-agency strategies are developed independent of each other (Long and Franklin, 2004).

Whether a top-down or bottom-up planning generates better results is addressed by some of the studies. Research findings suggest that public agencies can adopt a top-down (Campbell, 2002; Hendrick, 2003; Kim, 2002; Roberts and Wargo, 1994; Ugboro *et al.*, 2010), a bottom-up (Franklin, 2001; Wheeland, 1993) or a mixed approach (Baker, 1992; Long and Franklin, 2004). A multi-agency department that adopts a bottom-up approach authorises each agency to function autonomously, free from other agencies. In another form of bottom-up approach, agencies start the process by consulting with a wide range of external stakeholders “from scratch” through interaction in conferences or large-scale assemblies (Franklin, 2001, p. 131).

The case of the state of Oregon reveals that a bottom-up strategic planning approach is apt for state-wide planning for it involves citizens and increases their cognizance of the extent of the complexity and interconnectedness of the state's issues, as well as bringing new visions into the process (Kissler *et al.*, 1998a). Similarly, the research on US federal agencies suggests that agencies that follow bottom-up approaches demonstrate more externally-oriented practice; endeavour more to receive external stakeholder views; and evaluate the possible effects of stakeholder attitudes on long-term purposes of the agency (Franklin, 2001). On the other hand, a top-down approach proved effective in the US Air Force (Campbell, 2002) and a mixed approach generated positive results in the corporate strategic planning practice of the US Naval Surface Warfare Centre (Baker, 1992).

Long and Franklin's research on fourteen cabinet-level federal agencies empirically demonstrates how state agency practice is dominated by non-standardised patterns in meeting the mandate of the GPRA 1993 (2004). The authors conclude that a bottom-up strategic planning approach creates non-standardised outputs due to the uniqueness of each agency's management process, even though the GPRA 1993 mandates strategic planning in a top-down fashion and prescribes standardised outputs (Long and Franklin, 2004). Hence, agency practices on the ground with respect to GPRA 1993 produced unintended results, as well as some intended ones, that may not have value for the agency.

This evidence partly supports the idea that a top-down strategic planning approach may be better suited to military-style hierarchical organisations with strict command and control and centralised decision-making; and that a bottom-up approach is more apt in the context of citywide or community planning. Hence, deciding whether to adopt a top-down, bottom-up or a mixed-approach is dependent on organisational contingencies and a strong conclusion cannot be made in favour of one or another.

### **3.2.3.5. Participation**

Participation is an important strategy practice. Empirical literature underlines the positive contribution of inclusion of internal and external stakeholders to strategic planning (Blair, 2004; Campbell, 2002; Kissler *et al.*, 1998a; Poister, 2005; Wheeland, 1993). The link between strategic planning and participation is found to be reciprocal, where participation improves strategic planning and strategic planning enhances public participation in strategy-making processes (Blair, 2004). US federal agencies organise "summits, retreats, conferences,

workshops, ... focus groups, surveys, webpage comments, ..." (Long and Franklin, 2004, p. 134) as different participation activities. In the State of Oregon case, "regional meetings" were employed in order to incorporate external stakeholder views into the process (Kissler *et al.*, 1998a, p. 358). Research has found that internal consultative mechanisms increase the likelihood of successful strategic planning through the elaboration of strategy options from different perspectives; gaining buy-in of members; bringing in innovative views; and providing legitimacy for preferred strategies (Campbell, 2002). In the case of the US Air Force, established consultative mechanisms gave the organisation the identity of collective machinery and provided significant leverage for the process (Campbell, 2002). Similarly, the extensive participation of managers and other staff in the strategic planning process was found to be an important success factor in the DoTs (Poister, 2005). Staff participation in the DoTs in the US and Canada gradually increased after they gained experience in strategic planning (Poister, 2005). Collaborative planning enhanced joint learning and promoted collective rationality in the case of a local Departmental Fire Rescue Service in France (Favoreu *et al.*, 2015).

Studies diverge in their findings with regard to the extent to which participation affects strategic planning and plans. A study of US federal agencies reveals that they employ participative mechanisms just to meet the GPRA requirements or "to check the box", and that external stakeholder views make only marginal contribution, if any, to the final strategic plans (Franklin, 2001, p. 137). An important finding of this study is the low level of attention on citizens and service users as a group to be consulted. The study also reveals a low level of staff member participation in the planning processes. The authors conclude that participatory management requires transformation in the existing mentality and culture of the organisation in order to show its real effect on strategy-making. This is equally valid for a bottom-up approach to planning.

On the other hand, the structure and content of the community strategic plans are significantly affected by the level of public participation in the case of community planning in Nebraska (Blair, 2004). For example, strategic plans included fewer community development strategies, as well as classical business strategies (Blair, 2004). Similarly, the participation of citizens and other external stakeholders, as well as internal stakeholders, in municipal strategic planning in the US vastly improves effective strategic planning (Poister and Streib, 2005).

An important finding from two pieces of research is that secrecy, embedded in the nature of some public services, such as military service, can be a significant obstacle to external stakeholder participation. Both the cases of the US Air Force (Campbell, 2002) and the US Navy (Roberts and Wargo, 1994) show that confidentiality, stemming from the very nature of the military and security service, inhibits the participation of external stakeholders in the strategic planning processes. As in these cases, secrecy significantly affects the strategic planning process of the MoI which is discussed in more detail in the empirical chapters.

### **3.2.3.6. Creativeness of the Environment**

Successful cases show that the strategy process unfolds effectively when interaction takes place within a creative environment. Such positive relation between strategic planning and creativity within the environment was observed in the case of Rock Hill city-wide planning (Wheeland, 1993). In this case, for example, the process champions named the sessions “Charette” (a handcart used by architecture students) in an effort to symbolically identify the process with creativeness (Wheeland, 1993, p. 68). In the State of Oregon, inclusion of university schools and students enhanced the creativeness of the process by bringing in new perspectives for public discussions (Kissler *et al.*, 1998a). The process of back-casting in the US Air Force required a visionary and creative approach for successful completion of the planning process (Campbell, 2002). This successful case showed how scenario-building and role-playing, as practices of innovation and creativeness, contributed to change through directing the high command’s attention from threats to forecasted demands and opportunities lying ahead for the organisation (Campbell, 2002, p. 450). The assignment of stretch goals (goals that are challenging to achieve) was an important factor that urged creativeness and innovation in the US Air Force strategic planning process (Campbell, 2002).

An important dimension of strategy formulation is the interaction between strategy practitioners during the strategy process. Some effective forms of interaction supported by evidence are work sessions (Kemp *et al.*, 1993), task-force approaches or theme-group meetings (Wheeland, 1993), stakeholder meetings (Franklin, 2001), and round-tabling (Barzelay and Campbell, 2003; Campbell, 2002). As another example, intensive work sessions for brainstorming in both the case of the US EEOC (Kemp *et al.*, 1993) and the city of Rock Hill (Wheeland, 1993) led to successful strategic planning. In the case of the US Air Force, round-table meetings served as platforms for back-casting, a technique of visioning

that is used to link a preferred future to the present for the purpose of identifying required strategies, leading to effective strategic planning (Campbell, 2002).

### **3.2.4. Implementation**

Implementation is another component of strategic management as explained in section 2.2.1.3 in the previous chapter. Poister (2005) proposes performance measurement as a significant element contributing to success in the American DoTs' strategic management processes. He specifically contends that strategic management processes are facilitated in these public bodies through:

- The development and use of output and outcome measures to gauge progress towards strategic aims, within the framework of a performance measurement system,
- Assigning quantitative targets as performance measures that are bound with time frames,
- Adopting a proactive attitude for the use of performance measurement to manage strategic issues of the organisation. (Poister, 2005, p. 1053)

The same study elucidates that performance measurement, such as the use of balanced score cards, became a common practice in the US DoTs. This finding corroborates a previous finding by Berry and Wechsler (1995), which discovered a tendency among US state agencies to develop performance measures to underpin the strategic planning process through gauging programme and service results. Research into US municipal governments has found that 22 percent of the cities in the research sample used performance indicators to monitor the achievement of strategic targets set in their strategic plans (Poister and Streib, 2005). The regression model used in this study reveals that ascribing strategic plan-based performance targets to department heads and other managers, and evaluating managers through performance appraisal over their achievement of strategic objectives are the two most important factors for effective strategic management. Linking budgets to strategic issues that are formulated in the plan, particularly through the use of performance budgeting, and developing action and business plans for the realisation of strategic initiatives are effective tools for better implementation (Poister, 2005). Similarly, relating strategic plans to benchmarks leads to successful plan implementation (Kissler *et al.*, 1998a). In the Nebraska case study implementation of community-based strategic plans is significantly facilitated by external technical support and local or non-local financial assistance (Blair, 2004).

Community-based strategic plan implementation is also enabled by extensive participation of local people in the planning process (Blair, 2004). In a study of fourteen US federal agencies, Long and Franklin (2004) have found some common challenges in planning implementation. These challenges include: the absence of “systems alignment” (86 percent); inadequacy of resources (79 percent); uncertainty concerning the term of the US executive branch (71 percent); unsupportive organisational culture and resistance to transformation (57 percent); and the absence of valid and dependable data (57 percent) (Long and Franklin, 2004, p. 314). More recent evidence suggests formal strategic planning, in its own right, was important for better implementation of strategies in Canadian public bodies at federal, provincial and municipal level, particularly because it helps reduce uncertainty regarding the preferences of powerful stakeholders, such as elected politicians (Elbanna *et al.*, 2015). The involvement of top, middle and line managers in strategic planning processes reinforces this relation (mediating effect).

The findings related to plan implementation so far reveal that rational theory-based approaches and tools facilitate the implementation of strategic plans. In an alternative case, survey research conducted with Welsh local authority departments found a positive, however, insignificant relation between rational implementation and organisational performance (Andrews *et al.*, 2011b). The study put forth a negative relation between incremental strategy implementation and performance as well as between strategy absence and performance. These findings contradicted the previous empirical findings to a great extent (Andrews *et al.*, 2011b). However, the authors demonstrated that when they consider strategy content, rational planning leads to improved performance with a defender stance, while incremental implementation performs well with a prospective stance (Andrews *et al.*, 2011b, p. 20)

### **3.2.5. Outcomes of Strategic Planning**

Organisations utilise strategic planning for the realisation of some short and long-term goals (Wolf and Floyd, 2013), such as the enhancement of organisational capacity and performance particularly in the public sector (Poister *et al.*, 2010). Whether these outcomes were achieved is important to determining the effectiveness of the strategic planning process in public organisations. This section constructs an empirical basis for the discussion of the case of the MoI from an outcomes viewpoint.

Several proximate and distal outcomes of strategic planning are mentioned in the empirical literature in tangible or intangible form. For proximate outcomes, clarification of organisational mandate and goals is an important tangible gain. Eighty percent of the 512 municipal governments in a study perceived strategic planning to be helpful in clarifying their organisational task, aims and priorities (Poister and Streib, 2005). Departments that adopted a comprehensive strategic planning approach in the state of Milwaukee had more explicit and measurable objectives (Hendrick, 2003).

Strategic planning helps public organisations to improve their in-house management capacity. This is a common finding from two studies on US state agencies (Berry and Wechsler, 1995) and the US municipal governments (Poister and Streib, 2005). Evidence suggests that strategic planning improves decision-making through fostering strategic thinking, what Baker (1992, p.78) calls a “tangible result” of strategic planning in the case of the USNSWC. The US municipal governments are reported to widely benefit from advanced decision-making with regard to “programs, systems, and resources” (Poister and Streib, 2005, p. 52). It is found to lead to the alignment of resource allocation with strategic needs and hence to improved budgeting in the US federal and state agencies (Baker, 1992; Berry and Wechsler, 1995). Strategic planning is not only reported to improve decision-making but to provide justification; for instance, with US state agencies it was the basis for justifying organisational continuity, preferences and actions (Berry and Wechsler, 1995), particularly with regard to allocation of resources (Miesing and Andersen, 1991).

Strategic planning is reported to integrate different programmes and units of public organisations through the creation of cross-cutting strategies (Berry and Wechsler, 1995). Development of a common language of strategy improves communication among disparate departments and their staff, and builds a common insight of and commitment to organisational strategies, goals, and objectives (Baker, 1992). Strategic planning is also thought to be beneficial to public agencies through serving as a framework for the course and control of staff activity, which is a tangible outcome (Poister and Streib, 2005).

Expected distal outcomes of strategic planning are numerous and the empirical literature provides support for at least some of those impacts. For example, strategic planning has been demonstrated to give public organisations a clear strategic direction by helping to clarify organisational mission and goals (Berry and Wechsler, 1995). As an intangible result, it is found to lead to strategic change in public organisations (Baker, 1992, p. 78) through building

a positive and supportive organisational culture (Poister and Streib, 2005). Providing strategic legitimacy or “a clear rationale for corporate decisions” in the relevant public organisation, as in the case of NSW, is another important long-term outcome of strategic planning (Roberts and Wargo, 1994, p. 78).

The ultimate purpose of strategic planning reforms in government is to enhance public service performance (Andrews *et al.*, 2011b). Performance advancement, then, holds an important measure of success for the impact of strategic planning; however, establishing a causal link between the two is highly problematic (Eden and Ackermann, 2013). Eden and Ackermann argue that measuring organisational success is akin to comparing “the actual and hypothetical performance”, to find out whether an organisation would have performed better with and without strategic management, which is a highly challenging mission (2013, p.12). Researchers who have looked into the relationship between strategic planning and performance have found evidence of a positive association between the two in the public sector. While some research simply gathers the perception rate of respondents to survey items that target dimensions of performance (Berry and Wechsler, 1995; Poister, 2005), others utilise statistical models in order to explain the complex relationship between strategic planning and performance (Boyne and Gould-Williams, 2003; Hendrick, 2003; Kim, 2002; Poister *et al.*, 2013). In the first category, Berry and Wechsler documented that improvement in service delivery, as a dimension of organisational performance, was a perceived important outcome of strategic planning by state agency managers (Berry and Wechsler, 1995). However, only slightly less than 25 percent of the total respondents (295 in total) perceived the occurrence of such an outcome. In a survey of managers of state and provincial DoTs in the US and Canada, Poister (2005) found that 69 percent of the executives perceived improvements in the maintenance of general financial circumstances, 71 percent perceived efficient operation management, and 89 percent perceived improved service quality as the outcomes of strategic planning.

In the second category, research utilised statistical models to measure the association between strategic planning and performance. Based on this, Kim (2002) found, in the context of the departments of Clark County, Nevada, in the US, that participative strategic planning improves both organisational effectiveness and employee satisfaction as aspects of performance. Employee satisfaction receives support also in a study by Poister and Streib (2005), however, based on a positive perception rate of 48 percent of the total respondents. Hendrick (2003) has found a positive statistical relationship between strategic planning and

performance, particularly in the dimensions of satisfaction or difficulty in planning and strategic capacity, in the context of fifteen departments of the City of Milwaukee, in the US. Boyne and Gould-Williams (2003) have looked into the extent to which service quality, cost, efficiency, and cost-effectiveness, as dimensions of performance, are affected by strategic planning in their research of Best Value regime in the context of Welsh local authorities in the UK. The statistical results reveal that strategic planning leads to improvements in service performance, however slightly (Boyne and Gould-Williams, 2003). The same study found that an increase in specific numerical targets weakened performance (Boyne and Gould-Williams, 2003).

In contrast to the research cited above, researchers have found a strong association between strategic planning and some dimensions of performance in the context of public transit agencies in the US, particularly when previous performance of public organisations is considered (Poister *et al.*, 2013). The authors found no improvements in efficiency and cost-effectiveness measures, while they found that strategic planning very strongly affected the dimensions of “transit system utilisation” and “system productivity” within performance in public transit agencies (Poister *et al.*, 2013, pp. 604-605). The authors argue that the differences between the context of the US public transit agencies, dominated by the private sector and steeped in competition, , and that of the Welsh local authorities may explain the discrepancy in the strength of the findings (Poister *et al.*, 2013).

Contrary to the above dimensions of performance, research has also found that strategic planning improves stakeholder and service user satisfaction. Strategic planning has been shown to enhance customer relations, external relations and general public support in US state agencies (Berry and Wechsler, 1995) and municipal governments (Poister and Streib, 2005), most likely through effective communication and enhanced participation mechanisms (Kissler *et al.*, 1998a,; Poister and Streib, 2005).

An important distal outcome is the advancement of organisational learning, since good strategic management is associated with thinking, acting, and learning strategically (Bryson, 2011). Strategic management, beyond simple strategy formulation, then helps institutionalisation of the components of strategic planning, such as visioning, situation analysis or strategy development (Bryson and Roering, 1988) through having a strategic attitude. Evidence shows that organisational learning took place in the US federal agencies through the introduction of GPRA 1993 (Long and Franklin, 2004). A strategic learning-

related gain of public organisations is producing strategically-oriented managers in the long-run, as in the case of US NSW (Roberts and Wargo, 1994). Helping create such competent strategists and an ever-evolving organisational capacity that enables the organisation to overcome future challenges, strategic management helps organisations adapt to the changes in the environment, as in the case of Oregon’s community strategic planning (Kissler *et al.*, 1998a).

### 3.3. Conclusion

This chapter reviewed the descriptive and empirical literature of public strategic planning. The first section discussed the foundations of strategic planning in the public sector, its operation internationally, with the US and the UK discussed as pioneering countries, differences between public and private sectors and the implications for strategic planning in the public sector, and a commonly referenced conceptual framework of strategic planning (Figure 3.1). The second section reviewed the empirical literature by specifically looking into contingencies, preparation, strategy formulation, implementation and outcomes of strategic planning in an effort to build an empirical basis for the discussion of the first research question of this thesis (see Section 1.4). The findings from the review are summarised as success and failure factors in Table 3.1.

**Table 3.1 - Criteria for Success and Failure in Strategic Planning**

Component	Element	Related Dimensions or Characteristics	Effect
<b>Contingencies</b>			
	<i>Environmental</i>	Dynamic and Turbulent	(-)/(+)
		Existence of experienced sister agencies	+
	<i>Organisational</i>	Change of leader	+
		Being business-orientated	+
		Resource slack	+
		Fewer goals	+
		Existence of Corporate Planning Unit	+
		Centralised decision-making	+
		Size	-
<b>Preparation</b>			
	<i>Management capacity</i>	Capability to use analytical tools	+
	<i>Training</i>	Senior manager training activities (e.g. literature	+

	review)		
	Staff training activities	+	
	Hiring external consultants	+	
	Production of training materials (e.g. workbooks)	+	
	Self-assisting programmes	+	
	Workshops and demonstrations	+	
	<i>Game-scenario</i>	Indicating expected outcomes and resource needs	+
<b>Strategy Formulation</b>			
	<i>One-size-fits-all</i>	Prescription of a single model for the whole public sector	-
	<i>Tailoring</i>	Adaptation of SP model to contextual differences	+
	<i>Flexibility</i>	Adaptive planning	+
	<i>Senior managers</i>	Prepared, knowledgeable, committed (allocating energy, time, other resources and assigning priority), supportive	+
		Short tenure	-
	<i>Political leaders</i>	Short policy cycle	-
	<i>Process Champions</i>	Skilled, supportive	+
	<i>Process Sponsors</i>	Key decision-maker(s), supportive	+
	<i>Strategy Development Unit</i>	Guide, supporter, facilitator through effective practice,	+
	<i>SP Team</i>	Competent, close to senior management	+
	<i>SP Reform Watchdogs</i>	Effective Guidance	+
	<i>Middle managers and staff</i>	Widespread buy-in through participation	+
	<i>Consultants</i>	Professional, skilled (in coaching, mediation and alike) knowledgeable, co-operative	+
	<i>Strategy Network</i>	Influential	+
	<i>Formality</i>	Formal plans	+
		Informal plans	+
		Vision documents	+
	<i>Scope</i>	Corporate SP	+
	<i>Analysis</i>	Stakeholder analysis	+
		Strategic issue identification	+
		Assessment of strengths and weaknesses	+
		Assessment of opportunities and challenges	+
		Clarification of mission and goals	+
		Cost-benefit analysis	+
	<i>Management capacity</i>	Capability to use analytical tools	+
	<i>Budgeting</i>	Performance – Programme Budgeting	+
		Line-item Budgeting	-
	<i>Benchmarking</i>	Linking plan to benchmarks	+
	<i>Planning direction</i>	Top-down (in hierarchical structures)	+

	Bottom-up (in citywide or community planning)	+
	Mixed approach	+
<b><i>Participation OR Collaborative Planning</i></b>	Existence of mechanisms (regional meetings, workshops, focus groups, theme groups, round-tables etc.)	+
	Widespread participation of internal and external stakeholders	+
	Unsupportive culture	-
	Confidentiality	-
<b><i>Participation Environment</i></b>	Creative (e.g. through assigning stretch goals)	+
<b><i>Techniques used during interaction</i></b>	Brainstorming, visualisation, back-casting, scenario-building, war-gaming	+
<b><i>Conflict</i></b>	Disagreement on goals, process, strategy	-
<b>Implementation</b>		
<b><i>Formal Strategic Planning</i></b>	Formulation of strategies in a formal way	+
<b><i>Rational Implementation</i></b>	Centralised, distinct, emphasised particularly along with a defender stance	+
<b><i>Incremental Implementation</i></b>	Decentralised, intertwined with formulation, dynamic	-
	When accompanied by a prospective stance	+
<b><i>Manager Involvement</i></b>	The degree of top, middle and line manager participation in strategic planning	+
<b><i>Performance Measurement and Management</i></b>	Output and outcome measures	+
	Assigning performance measures to individuals (e.g. heads of departments)	+
	Performance appraisal of managers	+
<b><i>Benchmarking</i></b>	Linking plans to benchmarks	+
<b><i>External support</i></b>	Technical, financial, non-financial	+
<b><i>Resources</i></b>	Insufficiency of resources	-
<b><i>Culture</i></b>	Unsupportive culture and resistance to change	-
<b><i>Data</i></b>	Absence of valid and dependable data	-

The first column of Table 2.1 presents the relevant components of the strategic planning process. The second column presents the elements of the related component. The third column includes the dimensions and characteristics of the relevant element. And the fourth column shows the direction of the effect caused by the relevant element and its dimension or characteristic. Outcomes of strategic planning are not listed in Table 2.1 since these are considered as dependent variables and the direction of their effects on other variables is not the focus of this chapter. The findings summarised in Table 3.1 are of benefit to the first section of the last chapter of the thesis (Chapter 8) as criteria to benchmark and discuss the Mol's strategic planning experience with more emphasis on practice rather than theory.

# **CHAPTER 4**

## **METHODOLOGICAL DIMENSIONS OF THE RESEARCH**

This chapter discusses the methodological issues and approaches adopted for this case study. The chapter describes the following subjects in turn:

- 1) Research design, including case study as method; criteria for data interpretation; unit of analysis; ethics and access,
- 2) Sources of data and data gathering,
- 3) Researcher's role and reflections.

### **4.1. Research Design**

The aims and questions of this research are already presented in Chapter 1 (see Section 1.4). Therefore, this chapter discusses the rationale for the selection of a case study method, criteria used for data interpretation, unit of analysis and ethics and access.

#### **4.1.1. Case Study as a Method**

This is a qualitative study based on a case-study design with a single-case focus. Case study design is employed here as a consequence of the researcher's interest in the relationship between theory and case evidence (Barzelay and Campbell, 2003). This research approach is appropriate for the investigation of complex phenomena in the real world context, in an

attempt to understand objective reality (Yin, 2003; Yin, 2013), which is strategic planning for the current research. The research meets the criteria for a sound case study given by Yin (2009, p. 8) as;

- it aims to generate answers to how and why questions,
- its focus is on some contemporary event sequences,
- the researcher does not have control over the set of events.

In contemporary scientific inquiry, case study strategy, be it single or multiple, is utilised for gaining an understanding of the organisational and administrative processes and testing theory but it is not confined to these activities (Flyvbjerg, 2006). It is argued that most consistent theories are established through case study research (Flyvbjerg, 2006). Case study designs are frequently applied by researchers of public strategic planning and management (Barzelay and Campbell, 2003; Campbell, 2002; Kissler *et al.*, 1998a; Roberts and Wargo, 1994; Wheeland, 1993). Case study is recommended either explicitly (Poister *et al.*, 2010) or implicitly (Bryson *et al.*, 2010) particularly for a better understanding of the causal mechanisms that link strategic planning and management to its anticipated outcomes.

Case study designs are effective in generating social scientific knowledge (Flyvbjerg, 2006; Stake, 1995; Yin, 2003). Generalisation in single case research can be made through theoretical statements, as in single experiments, rather than to the population; and such generalisation is not statistical, but analytical (Yin, 2003, p. 10). Yin writes:

“Your cases are not “sampling units” and should not be chosen for this reason. Rather, individual case studies are to be selected as a laboratory investigator selects the topic of a new experiment.” (2009, p.38)

Case studies are apt for theory-testing. For example, a seminal case study research by Allison (1971) that explained the decisions taken in the Cuban missile crisis in 1962 from three rival theoretical perspectives (decision-takers as rational actors, complex bureaucracies, and politically motivated groups) had a great impact in the field of decision-making (Yin, 2009). This and many other successful case studies show that case study research, with a single case, can provide excellent conditions for testing theories and explaining social phenomena.

This project is designed as an “intrinsic” case study (Stake, 1995, p. 3) because of the author’s interest in the Turkish MoI. At the same time it is a “holistic” case study (Yin, 2009, p. 46), which deals with the MoI as a whole. The time scale and focus of the study begins from the year 2007, the year that strategic planning preliminaries started in the MoI and ends

by the completion of data gathering in September 2013. The research does also look into the period between 2003, the year of the legislation of the PFMCL and 2007 in order to provide contextual and background information.

#### **4.1.2. Criteria for Data Interpretation: Conceptual Framework**

One important element of the design of this research is its deployment of two rival theories or explanations to serve as the criteria to collect data and interpret the empirical evidence obtained from the MoI (Yin, 2009). Combined with a pattern-matching approach, in which patterns observed in the MoI are judged against the patterns of the rival theories, a rival explanation strategy is adopted to overcome the biases that may result from a single explanation. The conceptual framework presented in Table 2.1 is developed from a review of rational planning and incrementalism theories (see Chapter 2) in order to apply the pattern-matching technique in Chapters 6 and 7. The dimensions of the two theories are reduced to observable entities and described clearly as patterns to enable the testing of the theories vis-à-vis the formal PFMCL framework and strategic planning practice of the MoI. The research deploys the patterns presented in Table 2.1 as a template and investigates in Chapters 6 and 7 whether these patterns exist in the MoI and explains the causal mechanisms that generate the achieved results. Including two competing theories had important implications for the research. Initially, the dimensions of the two theories shaped the interview guide establishing what kind of data was to be gathered from the informants and from the case in general. Subsequently, the theories led to the specification of the themes and codes of the research that are employed for data analysis.

A principle aim of this research is to find whether the MoI has effectively adopted and applied strategic planning in practice, how it has done so and why. This required benchmarking the MoI's practice against the practice of other public organisations. Chapter 3 reviewed the empirical literature for success and failure factors and developed a set of criteria that is presented in Table 3.1. The strategic planning practice of the MoI is judged against these criteria in Chapter 8, within a comprehensive discussion focusing on practice and non-analytical dimensions of strategic planning (Jarzabkowski and Paul Spee, 2009; Whittington, 2006). The practice dimension refers to how the MoI management understood, interpreted, adapted and put the standard formal strategic planning model into operation. Including the practice dimension fills a gap stemming from purely analytical and logical views of strategy and enables the researcher to analyse the human and social aspect of strategising.

### 4.1.3. Unit of Analysis: The Case

Strategic planning was seen by some scholars of planning as a tool for multi-agency public organisations to implement effective allocation of resources or giving new strategic direction to bound agencies, for example by assigning new goals for the involved agency (Faludi, 1973). However, ‘at what level strategic planning works best’ is a question yet to be addressed. While strategic planning is mostly practiced by the units within departments and departments themselves and is applied at country-wide, state, regional, and local levels (Kaufman and Jacobs, 1987; Poister *et al.*, 2010), there is no research that looks into strategic management from the perspective of the level of government (Bryson *et al.*, 2010). The MoI is a central governmental department and strategic planning targets the headquarters of the MoI. It had a staff population of 2049 to 2581 in the headquarters between 2010 and 2013, which put it into the category of large organisations (Roberts and Wargo, 1994). Its budget ranged from £883,654,864 in 2009 to £1,418,114,382 in 2013, which is a 60 per cent increase in five years, as presented in Table 5.1. The MoI has departments for main service, consultative-supervisory service, support services, subsidiaries and permanent boards. It has six main service departments:

- General Directorate for Provincial Administration,
- General Directorate for Civil Registry and Citizenship,
- General Directorate for Local Administration,
- Department for Associations,
- Department for EU Affairs and Foreign Relations,
- Department for Smuggling, Intelligence, Operation and Data Collection.

Three consultative and supervisory departments:

- Department for Strategy Development,
- Department for Legal Consultancy,
- Centre for Research and Studies.

Six supportive departments:

- General Directorate for Personnel,
- Department for Training,
- Department for Administrative and Financial Affairs,
- Department for Information Technologies,
- Centre for Disaster and Emergency Management,
- Bureau of Border Management.

And five subsidiaries:

- The Turkish National Police,
- General Command of Gendarmerie,
- The Turkish Coast Guard Command,
- the Undersecretariat for Public Order and Security,
- Directorate General for Migration Management.

The Department for Strategy Development, which from now on will be referred as Strategy Development Unit (SDU), was established within the framework of strategic planning reform in 2006. The last two subsidiaries were established later during the plan's implementation period: the former in 2010 and the latter in 2013. A ministerial committee that is chaired and dominated by the undersecretary and that consists of the four deputy undersecretaries and the heads of the departments is the supreme decision-making body that runs the business. The MoI departments are located in multiple sites. While some departments, such as provincial administrations, local authorities and associations, are located within the headquarters of the MoI, others, such as civil registration and citizenship, EU and foreign affairs, migration management and public order and security, are located outside the headquarters due to lack of capacity within central facilities.

The MoI is also represented in 81 provinces under the management of governors and over 800 districts under the supervision of district governors. Shaping the provincial structure and real service delivery branches of the MoI, these bodies were excluded from strategic planning in practice as will be discussed in the following chapters.

The researcher as a member of the organisation has familiarity with the case making the choice purposive (Patton, 2002; Seidman, 2006). The Ministry is an interesting case to be studied for the following reasons: First of all, Turkey is a developing country, in contrast to the developed countries that earlier adopted strategic planning. Whether the theories of planning work or fail in different contexts is an interesting research topic in itself. The scarcity of empirical research on strategic planning practices in the Turkish public sector raises the need for qualitative data and therefore validates the application of an in-depth case study strategy. Existing empirical research on Turkey's experience with strategic planning in its public sector amounts to nothing beyond a large-N quantitative study which took Special Provincial Authorities as units of analysis (Songür, 2011), a few doctoral dissertations, an article published in an international journal (Canpolat and Kesik, 2010) and a few book sections by the same authors (for example Kesik and Canpolat, 2014).

Secondly, the Ministry constitutes a potential typical case in terms of its organisation and management among twenty-six ministries in the Turkish central government. The reason is that ministries in the Turkish government are structurally and functionally organised uniformly under the provisions of a constitution-like powerful act, the Act N° 3046 labelled the Act on the Establishment and Duty Principles of Ministries, which came into force in 1984, two years after a military coup. The uniform nature of the Turkish central bureaucracy is widely recognised by Turkish scholars in the field of public administration (Canpolat and Cangir, 2010; Sözen, 2005).

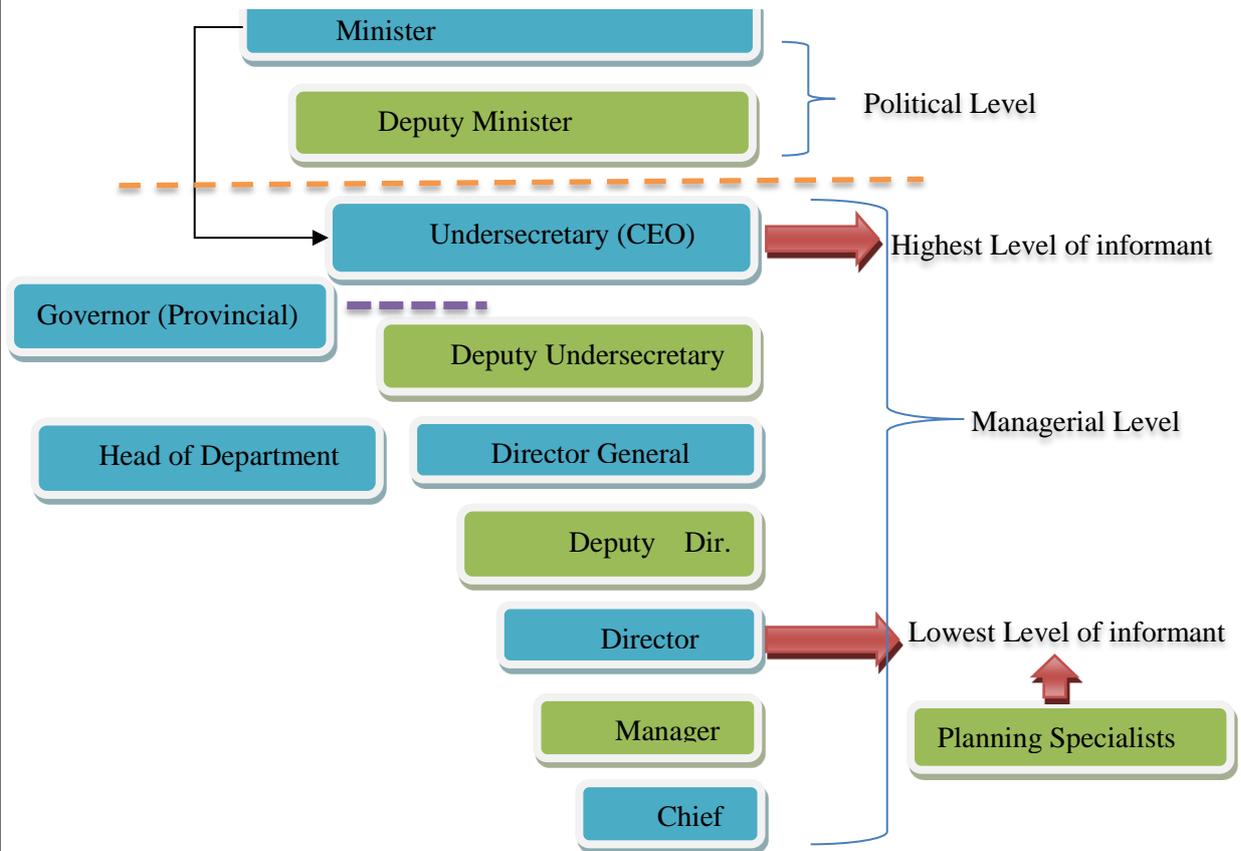
Thirdly, the researcher works for the case organisation and is interested in seeing how strategic planning and underlying theories work in the MoI. This work has the potential to elucidate the mechanisms in place. This understanding may open up the way for predictions that have the potential to allow for new policy advice (Yin, 2009).

The sampling strategy for the case can be analysed in two parts with regard to the role of key informants and the structures within which these actors played a role in the planning process. Figure 4.1 below illustrates the management echelons of the Turkish Ministry of Interior. As seen in Figure 4.1, the highest level of informant is the undersecretary while the lowest level comprises directors and planners. The two components of selection are as follows.

#### **4.1.3.1. Strategy Development Board (Ministerial Committee)**

The Strategy Development Board comprises the management elite and dominant coalition of the MoI consisting of the undersecretary and the heads of departments (main service, support, consultative-supervisory units), with ultimate decision-making responsibility in terms of strategy choice (MoI, 2009c). The dominant coalition is the group of decision makers with the highest impact on the system of an organisation, who are expected to detect and settle organisational problems (Miles and Snow, 2003). The minds of top managers' are where separate elements of a strategy are merged (Quinn, 1993). An organisation's perception of its milieu is almost identical to that of its dominant coalition and it is that perception that responds to change in the environment, strategic decisions, prioritisation of resources and creation of new structures and processes in the organisation (Miles and Snow, 2003). Since it is the perception and interpretation of the dominant coalition of events and facts that shape organisational decision-making, analysis of this perception deserves a primary focus.

**Figure 4.1 Management Echelons of the Turkish Ministry of Interior**



Source: Adapted from MoI, 2013b

Research, whether qualitative or quantitative, that focuses on probing the effects of strategic planning and management on organisational performance and change is mostly, if not totally, conducted on the perceptions of the dominant coalition and other managers of the organisation at different levels (Andrews *et al.*, 2006; Poister *et al.*, 2013). The Ministerial Committee or the Strategy Development Board had fifteen former members, and seventeen current members due to the creation of two new departments. The former members are the ones who took part in the preparation stages of the first strategic plan (MoI, 2009c) and appointed to different posts or different institutions since then. Nine of the members have been appointed as governors to provinces, three of them to other public organisations, two retired, and the then undersecretary has been appointed as the deputy-minister to the Minister of Interior. Sampling is carried out by means of a snowballing approach (Seidman, 2006;

Silverman, 2010). Detailed statistics of interviews and the interviewees are presented in section 4.2.2.2.

#### **4.1.3.2. Selection Strategy for Other Practitioners**

Having informants from different hierarchical levels of an organisation reinforces the accuracy of the empirical data collected. Although interviewing management elite is a fruitful data gathering method, it still has potential pitfalls for creating biased information. To overcome this danger, a series of semi-structured interviews were conducted with deputy directors-general, directors and with planning specialists, who personally took part in planning activities. Although the directors' influence regarding strategy development is rather limited and indirect compared to upper management levels, they have a direct impact on strategy implementation for serving as line managers. Planning specialists have also been seen as key informants for this research as they have participated thoroughly in the planning process (MoI, 2009c). In this phase of identification, key informants from fourteen units and planning specialists are picked in accordance with the snowballing approach.

An important note to be made is that the General Command of Gendarmerie and Turkish Coast Guard Command (subsidiaries) are intentionally excluded from the study since these two subsidiaries were given exceptional status by the PFMCL 2003 not to prepare strategic plans. Accordingly, no reference to these two organisations in the MoI's strategic plan exists. The Turkish National Police was also purposefully excluded from the scope of the research as the PFMCL envisaged a separate strategic planning procedure for this subsidiary. Hence, no direct reference to the Turkish National Police exists in the strategic plan. However, managers' perception of the security and law enforcement services in their relation to strategic planning is reflected in the research.

#### **4.1.4. Ethics and Access**

The research is conducted in accordance with the University of Nottingham's Code of Research Ethics and the SSSP (School of Sociology and Social Policy) ethical principles and rules. An ethical clearance form, including a participant information sheet and consent form, was approved by the principal supervisor on 6 February 2013 and reviewed and authorised by the SSSP ethics officer on 25 February 2013. Regarding the case organisation, to note, there

were no formal ethical clearance procedures to be fulfilled. Ethical issues were negotiated and settled orally with the MoI officials.

As the researcher had personal links within the MoI due to employee status within the Ministry and as the PhD programme was sponsored by the MoI, organisational access was obtained relatively easily. Individual access was partly gained through acquaintance but mostly by taking advantage of the snowballing technique during field work (Seidman, 2006; Silverman, 2010).

Of vital importance, informed consent was gained from participants prior to conducting interviews (Lewis, 2008; Mason, 2002; Ryen, 2011; Seidman, 2006). In brief, the participants were given the opportunity to read the consent form and to ask questions either related to the form or to other aspects of the research before the interview(s) commenced. All participants read, filled in and signed the consent forms. Confidentiality and anonymity were strongly assured. An effort has been made to disguise the identities of the participants and make the excerpts used in this thesis untraceable. Extra attention is paid to ensure that ‘off the record’ interview content is not disclosed (Goldstein, 2002, p. 671).

In terms of access to documents, the strategic plan, performance programmes and annual reports, which are one group of the two core data sources apart from interviews, were in the public domain and available via the internet. Access to minutes of seven strategic plan preparation meetings of the Strategy Development Board was gained through the pursuit of ministerial procedures for in-site examination.

## **4.2. Sources of Data and Data Gathering**

The distinctive features of case study design is the demand for multiple sources of evidence, in-depth examination and the need for the triangulation of data because of the difficulty in discriminating the phenomenon under scrutiny from the context (Yin, 2009). The process of strategic planning, both in terms of formal arrangements and practice (Boyne *et al.*, 2003), can be properly investigated through researching the existence and the quality of planning documents and through the perceptions of informants that played a role in the planning process (Boyne *et al.*, 2004; Langley, 1988). The analysis of official-legal texts primarily sheds light on the formal arrangements of the strategic planning reform, while interviews and plans, programmes, and reports that are produced in the post-reform era inform research

about actors' practices . Following these principles, the two main data sources for this research are interviews and documents (Bryman, 2008).

#### **4.2.1. Documentary Data**

Case study research requires the utilisation of multiple sources of data in order to strengthen the construct validity and reliability of the research (Yin, 2009). Qualitative analysis of documents is an indispensable part of this study. Documentary analysis based on thematic analysis (Bryman, 2008) is employed to provide greater comprehensiveness and richness of knowledge; to enhance the quality of data gathered and of data analysis and to compare empirically obtained data (King, 2004). Primary sources that have informed the research are documents (legal texts, cross-governmental strategy documents, the MoI's plans, performance programmes, annual reports and minutes of meetings) and archival records (organisation organogram(s) and budgetary records from 2009 to 2013). These sources are shown in the references section.

The main sources of documentary evidence have been the MoI and the internet. A comprehensive internet search was conducted prior to the site visit (Yin, 2009). As transparency and accountability are important functions of strategic planning, it is compulsory under Turkish law to annually publish plans (any final strategic plan), programs and activity reports for public organisations. The MoI publishes its related documents on the <http://www.strateji.gov.tr> web portal which is devoted exclusively to strategic planning and related activities. All planning documents were accessed via this portal. The legal documents such as acts, regulations and communiques are accessible for the public at the <http://www.mevzuat.gov.tr> web portal. All legal documents mentioned above were obtained from this portal. Cross governmental strategy documents were provided via the portal at <http://www.kalkinma.gov.tr/Kalkinma.portal> which is governed by the Turkish Ministry of Development (MoD). All other strategy related documents were obtained from the portal at <http://www.sp.gov.tr/tr> which is specifically developed and hosted by the MoD for synchronising the strategic planning activities of Turkish public organisations. Minutes of meetings were accessed as in-site examination which means that no photocopying was allowed. It was observed that the minutes were originally taken as summary notes rather than verbatim. Primary documents are referenced in the bibliography.

Secondary sources of the research refer to the sources that constitute the literature. Strategic planning is related to multiple literatures. The theories of strategic planning stem from decision-making, planning and public policymaking fields. Furthermore, empirical research that targets strategic planning exists in strategic management (covering both public and for-profit organisational research) as well as in general public administration literature. Secondary sources included:

- books
- journal articles
- conference papers
- web material

The libraries of the University of Nottingham and the online access facilities provided by them to databases for e-books, journal articles and the like have been the main access points for secondary sources.

#### **4.2.2. Semi-structured Interviews**

The interview method is seen as an essential means of social inquiry, along with observation (Snow and Thomas, 1994). It has been one of the most frequently deployed qualitative methods among management researchers (Mason, 2002; Snow and Thomas, 1994). As an example, Barzelay and Campbell's (2003) case study of strategic planning in the US Air Force is a very good example of the application of interview technique in public strategic planning research. Interviews have been a time and labour intensive method which required an enormous amount of physical and mental effort in the conduct, transcription and data analysis stages. As a precaution against the risks of response bias; inaccuracy of data because of memory problems and reflexivity, measures were taken by the research design, such as the deployment of two rival theories for explanation to enhance reliability or, including lower level managers as informants in addition to management elites (Andrews *et al.*, 2006; Wechsler and Backoff, 1986). Conducting four pilot interviews greatly enhanced the quality of the interview guide.

This research is concerned with human behaviour and an effective way of understanding this is by asking the actors to reflect on the meanings they ascribe to behaviours themselves. Given that most case studies have behavioural or human aspects (Yin, 2009), interview technique constitutes a central part and a key method of case study designs (Stewart, 2004).

The interview method enabled the researcher to elicit the perceptions and theoretical perspectives of management elites, as well as other managers, which are harder to access through other sources of data (Goldstein, 2002; Lilleker, 2003; Richards, 1996). Common theory-driven and open-ended questions were asked of all participants. While this technique provided a common topic-framework regarding the interviews, at the same time it allowed participants to come up with their own responses and stress their own points without time or other constraints (Dunford and Jones, 2000). By allowing the researcher to ask non-standardised questions, as well as the standardised ones, semi-structured interviews helped the researcher to produce situated knowledge (Mason, 2002), which facilitated the understanding of contextual knowledge.

#### **4.2.2.1. Formulation of the Interview Guide**

As recommended by research methods theory on the interview process, a semi-structured interview guide (Appendix 2) (Bryman, 2008; Seidman, 2006; Silverman, 2010) was designed based upon a comprehensive review of the literature including previous guides and questionnaires employed in the field (Andrews *et al.*, 2009; Barzelay and Jacobsen, 2009; Boyne, 2001; Scholes and Johnson and Scholes, 2001). The guide was prepared in English and later a Turkish copy was produced. Prior to the actual interviews, four pilot interviews were carried out in March 2013 in order to test the comprehensibility, practicality and effectiveness of the interview guide to elicit the right kind of data, and to make necessary adjustments. The two initial pilot interviews included a head teacher in the UK and a finance manager of an agency outside the UK. Both participants were picked for their experience with strategic planning and management in their organisations. The interview guide was reviewed and revised after each pilot interview in order to fine tune the guide. The guide was later tried on two members of the MoI. One of the two participants was a former head of unit and the other had previously worked for the SDU at management level. The guide was reviewed and adjusted after each pilot interview and finalised in late March 2013.

#### **4.2.2.2. The Conducting of the Interviews**

The Ministry is located in the capital city Ankara, Turkey. Therefore, the field work required travelling to Turkey. Prior to conducting the interviews, official advance letters along with participant information sheets were sent to the potential participants. The documents were

written in English and later translated into Turkish, the official language spoken in Turkey. The covering letter included the contact details of the researcher; brief information about the topic of the project; request for interview; information about the expected duration (60 to 90 minutes), place and the contribution expected from the research (Goldstein, 2002; Lilleker, 2003; Richards, 1996). The letter also informed potential respondents that they were going to be contacted by the researcher later in person to negotiate and decide the time schedule for the interview if possible.

The participant information sheet presented the name and the contact details of the researcher, the aims of the research, potential participants, principles of voluntary participation, information on the duration, the expected contribution of participants, the expected outcomes of the research, that the content will be recorded upon consent, that the content will be used both in the PhD thesis and in other publications and that the principles of confidentiality and anonymity will be stringently adhered to. Finally, the names and contact details of the PhD supervisors and the School of Sociology and Social Policy (SSSP) Ethics Officer were provided in case of the need for extra information or a complaint procedure. An introductory letter authored by the PhD supervisors was also sent in order to formally inform potential participants that the research was being conducted under the supervision of the SSSP authorities.

A total of fortytwo interviews were carried out between April and June 2013: Thirty-six interviews with managers and six interviews with planning specialists. Interviews with managers included undersecretary (1), deputy undersecretaries (4), directors-general (5), heads of departments (10), deputy directors-general (8), deputy heads of departments (1) and directors (7). A disguised list of the interviewees according to their departments is available in Appendix 1. Participants were interviewed only once in their offices with a request for 60 to 90 minutes which was not exceeded to keep their attention alive (Seidman, 2006). Accordingly, the interviews lasted around sixty minutes in average as in the case of the pilot interviews. The shortest interview took 33 minutes while the longest lasted 104 minutes.

All interviews, except one, were recorded upon informed consent of the participants. Notes were taken in this single instance. Recordings were carried out by means of a digital sound recorder. 'Thank you letters' were sent afterwards to all participants.

### **4.3. Data Analysis and Validity**

The data was sensitively systematised for a better quality of analysis (Seidman, 2006). Both the interview and documentary data was coded and analysed through Nvivo 10 qualitative data analysis software to enhance the reliability of coding. The content themes were drawn deductively from the two rival theories, as was the interview guide. Observed patterns in the data set were coded under relevant themes that were derived from the two theories. Data coding continued until the data set was organised in the order of themes, codes, sub-codes, sub-sub-codes. For a rigorous explanatory account and to strengthen the internal validity of findings the coded data was organised in the form of causal networks under the ‘models’ component of the Nvivo 10 software (Miles and Huberman, 1994). Developing causal maps helped the researcher, through visualisation, distil the data and ideas and firmly establish and clarify perceived causal links between different mechanisms and forces that were influential in the case. The causal networks, then, were translated into summary reports, which enabled the researcher to check the logical coherence and meaningfulness of the account. A pattern-matching technique (Yin, 2003) was employed to compare the case patterns against the patterns derived from the dimensions of the two rival theories. A tabulation technique was used where necessary in order to present qualitative and quantitative data that was gathered from interviews and documents in an organised way (Seidman, 2006; Silverman, 2010). For example, the results for the pattern-matching of the two theories are presented through tabulation at the end of Chapters 6 and 7. Compliance with these strict procedures underpinned the internal validity and reliability of the findings of the research (Mason, 2002). Addressing opponent explanations highly contributed to the same end (Patton, 2002; Yin, 2003). Construct validity is assured by a comprehensive review of the theoretical and empirical literature, including the previous interview guides and questionnaires.

### **4.4. The Researcher’s Role and Reflections**

It should be noted that this is primarily research on the MoI, not for the MoI. As the researcher is an employee (district governor) of the MoI this might have affected the research process. Being a member of the case organisation provided the researcher with easier access to potential informants as well as insider knowledge and experience. Particularly, possessing concrete and also tacit knowledge related to the functions, businesses, operations and practices of the MoI and of separate units, the internal culture within the Ministry and the

broader culture within the Turkish central and provincial government, the relation and tension between politics and bureaucracy, all gave an important advantage in understanding and interpreting the data gathered (Bryman, 2008). This privileged knowledge and experience, however, are also likely to influence the personal values of the researcher with a potential to undermine the objectivity of the research. The researcher has been aware of his position throughout the research and attempted to deal with his values and biases by taking his position into account in order to enhance the objectivity of the research. He has also been aware that personal values and biases are highly difficult to deal with in qualitative research and additional measures should be taken to tackle this issue. The strict measures discussed throughout this chapter, particularly in sections 4.1.2 and 4.3, are prioritised in order to reduce the risk of interference by personal values in the research process. To what extent this is achieved is up to the audience.

One of the potential problems identified includes the tendency of elites to control the interview process (Morris, 2009; Richards, 1996). This could very likely be the case for the researcher as the elites were his superiors in the hierarchical structure of the MoI. Fortunately this researcher did not experience considerable problems related to unbalanced power-relations in the interview settings. Apart from non-standardised questions, all participants were asked the standardised questions in the interview guide, so they have been treated equally. Secondly, by planning the interviews with senior managers at a later stage of the fieldwork (as long as their time schedules were available), the researcher had the opportunity to benefit from his interview experience with lower level managers.

# CHAPTER 5

## STRATEGIC PLANNING IN THE MOI: THE ACTUAL STRATEGY PRACTICE

“Caravan gets aligned on the way.”<sup>2</sup>

(Interview\_21\_manager)

This chapter describes and analyses the strategic management practice of MoI practitioners. It aims at presenting a complete and coherent account of the MoI case study by casting light on the dynamics of the extra and intra-organisational environment; the way strategic planning was perceived by the MoI managers and planners; the way it was put into practice; analytical and social practices, actions, reactions, tensions and other types of interaction that occurred within this process. The account is told from an integrative perspective that joined the views of the managers and planners as key practitioners, in light of the documentary data. It unfolds in congruence with the chronological order of the MoI’s practice. Narratives of the actors are given place within the sections particularly to provide a better understanding of the MoI’s cultural paradigm. To this aim, the chapter is structured in four main sections as follows:

- 1) Socio-Political, Environmental and organisational context,
- 2) Stages of strategic planning,
- 3) Implementation, monitoring, evaluation and feedback,
- 4) Conclusion.

The conclusion section presents a summary of findings. The findings from this and the following two empirical chapters are discussed at length in Chapter 8 in comparison with the success and failure criteria developed in Chapter 3 in Table 3.1. The discussion starts with an

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<sup>2</sup> Translation of the Turkish idiom ‘*Kervan Yolda Düzülür*’ that is used to indicate a working culture which is inclined to ‘planning while doing’ vis-a-vis ‘planning in advance of doing’.

outline of the outer and inner context of the MoI on the eve of its first strategic planning journey.

## **5.1. The Socio-Political, Environmental and Organisational Contexts**

### **5.1.1. The Socio-Political Context**

In this section, two determinative socio-political characteristics of Turkish State are discussed from the perspective of their influence on public sector reforms. The first characteristic of the Turkish public administration and politics has been the dichotomy and tension between the state (i.e. the bureaucratic machinery as defined in the Turkish Constitution) and elected governments. Different from the ‘public interest’ model of the Anglo-Saxon world, the Turkish system has shown the characteristics of the *rechtsstaat* administration model (Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2011, p. 62), in which the dichotomy is explicit. A continuous power conflict between the elected governments and the highly centralised, bureaucratic and secular state have characterised the nature of state-government relations. The congruence between the two, for most times, has been delicate since they have been “hostile adversaries” (Heper, 2005, p.215). Equipped with wide veto powers (Sakallioglu, 1997), the Armed Forces, the National Security Council, the Constitutional Court and other high courts and institutions acted as the guardians of the secular state (Heper and Keyman, 1998; Sozen and Shaw, 2002), the principles of which were defined by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk in the establishment of the Turkish Republic in 1923 (Heper and Guney, 2005; Sakallioglu, 1997). The influence of the state institutions is amplified by the patrimonial patterns in Turkish traditions and by the lack of a developed middle class in Turkish society (Sozen, 2012; Sozen and Shaw, 2002).

Hence, the success of the administrative reforms in Turkey greatly depended on the stance and attitude of the state institutions against reforms (Sozen and Shaw, 2002, p.480). The governments have *de facto* been given little discretion with regard to change and reform in the main state apparatus, and the core of the bureaucracy itself was designed as an immune structure against significant government interventions. Under these circumstances, it has been frequent practice by governments to bestow exemptions on these historically “privileged” (Heper and Guney, 2005, p.636) and autonomous agencies (Sakallioglu, 1997) in numerous laws that intended to transform the public sector. The governments that have challenged the system have been toppled by the main guardian of the system, the military, by coup d’états in

1960, 1971, 1980 and a ‘postmodern’ coup in 1997 (Özel, 2003; Kalaycioglu, 2001) respectively or by the constitutional court through banning political parties, such as in the case of the Welfare Party in 1998. The ruling Justice and Development Party avoided a ban by the constitutional court in 2009 marking the start of a shift in the balance of powers in Turkish internal politics (Öniş, 2015). As a consequence of a series of police operations against top ranking officers of the Turkish military between 2008 and 2012 with claims of illegal inner-state operations, the once most powerful actor of Turkish politics and the guardian of the regime, the military, evidently stepped back from the political arena (Aydinli, 2011). The elected government appeared as the most powerful actor of public policymaking with over a decade of one-party rule and with a clear majority in the Turkish Parliament. Ironically, this also marked a significant turn in the approach of the government towards reforms including the strategic planning initiative of the year 2003. Previously, reforms were seen by the government as means of demilitarising Turkish politics and undermining the established political order; and the relations with and external pressure from particularly the EU, as well as the IMF and the World Bank, were used by the government as rationales against the *status quo* and anchors for the legislation and enforcement of the reforms. Once the military receded and the elected government “secure[d] control over all levers of the Turkish state” (Armstrong, 2014), public sector reforms showed a tendency of slow down and even retreat (Öniş, 2015) as will be exemplified in Chapters 6 and 7.

The role of the military in politics is of particular interest to the MoI within the context of strategic planning initiative, since it has two semi-military subsidiaries, the General Command of Gendarmerie and the Coastal Guard Command, for law enforcement and security. Parallel to the shift in the balance of powers throughout the 2000s, the hierarchical controls of the Minister of Interior on the semi-military agencies were largely increased at the detriment of their autonomy. Started by the legislation of PFMCL in 2003 and ended by the fourth year of strategic plan implementation in 2014, the first strategic planning process of the MoI was greatly influenced by these developments in the external and internal environments and unfolded with ups and downs.

Another important characteristic of the Turkish politics and public administration that is strictly associated with the fate of public sector reforms is the prevalence and validity of patrimonialism, clientelism and political patronage (Sozen and Shaw, 2003), which also embraces the elements of “nepotism”, “favouritism” and factionalism (Kalaycioglu, 2001, p.63). As widely argued, democracy is seen by the political elites in Turkey as a means for

better access to public resources (Heyer and Keyman, 1998; Kalaycioglu, 2001; Sozen and Shaw, 2002). For example, appointments to senior bureaucratic posts are made through political patronage, patrimonialism and loyalty rather than by means of a merit-based system. By doing so, the ruling elites not only ensure that the incumbents of bureaucratic posts are the supporters of the same party or ideology, members of the same family, clan or religious group, they also invest in securing forthcoming elections. Hence, any reform attempt that challenges this order is perceived by these actors as a threat to their continuity in power. Stressing this trait of the Turkish system, Sozen and Shaw argue:

“Clientism and party patronage ... are the fundamental characteristics of the Turkish political system. The nature of party politics requires transferring state sources to their supporters through clientistic relations and network politics. For political parties patron-client relations with electorates are an important factor in determining electoral victory. As a consequence any reform programmes which pose a threat to politicians’ control over patronage are highly resisted ...” (2002, p.481)

Such a tendency in the Turkish politics and public administration has been an important barrier before the success of public sector reforms that aimed building a rational bureaucracy and a responsive public administration, leaving a big gap between the formality and the reality of the reforms (Sozen and Shaw, 2003). To what extent this has been the case for the strategic planning initiative of the MoI is addressed throughout the remaining chapters.

### **5.1.2. The Environmental Context**

As hinted in the previous section, the environment of the MoI has been a highly complex, extremely dynamic and in many respects uncertain from the early 2000s to date, according to MoI managers. This has been a process marked by numerous reforms and transformation both in the state apparatus and in the wider society in Turkey (Interview\_30, \_former\_manager; Interview\_34, manager), during which the MoI was at the centre of the changes (Interview\_29\_manager). At the same time, it has been an era in which various trends such as civilisation, democratisation and human rights, localisation, governance, transparency and accountability dominated the public realm. Likewise, the explosions in technological development, globalisation and transition to the information society have been influential on Turkish public administration, particularly through Europeanisation, which was accelerated by the EU accession negotiations that started in 2004. As an example, one-third of the Turkish Constitution, a product of the 1980 military coup, changed during this period

in order to meet the EU's Copenhagen Criteria (UfPOS, 2013). The MoI Managers mostly perceived the period accordingly:

“The steps that Turkey took in order to meet the Copenhagen Criteria; the reforms that were realised with regard to democratisation and in the structural sense; [and] the successive constitutional changes enabled [Turkey] to force [all] those things into a couple of years, which took the European Countries decades to realise.” (Interview\_12\_manager)

The impact of the dynamic environment varied in respect to the interaction and tension between the surrounding trends and specific service domains. Those tendencies and developments that have had the most impact on the MoI are examined in more detail next.

### **5.1.2.1. Localisation**

The period from 2002 to date has been one in which a growing localisation trend has emerged and gained pace in Turkey, though with ups and downs. This trend included the replacement of classic tutelary powers of the central state, which were exercised by the MoI's prefects, with regulatory powers and the gradual delegation of some powers and services to local authorities that had been used and delivered by the provincial branches of the central state. The MoI has been more the subject of the reforms, rather than the driver, being at the receiving end of continuous high pressure to change. The local authority's reform process also unfolded unexpectedly and in an unplanned manner, as perceived by the MoI management, as the reform agenda had not been fully proclaimed in advance by the government (Interview\_12\_manager). For example, the government decided to abolish Special Provincial Administrations<sup>3</sup> in 2012, which it had devolved more autonomy and given more financial resources to only in 2005. Even the replacement of appointed prefects by elected governors was widely spoken about within this period, although it was not officially declared as a governmental policy (Berkan, 2013). Localisation precipitated a total re-organisation of the state and social relations in Turkey in that period (Apan, 2011). The trend has been so dynamic and powerful that it led the majority of the MoI management to perceive a serious threat to the existence of the prefectural class, which was the backbone of the MoI bureaucracy and of the central state apparatus (Interview\_3; Interview\_12; Interview\_17\_managers). A typical expression reflecting the concerns of the management cadre was as follows:

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<sup>3</sup> Special Provincial Administrations are the local authorities for the rural areas that are outside the physical borders of municipalities.

“Localisation is influential; ... today [there is] ... a serious change, grave transformation ... I am of the opinion that this surely affects the goals, targets, [and] activities of the Ministry ... Certainly, I have serious worries regarding the extent to which a strategic planning whose goals, targets, and consequently, activities are intervened, can be the one contemplated at the outset ... Because agreement between the targets you set and the ones you realised can occur only in stable environments.” (Interview\_6\_manager)

Hence, the period from the 2000s to date is marked by contrast and conflict between the governmental and bureaucratic goals with regards to the centre-local relations. The strong one-party government has not left room or opportunity for the MoI bureaucracy to balance or resist the changes, as it was able to manage during coalition governments previously (Interview\_15\_manager).

It is important then to view the Strategic Goal 1, that is reinforcement of the prefectural system and Goal 4, which is empowerment and accountability of the local authorities (MoI, 2009c), in the light of the tension caused by the localisation trend.

### **5.1.2.2. Democratisation and Civilisation**

The main mandate of the MoI is perceived by both its internal and external stakeholders as security and public order. This is a perception built upon a practice and experience going back decades, in an insecure domestic environment marked by internal turmoil, *coup d'états*, martial law and states of emergency, the last instance of which in the south-eastern region of the country was abolished by the Justice and Development Party government in 2002 (UfPOS, 2013). The period between 2002 and 2010 was a distinctive one for Turkey, which marked a change from an authoritative state towards a more democratic one that emulated the standards of EU societies. Numerous reforms, such as abolishment of capital punishment and right to freedom of information, were put into place in less than a decade (UfPOS, 2013).

Parallel to these developments, a tendency towards democratisation within the MoI was apparent (Interview\_15\_manager), which transpired, and continues to do so, as a transfer of services traditionally delivered by security agencies to the newly established or existing civil departments. Such service areas included NGO or association services, migration and asylum services, record-keeping of political parties and labour unions, and passport issuance from 2015. While the localisation agenda repressed bureaucracy and even started debates over the existence of the MoI, the civilisation process opened up new horizons for civil bureaucracy as the example of the recent establishment of the new General Directorate for Migration Management in 2013 demonstrates.

### **5.1.2.3. Governance, Transparency and Accountability**

The period was also one in which governance, participation, transparency and accountability of the public sector became an unusually dominant theme. It was officially announced by the Prime Minister's Office in the well-known 'Change in Management' report that:

“The reorganisation of the public administration was built upon the advancement of effectiveness and participation.” (Dincer and Yılmaz, 2003, p. 12)

The reforms emphasised transparency and accountability of the public administration and indicated governance as a target, which favoured networks and partnerships between multiple actors and interaction in defining and addressing social problems (Dincer and Yılmaz, 2003). The MoI had an active role in the realisation of the intended changes, for example by funding projects within NGOs. The democratisation trend along with the emphasis on governance in reforms encouraged service users to demand better services and to hold public services and organisations to account (Interview\_42; Interview\_3\_managers). Although the reflections of change within Turkish society were limited when compared to the EU, it was still visible and enough to put some pressure on public organisations for better quality services, as perceived by the MoI managers. The comments of a manager were:

“For instance, while you could tell [in the past] a citizen, who applied for a registration service, to wait for fifteen days ... he could wait for twenty days [maybe] ... But now, a citizen who waits three minutes, starts grumbling in the fourth minute saying; ‘What’s happening?’” (Interview\_23\_manager).

The increasing pressure from service users for better quality services was recognised by the internal stakeholders during the SWOT analysis study (MoI, 2009c). By the legal mandate of the PFMCL 2003, the strategic management reform compelled transparency and accountability of public organisations and services through performance reporting to Parliament, to the Court of Accounts (CA) and by publicising details on the internet and other channels.

### **5.1.2.4. Technological Revolution**

Another important trend was the global technological revolution. The Turkish Government acted willingly to adapt to recent developments in computer and internet technology, particularly to the growing trend of e-government, in order to enhance administrative processes, service production, delivery and information sharing (Interview\_7, manager).

Starting from the early 2000s, the Turkish Government initiated internet and computer-based projects such as MERNIS (Turkish Central Registry System), in which the MoI played an important role (Interview\_31\_former\_manager). Hence, the strategic planning period overlapped with a period in which the MoI bureaucracy had already initiated a transformation from paper to digital communication through electronic networks, service delivery through e-government tools, call centres, electronic signature and electronic payment (MoI, 2010a). While the computerisation process brought new opportunities in service production and delivery, it also introduced new challenges for and demands from the MoI management and staff to develop new skills and to enhance management capacity to better adapt to this new technology-laden work place environment, service delivery and data security (MoI, 2009c). The MoI's efforts to adapt to the technology manifested itself clearly in its first strategic plan in the form of a distinct strategic goal (MoI, 2009c).

### 5.1.2.5. Resources

Unlike Western cases, strategic planning came into the agenda of the MoI at a time when there was considerable resource abundance in the MoI, as in the whole Turkish public sector. That was the positive result of structural reforms, new economic development policies, and the unusual stability in government through one-party rule for almost a decade. Table 5.1 presents the MoI's six-year period budgetary figures from preparation for strategic planning to the fourth year of plan implementation.

**Table 5.1 The MoI's Budgetary Spending (2008-2013)**

Units in GBP (£)\*

Planning Preparation			Plan Implementation			
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Realised Budget Spending	716,548,152	883,654,864	1,361,911,364	1,064,833,245	1,201,048,450	1,418,114,382
Increase in Spending (%)		23	54	-22	13	18

\* Figures converted from Turkish Lira to GBP by referring to the exchange rates of the Turkish Central Bank in the respective reference years.

Source: (MoI, 2009c, 2011, 2012, 2013a, 2014a)

Table 5.1 reveals a great increase in the MoI's corporate budget throughout the researched period. Specifically, there was a budgetary upsurge by 54 percent in 2010 in the first year of

plan implementation. Although there was a decrease of 22 percent in spending in 2011 compared to the previous year, the spending was still well over the 2008 and 2009 budgetary figures. The budget increase continued through 2012 and 2013 by 13 and 18 percent respectively. The data indicates a 60 percent increase in revenues from 2009 to 2013 and 98 per cent increase when 2008 is taken as the reference year, which means that the MoI revenues almost doubled in the five year-period during the preparation and implementation stages. From a theoretical point of view, this substantial amelioration in financial conditions built a munificent environment for the strategic planning process of the MoI. Whether the availability of finances led to a better strategic planning practice is the topic of discussion for forthcoming sections.

### **5.1.3. Internal Environment**

#### **5.1.3.1. Organisational View**

The MoI is a bureaucratic organisation and its bureaucratic character has been exceptionally reinforced by the intrinsic dynamics of the security and law enforcement service domain. Likewise, the prefectural system has traditionally been steeped in bureaucratic practices and ascribes a distinctive place to MoI bureaucracy within the structure of the state (Interview\_6\_manager). The provision of a wide range of public services and the position of the prefects as co-ordinators of the central services, such as civil registration, security and education, in provinces and districts has led to the MoI being conceived internally as “an organisation that serves public from cradle to grave” (MoI, 2009c, p. 60).

The governors and sub-governors as prefects are representatives of each minister at the provincial level. The MoI is perceived by the majority of its management as identical with the state bureaucracy and as a ministry “that has the most deep-rooted mechanism in the state administration” (Interview\_11\_manager). This was concisely expressed by a former Minister of Interior in what has now become a cliché among the MoI management:

“One half of Turkey is administered by the Ministry of Interior and the other half is by the remaining ministries.” (Interview\_1\_manager)

Having a history of over 150 years, the MoI is viewed by its internal stakeholders as having an established and strong organisational tradition and culture, which is mostly expressed through the practice of a strict hierarchy and state protocol. The MoI is viewed by its

management as a pioneering organisation within the public sector (MoI, 2009c). There have been some practices that empirically support this perception, such as the recent successful cross-cutting e-government projects conducted by the MoI, which were also assessed as a strength of the organisation during strategic planning (MoI, 2009c).

However, a powerful conservatism and strong traditionalism also exist within the MoI, which has various consequences. For example, conservatism leads to *status quo* bias, which then functions as a resistance mechanism against change in the MoI (Interview\_16\_manager). At the same time it can lead to the re-emergence of traditional values and principles, such as human- or citizen-oriented service (Dincer and Yılmaz, 2003) that has been dominant in the Turkish State tradition. This finds expression in the maxim; “Let man flourish so that the State can flourish.”<sup>4</sup> Human-oriented management or service delivery, which is deployed as a counterweight to the concept of ‘customer-oriented service’, prevalent in Western public services, has once more gained salience as a valued principle in the management paradigm of the MoI in the recent decade (MoI, 2009c).

The prefectural class, which constitutes the majority of the MoI managers, is inclined to focus on day-to-day management due to their provincial administration experience, in which crisis management and problem solving has priority (e.g. Interview\_39; Interview\_16\_managers). This characteristic of the MoI bureaucracy was expressed by a planner saying; “The urgent issues always have priority over the important issues in bureaucracy.” (Interview\_28\_planner) It rendered the MoI management more inclined to favour flexible ways of management over long-term and plan-based management (Interview\_39, former\_manager).

### **5.1.3.2. Awareness of Need for Change**

Internal dynamics for change to effect a more efficient organisation have always existed within the MoI, though marginal and concentrated more at the lower levels of management (Interview\_42; Interview\_39\_managers). The management of the MOI was aware in the early 2000s that its bureaucratic structure inhibited the development of creative strategies to address established and long-lasting problems such as separatist terrorism. A Strategy Centre was established *ad hoc* in the year 2000 as a think-tank unit with the support and approval of

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<sup>4</sup> This is a translation of a Turkish maxim that is used to indicate that the well-being of each individual living in a country is a condition of the prosperity and future of the whole country.

the then Minister of Interior, to fill the strategy content gap, rather than initiate a strategy process, and to meet the demand for creative strategies in the field of home affairs. A manager summarised the unit's role as:

“It was a unit which was producing know-how, related to the strategies that were to be, or should be, pursued by the Ministry ... for the execution of the domestic policy” (Interview\_27\_former\_manager).

The establishment of the Centre was remarkable at a time when the term strategy was only used and institutionalised in the military and foreign policy context in Turkey. The Centre was working in close contact with academia, civil society and the private sector. Research was conducted by specialists employed by the academics through contracting-out or through joint ventures. Most R&D activities involved extensive fieldwork, brainstorming and roundtable meetings, briefings and visits to other countries. For example, the Centre's officials visited the UK Home Office and Northern Ireland Institutions several times in the early 2000s to learn from their experience in handling the IRA problem, particularly non-security measures, in order to develop strategies to settle the separatist terrorism in Southeast Turkey (Interview\_27\_former\_manager). The Centre had a relatively free and flexible space to manoeuvre; could act outside bureaucratic constraints; reported directly to the undersecretary and the Minister; and therefore could generate strategies that were significantly innovative compared to the prevalent policies of the MoI in the early 2000s. It developed strategies in areas such as combatting terrorism through non-security policies; enhancement of the administrative performance (for example performance-based appraisal system, transparency of services, and prefectural system), social policy (for example migration, children and women's rights) and alike (CfRS, 2014a). Just after five years of being established, the Centre's name was changed to The Centre for Research and Studies (CfRS) after an Amendment (2005) in the PFMCL 2003, which enforced the establishment of the SDUs in public organisations. Most strategies developed by the Centre could not be put into action in those years as they challenged the *status quo* in the MoI as well as the country (Interview\_27\_former\_manager). For example, the counter-terrorism strategy developed by the Centre suggested radical policy changes in the traditional counter-terrorism approach, such as widening the cultural rights of Kurds and empowering local authorities, political risks of which could not be undertaken by the Government at the time.

The MoI management faced the challenge of applying strategic planning under these conditions. The discussion now turns to the actual practice of strategic planning in the MoI.

## 5.2. Strategic Planning in Action

Strategic planning did not start as a bottom-up movement within the MoI (Interview\_6\_manager) but rather it entered into the agenda simultaneously with other public sector organisations upon the enforcement of the PFMCL in December 2003. The preliminary work for the first MoI strategic plan was set out after three years in 2006 by the creation of the SDUs in public departments and agencies by the Amendment to the PFMCL 2005. This policy move aimed at forming specialised corporate units in public bodies that could overcome the technical hardships and challenges of formal strategic planning, which was “totally unknown to the MoI and to the whole Turkish Public Administration” (Interview\_2\_manager) at the outset of reform efforts. The MoI established its own SDU in early 2006. The SDU undertook the creation of the Strategic Planning Study and Co-ordination Group, which is called ‘the planning team’ in short for the sake of this research. Consisting of urban planners and financial service specialists and led by a director who was an associate professor, the planning team was responsible for carrying out the strategic planning process on behalf of the undersecretary, who was accountable to the Minister for strategic planning. The head of the SDU supported the team leader and the team, rather than leading the team himself. The team consisted of two groups, due to the structure of the SDU, which originated from the Strategic Planning Department and the Department for Performance and Budgeting. While the former department was responsible for the overall strategic planning process, the latter was specifically assigned to work on performance indicators, costing, and performance budgeting. The preparation stage of the plan lasted three years and developed in six progressive stages:

- Organisation and restructuring for planning,
- Situation analysis,
- Development and identification of vision, mission, and basic values,
- Specification of goals, objectives, strategies and assignment of performance indicators,
- Costing,
- Budgeting.

These stages were followed by implementation, which started in January 2010 and went on until the end of December 2014. The planning process commenced with the formation of a three-level participative decision-making pyramid.

### 5.2.1. Organisation and Re-structuring

The establishment of the SDU was a governmental response to the structural requirements for a proper strategic planning process. Although the MoI's SDU appeared to be a brand new unit, it inherited staff from the Research, Planning and Co-ordination Unit (RPCU) which had been abolished concurrently with the creation of the SDU. The abolished RPCU was legally responsible for the preparation of five-year plans for the MoI that had to cohere with the five-year cross-governmental development plan. However, the planning referred to in the RPCU's mandate was neither rational nor long range planning nor had it any professional staff with technical expertise in planning. Therefore, the emergence of the SDU was more a change in the terminology rather than the inception of something new. This was perceived by managers and planners (e.g. Interview\_28\_planner) as a significant obstacle to strategic planning. A manager's comment was:

“[The law] abolished the RPCU [and] established the Strategy [Development Unit], I mean [so called] from scratch. But only the nameplates changed in practice. So, the head of the RPCU became the head of SDU. And the name of the things that they were doing as RPCU was changed to strategy. So, nothing changed much in practice.”  
(Interview\_27\_former\_manager)

The SDU did not join with or follow the direction of the Strategy Centre, that had the function of developing strategy content, but borrowed the word 'strategy' from its title instead (CfRS, 2014a). The former Strategy Centre was turned into the Centre for Research and Studies and discontinued its strategy development activities by the end of 2006 and became redundant, leaving that function to the SDU as a requirement of the formal PFMCL framework.

Although the MoI was, to some extent, familiar with the concept of 'strategy', it did not have any experience in applying it to planning. Thus, at the outset, according to the managers and planners, the concept of strategic planning and related concepts such as vision, mission and performance were totally new to the SDU staff, including the planners, the MoI management and even the Ministry of Finance (MoF) and the SPO that is responsible for guidance and supervision of the planning activities of all public organisations. Neither were there equivalent words for these concepts in the Turkish language. The wording of the PFMCL 2003 received intensive critique for being a direct and poor translation of the Anglo-Saxon models rather than interpretation and adaptation of them. The equivalent words for strategy, vision, mission and performance in Turkish were 'strateji', 'vizyon', 'misyon', and

'performans' respectively, which were almost identical with the original words in English. Two managers commented on the challenge this posed to comprehension:

"For instance, yes, something [looks like] reading in Turkish; but you are trying to figure out what it says!" (Interview\_31\_former\_manager)

"You are using the concepts of a different culture and you use these concepts as they are ... there will be, and even are, problems with the comprehension and implementation of such a system based conceptually on translation." (Interview\_17\_manager)

There was nothing more than a statutory adoption among the MoI management and the staff in general at the beginning, particularly among the managers of an older generation, based on legal obligation rather than deep insight and willingness. The older generation of managers were apparently dominating the process; however, the managers' views still revealed some variation. For example, the younger managers, a few of whom were also working as department heads, were more aware of the need and eager for change:

"Young bureaucrats in the Ministry are open for these changes. No hesitation on this! Young bureaucrats; these were people most of whom were educated abroad, went [abroad] for language [courses], for master [studies]" (Interview\_30\_former\_manager).

Adoption levels among these young managers were higher than in any other group and they contributed most to the discussions during workshops and brainstorming meetings. Yet, the uncertainty-related concerns stemming from lack of previous experience was prevalent within the organisation. "It was merely fulfilment of a given task since there was not an established culture," reflected a manager (Interview\_39\_former\_manager). Some managers and staff members with negative views voiced their concerns about the incompatibility of strategic planning with the MoI's mandate. They were thinking out loud:

"What can you measure in the social [field] and how? This is a real challenge ..." (Interview\_2\_manager).

In addition, perception of an expected increase in workload and responsibility was leading to unease within the departments. There was resistance, symbolically directed at the SDU, voiced as: "You are bringing in an extra enforced labour!" (Interview\_28\_planner). This view mostly stemmed from the perception of strategic planning as merely extra and excessive documentation of the business-as-usual.

There was also a feeling of curiosity among the staff and within the planning team about how the process would develop and what the outcomes would be. From the planners' perspective,

strategic planning was not considered by the management at that time as a means for strategic change in the MoI (Interview\_36\_planner). Despite low adoption levels, the management was seeking ways to prepare a technically good plan. The technical aspect of the preparation of the plan, on the other hand, was perceived by the management to primarily be the duty of the SDU. Although there was an understanding that there was ‘a formal task to be done’, the management were also trying to explore, at least to some extent, how strategic planning could add to their operations (Interview\_3). A manager’s comments evidenced this:

“But while this was being made ... a mentality of ‘How can we benefit from this? How can this contribute to us?’ was coming to the front, as well.” (Interview\_39,\_former\_manager)

The mood of the management was “cautious optimism” as described by a manager (Interview\_34\_manager).

In these circumstances, with an aim to develop a common language and adoption of strategic planning in the broader public administration, the SDU (MoI) representatives suggested the organisation of a ‘training the trainees’ programme in a four-way meeting also attended by the MoF, the SPO and representatives of the Prime Minister (Interview\_28\_planner). The suggestion could not be put into practice since the SPO and the MoF, as co-ordinator organisations, did not adopt the idea. Neither of these bodies appreciated the importance of mental preparedness for good quality strategic planning process (Interview\_28\_planner). Public bodies had to pursue laws, by-laws and the SP Guide 2006 provided for them to navigate through the processes.

Under these circumstances, in an effort to fill a knowledge gap in the MoI, the SDU published a literature review based booklet in early 2006 titled ‘Strategic Planning in the Public Sector’. The booklet included shorthand definitions and explanations of strategic planning related concepts and the rationale for its application in the public sector. The SDU later developed the booklet, turning it into a book, this time titled ‘Strategic Management’ publishing 1500 copies at once to dispatch to other public organisations along with the MoI departments (Aşgin, 2008). The book did not only benefit the MoI departments but also the line ministries and agencies which were desperate for such kind of source, as reflected by the planners.

Despite lacking skills, expertise and experience in planning, the SDU was cognizant of the need for adoption and participation for success according to a member of the planning team:

“We took the mental and intellectual preparation process very seriously. Because I saw it; if you take it like getting rid of a legal obligation you can’t make that much progress. The Ministry of Interior is an established institution with strong traditions. There, you have to make that mental preparation in order to introduce something new.” (Interview\_28\_planner)

To facilitate insight and adoption, they held training seminars for the management and the staff (Interview\_33\_planner). The strategic planning booklet and the book produced by the SDU were used as the main reference sources during training activities. The planning team organised several preparative and training seminars and meetings for the staff members between 2006 and 2009 (SDU, 2006b). The training seminars were held as short daily activities that covered a wide group of participants from the undersecretary at the top, to the line managers at the bottom. According to the perceptions of planners, these activities translated into a positive difference in the adoption levels of the management within months (Interview\_28\_planner). However, the perceptions varied among the recipients regarding the extent of their impact. A manager commented on training activities with reference to the SWOT analysis study:

“Unfortunately ... this puts forth the reality of an attempt to plan with people ... who were not trained well. In that period, maybe there occurred [training activities] attended by a few friends including myself; but not everyone came [for planning] as formerly trained; [and] I think that it couldn’t be a training of [good] kind only through [a few] conferences.” (Interview\_42\_manager)

The SDU was leading the process in line with the SP Guide 2006, which was the rule of thumb for strategic planning in the Turkish public sector. The guide was stipulating the establishment of a planning committee in order to carry forward the strategic planning process through the support of a co-ordinator unit, which was the SDU by default in all public bodies. However, the SDU did not find this mechanism adequate in raising awareness and providing participation across the large organisation. The SDU formed a three-level planning and decision-making structure, a decision pyramid, aimed at ensuring awareness, adoption and participation in strategic planning at all levels from very bottom to the very top. The three levels of the decision-pyramid formed in April 2006 were (SDU, 2006b):

- Strategic Plan Study Groups (level 1): It consisted of 15 committees with the inclusion of three members of staff at different levels from 15 different units. Formation of these groups aimed at widening participation and buy-in in the process.
- Strategic Plan Executive Group (level 2): The members of this group were deputy heads and it was organised to prepare proposals and to fill in the potential gap

caused by disruptions in the strategy development board's meetings, for example due to time limitation.

- Strategy Development Board (SDB) (level 3): The highest level of decision-making in the process consisted of the undersecretary, his deputies and the head of units.

Particularly the SDB was of extreme significance for the strategic planning process. The MoI was a gigantic bureaucratic entity consisting of a number of different units with different functions and it was impossible to carry out planning activities smoothly without the approval and command and control of the top management, particularly of the undersecretary. It was challenging for the team to get full attendance from the undersecretary and the unit heads in planning meetings at a time when awareness of and support for the process was low (Interview\_28\_planner). But thanks to an existing legally binding tradition of the MoI, the unit heads were meeting on a weekly basis in the Ministerial Committee to discuss and resolve significant issues in their agenda. The team took advantage of this existing body, which facilitated decision-making during planning.

The decision system was operating in the following way: at the first level based on demand from the SDU, separate units were producing unit-specific data under the co-ordination of the study groups that existed in every unit. The study groups were coming together in meetings for the discussion of issues in a participative way. "Several meetings were held with the working groups ..." (Interview\_41\_planner) within this context as reflected by a planner. At the second level, massive data was compiled and refined by the planning team and submitted to the Strategic Plan Executive Group for discussion and preparation of proposals. In the third and last level, the proposals shaped by the executive group were discussed by SDB members and articulated into decisions. Although the formal decision route was designed with the intention of promoting participative decision-making, effects of hierarchical decision-making were dominant along the upper levels, particularly at the SDB meetings. Discussions at the highest level took place within the remit of 'bureaucratic courtesy' (Interview\_28\_planner).

In addition to the formal framework of decision-making, there was a form of internal diplomacy that expected the existence of and exploitation of strong personal links and effective communication skills. Having the full backing and sponsorship of the SDU head, the team leader kept close contact with the undersecretary at all stages to justify strategic planning and gain the undersecretary's support and sponsorship for more participation in the process, and most critically, to filter the team's suggestions into top management directives. But the team could not rely solely on directives, which would contradict the aims of

voluntary participation (Interview\_28\_planner). The process was conducted with diplomacy through informing, explaining and persuading department heads to reflect the rationale of strategic planning and to ensure the adoption and ownership of strategies emerging from lower levels. Through the use of informal diplomacy, decisions, particularly ones that could not be settled within the board meetings, were passed on to the undersecretary and to the department heads through the formal decision-making channels, so as to facilitate definite outcomes. One manager's views were:

“If an ambience of agreement can't be provided there, I guess the issues are settled between the undersecretary and the head of the SDU. This is not strange; I mean this is ingrained as a method and acknowledged within the culture and traditions of our ministry.” (Interview\_39\_former\_manager).

At a time when top management had considerably limited knowledge of strategic planning and under the prevalence of strict hierarchy, it was sometimes extremely challenging for the team to accept their decisions on issues that they did not have technical expertise in. In one notable instance, it was argued by a member of the Strategy Development Board that a link between the strategic plan and the budget was not a requirement for effective strategic planning and management. Diplomacy on most occasions helped the team to settle problems of this and other kinds, though explication and persuasion sometimes required inordinate amounts of effort and time (Interview\_28\_planner).

The SDU inherited the staff of the abolished RPCU many of whom had not acquired planning expertise and technical knowledge of its processes. This compelled the SDU managers to search for possible solutions. The SDU, first, transferred planners and financial service specialists from other central departments and provincial branches of the MoI to strengthen the planning team. Second, they contracted out consultancy services to another public organisation, the National Productivity Centre (NPC). From the very beginning of the process, the NPC specialists supported and even carried out the process at all levels including the moderation of the meetings, conducting and analysing questionnaires. However, as reflected by some managers, even the expertise of the NPC specialists did not suffice to enlighten the MoI staff as to the meaning of basic concepts, the importance of strategic planning and in what way it would make difference. A manager commented as:

“The basic problem was that ... I mean how many people [or] bureaucrats were mentally and theoretically ready for this? That technical knowledge was lacking; neither was it given widely; that [technical] knowledge was given to limited individuals at a certain level. And what is the ultimate aim of strategic planning in reality? How shall it contribute to us; to the

public bureaucracy; to our services; to public administration? A substantive training was not given on this matter. We can talk about a deficiency of information there.”  
(Interview\_30\_former\_manager)

Meanwhile, despite the exemption from strategic planning given to the Gendarmerie and the Coastal Guard Command by the PFMCL 2003, the MoI management insisted on the participation of and contribution from these two agencies to the corporate strategic planning process. With this aim in mind, at the very beginning of the process, to gain the support of the top management, the SDU made an official call to the two agencies, as well as to the National Police, to participate in the planning activities for the co-ordination of strategies related to law enforcement and security duties and functions (SDU, 2006c).

In the first six months of the groundwork between August and November 2006, the planning team finished a Preliminary Programme (2006) which defined the works, deadlines, actors, and their roles in planning and sent it to the SPO to meet the legal requirements of the by-law on the Methods and Principles of Strategic Planning in Public Organisations 2006 (hereinafter MPSPPPO By-law 2006). Having the organisational structure established, a road map for the process defined and other formalities completed, the planning team was ready to move forward to the situation analysis stage. A noteworthy feature of the planning process, as perceived by the managers, was that it was progressing in a strictly formal way. The planning team was seeking to abide by regulations, particularly the SP Guide 2006, in all activities they were carrying out (Interview\_2; Interview\_28, planners).

As the organisation and structuring was completed, it was time for the SDU and the planning team to pass on to the second stage, situation analysis, which was designed to produce comprehensive data relating to the internal and external environment of the MoI, upon which the strategies would be built.

### **5.2.2. Situation Analysis**

The planning team regarded the whole situation analysis study as an attempt to respond to the question of ‘where does the MOI stand within its milieu?’ (MoI, 2009c, p. 17). This was a four-stage study that aimed at clarifying and linking the internal dynamics of the MoI with the developments and trends in its external environment. It was also a stage that was anticipated to produce adequate data to help and guide the selection and formulation of organisational goals and strategies. It included internal structural analysis, environmental analysis, stakeholder analysis and SWOT analysis phases. The internal and external analyses

studies were carried out by the respective departments of the MoI. The planning team gathered separate reports from the departments and sought and analysed extra data if they detected any gap in the reports. The stakeholder and SWOT analyses, however, were orchestrated by the planning team on a participatory basis with the support of the NPC consultants.

Internal analysis included the investigation and clarification of the legal mandate and human, financial and physical resources of the MoI. Starting from December 2006, each unit analysed their mandate and duties vis-à-vis the legal framework that they were acting upon, ongoing projects and service provision, human, physical, technological resources and service infrastructure (MoI, 2009c). This study was expected to feed into the SWOT analysis stage and act as a basis for strategies to be formulated. The reports included detailed statistical data regarding the qualification of the staff, such as academic degrees, foreign language qualifications, computer skills and the numbers and the detailed features of the MoI's ICT infrastructure.

As with the internal analysis studies, the environmental analysis report was produced upon the evaluations of separate departments of their respective service fields. This stage required an outward focus and necessitated an effort to understand the present and anticipated developments, tendencies, changes, opportunities and threats in the surroundings both domestic and international (MoI, 2009c). Within this stage, the departments reviewed reports, strategy documents, legislation, practices of other organisations, such as the EU, OECD and the EC, as well as countries, and similar data sources relating to the scope of the MoI. This included developments in local governments in Turkey, in Europe and the rest of the world; civil society organisations in Turkey and in the rest of the world; the nature and impact of the EU justice and home affairs policy on Turkey; public financial management and e-government (SDU, 2007a). The cross-governmental strategy documents such as Information Society Strategy Action Plan (2006-2010), the Ninth Development Plan (2007-2013), Mid-term Plan, and Annual Programme were scrutinised so as to be incorporated within the strategic planning process in this stage. The planning team consolidated the departmental reports and amalgamated them into a high volume environmental analysis report in the first quarter of 2007 (SDU, 2007a).

The MoI lacked a dedicated mechanism or unit to systematically analyse its stakeholders' preferences in the pre-planning era. As commonly conveyed by the managers, the MoI's

relations, particularly with its external stakeholders, were traditionally based on reactions to complaints raised by service users and other stakeholders. Negative reactions and complaints were treated as warning signs of a need for revision of existing decisions (Interview\_4; Interview\_8; Interview\_34\_managers). One manager's comment was:

“But more we are ... forced to assess ourselves as we subsequently become aware that the practices have led to problems at the provincial level. This is a problem-focused approach in a sense. If there is no voice being echoed in the provinces about a regulation that we did, [we come to think that] it is successful.” (Interview\_13\_manager)

As pointed out by managers, complaints were raised through various channels such as the right to petition, feedback from prefects who worked at the frontline on the provincial level, the politicians acting as mediators between the citizens and the MoI, the media, the Right to Information Act in force since 2004, the internet and others (Interview\_21; Interview\_34\_managers). For an organisation with such traditions, pro-active consideration of stakeholder opinions was to a great extent a new experience. The planning team considered this an opportunity that could either contribute to the formulation of the best goals and strategies through advanced collective rationality, or correct any existing misconceptions of stakeholders about the MoI and its services (Interview\_28). Underpinned by these motives, the analysis incorporated internal as well as external stakeholders.

For internal stakeholder inclusion, the planning team, first of all, designed a web-based questionnaire that was published on the MoI's web portal in order to facilitate and increase staff participation. A total of 322 members of staff responded to the questionnaire; 102 of whom were managers, while 220 were other staff (SDU, 2007b). The questionnaire included perception-measuring items related to the respondent's own unit such as staff satisfaction, participation, performance and service quality; inter-departmental relations with the MoI, such as hierarchical relations, co-ordination and corporation and human resources such as the competency of staff (SDU, 2007b). There was also an open-ended question that enabled staff to note what they perceived to be noteworthy.

Information on internal stakeholder opinions was not restricted to the survey. The study groups at the first level of the decision-pyramid shaped the formal departmental proposals in consultation with other members of the staff within respective departments. The consultation was carried in two ways. First, the study groups received the official written foresights and proposals of every section for goals, strategies and other related subjects for the next five years. Then, the proposals were discussed in departmental meetings through staff

participation to shape the final proposal for the department. A manager's views on the departmental consultation mechanism were as follows:

“I mean ... we took everyone's [opinions] from the very bottom to the top ... by means of meetings ... we reflected the text on to the screen; works were conducted over the screen. [The managers] came ... there; we went over it item by item.”  
(Interview\_31\_former\_manager)

Secondly, the departmental proposals were discussed in common brainstorming meetings of the study groups at the first level of the decision-pyramid, whereby managers from other departments had the opportunity to learn more and comment on other units' proposals. In these meetings, however, discussions were focused more on issues of common interest mostly linked to the powers, rights, needs and the future of the MoI and of the prefectural system (Interview\_28\_planner).

The internal survey was succeeded by the external stakeholder analysis survey. External stakeholder analysis was aimed at clearly specifying and taking the views of collaborators, interactive working partners, service users, indirectly affected groups and central public bodies that are oriented towards the MoI's activities (MoI, 2009c). Service users were not surveyed individually but through representative organisations, such as associations and labour unions (Interview\_28). The questionnaires were sent to 370 organisations and 270 of them responded.

The overall central stakeholder analysis study was challenging for the team because of the reluctance of stakeholders to respond to the questionnaires. The team was forced to prompt the stakeholders to complete and send back the questionnaires to achieve a satisfactory response rate. “We were, so to speak, forcing them to share their opinions,” disclosed a planner (Interview\_28\_planner). An underlying reason could be the general tendency to ignore questionnaires or the fledgling level of participatory democracy in Turkey, according to the same participant. However, it was a real problem that the team had experienced with the internal stakeholders as well.

Although formal-central stakeholder analysis was very new to the MoI in a broad sense, some departments deviated from the mainstream. For instance, the analysis of both internal and external stakeholder preferences through questionnaires, meetings and by any other available means and acting upon stakeholders feedback was routine for the Department of Associations since its foundation in late 2003 (Interview\_30\_former\_manager). The main explanation for

this deviation was that the founder head of the Associations Department, who served as the department head between 2003 and 2009, had an MPA degree from a UK University and his dissertation had been on strategic planning in the public sector. Therefore, the managers' views on stakeholder participation in NGO-related services differed significantly from the central SDU-led stakeholder analysis. Goal 5 of the strategic plan that targeted the enhancement of associations, and thereby civil society, was set as a high priority with support from both the internal and external stakeholders (Interview\_17\_manager).

Stakeholder analysis was finalised in May 2007. Both the internal and external stakeholder analyses generated detailed statistical data, not only to feed into the planning agenda, but also for future comparison to observe change in perceptions during or after plan implementation. Despite the challenges, some managers (e.g. Interview\_6; Interview\_29; Interview\_30, managers) viewed it as a satisfactory process, particularly as it was the first strategic planning attempt in the MoI. A manager's reflections were:

“With the highest participation; by the participation of all department heads, including the internal stakeholders, external stakeholders; I believe that – [though] it was our first strategic plan – a perfect participation rate was achieved.” (Interview\_33\_planner)

Stakeholder analysis was followed by an executive group meeting at the second level of the decision-making pyramid in May 2007 (SDU, 2007g). The executive group discussed and adopted the structural and environmental analysis reports and evaluated the outcomes of the stakeholder analysis at the meeting. The team demanded more temporary staff support from units as they started to feel the need for more personnel to advance the process. The team pointed out the importance of attendance by permanent members of the executive group as well, since some units started to be represented by lower level managers in the meetings, on the pretext of a high volume of departmental workload (Interview\_36; SDU, 2007g).

The findings from the first three phases of the situation analysis study, along with the outcomes of other planning-related activities were demonstrated next by the planning team to the department heads in the second SDB meeting in June 2007 (SDU, 2007c). In this meeting the planning team once again reemphasised the need for adoption, participation and contribution of the units to the planning process and raised the expectations that the team and the SDU had from the departments. The undersecretary gave his full support to the team by personally stressing the vitality of the plan and calling for active participation in it. During

the meeting, there was an emphasis on a wider consideration of the ideas of the staff members before the next meeting of the board on SWOT analysis (SDU, 2007c).

The next and last step of the situation analysis was SWOT analysis. The SDU fed the data generated in the former steps directly into the SWOT analysis study. Evaluation of internal strengths and weaknesses and external opportunities and threats were again discussed and settled through a bottom-up approach in the formal three-step decision mechanism. At all three levels, the meetings were moderated by the NPC consultants along with the planning team members (Interview\_36\_planner). The SWOT analysis sessions were fairly new for the MoI management and received interesting reactions from the participants who pointed to the deficiencies in the readiness of the management for such studies. A manager's reaction was:

“For example let's say ‘what is SWOT analysis?’. ‘What are your [department's] opportunities [and] threats? What are the priorities?’ So on and so forth. What threat!? It was a process progressing over hesitations such as: ‘... what does this mean? In what way should I perceive this?’ (Interview\_42\_manager).

Therefore, the process itself developed in a learning-by-doing (Interview\_28\_planner) or even in a groping fashion (Interview\_34\_manager). The SWOT analysis exercises were finalised in June 2007 in a meeting of the SDB, where there was a strong call for the units to keep critical personnel available until mid-July 2007 when intensive planning works would take place (SDU, 2007d).

### **5.2.3. Definition of Vision, Mission and Organisational Values**

After locating the MoI within its milieu, the question to be answered next was; “Where does the MoI want to be in the future?” (MoI, 2009c, p. 9). To address this question, the MoI re-explored its mission and basic values and set out a formal organisational vision statement. Definition of a vision, mission and organisational values was relatively straightforward. The planning team formally demanded the proposals of the units, and then they combined and compiled the proposals and carried a number of alternative statements to the SDB's agenda. In an exceptional scenario, the board was chaired by the then Minister personally, who was appointed in May 2007 among governors for the three-month interim election period, as a constitutional requirement, for the identification of mission and vision statements. The minister's attitude was perceived as being very supportive, particularly by the planning team and the SDU. A Planner expressed his feelings as follows:

“For example in the ... mission, vision, basic values stage ... the then honourable Minister ... attended the meeting, he stimulated [us], owned the matter ... I don't think that the minister [personally] comes and backs the goals, targets, basic values in every ministry.” (Interview\_33\_planner).

In June 2007 under the chairmanship of the Minister, the strategy board comfortably adopted an encompassing mission that directly reflected the legal mandate of the Ministry, enumerated in the second section of the Statute of the MoI 1985 (Law N°: 3152) (Interview\_41\_planner). There was no confusion or conflict about the mission of the MoI, at least at the conceptual level. The mission of the MoI read as:

“Republic of Turkey Ministry of the Interior, conducts its duty and services, in the frame of an efficient and human oriented administrative perception, regarding protection of homeland security and public order, indivisible unity with the country and nation, rights and freedoms laid down by the Constitution, public peace and general morality; ensuring preservation and safety of border, coast and territorial waters; carrying out studies related to domestic policy of homeland, foundation, abolishment and arrangement of civil administration departments; arrangement, orientation, coordination and supervision of interests and relations of local administration with central administration; prohibition and tracking of smuggling, associations, civil registry and citizenship affairs by means of its organizational structure extended along the country.” (2010c, p.1)

A vision for the future was also developed in the meeting. The MoI's vision was:

“Vision of Republic of Turkey, The Ministry of Interior is to be an organization that integrated its institutional background with the contemporary administration perception; pioneering the other public institutions and organizations in terms of the quality of its services and to be a safeguard of a peaceful society whose public peace and safety are ensured.” (MoI, 2010c, p. 1)

The strategy board adopted all the contemporary ideal principles of a democratic public administration as basic values that were expected to guide the MoI's strategic aims and operations. These values included democracy, the rule of law, respect for human rights, human-orientedness, respect for social values, trustworthiness, transparency, equity, accountability, participation, modernity, service quality, efficiency, effectiveness, accessibility, leadership, openness for corporation, professionalism and environment-friendliness (MoI, 2009c; SDU, 2007f).

After this relatively straightforward stage, the planning works moved to the most complicated stage in which goals, targets, strategies and performance indicators were formulated. As work on goal-setting and strategy formulation continued, the first important change in staffing occurred. The interim Minister who chaired the mission, vision and values meeting was appointed as the new undersecretary in December 2007, while the existing undersecretary

was appointed as a governor to the Province of Bursa. This was the first sign of a high senior manager turnover in the MoI, which was defined as an important internal weakness in the SWOT analysis study (MoI, 2009c). Further, four ministers served successively as the Ministers of Interior during the researched period of 2007 to 2013 indicating short policy cycles, though under the same one-party government.

#### **5.2.4. Formulation of Goals, Objectives, Strategies and Performance Targets**

At this stage, the MoI directed its effort to answer the question; “How can we reach the desired state?” (MoI, 2009c, p. 19). This was the most important stage, as argued previously (Bryson and Roering, 1988), since strategic goals and strategies had to be formulated. Contrary to the definition of the mission and vision, the team had to work hard to formulate a quantifiable, implementable and achievable set of goals.

##### **5.2.4.1. Goal Setting and Analysis of Strategies**

At the time of planning, there was a consensus among the management and the MoI staff over the mission that was provided by statutory powers. A manager’s reflections were:

“[The source of our mission is]starting from the constitution; being primarily the constitution, it is the Law 3152 regulating the organisation and duties of the Ministry.”  
(Interview\_10\_manager)

MoI managers and other staff mostly perceived, at first glance, the mission and goals of the MoI as clear and achievable. This perception of clarity in the mission and goals was mostly due to the unambiguity of the wording of the statements in the statute, rather than to their ability to be turned into quantifiable and measurable commodities. As indicated by managers, it was not so easy to quantify the Ministry’s work (for example Interview\_27, former\_manager). Developments later showed that it was extremely difficult in areas such as regulation and standardisation of local authorities to assign performance indicators as outcome measures.

The planning team continued to follow the SP Guide 2006. This stage started with a formal call from the planning team, as it did in the previous stages. The departments were asked to send their formal proposals for goals, objectives and performance indicators. At this stage two elements demarcated the boundaries of goal-setting for the departments: The first was the statutory mission of the MoI and the second was the upper norms in the cross-governmental

strategy documents such as the 9<sup>th</sup> Development Plan. The cross-governmental strategy documents prevailed upon goal-setting and on some occasions on strategy formulation due to the integrative approach of the formal PFMCL framework.

Under these circumstances, as suggested by the planners, every department, without exception, proposed almost all of their statutory duties, projects and activities to be included within the strategic plan. A planner commented as follows:

“There was an excessive response, too many activities, too many projects, even minor businesses were included as activities, so we had a highly complex document in hand ... Although arguable in quality, we received enormous numbers of alternative activity sets, project sets [and] target phrases.” (Interview\_41\_planner)

The attitudes of departmental representatives were the same during meetings (Interview\_28\_planner). The reason was simple. Although mental adoption of strategic planning was low among managers, they were still motivated to secure their unit’s survival in an uncertain and unknown future in which strategic planning could either be central to management or be formulated into a plan sitting on the shelf (Interview\_31, former\_manager). It was particularly crucial for the departments to be recognised by the strategic plan at a time when strong localisation trends were eroding the mandate of the MoI and even threatening some units with becoming aimless and redundant (Interview\_13\_manager). The managers were motivated by the idea that budgets would be allocated in accordance with the strategic plan. They were not wrong in thinking in this way because the formal PFMCL framework introduced performance budgeting into the system. Management concerns reached an apex when the NPC consultants started to emphasise in meetings that any activity or project out of the plan would not be eligible to receive appropriations from the budget (for example Interview\_26\_manager). The following account of a planner highlights how perceptions of a contingent relationship between plans and budgets influenced the interests of MoI management in the strategic planning process:

“Then an insight started to develop. The approach exhibited was like: ‘We won’t be able to receive appropriations from the budget if we can’t define our goals and targets as required.’ When that stage came, and as such a concern came about, the interests of the departments increased abruptly. They started to propose all of their [businesses].” (Interview\_36\_Planner)

The sudden increase in departmental interest led to an upsurge in the number of activities and performance indicators from about 300 to about 900, which was then reduced again before the submission of the plan to the SPO for review. However, the planning team had to

persuade, rather than oblige, the departments to discard any formal proposal made by them. They kept in close dialogue with department managers to convince them that some of their proposals were not of significance or of interest. The team and the units were meeting on a common ground over the principles of persuasion and reconciliation. A manager's view reflected the types of interaction at the time:

“I am of the opinion that it was [a kind of] consultation, negotiation, affection, inducement, [and] interaction.” (Interview\_29\_manager)

A notable characteristic of strategy proposals was that they were mostly the ongoing activities and projects undertaken by the units. A member of the planning team and a manager summed up the scene neatly:

“It was the crystallisation of what the Ministry had already been doing.” (Interview\_28\_planner)

“I think it obtained the systematisation of what we have [already] been doing as a Ministry.” (Interview\_21\_manager)

Although this was the general tendency, some of the strategies discussed did require a major shift in the current policies, whereas others introduced technically innovative strategies. Innovative options were mostly debated in the workshops at the lower levels of decision-making attended by junior level managers, mainly directors and deputy directors-general (Interview\_6\_manager). From this perspective, the planning workshops created a participative climate for challenging ideas to be articulated (Interview\_41\_planner). These ideas were diluted in time as they were revisited time and again throughout the three-level strategic decision-making pyramid, to be brought in line with the MoI's existing values and policies (Interview\_36\_planner). Despite this, a few strategies that posed a challenge to the *status quo* in specific areas, such as performance appraisal of human resources, managed to find a place in the plan. The fate of these strategies is an interesting discussion topic and this is resumed in Section 7.3 in Chapter 7.

As the process progressed, the MoI management faced the risk of excluding law enforcement agencies from the corporate strategic planning process. The Gendarmerie and the Coastal Guard Command were exempted from strategic planning by the PFMCL 2003 on the grounds of confidentiality, while a separate strategic planning process was mandated for the National Police by the PFMCL 2003. From the perspective of trying to achieve an integrated or corporate strategic plan and ensuing implementation and monitoring process, the exclusion of

these agencies undermined the MoI's mission, since law enforcement and security had a central position within it. The management aspired to include security strategies to communicate the Ministry's mission and vision to the public and thus, strengthen its public image. In an attempt to prevent such a contradiction, the team fostered close relations with the SDU unit of the Police (Interview\_28\_planner). The headquarters of the Police and the MoI being adjacent facilitated face to face communication. They had already made an official call to the Gendarmerie and the Coastal Guard Command at the outset for their contribution to the process (SDU, 2006a). To ensure co-ordination, the team held channels open for information sharing, particularly with the Police, which also had to prepare its' own strategic plan. The team's aim was to link the agencies' strategic goals to the Ministerial strategic plan. The planning team contemplated Strategic Goal 2 as a frame goal to integrate at least the strategies of the Police (Interview\_36\_planner). However, the provisions of the PFMCL 2003 and of the MPSPPO by-law 2006 were clear and the situation was exceeding the power available to any team or any unit. They could not accomplish the integration of three agencies to the ministerial plan, which was perceived as a severe complication (Interview\_36; Interview\_41\_planners). The Police had already finished and enforced its first strategic plan by 2009, one year before the MoI, in compliance with the deadline set in the MPSPPO by-law 2006. This was perceived by the actors as an incongruity:

“The main problem here is that the National Police had prepared and started to implement its plan before the time we prepared our strategic plan; this was a very big contradiction.” (Interview\_41\_planner)

The Gendarmerie and the Coastal Guard Command never produced a strategic plan within the formal PFMCL framework, which was in accordance with the law, and therefore could not be integrated into the ministerial strategic planning process. The SDU made a last move under those conditions:

“We ... said; ‘This is our mission; [and] this is our vision; these are our goals and targets; these are our basic values. Consider these in the projects, activities, [and] operations that you intend to execute?’” (Interview\_33\_planner)

#### **5.2.4.2. The Analysis of Strategies**

The analysis of strategy alternatives in formal strategic planning is expected to be formal, analytical and comprehensive. However, evidence shows that the process of strategy analysis did not unfold in the way prescribed by the formal PFMCL framework. To understand this

stage of the MoI's strategic planning journey, it is important first to provide some background information about the regulations in the law and the SP Guide 2006. The PFMCL 2003 set out analysis of public projects as a prerequisite for their approval by the MoD. The law obliged public organisations to conduct a feasibility study which included a cost-efficiency or cost-benefit analysis as well as environmental analysis. The specific guidelines for strategy analysis were provided via the SP Guide 2006.

The practice in the field developed rather differently from the prescriptions of the SP Guide 2006. The strategic planning programme did not include a stage dedicated to comprehensive analysis of alternatives, nor were the departments instructed to carry out such kind of analyses for the proposed strategies. Participants' reflections showed that the SDU undertook costing and budgeting phases rather than a cost-benefit analysis stage:

“No, it was not carried out, cost-benefit analysis was not carried out ... but there was the budgeting stage ... These kind of studies were not that possible to be performed in the first planning period; you have a group who are totally unfamiliar with the concepts [and] with the processes ...” (Interview\_41\_planner)

Strategy proposals were subjected to the routine, traditional or unit-specific analysis procedures of separate departments, independent of the strategic planning activities (Interview\_28\_planner).

The strategy board held two meetings to discuss a set of goals as well as other issues related to the planning process and adopted the goal-set in 2007 (SDU, 2007e, 2008a). The SDB's meetings took place in the traditional hierarchical way in which the undersecretary was dominant. Decisions were taken on the basis of a “natural consensus” (Interview\_28\_planner), which was developing intrinsically during discussions. Although reasonable ideas were being voiced within debates, there was very little room for negotiation and bargaining. Every unit had a different mandate and the department heads most the time refrained from intervening in another unit's area of interest. Any conflict, where it emerged, was being settled by the chair of the meetings. In an extreme comment, a manager was reflecting the dominance of the chair (undersecretary) in the meetings saying:

“How can you dispute there? It is whatever the undersecretary says it is.” (Interview\_31\_Former\_Manager)

As will be detailed in the section on budgeting, conflict and bargain was ruled out because planning did not function as a means of budget allocation, according to the planners. The

perception of the management matched that of the planners (e.g. Interview\_13\_manager). One planner surmised that the decisions were not being produced as a result of close interaction between the department heads:

“Of course there were expressions of ideas but there was not a single decision taken upon extensive discussion that can be called as ‘Yes, [this is] our collective decision’. Nobody intervened in each other’s mandate. They intervened with the stuff related to their own mandate. Others did not step in.” (Interview\_36\_planner)

The stage was neither theoretically nor practically closed to opposing comments but, as underlined previously, the discussions took place within the traditions of the MoI bureaucracy, which was putting considerable limitations on an open and democratic climate of discussion. The following comments by a manager highlight this dimension:

“There is the [undersecretary] there; there is hierarchy; so bargaining does not take place. Neither coercion nor bargain exists. [It] did not take place. But let’s say conversations and talks occur for or against the subject matter on the agenda. Whichever is weighted gets adopted as the Board’s opinion.” (Interview\_35, Former Manager)

Another manager’s views revealed that discussions mostly occurred on technical aspects such as claims of mandate overlaps or uncertainties over mandates (Interview\_39\_former\_manager). SDB meetings functioned as platforms for the settlement of such questions about mandates (Interview\_31\_former\_manager).

The results were not satisfactory from the planning team’s point of view. When the first draft of the MoI Strategic Plan 2010-14 was finalised and sent to the SPO for approval in 2008, it included 25 strategic aims, 104 strategic targets and 344 performance indicators (Interview\_36\_planner). Performance indicators were seen as proxies for strategies and therefore the planning team did not include a specific section for strategies in the draft plan. The draft was criticised, as anticipated by the planners and turned down by the SPO for not including strategies more explicitly and for including numerous goals, objectives and indicators, which were seen as a challenge to effective implementation. The result was not a total surprise for the planning team:

“So, there might have been items included there [within the plan] that were incompatible with the logic of strategic planning because, for instance, you wouldn’t be able to persuade the deputy director-general in that department. He might have said: ‘No, this is indispensable for the Ministry!’ What happens in such a situation ...? It gets declined by the SPO at the review stage.” (Interview\_28\_planner)

Upon stern criticism from the SPO, the team started to review the draft and targeted three things: First, they aimed to reduce the number of strategic goals, targets, and performance indicators due to concerns about the applicability of such a plan. This task was not an easy one since the departments were very reluctant to concede. Secondly, they decided to include distinctive strategies explicitly within the plan. Thirdly, upon approval by the undersecretary, the SDU merged the Strategic Planning Department and the Department of Performance and Budgeting under the new Department of Strategic Management to synchronise planning activity and prevent some existing conflicts stemming from the bipartite structure (Director-Planner-2, SDU).

Meetings continued at the first and second levels of discussion. As time progressed the managers and the staff started to lose their concentration. The planning team emphasised the importance of adoption and management support for the success of the process at every opportunity. They then decided to be pragmatic and started to re-categorise the current set of goals and targets. They combined similar goals and pushed some goals down to the target level and joined related targets, even if they were loosely related (Interview\_41\_planner). A planner described the process as follows:

“We noticed that, and did that. You can turn them into strategies by regrouping ten of them under one. By pulling the aims down, by pulling the targets down to a lower level, we transformed them into strategies. We then produced the indicators from there, and strategies were not developed in a way such as ‘this or that’, but in a way that occurred as degrading the levels. But these have the same consequences.” (Interview\_36\_planner)

Following this the team initiated bilateral discussions with departments to generate effective performance targets. The units did not have attendance from high level managers during this round of debates. Nor did they engage in discussions on whether or not their activities were measurable in their results. By implication, they left this task to the team and to the SDU (Interview\_36; Interview\_41, planners). The diminished level of attendance increased the burden of the team twofold. They started, with the support of the NPC consultants, to examine the activities and projects of the departments to come up with reasonable performance indicators for the selected strategies. They then realised that service and mandate areas that could not be quantified were excessive in contrast to the ones that were quantifiable. They had particular difficulties when assigning indicators as measures of outcomes in policy-making and regulation-related areas such as local authorities and provincial administrations, which were two of the main service units in the organisational

chart. There were other fields posing problems, such as the civil registration services, as highlighted by a planner:

“I think that the civil registration is having problems with the definition of indicators. In fact, we are having trouble with the civil registration although it is a unit that should not be experiencing problem.” (Interview\_41\_planner)

Civil Registration was a service delivery unit responsible for, among other things, issuing ID cards through provincial branches, which could easily be quantified. It was “the only department with a described duty within the Ministry of Interior” (Interview\_31, former\_manager). The problem with civil registration was the exclusion of its provincial branches, which were performing the delivery function at the frontline, from the strategic plan. The strategic plan included the duties of the department centre, such as the completion of an e-government project. Therefore, performance indicators targeted inputs rather than more quantifiable service outputs.

As a result of this complex exercise, the planners perceived unquantifiability of services as one of the most important challenges to beset strategic planning in the MoI (Interview\_2; Interview\_33; Interview\_36 Interview\_41). The following were a planner’s impressions:

“Our ... departments are having great difficulties in defining indicators. The reason is; maybe the limited level of direct service delivery towards the citizens; having a guiding character; making policy; defining criteria ... One of the most important problems is definitely the specification of indicators that are not fully measurable, and the inclusion of indicators within the programme, in one way or another, that are not much outcome-oriented.” (Interview\_41\_planner)

The team had time constraints, hence had to be practical. As conveyed by the planners, they generated performance indicators from departmental activities (Interview\_36\_planner). They took advantage of the Ministry Investment Programme, which included the projects and activities of the units in detail along with departmental proposals. It meant that performance indicators, in certain fields, were assigned as a measure of input only, such as the fulfilment of an activity or a project that is defined as formal effectiveness (Boyne, 2002), rather than as a measure of the outcomes of that specific activity. The outcomes of this process were perceived by a manager accordingly:

“In the existing [strategic] plan, to the extent that I remember, there wasn’t that approach in the sense of a measurable performance. Rather, it was a study of in what period specific duties would be performed over years” (Interview\_39\_former\_manager).

Eventually, when the team felt that they were ready to move on to the costing stage, they had drawn the twelfth version of the goal-set which included six strategic goals and thirteen strategic targets (Interview\_36\_planner). The simplification of goals and strategies was welcomed by the management and staff which had a direct effect on the extent of adoption, as observed by the planners:

“But now it is easier; the adoption levels increased since the indicators were measurable and quantified. The adoption level considerably increased in the units as well; they became happy I mean.” (Interview\_2\_planner)

The planning process produced its first output through the publication of a bi-monthly Internal Affairs Magazine in early 2009, organised by the SDU as part of the publicity strategy agreed during the planning meetings (Interview\_33\_planner). As expressed by the head of the SDU in the first issue of the periodical, its main target was to promote the new vision and mission of the MoI through communication of departmental activities, projects, best practices and developments with internal and external audiences under the principles of transparency and accountability (MoI, 2009a).

#### **5.2.4.3. The Content of the Strategies**

The selected six goals, cascading objectives and strategies reflected the perceptions, actions and reactions of the MoI management to the diverse developments, trends and related tensions occurring in its extremely dynamic environment, which was described above in the first section of this chapter. Hence, the reflection of the outcomes of the situation analysis within the strategic plan was crucial for the formulation of effective strategies to find the best fit between the MoI and its highly dynamic environment. Planners’ viewed the interpretation of the results of analyses inadequate and pointed to a gap in this regard (e.g. Interview\_41\_planner). The accounts presented by the planners implied the existence of some bureaucratic rules acting as filters that defined what to count in and what to overlook during the formulation of strategies. The management was applying a combination of explicit and implicit criteria that was a blend of the management paradigm of the MoI and the obligations of the formal PFMCL framework. The selection criteria were observed to include five main decisive components: (1) legality, (2) government’s preference, (3) basic values and principles, (4) impact of the *status quo* and (5) cost (Interview\_13; Interview\_17; Interview\_27; Interview\_22; Interview\_29; Interview\_30; Interview\_31, managers). How these criteria are employed for the selection of strategies is discussed at length in Chapter 7

section 7.2. Formulated in congruence with these criteria, six strategic areas were targeted through six strategic goals within the MoI's strategic plan. The six strategic areas and goals were (MoI, 2009c, p. 54-74):

1. Central Administration System: To enhance and reinforce the provincial administration (prefectural) system.
2. Law Enforcement and Security: To advance and reinforce the homeland security services.
3. E-government: To enable online delivery of the services provided by the Ministry.
4. Local Authorities: To provide efficiency, effectiveness, participation, transparency, and accountability in local authorities.
5. Civil Society: To obtain the development of the civil society.
6. Re-organisation: To overhaul the organisational structure of the Ministry.

### **5.2.5. Costing and Budgeting**

The stage of costing was a preparatory step for the following budgeting phase. The total cost of the strategic projects and activities had to remain within budgetary limits. This required the prioritisation of projects and activities by consideration of the principles of sustainability, effectiveness, efficiency and impact (SPO, 2006c, p. 43)(SPO, 2006). The stage developed straightforwardly. The SDU was responsible for the consolidation and finalisation of the Ministry budget. Therefore, it had the budgetary data in hand. As strategies were selected among already running activities and projects, the planning team could and did pragmatically refer to the budget projections of years 2010-2011 (Interview\_36; Interview\_41\_planners). They had the projections for 2009-2011 since three-year budgeting had replaced single-year budgeting through PFMCL 2003 regulations. They also referred to the cross-governmental Mid-term Plan 2009-2011, which included across-the-board public budgetary forecasts for three years. Relying on this data and forecasts, the team calculated the cost for strategies for the next five years. They sent the draft strategic plan, including the cost forecasts, to departments for their last comments. The team turned departmental comments into a proposal and brought it into the agenda of the SDB. Upon approval of the proposal, the SDU sent the draft strategic plan once again to the SPO. This time the SPO asked for some minor corrections but did not want the plan to be re-submitted. After corrections, the MoI's first strategic plan for the years 2010-2014 was finalised.

The budgetary capabilities had been an important subject of debate during the SDB meetings. The management was of the view that limited budgetary funds would not allow for setting stretch goals even if the departments were in favour of doing so. The managers' argument that their appropriations for capital and operating budgets were already definite was undermining the whole idea of strategic transformation. The department heads raised their objections during the meetings. A planner's comments were:

“They said: ‘What can I visualise beyond this, I will do this, and this, and that as Department X, but the budget allocated to me is definite ... It has a limit ...’ This point is one which turns all the motivation upside down.” (Interview\_41\_planner)

The managers' views coincided with the perspective that the inadequacy of resources was one of the most important obstacles before formal strategic planning (Boyne *et al.*, 2004). The managers' perception of limited resources was interesting given that budgetary resources increased by 54 percent in the first year of the plan. Data presented in Table 5.2 may explain the grounds of that perception.

**Table 5.2 The MoI's Estimated and Realised Budgetary Figures**

Units in GBP (£)

Planning Preparation			Implementation			
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
<b>Estimated Budget (£)</b>			1,029,102,681	986,147,937	892,447,664	1,005,673,976
Estimated-Realised Spending Difference (%)			32	8	35	41
<b>Realised Budget Spending (£)</b>	716,548,152	883,654,864	1,361,911,364	1,064,833,245	1,201,048,450	1,418,114,382
Increase in Budget Spending (%)		23	54	-22	13	18

\* Figures converted from Turkish Lira to GBP by referring to the exchange rates of the Turkish Central Bank in the respective reference years.

Source: (MoI, 2009c, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014a)

Table 5.2 presents the estimated and realised budgetary spending figures throughout the period 2008 and 2013, as well as the annual change in percentage. An important impression

emerging from Table 5.2 is the remarkable deviations in the estimated figures, which is an indicator of the incoherence of the predictions during the strategic planning process. The lowest deviation in estimated figures was in 2011 by 8 percent, while it was over 30 per cent in 2010 and 2012, reaching an apex of 41 percent in 2013. The amount of increase in the budget, according to the figures, could not be predicted by the management.

The PFMCL model introduced two very important changes into the financial management system of the MoI, as well as the whole public sector. First, the PFMCL 2003 delegated financial powers, particularly spending power, to lower echelons within the hierarchy, which was traditionally accumulated at the centre. Second, it increased the temporal scope of budgeting from single-year to multi-year (three years) budgeting. The changes were welcomed by managers with great satisfaction, particularly by ones whose departments make large capital investments covering multiple years, for it removed uncertainty regarding income and opened room for manoeuvre. A manager commented:

“Budget was previously going to the deputy undersecretary; even some were going to the Minister [for approval]. In the analytic budget it ends at the director-general; I mean it does not go beyond whoever the department head is. This is the right way, and it has mobilised [the departments] much ... Before, you were ... doing your projects on annual basis, and no work ends in one year. You can [now] plan more comfortably by looking ahead.”  
(Interview\_31\_former\_manager)

Although this was an important move forward, there was still a two-year gap, as the strategic plan was being prepared for five years. The Guide 2006 stipulated the prediction of budgetary revenues for the remaining two years by the MoI itself (SPO, 2006c).

The formal PFMCL framework required the establishment of a strong link between strategic plan and budget. It introduced performance budgeting as a tool into the management system to establish this link. Regulations required the preparation of annual performance programmes and dispatch of the programme to the MoF and the SPO for approval. Unlike the extension of the budget period, performance budgeting evoked concerns among managers. They thought that they might not be entitled to receive appropriations for any project and activity that was excluded from the strategic plan. This motivated the departments to urge the planning team to include all departmental proposals within the plan complicating the process as mentioned earlier. The process did not unfold as rigidly as expected. Following was a manager's view:

“I don’t think that the appropriations were allocated according to the strategic plan.” (Interview\_35\_former\_manager).

There were, and still remain, strong system-related obstacles to performance budgeting. For example, the central and inflexible employment system of the public sector was impeding the calculation of labour costs for each project separately. Similarly, the accounting system was not based on programmes, but on functions. Therefore, the MoI continued to implement, in consultation with the MoF, the traditional line-item budgeting system. The perception of the management of the post-planning era was no different to that of the pre-planning era as regards to budgeting. A typical comment was:

“It is the same as regards to the budget; I mean an approach of ‘let’s cut this directorate-general’s budget and add it to there’ does not exist in general ... The Ministry of Finance calls in this way: ‘the appropriations will be increased by 10% this year’... The proposals are made accordingly ... But [say] the Directorate-General of Civil Registrations doesn’t bargain or have an argument on appropriations with the Directorate-General for Local Authorities” (Interview\_13\_manager).

Although four annual performance programmes have been prepared by 2014, programme budgeting has not been implemented in the MoI.

## **5.3. Implementation, Monitoring, Evaluation and Feedback**

### **5.3.1. Monitoring Implementation**

The formal PFMCL framework theoretically ensured implementation of strategies through *ex ante* annual performance programming and *ex post* performance reporting. It is argued that performance programming failed in the Turkish public administration (Kesik and Canpolat, 2014). The situation was not much different in the MoI. The MoI departments started to report their performance data as required formally. The SDU was accountable for the accumulation of the reported data. The departmental data were being input through a module within the online e-butce<sup>5</sup> application which was being centrally hosted by the MoF from 2009 onwards. The key element for the future of effective plan implementation was whether or not the reports would have implications, either positive or negative, for the managers and departments. The practice showed that internal reporting became a routine activity without important consequences for the departments (Interview\_36; Interview\_42, planners).

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<sup>5</sup> Electronic budgetary management platform of the Turkish public sector, which is a component of the SGB-Net network of the MoF.

In the meantime, the appointment of the Prime Minister's Undersecretary Mr. Ömer Dinçer, who was the designer and the champion of the strategic management reform in the Turkish Public Sector, as the Minister of Labour and Social Security in mid-2009 marked the start of an important decline in the Government's dynamic emphasis (an emphasis shown by rhetoric and action) on strategic management reform. High levels of manager turnover undermined the stability of implementation as well, a weakness of the MoI detected during the situation analysis study. The inspections of the Inspection Board and the audits of the Internal Audit Unit did not affect the managements' perception. The Government stepped back, following the enforcement of the Amendment Law 2012, from the legislation that empowered the Court of Accounts to perform performance review as part of external audit.

The publicising of the reports, on the other hand, is perceived by the departments and the SDU officials as bringing to bear pressure for better implementation. However, the practice showed that this pressure was not actually imposed on the MoI or any other public organisation by Parliament, or by wider society.

### **5.3.2. Evaluation and Feedback**

The SDU was designed to be a central evaluative unit by the formal PFMCL framework. Although it was assigned evaluative functions by the By-Law on the Operation Methods and Principles of SDUs 2006, such as the analysis of departmental performance, the conduct of R&D in failing or other service fields and the analyses of service effectiveness and service user satisfaction, the SDU has not been able to perform these duties in practice. The SDU, rather, performed the function of accumulating the departmental quarterly performance data and returning the data to the units as a single report for feedback purposes. As commented by a planner, feedback beyond the formal performance reporting was being given to the departments through informal channels:

“This is some kind of a unit that can view the Ministry from above as a whole; at that level of qualification ... In this regard, if it is allowed, it has the capacity to perform [the evaluation of results]. We are transferring this orally to the units in some occasions when appropriate. There are units acting upon this.” (Interview\_41\_planner)

Completing the picture, the following account of a manager reveals a gap in evaluation of results and the continuation of traditional methods of evaluation:

“[Performance data] are taken; [or] gathered regularly and systematically in a reiterating manner. But I doubt whether or not these are evaluated.” (Interview\_6\_manager)

The overall monitoring and feedback mechanism was perceived as inadequate by both the planners and the managers:

“So, I can frankly say that the monitoring and evaluation process of the strategic plan lacks; and that it does not operate effectively.” (Interview\_41\_planner)

“... I don't think that the evaluation system generates grave consequences for our Directorate-General.” (Interview\_13\_manager)

A recent development has been promising. The Undersecretary decided in 2012 during the approval of the performance programme to receive the 2013 annual activity reports of the departments in person. The Undersecretary's decision had a positive impact on managers through the pressure it generated. For example, the departments tended to include more performance targets than the previous year after the Undersecretary's decision was announced, to show how highly engaged they were in the pursuit of organisational goals (Interview\_36\_planner). The involvement of top management was perceived as the most important factor by the planners and managers in evoking the managers' interests in strategic plan-related activities:

“There are times in which the top management gets involved in the process, I believe they are now. We can form this pressure through the top management ... if the activity reports are spoken at the top management level; department by department - it is now being done - lets say ... if the top manager or the department heads asks why performance targets were not achieved ... than it makes sense.” (Interview\_41\_planner)

What made the top manager's (the Undersecretary) position central and dominant was the management culture of the MoI, as perceived by some of the managers (for example Interview\_12\_manager). These managers pointed to the detrimental effects of an absent link between performance and the appraisal of the managers on plan implementation. The publication of the annual activity report is reported to have had a positive effect on plan implementation; however, this effect was far below the potential pressure that it could exert, due to the low level of awareness and even indifference of the Turkish Parliament and of wider society to performance reports.

Four annual activity reports were prepared and published by the MoI by 2014, the final year of the first strategic plan. The reports show that there are departments that outperformed as well as others that underperformed according to the formal effectiveness figures presented

(MoI, 2013). The first strategic plan of the MoI documented activities that were already being carried out and stayed as ‘a plan on the shelf’ in the four years of implementation, which was far from generating the expected outcomes, according to the perceptions of a majority of the managers and planners. One manager stated:

“These kinds of activities already existed before planning, which we are doing under the tag of strategic planning, as I said before. So, there isn’t anything that can be deemed changed upon the formation of the strategic plan ... The strategic plan, perhaps, has registered these.”  
(Interview\_9\_manager)

## 5.4. Conclusion

This chapter has presented a coherent narrative of the strategic planning practice of the MoI that came into the MoI’s agenda by legislative mandate and took place in a highly complex and dynamic environment. It told the story of a central governmental ministry with a strong and established culture and whose management is accustomed to day-to-day management and problem-solving, rather than goal-based planning. Strategic planning practice within the MoI was a combination of analytical and non-analytical practices. Evidence demonstrated how human relations, communication, diplomacy, persuasion and other kinds of interaction played important roles in the strategy-making process. Evidence also showed how the interaction among strategy practitioners, specifically managers, planners, consultants and stakeholders and their level of expertise and strategy knowledge affected the strategy formulation process and outcomes. There were a few factors and mechanisms that were successfully utilised to leverage the strategic planning process, such as the formation of the three-level decision-pyramid to enhance participation and employment of strategy consultants. However, these positive aspects were overshadowed by many negative practices, such as problems with the formal PFMCL framework; inadequacy of training on what formal strategic planning is and how and why it should be applied; the insufficiency of the commitment of the top and other managers; high manager turnover; failure to link the strategic plan and budget; failure to establish effective monitoring, evaluation and feedback systems; and failure to integrate all agencies under corporate strategic planning, which made the first strategic planning practice of the MoI ineffective. The problem with the measurability of the service, which stemmed from the public nature of the MoI’s services, was a significant factor that negatively affected the practice. The existing strong organisational culture and *status quo* prevailed and the implementation of strategic planning did not make significant impact upon the practice of the MoI, despite the comprehensiveness of the strategic planning reform. To conclude, the first

strategic planning trial of the MoI was ineffective and did not bear the expected change and positive results that were sought and expected.

# CHAPTER 6

## RATIONAL PLANNING THEORY AND EVIDENCE FROM THE MOI

“The law has a soulless language for its ... translation ... It doesn’t have a soul, there is the body; we will blow the soul to that body. The generation will [gain experience], as I said, it will change, it will resemble us, and the owners will increase once it resembles us.”

(Interview\_21\_manager)

The process of strategy formulation, in the rational planning sense, shows patterns of high formality and explicitness throughout all the planning phases. It involves the deployment and pursuit of a series of highly analytical and logical procedures for the formulation of strategies (Collier *et al.*, 2001) as evidence of procedural rationality. This chapter analyses the strategic planning practice of the MoI by applying the patterns of the rational planning model outlined in the conceptual framework in Chapter 2 (see Table 2.1) to the formal PFMCL framework and to the practice of the MoI. By testing the theoretical patterns against case patterns, the Chapter demonstrates the degree of coherence between rational planning and the formal PFMCL framework and between rational planning and the MoI’s practice. It digs deep to find the root factors, structures and mechanisms that generate this practice. The results of pattern-matching are discussed in the conclusion section of this chapter. The accounts of the managers and planners and the content of the legal texts and official documents form the data sources for the analysis. This chapter is structured in five main sections:

- 1) Pattern 1: Comprehensive Analysis of Strategy Alternatives,
- 2) Pattern 2: Formality,
- 3) Pattern 3: Implementation,
- 4) Pattern 4: Integration and Co-ordination,
- 5) Conclusion.

## 6.1. Pattern 1: Comprehensive Analysis of Alternative Strategies

It was argued in the Chapter 2 that analysis of alternative strategies in rational planning is formal, analytical and comprehensive with regard to cost-benefit analyses of available strategy options. Hence, it is expected that an organisation that adopts formal strategic planning will employ formal-analytical procedures for strategy analysis. In this section, the research looks into the fulfilment of the range of strategy alternatives considered, strategy-related information gathering and use, particularly the extent to which innovative strategies were considered in analyses, the employment of formal analytical methods for cost-benefit analyses and piloting and the application of the efficiency rule in the MoI. The section not only retrospectively explores and explains the planning period, but also tracks changes in the perceptions of the managers throughout the plan implementation period.

The formal PFMCL framework ascribed the duty of cost-benefit analysis to the SDU to ensure that it was conducted centrally and professionally. The SP Guide 2006 described how the analysis should be performed through exploration and selection of the best strategies and how the results of the SWOT analysis should be exploited in the analysis process (SPO, 2006c). Central analysis of strategies occurred incompletely during the strategic planning process in the MoI. The process did not include a formal and explicit cost-benefit analysis of strategic alternatives, one in which monetary and other costs and benefits are weighed thoroughly and comparatively against alternative policies, programmes, projects, activities, and decisions (Interview\_41\_planner). Below is a planner's view:

“I think an evaluation of alternatives did not exist. I mean there wasn't an evaluation of alternatives; but maybe it was partly tidying up the expressions.” (Interview\_28\_planner)

As pointed out by the planner, analysis during strategic planning focused on prioritisation of goals through reducing numerous departmental proposals to a feasible and concise guideline and articulation of expressions, which was carried out by the planning team. With this aim, a range of activities and projects were considered both through formal proposals from units and throughout the discussions in workshops at different levels. Formal proposals from the departments mostly reiterated 'business as usual'. They included what the units had already been doing and what they would be doing to meet their legal obligations in the following years (Interview\_36\_planner). A planner's reflection of the process was:

“The formation of the strategies: first, [the planners] in our unit formed drafts following the specification of goals and targets, like; ‘this can be a strategy’, and these drafts were revised upon discussions with the units.” (Interview\_2\_planner)

A study of costing took place following the formulation of strategies, in order to calculate the budgetary requirements for plan implementation (MoI, 2009c). As pointed out by some of the planners and managers, the superficiality of central strategy analysis was mostly perceived to stem from the lack of technical knowledge about formal strategic planning due to the novelty of the technique to the MoI management (For example Interview\_36; Interview\_41, planners).

Another aspect of the process to be highlighted was the rather limited consideration of the situation analysis reports in the analyses. Since strategy analysis was perceived by the actors as the articulation and summation of business as usual, the link between the outcomes of the situation analysis and strategies could not be established adequately. A planner who described this deficiency as the weakest link of the whole planning process underlined this gap:

“This point is the most vulnerable spot of the strategic planning. This is the missing leg. You conduct plenty of situation analysis; situation analysis is consisting of many other sub-analyses ... These were conducted very comprehensively and in good quality ... [But] I think that the process was not an easy one for the reflection of these ... I mean there are points that have been reflected, but it is impossible to speak out within this bureaucratic structure that they have been totally reflected.” (Interview\_41\_planner)

To give an example, although the actors identified the weakness of organisational memory created by the high speed of staff turnover as a defect (MoI, 2009c), they could not formulate a strategy to overcome the issue and high staff turnover continued to be a problem. The motives behind this issue were multiple and varying depending on the area of interest, as will be seen in forthcoming sessions.

Overall, the data revealed a fragmented form of analysis within the MoI, which was loosely connected with the strategic planning process.

### **6.1.1. The Range of Alternatives Considered in Analyses**

Since the central analysis of strategies that was co-ordinated by the SDU and the planning team was incomplete, the research directed itself to departmental approaches to analysis within the researched period, particularly to how the managers perceived cost-benefit analysis

of strategies and the reasons behind this. The interview data demonstrated that regardless of the method of strategy analysis and its depth, it is an established routine for all departments of the MoI to search for alternatives and to include multiple options in strategic decision proposals. The managers, to a broad extent, perceived the consideration of different alternatives in analysis as unavoidable, a requirement, and in some cases as a method. They saw it as a process for determining what is qualified, what best serves the MoI's goals and targets and a practice that continues as long as the conditions, such as the availability of time, allow. The managers perceived the MoI by and large as an organisation that is inquisitive, open for quest and not handicapped by obsession (Interview\_24\_manager). This applies to the pre-planning era as well as the planning and post-planning era. The following comments reflected the views of managers from different departments of the MoI:

“Certainly, well, there was a quest for alternatives in that [Strategy Development] Board; and among the specialists. We have a wide service area ... I mean alternatives are certainly investigated.” (Interview\_35\_former\_manager)

“We always have the alternatives in front of us; we focus on the one that we consider as the most eligible and on the alternatives that we believe shall serve best to our goals.” (Interview\_23\_manager)

The range of alternatives considered varies according to different factors, for example with regard to whether they are innovative or familiar options.

### **6.1.2. The Degree of Analysis of Alternative Strategies**

The data shows patterns of restricted and comprehensive analysis taking place at the same time in the examination of strategies. While both patterns are intrinsically analytical, the use or non-use of formal methods to support the analysis process marks the difference between the two (Beach and Mitchell, 1978).

#### **6.1.2.1. Restricted Analysis or Unaided-Analytical Method**

The majority of the MoI managers perceived strategy analysis in their respective departments to be informal or non-specific. This group of ideas is classified under the unaided-analytical procedures category after Beach and Mitchell (1978) and the analysis is rated as restricted. The decision procedures employed in this pattern are still analytical. Sources of information frequently used by managers are; previous experience with the strategic problem, best practices in or out of the country in the field (Interview\_3\_manager) and outcomes of written

consultations with other departments or agencies (Interview\_11\_manager). However, the extent of the analysis does not reach the level of formal analysis since it is not adequately supported by formal-analytical methods.

Restricted analysis encompasses two slightly different threads within it. According to the first perspective, analysis is an intellectual activity that automatically transpires in the mind and in the sub-consciousness when a strategic problem is recognised. Analysis is a process of giving forethought to a choice in order to weigh the advantages and disadvantages of different options. Cost-benefit analysis does not necessarily unfold formally, systematically and scientifically. The managers in line with this perspective were from units with supportive functions such as human resources and staff training and a main service unit with coordinative functions. Some managers' comments with this view suggested:

“Of course, it is done in the back of your mind; within one's mind ... it cannot be without giving it any forethought.” (Interview\_10\_manager)

“Cost, [well] these are considered. Willingly or unwillingly even if you do not document this, it already exists in the sub consciousness.” (Interview\_11\_manager)

According to a different perspective, strategy analysis is a process that is simply formal but non-specific in form or in other words it does not employ specific formal-analytical methods, a methodology, a template, or written criteria to judge strategy options against. This kind of cost-benefit analysis may occur in the form of a written consultation or discussion among actors at an official meeting. Cost-benefit analysis is not taken as a very technical and sophisticated endeavour according to this view and thus, it is conducted at a basic level. This view was reflected by managers from various departments functioning in different service domains such as provincial administration, the SDU, human resources, civil registration and association departments. Following are some of the comments in this vein:

“I am not of the opinion that scientific methods are employed ... Hence, a cost [-benefit] analysis is carried out even though at the very basic level.” (Interview\_6\_manager)

“It is not informal, but unspecific in its form, or it is performed without having a specific form.” (Interview\_42\_manager)

Taking a different stance from all other managers, one participant viewed analytical methods as unnecessary for his department's service area due to his perception of a highly-regulated realm and due to performing regulatory functions. His comments were:

“Well, such [analytic methods] are not things that are much required as for the services we provide. But it can be done; certainly, such a study can be fulfilled technically.” (Interview\_29\_manager)

The managers perceived cultural, system-related and service-related elements as factors limiting the analysis of strategies. These factors and how they lead to specific outcomes are discussed next.

The first set of factors is cultural. Some of the MoI managers considered a bureaucratic-authoritative management style as a significant impediment to comprehensive analysis. The leader-centred, top-down, highly authoritative management style dominant in the MoI was considered to have a negative effect on organisational democracy, which restricts internal stakeholder participation in strategic decision-making. It is perceived to lead to a restricted form of analysis, as it suppresses creative and alternative ideas suggested by the managers and by different members of staff. Hence, personal ideas and orders of the leader, such as a department head or the top manager, rule out a collective and systematic study of costs and benefits of a variety of strategy options. A manager’s views were:

“Well, through discussion of a professional team, through finding out the requirements of science and logic, and by preparing and submitting alternatives to the decision-taker for a choice. No! It does not work like that here. An order must be given! Authoritarian culture! The characteristic of leader-centred societies.” (Interview\_34\_manager)

The MoI is perceived to be a highly conservative organisation that has a *status quo* bias by most of the managers. Conservatism drives the management to refer to traditional or pre-tested methods through the assumption of a priori reliability (Interview\_6\_manager). Although supported by weak evidence, the high influence of strong traditions may sometimes amount to taking something ‘as it was’, which is embodied in the following comment by a manager:

"It was like this before, so we do it in the same way." (Interview\_38\_manager)

A preference for traditional methods and the relative novelty of the cost-benefit analysis concept in public administration precludes the institutionalisation of formal strategy analysis. A manager’s reflections were:

“This cost-benefit concept has recently been introduced [into the Turkish public administration]. We cannot even say that it is fully introduced. Since it is not fully introduced, there isn’t such measuring or calculation. But, it is now on the public sector’s agenda.” (Interview\_35\_former\_manager)

As regards to the consideration of innovative alternatives in analyses, some managers stated that *status quo* bias counteracts change, impeding institutionalisation of change and innovation, while some others commented that conservatism is a requirement and deliberate choice due to the service characteristics of the MoI, referring mostly to the core functions and mandates such as law enforcement and security that have highly public characteristics (Interview\_22\_manager). A manager's view was:

“Well, of course technically it is possible but it is not straightforward in this structure which I belong to. It is very difficult for demands for big change to emerge; to get approved; the functioning of this process is not an easy task.” (Interview\_29\_manager)

Since formal analysis of strategies is not embedded or routinised within the management culture, fulfilment of in-depth analysis is very much dependent on leaders, individuals and staff with a limited scope. In the absence of institutionalised methods, analysis turns to a traditional, unsophisticated form ending up in a restricted manner. A manager's comment pointed to the methodology concerns:

“We have a problem regarding the methodology ... we do not have definite, institutionally pre-determined [method], this is being carried out over individual-based evaluations.” (Interview\_3\_manager)

The second set of factors that are mostly negatively associated with the extent of analysis are system-related. A small group of respondents perceived firm regulations as a constraint to the analysis of alternatives. Comments refer more to support, or unit-to-unit services such as human resources and in mostly public-to-public bodies that are regulated firmly by law. Bureaucratic structures show patterns of highly rule-based systems. In the case of the MoI, when rules and regulations define particularly who delivers the service to whom, where, when and how, the operational system of the units, at least the ones mentioned above, show a pattern of rule-based decision-making as opposed to a goal-based (Russell and Norvig, 2010) decision-making model. A manager's view pointed to such a pattern:

“For example, [the moderator] is asking; ‘What are the external threats to your Ministry?’ ... ‘What is your target?’. ‘Well, I do not have a target.’, you answer, ‘The law has stated that [this department] does this in this way, in that way and in that way. I don't know any other thing. I don't have a target’.” (Interview\_42\_manager)

The managers' accounts indicate a system of if-then rule-base that is the system of laws and regulations that define service delivery. In such a system, if a problem triggers a process, then a certain rule-base gets activated to respond with appropriate solutions. The solutions are also

pre-determined and formulated within the rule-base that operates in connection with the organisational memory, which is defined as “the stored information from an organisation history that can be brought to bear on present decisions” (Walsh and Ungson, 1991, p. 61). Such a system should be renewing its memory and the rule-base continuously to respond effectively to the surrounding changes. While strict rule-based system structurally constrains the consideration of alternatives out of the rule-base and the organisational memory, at the same time it leads to limitations on managerial discretion, which then has a negative effect on both the extent of analysis and on change and innovation. A comment reflecting this perspective was:

“[Innovative alternatives] can rarely be seen; at the end of the day we work within the framework of laws, regulations, and legislation, I mean we are working in the public sector. We have rules which mould this in a specific form. So it is rare to change and restructure them.” (Interview\_4\_manager)

On the contrary, when strictly regulated units operate flexibly with a goal-based intellectual model, in which the actors search for the optimum action that yields the best expected utility against a set of preferred goals (Russell and Norvig, 2010), the analysis turns into a comprehensive mode, particularly when projects involve ICT infrastructure that allows piloting. An example is the ‘112 Emergency Call’ project that has been initiated within the framework of Single European Emergency Call Number as an EU commitment (Dogan, 2011). The 112 Call Centres project has been undertaken by the Directorate-General for Provincial Administrations, a department which has policymaking, regulatory and service delivery functions in a strictly regulated mandate and which delivers services to both public bodies and individual citizens. Goal-based decision-making and availability of piloting in this case enabled the management to abandon what is routine for the unit and turn to comprehensive analysis. A manager’s account is given in-length below as it highlights the difference between the two approaches more clearly:

“When some new projects are conducted, discussions are occurring with regard to how the service could be provided better, how it should be designed ... regarding either its cost or its contribution to citizens, to the efficiency and transparency of the service. Discussions have occurred on what we name as 112 project in short; we had serious discussions on the project while we were designing it ... there were serious [discussions] on alternatives. But, as for the continual services, which are delimited by the legislation, you are constrained by a certain zone. You can only make changes within the borders of that zone.” (Interview\_29\_manager)

Limited to the mentioned aspects, the above account reflects that the managers searched for the best alternative strategy in the 112 project that satisfies an intrinsically ordered group of

goals in light of their trade-offs, which are minimising costs, providing efficiency, ensuring transparency and user satisfaction (and probably many more), which comprises an abstract “utility function” of the decision-maker (Simon, 1955, p. 106).

The third and the last set of factors are service-related. Regarding the consideration of innovative alternatives in analyses, a few of the managers commented with reference to the law enforcement and security domain in particular, that the mandate of the MoI does not favour substantive change. The following comment highlights this perspective:

“The occupation area of our Ministry is not one that can be changed immediately; it is not a field that can be differentiated sharply overnight or from today to tomorrow through arrangements.” (Interview\_11\_manager)

The extent of publicness of services is negatively related with the extent of analysis in the MoI context. The prominent public profile of the law enforcement service and the perception that it builds among the MoI managers, as expressed in the above quote, reinforces conservatism in the MoI. That is, security compliance is viewed as one of the core functions of the state apparatus, which should be continued steadily with minor adjustments (for example Interview\_22\_manager).

#### **6.1.2.2. Comprehensive Analysis or Aided-Analytical Method**

A smaller group of the MoI managers revealed that the strategy analysis process was mostly formal and comprehensive in their departments. This pattern is referred to in this section as aided-analytical category, for the analysis process is supported by formal methods (Beach and Mitchell, 1978, p. 441) such as piloting. Some of the managers in this group came from the ICT department or the departments which intensively rely on ICT infrastructure and exploit e-government applications widely in service delivery, such as civil registration and association services. Other managers originate in the local authority services whose main function is to regulate and standardise local authorities, and thus, work in a highly political domain.

For this category, analysis involves the review of the relevant literature, the reports of national or international organisations and court rulings, in order to gain awareness of up-to-date knowledge of the field. It includes extensive scanning of the internal and external environment to find and exploit prior experience. The scanning of the environment involves visits to other domestic organisations as well as other countries to witness and learn the

phenomenon in its original setting. A manager's comments regarding visits organised for learning from other country experiences were:

“Practices of other countries; for example, even at the foundation of the department ... we examined the UK [experience]; we went there [to see] how the Charity Commission is working, how these things are being done [in the UK].” (Interview\_30\_former\_manager)

Aided-analytical perspective involves piloting before the expansion of strategies, particularly costly ones. Additionally, the managers perceived more interaction and consultation with their stakeholders in this category. The views of the managers suggests that they perform a kind of unnamed SWOT analysis study, independent of the SWOT analysis carried out centrally during the strategic planning process, to figure out the risks/costs and benefits of the intended strategies (Interview\_13, Interview\_15; Interview\_7, managers). A manager's view was:

“But we absolutely conduct cost-benefit analysis when making a regulation. I mean, we detect the risky areas. The weak aspects, the strong aspects, we are doing something similar to what we call SWOT analysis” (Interview\_15\_manager).

Analysis shows that service delivery systems, availability of piloting, mandate and service domain and decision problem and environment are effective on the comprehensiveness of analysis.

The first effective factor is service delivery systems. This is a factor that affects the nature of the analysis in the MoI. Services that are delivered through ICT infrastructure are those in which alternative analysis turns into a comprehensive mode. Most of the managers who conducted a formal cost-benefit analysis were either in the ICT department or in units that deliver a large part of their services online such as the civil registry and associations units. ICT services demand an extensive analysis of business needs, the definition of business processes and a subsequent analysis of possible solutions as underlined by some of the managers. A typical comment was:

“Well, all units were visited, their needs were identified, appropriate analysis studies were realised, and software models were developed, which fit to [the needs].” (Interview\_39\_former\_manager)

A goal-based decision model replaces a rule-based model in ICT-related issues which calls for the decision-rule of efficiency or optimisation. Being an extremely flexible field, ICT enables the managers to search for the most beneficial option, rather than the least risky one,

among alternatives, which are effective and efficient (Interview\_7\_manager; Interview\_40). Managers believe that quantifiability of data and availability of piloting or experimentation in the ICT domain facilitates analysis.

Unlike other units, technical units, such as the Department for Information Technologies (DfIT) employ professionals and allocate a budget for analysis (DfIT, 2013), which is a characteristic of the aided-analytical strategy (Beach and Mitchell, 1978). In some, and mostly complex cases, analyses are performed under contracts by private ICT companies or by public organisations specialising in R&D, such as TUBITAK. In an organisation such as the MoI, in which the department heads belong to the prefectural class, dependence on professionals and private contractors to do analyses leads to different consequences. On the one hand, a high level of dependence is perceived by the managers to be an impediment to controlling the quality of analysis (Interview\_25\_manager). On the other hand, intensive interaction with private ICT companies brings in innovative ideas and solutions for the improvement of an already installed system or for the use of the system with other purposes, with some additional change in some cases (Interview\_3\_former\_manager). This interaction has important consequences as it does not only bring in innovative ideas on how services should be delivered, but also on what is to be delivered (Interview\_31\_former manager).

Assuming the budget is available, the only limitation for experimentation in ICTs is the time limit. A comment in this regard was:

“In challenging issues we are in an endeavour of exploration till the most correct results are taken. But, we have to terminate this process at some point, because if it lasts long you won’t have time for implementation.” (Interview\_7\_manager)

A goal-based decision model and the decision rule of optimisation lead the management to experimentation and piloting, therefore the process ends in a comprehensive mode of analysis.

Although positive views were more common, two managers who worked in the ICT-related units did find the analysis restricted. In one case the manager referred to the MoI management’s generic approach to analysis, rather than the ICT-related units. The other manager personally perceived the quality of technical analysis, rather than the procedures employed, as dissatisfactory.

Related to the first factor is the second factor of the availability of piloting. Most MoI managers perceived piloting as a method for strategy analysis employed by the MoI departments. Piloting is employed when important or radical policies or projects are involved and when the management lacks experience. Yet, it is not widespread, particularly in the Turkish public administration (Interview\_6\_manager). According to the managers, it is applied, for example, to see the practical effects of a policy in a small-scale setting or to test theoretical analyses in the field; to detect and eliminate potential risks of a policy or project; to retreat and recompense easily before the expansion of a policy to a whole country or region; and thereby to minimise the cost of strategies. Some examples of projects that involved piloting in the MoI and their years of initiation are presented in Table 6.1 below.

**Table 6.1 – Pilot Projects Conducted by the MoI between 2003-2007**

No	Project Title	Content	Year of Initiation
1	e-icisleri	The electronic communication network of the MoI	2003
2	MOBESE	National CCTV systems	2005
3	Electronic ID Card	Replacement of classical ID cards	2007
4	112 Emergency Call Centres	Combination of various emergency telephone numbers under 112	2007

**Source:** Adapted from MoI Activity Reports (MoI, 2012, 2013, 2014a)

A representative example to the formal analysis in the ICT-based service provision is the Electronic ID Card (e-ID card) project of the Directorate-General for Civil Registration and Nationality. The aim of the project was to replace the existing classical ID cards with the electronic ID cards in order to enhance ID confirmation and prevent fraud in public services, and to improve citizens' lives through the availability of the electronic cards for multi-purpose use, such as e-passport and e-signature, according to the Decree of the Council of Ministers 2007 on Nationality Card Project. The project kicked off with the Nationality Card Project Circular of the Prime Minister's Office 2007, at a time when the strategic planning preliminaries of the MoI were just gaining pace. Hence, the realisation of the e-ID card project continued throughout the planning period and it was formulated as a strategy within the strategic plan in 2009 as follows:

“The delivery and expansion of the “Citizenship Card”, as a replacement of the existing “ID Cards”, shall be commenced.” (MoI, 2009c, p. 61)

The project was piloted in the City of Bolu from 2008 to 2010 to test various alternatives and options regarding the operating systems, materials to be used and service delivery systems (MoI, 2011).

The electronic ID cards piloting project and other piloting cases referred to above show, first of all, that piloting, as a means of cost-benefit analysis, was applied by the MoI in the pre-planning era, which means that formal analytical techniques were being employed by the MoI before the formulation and implementation of the first strategic plan. Secondly, piloting and project-based working was introduced into the Turkish public administration after the acceleration of Turkey-EU relations in early 2000s (for example Interview\_13\_manager). Thirdly, the piloting cases referred to above had technical dimensions and involved intensive investment in ICT infrastructure. And finally, the services targeted by the pilots were quantifiable to a great extent, such as the delivery of a certain amount of ID cards or installation of CCTV cameras and other systems.

The third factor influential on analysis of strategies is the characteristics of the mandate and service domain. The political mandate of the MoI mostly relates to local authorities, such as municipalities and typically refers to its regulatory functions. Constituent-related issues, as in the regulation of local authorities, have a natural and close interplay with the political agenda and the interest and influence of the political actors on this mandate is demonstrably high in the MoI's context. According to a manager:

“The political actors assign prime interest to work with concrete [political] outputs. For example, the local authorities department is still perceived as the most important department of the Ministry. If you ask what they are doing ... They issue loan permits to municipalities, and also they issue staff recruitment permits. But, this has concrete political returns. So, the local authorities' service becomes an important unit.” (Interview\_31\_former\_manager)

While this domain attracts the full attention of politicians, strategic decisions in this area are perceived as associated with a high risk by the managers. Any legislation or regulation in this domain has a potential to cover about three thousand large and small municipalities which are extremely politicised bodies. The broadness of the scope and a subsequent high risk anticipation leads to an increase in the perception of the decision importance. As perceived by the managers who act in the political domain, when the strategic goal is related to highly political mandates and not restrictive, managers are strongly inclined to carry out broad and deep analysis both to find the best option and to persuade the minister or the government. A manager's view was:

“So, we already have to study what kind of risks does, or doesn’t, exist; what kind of problems are present; what the pros and cons are; so that we can explain to the political will [and] persuade [them and] show that it is reasonable.” (Interview\_15\_manager)

When in the rare instances that the government agenda empowers managerial discretion, analysis occurs thoroughly both in range and depth. A comment in this regard was:

“If this is being prepared by us, if it is not turned into a directive saying that: ‘you will do this’ ... we elaborate all alternatives. I mean if we do it in this way what the outcomes will be, if we do in that way, then what. The proposals prepared for decision-takers include these alternatives.” (Interview\_13\_manager)

The analysis takes place within the rules of political imperatives designed to minimise the political risks for the minister and the government while maximising positive reflections or satisfaction of the constituents about the consequences of the chosen strategy. Political risks rather than monetary costs, and political gains, such as the satisfaction of the constituents, rather than monetary savings or improvements are perceived as being more important in analysis (Interview\_13\_manager). In other words, political factors overshadow monetary aspects, although financial costs are included within analyses. Any regulation, for example, for an increase in the revenues of the municipalities is directly related to the government budget, not to the organisational budget of the MoI. Therefore, the cost of a strategy of the above kind is undertaken by the government.

When a specific strategy is turned into a top-down instruction by the minister or the government, it distinctly constrains managerial discretion limiting the analysis of alternative strategies. A manager commented as:

“We do what the political will asks from us to do, plan B, plan C mostly are not prepared.” (Interview\_19\_manager)

When managerial discretion is restricted by the political agenda, in-depth calculation of political risks and benefits is more likely to intensify. The decision-rule becomes the justification of the political decision and to provide rationale for the selected strategy. It becomes a process of the rationalisation of the political decision, as suggested in the literature (Bryson, 2011). The method used in analysis is one that has counterparts in Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) (Interview\_20\_manager), which is an analytical tool used to rationalise the preparation procedures of legislation proposals. The perceptions of the MoI managers regarding the use of RIA, as a formal-analytical method, are discussed below as a case for the use of formal-analytical tools for strategy analysis.

RIA was introduced as an analytical tool into the Turkish public sector in 2007 as a thread of the Better Regulation Practices project that was initiated by the government in 2000 (PM, 2007). As an analytical method, it aimed at rationalising the preparation process of bills and regulation proposals that have considerable expected impact. The Decree of the Prime Ministry on RIA 2007 stipulated the quantification of targets of regulation, monetisation of its expected impact and preparation of a detailed standard report by public departments. Although the Decree on RIA 2007 stipulated the formal-analytical evaluation of a minimum of three alternative policies for draft laws and regulations that are expected to have an impact of 10 million Turkish Liras, experience shows that it is not institutionalised and routinised, and thus, rarely practiced. A typical comment from the MoI managers was:

“No, it is not systematic like that ... it is obligatory to carry out RIA through a regulation by the Council of Ministers. I don't think it is being done at all. I have never read a document labelled 'RIA', related to any work ...” (Interview\_42\_manager)

This view accords with the following assessments of the European Commission on the Turkish public administration in the Turkey Progress Report 2013:

“No progress was made with developing RIAs with a view to increasing the quality of legislation. In particular, no RIA was conducted prior to the adoption of key legislation.” (EC, 2014, p. 8)

A limited exception to this pattern emerges in the regulation of municipalities, which is highly politicised and constituent-sensitive. The method of analysis performed in relation to the political-regulatory mandate shows the characteristics of RIA to some extent as expressed either directly or indirectly by managers particularly by those who work in the local authorities department. Most managers who played a role in this domain reflected that they include criteria similar to the RIA to study the strengths and weaknesses of alternative options, though they imply that they do not use a standard form or template (for example Interview\_20\_manager). The RIA-like method is mostly employed when managers have discretion over alternative strategies and the analyses include quantitative data where possible (Interview\_19\_manager).

Another exceptional case for the use of RIA was seen during the establishment of the new Directorate-General for Migration Management by the Law on Foreigners and International Protection 2013, which was formulated as a strategy in the MoI's strategic plan (2009, p.58). A RIA was conducted by the MoI's Migration Bureau during the preparation of the bill. Following was the account of a manager who took part in the preparation process:

“For example, this law [on Foreigners and International Protection] has an RIA [report]. Normally, almost no such studies are conducted [by public organisations] although it is obligatory for legislation. [And] no one asked us to conduct RIA during the preparation of the law; but we did it.” (Interview\_32, manager)

The above account presents another piece of evidence for the lack of institutionalisation of formal analysis and of how analysis is manager-dependent, despite the existence of a legal obligation to adopt the RIA. When governmental decree imposes one single option on the management, the RIA-like method inevitably gets halted. A recent example of this was observed during the legislation of the Law No.6360 on the Establishment of Thirteen New Metropolitan Municipalities 2012 that radically increased the numbers, powers and revenues of the metropolitan city municipalities and eroded some powers of the prefects. The bill for this law was prepared by the Directorate-General for Local Authorities under extremely limited discretion of the managers since specific preferences were already made clear by the government. A manager’s reflections were:

“We see in many issues that Regulatory Impact Assessment [reports] are not annexed to bills, although it is obligatory. Likewise, the law no.6360 [on metropolitan municipalities] that brought a big burden over the budget does not have a RIA [report].” (Interview\_13\_manager)

The management focuses on the rationalisation and justification of the preferred strategy in such situations, as argued above.

The fourth factor impacting on analysis is the decision problem and environment. The perception of how important a decision is (Dean and Sharfman, 1993) affects the degree of strategy analysis among MoI’s managers. Managers from various departments viewed ‘decision importance’ as a cause for thorough analysis. According to the managers, when strategies are considered to relate to wide public groups; are costly; address politically and socially sensitive issues; are troublesome, problematic and involve uncertainties, or require excellency they are perceived as important and strategic by the management and analysis is widened and deepened. Some comments in this line were:

“It depends to the importance of the subject matter ... There are occasions when you behave fastidiously according to the importance of the incident.” (Interview\_37\_manager)

“You won’t have the chance to say ‘pardon me!’ after spending large amount of capital.” (Interview\_7\_manager)

“For example, in these efforts about the terrorism ... It is because the issue is very sensitive and because it includes serious risks.” (Interview\_27\_former\_manager)

Once managers believe a decision is sufficiently important, the first thing they do is to examine the internal and external environment to learn from others' experiences. Some of these managers conduct formal cost-benefit analysis and they are all from ICT-related departments.

## **6.2. Pattern 2: Formality**

A high degree of formality is an important aspect of the rational planning model. The extent of formality within the formal PFMCL framework and the practices of the MoI can be understood by looking into the content of a strategic planning preparation programme, the formality of planning structures and procedures and the existence of a written strategic planning document.

This research determined that strategic planning in the MoI was formal to a great extent, both theoretically and practically. Firstly, having a one-size-fits-all approach, the PFMCL model introduced a highly formal model of strategic planning. The legal arrangements established the principles and procedures of strategic planning in the Turkish public sector in a cascading fashion through laws, by-laws, a Strategic Planning Guide and circulars. Strategic planning is considered to be an area of special expertise. The establishment of SDUs as ad hoc departments by the Amendment to PFMCL in 2005 reinforced the formality of the model. The main legal document that defined the procedures to be followed throughout the strategic planning process is the MPSPPPO By-law 2006.

The provisions of the MPSPPPO By-law 2006 explicitly set out the schedule of the strategic planning cycle from beginning to end. Article 7 determines a five-year period for a strategic planning cycle. Article 8 regulates the subjects of preparation period and preliminary programmes. According to Article 8 strategic planning is prompted by the issuance of a circular by the top manager, which would be the undersecretary in the MoI context. According to Article 13 preparation for the plan must be finalised and the draft sent to the MoD for review by the January of the year prior to the year that the plan comes into force. According to Article 8 the preliminary programme must include:

- 1) Stages of strategic planning,
- 2) Activities to be realised,
- 3) Timetable that shows the deadlines for the stages and activities,
- 4) Units and staff with responsibilities,

- 5) Need for training,
- 6) Need for consultation services if required.

Preliminary programmes of public organisations are reviewed and approved by the MoD before they pass on to the planning stage. The above provisions evince that the strategic planning model introduced by the PFMCL 2003 consists of unambiguous, explicit and formal procedures from top to bottom, which are under external supervision.

The existence of a preparatory programme is the first dimension of formality. This research found that at the very beginning of the planning process, the planning team prepared a preliminary programme in light of the legislation and the Strategic Planning Guide 2006 and sent it to the SPO in October 2006 (MoI, 2009c). The preliminary programme served as a road map for the rest of the process for the planning team. A planner reflected the situation in the following way:

“Sure [it was formal], a team was formed within the strategy development unit in the Ministry, at the specialist and assistant-level. A preliminary programme was prepared by the studies of this team. All these processes were carried out in compliance with the legislation. The preliminary programme included the definition of the actors and groups and teams who would take part in the preparation process. Their area of duty, the business that they would do was given a place comprehensively and a timetable related to strategic planning was issued. And the rest of the process was in accordance with the preliminary programme.”  
(Interview\_41\_planner)

As a sign of explicitness and formality, the preliminary programme included a timetable that set the timings of the activities that would be finalised throughout the 35-month period between August 2006 and June 2009 (SDU, 2008c, pp. 4-5). The MoI’s strategic planning schedule is presented in Table 6.2 below. The process unfolded in compliance with the schedule above. The definition of mission, vision, and basic values was fulfilled in February 2007 earlier than expected, whereas it was scheduled for May-August 2007.

The formality of structures and processes is the second dimension of formality. Both official documents and the accounts of the actors showed that strategic planning in the MoI was carried out using formal structures and processes. The managers referred to many aspects that indicated formality. For example, they referred to the obligatory nature of the formal PFMCL framework as the source of formality which included the proceedings of the planning process such as meetings, the departmental procedures in the formation and functioning of the committees, the pursuit of the Strategic Planning Guide 2006; the formal demands of the then SPO from the MoI, which were bound to deadlines; and the fulfilment of stakeholder analysis.

**Table 6.2 – The Strategic Planning Timetable of the MoI**

No	Activity	Period			
1	Preparation Period	August	–	October	2006
2	Situation Analysis	December	–	April	2007
3	Specification of Mission, Vision, and Basic Values	May	–	August	2007
4	Specification of Strategic Goals and Targets	August	–	December	2007
5	Determination of Detailed Activities/Projects and Performance Indicators	January	–	September	2008
6	Calculation and Specification of Cost and Estimated Budget			October	2008
7	Finalisation of the Content of the Draft Plan			November	2008
8	Evaluation of the Draft Plan by the Strategy Development Board			December	2008
9	Dispatch of the Strategic Plan to the State Planning Organisation for Review	January	–	April	2009
10	Finalisation of the Strategic Plan and Ratification by the Minister	May	–	June	2009

Source: (SDU, 2008c)

There was no hesitation in endorsement of this view in the managers' accounts:

“It was formal, sure, sure entirely; this was a work conducted within the framework of the [Law] 5018.” (Interview\_23\_manager)

“It is formal; well, a process that proceeds formally is more explicit ... meetings at the beginning; a plan in these meetings, a programme, and the musts of strategic planning in that programme; contracting-out consultancy services. All these progress in a way to meet the formal requirements.” (Interview\_20\_manager)

Formality prevailed over the stages of preparation and organisation, situation analysis, definition of mission and vision statements, formulation of goals, targets, and strategies, costing and budgeting during the preparation of the strategic plan. This was not an unexpected situation for the MoI, as formality was an enduring characteristic of its bureaucratic system. As initial steps to form the necessary structures for planning, the Planning Team was created in April 2006 while the SDB was established in June 2006 (SDU, 2006b). The creation of the three-level decision structure was realised officially and formally by the approval of the Undersecretary at the top in June 2006.

The conduct of the situation analysis demonstrated the same formality and explicit pattern. All four components of the situation analysis relied on official communication, survey

studies, meetings and reporting (MoI, 2009c). The planning team consolidated and documented the results of every stage of the situation analysis. The SDU published an Internal Structural Analysis, an Environmental Analysis, a Stakeholder Analysis, and SWOT Analysis Reports in 2007.

Regarding the activities, the planning team held and attended a total of 115 official preparatory, informative, evaluative and training meetings, while they organised 32 activities for other members of staff across the MoI for the same purposes between 2006 and 2009, according to the SDU reports (SDU, 2008c, p. 7). The planning team sought the approval of the SDB, as the highest level of strategic decision-making, at each and every phase of the process. The board issued three main resolutions during its work to officialise decisions. Through Resolution-1 on 26 June 2007 (SDU, 2007f), the board officially defined the vision, mission and organisational values of the MoI in the presence of the Minister. The board then passed Resolution-2 on 12 February 2008 (SDU, 2008a), to approve the strategic aims and targets of the MoI. And, finally it passed Resolution-3 on 25 December 2008 (SDU, 2008b) which finalised the MoI's first strategic plan in advance of the SPO review for the period of 2010-15 by approving the strategies, performance indicators and their costs.

The formality of the framework had consequences for the practice of strategic planning in the MoI. For instance, some managers considered it to be a requirement to embed strategic planning in the MoI's organisational culture and enhance participation. One manager and a planner had this to say:

“We are at the beginning stage, everything is going formal ... But, we lose most things from the beginning when we start something informally. I mean, it becomes troublesome if it goes with nothing binding. We may not comply with [informal arrangements].”  
(Interview\_3\_manager)

“No, it was done in a formal way; it was fulfilled in a formal manner as it was expected to be. Participation wouldn't be satisfactory in our Ministry if it was informal.”  
(Interview\_36\_planner)

With a similar perception of formality as being equivalent to legal obligation, a manager perceived it to be a counter-power that broke the resistance of the management to the enforcement of strategic planning. He stated that:

“The fact that it was obligatory was breaking the resistance; no one could exert resistance [to strategic planning] in that sense.” (Interview\_30\_former\_manager)

This manager's view reflects how formality acting as legal obligation plays a crucial role in the adoption of strategic planning in a strictly bureaucratic structure.

The obligation to produce a strategic plan at the end of the strategic planning process is another dimension of formality. The formulation of the MoI's goals, targets, strategies and performance indicators within a concrete document was an indication of its formality within this context. At the end of the planning process, the MoI management came up with a documented strategic plan (MoI, 2009c) that included the mission, vision, basic values and principles, 6 strategic aims, 13 targets and 39 performance indicators, estimated cost of strategies and responsible units. The strategic plan was published through the MoI's web page ([www.icisleri.gov.tr](http://www.icisleri.gov.tr)) and sent to the MoF and the Parliament for budgetary discussions and decisions, under the provisions of the MPSPPPO By-Law 2006.

### **6.3. Pattern 3: Implementation**

Implementation is a critical component of the rational planning model and is considered to be more challenging than strategy formulation (Elbanna *et al.*, 2015). It is a distinguishable component of strategic planning and is based on formal, rational and explicit techniques as explained in Chapter 2 (see Section 2.2.1.3). It was argued in Chapter 2 that implementation is addressed as a unidimensional concept although it has at least two dimensions. The first dimension is the implementation of a strategic plan and the second is the overall application of the strategic planning model. This section tackles the two separately in turn.

#### **6.3.1. Implementation of the Strategic Plan**

Article 41 of the PFMCL 2003 based the monitoring mechanism on an annual performance reporting system, rather than a sophisticated performance management approach that linked personal and departmental performance to the goals and targets. Annual reports were envisaged to include the achievement levels of performance targets that were due to be set beforehand in a performance programme, as well as spending figures. The By-law on Activity Reports 2005 obliged annual reports to be published online to reinforce transparency and accountability. Reports at the same time were to be sent to the MoF and to the Court of Accounts as well, as the responsible institution for examining and submitting the reports to Parliament for debates, along with a statement of general compliance.

The external control of organisational performance was ascribed, in the formal PFMCL framework, to the Court of Accounts. The Court of Accounts was to perform performance audits and prepare performance reports in addition to its ongoing public spending reviews.

There were two other control elements within the system in addition to the reporting mechanism. The first was the routine biennial inspections by the MoI Inspection Board conducted to determine the achievement of strategic goals as well as many other subjects. The second was the internal auditing system as part of the internal control system introduced by the PFMCL 2003. The internal auditing system was designed to conduct an annual analysis of internal and external risks that might impede the achievement of strategic goals and targets and to recommend necessary actions to be taken by the organisation, according to the Communique of the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards 2007.

### **6.3.1.1. Monitoring**

The MoI adopted a mechanism of quarterly-reporting, in congruence with the By-law on Activity Reports 2005 and asked for quarterly reports of performance data from the departments accordingly (Interview\_36\_planner). The interview data disclosed a varying level of awareness among the MoI managers of the monitoring mechanism. Most MoI managers perceived the above mechanism to be ineffective for a number of reasons, while a small group of managers viewed it as effective. Internal auditing was defined as an important component even by those managers who did not have full insight of the monitoring mechanism.

Only a small group of managers had a comprehensive view of the formal monitoring mechanism. These managers could describe the formal processes in detail. They listed the components of the monitoring mechanism as including items such as reporting to the SDU, internal control and audit, routine inspection, hierarchical control of the Undersecretary and the external audit of the Court of Accounts (for example Interview\_5; Interview\_14; Interview\_22, managers). However, the majority of the managers had a partial view of the mechanism. For example, a manager perceived internal auditing as a monitoring mechanism while two other managers associated monitoring with the organisational hierarchy:

“There is a unit that is reporting this, but there isn’t a unit that monitors whether [targets] are achieved or not. For example, there is the internal audit unit; it is controlling the ongoing processes of the Ministry; they are reporting what is realised at what stage to the Undersecretary’s office every two, three years.” (Interview\_1\_manager)

“It is hierarchy what monitors this. I don’t know whether there is an additional mechanism that monitors this; I don’t think [there is].” (Interview\_42\_manager)

“There is no mechanism. We brief the Undersecretary.” (Interview\_26\_manager)

The managers and planners viewed the existing plan implementation mechanism as ineffective to a great extent. The idea that the implementation mechanism is ineffective is supported by evidence from the annual performance reports of the years 2010, 2011, 2012 and 2013. Table 6.3 presents detailed data with regard to the performance achievement levels vis-à-vis the strategic goals and years.

**Table 6.3 Performance Achievement Statistics**

Strategic Goal	Section 1					Section 2					Section 3					Section 4									
	P*>Target					P = Target					P < Target					P = Zero									
	2010	2011	2012	2013	Total	2010	2011	2012	2013	Total	2010	2011	2012	2013	Total	2010	2011	2012	2013	Total					
Prefectural System	-	-	-	-	0	1	1	-	-	2	-	-	-	2	2	2	1	1	-	-	4				
Law Enforcement	-	1	1	3	4	2	-	-	-	2	1	2	2	2	7	-	-	-	-	-	0				
e-government	1	1	2	1	5	5	1	7	10	23	1	1	3	5	10	2	5	1	6	14					
Local Authorities	-	-	-	1	1	1	2	4	4	11	2	-	1	-	3	2	2	-	-	-	4				
Associations	5	1	2	2	10	1	2	1	2	6	-	-	-	-	0	-	2	-	-	-	2				
Re-organisation	1	-	1	3	5	2	4	4	3	13	-	3	2	3	8	2	2	-	2	-	6				
<b>Total of Indicators in Four Year</b>						<b>25</b>					<b>57</b>					<b>30</b>					<b>30</b>				
<b>Grand Total of Indicators</b>	<b>142</b>																								
<b>% in Total **</b>	<b>18%</b>					<b>40%</b>					<b>21%</b>					<b>21 %</b>									

\* P = Performance ; \*\* Percentage values are shown in integer values

Source: (Adapted from MoI, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014a)

Table 6.3 is divided into four sections. Sections 1, 2, 3, and 4 present performance overachievement, on-target performance, underperformance and no-achievement respectively. Underperformance corresponds to performance values that are below 100 percent. No-achievement corresponds to zero percent since no progress was made on the associated target. According to the figures, the total number of indicators set throughout the four years of plan implementation was 142. During the four years of implementation, 25

targets were overachieved, 57 were on-target, 30 were underachieved and there were no achievement at all on 30 performance targets within that year. Sections 1 and 2 are the positive side of the MoI's performance achievement and the total of the two sections reveals that 82 total indicators were achieved or exceeded, marking a 58 percent success rate in meeting targets. Sections 3 and 4 are the negative side of performance and the sum of the two sections shows that 60 indicators were underachieved or there was no progress in some at all, marking 42 percent underachievement or no-achievement in meeting the targets, which is an important indicator of deviation during plan implementation.

Underachievement or no-progress can both be seen in all six targets during plan implementation. The greatest deviation was in the e-government and re-organisation strategies. For e-government strategies there was underachievement in 10 targets and no progress in 14 targets while these figures were 8 and 6 respectively for re-organisation strategies during the four years of plan implementation. The associations (civil society) strategy was the most stable field with regard to achievement of targets set in this area. Overall, the data presented in Table 6.3 shows that plan implementation was highly unstable, providing evidence of a loosely controlled process. The discussion now turns to the accounts of the actors to explain the dynamics of such practices.

Most MoI managers and planners viewed the plan implementation mechanism as invisible. The invisibility of the mechanism had a close association with a perception of plan implementation being routine or insignificant, as well as with the novelty of strategic planning in the MoI. The following account reflects how a planner observed the managers' approach to the reporting mechanism:

“We prepared quarterly performance programme monitoring reports that were signed by the Undersecretary and sent them to the units. We tried to track, but our reports were not considered much. It was taken like: ‘Err, it’s routine work’.” (Interview\_36\_planner)

Another manager's view was similar:

“I think that [reports] are more routine stuff; are not things with content. I do not presume that any department would evaluate the three-monthly reports going like; ‘Bring [the report], let’s see what we have [done]’.” (Interview\_42\_manager)

There were some reasons underlying this perception, which were most influential in the degree of plan implementation in the MoI. Firstly, the MoI managers and planners viewed the

lack of formal incentives and sanctions within the mechanism as a significant defect (e.g. Interview\_23\_manager). The following quotes are indicative of such views:

“No, no, no way, this business can’t be continued with this mechanism. There must be concrete sanctions.” (Interview\_19\_manager)

“Well now, if you introduce something with no defined deadline, form, method, and sanctions in bureaucracy, its achievement in implementation will be dependent on the sensitivity of the day.” (Interview\_28\_planner)

As formal incentives and sanctions were seen as a requirement for effective implementation, the absence of these led to a weak link between the accountability of the managers and the plan implementation, resulting in low levels of implementation. Secondly, managers perceived the absence of a link between performance and staff appraisal as a deficiency impacting on implementation. The appraisal of staff was mostly based on loyalty and subjectivity which continued in the traditional way after the introduction of strategic planning. In this system, which empowered the top management with considerable discretion in staff appraisal, the level of strategy implementation continued to have a strong link with the attitude of the Undersecretary. The leader-centred organisational culture of the MoI, as described previously, reinforced the situation of the top management dominating the plan implementation process. A manager’s account was:

“I believe this [mechanism] will be effective ... when it is taken seriously by the top management ... This is stemming from the organisational culture. It is a consequence of the management and career system of the Ministry, as well.” (Interview\_12\_manager)

Many other managers viewed the top management’s attitude as the most important element in plan implementation and they found the top management’s existing level of commitment and emphasis inadequate or wanting:

“In fact, the control mechanism is not functioning, [the top management] is not calling you to account.” (Interview\_19\_manager)

“I believe it shall be more effective, for example, if the top management makes his questioning ... based on the performance targets.” (Interview\_17\_planner)

A test of these statements was realised in 2013 upon the Undersecretary’s decision to hear the annual performance reports of the departments in person from the department heads. The change in the Undersecretary’s attitude noticeably affected the managers’ behaviour in a positive direction with regard to their engagement in meeting strategic targets. Concrete

evidence of such positive change came in the form of an increase in the number of performance indicators proposed by the departments for the forthcoming year. Following was the account of a planner who observed the change in the managers' attitude:

And, [the Undersecretary] especially called the department heads to determine their performance programmes bearing in mind that he would bring them to account the following year. The approaches [of the managers] have started to change this year [in 2013].” (Interview\_36\_planner)

A similar view was reflected by the managers. They disclosed how the change in the Undersecretary's attitude led to a change in their approach to the achievement of their targets:

“Well, we are making a presentation to the Undersecretary next week about our department's performance targets within the strategic plan. So, that the top management is developing ownership and adopting [strategic planning] is affecting the perspective of the department, of the directorate-general and of other directorates-general ...” (Interview\_20, manager).

The impact of the Undersecretary's decision can be concretely observed in Table 6.3 above. While the total numbers of performance indicators remained stable in the years 2010, 2011, and 2012 around 31 indicators, the figure surged to 49 in 2013, showing how interest in the process by management changed considerably in response to a change in emphasis from top management.

While the attitude of top managers was important for plan implementation, the government's dynamic emphasis was equally important as it was an antecedent for the top manager's attitude. The appointment of the Prime Minister's Undersecretary Prof. Ömer Dinçer, who was the designer and the champion of the strategic planning initiative, to a different post where he lost his influence on the strategic planning reform process, marked the start of a decline in the Government's dynamic emphasis on the reform. As the mastermind, he was identified with the strategic planning reform so closely that most critiques of strategic planning were being directed to him personally (Interview\_13\_manager). Parallel to the visible dwindling in the Government's emphasis, the perception of strategic planning as a source of unnecessary increases in workload prevailed over the implementation period in the MoI, as it did to a significant degree during the planning process. For example, a manager commented:

“We perceive it as an obligation. Implementation is not progressing well for this reason. We should save [the strategic plan] from being a document that is not re-visited.” (Interview\_26\_manager)

This development led to the growth of the idea that strategic planning would be abolished in the near future, which was underpinned by the perceived disagreement of strategic planning with the traditions of Turkish public administration and of a view of bureaucratic drudgery (Interview\_36\_planner). What reinforced this idea was the vagueness stemming from the inconsistency in the government's attitude, as put by a manager:

“A big uncertainty, I mean everything can come to an end if the Government says: ‘No need for these strategic plans!’ and gives up this business of planning. Strategic planning has not yet institutionalised in that sense” (Interview\_13\_manager).

There were other reasons cited by the managers as factors weakening monitoring and thus, effective implementation. Some actors viewed the external control arm of the mechanism to be inadequate (Interview\_17\_planner). This view developed due to a change in the government's policy during the MoI's plan implementation process. The Court of Accounts had started to prepare performance reports in agreement with the formal PFMCL framework. It continued issuing performance reports in fields such as e-government and prevention of road traffic accidents until the year 2008 (Sayistay, 2014) when the government abolished, through the enforcement of the Amendment Law 2012, the legislation that empowered the Court of Accounts to perform performance reviews. This move damaged the link between the strategic plan and external audit, undermining the plan implementation process. The amendment was partly withdrawn by the Constitutional Court in the same year and a new legal arrangement is still due to be made.

High staff turnover was found to be another impediment due to the damage it did to organisational memory. High levels of manager turnover undermined the stability of implementation, as identified by the managers during the SWOT analysis study (MoI, 2009c). Even before the plan implementation started, in late 2009, some of the department heads, such as of the Associations Department and ICT Department, had been appointed to provincial branches. Upon a conflict between the heads of two departments within the SDU, the planning team leader, as the head of one of the departments in conflict, moved to a new position in a public university in 2009, just before the finalisation of the strategic plan. The fall of the leaves did not stop there. All the members of the strategy board, who had set the goals within the first strategic plan, had left their positions due to appointments to external or provincial posts or retirement by 2013. High staff turnover was not limited to the department heads. Many mid- or lower-level managers were subjected to circulation every two or three

years within the period of 2007-2013, weakening the organisational memory, which then had a negative impact on plan implementation. A planner's views were:

“Let me give you an example; you are made to explain all the process from scratch to the new incumbent. And you are doing this continuously ... This comes as a handicap both for [the SDU] and for the other units of the Ministry.” (Interview\_41\_planner)

The publication of the reports was perceived by the departments and the SDU officials as exerting potential pressure for better implementation. A manager suggested that the interests of civil society or the public, as external stakeholders, was considered to be as significant as the top management's engagement in plan implementation. He stated:

“The [external] stakeholders should take more active roles; ... the fact that the top management is calling to account does not necessarily mean that the mechanism is functioning well.” (Interview\_30\_former\_manager)

The practice showed that civil society pressure was not exerted on the MoI, or on any other public body, as a necessary consideration during the implementation of the first strategic plan. Neither is there evidence that political circles adapted to strategic management in the public sector. For example, the plans and performance reports of public organisations have not yet become the subject of parliamentary debates.

Some activities, such as the projects developed by the Directorate-General for Local Authorities to promote women's rights were conducted out of the strategic planning framework. One of the managers perceived this as an obstacle to effective strategic planning and management. The low quality of some performance indicators was also viewed as a problem for effective plan implementation. According to this view, the lack of expertise and inadequate effort exerted to specify realistic performance targets led to underperformance in the course of implementation (e.g. Interview\_23\_manager).

In contrast to the majority of the actors, a small group of managers viewed the existing mechanism as effective since it was extremely formal and consisted of powerful components. A common response in this pattern was:

“Additionally there is the internal audit and internal control mechanisms ... the control of the Court of Accounts ... when we think of the Undersecretary's intervention to the processes as a guiding activity, this system has a mechanism internally, and this is an effective mechanism.” (Interview\_22\_manager)

However, the same manager viewed the impact of this system on manager's motivation as ineffective or "a pressure that shall not evoke discontent [among managers]" (Interview\_22\_manager). This shows that these managers refer mostly to the formal-legal aspect of the monitoring mechanism rather than its ramifications in practice. The Undersecretary's recent decision to review departments' activity reports personally was observed to have an impact on these managers' views, as they drew attention to the meetings with the Undersecretary in their responses.

Although internal auditing was newly introduced along with the formal PFMCL framework, it was perceived to be an influential and significant component of the monitoring mechanism by many managers. In one case, internal auditing was considered to be unnecessary and dysfunctional by a manager from the civil registration services due to the lack of expertise of the auditors in ICT, because the service relied mostly on sophisticated ICT infrastructure (Interview\_31\_former\_manager).

The link between the budget and the activities and projects was seen as an influential element of plan implementation. Managers who raised this point perceived the budgetary process, particularly the capital budget, governed by the MoF and MoD and the process of convincing these ministries, as being more influential than the monitoring mechanism. A manager's comments were:

"There isn't a considerably effective mechanism to be honest. The Ministry of Development on the one side, the ministry of finance on the other side, their activities during budgetary works are the most effective mechanisms for me." (Interview\_13\_manager)

Parallel to these views, departments that make large capital investments were more motivated by the budget for better plan implementation, such as civil registration services. These departments were aware that a failure to meet a target may complicate negotiations with the two ministries for the next year's budget (Interview\_31\_manager). On the contrary, the departments with more regulatory roles, such as local authority services, whose budget is to a great extent constituted of staff costs, were less motivated by the budget (Interview\_13\_manager).

The managers, in general, identified some factors that contributed positively to the implementation of the plan. For example, the quantifiability of the services was viewed as a facilitator of implementation (e.g. Interview\_23\_manager).

### 6.3.1.2. Analysis of Results and Feedback

The analysis of the results of strategies is considered to be a central activity and assigned to the SDU within the framework of PFMCL 2003. This mandate encompasses the analysis and feedback of performance data and of the effectiveness of service user satisfaction. Effectiveness of service may refer to the ratio of outputs to outcomes of service, or to the ratio of inputs to outcomes of service, which is termed as cost-effectiveness (Pollitt and Bouceart, 2011). In either case, the outcomes of service are vital for the measurement of service effectiveness. The annual reports of the MoI prepared by the SDU in co-ordination with the MoI departments present input, limitedly output and formal effectiveness data. While the reports provide only one single dimension of performance, which is formal effectiveness, they do not provide outcome data (MoI, 2013). A defect in the input data is that it includes contracting-out costs of projects and activities while it excludes staff and other costs undertaken by the MoI departments for each project or activity. Another defect is that input data does not provide cost per unit figures, such as the cost per head of issuing a citizen ID card or passport. Therefore, any attempt to compute, for example, cost-efficiency or cost-effectiveness of the service over the data presented in the MoI's annual reports may be misleading, even if it could be done. Given the limitations of the input and output data, and the absence of outcome or impact data, the central analysis of the results of the strategies remains restricted to the statistics of formal effectiveness, even though the analysis has been legally systematised. The intermediate and final outcomes of programmes and their relation to costs have not been of systematic interest and input indicators and formal effectiveness are taken as the main criteria for the analysis of results.

Most managers' perceptions echo the above view, which can be observed in the MoI's annual reports 2010, 2011, 2012 and 2013. Despite the centralisation and systematisation of analysis within the framework of the PFMCL 2003, managers viewed the analysis of results as unsystematic, non-institutionalised, departmental and superficial. Some managers' comments were:

“Maybe part of the SDU is involved in [the analysis of results]; I am trying to say, they may have a legal, formal duty, however it is not effective in practice, there isn't an effective performance [monitoring system].” (Interview\_34\_manager)

“Each unit conducts its own [analysis]; neither have I seen in the SDU's reports that they conduct analysis of results over outcomes.” (Interview\_20\_manager)

An underlying reason for this is that strategic planning has not caused a shift from traditional input-focus to outcome-focus in the MoI. The activities or inputs are monitored, the impact of programmes on how they affect citizens is observed unsystematically and mainly through complaints of the service users. Systematic and comparative measurement of inputs, outputs and outcomes is absent in the system. The measure of achievement is the realisation of an activity or project. Departmental analysis of results is traditional, not explicit and not analytical to a great extent, except for ICT-based services. The quality of departmental analysis is individual and manager-dependent and hence variable. Managers reflect the assumption that ‘public programmes benefit the citizens’ (Interview\_35\_former\_manager). A manager who recognised this said as much:

“This is one of the lacking aspects in strategic planning [in the MoI]. I consider the systematic and routine analysis of results as a subject to be dwelled more on [in the Ministry].” (Interview\_22\_manager)

In an environment where the old culture prevails, the departments have not developed the means to measure the intermediate and final outcomes of their programmes and their links to inputs.

From both the managers’ and planners’ perspective, it is also the ineffectiveness of the existing control mechanism, which leads to the exercise of traditional and partial results-analysis in the MoI departments. The absence of adequate incentives and sanctions, the absence of a link between performance and staff appraisal build a perception of the insignificance of performance measurement among managers, and hence, ignorance.

Analysis of results requires expertise, according to some managers and the MoI departments do not employ staff with the requisite skills. The accounts of two managers, one from vocational training and the other from human resources department, were:

“To be honest ... in vocational training ... we are having trouble about employing professionals who will measure, evaluate, and plan this.” (Interview\_35\_manager)

“If you ask whether we have studies [of analysis] I can’t say that there is. Because it is difficult; and it is an issue that requires some expertise.” (Interview\_11\_manager)

These accounts point to the fact that the SDU was not designed with a results-focused logic, which is the approach demanded by formal strategic planning. In some fields, such as the regulation of municipalities, analysis of the impact of regulation on society may require a sizeable budget while the existing budget does not allow for this. Even if the required funding

is available, analysis of outcomes is still perceived as challenging, particularly in the fields where quantifiability of outcomes is problematic, such as provincial administrations (Interview\_18). A manager's view was:

“Of course analyses are important, but these are not easily measurable from our department's perspective and from the point of the business that we do.” (Interview\_29\_manager)

Acting upon complaints is perceived to be an important characteristic of the MoI (and Turkish) bureaucracy. The complaints of service users are a substitute for systematic results-analysis in the MoI's case and they constitute an important part of the existing feedback mechanism. Complaints direct the departments to see and eliminate the detrimental effects of public programmes on service users and re-shape the service in order to prevent such misconduct in the future. The complaints mechanism has progressively become systematised and simplified through e-government applications. For example, the Prime Minister established a direct line called Prime Ministry Communication Centre (BİMER) to receive citizens' complaints about public services in person, by phone, internet, or through letters. The complaints were then directed to the relevant public organisation according to their relevance with a guaranteed 30-day response period.

Managers whose service field is quantifiable and who use intensive ICT infrastructure, such as the civil registration and ICT departments, reveal a more systematic evaluation and feedback of results.

### **6.3.2. The Application of Strategic Planning and Process Outcomes**

The application of the strategic planning model is the second dimension of implementation. To ascertain the extent to which the application of the model succeeded requires looking at it from a broader perspective. The effectiveness of strategic planning is best understood by assessing the extent to which strategic planning generates the expected results and initiates and achieves strategic change. From this perspective, the managers largely had negative views although a very small group of managers and planners did have positive views.

Most managers and planners viewed strategic planning as ineffective in the MoI. According to a dominant view among the MoI managers, strategic planning resulted in the documentation of what the departments had already been doing to meet their legal mandate. It was the articulation of business-as-usual as expressed by a planner:

“The issues that were required to be enunciated and expressed tidily did appear [in the strategic plan]. Those parts were revised. But this doesn’t mean radical differences in strategy and policy. One should see [the strategic plan] as limited to those revisions.” (Interview\_28\_planner)

This line of argument suggests that the MoI departments had not operated arbitrarily before strategic planning was introduced. The assessment of departmental resources against their targets and monitoring progress, though limitedly, was part of the management remit and activity. Hence, the same kind of work was being performed previously, just not under the label of strategic planning. The same activities and projects would have been performed even if strategic planning had not been introduced to the MoI’s management system. The strategic plan merely registered, formalised and sanctioned the extant functions, according to managers. The plan remained as ‘a plan on the shelf’ during the four years of the implementation process, although quarterly performance reports were produced solely to meet the legal obligations, according to this widespread perspective. A manager’s views were:

“Well ... Turkey has fifty years of planning history. But no one still knows what there is, or isn’t, within the plans. So, it feels like the strategic plan [in the MoI] has remained at the same level.” (Interview\_15\_manager)

Most managers believed that strategic planning did not bring about a significant change to the *status quo* in the MoI, particularly with reference to management capacity and service delivery or performance, though it made some limited contributions. Most of the managers recognised the problem as being related to dimensions of awareness building and adoption. The underlying reasons articulated by the actors are weak adaptation, insufficient training, inadequate external guidance and weak organisational memory.

Weak adaptation is the first factor. According to this, strategic planning is not adequately tailored to the realities and needs of the Turkish public administration. The fact that it was originally a private sector technique that was directly transposed from Western public sectors in 2003 raised problems of adaptation. The PFMCL 2003 was extensively a direct translation of the Western models and so were the cascading regulations. Hence, the PFMCL 2003 neglected to adapt the language of the source legislation or tailor the components of the strategic planning model to the Turkish public administration system, so as to facilitate its adoption and application. Basing the system on directly imported words (such as ‘strateji’ for strategy), rather than on counterparts or similar terms in the Turkish bureaucratic tradition, created a model that lacked conceptual clarity. One manager’s perception was:

“You can enforce something legally but adoption is something different. The adoption of [strategic planning] could not be provided. The reason is, first, the strategic planning [model] is a verbatim translation [rather than interpretation]. So, the [managers] have not been able to settle the concepts [in their minds] yet.” (Interview\_6\_manager)

The following manager’s challenging experience represents an example of what the above comment highlights:

“I don’t know; should its terminology be that much difficult? I feel that it may be simpler ... I still confuse vision and mission, for example, which one would be above and which one below [in the goal-hierarchy]. It always gets mixed up.” (Interview\_31\_manager)

The strangeness and complexity of the terms and concepts raised the problems of perception, insight and adoption. As a widely recognised factor, the problem of insight continued during and after the planning process, subsuming the implementation period. As the managers could not ascribe meanings to the new concepts and elements of the new model or gain intellectual insight, they could not act upon them effectively. A manager’s metaphorical account pointed to the link between tailoring and adoption:

“The law has a soulless language for it’s a translation ... It doesn’t have a soul, there is the body; we will blow the soul to that body. The generation will [gain experience], as I said, it will change, it will resemble us, and the owners will increase once it resembles us.” (Interview\_21\_manager)

Overall, the managers perceived a straightforward and powerful link between the practicality/outcomes of the model and the ability to comprehend problems that stemmed from directly importing foreign concepts and a lack of local tailoring.

The second dimension is the insufficiency of training. According to some managers and planners, awareness-building and adoption requires intellectual preparation, which can be achieved through appropriate training. The problems associated with poor perception and comprehension of the concepts introduced by the formal PFMCL framework could be overcome by means of training. However, such training could not be given to the managers either before or after planning. Strong evidence supporting this argument comes from the fact that the managers were still struggling to understand the basic concepts such as mission, vision, target, and performance indicator in the fourth year of plan implementation. There are even doubts whether or not most managers have comprehended what strategic planning and strategic plans mean (Interview\_7\_manager) and how it may contribute to the Mol’s business (Interview\_30\_manager). Planners were not exempt as they also lacked the technical expertise to grasp key concepts, since it was the first time they had engaged in strategic

planning. The managers perceived the link between training and expected outcomes of strategic planning as strong. Following was the account of a manager in this respect:

“There is a big knowledge gap for sure. We can talk about more concrete things once this is overcome. We can then say, [for example:] ‘It has contributed to integration; service quality has improved; corporation and co-ordination has been affected’.” (Interview\_42\_manager)

The third dimension is the inadequacy of external guidance during the planning process. A similar argument was made previously in the context of the US state agencies in Chapter 3 (Franklin, 2001). Particularly the planners, who were responsible for the co-ordination of the planning work, criticised the weak guidance provided by the SPO as the watchdog for the strategic planning reform. The planners describe the formal model laid out by the PFMCL 2003 and the Guide 2006 as ill-defined and full of grey areas that required further explanation (Interview\_28\_planner). It was argued in Chapter 5 that a training-the-trainees programme suggested by the MoI was turned down by the watchdogs at the outset. Despite deficiencies and critique, the MoD has not published an updated version of the Guide 2006 to date.

The fourth dimension is weak organisational memory. The MoI is handicapped with a high turnover at both the political and management levels. As the appointment term for managers and the planning schedule did not converge in the MoI, untimely changes of actors have become inevitable, disrupting plan implementation and the construction of organisational memory with reference to strategic planning practice. High turnover was recognised by both internal and external stakeholders as a weakness and threat to the future of the MoI during planning (MoI, 2009c). As a response and to provide continuity in departmental work, ‘the employment of permanent specialists’ was developed as a human resource strategy under Goal 1 (MoI, 2009c, p. 56). The necessary legal basis was created by the enforcement of By-law on Home Affairs Specialists in 2013. The MoI started recruiting specialists in the same year. Yet, managers still perceive the present weakness of organisational memory and interruptions in management continuity as negatively related to the effective application and outcomes of strategic planning.

As the last dimension, the managers perceived an important association between the leadership attitude and the outcomes of strategic planning. References were made to political and particularly to managerial leadership. Managers reflected the need for more top management commitment and engagement in the planning and monitoring processes. The perceived importance of leadership for effective plan implementation is also relevant for the

effective application of strategic planning. However, managers assigned less importance to the link between leadership and application of strategic planning than they did to the leadership-plan implementation link.

Although it is widely perceived that strategic planning did not bring significant change and did not produce the expected outcomes, managers still recognised some favourable changes. The perceived changes mostly relate to management capacity. A few managers described the introduction of strategic planning and finalisation of the first strategic plan on its own as a significant change (Interview\_13\_manager) signalling an “intellectual revolution” (Interview\_3\_manager) given the high resistance from the bureaucracy at the beginning of the process. For some managers, strategic planning created awareness with regard to what the respective departments do and where they are situated in the wider canvas of the MoI. It helped management review and become aware of the roles and functions of the departments, delimit the mandate and service of the MoI, remove contradictions and institutionalise service and stabilise management by putting time and other constraints as controls on broad malleability and excessive discretion. One manager’s views were:

“It formalised [the business, and] rendered it organisation-wide weakening its relation with individuals; so, the strategic plan established a continuous system that cannot be changed considerably by the appointment of a new manager.” (Interview\_22\_manager)

Given the high rate of manager turnover in the MoI, this function of strategic planning was promising. Whoever came to the post would have to abide by the strategic plan. Strategic planning evoked the importance of prioritisation of business among managers, which is likely to lead to the establishment of a balance between the urgent and the significant issues in the MoI, where the former traditionally overwhelmed the latter. Managers became more aware of plan-based work vs. groping, long-term vs. short-term focus, prioritisation of tasks, quantifiability of service and measurability of achievement and became familiar with the concepts of goals, targets, performance indicators and the like. Following are two of the managers’ accounts:

“We have come to learn that the things that we have been doing by groping according to the needs of the day are not persistent and sustainable.” (Interview\_11\_manager)

“I at least believe that it has marked the beginning of a new culture that necessitates [the preparation of] an action plan, and the specification of the Ministry strategies and policies [within] that action plan.” (Interview\_39\_former\_manager)

Planning began to become a part of the organisational culture according to this view, yet in its very early steps. It has, as one of the managers commented, stirred the cumbersome MoI bureaucracy into action (Interview\_3\_manager).

#### **6.4. Pattern 4: Integration and Co-Ordination**

The formal PFMCL framework had an integrative approach. The first dimension of integration was the aim to include all functions and departments within the strategic planning process and plan. The MPSPPO By-law 2006 involved the participation and contribution of all the departments within the involved public organisation in the strategic planning process. Similarly, the Guide 2006 stipulated the formulation of projects and activities as counterparts for each and every legal responsibility ascribed to public organisations (SPO, 2006c). Organisational missions were seen as a means for this purpose (SPO, 2006c). The second dimension was the articulation of an inspiring vision as an abstract description of an ideal future of the public organisation as a whole (SPO, 2006c). This second dimension was particularly critical for multi-agency public organisations with multiple functions such as the MoI.

The formal PFMCL framework adopted an enhanced style of co-ordination within strategy-making in government. According to the By-law on Public Strategic Planning 2006, the strategic plan of the MoI, and of any other public body, had to be in accordance with upper level principles and norms formulated within the development plan, mid-term programme and any other national, regional and sectorial plans and programmes. The Ministry of Development was assigned by the PFMCL 2003 the duty of ensuring the compliance of strategic plans with the mid-term programme, as well as the evaluation and control of the investment proposals for public organisations. It was organised in the form of sectorial departments based on expertise, through which public investment proposals and projects were assessed, as in the case of the Department for Information Society, which controlled and co-ordinated e-government projects cross-governmentally (MoD, 2014). Within this context, the MoI had to consider the goals, policies and macro indicators provided via the mid-term programme for the formulation of its strategies. Concurrently it had to stick by the appropriation proposal ceilings defined by the mid-term fiscal plan for resource allocation.

#### **6.4.1. The Inclusion of All Departments**

For the first dimension, the MoI planners targeted the integration of all departments within the MoI into the planning process and the plan, through the support of the top management. This was one of the aims behind the creation of the comprehensive three-level decision-pyramid. The examination of the MoI's strategic plan shows that it encompassed fourteen main, support, advisory and other departments and the provincial branches of the MoI (MoI, 2009c). These fourteen bodies in total did not include the three subsidiary agencies that were assigned to perform the most critical functions of law enforcement and security. The provincial branches of the MoI were formally included within the strategic plan. However, this integration could not be put into practice in reality, as will be argued below.

The exclusion of law enforcement agencies had two aspects that stemmed from the formal PFMCL framework itself. Firstly, the Turkish National Police had to prepare its strategic plan independently of the MoI according to the By-law on Public Strategic Planning 2006. Secondly, unlike the Police, the Gendarmerie and the Turkish Coast Guard Command, which were affiliated with the Army in military issues, were exempted by the PFMCL 2003 from strategic planning obligations on the grounds of confidentiality and sensitivity around their duties. Neither the Turkish Police, nor the Gendarmerie or the Turkish Coast Guard Command could be integrated to the strategic plan due to the arrangements of the formal PFMCL framework. The Police had already finished and enforced its first strategic plan by 2009, one year before the MoI, in compliance with the deadline set in the By-law 2006. It was perceived by the actors as a significant incongruity:

“The main problem here is that the National Police had prepared and started to implement its plan before the term we prepared our strategic plan; this constituted a very big contradiction” (Interview\_41\_planner).

The Gendarmerie and the Coastal Guard Command never produced a strategic plan within the formal PFMCL framework, in agreement with the law, and could not be integrated into the ministerial strategic planning and management process. The planning team attempted to overcome this discrepancy by giving a place to Goal 2 in the strategic plan, which was intended “to enforce and enhance homeland security services” (MoI, 2009c, p. 57), as a guideline for strategy development in these agencies, at least for the Police (Interview\_36\_planner).

Although the regulations of the formal PFMCL framework explained this omission, it was widely believed that the legal arrangement itself was a consequence of a long lasting power struggle between the civil and uniformed bureaucracies, in which the latter always enjoyed more autonomy (Interview\_3\_manager; Interview\_31\_former\_manager). This was the case for example with regard to public spending and accountability. According to this view, these subsidiary agencies, particularly the Gendarmerie and the Coastal Guard Command, are treated differently since they are semi-military organisations. Hence, it is a frequent practice by the legislator to bestow exemptions on these agencies in numerous laws intended to bring new responsibilities to public organisations. These agencies are loosely connected to the MoI (Interview\_42\_planner) and the problem of integration within the context of strategic planning cannot be solved unless this long-lasting organisational and structural problem is settled. The following account by a manager was illustrative:

“What is the degree of connection of these agencies to the Ministry? To what extent are they a part of this system? And even if they prepare strategic plans, to what extent are they manageable [by the MoI]? ... The first step should be the emplacement of the[se] pieces properly. If these pieces are properly situated, then that big picture emerges by itself.” (Interview\_23\_manager)

The MoI management, to a great extent, perceived the situation to be problematic and as a barrier to the joining together of different departments around a common vision, mission and goals as well as to the synchronisation of units and enhancement of a sense of belonging within the MoI. Following were a planner’s and a manager’s views:

“The subsidiary [law enforcement] agencies must as well focus on the [common] goals and targets in order to provide the integrity of projects and activities; they must prepare strategic and action plans for the achievement of the same goals and targets.” (Interview\_33\_planner)

“Their budget is separate and top manager is different according to the law 5018 [PFMCL]; it is a subsidiary, and it can prepare [its own plan], but the ministry should determine the target. It is under civil authority. [The absence of this] creates a gap.” (Interview\_34\_manager)

The managers and planners viewed this as an impediment to the accountability of top management within law enforcement agencies, who spend public money like any other department of the MoI. According to them, the law enforcement agencies should be included within the strategic plan, with safeguards in place to exempt confidential issues from their mandate. Their exclusion undermines the system by leaving their monitoring and evaluation solely to hierarchy rather than being subject to performance appraisal. Only a handful of managers viewed the exclusion of the law enforcement agencies as justified and as necessary

in some cases. Some managers thought that these semi-military agencies already had strategies, plans, goals and targets and that they always acted strategically. Hence, they believed the exclusion of these agencies would not do any damage to the integrity of strategic planning. According to others, their exclusion was a necessity due to the characteristics of their service domain. One manager's account was:

“Well, I believe they are excluded due to the sensitivity at the agency level. This is quite normal; it is a requirement to my opinion.” (Interview\_11\_manager)

Provincial branches of the MoI include the offices of each department at the provincial level, such as civil registration and nationality, which are the main units with service delivery functions. The number of services delivered by the department headquarters at the centre of the MoI is limited. Interestingly, the provincial branches were treated both as internal and external stakeholders in the analysis study (MoI, 2009c), which appeared to be a contradiction in the approach to these branches during planning. Yet, unlike the law enforcement agencies, the provincial branches of the MoI were shown to have been assigned to duties through the strategic plan (MoI, 2009c). However, this reference was symbolic and provincial branches and their performance has never been monitored within the framework of strategic planning, according to participants in this study and annual activity reports of the MoI (e.g. MoI, 2013). A planner pointed to this gap:

“... the provincial leg is not included within this strategic plan; it must absolutely be designed to include the governors and district governors.” (Interview\_33\_planner)

The exclusion of the provincial branches meant the exclusion of service delivery from planning to a great extent, having important consequences for the MoI's practice of strategic planning. Most of the MoI services are delivered through the provincial branches of the departments. For example, national ID cards or international marriage certificates are issued by the provincial offices of the Directorate-General for Civil Registration and Nationality. Similarly, it is the duty of the provincial office of the Department for Associations to examine and monitor the annual declarations of local associations. One manager's comment was:

“Most of the business does not start and end in this unit. I mean, we do not start and finish the whole process. If it was like that, we could undertake all the responsibility with all aspects. For example, the provincial branches are processing some documents we send to them ... I believe it would be more convenient if the [strategic plan] was prepared through the integration of the provincial units.” (Interview\_2\_manager)

Due to the de facto exclusion of provincial branches from the strategic plan, most performance targets remained as input targets, such as completion of an e-government project. Following is a typical performance target taken from the MoI's 2012 annual report:

“The establishment date of the spatial address registry system.” (MoI, 2013, p. 39)

In this example, the date of the creation of a new system is taken as a performance indicator. However, no targets are put in place to link the new system to the delivery of any service. Evidence shows that the exclusion of the provincial branches has been a significant failing of the MoI's strategic planning experience.

#### **6.4.2. Building a Common Vision**

There is evidence that the integrative effect of strategic planning over management remained extremely limited. The main reason for this is the multi-department structure of the MoI, in which departments perform distant and, to a large extent, disconnected functions. For example, while the Local Authorities Department performs regulatory functions over municipalities, the Civil Registration Department performs direct service delivery, such as the issuance of national ID cards to citizens. Similarly, the Associations Department and law enforcement agencies act in different domains. In such a system, the MoI departments reveal patterns of introverted working as expressed by a manager:

“Our departments are mostly introverted. They don't interfere with other departments' business; neither have they allowed others to interfere with their own work.” (Interview\_25\_manager)

The negative effect of this culture on discussions during the SDB meetings was discussed previously. An important common point between different units was the management class of the departments: the prefects (Interview\_15\_manager). While evidence points to a low level of a perceived common vision and integration, some managers viewed this as a matter of time and thought it was too early to see such effects of strategic planning. One manager said:

“I don't think there is an awareness of integration. I believe that we need some more time for that.” (Interview\_4\_manager)

Practitioners did mention some positive integrative and co-ordination effects of strategic planning but most of these positive views relied on assumptions rather than concrete observations. It is assumed by some planners and managers that high levels of interaction

during the planning meetings might have contributed to the impression of a common vision, a sense of integrity and co-ordination. Since the strategic plan is not reviewed periodically through meetings, the assumed positive effects are likely to have faded over time. The following account by a manager points to the need for continuity through meetings for a better sense of integrity:

“If a structure [and process] can be created for the annual review of the strategic plan and if review meetings can be held with the stakeholders, it can contribute a great deal to integration.” (Interview\_23\_manager)

This view is in conformity with the empirically supported calls in the literature for a more flexible sort of strategic planning model and a blend of rational and incrementalist models that allows the revisiting and revision of strategic plans (Poister *et al.*, 2013), for example on an annual basis.

### **6.4.3. Co-ordination**

The results of stakeholder analysis during the planning process showed that the majority of the internal stakeholders of the MoI found the level of co-ordination and co-operation among departments, and between main service departments and subsidiary agencies, as falling below the expected standard (MoI, 2009c). The customary manner in which inter-departmental relations are constituted with low co-ordination continued to be the case following strategic planning. The close interaction during the planning process showed a temporary positive effect in this regard. There are two important aspects of co-ordination to be addressed for the MoI's practice. First, strategic planning was expected to centralise strategy analysis under the co-ordination of the SDU. How and why strategy analysis remained departmental and fragmented, and how and why central analysis developed superficially during planning was discussed in the first section of this Chapter. Secondly, the monitoring, evaluation and feedback of plan implementation was similarly anticipated to be centralised and co-ordinated by the SDU. Although implementation was monitored centrally by the SDU through three-monthly performance reporting, the evaluation and feedback functions could not be fulfilled effectively as explained under the implementation dimension. Hence, neither the *ex-ante* analysis of strategies nor the *ex-post* evaluation of results could be centralised effectively at a level of high central co-ordination, although the formal PFMCL framework created necessary structures and processes. The inadequacy of the SDU to centralise strategy work was also the consequence of power relations among departments and ineffective actor certification of the

SDU. In other words, the SDU did not manage to wield its legal powers fully against powerful departments, with regard to strategy formulation, monitoring implementation and analysing and feeding back results.

As with the internal stakeholders, the external stakeholders of the MoI found the effectiveness of co-ordination with the MoI weak or average at the start of strategic planning (MoI, 2009c). Managers from various departments perceived no change in cross-governmental co-ordination. A manager stated:

“I can’t say, at least for our department, that such awareness [of high-co-ordination with external stakeholders] has developed.” (Interview\_29\_manager)

However, there is evidence that strategic management had a positive impact on co-ordination between government departments, at least in some respects, with consequences for the MoI. The MoD had a critical role in this regard. It was legally given the role of a hub, where all strategic plan proposals are gathered and checked for compliance with governmental goals, constitutional and legal arrangements, technical aspects of strategic planning and to prevent duplication of projects by different organisations. An increased co-ordination in the field of ICT and e-government strategies was observed in this regard, which is due to the efforts of the Department for Information Society of the MoD. One manager’s account was:

“For example, there is the Department for Information Society in the Ministry of Development .... It is the unit that co-ordinates e-government activity .... They transfer capital and support you primarily if your project overlaps with the governmental goals. For me, they are fulfilling a successful co-ordination.” (Interview\_7\_manager)

According to the managers, enhanced co-ordination in the e-government domain helped to synchronise organisational goals with that of the government, the compatibility between e-government applications in different departments and helped prevent repetition in the public sector. One dimension of positive co-ordination can be found in cross-governmental strategy documents and plans, such as the Information Society Strategy (2006), that have considerably grown in number since the enforcement of the PFMCL in 2003. These are the documents in which governmental goals are formulated and to which acquiescence is mandatory. The MoI was strict in demanding compliance to its goals and targets with such plans and documents, as in the example of the Information Society Strategy (2006) that guided the e-government goals and strategies of the MoI (MoI, 2009c)

Since e-government is extensively used in the MoI and in the Turkish public sector for many functions, from production to the delivery of services, improved co-ordination in e-government is expected to have more than a moderate impact on government-wide co-ordination.

## **6.5. Conclusion**

Through a pattern-matching approach, this chapter compared the patterns of rational planning theory with the patterns of the formal PFMCL framework and with the patterns of observed strategy implementation of the MoI to explain the dynamics of practice. The results of pattern-matching are presented in Table 6.4 below, which is structured in the following way: the second column indicates the involved dimension of rational planning; the third column shows only the degree of convergence between the pattern of rational planning and the formal PFMCL framework; the fourth column shows the observed practice in the MoI; the fifth column compares the patterns the MoI's practice with that of rational planning; the sixth column shows the area of concern; and the seventh column shows the effect of strategic planning reform on the pattern observed in the MoI's practice. Next, the results of pattern-matching are discussed for each pattern.

### **6.5.1. Comprehensive Analysis of Alternative Strategies**

Although the formal PFMCL framework envisaged formal analysis of alternative strategies centrally, the data shows that a link between the strategic planning process and cost-benefit analysis of alternative strategies could not be established firmly during the planning process. The analyses of strategies occurred within the normal workflow in the MoI departments through conventional methods during planning. Cost-benefit analysis of departments showed patterns of comprehensive (aided-analytical) and restricted analysis (unaided-analytical) both of which continued to co-exist during pre-planning, planning and post-planning eras, as exhibited in Table 6.4. Perceived as the generic approach of the MoI, restricted analysis is found to be a consequence of some cultural, system-related and service-related factors which lacks a precise methodology and depends mostly on a rule-based decision-making mental model.

**Table 6.4 – Results of Pattern Matching for Rational Planning**

No	Pattern of Rational Planning (RP)	PFMCL to RP	Pattern of Practice Observed	MoI Practice to RP	Areas of Concern	Effect of SP on Practice
1	Formal Comprehensive Analysis	High	Situation and SWOT analysis for strategic planning purposes	High	The SDU and other MoI Departments	High
			Formal-comprehensive analysis of strategy options by departments	High	Technical and quantifiable services delivered through ICT infrastructure; Political domain (where managerial discretion exists)	Low
			Restricted analysis of strategy options by departments	Low	Most MoI departments (services that are not delivered through ICT and e-government)	Low
2	Formality	High	Formal strategic planning	High	The whole strategic planning process	High
3	a) Implementation of the Strategic Plan	Moderate	Weak implementation	Low	The strategies formulated within the strategic plan	Low
	b) Application of the SP Model	High	Weak Application	Low	Components of strategic planning (PFMCL framework)	Low
4	a) Co-ordination	High	Enhanced co-ordination	High	Cross-governmental (by the Ministry of Development)	High
			Analysis of strategies fragmented	Low	Analysis of strategies is departmental OR is not performed by the SDU centrally	Low
			Evaluation and feedback of results fragmented	Low	Evaluation and feedback is departmental OR is not effectively performed by the SDU centrally	Low
	b) Integration	High	Partial inclusion of units	Low	Law enforcement and security agencies, and provincial branches excluded from SP	Low
			No buy-in of common vision	Low	Organisation-wide	Low

This chapter has described how restricted analysis is dependent on individuals and marked by risk-minimisation and justification of decisions, which are the two kinds of decision rules employed in the decision-making process. A pattern of comprehensive analysis is found to exist in ICT departments and ICT-related services, such as e-government. In this mode,

analysis is systematic, formal and conducted by professionals; built on goal-based decision-making; mostly a consequence of service delivery systems, availability of piloting, the characteristics of mandate and service domain and the dimensions of decision problem and decision environment. The decision rule employed is efficiency or optimisation. Contrary to expectations, the findings show that strategic planning in practice could not transform restricted analysis to comprehensive analysis in the MoI. The pattern of comprehensive analysis observed in the MoI is not the consequence of strategic planning, but mainly of computerisation, Europeanisation effects and domain-specific pre-planning culture. Hence, pattern-matching is indicated both as high and low with regard to comprehensive and restricted analysis in Table 6.4 and strategic planning effects on this result are shown to be low, except for situation and SWOT analysis, which were introduced to the MoI management through strategic planning reform.

### **6.5.2. Formality**

The evidence shows that the formal PFMCL framework is highly formal, legally binding and structures and processes were created and functioned formally. The MoI strictly adhered by a plan preparation programme and a strategic plan document was produced at the end of the process. Formality, in the sense of legal obligation, is seen as a requirement for the initiation and adoption of strategic planning in the MoI. As formality prevailed over all practiced components of strategic planning, pattern-matching in this dimension is marked as high. Strategic planning effects are also marked as high in Table 6.4, since formality of the process stemmed from the formal PFMCL framework or the strategic planning model introduced.

### **6.5.3. Implementation**

Pattern-matching between the theory and the formal PFMCL framework is rated as moderate for implementation of strategies with regard to the quality of the formal monitoring and evaluation systems. It is rated high for the application of the strategic planning model, since the application of the formal PFMCL framework is mandated to the MoI and is under legal guarantee. Regarding the practice, the evidence suggests that the monitoring mechanism proved mostly inefficient during the course of plan implementation. The lack of incentives and sanctions and the lack of a link between performance and staff appraisal, or the absence of performance-based objective criteria for appraisal, lead to the negligence of the strategic plan (Poister and Streib, 2005). In such a system, the MoI managers are mostly accountable

to more senior heads, who have excessive discretion in terms of staff appraisal in the existing subjective system for managing personnel in the MoI. Hence, the attitude of the leadership cadre takes on critical importance by shaping the attitudes of department heads and lower level managers. The evidence shows that effective implementation is contingent upon the existence of a politically strong process champion (Bryson, 2011, p. 104), external audit, and stability of government policy, parliamentary control and civil society engagement to hold public agencies accountable. Similarly, nurturing an environment for a strong strategy-related organisational memory and linking strategic planning to budgetary allocation were found to be important factors for plan implementation. While the relationship between the plan and the budget is vital for service delivery units that exploit high capital spending, its effects are negligible for regulatory and policy-making units. Measurability of service is found to be a facilitator of implementation.

As for the application of the strategic planning model in the broader sense, the MoI managers, to a large extent, perceived a poor application of the model due to the problems of awareness and adoption. The managers largely perceived that the anticipated outcomes of strategic planning did not transpire. Evidence reveals that weak awareness and adoption of strategic planning led only to the formalisation of a business-as-usual approach and could not function as leverage for strategic change in the MoI. Lack of familiarity with the new goal-based decision-making model, insufficient tailoring and training, weak external guidance of the reform watchdogs and weak organisational memory stemming from high manager turnover are discussed as the central factors and mechanisms that led to weak awareness and acceptance of the strategic planning model in the management class. The MoI could neither apply the components of strategic planning model properly, nor took the strategic plan as the main reference point for its operations, leaving the plan ‘on the shelf’. Hence, from a practice perspective, pattern-matching for both the application of the model and implementation of the strategic plan are marked as low in Table 6.4, demonstrating that strategic planning had a limited effect on management practice.

#### **6.5.4. Integration and Co-ordination**

The formal PFMCL framework stipulated a highly integrative system, in which a high level of co-ordination was supposed to exist. Therefore, the match between the integration and co-ordination patterns of the theory and the formal PFMCL framework are marked as high in Table 6.4. In practice, the law enforcement and security subsidiaries and provincial branches

of the MoI, who deliver MoI services at the street level, could not be integrated to the MoI's corporate strategic planning process, undermining the whole strategic plan and defying the logic of strategic planning by excluding service delivery to a great extent. Strategic planning activities created an impermanent impression on integration among managers, which faded during the plan implementation period. The MoI could not realise the sustained integration of its departments around a common vision, since it did not develop an organisational culture where strategies could transform the strong tendency for introversion among the departments, all of which had considerably detached functions.

The MoI could not realise its aim to centralise the analysis of strategies and of evaluation and feedback of results either, due to the continuance of the pre-planning culture and due to the SDU's weak actor certification. Cross-governmental co-ordination was enhanced, visibly in the e-government domain, through the effective role of the SPO and later by the MoD. Cross-governmental strategy documents that increased in number after strategic planning provided the basis for effective co-ordination across the government. Finally, the match between the theory and practice is marked as high in Table 6.4 with regard to cross-governmental co-ordination, while it is marked as low for the rest of the integration and co-ordination elements. Table 6.4 demonstrates cross-governmental co-ordination is enhanced by the effect of strategic management, while it had limited impact on internal systems.

To conclude, the analysis of the evidence from the MoI case exhibits a high level of match between the patterns of rational planning and the formal PFMCL framework, except for implementation, which is at a moderate level. This confirms that strategic planning reform was based on a rational planning theory. Pattern-matching is low in most dimensions with regard to the MoI's actual practice, except for environmental analysis, comprehensive analysis in some domains under certain conditions, cross-governmental co-ordination and formality of strategic planning. Table 6.4 reveals that the effect of strategic planning remained at low levels in changing the managers' behaviour, except for internal and external environmental scanning, cross-governmental co-ordination, and formality of the process, in which the effects of strategic planning were high.

# **CHAPTER 7**

## **THE THEORY OF INCREMENTALISM AND EVIDENCE FROM THE MOI**

“When we come to our ministry, it continued a structure that underlined stability, and that favoured adjustment up to the time being. I don’t think from the perspective of the services we provide that it would be beneficial to consider very different alternatives, I would rather consider more significant the efforts for continuous adjustment.”

(Interview-22, manager)

The theory of incrementalism posits that public organisations act in highly political environments in which decision-making operates through patterns of partisan mutual adjustment (Pal, 2011). Decisions in the public sector are taken through negotiation, bargaining and agreement. Agreement and political rationality, rather than procedural rationality, is the best criterion for public sector strategies (Braybrooke and Lindblom, 1970). Analysis is margin-dependent, incrementally different options, both from each other and from the existing strategies, are considered in analysis and decisions are made upon the basis of increments of change in values promised by a limited number of strategy options (Atkinson, 2011). Analysis of strategies develops progressively in a trial-and-error fashion. Strategy formulation is considerably flexible and it is an ongoing and dynamic process (Quinn, 1980). This chapter analyses the case evidence with an explanatory approach by using the dimensions of incrementalism theory as patterns. In a similar approach to Chapter 6, analysis is directed both to the formal PFMCL framework and to the MoI’s practice. Hence, this chapter compares theory with the formal PFMCL framework, and theory with the practice of the MoI. Analysis is conducted by means of interview and documentary data in an integrative manner and the causes of the patterns observed in the case are traced back to their source factors, structures and mechanisms. With this aim, the Chapter is structured in the following way:

- 1) Pattern 1: Partisan mutual adjustment,
- 2) Pattern 2: Criteria for good strategy,
- 3) Pattern 3: Simple incremental analysis,
- 4) Pattern 4: Trial-and-error,
- 5) Pattern 5: Flexibility and dynamism,
- 6) Conclusion

The Chapter begins with a ‘partisan mutual adjustment’ pattern to explain whether strategic decisions are taken by politically motivated departments of the MoI through interaction, specifically through conflict and bargaining, with other departments or external actors, who are also politically motivated.

### **7.1. Pattern 1: Partisan Mutual Adjustment**

For the intra-organisational politics, in ministries such as the MoI that include various departments and agencies with separate functions, strategic planning can be employed for main two aims: Firstly, for directing resource allocation among agencies; secondly, for ascribing strategic tasks to departments in light of environmental changes (Faludi, 1973). In public organisations, the latter may occur as prioritisation of goals and actions. Accordingly, resource allocation and prioritisation of goals emerged as potential areas of conflict and bargaining (Favoreu *et al.*, 2015) within the MoI’s strategic planning process.

The formal PFMCL framework stipulated the establishment of a link between the plan and the budget through performance budgeting, which was a radical change to the classic budgeting system. The idea of linking the plan to the budget gave MoI managers the incentive to ensure all departmental goals were included within the strategic plan, but also creating potential conflicts and bargaining over resources. For example, the insistence of the planners on to implement performance budgeting caused an upsurge in departmental performance indicator proposals to three-fold all of a sudden (Interview\_36\_Planner). The managers believed that any activity or project that fell outside the strategic plan would not be apportioned money in the budget. As one manager stated:

“In order to receive a share of the budget, we wrote down everything that we had been doing.”  
(Interview\_26\_Manager)

However, the developments during the MoI’s planning process showed that it was not an easy task to turn to performance budgeting due to a series of systemic and other factors, such as lack of experience and the inflexible personnel system. Neither the MoI nor any other

public organisation in Turkey has implemented performance budgeting to date and budgeting has continued in the traditional way. Conflict and bargaining on resource allocation was ruled out to a great extent because strategic planning did not function as a means for resource allocation. The following extract highlights a planner's views:

“Where does bargaining occur? It occurs when sharing something, when sharing a resource. Now, that kind of bargaining did not happen; [such as] ‘linking the plan to the budget in a way when we have a certain size of cake and sharing the cake’. This did not happen since the extent of the [planning] work had not reached that point.” (Interview\_28\_Planner)

The realisation of costing and budgeting chronologically after the formulation of goals and strategies (MoI, 2009c), rather than concurrently, shows a weak link between the two.

The prioritisation of goals and strategies was the second potential source of conflict. The basic reason was that the strategic plan was intended to be a concise guideline, particularly due to the directives of the SPO, whereas the MoI departments were motivated to have all their activities listed. Discussions for prioritisation took place at the three-level decision-pyramid created by the SDU for strategic planning purposes. The most interactive debates took place in the first and second level of the pyramid, in which managers other than the department heads and the Undersecretary took part. The parties involved in the discussions were the departments, on the one side, and the planning team or the SDU, on the other side. Departments were motivated by the instinct of survival and maintenance of functionality. The managers from main service departments (either with delivery or regulatory functions) viewed the inclusion of their respective goals and actions within the strategic plan as an important means for ensuring the continuity of their units (for example Interview\_31\_former\_manager). The planning team, on the other hand, was motivated by the aim of developing a technically perfect strategic plan. Hence, a rather moderate degree of conflict and bargaining between the departments and the planning team occurred (Interview\_13\_manager). One of the planners described the process:

“There were discussions, but not severe. It wasn't right to approach going like: ‘We know everything.’ The department staff knows the department's characteristics better than us. We rather considered what they said, but at the same time we tried to direct them in order to adapt proposals into the formality of planning. Some of them insisted on some issues; we resisted. Yet, we found a common point.” (Interview\_2\_former\_manager)

The units that are not assigned service delivery or regulatory functions, such as the Inspection Board, were less motivated by such stimulus and the discussions they were involved in took place as consultation on technical issues with the planning team (Interview\_34\_manager).

In the SDB, discussions on the prioritisation of goals between the planners (SDU), department heads, deputy undersecretaries and the Undersecretary developed in the form of talks on pros and cons of proposals, exchange of ideas, constructive criticism, consultation, and clarification of situations in congruence with the MoI traditions. Similarly with the deputy heads and directors, the department heads were motivated by the aim of getting their departmental priorities accepted by the board or to be included within the strategic plan. The SDU's position was the same. The discussions at the board level did not amount a level of conflict and bargaining. A manager's view was:

“No it is not bargaining, as I said, we learned [strategic planning] all together at that time; we did it collectively.” (Interview\_10\_manager)

Several underlying reasons existed. Firstly, most of the managers believe that departmental mandates are clearly defined by the Statute of the MoI and it is primarily the department heads and managers who prioritise their respective goals and actions gradually throughout the three-level decision-pyramid. According to this view, departmental relations are not based on mutual interests since mandate overlaps are rare among departments. A manager's view was:

“One should not expect bargaining here, because there is the departmental [approach] during the preparation of the plan ... so, bargaining is not possible since there isn't much intersection points; [and] since there isn't a relation based on mutual interests.” (Interview\_13\_manager)

According to the managers, conflicts can stem from mandate overlaps, although its likelihood is perceived as low. Examples of conflicts that stemmed from mandate overlaps occurred as denials or claims of a service or mandate between two departments, or uncertainty over the power to manage some funds between the SDU and the Department of Administrative and Financial Affairs, due to a change in the public spending system by the PFMCL 2003. Conflicts of mandate overlaps cannot be the subject of negotiation, bargaining and agreement among equivalent departments. Rather such conflicts are settled by the highest managerial or political authority in the MoI.

Secondly, the vertical organisation and hierarchical system in the MoI, according to some managers, does not adopt negotiation and bargaining as a method. A planner reflected: “Equal [departments] cannot make a choice among themselves [in the MoI]” (Interview\_28\_planner). The role of the Undersecretary, and occasionally the minister, are seen by the MoI managers as the most important factor in impeding the development of interaction, similarly to partisan mutual adjustment. The hierarchical system depresses

conflicts intrinsically and through the powerful position occupied by the Undersecretary in decision-making, who is also empowered by the law to conduct strategic planning on behalf of the minister. In this system, the departments express their position and perspective on an issue in the SDB, which is dominated by the Undersecretary. Decisions are taken on the basis of a “natural consensus” (Interview\_28\_Planner) that develops naturally through discussions. Unsettled conflicts are resolved ultimately by the Undersecretary, in consultation with the SDU if required, for being the unit that acquired the expertise of strategic planning, at least in theory. The department heads act upon the orders and directives of the Undersecretary. Due to his strong position, the Undersecretary, or the minister on some occasions, has the power to mediate to get agreement on goals, strategies and priorities. In such a setting, as viewed by a manager, “decisions are made easily” (Interview\_11\_manager). This description of decision-making or consensus-building is similar to what Bryson (2011, p.23) portrayed previously:

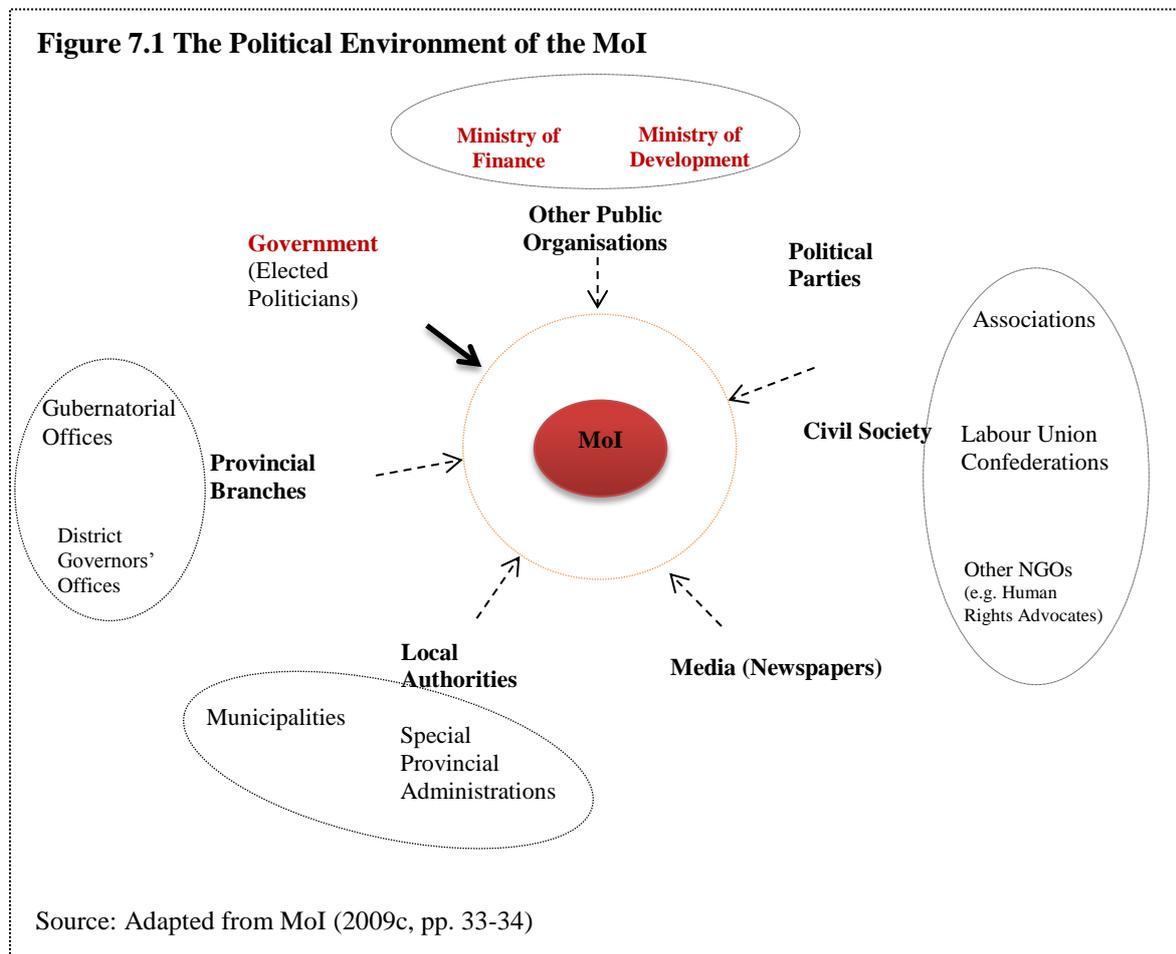
“In the fragmented, shared power settings that characterise many public ... organisations ... there will either be consensus on goals, policies, programmes, and actions necessary to achieve organisational aims, or there will be someone with enough power and authority that consensus does not matter ... Only in fairly centralized, authoritarian, and quasi-military bureaucracies will the assumption hold – maybe (Roberts & Vargo, 1994).”

The MoI offers an example of what Bryson describes above, at least with reference to the internal politics of planning. The managers reveal that the decision-making system of the MoI only permits flexibility to the extent of the top manager’s personal will to share power with other actors. Such an organisational setting does not allow the cultivation of a pluralist culture that builds on diversity and conflict of ideas.

Hence, with reference to the intra-organisational dimension, strategic planning developed as a process constituting various interactions at moderate levels such as discussion, influence, persuasion and reconciliation, rather than bargaining, among the actors. Thus, intra-institutional diplomacy was employed by the planning team for the settlement of minor conflicts.

For the extra-organisational relations of the MoI it is better first to look into the formal arrangements of the PFMCL 2003. The formal PFMCL framework recognised the political nature of the environment of public organisations by including stakeholder analysis as a component (SPO, 2006c) in the broader situation analysis. The guide adopted interviewing, meetings, workshops and questionnaire studies as methods for receiving stakeholders’ views

(SPO, 2006c). The MoI acted in congruence with the guidelines provided within the Guide 2006. The planning team conducted a central stakeholder analysis study in mid-2007 through the use of a questionnaire methodology. This was a form of information gathering, a discrete and discontinuous activity that lacked interaction between the MoI and its stakeholders for shaping the future strategies. Yet, it was an important step for the MoI management for the systematic analysis of their political environment. Figure 7.1 presents how the MoI perceived its political environment (MoI, 2009c) as having a wide range of actors as stakeholders, from provincial branches and local authorities to civil society institutions, political parties and the media. The ‘government’ item is added to the Figure 7.1 by the author of this thesis, implying that elected politicians are also important stakeholders in the MoI’s strategic planning process.



The solid arrow represents the big impact of the government on the MoI, at a time when the strong one-party government that has been in power for the last twelve years considerably weakened this dichotomy and became the most important determiner of the public strategy and policy-making. The MoF and the MoD are purposefully included by the author to

indicate that these two institutions, among other public organisations, are important stakeholders of the MoI's strategic planning process.

The preparation of the MoI's strategic plan took place between 2006 and 2008 (MoI, 2009c). While planning activities progressed through interaction among departments, the SDU and the top management, the departments were not isolated from the external environment and its effects upon them. Departmental interaction with their primary stakeholders continued either within or outside the context of the strategic planning work.

Conflict, bargaining and agreement mostly occurred in the external environment of the MoI according to the MoI managers, where the political and managerial domains intersect. The interaction occurred in the form of bargaining when other ministries, as equivalents of the MoI, were involved. The interaction occurred in the form of influence, inducement, and persuasion of the MoI by its stakeholders when non-equivalent stakeholders were involved.

Particularly the departments that work in close proximity to the political domain are perceived to engage in more interaction with their stakeholders. Some departments in the political realm with regulatory functions, such as the Department for Associations, conducted their own stakeholder analysis through meetings with external stakeholders. The department received the viewpoints of the associations in these meetings and there was harmony rather than conflict between the MoI bureaucracy, the government and the associations regarding the goal of enhancing civil society at a time when governance and transparency were rising, mostly due to the impact of accession talks with the EU.

The Directorate-General for Local Authorities was a department that acted in the political realm with responsibility for the regulation of local authorities. The Department's relations with municipalities, who are its primary stakeholders, were extremely dynamic due to the intrinsic characteristics of the field. The managers reflected a high level of stakeholder interaction and conflict within this domain. A manager's account was:

“Every party wants a regulation to be made according to their own points of view. For example, the perspectives of the metropolitan municipalities and district municipalities are in conflict [in general]. If you design the system according to the viewpoint of one of the conflicting parties, you may make one of the parties happier, but you damage the system as well .... The viewpoints should be received, but making regulations that will not damage the functioning of the system is significant.” (Interview\_20\_manager)

The above account reflects a contrasting view with the case of the associations department. The local authorities department is motivated by the desire to preserve the system or the

*status quo* in local-with-local and local-with-centre relations which puts the MoI bureaucracy, at least some part of it, in conflict with the local authorities and the government. A manifestation of this occurred during the legislation of Law No: 6360 on Metropolitan Municipalities-2012, within the strategic plan implementation period. The Directorate-General for Local Authorities received the views of the mayors of metropolitan and other municipalities, MEPs, governors, district governors and other stakeholders in order to propose a suitable model to the government. The attempt of the Department to establish a balance between the demands of the stakeholders and the existing system was ignored by the government. Following was a manager's account:

“As bureaucrats, we tried to reflect [the views of the stakeholders] during the legislation process ... but we couldn't succeed to a great extent. Because, there were big gaps between the model in the government's mind, and the model that we drafted. The full stop was put by the government.” (Interview\_13\_manager)

Harbouring serious contradictions with the MoI's strategic plan, Law No: 6360 has also been an example of how government preferences can lead to the suspension of the strategic plan. Hence the government, comprising elected politicians, is highlighted in Figure 7.1 to indicate its dominant role and decisiveness in the field of public policy.

Stakeholders direct their efforts to persuade, rather than bargain with the MoI bureaucracy, while they bargain with the elected politicians in order to maximise their benefits in the political realm. Recognising the political nature of the Undersecretary's role as an agent of the political establishment and the grey area on which the political and the managerial are intertwined, the Undersecretary reflected two interlaced roles: a representative of the bureaucracy to be persuaded on technical issues, or a government agent who negotiates politically with the stakeholders.

Unlike political fields, technical service domains such as civil registration and nationality services do not show high political interaction, conflict and bargaining patterns. These domains do not attract as much attention from internal and external stakeholders as does the political domain (Interview\_31\_former\_manager). Technical services are quantifiable to a high extent and business and task processes are clearly defined. Intervention by the MoI's top management is perceived to be low in technical services. As with the internal politics of the MoI, in which the Undersecretary has the unique power to induce consensus on goals and actions, the strong one-party government had control over enforcing agreement on necessary legislation in the Turkish Parliament until mid-2015.

A cyclical and recurrent form of bargaining among equivalents is perceived by the managers to transpire in the budget preparation process and in the negotiation of the investment programmes. The formal PFMCL framework introduced a dual system based on the dichotomy of the budget and investment procedures. According to Article 17 of the PFMCL 2003, the MoI, as other public organisations, had to send its budget proposal to the MoF and its investment programme proposal to the MoD. The two ministries are highlighted in Figure 7.1 to underline this relation. In this system, an investment proposal could not receive funds unless it was approved by the MoD, as the co-ordinator of public investments.

Although the budgeting system continued in the form of classical budgeting, the departments were to continue to defend and justify their budget proposals through negotiation with the MoF according to the PFMCL 2003. Increasing the departmental budget beyond the fixed annual rate was possible by transferring from the reserve fund budget item, which increased the likelihood of bargaining. The law authorised the minister of finance to secure such transfers, implying interaction and bargaining between ministers at the political level, as well as the one between bureaucrats, for the pursuit of the MoI's goals. Although a link between the MoI's strategic plan and resource allocation could not be established, the following account of a manager showed how strategic planning could have a justification role in budgeting processes during negotiations with the MoF:

“Additionally, the process unfolded according to the [PFMC Law No:] 5018. These issues were raised by the involved [MoI] departments during the defence of budgets. We said ... ‘This [activity] exists in our strategic plan; we have to carry out this activity; so you have to allocate this resource to us.’” (Interview\_30\_former\_manager)

The negotiations for the investment programme with the officials of the MoD were similar to the one with the MoF. The MoD is the supervisor of the public strategic planning activities in Turkey. The MoI's strategic plan could only come into force upon the examination and approval of the MoD. In its examination, the MoD sought for the congruence between the MoI's goals and strategies, particularly capital investment proposals within this context, with cross-governmental goals and strategies. The MoI departments, therefore, had to negotiate their investment project proposals with the officials of the MoD. The interaction with this ministry was found to be moderate when compared to the one with the MoF on budget, as reflected by the actors (for example Interview\_31\_former\_manager).

The external environment of the MoI demonstrated more of the characteristics of a centralised system because of the accumulation of executive and legislative powers in the

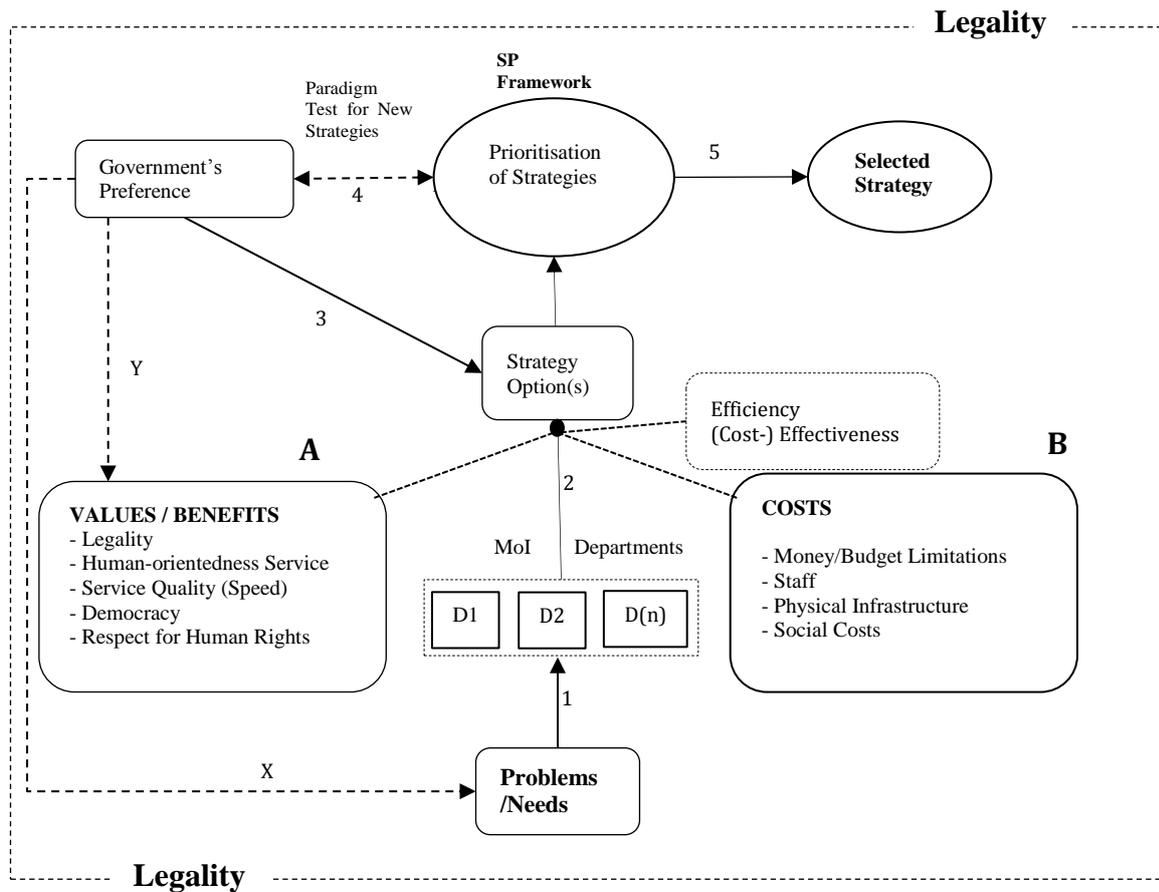
(one-party) government that had a unique position in the public policymaking system. This power was underpinned by the traditional functioning of Turkish democracy and political parties, in which government proposals can seldom be challenged by the ruling party deputies in the Parliament, unlike for example the UK system, due to strict party discipline and strong leadership. Although the departments of the MoI engaged in different kinds of interaction with their stakeholders, this interaction did not show a strong pattern of partisan mutual adjustment that can be seen in highly pluralistic systems, such as the US as argued by Lindblom (1979).

## **7.2. Pattern 2: Agreement as a Criterion for Good Strategy**

In this section, the MoI's practice is analysed with regard to some criteria, details of which are discussed progressively, that were applied for the selection of strategies. That is whether it has been the attainment of agreement, or another set of criteria that has been influential in the strategy choice.

The formal PFMCL framework adopts a method similar to rational planning theory. It stipulates the determination of values and goals and the analysis of strategy options with regard to their costs and benefits in light of these values and goals (SPO, 2006c). Figure 7.2 presents the criteria for the selection of strategies in the MoI and how the selection process occurs in practice. The accounts of managers and planners and examination of the planning documents disclose that the MoI formulates its strategies, to a great extent, to address social problems and needs. In practice the MoI evaluated the benefits and the likely costs of strategy options through a restricted form of central analysis within the context of strategic planning and through varying degrees of departmental analysis in light of some pre-adopted values, as shown in Box A in Figure 7.2. The main values were proclaimed by the MoI in its strategic plan as legality, human-orientedness, enhanced speed and better quality service, democracy, effectiveness, efficiency and respect for human rights (MoI, 2009c, p. 53), which have been referred as dimensions of organisational performance (Boyne, 2002). This was in accordance with the arrangements of the Guide 2006, which stipulated that values could address people (internal and external stakeholders), processes, and dimensions of performance (SPO, 2006c). The link (Y) shows that these values can be adopted for the MoI, as well as for the whole of the public sector, by the Government.

**Figure 7.2 – The MoI’s Criteria for Strategy Analysis**



In this section, first, the values and principles in Box-A in Figure 7.2 that guide strategy selection shall be defined and discussed. Then, how other factors, such as the government and management paradigm, affect strategy selection in light of these values shall be argued. Finally, the role of costs, as a criterion, and the link between the values, benefits and costs shall be discussed.

### 7.2.1. The Basic Values of the MoI

Legality is the foremost value that guides strategy development in the MoI according to its strategic plan (MoI, 2009c, p. 53) and according to the accounts of the majority of managers and planners. As a value, legality is related to the merits of bureaucracy such as predictability and equity before the law (Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2011). Strategies, for the MoI, are the means to achieving these values. Another aspect of legality, that is compliance with the law, is discussed in the next section.

Enhanced service delivery speed is treated as an aspect of service quality, while quality is dealt with as a dimension of organisational performance in the public management literature (Boyne, 2002; Poister, 2003). Fast and better quality service was one of the basic values aspired to by the MoI, as detailed in its strategic plan (MoI, 2009c, p. 53). Participants in this research supported this view as the following account by a manager demonstrates by posing a strong link between service speed improvement and strategic planning:

“Strategic plan must be the calculation of how [services] within your mandate can be provided best and in a short period of time through the targets [and] measurable indicators specified by you.” (Interview\_22\_manager)

High quality and enhanced service speed have been repeatedly emphasised by the MoI’s strategic plan, as in the following quote:

“The information and communication technologies will be exploited to the highest extent in order to provide citizens with the simplest and most effective, high-quality, swift, continuous and secure opportunities in the provision of services that are laid down in the Ministry’s mission ....” (MoI, 2009c, p. 60)

References are made to the improvement of service delivery speeds with relation to goals 1, 2, 3, and 6 (see section 5.2.4.3 for a list of goals) in the strategic plan. There was harmony between the government and the MoI bureaucracy with regard to improvement of service delivery speed, as can be traced in the cross-governmental strategy documents, such as the Information Society Strategy (SPO, 2006a). Strategies such as the expansion of e-government applications that promised this outcome were widely adopted. A planner commented as follows:

“The services can be provided in a short period of time [by means of e-government]; this increases both the citizens’ and the state’s satisfaction in high degrees. This makes everyone happy in the ministry, no one resists this.” (Interview\_2\_planner)

Human-orientated (or citizen-oriented) public service was another principle and value that was firmly adopted by the Turkish government (SPO, 2006b), and by the MoI (MoI, 2009c). As noted in Chapter 4, human-orientedness was employed in the Turkish public service as a refutation of the ‘customer approach’ in service provision. The following logic expressed by a manager lies behind such approach:

“I should say that I strongly oppose to this idea: ‘Citizen is customer!’. No! Citizen is not a customer in public service. If you define him or her as a customer, you have to show him or her the alternative ... Citizen is the owner of the business.” (Interview\_21\_manager)

While this account reflects the inadequacy of competition (referring to alternatives) in public service provision in Turkey, it also implies the highly public ethos of the services provided by the MoI, particularly security and law enforcement. Human-orientedness was an overarching and superior value that encompassed the value of service quality mentioned above. References were made, in the MoI's strategic plan, to either human- or citizen-orientedness in the MoI's mission statement and with regard to goals 1, 2, and 3. A manager from the registration and nationality services, in which e-government is dominant, pointed to the essential nature of this value:

“Our basic [value] is human-orientedness. The outcomes should directly target the citizens.”  
(Interview\_31\_former\_manager)

Service user satisfaction, which is an aspect of organisational performance (Poister, 2003), was considered as a dimension of human-orientedness by the Turkish government (SPO, 2006a). In accordance with the government's perspective, service user satisfaction was viewed by many actors from various departments of the MoI as a significant criterion for the evaluation of strategy options. According to them, strategies should meet the expectations and needs of citizens and act as the main trigger for departments to take action. One manager described this as:

“And ... citizens' satisfaction; this is very important. I see the attainment of the expectations of the target population as a significant criterion in this regard.” (Interview\_23\_manager)

One aspect of citizen satisfaction that was perceived by managers, particularly from the registration and nationality department and the local authorities department, was whether a strategy had the potential to simplify the lives of citizens. According to this view, a strategy can be more easily adopted by the MoI if it promises to facilitate a better life for citizens leading consequently to their satisfaction (for example Interview\_26\_manager). Respect for human rights, which is referred to in the context of civil society strategies in the strategic plan (MoI, 2009c), can be considered to fall under the category of human-orientedness.

Democracy was adopted as an important value by the MoI management. References were made to Goals 3, 4 and 5 (MoI, 2009c). Efficiency and effectiveness shown in Figure 7.2 are related to inputs, outputs and outcomes of the process and how these play a role as selection criteria is discussed in the context of the application of the criteria below.

### 7.2.2. The Process of Strategy Selection

Figure 7.2 shows that strategy development is triggered by the awareness of a problem or a social need by the MoI departments (Link-1). A problem can be ascribed by the government to the MoI as a task and responsibility to be solved as shown by the Link (X). The following account by a manager reflects the function of strategy development as problem solving:

“Well, [does the strategy] meet the needs of the public? And second, does it solve the problem in that field?” (Interview\_25\_manager).

In whichever field the strategies are developed, the values in Box (A) serve as the main principles and guides. For example, when strategy is related to direct service delivery, the strategic target becomes “the provision of better quality services with enhanced speed” (MoI, 2009c, p. 61). Similarly, for the value of democracy or participation, a strategic target is formulated as “the obtainment of participation ... in local authorities” (MoI, 2009c, p. 62).

Although the formal strategic planning framework stipulates central analysis of strategies, analysis is mostly departmental and fragmented in the MoI. Strategies are analysed by the departments in view of their benefits and costs, as shown by Link 2 and strategy options are supplied as input through the strategic planning process. The emphasis of the departments on values varies, particularly with regard to efficiency and cost-effectiveness and so does the extent of their analysis. Before explaining the extent and dynamics of the variation, the criteria of legality and the government’s preference are worth dwelling upon.

Legality is the most important criterion for strategy development in the MoI, mostly with reference to compliance with law. The dashed outer square in Figure 7.2 represents legality. It constitutes a comprehensive basis that comprises all activities including strategic planning. Law is the main source of the MoI’s mission, thus, its mission statement reflects its legal mandate (MoI, 2009c). The lines drawn by the law are the borders and strategies should and must address issues within these parameters. The following is one manager’s account:

“There is the legality criterion in the first place, because anything that you do must be within the framework of the legislation; within the lines that it draws. You have to look from the perspective of legality when you consider things in front of you.” (Interview\_42\_manager)

Hence, a social problem or need must find a place in the MoI’s repertoire of rules to become a subject of strategy formulation. The strategies formulated within the strategic plan were

accordingly selected in strict compliance with the law. One planner's account made reference to central strategy analysis:

“We considered the legal mandate [for strategies]; what is being done at the present or will be done in the future ... the legal mandates were considered, rather than the benefits and costs [of strategies].” (Interview\_36\_Planner)

The above planner referred to the central analysis of strategies, rather than the departmental dimension of analysis. This is a consequence of the MoI's classic bureaucratic organisation as well as that of the broader public administration, in which compliance with law, rules and procedures are essential. In this bureaucratic entity, if any problem falls outside the lines drawn by the law, then a new rule must be created to constitute the legal infrastructure for required activities (Interview\_37\_manager).

The government's preference is perceived as another important criterion for the selection of strategies. While the law may include broad and vague expressions, government preferences, which can be deemed as a representation of the view of the majority in society, comprise down-to-earth steps and actions to be taken. These preferences emerge in two forms. Firstly, they can be identified as formal strategy expressions through cross-governmental plans, programmes and strategy documents. These official documents are the products of formal bureaucratic procedures that process and turn government's broad goals into legally and practically feasible plans (Interview\_28\_planner). Compliance with these preferences is mandatory for the MoI, according to the formal PFMCL framework. The government's preferences are then input through strategy options, as shown by Link 3 in Figure 7.2, to be directly included within the strategic plan. The MoI's strategic plan was prepared in strict compliance with such preferences formulated in the 9<sup>th</sup> Development Plan, 60<sup>th</sup> Government Programme Action Plan, Mid-term Plan, and Information Society Strategy (MoI, 2009c). Participants' perceptions were affirmative:

“Ninth Development Plan ... annual programmes, government programmes, these are our reference points. Our strategic plan must be in congruence with the upper level plans of the state [and] the government. The preferences of political power were reflected [to the strategic plan] ... our [plan] has always been in accord with those documents.” (Interview\_33\_manager)

Secondly, the preferences of elected politicians are extremely unpredictable, which generates the problem of “stakeholder uncertainty” (Elbanna *et al.*, 2015, p. 7) and unplanned change in policy. In such situations, mostly a single strategy option was dictated by the government to

the MoI out of the strategic planning framework, which was mostly perceived to occur in the political realm, such as the regulation of local authorities (for example Interview\_19\_manager). Government preference dominates any other criteria, except for legality, for the adoption of strategies. When the government's preference conflicts with the existing rule-base, a new rule is created. The government can afford the creation of a new law easily relying on its incontestable majority in the Turkish Parliament. Strategies that overlook or stand in conflict with the government's choices cannot be implemented (for example Interview\_30\_manager). One manager pointed to this:

“If you produce something notwithstanding [the government] ... you will get stuck at some point, even if you have formulated the best strategy; the best plan in the world.” (Interview\_23\_manager)

The MoI management acted upon this issue during the planning process as conveyed by some participants:

“Some of the [departmental] suggestions for strategic targets were declined on the grounds that the government's view was different.” (Interview\_36\_planner)

The MoI culture demonstrates a strong tendency towards conservatism and *status quo* bias. Hence, the strategy options taken into consideration were strictly subjected to a management paradigm-test during analysis. Options that radically challenged the *status quo* were either declined during strategy formulation or could not be implemented even if they were adopted in the strategic plan. An example of the latter situation is the MIAPER (Performance Appraisal) Project that is discussed in the following sections. The exceptional status of this regularity is shown by Link-4 by Figure 7.2, whereby the MoI tested a far-reaching option against the government's preferences. Hence, if a strategy option that challenged the *status quo* was within the preferences of the government, it was adopted without resistance, since the MoI bureaucracy did not have the power to resist the government.

The values discussed in the previous section could be achieved but had some cost implications, such as expenditure of resources in terms of public money, staff, physical infrastructure and social costs as shown in Box B. There were two views of the role of costs as a criterion for strategies. Firstly, most MoI managers perceived of costs as being equivalent to budgets, which showed the limits of annual spending. According to this mainstream view, costs were an important but not the primary criterion for strategy development. This was particularly the case for departments with regulatory functions, where

social costs, rather than monetary costs, played a greater role. This also applied to other departments such as human resources and provincial administrations. Cost is a wholesale figure that is determined by the addition of the price of each single strategy, as practiced during strategic planning (MoI, 2009c). Hence, the criteria of efficiency and cost-effectiveness, which required the close and concurrent consideration of values/benefits and costs, were not the primary measures for the selection of strategies (Interview\_27\_former\_manager). Values, social benefits, solutions to social problems or meeting the needs of the public were more influential as criteria, with an eye kept on the budget. This logic was strongly underpinned by the notion of legality as compliance with law. Hence, services were described, designed and delivered through the law in advance and the task of the departments was to provide these services within the limits of the budget. The belief that “delivering the service in compliance with law and within the budgetary limits generates benefits” was taken for granted in this perspective (Interview\_35,former\_manager).

A considerable increase in the MoI’s budget that started in mid-2000s and continued throughout the planning period possibly had some effect on the perception of the insignificance of cost-effectiveness, as pointed out by a manager (Interview\_22\_manager). Table 5.1 demonstrates that the MoI’s budget almost doubled from 2008 to 2013. According to this view, the cost-effectiveness dimension received limited attention from the MoI management under the conditions of resource abundance.

Secondly, a small group of managers from departments such as Civil Registration and ICTs, who use a digital communications infrastructure in all or some service delivery through e-government projects, assigned primary importance to efficiency and cost-effectiveness. The criterion for a good strategy was the optimisation of utility, according to these managers, where utility was a combination of different values that are expected to be achieved, such as user satisfaction, higher speed, enhanced security, efficiency, and effectiveness (Interview\_29; Interview\_39\_managers). Selections were made through the analysis of expected utility and costs of strategy options in light of these values, rather than through a process of negotiation and reconciliation. ICT permitted some experimentation for the optimisation of expected utility as long as finances and time sufficed.

Changes in the values of efficiency and cost-effectiveness of services were not systematically monitored by the MoI, although performance measurement was introduced through the formal PFMCL framework. The formal effectiveness of its programmes was the focus of

performance measurement, instead (MoI, 2012). Strategies for internal or external service delivery were the product of either restricted or comprehensive analysis, rather than the outcomes of political negotiation and agreement. The exception to this finding was the regulation of local authorities, in which government preferences reflected political interaction between the government and its stakeholders, particularly the municipalities.

As a final point, since the existing level of resources and available strategy options determined what the MoI could do and achieve in the short term, a process of adaptation of goals (ends) and strategies (means) became the norm. Two of the managers' accounts indicate this link:

“Well, we don't have the opportunity to say, as being the Police Force, [for example,] that we have fifty thousand policemen [this year and] this will be one hundred fifty thousand next year. The budgetary figures are definitely considered there.” (Interview\_12\_manager)

“Second the financial situation ... the level of staff, physical infrastructure, these have primary significance. Well, what can you do without having adequate resources ... we have just managed to hold a mini-scale international conference on public-civil society relations this year ... there was the legal basis [and] we had it in our strategic plan, but we didn't have the resources and [qualified] staff previously.” (Interview\_14\_manager)

The second quote constitutes a good example for what happens when goals are not adapted to means. In this example a delay occurred until the necessary resources were obtained.

### **7.3. Pattern 3: Simple Incremental Analysis**

Analysis of a limited number of policy options that are marginally different from each other and from the *status quo* is an important stratagem of disjointed incrementalism and it is by its own referred as “simple incremental analysis” (Lindblom, 1979, p. 517). The distinction between the ‘trial-and-error’ and ‘simple incrementalism’ stratagems of broader incrementalism theory is that the former may lead an organisation to change in the long run when applied consistently and sequentially, while the latter leads to the preservation of the *status quo* (Atkinson, 2011).

The accounts of the managers suggest that the MoI management had a tendency towards prioritising their past experiences or those of others in adopting strategies particularly with regard to, but not limited to, its core functions. One manager's comments were:

“When we particularly look into our Ministry, I think that [strategies] are more established applications relying more on our past experience [and] on the experiences of other countries.” (Interview\_21\_manager)

As in the manager’s account, the origins of tried and tested strategies can be domestic or foreign. Whatever the source, the adopted option leads to incremental progress. Characterised by strong conservatism and *status quo* bias, the organisational paradigm of the MoI is viewed by the managers as an influential determinant in this respect. According to this assessment, the MoI’s paradigm favours adaptation to its environment in small steps progressively and decisively due to the intrinsic features of its core functions. The term ‘core function’ is critical in this context. The dominant core function of the MoI is recognised as security and law enforcement by internal and external stakeholders with a convergence in their respective approaches (MoI, 2009c). Law enforcement and security, at the same time, is a core central state function and regulations and actions in this domain define an important part of the relation between the state and the public. Hence, any suggestion of radical change has the potential to change the nature of the state-public relations affecting the state system, its main paradigms and the ‘social contract’. A conservative stance is adopted, in this domain, by the top management to ensure the continuity of the existing system. A manager’s view was:

“When we come to our ministry, it continued a structure that underlined stability and that favoured adjustment up to the time being. I don’t think from the perspective of the services we provide that it would be beneficial to consider very different alternatives, I would rather consider more significant the efforts for continuous adjustment .... I mean, our Ministry is one of a few that nurtured an administrative tradition [and] generated stability.” (Interview\_22\_manager)

From this perspective, a strategy option gets adopted if it is familiar and not radically different from the established norms. The untested and far-reaching options, particularly with respect to the MoI’s core functions, are ignored:

“The Ministry is not enthusiastic about making changes in basic areas. It is perceived as risky to deviate from the gained experience and [established] practice.” (Interview\_12\_manager)

New strategy alternatives are considered with reference to their relevance to the existing or pre-existing methods. An alternative is accepted by the top management if it can be associated with the pre-tested policies, such as the example of community policing strategy adopted in 2003. The following manager’s view is important as it shows how new strategy options are linked to past experience:

“For instance, a project called community policing was implemented .... We suddenly saw that we adapted what once the neighbourhood guards performed to the present day when implementing community policing. [Community policing strategy] says that the police should know who they provide services to, should visit businesses and households. The neighbourhood guards did the same thing .... Hence there is no change in the mission [and] the target. But, of course the population is now three thousand while it was three hundred in the past. Now you are to know the [service users] by the help of technological means .... You develop measures according to the needs of the day. The core of the business does not change, as I told.” (Interview\_35\_former\_manager)

The adoption of an alternative that is considerably different from the *status quo*, meaning a deviation from simple incremental analysis, is possible by the intervention of the government in the strategy selection process, for example by a reform agenda. A recent example of such intervention could be found in 2009. The government’s approach to the problem of separatist terrorism in Turkey changed from it being seen as a security problem and an armed struggle to a social conflict that needed a peaceful solution based on the recognition of differences in society. This shift considerably altered the ‘nation state’ paradigm of the Turkish State that had long overlooked ethnic diversity in society. Hereby, another dimension of strategies in the core functions emerges. While the MoI bureaucracy has tended to preserve the *status quo* in its core fields, making radical changes in these areas falls beyond its powers. It requires the will and support of the elected government, as representatives of the public, for any far-reaching strategies to gain legitimacy. This substantiates the exogenous nature of goal-setting in the core fields (Wechsler and Backoff, 1986). Simple incremental analysis is perceived to exist in some degrees across the MoI departments, such as the provincial administration services, with functions that have similar characteristics to the law enforcement and security domain. Innovative strategies can still be found in the core fields such as the extensive use of e-government.

Despite this generic approach of the MoI management, four groups of far-reaching strategies were detected, which were developed either to start or sustain change in and out of the MOI. These are found in (i) e-government and ICT, (ii) re-organisation in security and law enforcement, (iii) human resources and, (iv) strategies in regulatory functions. It is discussed next how innovative strategies that somehow found a place in the strategic plan were undermined by the existing management paradigm of the MoI, except for the e-government strategy.

### 7.3.1. E-government and ICT strategies

These strategies were formulated for the enhancement and expansion of ICT infrastructure and e-government applications across units, functions and services of the MoI. They aimed to develop and further extend ICT and e-government projects that had been initiated in the pre-planning era in mid 2000s such as:

- E-icisleri (2003),
- E-ID Card Project (2006),
- ID Data Sharing Project (2005),
- MAKS (Spatial Address Registry System) Project (2006), and
- Electronic archive (2007) projects.

An analysis of the MoI's activity reports 2010, 2011, 2012, and 2013 shows that these projects were either completed or made significant progress. For example the MAKS project was completed in 2012 (MoI, 2013), while the e-ID Card project passed to the final phase of delivery by adapting the infrastructures of the provincial civil registry branches in 2013 (MoI, 2014a). The documentary and interview data demonstrates that the adoption and implementation of e-government and ICT projects were relatively straightforward in the MoI, although they brought radical change to service design and delivery.

One explanation is that the strong dynamic emphasis backed by legislation on specific policy areas by the government's agenda. The government had already set and declared the expansion of e-government applications as a strategic goal via the Government Programme, the 9<sup>th</sup> Development Plan 2007-13, the Mid-term Plan 2011-13, Annual Programme 2013, Information Society Strategy and Information Society Strategy Activity Plan. The government set a target to deliver 70% of public services through online applications and realise one of every three public sector transactions through electronic channels by the year 2010 (SPO, 2006a). The MoI had already had some experience from early 2000s to see how e-government applications could improve public services and make positive changes. The MOIs provincial branches and prefect offices had already begun to use ICT in service provision independently of each other and of the headquarters before it was adopted as a generic strategy by the MoI. While these separate experiences demonstrated the concrete benefits of ICTs to service provision a need for co-ordination and synchronisation of the systems emerged concurrently, which required a comprehensive approach in the ICT field (Interview\_39\_former\_manager). The creation of electronic ID database (MERNIS) and ID Data-Sharing (KPS) projects considerably hastened ID confirmation services in public to

public, public to private and private to private services opening up a new era in public service provision in Turkey, which also drew the attention of many other countries (Interview\_31\_former\_manager). The e-government strategies under Goal 3 targeted both service delivery and internal operating systems.

The annual activity reports of the MoI shows considerable progress in the realisation of e-government projects that brought big change to the design and delivery of services (MoI, 2010b, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014a). The most effective factors were the influence of the political agenda and the expected contributions of such projects to improved service quality (including speed) and human-oriented service delivery as principal values of the MoI's service provision policy. The experience of the MoI throughout 2000s and other countries' experiences in the e-government field were also influential. From another point of view, systems such as CCTV or electronic ID cards increased the surveillance capacity of the state over the public by providing 'Big Brother' with new and effective means of control, which could hardly be rejected by a traditional bureaucracy. Finally, the previous empirical evidence suggesting that ICT strategies that particularly targeted internal operating systems reinforced command and control in hierarchies in some cases (Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2011) may also have a role to play in the easy adoption of such strategies by the MoI's top management.

It should be re-emphasised here that ICT strategies brought innovation to the content of the service delivered as well as the methods of service delivery, particularly through consultation with professional ICT analysts. Since e-government strategies date back to the pre-planning era, a direct link between a change in this realm and strategic planning cannot be established straightforwardly.

### **7.3.2. Re-organisation Strategies for Security and Law Enforcement**

Turkey's reorganisation strategies were developed particularly through the impact of accession negotiations with the EU in view of the recent developments in the service realm and society. Turkey undertook several responsibilities in its National Programme 2003 under Chapter 24 titled 'Justice and Home Affairs', including the necessities of reorganisation strategies, to harmonise its policies with the EU's *acquis* (IA, 2013). The strategies in this area targeted the establishment of two new departments under the MoI in the migration and border security service areas that have traditionally been delivered by the law enforcement

and military forces. The first of these was the establishment of the General-Directorate for Migration Management (MoI, 2009c). A migration bureau had already been created in late 2008 as a nucleus in accordance with the ‘Asylum and Migration Action Plan 2005’ from the Prime Minister’s Office (IA, 2013, pp. 18-21) before the first strategic plan came into force in 2010. The bureau was transformed into an agency in 2013 by the enforcement of its statute. Recognising the establishment of this new agency as a significant shift in existing migration and asylum policy, a manager described how he perceived the creation process of the new unit as being straightforward:

“There are decrees of council of ministers, national programs, undertakings for the EU, needs of the Country, the Ministry strategic plan ... things written in the development plans so on and so forth; since there was lots of stuff written in various documents we did not have trouble.” (Interview\_32\_manager)

The second strategy was the transfer of the border security services from the military forces to a new directorate-general specialising in integrated border security. In a similar manner to migration services, the preliminaries for the establishment of the new department started in 2003 with the creation of a Project Management Centre within the MoI to co-ordinate EU projects on integrated border management (MoI, 2014c). A bureau was founded in 2008 and was overhauled in 2012 as the ‘Border Management Bureau’. Unlike the migration and asylum department, this new department has not been established under the auspices of the MoI as yet, although it was included as a strategy under the Target 2.1 in the strategic plan (MoI, 2009c, p. 58).

Reorganisation strategies were partly realised by the establishment of the new migration agency and the most influential factor was the impact of EU relations and Turkey’s commitments within this context, rather than internal dynamics, strategic planning and change. The political agenda also played an important role for the facilitation of the process, as perceived by the actors (Interview\_32\_manager).

### **7.3.3. Human resource strategies**

Within the context of human resource strategies, performance-based appraisal of prefects was adopted as a strategy in the Strategic plan (MoI, 2009c). Both managers and planners viewed the performance appraisal of prefects as challenging since the existing appointment system for the prefects was firmly embedded in the *status quo* in the MoI. It was not an easy task to change this system that had been operating for years, according to one of the managers

(Interview\_8\_manager). The origins of this strategy dates back to the pre-planning era in the development of the MIAPER project (Performance Appraisal of Prefects) in 2006 by the former Strategy Centre (CfRS, 2014b). Its adoption as an organisational strategy formally through the strategic plan meant a major shift from a system based on broad discretion, loyalty to both political and managerial leaders, and patronage to a more objective system for personnel appraisal. The piloting of the developed performance criteria continued until 2008 (MoI, p. 77), however, MIAPER was not included as a target within the performance programmes during the four years of plan implementation between 2010 and 2013. The MoI management could have enforced the new model through a ministerial regulation but they discontinued the project:

“MIAPER ... Its appropriation was within the capital budget until last year. They said: ‘It is done’ and it was cancelled.” (Interview\_36\_planner)

The managers perceived that innovative strategies such as the MIAPER could not be put into practice due to internal resistance in the MoI:

“[MIAPER] could be easily put into practice .... Well, we adopt the idea, and even initiate the process enthusiastically; however when it comes to implementation, a braking occurs in the Ministry ... Perhaps it is the same in all other ... public organisations.” (Interview\_34\_manager)

The internal resistance expressed by managers reflects the prevalence of the *status quo* in the MoI that has been elaborated in the preceding and present chapters. Hence, this radical strategy could not be implemented because of the resistance from *the status quo*, although it was given place in the MoI’s strategic plan.

#### **7.3.4. Strategies in the Area of Regulatory Functions**

The innovative strategy in regulatory functions aimed to set national standards for local authority services and central monitoring of service performance. By the adoption of the strategy, the MoI showed decisiveness to use its regulatory powers on local authorities that were extremely politicised bodies. The antecedents of the strategy lie in 2001 with the start of the BEPER (Performance of Municipalities) project (MoI, 2012). The General-Directorate for Local Authorities aimed to develop performance criteria and an online database through testing and piloting in order to measure, compare and benchmark local service performance indicators and enhance democracy, participation, transparency and accountability in the local authorities by providing public access to data (MoI, 2011). The ultimate aim was the

enactment of a law to enforce performance measurement in local authorities (MoI, 2010b). The MoI allocated funds for the completion of the project in 2010 and 2011 during the plan implementation period (MoI, 2011; 2012). However, the project was halted in 2012, without an explanation, although a fund was allocated in the 2012 budget (MoI, 2013). Accordingly, the strategy to measure service performance in local governments was abandoned. The end of the project marked the continuity of the *status quo* with regard to the accountability of local authorities. The following manager's account pointed to the difficulty of regulating and standardising local services:

“You know that the work relating to the local authorities is performed by the Directorate-General for Local Authorities. But, it can still be considered as a fantasy for [this department] in the Ministry to carry out a study to analyse how services can be delivered in shorter times, more efficiently, with lower costs. It is because of the domain characteristics and the [political] nature of the domain.” (Interview\_39\_former\_manager)

The most decisive factor in this respect was the pressure from local authorities that have been enjoying a great deal of power and autonomy through the support of the localisation agenda in the last decade as well as the government itself, which favoured the empowerment of the local against central bureaucracy.

Overall, the evidence presented in this section demonstrates that simple incremental analysis is a stratagem that is frequently applied in the MoI, particularly in core functions. However, far-going strategies can be put into practice as long as they contribute to service delivery and do not radically alter the policies in core functions and established systems.

#### **7.4. Pattern 4: Trial-and-Error**

Trial-and-error, or sequential analysis, is an important pattern of incrementalism theory either within a disjointed or logical mode. Trial-and-error is not theoretically expected to be found in the MoI, since strategy formulation was based on a formal strategic planning model. In this section, firstly, the existence of trial-and-error in strategic decision-making is highlighted from the perspectives of the MoI managers. Documentary evidence is integrated where appropriate to support arguments. Secondly, analysis is directed to whether trial-and-error is practiced purposively, as a deliberate and logical method of strategy formulation and implementation, or non-purposively as a sign of muddling through or groping.

The perceptions of actors reflect two competing views. While one view supports the existence of trial-and-error in the MoI as a method, the other view advocates the opposite. The discussion starts with the latter view.

About half of the MoI managers perceived trial-and-error as non-existent or an infrequent method in the context of strategic goals or problems in the MoI. The word ‘error’ is perceived with negative connotations by these managers and trial-and-error, for them, is the last resort. Error is not an option, in this perspective, even though the managers are aware that it occurs frequently in public organisations all around the world. Two of the managers’ views were:

“No, no, there is nothing called trial-and-error; it is not our management style.”  
(Interview\_14\_manager)

“No, we don’t do experiments, we don’t use trial-and-error; something gets weighed, discussed, then implementation begins.” (Interview\_15\_manager)

Several factors were cited by the managers as the underlying reasons. Among these were the ownership of the resources, that is public vs. private ownership, strict rules and regulations that govern public spending in the sector and availability of piloting.

With regard to resource ownership, trial-and-error in the context of strategic goals and problems is considered to be inappropriate since the MoI uses public resources to produce and deliver services. The use of public resources, mainly public money, is perceived to be related to two factors. The first is the strict rules and regulations that define how public money can be spent by the MoI departments. Public spending is seen as a highly regulated field that puts severe restrictions on managerial discretion. Tight budgeting procedures involve the provision of a service or the fulfilment of a specific project or activity within a pre-determined time frame, with a certain amount of public resource, whereas trial-and-error requires more flexible spending. A manager’s view reflecting this perspective was:

“Therefore, the budgeting in bureaucracy [and] public administration operates over tight fiscal discipline. There is hesitation in that sense, I mean; ‘the appropriation is this, and it is limited’. You may not have the opportunity even if you would like to [try something new].”  
(Interview\_42\_manager)

Another dimension of tight regulations is the matter of authorisation for the practice of trial-and-error in the public sector. One manager commented:

“But you have to go through numerous procedures to try something [new] in the public sector. To what extent will they allow you? And you [will] need to convince them ... [You] will not have authorisation most times.” (Interview\_25\_manager)

Hence, if and when a strategic decision involved monetary costs, then highly strict budgetary regulations and the issue of authorisation invokes risk-averse attitudes (Kissler *et al.*, 1998a) dismissing trial-and-error as a method for strategy analysis. An example for the latter is the need for ratification by the High Planning Council chaired by the Prime Minister for big capital investments.

Some managers think that however perfectly designed strategies in theory are, they should be tested against the practicalities of life, against the unforeseen and the overlooked details that might have grave consequences in implementation (Interview\_23\_manager). These managers were motivated by the perceived high risk of wasted public resources, as well as other factors such as social risks and the public reputation of their departments and the MoI. Perceptions of high risk are amplified by irreversibility of costly decisions. This alternatively leads to two different actions. On the one hand, it may lead to the exploitation of intra- and extra-organisational lived experience. In this case the analysis process shows the patterns of a process of simple incremental analysis, as it was argued in Section 7.3. On the other hand, it may lead some departments to go thorough analysis in technical areas where the availability of experimentation and piloting plays an important role as an enabler. Departments that deliver some of their services through digital communications infrastructure, particularly ICT, civil registration and associations, tend to analyse comprehensively ‘how’ the service should be provided, as the field allows for R&D, innovation, and piloting. The following comment from a manager in the ICT department points out the relationship between irreversibility of decisions, their costs and analysis:

“I don’t think that we have a choice in this subject. I mean, we are trying more to dwell on the research dimension ... You won’t have the chance to say ‘Pardon me!’ after spending large amount of capital.” (Interview\_7\_manager)

The sequence of analysis that takes place is (1) R&D of the project, (2) piloting and (3) implementation. All these stages were perceived to involve formal procedures such as the preparation of feasibility reports. Whether a project shall be implemented is decided in the first phase, while how it shall be implemented is settled in the piloting phase. The irreversibility of the decision and the option of piloting pushes departments towards conducting some analysis of a policy, project or activity within the context of a strategy, prior

to its expansion. Piloting is viewed by these managers as an indispensable and proper alternative to trial-and-error. Furthermore, it is perceived to be getting engrained within the MoI's management culture as a routine method of analysis as well as within the Turkish public sector as a whole (for example Interview\_13; Interview\_22\_managers).

Some of the managers in this respect view trial-and-error as an extravagant approach, an outdated method which unnecessarily empowers personal discretion in the public sector and they view errors, in service provision, particularly in costly strategies, as a risk for the wellbeing and public image of the agency in the long-run:

“Well, I consider trial-and-error as a luxury. You provide a service here, and you use resources for doing this, and this resource belongs to the public. Therefore, analysis, research, investigation and certainty instead of trial-and-error.” (Interview\_23\_manager)

The following views of a manager on how to approach strategic matters describes a method that is very similar to formal strategic planning:

“There should be a mechanism for decision-making. You collect the information, analyse it, form the strategy; and there should be a documented programme which shows the method of implementation. You make the decision and monitor implementation. If the implementation leads to an unanticipated direction, you don't change it the following day. You should develop a mechanism to change it.” (Interview\_32\_manager)

Some managers viewed cultural factors as effective. They felt that trial-and-error was not an institutionally adopted generic strategy for the analysis of strategic decisions and neither was it an element of the MoI's traditions and of its management ethos and hence it was not an established and routinised managerial behaviour (Interview\_13; Interview\_42, managers). Trial-and-error is considered by some of these managers as “acting without feeling confident” (Interview\_9\_manager). For these reasons it was seen as inappropriate for public service and particularly for the MoI.

Social risks are also seen as influential, as public service involves large populations consisting of individuals who cannot be treated as subjects of policy experiments. The consequences of errors may be severe not only for the members of the organisation, its image and trustworthiness but also for large numbers of individuals as the users of public services. A manager's view was:

“Because, public administration is a management field which bears consequences for wide masses. So, it is not much possible to apply to trial-and-error. It is targeted to eliminate or minimise error ... through pilot applications, instead.” (Interview\_42\_manager)

Despite these views, the existence of trial-and-error as a method attracted support from some practitioners and this is discussed next.

The other half of the managers interviewed pointed to the existence of trial-and-error within the practices of MoI departments, however most times as a result of impulsiveness. According to this view, trial-and-error is not a purposeful choice, rather an unintended consequence that the MoI departments endure with regard to strategic issues. Neither is it an explicitly formal process showing the patterns of logical incrementalism. Two managers' comments sharing this perspective were:

“Trial-and-error is not a method that is highly appreciated in our administration perspective. Sometimes ... it happens in the following way: You do something, but not to say; ‘I will see what happens.’ You do it and see that you fail, and change it in a short period of time. It turns to trial-and-error, but it's not your initial intention. It happens both in the department and in the ministry.” (Interview\_13\_manager)

“It is not performed purposefully ... but it is so in practice; virtually. I mean, it is done unconsciously. Well we observe it every day; the laws [and] regulations are changing every day, [and] continuously ... There is no choice as: ‘Let's do it in this way; if we see errors we can correct [them]!’ The practice is not based on such a priori acceptance.” (Interview\_34\_manager)

Though unintended, it is perceived by a few of the actors to be the most significant descriptor of strategic decision processes either within their respective departments or of the MoI as a whole. A manager's view was:

“Well, it wouldn't be much possible to say these in a planned period of five years with a strategic plan. But, what is our generic approach? Trial-and-error is a significant method!” (Interview\_12\_manager).

Implicitly or explicitly the Managers felt that the negligence of formal strategy analysis, which is a component of the MoI's strategic planning framework, results in insufficient scrutiny leading to a process of trial-and-error. Evidence for this pattern is seen in a continuous change in laws and regulations within a short period of time of their enforcement. The process is driven by reactions from affected groups in the field, such as service users, politicians as their representatives, prefects as implementers at the local level and other stakeholder groups of the MoI, rather than as a result of systematic analysis of the policy outcomes. Error does not occur in a controlled process in this pattern, but as a consequence of a lack of adequate formal cost-benefit analysis or imperfect calculation. A manager's reflections were:

“[Trial-and-error] is an important method in the Turkish [Public] Administration ... ‘Let’s do this, if it doesn’t work, we change it!’ ... I don’t think that comprehensive, long-term analyses are conducted such as: ‘What pros and cons are we likely to face in the long-run? Does this happen if that occurs?’” (Interview\_12\_manager)

Some of the underlying reasons perceived by the managers include decision-related factors, such as the tolerability of decision consequences and reversibility of the decision and the impact of the political agenda. The management culture and paradigm of the MoI has an overarching impact over the processes.

The decision-related factor reflects the continuity of the practice from the pre-planning era, at least in some departments. The low level of adoption of the strategic planning framework, lack of technical expertise and experience, weak leadership support and other factors lead to the negligence of the formal strategic planning framework and to the exercise of an extremely flexible and unplanned practice. A narrative related to this kind of approach is found in the saying “*Caravan gets aligned on the way!*” (Interview\_34\_manager). The following account presents how trial-and-error can have an important role in the departmental practice:

“All our [practice] is conducted through trial-and-error. We do it; if it works we say ‘OK!’, if it doesn’t we change it ... we don’t have a clear [formal] method.” (Interview\_3\_manager)

Managers or departments tend to follow this path mostly when the expected consequences of a decision are relatively non-costly or tolerable and when decisions are easily reversible, even though it requires new legislation in Parliament. The following account reflects this dimension:

“But the risks generally are absorbed in internal matters. You amend a law by enacting a new law upon three days of its enforcement, if it fails.” (Interview\_27\_former\_manager)

The above account implicitly refers to the ease with which new laws can be passed in the Turkish Parliament. This stems from the strength of the one party government as an executive branch with indisputable dominance over the legislative in Turkey, where an effective balance of powers is not established in the state system. These kinds of decisions may bear social costs and specific costs for affected groups, such as the employees as the targets of human resource strategies. An example was given by two managers with reference to the amendment in the appointment system of the prefects from 2010, which targeted the appointment of more experienced and senior prefects to the underdeveloped southeast part of Turkey, which is also affected by ethnic terrorism. The first manager commented as follows:

“For example, we decided not to leave any sixth class districts in the west [of the Country, and we did]. But later we saw that it affected the east very much and we stepped back. We are now increasing the number of sixth [class districts] in the west in order to appoint more senior [prefects] to the east, to the fifth zone.” (Interview\_4\_manager)

The other manager completed the story:

“[We] have turned sixty of the sixth class districts into fourth class [in the southeast] within two-year period [and] appointed district governors who have at least two years or more experience. This brings a new situation to our system ... We are playing within the system. We don't break the system but we create flexibilities within it. Or, we are making changes but the main tenets of the system remains as they are.” (Interview\_8\_manager)

These accounts demonstrate how the process of amendment unfolded in a trial-and-error manner. A different form of trial-and-error occurs through the impact of the political agenda which is driven by unexpected changes in Governmental preferences, particularly in highly political areas such as the regulation of local authorities. In this pattern, a change in governmental preferences leads directly to the suspension of the formal strategic planning framework and the MoI's management paradigm. Set apart from previous patterns, the change is far-reaching rather than incremental. The management's role, in this case, is to give technical assistance for necessary legislation or regulation. Although the financial costs of strategies are analysed to rationalise the government's choice, the social, indirect and other risks and costs, for example, of the uncertainty lying ahead, are not evaluated formally within the process. An example of this lies in the reform process of the Turkish local authorities that started in 2003 and continued to date with an important peak in late 2012 by the enforcement of the Law No.6360, which increased the numbers, expanded the borders and boosted the powers of metropolitan municipalities following the March-2014 local elections. A manager commented about the process as follows:

“I mean, what our department is doing is not within the framework of strategy ... We did not talk [and] discuss about expanding the borders of the metropolitan municipalities ... no one talked about such a model. These were not included in our reports. But ... there occurred a shift in the Country beginning from last year ... This isn't something happening within the context of strategy.” (Interview\_19\_manager)

Within the same context, the following account of a manager showed how the situation exceeded the managerial and organisational frontiers:

“[The Law 6360] is not our decision. We are acting as technocrats in this situation. It is the decision of the government, I mean. It is the government's project ... it isn't something at [the management] level. It is totally about the high level political will.” (Interview\_15\_Manager)

The legislation of the Law No.6360 meant the abolishment of Special Provincial Administrations in metropolitan municipalities, which was in direct conflict with the strategic target 4.3 of the MoI's strategic plan that stipulated the improvement of these administrations. Neither had the MoI's strategic plan included such a strategic target in its first strategic plan nor did the government purposefully adopt a trial-and-error approach. Instead the development showed a pattern of inadequate formal analysis and unintentional trial that generated non-incremental outcomes. Law No.6360 came into force in 2014 and three changes were made to it by July 2014. The implementation process needs to be observed to see if more evidence supports, or contradicts, the perceptions of the managers.

## **7.5. Pattern 5: Flexibility and Dynamism**

Incrementalism posits that continuous adjustment of means and ends is a superior approach to an inflexible long-term planning practice (Braybrooke and Lindblom, 1970). This approach requires continuous reconsideration of goals and strategies after every move. Hence, strategy-making unfolds flexibly and dynamically (Quinn, 1980). Having a strategic plan is not a necessity in incrementalism and it would be treated as a 'working paper' even if one existed. In this section, the formal framework of the PFMCL and the strategic planning practice of the MoI are examined with regard to the extent that they allow the reconsideration and revision of goals, targets, and strategies in order to adapt to changes in the internal and external environments. The analysis includes the extent to which strategy formulation and implementation demonstrate dynamic characteristics in the MoI.

The formal PFMCL framework offers a limited form of flexibility with clear margins that set the bars high, with an assumption of operating in a mostly static environment. It stipulates two methods for the reconsideration of strategic plans: update and renewal. Relevant provisions for the update and renewal of strategic plans are given place within the MPSPPPO By-law 2006. The update of a plan is defined in the MPSPPPO By-law 2006 as: "the numerical changes in performance targets without any change to the mission, vision and strategic goals of the plan" (p. 1) and a plan can be updated within at least two years of plan implementation. The renewal of a plan is defined in the MPSPPPO By-law 2006 as: "the re-preparation of a strategic plan from scratch for a new five-year term" (pp. 1-2). Renewal can be made in the case of:

- A change in legislation regulating the mandate, duties and responsibilities of a public organisation,
- A change of government,
- A change of minister,
- A natural disaster, hazardous infectious diseases or severe economic depression.

While the formal strategic planning framework stipulated a restricted form of flexibility, the managers reflected a highly malleable and dynamic strategic planning model that hypothetically allows for responsiveness to changes in the internal and/or external environment. Their views relied mostly on personal speculation, rather than concrete information, pointing out a knowledge gap in the above arrangements made by the By-law 2006. A comment in this respect was:

“Strategy-making is a dynamic thing. We can change this document even after a year has elapsed [upon its enforcement].” (Interview\_26\_manager).

Despite low levels of awareness of the procedures for update or renewal, flexibility was perceived as an important principle for the effective implementation of strategic planning in the MoI. Two of the managers’ responses were:

“Neither is it unchangeable ... if time necessitates significant changes, we should be able to do them. Otherwise ... the plan would tie us down.” (Interview\_8\_manager).

“Well, it doesn’t mean that the strategy is indispensable after you specify it and after the plans and programmes for three-year terms are made ... the plans of strategies should not be indispensable and immutable, if so, this is not right.” (Interview\_14\_manager)

The goal-hierarchy of the MoI cascaded classically from broad to specific dimensions at five levels described as (MoI, 2009c) Vision – Mission – Goals – Targets – Performance indicators. The analysis of performance reports and activity reports in the years 2010, 2011, 2012 and 2013 of the MoI revealed that no renewal action took place with respect to the strategic plan at the first four levels of this goal-hierarchy model, despite four ministerial changes from 2010 to date during the plan implementation period (MoI, 2014b). Neither did the management carry out a review process during implementation to re-assess organisational goals and targets in light of new developments. The enactment of Law No.6360 in late 2012 marked a far-reaching move in the government’s existing policy for the regulation of metropolitan city municipalities, which precipitated the need to re-address Goal 1 (reinforcement of the prefectural system) and Goal 4 (reinforcement of local authorities). While these symbolise the tension between central bureaucracy and local government, such revisions could not be made in accordance with formal procedures. However, once the MoI

management realised that the reinforcement of the prefectural system was close to impossible within the powerful current of localisation, a de facto change was made to the first strategic target in 2011 through the removal of the phrase ‘prefectural system’. Following is the original form of the Target 1.1 in the MoI’s strategic plan:

“The prefectural system will be overhauled in order to serve better to the citizens.” (MoI, 2009c, p. 56)

Below is the transformed form of the Target 1.1 in the MoI’s 2011 performance report:

“The necessary arrangements will be made in order to serve effectively and with better speed to the citizens.” (MoI, 2012, p. 85)

This was an important step back from the original strategic position; however, the change did not occur within the formal procedures of the formal PFMCL framework. Furthermore, the change was made in the annual performance reports; hence, the strategic plan remained in its original form. The following account by a planner confirms this:

“No change was made to the strategic plan after it was publicised ... We could not do [it] at the level of mission, vision [and goals] ... however, we tried to provide that dynamism at the level of activities and indicators during the preparation of the performance programmes.” (Interview\_41\_planner)

The last sentence reveals that the MoI found its own solution to enhancing the flexibility of the strategic planning framework through circumventing the legal arrangements made by MPSPPPO By-law 2006. This was a de facto adaptation of the plan to the changing circumstances within the limits of the initial budgetary figures. While the MPSPPPO By-law 2006 allowed solely for alteration in the numeric values of the performance targets set in the strategic plan, the MoI introduced new performance targets every year through annual performance programmes, as expressed by the planner above. Other participants took a similar line:

“Of course, since you prepare [annual] performance programmes within the strategic planning framework, you have a chance to make some changes.” (Interview\_12\_manager)

“The legislation allows [changes to the strategic plan], but whether it develops in that way ... in practice is doubtful. So, it is dynamic in this aspect, but is it that much relevant in practice? ... It is dynamic only in one aspect since performance indicators are redefined every year in practice ...” (Interview\_17\_planner)

The change occurred in, and is limited to, performance indicators at the fifth level of the goal-hierarchy, except for the change made to the Target-1 as mentioned above. Table 7.1 presents the use of the previous and new performance indicators between 2010 and 2013.

**Table 7.1 – Use of New Performance Indicators**

Goal No	Strategic Goal	2010			2011			2012			2013		
		T	P	N	T	P	N	T	P	N	T		
1	Reinforcement of the Prefectural System	3	-	2	2	1	-	1	1	1	2		
2	Law Enforcement & Security	3	1	2	3	3	-	3	3	2	5		
3	e-Government	9	1	6	7	3	10	13	1	21	22		
4	Reinforcement of local authorities	5	-	4	4	2	3	5	2	3	5		
5	Enhancement of civil society	6	5	1	6	3	-	3	1	3	4		
6	Reorganisation of the Ministry	5	2	7	9	3	4	7	-	11	11		
<b>TOTALS</b>		31	9	22	31 *	15	17	32 **	8	41	49		

(N) = New, (P) = Previous, (T) = Total

\*The figure is presented as 30 in the MoI Annual Report 2011, due to the presentation of two indicators as one single indicator.

\*\*The figure is presented as 33 in the MoI Annual Report 2012 due to a misprint.

Source: Adapted from (MoI, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014a)

The figures show that new performance indicators have been frequently introduced during the four years of plan implementation. Both the number of new and total indicators reached a peak in 2013. The number of new indicators was 41 out of 49 total indicators in 2013, while it was 22 out of 31 in 2011 and 17 out of 32 in 2012. The e-government strategy (Goal 3), in which ICT Department and the Directorate-General for Civil Registration and Nationality had active roles, was the most dynamic with 6, 10, and 21 new indicators in years 2011, 2012, and 2013 respectively. The realm of the sixth goal, reorganisation of the Ministry (Goal 6), was also active in including 7, 4, and 11 new indicators in the same years, while the areas of the other four goals remained stable.

The analysis of new performance indicators demonstrated either complementariness or discreteness patterns. For complementariness, each new indicator marked and represented a

different aspect or stage of the involved strategy. For example, developments in the strategy related to the e-ID card project were measured through the use of the following performance indicators in the years 2010, 2011, and 2012 respectively:

“The percentage of the completion of the T.R. [Turkish Republic] ID card pilot project practices (%)” (MoI, 2011, p. 93).

“The completion date of the project for the adaptation of the technological infrastructure of the provincial civil registration branches to the new T.R. ID cards” (MoI, 2012, p. 85).

“The completion date of the feasibility, investment and procurement works related to the [delivery of the] new T.R. ID cards” (MoI, 2013, p. 39).

In this example, each indicator represented a further stage of the e-ID card strategy observed as; finalising piloting (2010), adapting infrastructure (2011), and feasibility and procurement of the delivery service (2012).

The pattern of discreteness was observed when new indicators were mostly unrelated with the previous ones under the same strategy. This appeared in re-organisation strategies (Goal 6) in which various departments, such as Human Resources, SDU, Media and Public Relations Advisor’s Office, Department for Training, Department for Foreign and EU Relations had performance measures (MoI, 2011, 2012, 2013). For example, the Department for Foreign and EU Relations and the Department for Training had performance indicators for the first time within the strategic planning context in 2013 under Goal 6.

**Table 7.2 – Dynamism of Performance Indicators**

Goal-1	Objective	Performance Indicator	2010	2011	2012	2013
<b>Strengthen the Prefectural System</b>	The prefectural system will be re-designed to serve better to citizens	1 The number of standardised One-Step Bureaus	√			
		2 The completion rate of the scaling work (%)	√			
		3 The establishment date of the new migration unit (date)	√			
		4 The number of 112 Emergency Call Centres taken into operation		√	√	√
		5 The number of forms		√		
		6 The number of 112 Emergency Call Centres with completed physical infrastructure				

Source: Adapted from (MoI, 2010b, 2012, 2013, 2014a)

The highly flexible and dynamic practice of introducing new indicators harmed the steadiness of performance measurement. Table 7.2 shows an example of interruptions in the steadiness of the use of performance measures under Goal 1 throughout the years 2010, 2011, 2012, and 2013.

No single performance indicator was used throughout all four years of plan implementation. The indicators 1, 2, 3, 5, and 6 were used only once during the period, while indicator 4 was used for a three-year period. The statistics for the remaining five goals are similar. One main underlying reason is the focus on the formal effectiveness dimension of performance and the use of discrete input and output indicators, which terminate upon the completion of the given task.

The system developed to enhance flexibility was a response to demands from departments to meet their practical needs. The managers saw flexibility as a requirement from several aspects, including the need for change when analyses are weak or incoherent, foresights and predictions are imprecise and a business process is ill-defined, which renders a pre-determined performance target impractical. A manager's comment was:

“Sure, sure, sure it can be in this way either: At the end of the day, you can later see a target as unrealistic, which you consider realistic today. Or you might have defined an unrealistic target due to incorrect analysis or inadequate scrutiny of the data, or incorrect definition of the business process.” (Interview\_23\_manager)

Other factors recognised by the planners as influential include the lack of technical expertise in specification of performance indicators, uncertainty particularly with regard to budgetary prospects of a five-year plan term, a misperception of high flexibility of the strategic planning model and negligence of the departments due to a perception of ‘insignificant routine’. The following account by a planner reflects how perceptions of uncertainty regarding costs and budgets leads to the desirability of a more flexible strategic planning:

“I believe that performance indicators should be re-specified annually. Because, when you are told to define performance indicators for a five-year term it requires costing ... It is not much possible to specify the cost of an activity ... four years in advance in the public [sector].” (Interview\_17\_planner)

In practice, implementation by the MoI reflects the above account since new indicators have been introduced annually, as demonstrated in Table 7.3. The deviation between the estimated and realised budget figures presented in Table 5.2 also support the planner's view of future uncertainty in the public sector. The extraordinary upsurge in new and total indicators in

2013 is mostly related to a change in the top management's attitude towards more engagement in the plan implementation process, which is discussed in section 6.3.1.1.

Evidence reveals that proposals for big changes to the strategic plan are not welcomed by the SDU. For example, one of the managers described the rejection of their proposal to introduce significant change to the strategic plan:

“We tried a few times, but I don't know whether it stems from the ethos of strategic planning [or not]... there is an approach of; ‘This plan is prepared, it is going to be implemented, there isn't a chance to make a change!’” (Interview\_7\_manager)

This manager added that other reasons for the rejection of their proposals were related to the desire to avoid extra burdens on the budget and the MoD's need to ensure planning discipline, as an external supervisor.

## **7.6. Conclusion**

This chapter tested the patterns of the theory of incrementalism against the formal PFCML framework and the practice of the MoI through a pattern-matching approach that is detailed in Table 7.3 below. In this table the second column indicates the dimension of incrementalism involved; the third column demonstrates the extent of convergence between the pattern of incrementalism and the formal PFMCL framework; the fourth column exhibits the pattern observed in the MoI; the fifth column shows the degree of convergence between the patterns of incrementalism and the practice; the sixth column is dedicated to the area of concern and the seventh column indicates the effect of strategic planning reform on the observed pattern.

### **7.6.1. Partisan Mutual Adjustment**

With regard to partisan mutual adjustment, Table 7.3 shows that it is not applicable to the formal PFMCL framework since the PFMCL adopts a method similar to rational planning in which goals are formulated deductively. Resource allocation did not constitute a basis for conflict and bargaining because performance budgeting failed, classical budgeting continued and a link between the strategic plan and resources could not be established. Similarly partisan mutual adjustment did not occur during the prioritisation of goals, rather there was an exchange of opinions and persuasion.

**Table 7.3 – Results of Pattern Matching for Incrementalism**

No	Dimension of Incr.*	PFMCL to Incr.	Pattern Observed	MoI Practice To Incr.	Areas of Concern	Effect of SP on Practice
1	Partisan Mutual Adjustment	n/a	Analysis (restricted or comprehensive)	Low	Intra-organisational relations (mostly in technical service domains)	Low
			Conflict and Bargaining	Moderate	<i>Extra-organisational:</i> Regulation of local authorities; Budgeting; Capital investment	Low
2	Agreement as Criterion	n/a	Compliance by law and by government's preference; Analysis (restricted or comprehensive)	Low	Most service domains	Low
			Agreement	Moderate	Regulation of local authorities	Low
3	Simple Incremental Analysis	n/a	Consideration of marginally different strategies from each other and from the status quo	High	Generic approach of the MoI management, particularly in core functions such as law enforcement, regulation of local authorities and of provincial administrations	Low
			Consideration and implementation of innovative alternatives	Low	E-government strategy; and Re-organisation of migration service	Low
4	Trial-and-error	n/a	Non-purposeful trial-and-error	High	<i>Decision:</i> Risks and costs tolerable; reversible. <i>Political agenda:</i> Government's directive (can be non-incremental)	n/a
			Piloting	n/a	Quantifiable services delivered through ICT infrastructure	Low
5	Flexibility and Dynamism	Low	Highly flexible and dynamic practice	High	Change in performance indicators and the strategic plan	Low

\* Incr. = Incrementalism

Inter-departmental relations were not based on mutual interests and decision-making was highly authoritative, leader-centred and hence, straightforward. Therefore, the degree of match between the patterns of partisan mutual adjustment and the MoI's intra-organisational practice is low as shown in Table 7.3.

Regarding extra-organisational politics, decision-making in the wider environment showed patterns of central decision-making due to the dominance of the government in policymaking. Formal stakeholder analysis did not lead to partisan mutual adjustment because it was a discrete action conducted over a survey study. Negotiation and bargaining, to some extent, was seen in relationships with municipalities and also in a recurring manner in relationships with the MoD and MoF in budgeting and capital investment issues. Municipalities, as politically motivated actors, tried to persuade the MoI management on the content of local government reforms.

Interaction never reached the level of partisan mutual adjustment because the strong one party government was the main decision-maker for the content of the reforms, as it was in all policy-making areas. The motivation of the MoD and the MoF was mostly technical rather than political. Hence, the degree of correspondence between partisan mutual adjustment and the MoI's extra-organisational relations is moderate in the fields of the regulation of municipalities, budgeting and capital investment, as shown in Table 7.3, due to accumulation of decision-making power at the core of the government. The impact of strategic planning is shown to be low in both indicators as the MoI's practice showed no considerable change in the post-planning era.

### **7.6.2. Agreement as Criterion for Good Strategy**

This pattern is not applicable to the formal PFMCL framework since the PFMCL 2003 adopts comprehensive analysis or procedural rationality as the criterion for the selection of strategies. As for practice, it is shown that the MoI addresses social needs and problems through strategies and evaluates the costs and benefits of strategy alternatives vis-a-vis some adopted values, such as service quality, democracy and respect for human rights. Instead of agreement as a criterion, goals are set and strategic decisions are made to a great extent in compliance with the law, adopting governmental preference and through analysis. On the other hand, analysis unfolds either in the restricted or comprehensive form. Therefore, the degree of correspondence with the dimension of 'agreement as criterion' is indicated as low.

Agreement appears to be a criterion for strategies in the regulation of local authorities with a moderate effect as shown in Table 7.3. In both cases, the effect of strategic planning remained low as rated in the Table.

### **7.6.3. Simple Incremental Analysis**

Two tendencies in the MoI management are discussed in relation to simple incremental analysis. Firstly, the management tend to consider alternatives that are slightly different from each other and from the existing strategies when particularly core functions of the MoI are involved. Any suggestion of radical change in the strategies in the core fields requires the intervention of elected politicians or a reform agenda to be put into practice, showing the exogenous character of goal-setting in the MoI. Innovative strategies, such as e-government, are often limited with the aim of increasing service speed and reducing costs in the core fields, although efficiency and cost-effectiveness are not professionally monitored. There is a high level of convergence in this regard and strategic planning demonstrated a low effect on this result as shown in Table 7.3. Secondly, the management tend to consider far-reaching alternative strategies in some fields such as e-government strategies and migration services where there were considerable changes. While the origins of e-government strategies were found in the early 2000s, the establishment of a new Directorate-general for Migration Management was, to a great extent, the consequence of Europeanisation. Matching between these two strategies and the effect of strategic planning on these outcomes are low, as shown in Table 7.3. Although performance measurement strategies that challenged the *status quo* were considered and formulated in the fields of human resources and regulation of municipalities, these could not be put into practice due to resistance from those upholding the *status quo*.

### **7.6.4. Trial-and-error**

As shown in Table 7.3, the trial-and-error pattern is not applicable to the formal PFMCL framework since the framework obligates a formal-comprehensive analysis instead. Two different views emerged from the practice point of view. According to the first view, trial-and-error is not practiced since resources are owned by the public, spending is subject to strict rules and regulations and experimentation is available in public service provision. The MoI departments tend to pilot, particularly in ICT-related projects, when there is a perceived high risk of resource wastage due to irreversibility of decisions, such as those with high cost

implications, when there is high social risk and a risk of harming the Ministry's reputation. This pattern corresponds with the pattern of comprehensive analysis discussed in Chapter 6. It is shown as piloting in Table 7.3 and it is applicable in quantifiable services which rely heavily on ICT infrastructure. Pattern-matching is indicated as low under these conditions. According to the second view, trial-and-error is practiced within the MoI, but in a non-purposeful manner. The basic reason for this is the neglect of management of formal analysis of strategy options, which results in restricted forms of analysis. The process unfolds impulsively and in an uncontrolled manner, unlike the pattern of purposeful incrementalism. Unrestrained trial-and-error is mainly experienced due to the prevalence of a pre-planning culture and unplanned shifts in government policy. Although there is convincing evidence that trial-and-error exists in the MoI, some managers might have denied its existence on certain grounds. Firstly, availability of piloting and experimentation in ICTs rules out trial-and-error in ICT-intensive services as explained above. Secondly, some managers might have experienced trial-and-error but they may not be aware of it since it unfolds unwittingly. Thirdly, perceiving trial-and-error pejoratively and with negative connotations as a weakness of bureaucracy, some of them might have exhibited a bureaucratic reaction of denial. Hence, Table 7.3 shows a high level of correspondence between both the decision characteristics and the government's preference factors. The low effect of strategic planning on the results exhibited in Table 7.3 reveals that strategic planning has not brought about considerable change in the management culture.

#### **7.6.5. Flexibility and Dynamism**

The formal PFMCL framework suggests a restricted form of flexibility through 'renewal' and 'update' procedures, mostly due to the assumption of a stable external milieu. Hence, the match between the PFMCL framework and incrementalism is indicated as low in Table 7.5. In contrast, the practice of the MoI management unfolded in an extremely malleable and dynamic manner, particularly through the introduction of a considerable number of new performance indicators annually. Changes were made de facto through the circumvention of formal procedures. Although the strategic plan remained unchanged in its original form, it was not immune to becoming a de facto working paper subject to changes made to the content of the targets and indicators through performance programmes. Hence, Table 7.5 shows a high level of correspondence between the MoI's strategic planning practice and the

pattern of flexibility and dynamism of incrementalism, while the effect of strategic planning remained low on the management's practice.

To conclude, the findings show a low level of match between the patterns of incrementalism and the formal PFMCL framework as expected. Four of the dimensions are not applicable to the PFMCL framework, while there is a low level of match with regard to flexibility and dynamism, as the PFMCL model stipulates a restricted form of flexibility and dynamism. On the contrary, Table 7.3 presents considerable overlaps between the patterns of the MoI's practice and the patterns of incrementalism. Pattern-matching is high particularly with regard to simple incremental analysis, trial-and-error and the flexibility and dynamism dimensions, while it is moderate or low concerning partisan mutual adjustment and agreement-as-criterion. The last column in Table 7.3 shows that strategic planning had a considerably low effect on the practices of the MoI, which means that the pre-planning management culture and paradigm prevailed, although changes were observed as a consequence of various factors, such as Europeanisation, technological developments and governance.

# CHAPTER 8

## CONCLUSION

“Indeed, whatever the merits of strategic planning in the abstract, normal expectations have to be that most efforts to produce fundamental decisions and actions in government through strategic planning will not succeed.”

(Bryson and Roering, 1988, p.995)

This thesis is a result of the researcher’s interest in theory and practice. It undertook the task of explicating the difficulties and challenges inherent in the application of strategic planning in the Turkish Ministry of Interior, covering the period 2009 to 2013. Utilising a case study method, the thesis first reviewed the descriptive and empirical literature on public strategic planning and presented a synopsis of practice-based success and failure factors (see Table 3.1). These are to be utilised in the first section of this concluding chapter for a discussion on the MoI’s practice examined during fieldwork. It, then, developed a conceptual framework in Chapter 2 (see Table 3.1 in Section 3.4) by critically reviewing the theories of rational planning and incrementalism, as the two enduring process theories of strategic planning. Upon giving an account of its methodological grounds in Chapter 4, the thesis presented the chronological story of the MoI’s strategic planning process with a holistic and explanatory logic in Chapter 5. Chapters 6 and 7 deconstructed the strategic planning process of the MoI for theory-testing through pattern-matching. Chapter 6 tested the patterns of rational planning vis-à-vis the patterns of the formal PFMCL framework and the practice of the MoI. Next, Chapter 7 tested the patterns of incrementalism against the formal PFCML framework and the practice of the MoI using the same logic. This concluding chapter undertakes further discussion of the findings by revisiting the research questions outlined in Section 1.4 in order to draw a conclusion. To reiterate, the research questions are:

- ‘How was strategic planning practiced in the MoI; and why did or didn’t it generate the expected change and results?’
- ‘To what extent, how, and why does rational planning or incrementalism explain the strategic planning process and practice of the MoI?’

Sections 8.1 and 8.2 are followed by the section 8.3 on limitations of the study and the conclusion section 8.4 in which contributions to the literature and methodology of public strategic planning, and further research agendas are discussed.

## **8.1. ‘How was strategic planning practiced in the MoI; and why did or didn’t it generate the expected change and results?’**

The first question has a practice focus. It entails making judgements on the practice of the MoI, which is laid out as an explanatory narrative in Chapter 5 and gained breadth and depth in Chapters 6 and 7, against the practice-based criteria derived from the empirical literature (see Table 2.1). This task is fulfilled in this section and the discussion is made with regard to the components of strategic planning (see Section 2.2). The analysis so far has evidenced that the first strategic planning attempt of the MoI has been ineffective to a great extent.

### **8.1.1. Contingencies**

The significance of external environmental contingencies for the initiation and success of public strategic planning are elaborated in Section 3.2.1. Within this context, the absence of sister public agencies or a network of strategic management in the surroundings made the application of a formal strategic planning model more challenging for the MoI. Strategic planning is easily adapted if there are near-by agencies that have previous experience and that can be emulated (Berry and Wechsler, 1995).

With regard to the internal environment, the first issue was the large size of the MoI (Roberts and Wargo, 1994) with a staff of 2049 to 2581 in the headquarters between 2010 and 2013. Although, some successful cases of formal strategic planning in large public organisations have been observed previously (for example Campbell, 2002), the multitude of departments constituting the MoI was a challenge for co-ordination of corporate strategic planning and particularly for keeping the attention of the heads of these many departments to the end of the planning process. Departments were represented by mid-level, instead of senior managers

towards the end of the process. These considerations became an impediment for strategic planning in the case of the MoI.

A highly leader-centred structure significantly facilitated decision-making in the SDB meetings in the MoI, as suggested by empirical evidence (Hendrick, 2003; Long and Franklin, 2004), however, decision-making at the top did not reflect the ethos of team-work or collective rationality that was observed in successful cases of public strategic planning (Baker, 1992; Roberts and Wargo, 1994).

### **8.1.2. Preparation**

Evidence from the MoI suggests the need to consider adoption and implementation problems separately. The MoI case, as a whole, reflects how and why weak preparation leads, firstly, to failure in applying effective strategy formulation processes and secondly to weak implementation of the plan. The problems generated by paucity of awareness and comprehension lead to poor application of the strategic planning model. Application problems stem from the deficiencies in the preparation stages and affect the implementation of the strategic plan. Both managers and planners who participated in this study viewed the problem of poor planning outcomes more as an issue with training, awareness and buy-in, thus of the application of the model, rather than plan implementation.

The existence of management capacity, particularly to use analytical tools, was found to be a success factor (Kemp *et al.*, 1993; Streib and Poister, 1990). The MoI's existing capabilities rather than reflecting such analytical capacity revealed a tendency towards unplanned and day-to-day management because of the way in which prefects functioned at the provincial administration level. For example, the MoI did not have the expertise to conduct a comprehensive cost-benefit analysis.

In an attempt to prepare the actors psychologically and intellectually to undertake the process and to ensure buy-in, as proposed previously (Baker, 1992; Kemp *et al.*, 1993; Poister and Streib, 2005; Wheeland, 1993), the SDU invested in manager and staff training, hired external consultants, produced strategic planning and management books and booklets, and held workshops and presentations. However, the activities were short, remained superficial and did not suffice to enlighten managers and staff, who were dealing with strategic planning and its conceptual and practical complexities for the first time. An important shortcoming was that the senior managers did not attend any substantive training programme, conduct an intensive

literature review or engage in a self-assisting programme to get some deeper insight into strategic planning, which is considered to be an important achievement factor in the literature (Baker, 1992; Kemp *et al.*, 1993). The exceptional conduct of the Head of the Department for Associations who had a Master's degree from a UK university and wrote his dissertation on public strategic planning was an important case to point the importance of training in strategic planning. Contracted external consultants were also found to be incompetent and unhelpful, at least by some of the MoI managers, because they lacked the requisite expertise on strategic planning. This was a negative factor that led to ineffective planning. While successful preparation to include a projection of anticipated outcomes and resource requirements is recommended as a key step in the strategic planning process (Kemp *et al.*, 1993), the MoI did not produce such a forecast at the outset of the planning period. Previous experience with strategy development and a subsequent supportive culture is empirically found to be an important determinant of success (Poister and Streib, 2005). Yet, the MoI did not utilise and benefit from previous experience gained by the former Strategy Centre, which was created to produce strategy content (see Section 5.1.2.2).

When the gap between technical knowledge and expertise and the lack of experience of strategic planning cannot be effectively addressed through recruitment of strategic planners and training activities, this can lead to a failure in the ability of management to make sense of what strategic planning is, its importance and how it can be practiced effectively and successfully. This eventually leads to the failure of the whole planning process. Although the employment of strategic planning experts, which the MoI failed to do, is important for a technically good plan, it is not enough to overcome the problems posed by poorly informed managers, particularly those in senior positions. A lack of awareness of 'what strategic planning is' leads to resistance among management, not only towards the new, but also the unknown. It was discussed in Chapter 4 how the initially strong resistance from managers started to ebb through the impact of training activities, however limited they might have been, as familiarity with strategic planning grew. This demonstrates the importance of equipping the managers, who are the most important strategy practitioners, with adequate knowledge and skills to mitigate the initial resistance, encourage buy-in and achieve success in strategic planning. All these findings support the conventional proposition that high levels of expertise in planning, such as having an ad hoc planning unit, experience and management capability, is positively associated with successful adaptation to formal strategic planning (Boyne *et al.*, 2004).

### 8.1.3. Strategy Formulation

A one-size-fits-all approach is strongly rejected in the empirical literature in favour of contingency planning (Poister and Streib, 2005; Roberts and Wargo, 1994) because the former neglects the specific contexts of public organisations and becomes a barrier to meeting their needs for tailoring standard strategy practices (Long and Franklin, 2004). Strategic planning came into the MoI's agenda in exactly this kind of top-down and one-size-fits-all fashion through a legislative mandate. The MoI's case supports the argument for contingency planning and provides more evidence on how such a mandatory strategic management model can be detrimental with regard to basic formal strategic planning principles, such as integration, central co-ordination and an outcome-focus. The MoI had to apply this single formal strategic planning model to all of its units that had regulatory, policymaking and service delivery functions. For example, while setting measurable goals was straightforward in service delivery units, it was highly challenging in some services that mostly performed a regulatory or policymaking role. The problem with this approach was not only the incompatibility of the model with service requirements but also its rigidity, which was an obstacle to adaptability. As this approach hindered the MoI in adapting to changing circumstances in the external environment, flexibility and dynamism emerged organically in practice during the implementation period, as discussed in Section 7.5.

The case of the MoI shows that problems with strategic management can be external and stem from the mandated model itself and that these problems can emanate from political factors as well as technical ones. For example, the exclusion of the military-related Gendarmerie and the Coastal Guard Command from the process was a consequence of the historical power politics between the military and the bureaucracy in the Turkish state system, in which the former until recently has been dominant. This finding underlines the difference between public and private, by showing how socio-political factors may affect strategic management processes in a central governmental organisation.

Formality of planning is found to be a positive factor for the MoI's strategic planning practice, as anticipated in the empirical literature (for example (Poister *et al.*, 2013). Formality, with reference to a legal mandate, is perceived to be a requisite for the initiation and embedding of strategic planning in the MoI. Hence, formality is not only critical for the breadth and depth of analyses, but also for routinising the standard strategic planning

practices in MoI-like organisations, which continuously seek compliance with the law in their decisions and operations.

The performance of the MoI with regard to analytical practice varied from one component to the other. The stakeholder analysis, SWOT analysis and definition of vision and mission stages were satisfactory to some extent as argued in the relevant sections. However, the stages of formulation of goals, objectives, strategies and performance indicators, cost-benefit analysis, implementation, monitoring and feedback, which demanded enhanced training, expertise and experience, were unsatisfactory. While the empirical literature proposed that an enhanced management capacity and a capacity to utilise analytical tools, particularly performance budgeting and cost-benefit analysis, is of crucial importance for successful strategic planning (Elbanna *et al.*, 2015; Kemp *et al.*, 1993; Poister and Streib, 2005; Streib and Poister, 1990), the MoI management neither had the capacity to conduct cost-benefit analyses nor to apply performance budgeting. Line-item budgeting continued in the traditional way, but not incrementally, as presented in Table 5.1 in Section 5.1.1.5. The case of the MoI confirmed previous findings that agencies practicing line-item budgeting struggle with linking resources to strategic plans (Poister and Streib, 2005). A formal cost-benefit analysis was not undertaken, which is a finding that is widespread in other public administration settings (Poister, 2005).

Contrary to the requirements of the integrated or corporate approach (Baker, 1992; Campbell, 2002) adopted, the MoI could not manage to incorporate law enforcement and security agencies as well as its provincial branches to its strategic planning process. This was due a number of factors including the shortcomings of the model created by the PFMCL 2003, the insufficiency of technical knowledge on strategic planning and other socio-political factors. The exclusion of provincial branches and security agencies from mandatory planning by the PFMCL 2003 undermined the integrity of the MoI's strategic planning process, leading to the ineffectiveness of the process.

Clarification of goals is both a crucial element of the process and an aim of strategic planning (Poister and Streib, 2005). The managers and planners experienced difficulties during the assignment of impact indicators to objectives particularly in departments that undertook coordinating or regulatory roles. Missing nuances between regulation, policymaking and service delivery, the planners came to think that the regulatory and policy units were redundant since they struggled with assigning performance indicators for service output or

delivery. A similar problem was also faced in some service delivery departments due to the exclusion of provincial branches from strategic planning, which were responsible for service delivery at the front line. Hence, the clarification of goals occurred in a rather limited fashion.

Parallel to the empirical findings that suggested the participation of mid-level managers and staff for obtaining employee buy-in (Kemp *et al.*, 1993), the middle and lower-level managers and staff were included within the MoI's strategic planning process by means of the three-level decision-pyramid. The decision-pyramid was not dictated by legislation and was an original idea developed by the planning team to meet the unique needs of the MoI. Hence, it was a step taken outside the context of the formal model as a way of adapting it to the Ministry's contextual needs, highlighting the inadequacy of a one-size-fits-all approach. As explained by a senior manager, it was an exceptional period in which the MoI bureaucracy was heavily involved in strategic planning for the very first time.

To ensure participation, strategic planning efforts took a bottom-up approach by means of the three-level decision-pyramid (Kissler *et al.*, 1998a; Long and Franklin, 2004). The three-level decision-pyramid included training workshops, committees, presentations and other meetings as consultative exercises with internal stakeholders, which were supportive activities for strategic planning (Baker, 1992; Favoreu *et al.*, 2015; Kissler *et al.*, 1998a). The MoI's experience showed that the bottom-up approach was not immune to pitfalls. The mission, vision and organisational values were produced as proposals in the lower levels and submitted to the SDB for approval in short duration meetings. In such a bureaucratic setting, formal proposals to the strategy board were not able to challenge the *status quo* and precipitate strategic change. While collective action and consulting at all levels of management is critical for buy-in of a strategic plan (Campbell, 2002), strategy is mainly a top management responsibility and interest (Miles and Snow, 2003) and cannot be left to subordinates. Campbell's (2002) study on corporate strategic planning in the US Air Force revealed how top-down corporate strategic planning can lead to success in such strict bureaucracies spearheaded by forward looking leaders. The results of Campbell's study are important since the MoI has some shared characteristics with the US Air Force, such as the sensitivity and confidentiality of some of its service domains, prominent public position and strict bureaucracy. These characteristics favour a top-down planning approach. In contrast, the political domains of the MoI, such as local authorities and civil society associations require close interaction with external stakeholders. Hence, purely top-down planning is very likely to undermine consensus on goals in these domains. While the literature presents evidence in

favour of both bottom-up (Roberts and Wargo, 1994) and top-down (Hendrick, 2003) approaches and wide internal and external participation is by and large considered to be beneficial (Blair, 2004; Favoreu *et al.*, 2015; Wheeland, 1993), the multiple-goal nature of the MoI and dissimilarities in some domains demands a balance between the two approaches for effective strategic planning. This is strategic planning in which the top management team is fully engaged and associations, local government representatives and other stakeholders included, for example through regional meetings (Kissler *et al.*, 1998b). The MoI already has this experience, albeit somewhat recent in nature, that can be exploited for use as a centralised systematic stakeholder analysis process.

While internal stakeholder participation was satisfactory, external stakeholder participation was unsatisfactory. The views of external stakeholders did not make a considerable change to the content of the strategic plan. Legal duties and governmental preferences, rather than stakeholder (other than elected politicians) preferences, had the greatest influence on the formulation of the strategies as discussed in Section 7.2.2. This is similar to Franklin's (2001) study in the US federal agency context, which found that strategic planning had not made significant change to the content of federal agency strategic plans, but had still contributed to the inclusion of different external stakeholder groups and the public. Hence, unlike some previously successful cases (for example Kissler *et al.*, 1998a), the MoI did not benefit from face-to-face meetings of any kind with its external stakeholders within the framework of the formal stakeholder analysis. Such face-to-face meetings with external stakeholders held by separate departments, such as the Associations Department, had positive effects on their strategic planning process. These supportive activities were departmental, sporadic and outside the formal strategic planning process. Empirical findings suggest that participation becomes meaningful and fruitful when there is a supportive culture that favours organisational democracy (Long and Franklin, 2004). Again, the unsupportive decision-making culture of the MoI significantly counteracted the benefits of the participation mechanisms. Reflecting previous findings (Campbell, 2002; Roberts and Wargo, 1994), the MoI senior management was not very enthusiastic about discussing issues with external stakeholders due to a strong perception of confidentiality in their mission.

Another aspect of participation was the environment in which it took place. Successful cases show that effective participation occurs in creative environments particularly through the practice of techniques such as visualisation, back-casting, scenario building and stretch goal-setting (Campbell, 2002; Wheeland, 1993). There was no evidence of such practices during the

meetings particularly in the SDB as the highest platform with the power to decide on strategies. The exception to this was the brainstorming practices at lower level meetings, which resulted in the emergence of some ideas that could not be put into practice.

Conflicts that did arise during the strategic planning process were less destructive in the MoI, unlike other cases (for example Baker, 1992), because these were easily settled through the Undersecretary's mediation. However, this does not mean that there were no disappointments, frustrations and displeasures during the process. An example (see section 4.2.4.2) was the merging of the two departments in the SDU to overcome ongoing conflicts between the team leader and the other department head. While strategic planning processes developed more productively with knowledgeable managers in other cases (Poister, 2005), insufficient technical knowledge led to conflict among senior managers in the MoI.

#### **8.1.3.1. Practitioners' Role**

An important agent and practitioner of strategy was the SDU in the MoI. The existence of a corporate level specialised unit is necessary for good strategic planning (Boyne *et al.*, 2004). Creation of the SDU as a corporate strategy unit provided guidance, support, and coordination for the process, as evidenced in the literature (Ugboro *et al.*, 2010). However, it was limited in its scope due to two factors. Firstly, the MoI did not complete the establishment of the SDU by supporting the unit with planning experts with prior experience of strategic planning. Hence, the establishment of the SDU remained incomplete depriving the organisation of a fully-fledged support unit at the corporate level. This subsequently deprived the departments of effective internal guidance by the corporate planning centre, which is a similar finding to Boyne, Williams, Law and Walker (2004) in the context of BV regime in Welsh local authorities. Secondly, from the actor certification perspective (Barzelay and Jacobsen, 2009), there were some missing elements. Initially, the head of the SDU did not take an active role and certify this newly created unit by giving it strong representation, leaving this role to the team leader. Secondly, strategic change was not a priority in the Undersecretary's agenda whereas it was an important condition for effective actor certification of the SDU (Barzelay and Jacobsen, 2009). Finally, apart from the personal skills and efforts of the process champion, the SDU could not instil the standard practices of strategy into organisational routines. For example the SDU could neither centralise strategy development nor could it effectively monitor plan implementation. The departments continued to conduct themselves as they had in the pre-planning era. Replacing the former

Strategy Centre with the SDU, sans its staff, proved to be a step backwards with the loss of tacit strategy knowledge, prior familiarity and experience with the creation of strategy content as a minimum.

Another group of practitioners were senior managers. The readiness, knowledge and commitment of senior managers is a significant determinant of success in strategic planning (Baker, 1992; Bryson and Roering, 1988; Poister and Streib, 2005; Ugboro *et al.*, 2010), nonetheless, the MoI managers did not give a powerful demonstration of such values. Senior managers conceived of strategy as a responsibility that could be relegated to mid- and low-level managers and simply ratified by themselves, which was a crucial misconception. Unlike successful leaders who know that good implementation requires full insight of the strategic planning model (Baker, 1992; Barzelay and Campbell, 2003; Kemp *et al.*, 1993), the top management of the MoI did not exert themselves to gain comprehension of strategic planning. The SDB meetings that only lasted a few hours were the only platform where top management engaged with the proposals of lower committees. While good insight of strategic planning enhances the productivity of practitioners in the process (Baker, 1992; Barzelay and Campbell, 2003; Poister and Streib, 2005; Wheeland, 1993), poor insights sometimes led to conflicts on technical and other dimensions between the department heads and the strategic planning team in the MoI. Hence, top management did not allocate enough time, energy or priority to strategic planning, which negatively affected the ownership level of the staff, as previously suggested in the literature (Ugboro *et al.*, 2010).

Instead of exhibiting strategic leadership (Joyce, 2012) and taking the opportunity to review and revise the long-term strategic direction of the MoI, the Undersecretary acted as a sponsor by giving support to the team leader to facilitate his work for the finalisation of the plan. The top manager's role as a sponsor facilitated the team leader's work in practice, giving credence to previous empirical findings (Bryson and Roering, 1988), however, it was not enough for the overall success of strategic planning. The high rate of manager turnover and short cycles in ministerial appointments undermined the institutionalisation of commitment in the MoI, which confirmed empirical research arguing that these were challenges to public sector strategic planning (Baker, 1992; Berry and Wechsler, 1995; Bryson and Roering, 1988).

The need for a process champion in effective strategic planning was backed by strong empirical evidence (Barzelay and Jacobsen, 2009; Wheeland, 1993), and the team leader performed this role in the MoI's strategic planning process successfully. As a director in the

SDU, he was an associate professor; had a strong character and good communication skills, was committed and developed ownership of the process, which enhanced his performance. As an example of his competence, he was the main author of the booklet and later the book titled *Strategic Management*, that was published for training purposes at the preparation stage. An implicit shortfall of his situation was his rank (director), which can be an important point of negotiation with senior managers in bureaucratic organisations. He overcame this weakness, to a considerable extent, by taking the full sponsorship of the Undersecretary and the head of the SDU, and by the advantages derived from his personal skills. A critical turning point came when the team leader left, following conflict with another director in the SDU, for a position in a state university just before the finalisation of the strategic plan. He left the MoI, taking with him all the practical experience and tacit knowledge he gained during the preliminary stages, which was a significant blow to the success of the overall process.

The establishment of a planning team was a positive step, as found previously in other successful cases (Barzelay and Jacobsen, 2009; Bruton and Hildreth, 1993). Notwithstanding this, the team members did not have the expertise and experience of strategic planning or of any other kind of planning although there were officials in the team who were formally employed as planning specialists. Nor were the non-permanent staff, employed from other departments to support the team, experienced or skilled in strategic planning. This hindered the performance of the team. For example, the team did not know how to create sound performance measures for each service and hence, could not guide departments properly. They developed solutions by learning-by-doing throughout and kept the process going by engaging in different kinds of activities and coordination with representatives of the departments, thereby reconciling strategic goals and actions. Overall, both the SDU and the planning team played an important role for the co-ordination of planning efforts in the first cycle and for the emergence and accumulation of tacit strategy knowledge saved in the organisational memory. That was an important dimension of a corporate strategy culture that is crucial for the forthcoming planning cycles. The high rate of manager and staff turnover, however, crippled this gain in strategy information which was mainly a tacit form of knowledge that was subjective and personal to the active practitioners of the period.

The absence of or weak external guidance was unhelpful for strategic planning in the newly engaged public organisations (Long and Franklin, 2004). The planning team felt the need for such external guidance, however, the SPO, as the watchdog of the reform and as an important strategy practitioner, did not guide the process effectively. The SP Guide 2006, prepared by

the SPO, was inadequate and included statements that required further explanation. The experience of the MoI management had similarities with some US federal agencies in this regard, which could not conduct successful external consultation due to weak guidance by the watchdogs of the GPRA (Long and Franklin, 2004).

Empirical findings have underlined the importance of mid- and lower-level manager role for the success of strategic planning processes (Kemp *et al.*, 1993). In line with these findings, the planning team formally included the mid- and lower-level managers and staff in the process. These managers had better training from abroad, were generally open for strategic management-like innovative approaches and were more aware of strategic planning, which were supportive factors for the success of the process. These were the Young Turks of the MoI. However, unlike the team-based decision-making systems in many successful cases (for example Baker, 1992; Kissler *et al.*, 1998a), the leader-centred decision-making culture and greater tendency towards *status quo* bias in the MoI trivialised many new ideas discussed in the workshops and brainstorming meetings by these managers. Hence, the active role taken by these managers was not considerably decisive for the final outcome of the process. Only a few innovative ideas survived till the end of the planning process and none were implemented in practice, as discussed in Section 7.3 at length.

Despite shortcomings in the strategy formulation stage, there was a positive move with regard to stakeholder analysis. The MoI consulted with its internal stakeholders systematically for the first time and the three-level decision-pyramid served as an “institutional buttress” (Campbell, 2002, p. 426) of collective decision-making in the next cycles of strategic planning in the MoI.

#### **8.1.4. Implementation**

It was discussed in Chapter 6 at length that the MoI engaged in an overly flexible, dynamic, unstable and decentralised plan implementation that resulted in poor performance, according to the formal effectiveness figures presented in Table 6.3. This view reflects an incremental strategy implementation pattern in practice (Andrews *et al.*, 2011b) at a time when formal strategic planning was in force. This was supported by the perceptions of participants in the study. Previous research found that lack of incentives for staff led to poor plan implementation (Smith *et al.*, 2001), while linking planning, budgeting, and performance management processes with each other led to better plan implementation (Poister and Streib,

2005) . The results support these finding and suggest additionally that a failure to link staff appraisal as well as accountability to performance and lack of sanctions as well as incentives to motivate staff undermine plan implementation. The MoI managers continued to be held accountable to the top manager during the planning period, with no reference to their performance but rather to meeting their legal mandate and the top manager's subjective criteria. A strict association between the managers' attitude towards plan implementation and the top manager's exercise of his power to hold the department heads accountable existed in the MoI. The critical role of strong leadership in the strategy formulation process was stressed in the literature (Barzelay and Campbell, 2003; Wheeland, 1993). Participation of managers at all levels in strategic planning is evidenced to enhance strategy implementation (Elbanna *et al.*, 2015) and inadequate engagement of senior management in plan implementation process was reported to lead to poor implementation (Smith *et al.*, 2001). These findings are equally valid for the MoI. Strategic planning can be effective to the extent that top managers attribute importance to it both during the formulation and implementation processes. Hence, the government's persistence in the implementation of the reform, which has gradually diminished and the Undersecretary's enthusiasm for and engagement in strategic planning are two very important factors for effective plan implementation. The discontinuity of government policy in the planning period, lack of parliamentary engagement in holding public agencies accountable according to their performances and lack of civil society demand for more accountable public services were other factors that led to weak implementation.

Performance measurement, linking budget to plans and linking plans to benchmarks are proven to ensure effective implementation and monitoring of planned strategies (Kissler, *et al.*, 1998; Poister, 2005); however, the MoI failed to establish such a link. Previous research also showed that linking performance targets to specific individuals, such as heads of departments, generates positive results (Poister, 2005). The MoI did not establish such links to leverage its performance system. Failure to link resource allocation to the strategic plan through performance programming led to the emergence of the idea among managers that 'the strategic plan does not matter'. The MoI's experience revealed that a failure to create such link results in the negligence of the plan for the sake of the very bureaucratic instinct: 'Meet the legal mandate'. In contrast, the perception of the likelihood of a strong link between the strategic plan and the budget raised concerns for future resource allocation and led to a high level of positive change in the managers' motivations for plan implementation. These results are consistent with studies by Berry and Wechsler (1995), Poister and Van Slyke (2002) and

Poister and Streib (2005) who found that strategic plans are implemented more effectively when linked to budgets. Evidence from the MoI shows that performance budgeting, rather than classical budgeting, is necessary for proper implementation of strategic plans.

The evaluation of results and feedback functions were similarly ineffective. The MoI did not use strategic planning as a leverage to transform its input-focused management to an output- and impact-focused one. By the same token, the fragmented and unsystematic nature of evaluation and feedback continued. While comprehensive monitoring systems are empirically shown to enhance organisational capacity and plan implementation (Andrews *et al.*, 2011b; Elbanna *et al.*, 2015; Hendrick, 2003; Poister, 2005), a lack of legal obligation for the MoI to create a sophisticated performance monitoring, measurement or management system was an external negative factor that affected plan implementation. The top managers' limited interest in performance figures and reports, lack of policy evaluation experts with necessary skills, endurance of complaint-based evaluation and feedback culture were internal factors with a detrimental impact. In the absence of external and internal forces for effective evaluation and feedback as well as the lack of previous experience, the pre-planning organisational culture of the MoI continued into the planned period. The established belief that 'public service automatically benefits citizens' lasted to exist. This culture underlined input or provision of the service rather than outputs, outcomes and their links to costs. An effective evaluation and feedback mechanism is a component that makes the difference between a controlled or conscious and uncontrolled strategy process. A conscious strategy process results in organisational learning, while an uncontrolled process does not. Uncontrolled systems are prone to repeating their faults (Faludi, 1973). Learning has a strict relation with memory. The strategy-related organisational memory of the MoI was weakened by a high level of manager and staff turnover in departments, as mentioned earlier. The intensive use of ICT infrastructure by the MoI in recent years is an important advantage since ICT systems allow the storage of excessive data and instant access to the stored data.

As suggested by previous empirical studies (Boyne *et al.*, 2004), the multiplicity of goals of the MoI, some of which were in apparent conflict (for example enhancement of central bureaucracy and empowerment of the local, concurrently) undermined the implementation of the MoI's strategic plan. The government's preference for empowerment of local authorities overwhelmed the preference of the bureaucracy, which was the empowerment of the prefectural system.

### **8.1.5. Outcomes**

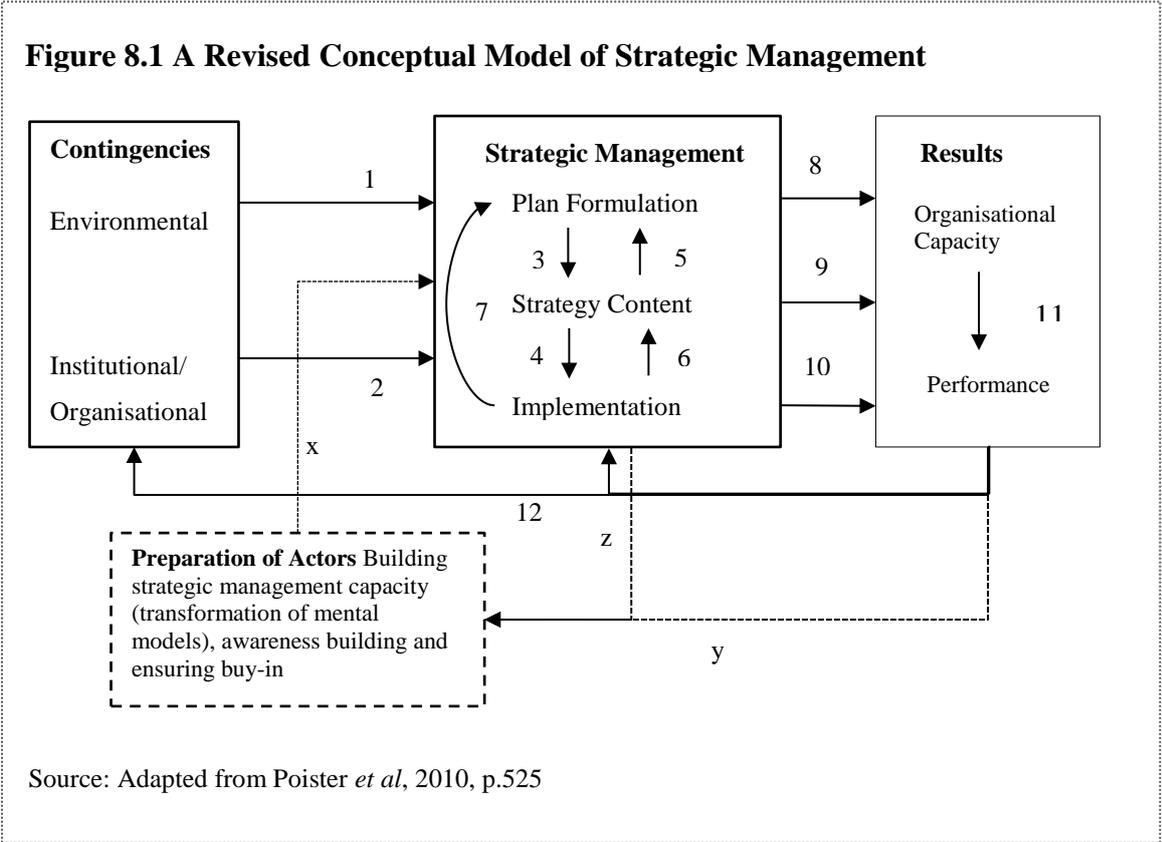
The MoI's experience provides important insights with regard to the outcomes of strategic planning, which are mainly improvement in organisational capacity and service performance. The generation of expected outcomes requires a good comprehension of the model and finalisation of the chain of stages in good quality. The case of the MoI shows no significant change in perceptions of managers with regard to the outcomes of strategic planning in the course of the plan implementation period. These deficiencies are related to the problem of application of the strategic planning model due to weak awareness and buy-in of strategic planning and weak implementation of the strategic plan. The problem of awareness and buy-in was a consequence of newness and inadequate adaptation of the model to the MoI context in terms of its language, terms and components, inadequate training and external guidance and weak organisational memory.

Yet, strategic planning still brought about some changes in the MoI's organisational capacity. Clarification of goals is one of the most frequently cited contributions of strategic planning in the literature (Berry and Wechsler, 1995, p. 164). It helped, albeit minimally, departments to clarify their mandates and goals and made them aware of the importance of prioritisation of tasks and the necessity of long-term thinking and measurement of service performance. It also initiated a process in which organisational strategy was expected to finally become institutionalised and immunised against short-term and unforeseen changes in preferences of top managers and elected politicians. This last point is particularly relevant to the MoI for the stability of strategies given the high rates of manager turnover and frequency of unexpected political manoeuvres. Strategic management may serve public organisations in similar contexts as a stabiliser of strategies. The MoI case demonstrates compellingly that unplanned government interventions, as a dimension of stakeholder uncertainty (Elbanna *et al.*, 2015), may interrupt plan implementation processes.

### **8.1.6. The Conceptual Framework of Public Strategic Management Revisited**

The empirical analysis so far encourages the researcher to revisit the conceptual model presented in Chapter 3 (Section 3.1.4). The findings suggest putting extra emphasis on 'preparation of actors' for successful strategic planning, which is shown in a dashed box, between the determinants and components of the model, as presented by link (x) in Figure 8.1.

Different from the original model, Figure 8.1 incorporates strategy practitioners into the equation by highlighting the readiness of these actors for strategy practice. Strategic planning requires an expansion in management’s awareness and insight and acceptance of the model through the transformation of the intellectual decision-making mechanism and mental models of the management. Transformation was expected to take place from a rule-based to goal-based decision-making mental model in the MoI as argued in Section 6.1. The findings of the existing research point to the fact that this transformation can be provided through effective training.



On the one hand, readiness in analytical management capacity leads to a productive process through high performance of strategy practitioners who gain the capacity and capability to master strategic planning. On the other hand, good understanding and acceptance of strategic planning leads to smooth social practice, for example by avoiding unnecessary conflicts. Hence, good preparation results in better analytical and social practices of strategy. The lack of a good-quality preparation stage shows its effects mainly on the application of the strategic planning model, but also on plan implementation. Links x, y, and z show how the preparation stage interacts with other components in the process. Considering that cultural changes and

intellectual transformation are challenging and time-consuming in public organisations, the stage of preparation becomes highly relevant in the public strategic management process.

## 8.2. To what extent, how and why do theories of rational planning or incrementalism explain the strategic planning practice of the MoI?

The second research question is elaborated in Chapters 6 and 7 at length. Hence, this section will address it by combining the results of theory-testing (pattern-matching), discussing underlying mechanisms and the implications of findings from a theoretical viewpoint.

Table 6.4 and Table 7.3 summarise the results of theory-testing. Table 8.1 presents a broader view of pattern matching findings in a matrix in order to simplify explanation, leaving the details to Tables 6.4 and 7.3. The patterns show high level of correspondence between the formal PFMCL framework and the rational planning model, (A, 1). The high level of match demonstrates that the formal PFMCL framework is built principally on a rational planning model, as the original theory stated. The observed lack of match between the formal PFMCL framework and the alternative theory of incrementalism underpins this finding (A, 2).

**Table 8.1 The Combined Pattern-matching Matrix**

		1	2
		Rational Planning	Incrementalism
A	Formal PFMCL framework	High	No Match
B	The MoI's Practice	Low	High

Pattern matching between the theories and the practice of the MoI showed mixed results (Row B). The theory of incrementalism, as the rival theory, received support for almost all of its dimensions from moderate to high degrees (B, 2). Hence, the explanatory power of incrementalism as a middle range theory (Atkinson, 2011) is underpinned by the findings in the context of the MoI. In contrast, rational planning found support for lesser dimensions and sub-dimensions with regard to practice. The low-match between rational planning and the practice of the MoI (B, 1) evidenced a deviation from the prescriptions of the rational planning model.

One aim of this research is to uncover the mechanisms that underlie the superiority of one theory over another in explaining the case study of the MoI. As strategic planning is a

complex phenomenon, all the factors discussed in the first section of this chapter play a role in varying extents in these results. However, building on its findings, this research associates a goal-based decision-making intellectual model with rational planning (or formal-comprehensive analysis) and a rule-based decision-making intellectual model with incrementalism (or restricted analysis) locating these two on the two ends of a spectrum. Sections 6.1.1.1 and 6.5.1 presents detailed arguments on this subject. Strategic planning practice in the MoI, in general, locates it on a position that is close to the rule-based intellectual model on the spectrum. ICT-related service domains are the exception of this conclusion. What follows is the implication of findings for the two theories.

### **8.2.1. Implications for Rational Planning**

The findings have implications with regard to a number of factors including the exogenous character of public organisations, external environmental characteristics, availability of resources, procedural and substantive rationality and the use of ICTs in decision-making.

While rational planning favours autonomy in decision-making, the MoI shows an exogenous character in goal-setting. The findings reinforce the idea that the exogenous character of public organisations presents barriers to effective application of strategic planning in public organisations (Stewart, 2004; Walker *et al.*, 2010). For example, the MoI was not able to integrate the law enforcement and security units into the strategic planning process because they were given varying degrees of exemption in the PFMCL by the reformers. Hence, while the MoI bureaucracy was expected to develop a strategic plan autonomously, it did not have the power to tailor the strategic planning model, to define its scope and to set stable goals, which put it in a contradictory position.

Public sector strategies are argued to achieve better results in stable environments regardless of strategy formulation or implementation approach (Poister *et al.*, 2013). Yet, there are conflicting views. Incrementalist strategy implementation is argued to work better in complex and dynamic environments (Walker, 2013). The external milieu of the MoI was unusually dynamic both in the pre-planning and planning period (2000s) due to a number of recent developments particularly Europeanisation, technological evolution, localisation, democratisation, civilisation, governance, transparency and accountability in the public sector. Furthermore, the government's priorities were inconsistent and variable. The active reform agenda generated an extremely dynamic and hostile environment for the MoI, in which

tackling the uncertainty of the future became highly challenging. While the literature suggested incremental approaches to tackle dynamic and turbulent environments, the MoI had to follow the rigid procedures of formal strategic planning due to the legislative mandate. Yet in practice, plan implementation unfolded rather flexibly. Unexpected alterations in government's preferences undermined the MoI's strategic plan by nullifying some goals that addressed central bureaucracy and local government. The findings show that under conditions of a dynamic and hostile external environment that is marked by uncertainties, rational planning does not fit well particularly with the political domain, in which goal-setting is highly exogenous.

On the contrary, the perceptions of the managers and the data presented in Table 6.3 suggest a relatively stable planning process in the regulation of associations. A distinctive characteristic of this realm was that the developments in the field did not pose a threat to the mandate and powers of the MoI bureaucracy. There was convergence between the ideas of the elected politicians and the MoI bureaucracy for the development of civil society and the preferences of the elected politicians showed continuity. The findings suggest that rational planning works better in the political domains in public administration when the environment is stable and munificent, particularly with regard to the preferences of powerful stakeholders. These findings suggest that researchers should take into account not only stability, but munificence vs. hostility of the environment being analysed.

The findings have implications regarding the extent to which the availability of resources, expertise and experience affect the success of rational planning. Availability of resources was argued to be a positive factor for effective strategic planning (Boyne *et al.*, 2004). However, the MoI could not apply strategic planning effectively despite the 60 percent upsurge in its budgetary resources between 2009 and 2013 (see Table 5.1), showing that resource abundance is not on its own a decisive factor for effective strategic planning and management, but many other factors, such as technical expertise that the SDU and the MoI lacked in general. This is in line with the previous findings (Boyne *et al.*, 2004, p. 342; Streib and Poister, 1990, p. 31).

The research presents arguments against comprehensive rationality by demonstrating that a public organisation may not apply the decision-rule of efficiency or behave substantively rationally in addressing its weaknesses through development of effective strategies, although

it operates in a procedurally rational manner. For example, the MoI did not effectively address the issues of;

- High staff turnover,
- The need for restructuring for successful plan implementation,
- The requirement for an effective and outcome-focused performance measurement system.

The underlying reasons for ineffective responses mostly emanate from the political nature of the public sector and from cultural-behavioural factors (Lindblom, 1979; Simon, 1955). It has been argued in this thesis that the inability of the MoI to devise appropriate strategies in the above areas was not the consequence of computational problems or procedural rationality because the necessity for such strategies was detected by the management during SWOT analysis. Politics, the prevalence of the existing culture and *status quo* bias are more likely underlying mechanisms. Stimuli other than limitations to cognitive capacity, such as loss aversion (attributing more weight to losses than to equal gains (Eidelman and Crandall, 2012)), that underlie *status quo* bias may have an inhibiting influence on the formulation of sound strategies.

While rational planning is reported to achieve high levels of organisational performance in the context of highly centralised organisations with a defensive stance, i.e. focusing on efficiency of the existing services (Walker, 2013), the adoption of the model proved to be challenging in the MoI despite its highly centralised structure. A distinction hereby needs to be made between centralised team-based decision-making and centralised leader-centred decision-making. The leader-centred decision-making in the MoI is one in which the Undersecretary, as the top manager, has the greatest influence on the final choice. This is perceived to be a strongly limiting factor for comprehensive rationality as the top manager's preferences replaces procedural rationality. Unlike the team-based system, this is an impediment to collective rationality and it explains to some degree why some centralised systems adapt easily and benefit more from strategic planning while others do not. Hence, the application of the rational planning-based strategic planning model may bear different results from authoritative, leader-centred systems to team-based systems.

Strategic planning aims to replace the rule-based mechanism with a goal-based mechanism, which works very well in the ICT field as discussed by others (for example by Dror, 1968) and supported by the findings of this research. This underpins the conventional claim that the ICT domain is more convenient for rational planning (Dror, 1968). This effect is seen not only

in the ICT department, but also in the departments that deliver some services through ICT systems, such as e-government. ICT shows this effect through several mechanisms. First, ICT is a technically sophisticated domain and analysis in this field requires the employment of experts and professionals. Analysis unfolds formally and comprehensively. Secondly, services that are intended to be delivered through ICT tools, such as e-government, require and compel the departments to provide detailed definitions of the business processes. A precise definition of the service for e-government purposes means the quantification of that service and clarification of tasks, which is essential for goal clarity and the successful practice of rational planning. Thirdly, ICT allows project development, experimentation and piloting, which enables departments to work on a long-term focused goal-based decision-making mechanism, rather than the short-term-focused rule-based decision-making mechanism that characterises the MoI's pre-planning generic management approach. The increasing use of ICTs in service design and delivery causes the diffusion of the technique. Finally, ICT is a favourable field for innovation. ICTs today have become decision-making agents in many fields similar to human agents and are increasingly creating space for the rational model. Although most public problems are complex and political in nature as well as unmeasurable, ICTs can still make an immense contribution to the implementation of strategic planning in the public sector as well as to service delivery, efficiency and cost-effectiveness.

### **8.2.2. Implications for Incrementalism**

The findings from this case study have implications for incrementalism with regard to strategy content and incrementalism, disjointed vs. logical incrementalism and the rule-based decision-making model.

Strategic decisions are described as ones that have a far-reaching impact, that are less reversible (Poister *et al.*, 2013) and that are to some extent associated with innovation. Recent findings show a high association between incrementalism and innovation, particularly with regard to incremental strategy implementation along with a prospector strategic stance (Walker, 2013). This shows a degree of contradiction as incrementalism has traditionally been accused of promoting the preservation of the *status quo*. First of all, incrementalism can lead to innovation through “a fast-moving sequence of small changes” (Lindblom, 1979, p. 520). Secondly, only prospector organisations, which are innovative and risk-takers, but not defenders, tend to be distinctively innovative and fast-moving despite adopting incrementalist strategy formulation and implementation. The MoI had a defender stance particularly

regarding its core functions, in which change was not welcomed. The stratagem adopted in core functions was simple incremental analysis rather than trial-and-error (Lindblom, 1979). This explains why change in these areas in the MoI was incremental. Therefore, incrementalism may lead to strategic change and innovation if it unfolds purposefully and sequentially in a trial-and-error manner along with a prospector's stance.

Having no explicit strategy formulation method, the MoI acted through groping its way through in the pre-planning era and this attitude clearly continued after strategic planning was introduced, as shown by the high match between the patterns of incrementalism and the patterns of the MoI's practice. The patterns point to a disjointed form of incrementalism that unfolds non-purposefully in the form of uncontrolled trial-and-error (groping), rather than logical or purposeful incrementalism (Quinn, 1980). The effect of uncontrolled trial-and-error is visible on plan implementation and this pattern is supported by statistical data. When Tables 6.3, 7.1 and 7.2 are read together, they draw a picture of high flexibility and dynamism in which myriad performance indicators are introduced and terminated and performance achievement fluctuate considerably between no-achievement of targets and overachievement between 2010 and 2013. An important implication of uncontrolled trial-and-error or groping is that strategic learning (Bryson, 2011; Mintzberg, 1978) does not take place effectively due to lack of systematic evaluation of results and feedback. More than half a century later, these findings provide support for Lindblom's (1959) arguments regarding the general approach of public policy analysts.

Incremental analysis in the MoI is highly associated with rule-based decision-making mental model. The main characteristics of this model are short-term focus, shallowness of information seeking and lack of planning. Rules themselves are products of short-term focus and non-comprehensive search procedures. Hence, the rules are subjected to change in short intervals. They are created to respond to certain conditions, rather than for the achievement of long-term goals that are associated with performance targets as indicators of success. The ability of the agents to contemplate long-term goals, develop and channel resources for the attainment of these goals, search for information and planning is highly restricted. Agents follow the rules not targets, or put differently, their target is to comply by the law. The restrictive effect of the rule-based mechanism is reinforced by other elements of organisational culture, such as a tendency to reproduce the *status quo*.

It was argued that simple incremental analysis was purposefully preferred in the core functions of the MoI. This practice led to the prevalence of the *status quo*, as argued in the literature (Atkinson, 2011; Etzioni, 1967), particularly at a time when a radical move was needed to address and settle a wicked problem, such as terrorism. It was shown (Section 5.1.2.2 in Chapter 5) how a new anti-terrorism strategy developed by the former Strategy Centre, which tackled the problem by recognising social diversity and through social means rather than military means, was suppressed by the *status quo*. This suggests that public agencies must bear in mind the risks inherent in being mired unconsciously in the *status quo* when they firmly adhere to simple incremental analysis and nurture a highly conservative culture for strategy development.

### **8.3. Limitations to the Study**

This study adopted a holistic approach and looked into the MoI as a whole. This approach has the potential to overlook differences in departmental attitudes with strategic planning. In an effort to minimise this risk, the research reflected variances in departmental approaches to strategic planning, where these nuances stem from sub-cultures nurtured within the broader organisational culture or from intra- and extra-departmental or domain-specific factors. Additionally, the external validity and generalisability of the findings of this research to a wider population is limited since it is a single case study. However, the findings can still be relevant to public agencies in similar contexts. It is very likely that the results will have important implications for other Turkish ministries as well as agencies in the Turkish public administration. Further, the study incorporated theory and a theory-based bi-partite conceptual framework to overcome the limitations to external validity and allow for generalisability. Analytical generalisations made with respect to the two theories have strong grounds, as suggested by Yin (2013).

### **8.4. Conclusion**

This research shows how and why top-down mandatory and formal strategic planning in a one-size-fits-all fashion can be poorly practiced in an authoritative and bureaucratic Ministry located in the Turkish central government in a highly centralised and dynamic policymaking environment. Confirming Bryson and Roering's (1988, p.995) claim quoted in the

introduction of this chapter, it argues that the application of strategic planning does not produce automatic results at least in the short-run in the MoI. Incremental thinking may dominate decision-making systems in a period in which rational planning-based formal strategic planning is adopted as the legal-formal strategy development model. Hence, strategic planning is highly difficult and challenging for public organisations like the MoI as they face various problems during the application of the model.

#### **8.4.1. Contributions to the Public Strategic Planning Literature**

This thesis makes original contributions to the strategic management literature, firstly, by presenting an in-depth case study of the Turkish MoI which opens up the “causal black box” (Poister *et al.*, 2010) of the MoI management through the vantage point of an insider’s perspective. The thesis casts light on the practice and theory dimensions of public strategic planning. Thereby, the thesis offers the public strategic planning literature with a full account of how the initiation of strategic planning stimulates a range of causal mechanisms, how these causal mechanisms interplay with each other and how the standard practices of strategic planning are filtered through the active mechanisms. Within this context, the study provides good examples regarding how complex and interwoven mechanisms generate the observed practice. For example, it argues that the perception of a budget-plan link increased manager engagement in strategic planning processes. It also argues by tracing root causes that the perception of a budget-planning link motivated manager engagement through the stimulation of the basic instinct of survival (of their departments). From this perspective, the study provides ample explanatory analysis. The research, in so doing, responds to calls from scholars for more qualitative research and in-depth case studies on strategic planning processes and practices of public organisations (Bryson *et al.*, 2010; Poister *et al.*, 2010).

Secondly, the research contributes to a specific stream of public strategic planning research that attempts to understand and explain the difficulties and challenges in the application of strategic planning in the public sector (Joyce *et al.*, 2014) by providing empirical evidence in the context of the MoI. The research posits a variety of factors as underlying mechanisms that include: strategic planning model (e.g. gaps in legislation, top-down and blueprint planning), environmental contingencies (e.g. stakeholder uncertainty, exogenous goal-setting), institutional contingencies (e.g. size, goal multiplicity and conflict,) socio-political relations (e.g. power conflicts between civil and military bureaucracy), cultural tendencies (e.g. mental models, *status quo* bias, authoritative management, leader-centred decision-making,

complaint-based feedback), practitioners' actual practice (e.g. inadequate preparation, weak analytical capacity, weak actor certification, exclusion of provincial branches), culture of democracy (e.g. inadequate parliamentary and civil society engagement), public service and domain characteristics (e.g. confidentiality, political nature), organisational memory (e.g. high management turnover), leadership (e.g. lack of commitment of top management), values (e.g. legality as compliance by law, human-oriented service, service quality) and powers and tendencies (e.g. Europeanisation, localisation, computerisation). The focus of previous case study research has generally been on best practice and successful examples (Campbell, 2002; Kissler *et al.*, 1998b; Smith *et al.*, 2001), with limited attention to failing cases and to underlying reasons of poor practice of strategic planning in public organisations. The thesis contributes to the attempts that fill this gap in the literature.

By postulating the causal mechanisms, the research makes an original contribution also to the study of theories of strategic planning, in addition to the theoretical implications discussed in sections 8.2.1 and 8.2.2 above. Within this context, firstly, it argues that no single theory can fully explain the strategic planning process of the MoI, although incrementalism does it better than rational planning. This is an interesting finding for the MoI, in which formal strategic planning is valid. The research shows that different patterns of incrementalism can co-exist in an organisational setting in which partisan mutual adjustment (political decision-making) is weak due to the concentration of power at the centre of the MoI and of the government. Hence, an implication of the findings is that incremental decision-making is not always political decision-making or negotiation (Andrews *et al.*, 2011b).

The thesis debates how a specific mental model, rule-based decision-making, functions as a mechanism and leads to the practice of incrementalism and restricted analysis in conjunction with other factors and mechanisms (such as *status quo bias*) and how goal-based decision-making mechanism leads to procedural rationality and hence, to comprehensive analysis. This is an original finding for the literature and it implies and entails a transformation in the mental models of strategy practitioners for effective strategic planning in MoI-like public organisations, which is a challenging task in the public sector. The findings of the thesis show that ICTs may have an important role to play in this transformation. The case of the MoI presents strong evidence supporting the use of ICTs, suggesting that they may be used as leverage for more rational decision-making and better strategic planning. This finding provides support for Bryson *et al.*'s (2010) rationale for predicting more research on the role of ICTs in public strategic management in the future.

Thirdly, the thesis argues that the weak preparation, poor analytical skills and social practices of the strategy practitioners are the most significant and decisive elements in the ineffectiveness of strategic planning in the MoI. It shows within this context that rational planning fails with unprepared practitioners and inadequate expertise even when there is resource abundance. This finding directs increased attention to the perspective of strategy-as-practice (Bryson *et al.*, 2010; Jarzabkowski and Paul Spee, 2009), which locates the practitioners of strategy and their readiness and practice at the centre of strategic management research.

#### **8.4.2. Contributions to Methodology**

The thesis shows that strategic management research requires attention to at least five different literatures. These are general planning, public policymaking, public management, decision-making and strategic planning and management literatures. This research involved a review of sources from all these literatures. Although these have many points in common, they helped understand different dimensions of a public strategy process. For example, while decision-making literature explained micro-scale decision-making and the meaning of basic concepts such as values, preferences and uncertainty; public policymaking situated strategy-making in the wider society, adding the macro-scale perspective to the analysis. Attention to these literatures will help researchers of public strategic planning to better understand and explain public strategy processes.

The thesis defined the dimensions of rational planning and incrementalism based on a comprehensive literature review and utilised these dimensions as criteria for judging the case evidence. This contributes to strategic management research methodology in the following ways: firstly, previous research looked into certain dimensions of strategic planning excluding others, and this led to a call for the employment of all-inclusive views of strategic planning in research (Poister *et al.*, 2010; Poister *et al.*, 2013). This study employed a vast array of dimensions from rational planning and incrementalism theories with a comprehensive approach in order to cover all aspects of the strategic planning and management phenomena in the case. Secondly, previous case study research applied the theories in general terms without setting objective criteria for the judgement of data and for further critique of the findings by the audience. For example, they referred to a case as a successful one; however, they did not provide enough empirical evidence to determine how it represented a successful case (Poister *et al.*, 2010). By contrast, the conceptual framework developed in this research

provided a comprehensive basis for the investigation of every aspect of strategic planning in the case organisation and constituted an objective basis for the analysis of data. By doing this, the research presented criteria for the judgement of its findings by the audience.

### **8.4.3. Area of Future Research**

This case study generated a significant amount of knowledge with regard to public strategy processes and practice. Firstly, a reasonable research agenda should be the extension of this study by testing some derived hypothesis through Large-N survey research in the broader Turkish public administration context. Researchers may conduct parallel quantitative research in settings other than Turkish public administration. Particular attention should be paid to the existence and effects of the rule-based decision-making mental model, which is found as a generative mechanism for the practice of incremental decision-making and restricted analysis in the MoI.

Secondly, the role of ICTs as facilitators of strategic planning should be brought under scrutiny. While changing existing management culture is a challenging task, ICTs interrupt the existing culture and substitute it for its own procedures: professional and comprehensive analysis. Intensive use of ICTs is likely to lead to a cultural change in the public sector, particularly from rule-based thinking towards more goal-based thinking, which is what strategic planning is intended to achieve in the public sector. This calls for a research agenda of in-depth case studies that aim to understand the role of ICTs in successful adaptation of public organisations to strategic planning.

Thirdly and lastly, the study provides a rich body of evidence that underpins the case and a research agenda for strategy-as-practice perspective, which views strategy as a product of analytical and social practices and as a product of human actors. As presented throughout the thesis, strategy is a blend of logic and emotions; the explicit and the tacit; quantities and qualities; the analytical and the social. This thesis proposes that if the theory is the skeleton of a body, practice is the flesh and blood. And, if one claims that theory is the body; than practice is the soul, as stated by one of the MoI managers (see Section 6.3.2). Hence, strategic management research and the field can progress more appropriately by attending concurrently to the theory and practice.

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## **Appendix 1 – Interviewee List**

### **Undersecretary and Deputy Undersecretaries**

Interview\_9 – Interview\_21 – Interview\_22 – Interview\_35 – Interview\_37

### **Department for Strategy Development**

Interview\_2 – Interview\_12 – Interview\_17 - Interview\_28 – Interview\_33 – Interview\_36 – Interview\_41

### **Directorate-General for Civil Registry and Citizenship**

Interview\_23 – Interview\_25 – Interview\_26 – Interview\_31 – Interview\_42

### **Directorate-General for Local Administration**

Interview\_13 – Interview\_15 – Interview\_19 – Interview\_20

### **Directorate-General for Personnel**

Interview\_3 – Interview\_4 – Interview\_8 – Interview\_11

### **Directorate-General for Provincial Administration**

Interview\_1 – Interview\_5 – Interview\_18 – Interview\_29

### **Department for Information Technologies**

Interview\_7 – Interview\_39 – Interview\_40

### **Department of Associations**

Interview\_14 – Interview\_30

**Department for EU Affairs and Foreign Relations**

Interview\_6 – Interview\_38

**Department for Smuggling, Intelligence, Operation and Data Collection**

Interview\_10

**Centre for Research and Studies (Former Strategy Centre)**

Interview\_27

**Department for Training,**

Interview\_24

**Department for Administrative and Financial Affairs,**

Interview\_16

**Directorate-General for Migration Management**

Interview\_32

**Ministry Inspection Board**

Interview\_34

## **Appendix 2 – Interview Guide**

### **Strategic Planning in the Public Sector: The Case of the Turkish Ministry of Interior**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

1. Is there any mechanism that co-ordinate the strategy development, formulation and implementation process in the MoI?
2. Have you ever had experience with strategic planning previously?
3. Did you take part in the MoI's strategic planning activities? Was this a key role? Could you please explain?

#### **DETERMINANTS**

4. Could you evaluate the internal and external environment of the MoI with regard to the pace of change, change trends, predictability and their effects on the MoI's adaptation to its environment?
5. Why do you think the MoI has started strategic planning? Whether planned or not, why does the MoI develop strategies?

#### **STRATEGY FORMULATION**

6. If you think of the process of strategy-making in the MoI, how could this process be described? Is it explicitly formal or informal? What do you think about the role of the high, middle and low level managers in this process and the level of their participation? Does strategy-making finish by the formulation and enforcement of the strategic plan, or is it a dynamic process?
7. Do you experience hot debates, big conflicts and bargain (similar to the political processes) on strategies during the process of strategy formulation? How and why?
8. Does your organisation have clear and precise goals and objectives and are these achievable?
9. Do you consider the views and opinions of internal and external stakeholders in strategy formulation? How?
10. Do you systematically analyse and evaluate the changes in the service environment of the MoI? How and why do you, or not, conduct this kind of analysis?

11. Do you consider and evaluate alternative programmes, policies, projects and strategies regarding a strategic priority, how and why? To what extent can these alternatives be different from the existing ones and why? What is the extent of information gathering in analyses? Do you utilise any specific method in analysis?
12. Do you utilise methods such as trial-and-error or experimenting for strategy development on a regular basis? Do you pilot projects and why?
13. Are there any important criteria for the MoI for the selection of strategies?
14. How or in what way has the first strategic plan affected the *status quo* in the MoI with regard to the strategies developed in the first strategic plan?

### **STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION**

15. Is there a specific management process to ensure effective strategy implementation? Can you describe it? How do you ensure that strategies are effectively implemented?
16. Do you regularly and systematically analyse and evaluate the outputs, outcomes and impacts of strategies? Is this done by a single unit or is it a departmental activity?

### **BENEFITS AND PROBLEMS OF STRATEGIC PLANNING**

17. Has strategic planning contributed to the organisation by strengthening the integrity of units and by enhancing external co-ordination? What implications do the exceptional situation given to the two law enforcement agencies and the situation of the Turkish Police have?
18. If you consider the broader picture, has strategic planning contributed to the performance of your unit, and to the performance of the MoI as a whole? How and why? Could you please exemplify?
19. What have been the benefits, if any, of strategic planning to the MoI so far? How and why do you think strategic planning generated these benefits?
20. What kind of problems have you experienced, if you did, with strategic planning? Why do you think these problems have occurred?

### **CONCLUSION**

21. Now we have come to the conclusion. Before we finish, would you like to add any comments about the subject?