NO NONSENSE: A REGIONAL APPROACH IN BELGIUM

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BELGIUM?
Belgium?
How you probably know Belgium
A country of regions

- Monarchy
- Representative and parliamentarian democracy
- Flanders - Brussels - Wallonia
- 4 language areas:
  - French
  - Dutch (Flemish)
  - German
  - Brussels: bilingual
- Problem areas: Brussels, language border municipalities with facilities (Komen, Voeren,...)
A country of provinces and communes
Local government in Flanders

- Political organization in 2018
  - City council
  - The Burgomaster and his Aldermen (Mayor and Deputies)
  - The CEO
  - Management team
  - Integration with Public Social Welfare Centre
The CEO

Clerk or City Manager?
Giving space to receive more space
What are we going to do?

1. Act!
   Because doing nothing is no longer an option.

2. Bruges-la-morte?!

3. Takeaways:
   Guidelines for change.
What are we going to do?

1. Act!
Because doing nothing is no longer an option.

Why not?
What has changed in the last couple of years?
Take a piece of paper, everyone.
Say no to pesticides.

Permit granted

Already!

1 decree on local governance 2019

- Political and administrative integration municipality – OCMW (Social Service Department) long-term plan
  - 1 integrated
- More local autonomy
  - More choices for presentation strategic policy
  - Credit control is less prominent and more flexible
- Fewer and simpler rules
  - Fewer procedures, fewer and simpler schemes
  - Simplification of administrative supervision

1 decree lokaal bestuur 2019

- Politieke en ambtelijke integratie gemeente – OCMW
  - 1 geïntegreerd meerjarenplan
- Meer ruimte voor lokale autonomie
  - Keuzevrijheden presentatie strategisch beleid
  - Kredietbewaking minder op voorgrond en soepeler
- Inperking en vereenvoudiging regels
  - minder procedures, minder en eenvoudiger
- Een eenvoudiging bestuurlijk toezicht

#ICMA2019
Higher complexity requires more creativity.

The perfect conditions for creativity according to John Cleese:

“Optimize for playfulness - find space and time, push past your limits, make mistakes, and be humorous.”
What are we going to do?

2. Bruges-la-morte?!

- Georges Rodenbach’s book written in 1892. “The quiet and impoverished city of Bruges turns away from the modern age and looks nostalgically back on its medieval past...”

- During a month, we visited several departments to talk to employees...
The City of Bruges in 2014...

- Approx. 40 unlinked departments, each having their own workplace culture;
- Various information desks spread over dozens of (medieval) buildings;
- No discussion platforms, no participation;
- HR department imposes sanctions on employees;
- 17 smartphones;
- 500 items on the average College agenda;
- Work clothes (PPE or Personal protective equipment) hardly or never worn;
- College decides that those retiring (300 out of 1600 employees) are not going to be replaced.
- ...
After only a few months on the job, Colin Beheydt does not spare his criticism for his employer

BRUGES – Speaking critical of your bosses and getting praise for doing so: that’s exactly what assistant city clerk Colin Beheydt did when he wrote a crushing report about the city’s personnel management. “He only did his job”, Burgomaster Landuyt says.
Time for NENO

Naar Een Nieuwe Organisatie
(litterally: towards a new organization).
Neno also means ‘child’.

#ICMA2019
6 objectives
6 ‘wharves’

• Mission, vision and values
• Organizational structure
• Organizational culture
• Personnel Department becomes Department of Personnel and Organization
• Housing
• Administrative simplification/efficiency
Mission, vision and values
Missie Visie & Waarden

Missie
Partner voor elke klant in Brugge

Wonen

Werken

Ontspannen

Woont...werk...ontspan...

Vooruitstrevendheid & Innovativiteit

Brugge

Stad op mensenmaat waar iedereen wil (aan)werken

WILMINGTON

Federal Point

Smith's Island

Cape Pfair

WONEN

WERKEN

ONTSPANNEN

WAARDEN

BRUGGE

VOORUITSTREVENDHEID & INNOVATIVITEIT
Organizational structure
Organizational culture
Personnel Department becomes Department of Personnel and Organization
Personnel Department becomes Department of Personnel and Organization

- Heads of departments are the real personnel managers!
- The New Way of Working: from punishment via flexible working to abolition of the employee time clock system
- Formation
- Feedback
- ...
Huis van de Bruggeling
Administrative simplification / efficiency
Slimming down the College agenda

Digitalization: scanning, BYOD, …
What are we going to do?

3. Takeaways: guidelines for change

- Change must lead to improvement.
- Theory is different from practice!
- Let go where possible, maintain where necessary. Stop killing people, or stop hiring people (and do it yourself).
- “Life is like a slot machine: you’ll never win if you don’t put anything in.”
- You always have various choices in life.
THANK YOU

Questions?