



Update on Project Governance Research in Norway

Concept International Symposium 19 September 2024

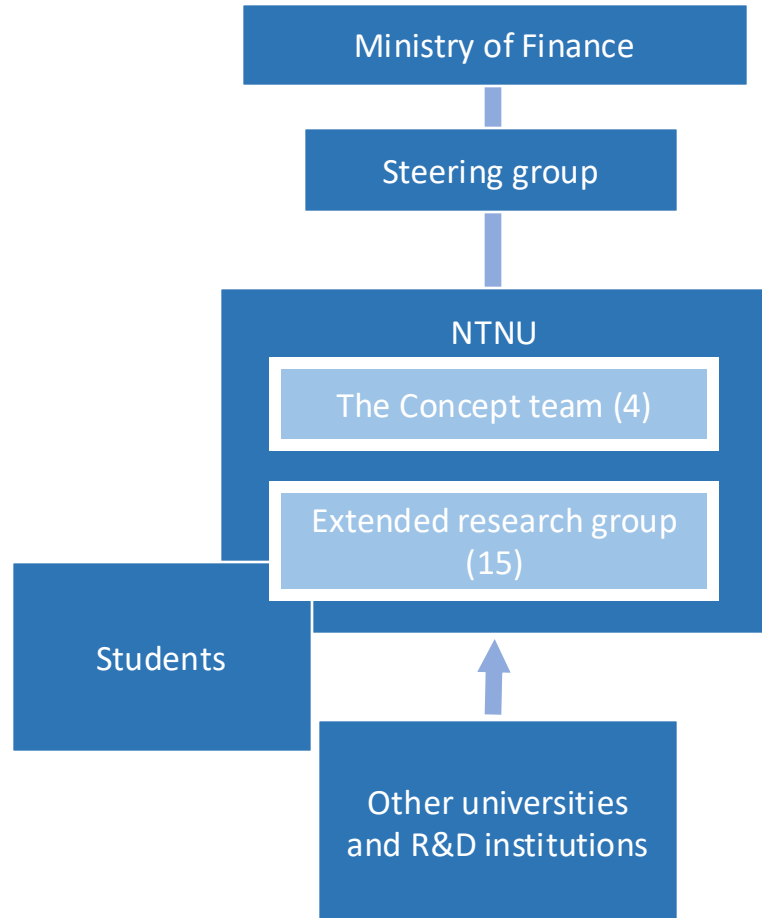
Gro Holst Volden, Programme Director
Concept Research Programme, NTNU

The Concept Programme

- Trailing research
- Funded by the Ministry of Finance since 2002
- Follows projects under the State Project Model
- 300+ projects since year 2000
- The perspective of the financing party; project governance
- Placed at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology in Trondheim
- <https://www.ntnu.edu/concept>



The Concept Programme



Researchers present at the symposium



Gro H. Volden



Morten Welde



Atle Engebø



Erik Valestrand



Nils Olsson



Ole J. Klakegg



Ola Lædre



Vedran Zerjav



Christian Bakke



Torbjørn Aass



Helene Berg

Two main objectives

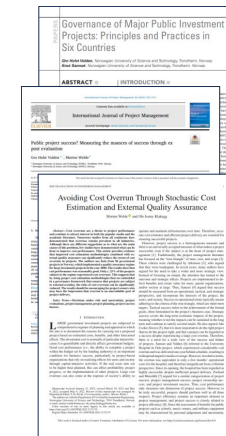
1 Improve the Norwegian State Project Model (practical)

We share lessons learned among projects and government agencies. We help the Ministry of Finance ensure that the scheme is in line with best practice.



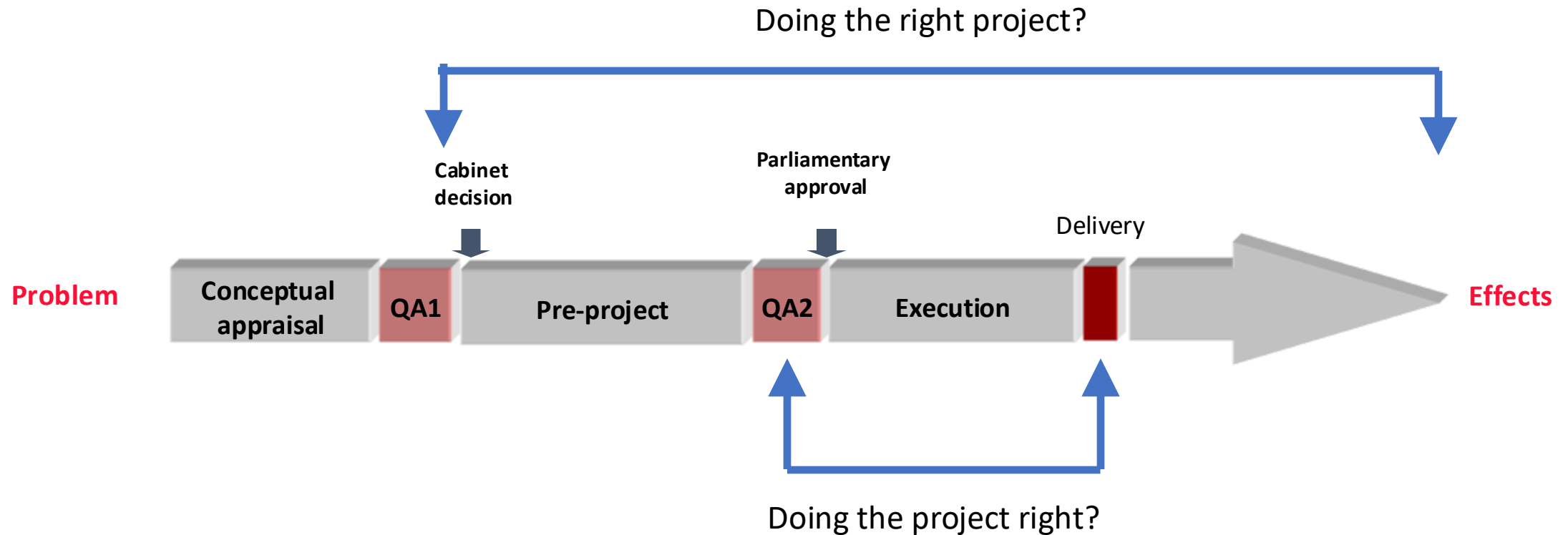
2 Contribute to the knowledge base (theoretical)

We manage a database of all projects under the QA scheme. We publish high-quality research through peer reviewed journals and conferences.



We follow projects in the State Project Model

– aimed to ensure successful projects on several levels

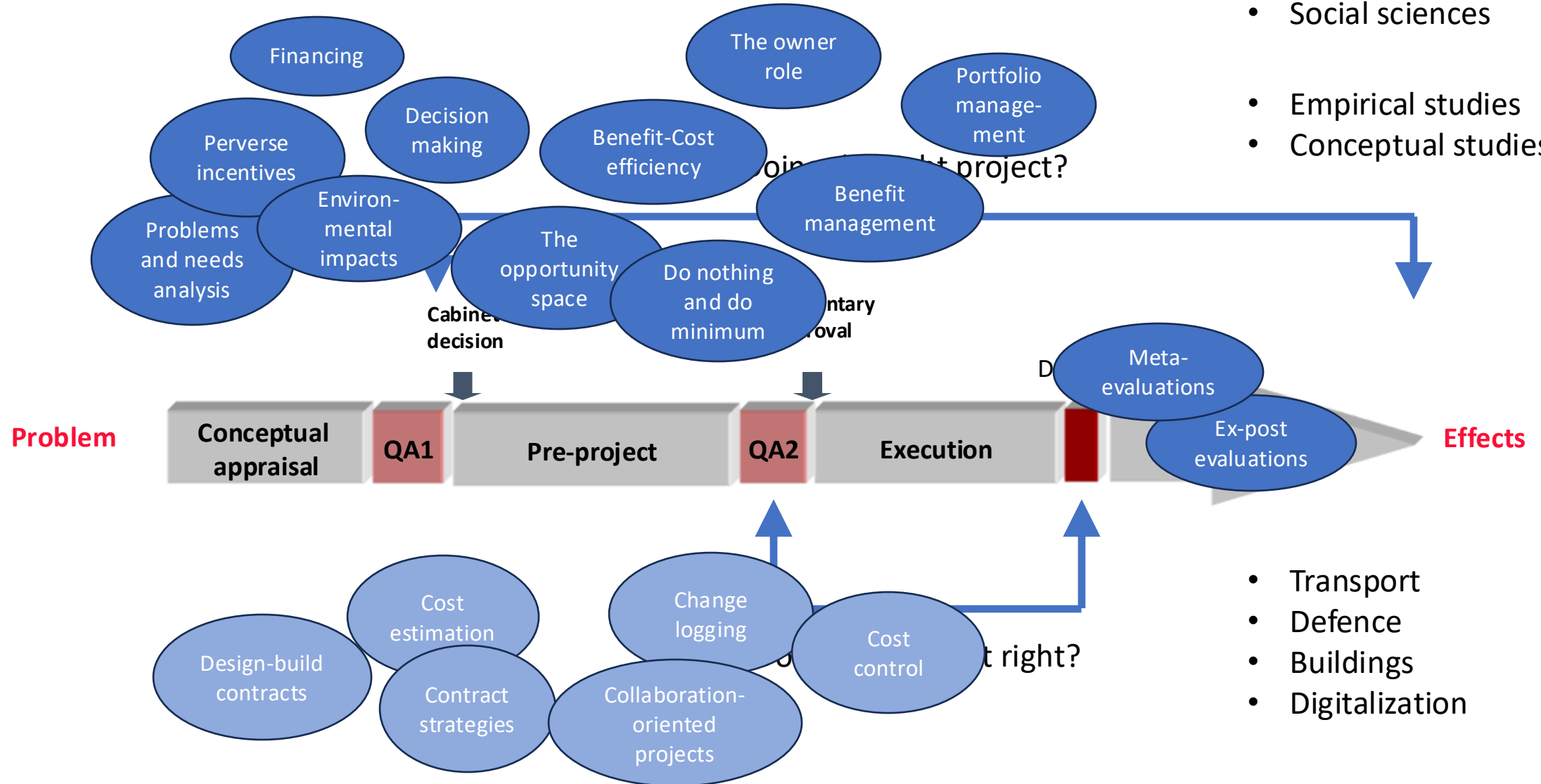


- Doing the right project wrong, is better than doing the wrong project right

Research topics

- Engineering
- Economics
- Management science
- Social sciences

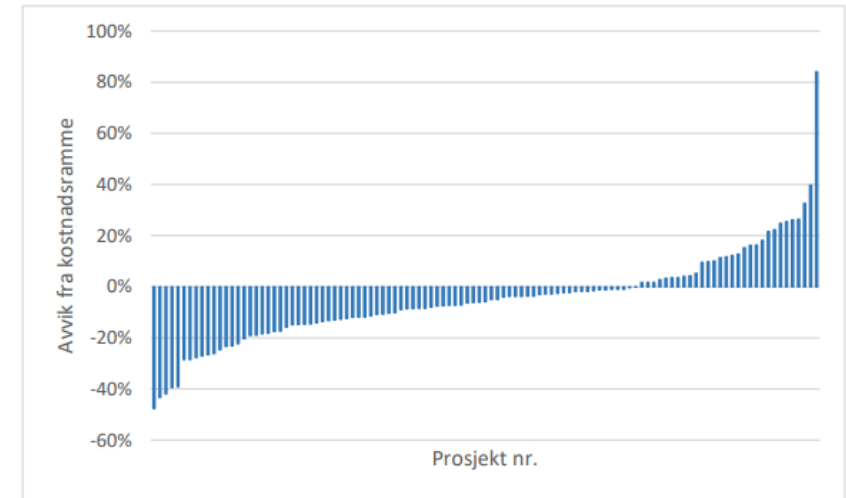
- Empirical studies
- Conceptual studies



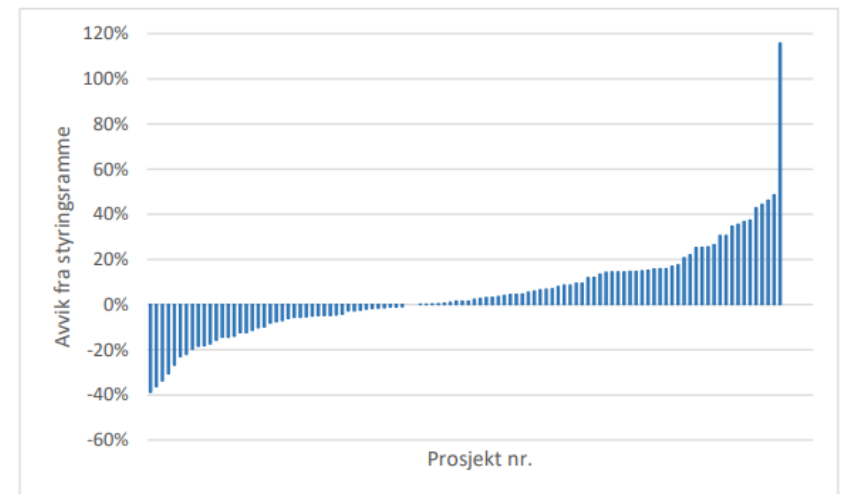
- Transport
- Defence
- Buildings
- Digitalization

We demonstrate what works and what doesn't

- Project practice has improved and become more harmonized
- QA2 has provided the government with good cost control on a portfolio level
- QA1 ensures that project selection is based on a broad assessment of strategic goals
- Concept as a hub for development of knowledge
- Remaining challenges are related to, inter alia, project initiation, life cycle cost perspectives, benefit and cost management in the pre-project phase, programme and portfolio management, use of post-project evaluation and other data from previous projects.

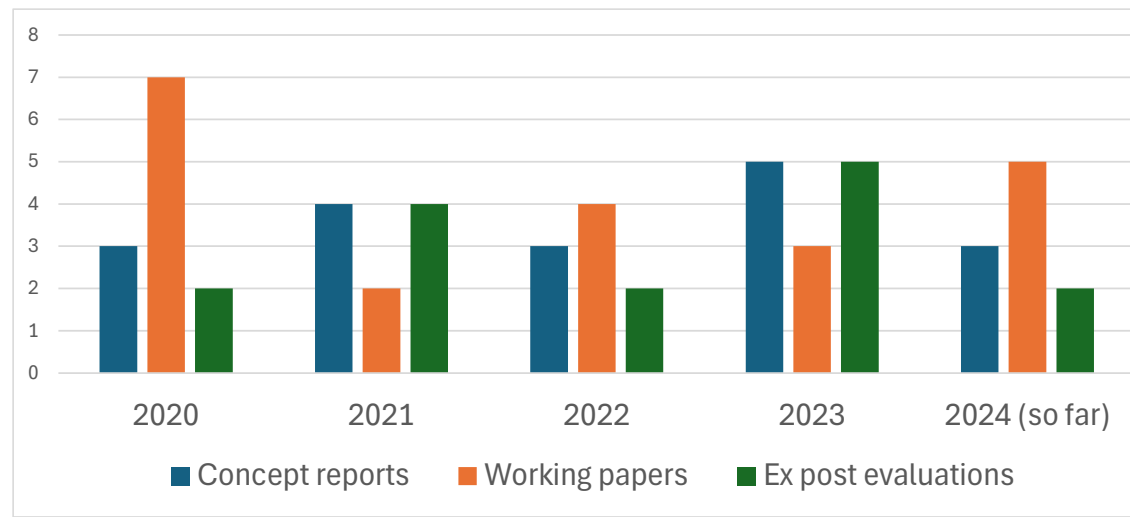


Deviance from budget (N=111)

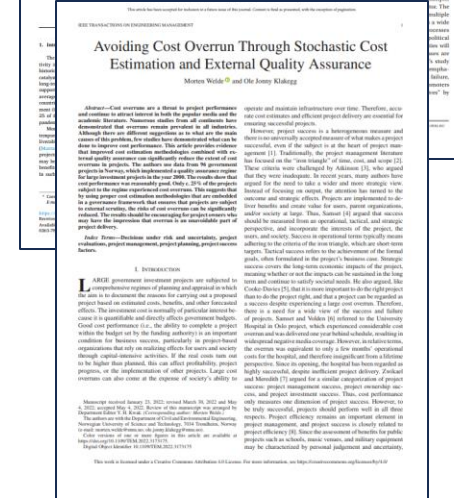
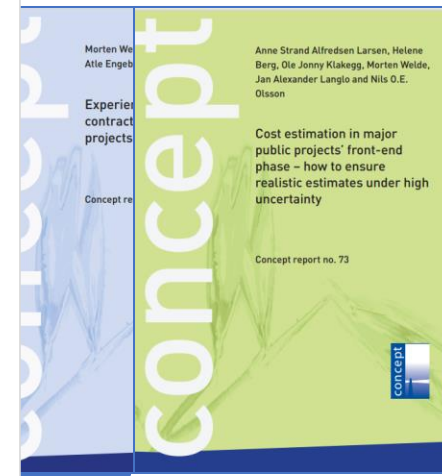


Deviance from target cost (N=106)

Publications



Publications	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024 (so far)
Concept reports	3	4	3	5	3
Working papers	7	2	4	3	5
Ex post evaluations	2	4	2	5	2
Booklets	3	6	4	3	0
Newsletters	4	4	4	4	4
Op-eds and feature articles	16	23	6	13	4
Master theses	12	10	10	10	4
Scientific papers	3	6	3	7	4
Book chapters	10	4	1	4	2



Extensive dissemination and networking

- Webinars, seminars, workshops, and other types of dialogue with ministries, agencies and QA consultants
- Collaboration with international network in academia and government
- LinkedIn account (new!)



Concept-programmet

Nytt fra Concept-programmet

2022 Nyhetsbrev nr. 4

Leder

I dette nyhetsbrevet har vi gleden av å presentere fire nye publikasjoner fra Concept. For det første en studie om bidragsrett i store statlige investeringsprosjekter. Videre en studie om anerkjennelse i store prosjekter, med fokus på organisering av anerkjennelse og behovet for kompetanse. Vi publiserer også en studie hvor en avdelingsleder i et stort offentlig og nye analyser som viser at det er viktig å ha kompetanse i en doktoravhandling om styring av store statlige investeringsprosjekter. Vi presenterer også noen interne nyheter, herunder om ansettelsen av en ny medarbeider i Concept-programmet. Tilslutt presenterer vi også vårt representant med forslag på flere nasjonale og internasjonale konferanser denne høsten, som kort omtales.

Som vanlig finner du en oversikt over kommende konferanser og nettvorkingsaktiviteter i nyhetsbrevet.

Vi er nå i ferd med å fastlegge arbeidsprogrammet for 2023. Vi vil blant annet oppdatere resultatene om kompetansebehovet, bidra kompetanseutviklingen i forskningsfeltet, og skilte ut i tillegg vil vi se på arbeid med totalstyring, hvordan arbeidsforholdene fra ES-sapportene følges opp, og vi vil fortløpelig knytte til utforming og utforming. I tillegg vil vi se på arbeid med totalstyring, hvordan arbeidsforholdene fra ES-sapportene følges opp, og vi vil fortløpelig knytte til utforming og utforming. I tillegg vil vi se på arbeid med totalstyring, hvordan arbeidsforholdene fra ES-sapportene følges opp, og vi vil fortløpelig knytte til utforming og utforming.

Vi takker for godt samarbeid i 2022, og ønsker alle våre partnere og samarbeidspartnere en riktig god jul.

Programledelsen



Programleder
Gro Heide Volden



Sjefkonferanser og nettverk
Morten Wulde



Some recent and ongoing
research topics

Do-nothing, Do-minimum or Do-something?

We studied 112 project appraisals and found:

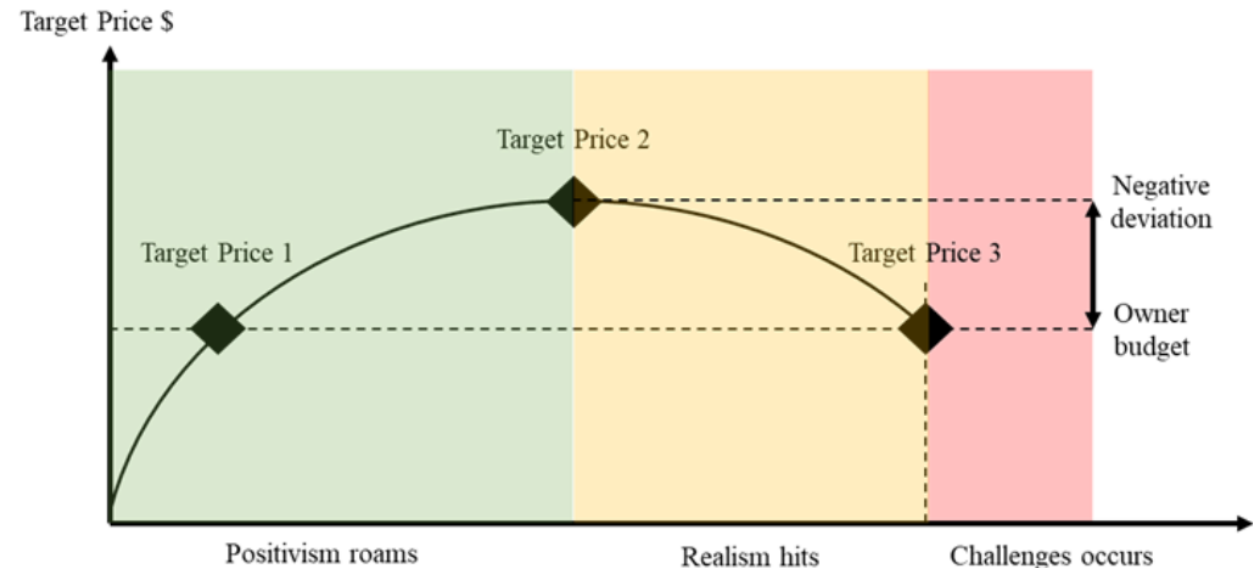
- The *do-nothing* alternative was
 - not treated as a viable option
 - low transparency
 - never recommended (although it was best value for money in many cases)
- *Do-minimum* alternatives were
 - included in only 1/3 of appraisals
 - tended to be negatively biased
 - recommended in only 2/112 cases



To ensure more efficient use of society's resources, the *do-nothing* and *do-minimum* alternatives must be treated more seriously in appraisals.

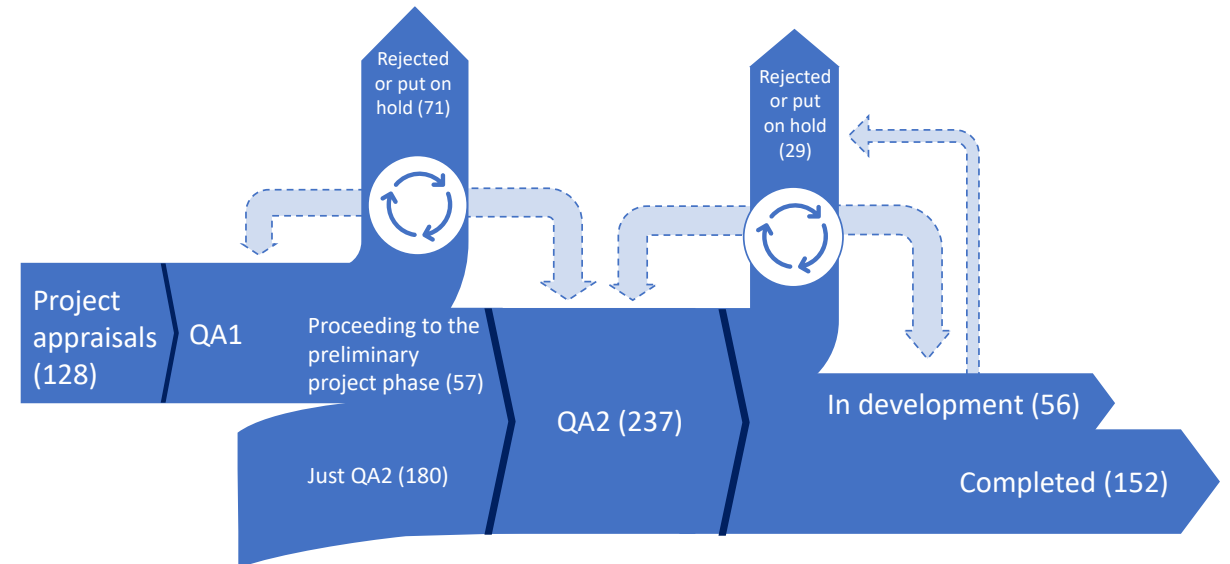
Collaboration-oriented projects – positive and negative experiences

- Collaborative contract strategies are common, but come in many forms
- The potential benefits of collaborative strategies are well documented in case studies
- A study of 105 projects found that the most common challenges and barriers were related to
 - The contract (incentives, finding the right target price)
 - The collaborative phase
 - Project organization
 - «Soft elements»



Decision-maker's use of appraisals and QAs

- Political processes have their own rationality, and reports may be used opportunistically
- The problem of path dependency (pre-determined solution)
- Difficult to reject proposals, easier to put on hold indefinitely



International book project

- Volume to be published by Wiley July 2025
- The focus is on governance arrangements (stage-gate models) for government investment projects, introduced by the authorities (national level)
- Target group: policymakers
- Contributions from experts in nine countries, and multi-national organizations



Future priorities for the Concept programme

- There are still many challenges in public projects, and many under-researched topics.
- More and better use of ex-post evaluation to improve future projects
- Collaboration with other universities and R&D institutions in Norway and abroad
- We welcome your views and ideas



Enjoy the
symposium
and make the
most out of it!

