

TOM KORTENBACH

Senior Policy & Programme Advisor — Governance, Strategy & Stakeholder Engagement

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PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

I thrive in challenging, dynamic environments where tasks are complex and agility is required, drawing on strong analytical capabilities, organisational talent, and an ability to connect people — acting as a translator and negotiator between stakeholders to bridge competing interests. Even under significant pressure, I stay calm and composed, maintaining clarity across multiple workstreams at once. Addressing major societal challenges is what drives me: I'm committed to empowering people by giving them meaningful options, a genuine sense of agency, and the skills to keep developing themselves. Based in Sydney since August 2026, having relocated from the Netherlands.

KEY SKILLS

Policy & Strategic Advisory

- Executive and board-level reporting, including budget and planning & control cycles
- Policy development and analysis across complex, multi-level government environments
- Strategic advisory to executive leadership (director-general / secretary-general level)
- Governance design and institutional process development
- EU and cross-border policy coordination

Programme & Stakeholder Management

- Programme and project management, including programme secretariat roles
- Multi-stakeholder coordination across government, institutional and community partners
- Negotiation and mediation between competing interests
- Change management in complex political environments

Evaluation, Data & Capability Building

- Developing monitoring & evaluation (M&E) frameworks and performance indicators
- Programme and policy evaluation
- Quantitative and qualitative data analysis
- Funding proposal development and grant coordination
- Training design and delivery; facilitation

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE – references available upon request

Founder

TKD Advisory

August 2026 – Present | Sydney, Australia

- Founded a management consultancy advising social enterprises and not-for-profit organisations entering or operating in the Australian market.
- Mission of the company is to build capability among people and purpose-driven organisations that want to increase their social impact and solve societal challenges, by using First Principles Thinking as a problem-solving method.
- Services include 1) advisory on strategy, policy analysis, and impact evaluations; and 2) capability building through workshops on First Principles Thinking, programme and project management, and facilitation of strategy events.

Strategic Advisor to the Director-General

Netherlands Enterprise Agency (RVO)

October 2025 – July 2026 | The Hague, The Netherlands

The Netherlands Enterprise Agency is an agency of the Ministry of Economic Affairs and one of the largest executive agencies in the Netherlands. I was the personal advisor to the Director-General, and supported him in his work with the agency's owner (the Secretary-General of the Ministry of Economic Affairs) and principals (Senior leadership of other ministries, decentralised authorities and the EU).

- Organised and prepared meetings between the Director-General and the owner on risk management and continuity of services.
- Organised and prepared executive meetings between the Director-General and commissioning ministries' Directors-General on strategic decisions, setting out the strategic direction of the organisation and cooperation with its principals.
- Ran internal meetings with directors and departments to drive follow-up on strategic decisions.
- Coordinated progress reporting on budget and the planning & control (P&C) cycle.
- Coordinated and composed the 2026 annual plan and the trimester progress reports on the annual plan for the agency's owner and internal senior leadership.

Senior Advisor, Public Sector

Berenschot

October 2022 – September 2025 | Utrecht, The Netherlands

[Berenschot](#) is ranked by consultancy.nl at diamond level for the public sector and platinum level for strategy in the Netherlands. Worked across multiple central-government ministries, provincial governments, municipal governments and the National Police — fulfilling roles including project and programme management, strategic advisor, trainer and researcher. Uses public value as a guiding principle and theory, in projects. Developed a proposition on broad prosperity for local governments. An exhaustive list of projects available upon request. Selected results:

- Developed and implemented an evaluation and monitoring framework for the National Programme on Liveability and Safety, for the Ministry of Housing and Spatial Planning (VRO).
- Led a statutory evaluation of the Zwijsrecht Municipal Audit Office (Rekenkamer), navigating political, governance and administrative sensitivities across the council-executive-officials triangle.
- Developed intermunicipal subsidy propositions (Regio Deals) that were successfully awarded, for the Green Heart region and South Holland's New Towns programme.
- Developed and implemented national nitrogen/agricultural policy for the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Food Security and Nature.
- Developed and implemented a programme management training curriculum for junior and mid-level civil servants, Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management.
- Developed and implemented a training on public value for programme managers and middle management, Ministry of Education, Culture and Science.
- Developed and implemented a process for innovation-project, as well as curated proposals, for the National Growth Fund, Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations.
- Developed programmes to strengthen democratic governance, Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations.
- Developed and implemented a large change programme for the National Police on protecting high-profile politicians and individuals threatened by criminals.
- Diagnosed internal and external bottlenecks constraining a municipality's growth agenda through interviews with executive leadership, benchmarked against four peer municipalities (Haarlemmermeer).

Co-Founder

Niet Denken, Maar Proeven (NDMP) — lit. "Don't Think, Just Taste"

December 2021 – February 2026 | The Hague, The Netherlands

- Co-founded a culinary services company grown from a shared passion for cooking, offering catering and private dining experiences.

Policy Advisor, EU Industrial Policy & Parliamentary Coordinator

Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate Policy (EZK)

June 2020 – September 2022 | The Hague, The Netherlands

- Collaborated with other ministries and European Member States on European industrial policy to establish enabling conditions for Dutch and European business, addressing decarbonisation, digitalisation, resilience and strategic autonomy.
- Served as national coordinator for the Netherlands' proposals under the EU's Important Projects of Common European Interest (IPCEI) programme — attended European forums and working groups, developed cross-ministerial policy papers with the Dutch Permanent Representation to the EU, and engaged industry stakeholders.

- Served as parliamentary coordinator for the directorate, preparing senior officials and ministers for House of Representatives debates, providing valuable experience navigating the dynamics between the public service and politics.
- Contributed to the letter to the House regarding the 'Vision on the Economy' from Minister of Economic Affairs Micky Adriaansens, which places broad prosperity at the centre.

Advisor, Business Operations

Health Council of the Netherlands (Gezondheidsraad)

October 2018 – May 2020 | The Hague, The Netherlands

- Aligned the advisory process of the Council's scientific committees with corporate operations as part of a broader change management programme, positioning the Health Council as a future-ready organisation.
- Worked with leadership to develop plans covering the functioning of committees, the (royal) (re)appointment of Council members, and a revised approach to committee-member recruitment and selection.
- Restructured core corporate-operations processes spanning HR, information, organisation, finance, IT, communications and facilities.
- Contributed to development of role profiles within corporate services during the preliminary phase of an organisational restructure, in a coordinating role spanning multiple parts of the organisation.

Co-Founder

Factory for Innovative Policy Solutions (FIPS)

March 2018 – Present | The Netherlands

- Co-founded and further developed a consultancy applying First Principles Thinking methodology to public-policy innovation and societal issues.
- Provide structured guidance to break down and clearly define complex problem statements, and to develop scenarios for innovative solutions.
- Delivered workshops and consultancy engagements over multiple years, guiding clients' solution-development process through to a published report handed to implementation partners.

VOLUNTEERING & COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Volunteer — Refugee Academy

June 2016 – July 2017 | The Netherlands

- Helped highly-educated refugees move closer to the labour market — contributed to needs assessment, built structure into the organisation, and facilitated sessions.

Vice President — LEO Club The Hague

September 2015 – September 2019 | The Netherlands

- Involved from the outset in re-establishing the club as an international, mixed club (members aged 18–35) supporting charities and organisations in need of financial or practical help.

EDUCATION

Master of Political Science

September 2017 – July 2018 | Autonomous University of Barcelona (Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona), Spain

Coursework: qualitative and quantitative research methods, democracy and citizenship, public management and public policy, socio-political marketing. Thesis: "Government Formations in the Netherlands: A Historical Perspective."

Bachelor of International Public Management

September 2012 – November 2016 | The Hague University of Applied Sciences, The Netherlands

Coursework: public management, political science, management skills, conflict studies, professional English. Thesis: "Sustainable Peace in Post-Conflict Areas."

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Collaborating on Policy and Implementation — Ministry of Finance (2026)
- Public Administration Programme — Berenschot (2022)
- Internal Advisory Skills Programme, 'Going Deeper' — Berenschot (2022)
- Project Management Training, 'The Way of Working' — Berenschot (2022)
- Policy in a Political-Administrative Environment — Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate (2021)
- Effective Negotiation in a European Context — Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate (2021)

- Economics of Public Interests — Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate (2020)

LANGUAGES

Dutch (Native) · English (Fluent)