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**Policy Advice and Institutional Politics:
A Comparative Analysis of Germany and Britain**

by

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Abbreviations

(other than party labels; English translation in parentheses)

AL	Abteilungsleiter/-in (Division Head)
AsdD	Archiv der sozialen Demokratie der Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (Archive of the Friedrich Ebert Foundation)
BAK	Bundesarchiv Koblenz (Federal Archives Koblenz)
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
BBG	Bundesbeamtengesetz (Federal Civil Service Law)
BMA	Bundesministerium für Arbeit und Sozialordnung (Federal Ministry for Labour and Social Affairs)
BMF	Bundesministerium der Finanzen (Federal Ministry of Finance)
BMFT	Bundesministerium für Forschung und Technologie (Federal Ministry for Research and Technology)
BMI	Bundesministerium des Innern (Federal Ministry of Interior)
BMJ	Bundesministerium der Justiz (Federal Ministry of Justice)
BMJFFG	Bundesministerium für Jugend, Familie, Frauen und Gesundheit (Federal Ministry for Youth, Families, Women, and Health)
BMWA	Bundesministerium für Wirtschaft und Arbeit (Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Labour)
BMWi	Bundesministerium für Wirtschaft und Technologie (Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Technology)
BK ¹	Bundeskanzler (Federal Chancellor)
BKAmt	Bundeskanzleramt (Federal Chancellery)
BKOrgErl	Organisationserlass des Bundeskanzlers (Organisational decree of the Federal Chancellor)
BPA	Bundespresseamt (Federal Press and Information Office)
BoE	Bank of England

¹ Until the mid-1990s, this acronym referred to the Federal Chancellery (Hoffmann 2003: 528).
Meanwhile, however, most official documents use this acronym for the chancellor.

BT-Drs.	Bundestagsdrucksache (Printed papers of the German Bundestag)
CEE	Central and Eastern Europe
ChefBK	Chef des Bundeskanzleramtes (Chief of Staff in the Federal Chancellery)
Cmnd.	Command Paper (5 th series)
Cm	Command Paper (6 th series)
CO	Cabinet Office
CoE	Chancellor of the Exchequer
CSD	Civil Service Department
CPS	Centre for Policy Studies
CSR	Comprehensive Spending Review
CSYB	Civil Service Year Book
Dept.	Department
DHV	(Deutsche) Hochschule für Verwaltungswissenschaften Speyer
FSU	Forward Strategy Unit
fte	full-time equivalent
GG	Grundgesetz (Basic Law)
GGO	Gemeinsame Geschäftsordnung der Bundesministerien (Joint Rules of Procedures of the Federal Ministries)
GOBReg	Geschäftsordnung der Bundesregierung (Rules of Procedure of the Federal Government)
GVPI	Geschäftsverteilungsplan (Task allocation plan)
HA	Hausanordnung (Internal decree)
HC	Printed papers of the House of Commons
HL	Printed papers of the House of Lords
HMSO	Her Majesty's Stationery Office
HMT	Her Majesty's Treasury
IPPR	Institute for Public Policy Research
LSE	London School of Economics and Political Science
MCC	Ministerial Code: A Code of Conduct and Guidance on Procedures for Ministers (2005-2007: Ministerial Code of Conduct: A Code of Ethics and Procedural Guidance for Ministers, since 2007: Ministerial Code)
MdB	Mitglied des Deutschen Bundestages (Member of the German Parliament)
MP	Member of Parliament

NA	National Archives
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PAR	Programme and Analysis Review
PASC	Public Administration Select Committee
PermSec	Permanent Secretary
PIU	Performance and Innovation Unit
PMO	Prime Minister's Office
PMSU	Prime Minister's Strategy Unit
PN	Press Notice
PPS	Principal Private Secretary
PRVR	Projektgruppe für Regierungs- und Verwaltungsreform beim Bundesminister des Innern (Project Group on Government and Administrative Reform at the Federal Minister of Interior)
PSRU	Public Sector Research Unit
PSSt	Parlamentarische/r Staatssekretär/-in (Parliamentary State Secretary)
PU.S.S	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State
RIPA	Royal Institute of Public Administration
SCS	Senior Civil Service
StS	Beamtete/r Staatssekretär/-in (Administrative State Secretary)
StWG	Gesetz zur Förderung der Stabilität und des Wachstums der Wirtschaft (Economic Stability and Growth Act)
TP	Time period
TSO	The Stationery Office
UK	United Kingdom
U.S.	United States of America

Newspapers

FAZ	Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung
FT	Financial Times
SZ	Süddeutsche Zeitung

Part I Introduction and research framework

'The politics of advice to ministers, singly or as a group, is decreed to be forbidden fruit to the public. Presumably, the worry is less that the public will fall from grace by eating from this tree of knowledge, and more that political administrators, naked in a sinful world, will lose their aura of original innocence.'
(Hecló/Wildavsky 1974: 266)

Chapter A Introduction

It is almost a truism in public administration research that ministerial bureaucracies have the monopoly on policy advice to political executives (e.g. Dogan 1975; Mayntz/Scharpf 1975; Aberbach et al. 1981; Jann 1988; Page 1992, Page/Wright 1999b; Peters 2001). Yet, since several decades scholars as well as the general public discuss the role of 'advisory arrangements' in government policy-making, i.e. of actors in central government organisations that offer policy advice to political executives next to bureaucratic advice. These advisory arrangements range from full-fledged line divisions for planning or general affairs to ministerial cabinets and advisory staffs at the organisational top-level of ministries, informal circles of personal aides as 'kitchen cabinets', and individual special advisers (e.g. Plowden 1987a; Andeweg 1997; Lee et al. 1998; Eichbaum/Shaw 2010).

As Hecló and Wildavsky note above, advisory arrangements act rarely in the limelight and their influence on government policy-making comes to public attention often only in cases of malevolent behaviour, e.g. the senior policy advisers at the U.S. White House in the 'Watergate affair' (Bernstein/Woodward 1974) or the departmental special adviser in the British Department of Transport suggesting in an email to departmental officials on 11 September 2001 that it is a 'very good day to get out anything we want to bury' (HC 303 [2002]: 8, 12; see also Blick 2004).

In contrast, the academic literature discusses the powers of advisory arrangements since decades, although the late 1960s to early 1970s as well as the past years can be regarded as heydays of scholarship. These authors claim that advisory arrangements influence government policy-making and the traditional bureaucratic monopoly on policy advice in central governments. They argue that advisory arrangements offer policy advice to political executives that may supplement but more often competes with bureaucratic advice and thus shifts the monopoly of policy advice in executives (Mayntz-Trier et al. 1972: 327-32; Mayntz/Scharpf 1975: 112-3; Aucoin 1979: 222; Biggart 1984). Furthermore, they claim that advisory arrangements influence the functional politicisation of ministerial bureaucracies, i.e. the 'sensitivity of civil servants for considerations of political feasibility' (Mayntz/Derlien 1989: 402), because the latter often adjust their bureaucratic advice in order to stand the arguably growing competition with the former or rather defend their monopoly on policy advice (e.g. Hecló 1977a: 20-4; Hollander/Prince 1993: 199; Maley 2000a, 2002; Brans/Trui 2007: 66; Rhodes et al. 2008: 465).

Yet, it is puzzling that despite the broad acknowledgements of the influence of advisory arrangements on government policy-making, our theoretical understanding and systematic empirical knowledge about their role in central government organisations is rather limited. We lack empirical research applying rigour theoretical approaches for

explaining their influence on government policy-making. Some exceptions exist, e.g. MacDougall's (2006) study on advisory arrangements at central and regional level in the UK applies a quasi-historical institutionalist approach by referring to the 'lifecycle of governments' in order to explain the dynamic role of such entities in British central governments. Various studies on the influence of advisory arrangements in the U.S. White House follow transaction-cost theory in order to understand how their size and internal organisation may influence the legislative behaviour of U.S. presidents as their clients (Ragsdale/Theis III 1997; Dickinson 2000, 2005, Dickinson/Lebo 2007). Yet, these few exceptions in the current literature applying a more rigour theoretical argument to study the influence of advisory arrangements in government policy-making refer mostly to their clients and, in turn, neglect their interactions with the ministerial bureaucracy.

Notwithstanding, a research interest in the influence or powers of advisory arrangements in government policy-making faces similar challenges as studies on their clients, i.e. ministers, or on permanent officials providing bureaucratic advice, namely that

'[w]e have no common metric for measuring degrees of influence within a particular country, still less do we have one that can be used to compare power and influence cross-nationally. (...) [Besides,] an evaluation of the relative influence of officials and ministers is problematic because any such evaluation requires that we know the "real" goals of officials and ministers uncontaminated by any modification of these goals that results from the interaction between the two.' (Page 1992: 143)

In fact, the influence of advisory arrangements is presumably even more difficult to measure due to their position 'in the dark' (Blick 2004) noted above. As a consequence, this study analyses the influence of advisory arrangements on government policy-making by examining the *mechanisms* by which these executive actors achieve their alleged powerful role in the central government organisations. Specifically, this study asks: *How do advisory arrangements influence government policy-making?* It aims to uncover the means by which advisory arrangements may influence executive decision-making processes and gain their role in central government organisations, referring to the monopoly of policy advice in executives. This key research interest, however, also aims to understand *why* advisory arrangements achieve a certain role in government policy-making as well as why their mechanisms to acquire a powerful position in central government organisations may differ.

1 The state of the art in studying 'institutionalised sources of policy advice'¹

The literature on advisory arrangements in government policy-making addresses various actors, including full-fledged line divisions for policy advice, ministerial cabinets, departmental leadership staffs, single policy advice units at the departmental top-level, 'kitchen cabinets', or individual policy advisers. Although the analysis of such advisory arrangements is often a 'by-product' of studying their client and/or parent organisation (e.g. Campbell 1983; Dahlström et al. 2011b), a wide-ranging social science literature examines advisory arrangements in central governments more explicitly (see Table A.1).

¹ (Mayntz 1987: 8).

Table A.1 Key social science studies on policy advice in government policy-making

research design	parliamentary systems		(semi)presidential systems		research method
	Westminster systems	Continental Europe	Continental Europe	United States	
single case studies	<u>Australia</u> Anthony 1975 Forward 1975, 1977 Boston 1980b, 1988, 1994 Walter 1984, 1986, 1993 Dunn 1995, 1997 Maley 2000a,b, 2003a, 2011 Tiernan 2001a, 2006a, 2007 Edwards 1992, 1998, 2002 Weller 2002 Hawker 2006	<u>Austria</u> Biegelbauer/Mayer 2008	<u>France</u> King 1960	Neustadt 1964, 1978, 1980, 1991	qualitative
		<u>Belgium/Flanders</u> van Hassel 1973	Siwek-Pouydesseau 1969	Meltsner 1976, 1990	
		Pelgrims 2002, 2003b, 2006, 2008, Pelgrims/Brans 2006, Pelgrims et al. 2008	Siedentopf 1970	Heclo 1977a,b,c	
		Suetens/Walgrave 2001	Wright 1976	Kessel 1983, 1984	
		Dierickx 2003	Searls 1978, 1981	Moe 1985,	
		Vancoppenbolle/Brans 2008	Rémond et al. 1982	Moe/Wilson 1994	
		<u>Denmark</u> Salomonsen/Knudsen 2011	Thullier 1982	Hart 1995, 1998	
		<u>Estonia</u> Keris 2008	Frogner 1988	Hult 2000, 2003,	
		<u>Germany</u> Wagener 1972, Wagener/Rückwardt 1982	Quermonne 1994	Walcott/Hult 1999, 2005, Hult/Walcott 2000, 2004	
		König 1975	Schrameck 1995, 2001		
	Karehnke 1975	Rouban 1996, 1997a, 1997b, 1997c, 2003a	Cohen/Krause 2000, Cohen 2002,		
	Schimanke 1982	Bigaut 1997	Dickinson/ Dunn-Tepas 2002		
	Mester-Grüner 1987	Sawicki/Mathiot 1999a,b	Krause 2002, 2004		
	Müller-Rommel 1994a, 2000	<u>Ireland</u> Connaughton 2006, 2007, 2008a, 2010a, 2010b	Preston 2000, 2001		
	Kullik 2002	<u>Poland</u> Majcherkiewicz 2008	Campbell 2001		
	<u>The Netherlands</u> Brans et al. 2006	<u>Romania</u> Cobârzan 2008	Patterson 2001, 2008		
	<u>Spain</u> Olías de Lima 1994 Guerrero 2003, 2009		Kumar/Sullivan 2003		
			Pfiffner 2005, 2011		
			Rudalevige 2005, 2009		
			Lewis 2008		
			Schlesinger 2008		
			't Hart et al. 2009		
small-N case studies	Boston 1980a Prince/Hollander 1993 MacDougall 2006 James 2007 Temmes 2007	Schwickert 2010	Connaughton et al. 2008 Müller-Rommel 2008		
		Dyson 1975 Fleischer 2009			
		Wagener 1972 Jeffrey 1978 Connaughton 2008b			
		Andeweg 1999 Eichbaum/Shaw 2010			
large-N studies	Prince 1983, Prince/Hollander 1993	---	---	Dickinson 1997, 1998, 2005, Dickinson/Dunn- Tepas 2002, Dickinson/Lebo 2007 Ragsdale/Theis III 1997	quantitative

Note: See for the definition of semi-presidential regimes Shugart/Carey (1992).

Source: Own illustration.

The first studies date back to the late 1960s when many Western governments created entities responsible for policy advice and planning for the first time (Blackstone/Plowden 1988: 191). After a decline of research during the late 1980s and early 1990s, the study of advisory arrangements became popular again since the mid-1990s – corresponding to the renaissance and expansion of advisory arrangements in many advanced democracies.

The existing literature is skewed in volume towards Anglo-American countries, with a broad range of studies on the institutionalised sources of policy advice to the U.S. presidency (e.g. Hecló 1977c, Walcott/Hult 1999, Hult/Walcott 2000; Dickinson 1997, Dickinson/Lebo 2007). Also the scholarly debate on special advisers in Westminster systems increased over the past years, particularly discussing their effects on the functional politicisation of the neutral ministerial bureaucracies in these systems (e.g. Eichbaum/Shaw 2010). For Western European countries, particularly ministerial cabinets in France and Belgium have been studied extensively, albeit often focussing on organisational characteristics such as their composition and recruitment (e.g. Siwek-Pouydesseau 1969; Wright 1976; Rémond et al. 1982; Rouban 1996, 1997a, 1997b, 1997c, 1997d, 2003a; Lang 2005: 23-5; Bezes/Le Lidec 2006: 124, 127-8). In contrast, advisory arrangements in other continental European countries gained less scholarly attention, e.g. the study of advisory arrangements in Germany was mostly conducted during the early 1970s, accompanying a larger debate about the internal organisation of the ministerial bureaucracy and potential improvements (PRVR 1969). To the contrary, the individual special advisers in Scandinavian governments are discussed only recently (e.g. Salomonsen/Knudsen 2011; see also Hustedt/Salomonsen 2011). Similarly, the analysis of special advisers and ministerial cabinets in Central and Eastern European countries is in its infancy (e.g. Connaughton et al. 2008).

Corresponding to the empirical complexity of the phenomenon, which limits the comparability of advisory arrangements, most studies focus on single cases or rather single countries (e.g. Blackstone/Plowden 1988; Marley 1997; Tiernan 2007; Eichbaum/Shaw 2008). The few existing comparative studies scrutinise often a small number of advisory arrangements across countries with similar institutional contexts such as Westminster systems (e.g. MacDougall 2006). Only very few scholars conduct comparative studies of advisory arrangements across countries with different institutional contexts (e.g. Dyson 1975; Andeweg 1999; Fleischer 2009; Eichbaum/Shaw 2010). Yet, their comparative character varies between truly comparative studies and edited volumes of similarly structured country chapters.

Lastly, the majority of existing studies applies qualitative methods in order to examine the phenomenon. Yet, these studies conduct rarely qualitative case studies in order to provide detailed accounts on the influence of advisory arrangements in selected policy-making processes. Instead, they tend to present anecdotal evidence rather than systematic empirical accounts, although they may rely upon a wider range of qualitative sources. Only few quantitative studies exist, but these are often confined to the analysis of organisational characteristics and their effects on quantifiable government policy-making such as the legislative behaviour of their client (e.g. Prince 1983; Dickinson 1997, Dickinson/Dunn-Tenpas 2002, Dickonson/Lebo 2007; Ragsdale/Theis III 1997).

To situate this study and its research question into the state of the scholarly debate, the next subchapter delineates this study's *explanandum* and presents its definition of advisory arrangements in central government organisations. The subsequent subchapter outlines the existing scholarship on the role of advisory arrangements in government policy-making, focussing on the key *explanantia* that are discussed in this literature.

2 The role of advisory arrangements in government policy-making: A functional typology

In general, the scholarly debate on the role of advisory arrangements in government policy-making is fraught with difficulties to define this role. As noted above, assessing the influence of executive actors is rather difficult and this study therefore focuses on the mechanisms by which advisory arrangements acquire their influence on government policy-making processes. In turn, this influence is less related to distinct government policies, measuring their impact on distinct government decisions, but rather on the processes of government policy-making in general.

The existing scholarship on advisory arrangements presents for their functional role various enumerations, comprising administrative support, intra- and inter-organisational coordination, policy advice, and liaison for their client to parliament, his political party, the media, interest groups, think tanks etc. (e.g. Forward 1975: 150, 1977; TBC 1976: 22-4; Klein/Lewis 1977: 4; Wilson 1977: 202-5; Mitchell 1978: 87; Prince 1979: 279-80, 1983: 15; Walter 1984; Hollander/Prince 1993: 204-5; Murswieck 1993; Andeweg 1999: 13; Eichbaum/Shaw 2007a).

This study focuses particularly on the role of advisory arrangements in the *formative* stage of government policy-making *within the executive*.¹ It suggests a functional typology of advisory arrangements with an influential role in policy formulation as heuristic to make sense of the complexity of empirical cases rather than as the 'final truth'. More importantly, it acknowledges that advisory arrangements may perform more than one function and thus suggests a 'continuous' typology, distinguishing ideal-types to which advisory arrangements 'correspond more or less' (Lehnert 2007: 96).²

In particular, it draws upon Campbell's (1983) differentiation of four ideal-types of executive leadership arrayed along two analytical dimensions, namely the 'degree to which the chief executive wishes to foster "countervailance" in the advisory system' and 'the extent to which the chief executive draws policy decisions into central agencies' (Campbell 1983: 23). Applied on the role of advisory arrangements in government policy-making, the first dimension refers explicitly to the extent to which these arrangements may supplement or compete with bureaucratic advice. The second dimension is less straightforward related to advisory arrangements. Yet, its underlying explanatory acknowledgment of actors is also very fruitful for an application on the role of advisory arrangements in government policy-making: Whereas Campbell distinguishes the involvement of key executive actors in decision-making as a relevant condition for executive leadership, this study focuses on

¹ See for the basic conceptualisation of the policy-making process as an ideal-typed 'policy cycle' and its distinguishable phases Lasswell (1956); Jann (1981), and Jann/Wegrich (2003).

² All German quotes have been tacitly translated into English by the author.

the involvement of advisory arrangements in government policy-making as a very basic condition to gain influence, distinguishing those with a more proactive role in policy formulation and those with a rather reactive engagement in these formative stages of government policies. As a result, four ideal-typed roles of advisory arrangements in government policy formation can be differentiated (see Figure A.1).

Figure A.1 A functional typology of advisory arrangements in government policy-making

		countervailance within the executive	
		strong (competition)	weak (supplement)
involvement in policy formulation	proactive	policy advice	ambulance
	reactive	broker	administrative support

Source: Own illustration, adapted from Campbell 1983: 24.

Advisory arrangements performing *policy advice* functions influence government policies in a proactive manner and compete with bureaucratic advice. In contrast, advisory arrangements acting as an *ambulance* contribute directly to government policy formation but expressly dampen competition with the bureaucracy – which often occurs during 'politics of survival' (Campbell 1983: 24, 1987: 484), i.e. when extraordinary circumstances such as crises encourage clients to reduce the extent of countervailing advice in favour of advisory arrangements (see also Murswieck 1993: 95). As opposite, advisory arrangements act as *brokers* when they are rather reactive in the formative stage of government policy-making, awaiting a mandate for providing mediation, but may compete with bureaucratic advice in the sense that their brokering contribution is often explicitly requested by political executives in order to overcome the contested and 'non-mediated' bureaucratic advice. Lastly, advisory arrangements offering *administrative support* do not compete with bureaucratic advice, nor do they engage in government policy-making proactively. This study's research puzzle focuses on advisory arrangements engaged in policy advice, but acknowledges that it is very likely that they perform also several of these differentiated roles at the same time. In turn, their occupation with these other functions may also affect their policy advice role in government policy-making.

In sum, this study analyses the role of advisory arrangements in policy advice, influencing government policy-making processes while competing with other executive actors and their provision of policy advice. Consequently, it assumes that advisory arrangements affect government policy-making at their formative stage as well as the monopoly of policy advice in executives.

3 Explanatory perspectives on the role of advisory arrangements in government policy-making

The existing literature on advisory arrangements in government policy-making discusses various explanatory perspectives to understand their role in government policy-making as well as their influence on the monopoly of policy advice in executives. Broadly speaking, these scholarly contributions can be distinguished according to their emphasis for environmental, institutional, organisational, and individual explanatory features. The next paragraphs present the key findings of existing studies referring to these four explanatory perspectives in the current scholarly debate.

3.1 The environmental perspective:

External pressures on government policy-making

Many authors argue that the observed increasing importance of advisory arrangements in government policy-making is caused by the growing complexity of policy issues – motivating politicians to demand policy advice from such arrangements that differ from the line bureaucracy (Cmnd. 3638 [1968];³ Deutsch 1973; van Hassel 1974: 345; O'Connor 1991: 23; Meltsner 1990: 7; Hollander/Prince 1993: 198; Ragsdale/Theis III 1997: 1303; SVR 1997: 119; Patterson 2001: 341, 2008; Savoie 2003: 22, 2006: 306; Hult 2003; Benoit 2006: 157; Baehler/Bryson 2008; Laughlin 2009: 246). The literature discusses various external dynamics increasing the complexity of government policy-making, including the 'internationalisation' and 'mediatisation' of government policies, as well as distinct external events and time-related aspects.

First, various authors assume that the internationalisation of government policy-making, i.e. national governments engaged in policy-making at supra-national level such as at the World Trade Organisation (WTO) or the European Union (EU), increases national politicians' workload in presenting and negotiating policy positions – and consequently requires knowledge on policy facts and government objectives across a wider range of issues that are better provided by advisory arrangements than the permanent bureaucracy with its traditional sectoral orientation (Berrill 1977, 1980: 7, 1985: 257; Blackstone 1987: 27-8; Goetz 2007: 170, 182-4; Biegelbauer/Grießler 2009: 65). Yet, no comprehensive studies on the role of advisory arrangements in coordinating and uploading national policy positions to the supra-national level exist. However, some scholars examine the importance of supra-national advisory arrangements for supra-national decision-making, e.g. the cabinets of EU Commissioners (Cini 1996: 111-5; Christiansen 1997; Page 1997; Hix 2005: 43-4; Wille 2007, 2009, 2010; Egeberg/Heksestad 2010) or the cabinets of Director-Generals in the WTO (Trondal et al. 2005, Trondal et al. 2010: 121).⁴

In a similar vein, other authors observe an increasing cross-cuttingness of traditionally separated policy fields and stress that advisory arrangements are better equipped than the ministerial bureaucracy to provide policy advice on the growing number of 'wicked issues'

³ To simplify the reading, all command papers are given with their number and the publication year in square brackets.

⁴ Some historians study the relevance of national advisory arrangements for the structure of organised policy advice at EU level, arguing that the ministerial cabinets of French ministers served as a blueprint for establishing cabinets servicing European commissioners (Ritchie 1992).

(see already Churchman 1967; Rittel/Webber 1973; Smith 1976: 292-3, 1977b: 136; Hall 1983: 50; Boston 1988: 17; Elgie/Machin 1991; Dunn 1995: 514; Mandelson/Liddle 1996: 245; Hayward/Wright 2002: 22; Murswieck 2004: 403; Head 2008, 2010; Christensen/Lægred 2011). Many governments became first aware of cross-cutting policies during the 1960s and responded with the introduction of government-wide planning systems, e.g. the 'Planning-Programming-Budgeting-System' (PPBS) in the U.S. (Wildavsky 1969; Schick 1973; Dennison 1979). They established distinct new advisory arrangements in order to conduct and manage these new systems – which eventually went beyond their initial tasks and provided also policy advice on other issues (Ellwein 1966: 143; von der Groeben 1968: 400; Wildavsky 1973; Prince 1979: 291; Olsen 1983: 100). More recently, an increasing number of governments established advisory arrangements in order to support 'evidence-based policy-making' to cope with cross-cutting policy issues (Dierickx 2003: 328; Maley 2003a; Eichbaum/Shaw 2007b: 465).

Next to the changing substance of government policies cutting across traditional policy fields, also the dynamics in actor constellations are relevant to explain the influence of advisory arrangements in government policy-making. The U.S.-American debate over the different advisory arrangements inside the White House regularly emphasises their role as 'access points' for policy actors and argues that their frequent functional and organisational changes are a response towards dynamic actor constellations in selected policy areas relevant to their client (Cronin 1969; Walcutt/Hult 1987, 1995, 1999, 2005; Walcott 2005; Warshaw 1995; Kessel 1984, 2001; Hult 2000; Kumar 2002a).

Second, other studies argue that the increasing mediatisation of government policy-making increases the demand for media advice combined with policy and political skills – which is better delivered by advisory arrangements than the permanent bureaucracy. Already the introduction of special advisers in Britain during the 1960s was later interpreted as a counterweight to a declining popular and media deference of the government (Blick 2004; for other Westminster systems see Cockerell et al. 1984; James 2002: 62; Tiernan 2006b: 9; Eichbaum/Shaw 2007b). More recently, studies portray such advisory arrangements as spin doctors, encompassing their dual role to develop the 'government's message' as well as to organise government communication (e.g. Jones 1999; Esser et al. 2000, 2001; Gaber 2000a, 2000b; Leif 2000; Moloney 2001; Simon 2002; Tenscher 2003; Kamps/Nieland 2006; Vowe/Opitz 2006; Marx 2008). Also the increasing numbers of special advisers in Scandinavian governments are arguably related to a growing demand in media advice (Nannestad 2003: 80-1; Persson 2003; Betænknig 1443 [2004]; Finansministeriet 2004, 2006; Grønnegaard Christensen 2004: 19; see also Kettl et al. 2004: 20-1; Broeng Jørgensen/Ginnerup 2007: 27-8; Jacobsson/Sundström 2007: 20; Lindholm/Prehn 2007: 20; Poulsen 2007: 470; Salomonsen/Knudsen 2011). Similar developments have been observed in the Netherlands or the U.S. (Grossmann/Kumar 1979; Andeweg 1991: 118; Neustadt 2001: 9; Dickinson/Lebo 2007: 215-7; Helms 2008).

Third, several authors discuss the relevance of external events for the role of advisory arrangements in government policy-making. On the one hand, the wide-ranging debate on public sector reforms also includes studies on how these reforms affect advisory arrangements, e.g. interpreting the recruitment of new 'ministerial consultants' in Australia

during the 1980s as support for the government's managerial reforms in the public sector (Russell 2002; Edwards 2002: 16; Hawker 2006: 246-8). More recently, authors argue that the influence of advisory arrangements in government policy-making increases in countries with large-scale public sector reform agendas because their clients become heavily inclined 'to deliver', accompanied by a stronger orientation towards results and outcomes (Eichbaum/Shaw 2007b). Also, advisory arrangements may use such reforms to strengthen their own role, e.g. a reform of the Belgian federal administration aiming *inter alia* at substituting 'ministerial cabinets' with new 'policy formulation units' failed due to their successful counteraction – and it actually strengthened their position in central government thereafter (Brans/Hondeghem 2005: 827; Pelgrims/Brans 2006: 12-4; Brans/Trui 2007; see also for Flanders: Pelgrims et al. 2003, 2007: 194-5, EN 5). To the contrary, the role of advisory arrangements in the Canadian federal government declined after the government hired external business consultancies for advising on public sector reforms to reduce the federal level's workforce in the 1990s (Perl/White 2001: 56, 66-8).

On the other hand, also unexpected events are argued to affect politicians' requests for policy advice offered by advisory arrangements (Meltsner 1990: 7; Maley 2000a; Tiernan 2007; Vancoppenolle/Brans 2008). Yet, such crises may also challenge existing advisory arrangements, e.g. when they failed to warn beforehand or when clients' attention distracts away towards short-term crisis reactions, in Campbell's terms declining the policy advice in favour of the ambulance function (see Boston 1980b: 195; Jann 1995: 7-8):

'In periods of political calm and economic prosperity, when there is no urgent need for the policy-maker to reach new decisions or break his routine, everyone welcomes planning, exercises in priorities review and the like. But in crisis or sudden changes (...), the products of the planner (...) hit rockbottom in value, and are ignored when the key decisions are made.' (Helmer/Scott 1975: 110)

Next to studies on the role of advisory arrangements in crises at national level (e.g. Sigelman/McNeil 1975; Tiernan 2001a, 2005, 2007; Keating 2003), also global crises such as the recent financial and economic crisis may employ external effects on the role of advisory arrangements in national government policy-making (e.g. Dahlström 2011).

Lastly, some authors refer to time-related aspects of government policy-making as external features affecting the role of advisory arrangements. On the one hand, they stress the importance of legislative rhythms and governmental 'business cycles' (Snowdon 1997), causing distinct challenges for clients requesting the policy advice from advisory arrangements rather than the ministerial bureaucracy, e.g. to co-prepare a party manifesto or co-formulate campaign pledges (Nordhaus 1975; Golden/Poterba 1980; Kavanagh/Seldon 1999: 219; Mielke 1999: 25; MacDougall 2006; Strøm et al. 2008).⁵ On the other hand, they observe 'partisan learning', i.e. changes in advisory arrangements to U.S. presidents are replicated by their predecessors of the same party but reversed by predecessors of the other party (Warsaw 1995: 248; Kumar 2002a).

⁵ In federal systems, the 'rhythm of legislative periods' (Mayntz/Scharpf 1975: 76) at federal level may be further shaped by elections at state level.

3.2 The institutionalist perspective:

Institutional features of politico-administrative systems

The majority of existing studies argues that institutional features at the macro-level of politico-administrative systems explain the role of advisory arrangements in government policy-making. They can be distinguished according to the two dominant perspectives in research on executives (see Goetz 2003a: 74, 2003b: 61-2):⁶ Whereas several authors apply a *governmental* perspective and address the executive 'from above' by referring to features such as the state structure, the separation of powers, the type of party government, and the principles structuring cabinet, others apply an *administrative* perspective and address the executive 'from below', highlighting features such as the administrative tradition, the horizontal and vertical fragmentation of central government, and the politicisation of civil service systems.

3.2.1 Governmental features and advisory arrangements

First, various authors argue that the state structure affects the role of advisory arrangements in government policy-making due to the different competencies that come under the central government's direct leverage: In some federal systems, advisory arrangements at federal level are confined to policy formulation if policies are mainly implemented at state level (Painter 1982; Kruis 1987; Derlien 1988a: 101-2; König 1976, 1993: 17, 45-47; Page 1995: 259-61; Andeweg 1999: 16; McClintock 2003: 16; Laffin et al. 2007). In turn, advisory arrangements at state level are more often engaged in mutual learning in order to develop best practices how to implement these federal policies (e.g. for the Scottish case: Parry/Jones 2000: 58, Parry 2001: 57; see also Gebauer 1994, 2008; Häußler 1995, König/Häußler 2002: 223; Grunden 2009; Schwickert 2010).

Second, some studies stress that the separation of powers influences the role of advisory arrangements in government policy-making, referring to the different executive-legislative nexus in politico-administrative systems (Lijphart 1984b; Duverger 1980; Sartori 1994):⁷ In presidential systems like the U.S., the president's legislative support shapes his possibilities to predict the outcome of his bargaining exchanges with Congress and thus may decrease or increase his demand and reliance upon advisory arrangements (Dickinson 2000, 2005; Krause 2002). In parliamentary systems with their characteristic 'fusion' (King 1976) of the executive and the legislative, the executive rests upon legislative support and, in turn, the latter is less relevant in shaping the former's demand for advisory arrangements – although the legislative may affect their organisation, e.g. by granting only a particular number of staff to advisory arrangements servicing governmental actors (King 1960: 434).

Third, particularly for parliamentary systems where ministers act as both cabinet members and department heads,⁸ various authors argue that the type of party government

⁶ In a similar vein, Sundström distinguishes institutional features related to 'forming a government' and to 'the work of government' (2009: 144).

⁷ Most authors distinguish presidential, semi-presidential, and parliamentary systems, but a wide-ranging debate in comparative politics discusses the definition of these ideal-types as well as their applicability and utility in empirical research (e.g. Elgie 1998).

⁸ Throughout this study, the terms '(ministerial) departments' and 'ministries' are used interchangeably.

affects the role of advisory arrangements in government policy-making: In single-party governments with cabinet members sharing a common ideological outlook, advisory arrangements are said to be more often concerned with managing governmental policy in an administrative manner rather than providing stark policy advice (Müller-Rommel 1993: 142-7, 2008: 266-7). In contrast, advisory arrangements in coalition governments are more often engaged in intra-coalitional coordination (see for New Zealand after the introduction of a MMP electoral system: SSC 1995; Boston et al. 1998; see also Andeweg 1999: 16; Shaw 2001: 156-7; James 2002: 61; Eichbaum/Shaw 2006, 2007c; see for Canadian advisory arrangements during a minority government in the 1960s: Lalonde 1971: 521). Moreover, the type of party government affects also the organisation of advisory arrangements, particularly their composition. In Belgium, the party headquarters decides about the members of ministerial cabinets servicing a Minister from another coalition party – reflecting their general relevance as political parties' access points to the executive (van Hassel 1973: 367; Prince/Chenier 1980: 527; De Winter 1996: 332, De Winter et al. 1997: 402; Andeweg 1988: 126; Burch 1990: 5; Müller 2000: 328; Brans et al. 2006: 62). Other authors refer to distinct parties in cabinet and their policy ideologies as explanation for the role of advisory arrangements in government policy-making. Following the debate on 'do parties make a difference' on government policies (see Rose 1980, 1984; Page 1991) these authors argue that the increasing use of advisory arrangements by politicians may be rooted in radical policy shifts that are more likely to be formulated by such entities than the ministerial bureaucracy, e.g. argued for the first special advisers during the 1960s in Britain who were particularly appointed to justify radical breaks with consensus politics (Blick 2004). Yet more detailed analysis of causal interactions between the party in power and its advisory arrangements in central government are missing.

Lastly, many studies argue that advisory arrangements lack own programme or statutory authority and thus derive their role in government policy-making mainly from their client. Consequently, these authors claim that the structuring principles for cabinet decision-making explain their role (Biggart 1985: 118; Korte 2006: 183; Blick 2004; Smith/Weller 1977: 46; Welan 1983: 17; Andeweg 1988: 133-4, 139; Gaffney 1991; see also Dyson 1974b: 319; Helmer/Scott 1975: 112; Walter 1993: 35-7; Tiernan 2001b; McClintock 2003: 16). If an advisory arrangement services a cabinet member with strong formal authority, it is very likely to gain also a pivotal role in governmental policy-making (Theis 1973; Smith/Weller 1977: 46; Boston 1988: 16; Süß 2003: 352-3; Blick 2004). Moreover, members of these advisory arrangements may also 'enjoy more senior classification and higher pay' (Gomery Report 2006: 137) than those working in arrangements at the disposal of other cabinet members, as observed e.g. in Canada for the special advisers at the PM's disposal.⁹ In contrast, advisory arrangements servicing clients with limited authority are often confined to other roles such as acting as liaison to their party (Andeweg 1988: 133-4, 139; Welan 1983: 17).

⁹ In some countries such as the UK, the Prime Minister is formally involved in decisions about the appointment of special advisers to cabinet ministers (O'Connor 1988: 26; Dogan 2003: 56).

3.2.2 *Administrative features and advisory arrangements*

First, scholars referring to administrative features to explain the role of advisory arrangements in government policy-making highlight the importance of administrative traditions. The notion of administrative tradition is defined differently in the literature (see chap. B.4.3.3 below), but the majority of scholars subsumes under the term those permanent formal and informal provisions in departmental policy-making that are perceived as rather similar across a particular set of politico-administrative systems. Following the general perception that advisory arrangements need to comply with these conventions (Mallory 1967: 33; Wilenski 1979: 40; Prince 1983: 5-6; Boston 1980b: 194; Dunn 1995: 517), these scholars conclude that administrative traditions with a weaker legal entrenchment support the influence of advisory arrangements in government policy-making (Bloomfield 1977, 1978; Train 1977; Pleasance/Saldanha 1979; Painter 1980; Schimanke 1982; Müller-Rommel 1993: 151; Andeweg 1999; Blondel et al. 2007).

Second, several scholars argue that the horizontal and vertical fragmentation of central governments affect the role of advisory arrangements in government policy-making. In *horizontal* terms, cabinet members enjoy different policy responsibilities and scholars argue that clients with distinct competencies, e.g. the Finance Minister or the Foreign Minister, are more likely to request the advisory arrangement at their disposal to get engaged in inter-departmental policy-making rather than intra-departmental coordination (Pearson 1977; Anderson 1996: 477). In a similar vein, other authors acknowledge the different internal organisation of ministries and its effects on advisory arrangements, e.g. in the French ministerial bureaucracy:

'In a ministry which is weak, which has no traditions and is badly run, in which the quality of the heads of the various bureaux is usually poor, the cabinet [advisory arrangement at the minister's disposal, JF] is necessarily more active, more interventionist than it is in the ministries which are highly structured, like the Ministry of Finance, whose officials are of a very high standard.' (Anonymous/Wright 1972: 82)

In turn, changes of ministries' internal organisation also affect advisory arrangements, especially if they are designated to support intra-departmental coordination (Derlien 1978: 79-80). This is also observed for organisational features such as their composition, e.g. when the offices servicing the Swedish PM and his cabinet colleagues were merged into a single 'Regeringskansliet', the number of media advisers increased – also to support the change of the 'trademark' of these offices (Elder/Page 2000: 138; Molander et al. 2002: 48; Persson 2003; Premfors/Sundström 2007: 70-3). Likewise, the separation of the PM's Department in New Zealand into two offices in 1987, servicing the PM and the cabinet respectively, and the reallocation of the internal 'Advisory Group' to the new PM's Office resulted subsequently in an increased partisan recruitment of those members advising the PM (Boston 1988: 18-9). Similarly, German federal ministers are perceived to need more personnel at their departmental leadership staff if the primary location of their ministry remained in the former capital Bonn after the move of the federal government (BT-Drs. 15/5897 [2005]: 6).¹⁰

¹⁰ Several federal ministries remained their principle official residence (*erster Dienstsitz*) in Bonn, although the majority moved their principle residence to Berlin and left only a secondary office (*zweiter Dienstsitz*) in Bonn (Goetz 1999: 170-1).

In *vertical* terms, authors argue that in some countries advisory arrangements also perform responsibilities with regard to delegated bodies such as agencies – and thus contribute to intra-departmental coordination while having less capacities left for getting involved in government policy-making as e.g. observed in Belgium where ministerial cabinets negotiate performance contracts with agencies (Rommel/Christiaens 2009). The distinct interactions between advisory arrangements and agencies have not been studied comprehensively so far. Yet, it is reasonable to assume that in some policy fields a close relationship with the agency – and thus close access to information about policy implementation – may actually strengthen the role of advisory arrangements in government policy-making.

Lastly, the largest body of the scholarly literature presenting institutional arguments to explain the role of advisory arrangements in government policy-making refers to the politicisation of civil service systems. Following the general notion of a conflict about the monopoly of policy advice in central government, they stress that all three ideal-types of politicisation are relevant, i.e. (1) the *functional* politicisation of civil servants characterising their political responsiveness to demands of their political masters (together with their self-perception of performing essentially political tasks, Mayntz/Derlien 1989: 402), (2) the *formal* politicisation defined as the formally available party-political appointments in the civil service and (3) the *party-political* politicisation of civil servants, referring to their partisan activities (Rouban 2003b, 2007a).

(1) Many scholars agree that advisory arrangements gain influence on government policy-making because they complement the presumably low or – from their clients' viewpoint – insufficient *functional* politicisation of departmental officials (Heclo 1981: 165-6; Boston 1994: 14; Maley 2002, 2003a; Laffan/O'Mahoney 2007: 183; Mulgan 2007; Biegelbauer/Mayer 2008: 125; Savoie 2008: 143). Their basic argument claims that politicians turn towards advisory arrangements because these are able to ignore 'existing orthodoxies and vested departmental interests' (Boston 1988: 17; see also Smith 1977a: 154-6; Böhret 1981b: 306; Plowden 1991: 219; Page 1992: 115-20; Benoit 2006: 183; Goetz 2005: 242, 257, 2007: 170, 176; Savoie 2008: 233). Broadly speaking, this complement role of advisory arrangements due to the distinct functional politicisation of the civil service system may result in two ideal-typed relationships between advisory arrangements and the ministerial bureaucracy. On the one hand, advisory arrangements may act as 'a legitimate filter, absorbing Ministers' political demands and enabling officials to get on with the business of providing free and frank advice' (Eichbaum/Shaw 2007c: 624; see also Hensley 1995). On the other hand, though, advisory arrangements may become a 'counter-bureaucracy' (Knill 1999: 132) – and eventually cause an increased political sensitivity among departmental officials, particularly in civil service systems with low functional politicisation in the first place, i.e. they initiate a 'more pervasive form of "politicization" from below' (Page/Wright 1999a: 275; see also Plowden 1987b; Maley 2000a, 2003a; Cm. 5775 [2003]; Tiernan 2007).

(2) The authors emphasising the explanatory relevance of the *formal* politicisation of civil service systems often refer to organisational features of advisory arrangements such as size and composition. They argue that in countries with limited formal possibilities for partisan appointments in the civil service, advisory arrangements may serve as a covert

means to install partisan aides (Pelgrims 2001; Elcock 2002; Blick 2004; Eichbaum/Shaw 2010). Hence, advisory arrangements may act as a 'para-political bureaucracy' (Williams 1980) to substitute potential political appointments in the bureaucracy (Macdonald/Fry 1980; Prince 1983: 6; Campbell/Halligan 1992: 202-3; Dunn 1995: 513). These recruitments may also disseminate into the permanent bureaucracy afterwards, e.g. a common way of getting national officials into permanent positions at the European Commission was to parachute them in from the cabinets servicing EU Commissioners, albeit this decreased over time (Fusacchia 2009: 29; Trondal 2010: 48).

(3) Those authors stressing the *party-political* politicisation of the civil service for the role of advisory arrangements in government policy-making assume that such arrangements provide policy advice to their client with a clear *partisan* perspective (Rouban 2007a: 268). In countries with a strong partisan politicisation of the civil service such as the U.S. or Belgium, advisory arrangements are thus perceived as 'spoils in a spoiled system' (Chapman 1959: 281; see also Dexter 1977; van Hassel 1973; Suetens/Walgrave 2001), competing with partisan advice by political appointees in the civil service and, in turn, strengthening cabinet members' control over the bureaucracy (Hecló 1977a, 1981: 181). Yet, the empirical picture is often more blurred and it seems to be particularly difficult to differentiate the partisan advisory role of advisory arrangements from their provision of other policy advice in order to delineate the relevance of party-political politicisation (e.g. Meyer-Sahling 2011).

3.3 The organisational perspective: Organising advisory arrangements

Those authors debating the internal organisation of advisory arrangements as explanation for their role in government policy-making are primarily concerned with formally organised entities, thus neglecting kitchen cabinets and individual special advisers. In addition, this scholarly debate is highly contested, i.e. for most arguments in favour of one particular organisational feature one may find counterarguments claiming the opposite. Partly, these academic conflicts are caused by the secrecy under which many advisory arrangements operate and the limited availability of quantitative data, e.g. on size, composition, staff turnover etc. (Bowles 1999: 5). However, authors agree that the 'organisational distinctiveness' of advisory arrangements affects their role in government policy-making: If the internal organisation of advisory arrangements follows the major paradigms of the bureaucratic organisation, they are assumed to play a minor role internally and across central government (Jensen 2000: 234, 2003a: 172, 180). To the contrary, an extraordinary organisation is regarded as crucial precondition for an influential role in government policy-making. The existing literature emphasising the relevance of internal organisation for understanding the role of advisory arrangements in government policy-making addresses mainly the following features: (1) durability, (2) internal affiliation, (3) size, (4) fragmentation, and (5) composition.

(1) The durability of advisory arrangements is discussed as both the durability of its organisation in general and the tenure in office of its members in particular. For the advisory arrangement as an organisational entity, authors argue that a long durability is inevitably related to a declining role in government policy-making, suffering from a gradually declining usefulness due to the loosening of its innovative power over time

because in some respects, 'the logical outcome' of an advisory arrangement's activities 'could lead to its own demise' (Jones/Storer 2000: 35; Wilson 2006: 165; see also Swank/Dur 2001: 78). Other authors argue that advisory arrangements are most influential at their infancy, when their political clients are unsure about what to expect and the permanent bureaucracy is unsure about potential resistances (Blackstone/Plowden 1988).

(2) Several studies argue that the internal affiliation of advisory arrangements is crucial for their access, frequency, and intensity of contacts to their client – facilitating or obstructing their role in government policy-making (Dyson 1973: 349; Helmer/Scott 1975: 119; Boston 1988: 14, 1994: 14; Meltsner 1990: 12-3; James 2002: 61; see also Altfelder 1965). This debate refers also to a classic academic discussion about the virtues and pitfalls of a staff affiliation compared to a line affiliation (Dammann 1969). Besides, the internal affiliation of advisory arrangements is often accompanied by a distinct location that, again, signifies its relations to the client, e.g. the influence of advisory arrangements inside the U.S. White House is presumably decreasing the farther away they are located from the oval office (Andrew et al. 1999; Neustadt 2001: 10; see also Morstein Marx 1964; Prince 1979: 288).¹¹ The location and physical space of advisory arrangements may also affect other organisational attributes, e.g. the increasing size of ministerial staff in Australia during the 1980s was also caused by a new permanent building for cabinet ministers and their staff (Maley 2000a; Russell 2002; Tiernan 2007). Likewise, the small physical space of the British PM's Office also limits the number of special advisers at the PM's disposal – unless they are not moved into different buildings (Kemp 1986: 63). In Belgium, the ministerial cabinets are so large that they are usually physically separated from the department – and Belgian ministers work in the buildings of their ministerial cabinets, rarely seeing their departmental civil servants (Andeweg 2000: 391).

(3) Most authors referring to organisational attributes for explaining the role of advisory arrangements in government policy-making discuss their size. On the one hand, authors argue that a small size guarantees an influential role because it enhances flexibility and supports trustful relations with the client (D'Aquino 1974: 74-5; Boston 1988: 18; Müller/Walter 2004: 196). On the other hand, many scholars equate growing resources with growing importance in government policy-making and claim that a larger size allows more priorities and capacity to influence government policy-making (Boston 1988: 17; Smith 1977a: 154-6; Tiernan 2006b).

(4) Several scholars argue that the size of advisory arrangements affects also other organisational characteristics such as fragmentation (Suleiman 1974: 188-97; Helmer/Scott 1975: 114). On the one hand, growing advisory arrangements are assumed to increase their *horizontal* fragmentation, i.e. internal specialisation, and thus their capabilities to respond to the varying requests for policy advice. In contrast, others authors stress that different subunits may initiate selective perceptions that are ill-suited for their cross-cutting advisory role (Lepper 1976a: 494; Boston 1988: 12; Rouban 2007b: 493). A particular issue in this respect is whether the internal organisation of advisory arrangements should mirror the structure of its parent organisation. Some argue it facilitates intra-ministerial relationships

¹¹ See e.g. Young's analysis of Washington, D.C. (1966) or Beer's (2007) study on the influence of accommodation on government policy-making in Australia.

because of clearly identifiable responsibility areas (e.g. applied in ministerial cabinets in France and Belgium, see Rouban 1996, 1997a, 1997b, 1997c, 2003; Pelgrims 2006, Pelgrims et al. 2008; for Italy see Stolfi 2011: 13), but it may also dampen the distinctiveness of the advisory arrangement and its provision of policy advice from bureaucratic advice.

On the other hand, growing advisory arrangements are often accompanied by an increasing *vertical* fragmentation, i.e. the emergence of internal hierarchies, affecting their role in government policy-making by predetermining their capacities e.g. to freely exchange ideas and fields of consideration – which is at the heart of many advisory arrangements' mandate (Brown 1965: 319; Mayntz 1977; Campbell 1986: 263):

'Whereas previously it was possible for one member [in French ministerial cabinets, JF] to cover a variety of functions which cut across the administration, a specialisation of functions is increasingly the norm. (...) It then becomes necessary for a generalist to oversee the work of the specialists and a hierarchy evolves.' (Searls 1978: 174)

(5) Other scholars argue that the composition of advisory arrangements accounts for their role in government policy-making, e.g. the heads' and members' gender, age, their educational, partisan, and professional background matter (Forward 1975, 1977; Lepper 1976a: 494; Prince 1979; Walter 1984, 1986; Boston 1980b; Westerberg/Niemann 2007). On the one hand, it is argued that a coherence of members facilitates developing its own status and thus supports their influence (Berman 1977: 301, 1979; Smith 1974: 83; Ragdale/Theis III 1997: 1301). On the other hand, other authors favour a variety of professional backgrounds in order to broaden its knowledge and expertise (Suleiman 1974; Searls 1978: 171; Dunn 1995: 508; see also Johnson 1968; Ridley 1968; Scott 1968; Judge 1981).

In addition, many authors suggest that advisory arrangements should include departmental secondees to facilitate their relations with the ministerial bureaucracy (Anthony 1975: 132; Boston 1988: 11; Parrado 2001: 15). Other authors highlight the relevance of outsiders to inject knowledge and working styles from the private sector and academia into government policy-making (D'Aquino 1974: 73; Lang 1977; Baum 1982: 548; Boston 1988: 11; Murswieck 2006: 591-2). However, many scholars argue that a mix of departmental secondees and outsiders is most appropriate (Dammann 1969: 35-8; Elgie 2000) – as exemplified for French ministerial cabinets:

'A Minister or Secretary of State who took only advisers from within the ministry (*de la maison*) would be risking swift and complete submission to the authority of his *directeurs* [division heads, JF] (...); a cabinet in which outside advisers predominate is often subject to bad relations with the sections.' (emphasis original, Anonymous/Wright 1972: 81)

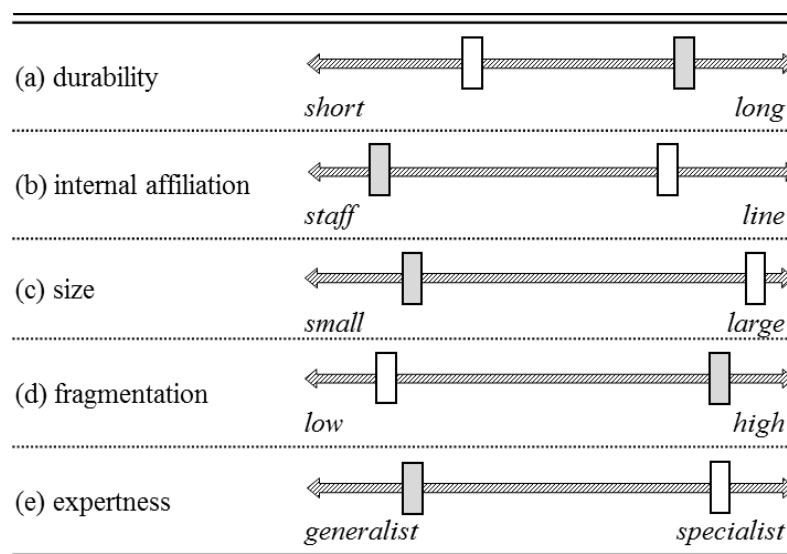
Moreover, advisory arrangements may serve as stepping stones to higher office (van Hassel, 1974; Wright 1974: 49; Siedentopf 1975; Searls 1978, 1981; Schimanke 1982: 226; Wagener/Rückwardt 1982; Brans 1999, Brans et al. 2002: 8-9, 13, Pelgrims/Brans 2006; Goetz 1999; Suetens/Walgrave 2001; Tiernan 2006a, b, 2007: 5-6).¹² Accordingly, many advisory arrangements recruit young graduates from universities 'who have not reached that stage of life where they want independence of schedule and who have enough

¹² In contrast, Spanish ministerial cabinets are characterised as 'cemeteries of elephants' (van Biezen/Hopkin 2005: 117), serving as a reward for former high-ranking officials and ministers.

physical energy to work twelve to fifteen hours a day' (Califano 1975: 190), although advisory arrangements may also include 'more experienced hands' (Dickinson 1998: 771). Particularly in federal systems, the composition of advisory arrangements often resembles regional balance or members from the client's regional origin (Joana/Smith 2002: 52; Wille 2011). In addition, some authors argue that only a limited tenure ensures the inclination of fresh ideas and helps to avoid 'group think' – and fosters their different timeframe compared to the permanent bureaucracy (see Janis 1971; Boston 1988: 11; (Dickinson/Tenpas 2002; Rouban 2007b: 483). In contrast, others argue that low staff retention rates in advisory arrangements result in the loss of relevant expertise and organisational memory with apparent effects on their role in government policy-making (Lepper 1976a: 494).

In sum, the literature presents various organisational features of advisory arrangements as relevant for their role in government policy-making. Although their organisational distinctiveness compared to the permanent bureaucracy tends to be an agreed supporting feature for an influential role, the findings from existing studies indicate an 'organic' figure of internal organisation, malleable over time (see Figure A.2). Whereas some features such as durability and internal affiliation are dichotomous, others can be displayed on a continuum. Furthermore, particularly the size of advisory arrangements is assumed to affect other organisational characteristics such as fragmentation and expertness.

Figure A.2 *Organisational characteristics of advisory arrangements*



Legend

□ advisory arrangement at t_0 ■ advisory arrangement at t_1

Source: Own illustration; see for a similar figure to illustrate coordination mechanisms Wiesenthal (2000: 64) and changes in core executives Jann et al. (2005: 22).

3.4 The idiosyncratic perspective: The relevance of the client (and the head)

In various studies, authors stress the explanatory relevance of the client and the head of advisory arrangements to understand their role in government policy-making – also because their crucial influence on the functional and organisational set-up of these arrangements (Smith 1977b: 135; Biggart 1985: 117; Meltsner 1990: 43-6; Ponder 1999; Hawker 2006: 253-4). The existing literature refers mainly to the professional experience and personal characteristics of these two individual actors.

For clients, authors assume that a longer tenure in office enables them to gain executive experience, including knowing better what they do request and especially what they do *not* request from advisory arrangements at their disposal as well as the permanent bureaucracy. Moreover, if clients are specialists with policy expertise, they are supposed to require less specialist policy advice compared to clients lacking such policy expertise (Weller/Grattan 1981: 60; Preston/t Hart 1999: 63; Andeweg 2000; Brans et al. 2006). In addition, the client's partisan background is argued to affect the composition of advisory arrangements, i.e. many members are recruited from the client's party and its machinery (van Hassel 1973: 367; Schulze-Fielitz 1984: 27; Prince/Chenier 1980: 527; Andeweg 1988: 126; Müller 2000: 328; Brans et al. 2006: 62).

Other authors discuss the client's personal characteristics for the role of advisory arrangements in government policy-making (Dutheillet De Lamothe 1965; Searls 1978: 167-8; Campbell 1983, 1988: 263, Cambell/Wyszomirski 1991, Campbell/Wilson 1995; Müller/Walter 2004; Mensing 2004; Tiernan 2006a). Here, the clients' philosophies of governance, management styles, political objectives, and preferences of working methods become crucial (e.g. special issue in *German Politics* 1998, 7(1); Korte 2000a, 2000b, 2006: 186; also discussed as 'presidential choice' in the U.S.-American literature, see Hess 1976: 174; Nash et al. 1980; Hermann 1994; Hult/Walcott 1995: 59, 69-70, 152, 2004: 176; Walcutt/Hult 1987, 1999, 2005; Kessel 2001: 28-31; for Westminster systems see Aucoin 1986; Boston 1988: 15; Kelly 2006: 10; Tiernan 2006a: 323). In turn, if the client is unsure of his objectives, has no sense of direction or judgement or is fearful of making decisions, then also advisory arrangements at his disposal often play a minor role in policy-making (Benoit 2006: 180; Blondel et al. 2007: 130-1; Müller-Rommel 2008), resulting in the dilemma 'that good ministers [tend] to appoint good ministerial staff and become better ministers, while some mediocre ministers [tend] to appoint bad ministerial staff and become bad ministers' (Wilenski 1979: 36).

Moreover, stronger clients are expected to conduct less personal control over their advisory arrangements than weaker clients, thus influencing less the policy deliberations within their advisory arrangements (Preston 1996). In contrast, other authors argue that clients seek support from their advisory arrangements to 'push' their political goals. Thus, these scholars expect strong clients to guide and control their advisory arrangements, lowering the influence of these arrangements on government policy-making, whereas weak clients are expected to give their advisory arrangements more leeway, eventually supporting their stronger role in government policy-making (Müller-Rommel 2008: 267).

Many authors assert to heads of advisory arrangements a central importance for the role of advisory arrangements in government policy-making (Suleiman 1974: 191; Savoie

1983; Lee et al. 1998: 117; Kumar 2001; Glaab 2007: 320). Whereas several authors stress their previous expertise in the ministerial bureaucracy and/or larger organisations to understand the peculiar position of advisory arrangements within the executive (Plasse 1994), others refer to their personal skills in handling the various requests on such an arrangement (Cohen 2002, Cohen/Krause 2002; Walcott et al. 2001; Krause 2004). Other authors also refer to their crucial personal relationship with the client, either facilitating or impeding the role of their advisory arrangement in government policy-making (Boston 1988: 14; Hawker 2006: 249).

4 Concluding remarks: Why study institutionalised sources of policy advice?

The scholarly debate on the role of advisory arrangements in government policy-making discusses environmental, institutional, organisational, and individual explanatory features. These four explanatory perspectives interact, e.g. external dynamics such as the internationalisation of government policy-making are arguably linked with institutional features, e.g. the distribution of authority in cabinets (Baker 2003: 325; Aylott 2005; Goetz 2006: 475-7; Hennessy 2007). Similarly, clients' individual characteristics are related to institutional features, discussed e.g. for prime ministers in Westminster systems as 'lattice of leadership' (Uhr 2005; see also Seligman 1956; Rose 1977, 1990: 9; Jones 1991: 6; special issue in *West European Politics* 1991, 14(2); Weller 1985, 1991; King 2003; Walter 2006; Bennister 2007, 2008; Baylis 2007).

Yet, this closer examination of the existing literature reveals also the major shortcomings of the current scholarly debate. On the one hand, it lacks a discussion of theoretical approaches for explaining the role of advisory arrangements in government policy-making (see for exceptions: MacDougall 2006; Ragsdale/Theis III 1997; Dickinson 2000, 2005, Dickinson/Lebo 2007). This study presents and applies a theoretical framework conceptualising the role of advisory arrangements in government policy-making as would-be change agents in recursive processes of institutionalisation (see chap. B below).

On the other hand, the current literature lacks comparative accounts, partly related to the four distinguished explanatory perspectives on the role of advisory arrangements in government policy-making: Studies emphasising *external* features conduct mostly diachronic analyses and assume that the dynamics in environmental features such as the increase of internationalisation of politics account for a changing role of advisory arrangements in government policy-making. In contrast, scholars stressing the explanatory relevance of *institutional* features refer primarily to the explanatory relevance of politico-administrative systems, conducting comparisons across countries. At the same time, though, the explorative nature of many studies entitles them to focus on similar systems, which may explain why such cross-country studies on advisory arrangements are mostly focussing on Westminster systems. Lastly, researchers explaining the role of advisory arrangements in government policy-making with their *organisational* and *individual* features stress the uniqueness of their organisational structure as well as their clients' and heads' idiosyncratic features – which limits the provision of generic knowledge across time and countries and, in turn, motivates rather single-case studies than comparative analyses.

As a consequence of this state of the art in scholarship on institutionalised sources of policy advice, this study seeks to add a rigour theoretical understanding of the phenomenon that is applied in a comparative empirical study examining advisory arrangements across politico-administrative systems and time in order to produce systematic insights into a rather understudied area of central government organisations.

This study is divided into four parts, namely its introduction and research framework, the empirical case studies on advisory arrangements at the centre of German and British governments, and the comparative synthesis of its empirical findings and conclusion. In more detail, the study's first part continues with the subsequent chapter B presenting this study's theoretical framework, followed by chapter C outlining the study's research design and its methodological framework, as well as chapter D illustrating the institutional context of advisory arrangements and situating the arrangements under scrutiny in their institutional and organisational habitat. The study's second part comprises the chapters E, F, and G presenting the three empirical case studies on the role of advisory arrangements in government policy-making in Germany under the Brandt government, the Kohl government, and the Schröder government respectively. The study's third part includes the chapters H, I, and J presenting the three empirical case studies on the role of advisory arrangements in government policy-making in Britain under PM Heath, PM Thatcher, and PM Blair respectively. The study's final part incorporates chapter K conducting a comparison of the case studies' key findings and discussing them from a theoretical perspective as well as chapter L drawing this study's conclusion on how advisory arrangements influence government policy-making.

'Organizations are creatures of their institutional environments, but most modern organizations are constituted as active players, not passive prawns.'
(Scott 2008b: 178)

Chapter B Theoretical framework

This chapter outlines the study's theoretical framework. The next subchapter presents the two major scholarly perspectives on institutionalisation in central government organisations that inform the key theoretical argument of this study: Institutionalisation processes in central government organisations are causal interactions between structure and agency, i.e. between an institutional context and would-be change agents. The second subchapter applies the definition of institution by new institutionalist organisation theory and argues that institutions are sets of regulative, normative, and cognitive pillars (Scott 2008b).¹ Accordingly, central government organisations as arenas of institutional politics can be regarded as 'organisational fields' including distinct regulative, normative, and cognitive pillars. In turn, would-be change agents are organisational actors within these organisational fields. The third subchapter follows this threefold definition of institutions and delineates the three explanatory perspectives for the influence of institutions on actors and vice versa in such institutionalisation processes as discussed in new institutionalist organisation theory. Yet, these authors often neglect the *co-generative* nature of structure and agency in institutionalisation processes. Therefore, as the fourth subchapter argues, this study applies the power-distributional approach, characterising institutionalisation as a *recursive* process between an institutional context and change agents, resulting in four ideal-typed mechanisms of institutional politics (Thelen 2009, Mahoney/Thelen 2010b).

1 Scholarly perspectives on institutional politics in executives

This study's theoretical argument is informed by two major scholarly perspectives on institutionalisation processes within executives emphasising the relevance of the *objects* and the *subjects* in such processes. Whereas the *objects*-oriented research perspective stresses the explanatory relevance of structure and can be traced back to the classic studies of bureaucracy, the *subjects*-oriented emerged mainly in policy analysis. With the new institutionalist turn in social sciences, these two rather separated research agendas intersected and a growing number of scholars apply a combinatory perspective emphasising both structure and agency in institutionalisation processes in executives. The following paragraphs provide an overview on the key arguments of these two scholarly perspectives and conclude with their intersection that informs this study's theoretical key argument.

The first *structure*-oriented research agenda originated with Max Weber's (1922) 'bureaucratic approach' stressing the relevance of bureaucratic organisation as the basis of rational power (see Brecht/Glaser 1940; Lepsius 1995). In a similar vein, Gulick's 'notes on the theory of organization' (1937) analyse the effects of bureaucratic organisation on executive actors, addressing issues such as coordination or departmentalism (see Gulick

¹ Similar to these authors, DiMaggio (1998) argues that new institutionalist subsets should not be distinguished according to their disciplinary affiliation.

1936; see also Simon 1946, 1947; Dahl 1947). Although they have been published in a series of 'papers on the science of administration' and thus referred to administrative science as a distinct discipline, their subsequent scholarly perception labelled them as 'organisation theory' (Waldo 1961: 217-8). These classics ignore any dynamics of agency:

'another deficiency of the classical approach (...) is the neglect of such important processes as goal-setting, decision-making, environmental relations, adaptive change, and in general of self-maintenance as a problem. Basically, it is the prescriptive rather than empirical and analytical orientation of classical theory which made it neglect these important topics of organizational dynamics. As such, they argued that every organisation is characterised by bureaucratic features disregard of its functions or objectives.' (Mayntz 1965: 98)

Succeeding organisation theorists questioned the universal applicability of this bureaucratic approach to all types of organisations and turned towards the contingent environment of organisations in order to explain their internal structure and behaviour (Selznick 1949; Stinchcombe 1959; Udy 1959, 1965; Blau/Scott 1962; Pugh et al. 1963, 1968, 1969, Hickson et al. 1969, Pugh/Hickson 1972, 1976; Woodward 1965; Lawrence/Lorsch 1967; Holdoway/Blowers 1971; Hollander 1971; Meyer 1972; Hellriegel/Slocum 1973; Reimann 1973; Child 1972a, 1972b, 1973, 1976, 1977; Miles et al. 1974, 1978, Miles/Snow 1978; Mintzberg 1979). Yet, these 'contingency theorists' neglected the distinctiveness of public or governmental organisations (Rainey et al. 1976, Rainey 1983a, 1984, Perry/Rainey 1988). Instead, governmental or political features were subsumed as external characteristics of organisations' 'task environments' (Hall 1982). Consequently, empirical analyses of these behaviouralist arguments addressed mainly private industry or public organisations 'below the ministerial level' (Scharpf 1976: 3); only very few studies scrutinised public or governmental organisations (e.g. Child 1972a, 1972b, 1976, 1977; Hood 1978, Hood/Dunsire 1981; Pitt/Smith 1981). These studies argued that public sector organisations adapt not automatically to their environment but employ strategic choices between different segments of it – albeit this argument may fit less for bureaucracies with a legally fixed range of functions (Döhler 1995: 383).

The second *agency*-oriented research agenda emerged in policy analysis, often associated with Lasswell (1956), although the seminal work by Lowi (1967) is most germane to this study's research interest in institutional politics in executives. His classification of four ideal-types of public policy includes 'constituent policy' as 'something regular and essential to do (...) with the structure, the composition, and the operation of the regime or system' (Lowi 1967: 239, 255-6, 268-74; see also Salisbury 1968).² In turn, constituent policies are argued to be primarily driven by political parties that are particularly interested in such a 'system maintenance policy' (Lowi 1970: 321, see also: EN 14, 1971: 1972: 300, EN 20). According to Lowi's key claim that 'policy determines politics', i.e. that policy types affect processes and structures of policy-making,³ constituent policy is presumed to determine distinct actor constellations with particular preferences and interactions (Lowi 1971: 144-5). Put differently: Lowi's constituent policy can be regarded as a type of institutional politics, resulting in distinct actor constellations and processes of decision-making. Yet, in contrast to the other three policy types, constituent

² The other policy types are: distributive policy, redistributive policy, and regulative policy (Lowi 1967).

³ See also Kjellberg (1977) and Peters et al. (1977).

policy has been studied only by very few scholars, e.g. examining civil service reforms or agency reorganisations (Spitzer 1983: 58-62, 1987: 235, 237), personnel management in the public sector (Meier 1993), as well as the regulation of lobbying of non-profit organisations in the U.S. (Wyszomirski 1998; see also Tolbert 2002).

In addition, also public administration scholars referred to concepts from policy analysis in order to study institutionalisation processes in central governments. As one of the first scholars discussing these dynamics, Dror introduced 'metapolicymaking' as the 'policymaking on how to make policy' (1968: 160), analysing how changes in the policy-making system affect policy-making strategies, thus scrutinising 'government redesign' by conducting an 'institutional politics analysis' (Gormley 1987: 154; see also Derlien 1990b, 1990c). Later, scholars made the actor-orientation more explicit by arguing that institutional changes in central government organisations are inherently characterised by a congruence of policy subjects and objects: Governmental actors engaged in 'institutional reforms' to change their institutional context are most likely to be affected by these changes themselves – which explains why such decision-making processes result rather in minor changes than in radical overhauls (Scharpf 1974a; 1986: 179-80, 187, 1987; Dean 1999: 179; Hesse/Benz 1989: 380; Benz 1990: 360). In stressing the distinct actor constellations as well as their dominant policy instruments, various authors analyse these dynamics in central government organisations as 'administrative policy' (Böhret 1983, 1986, 2002; Jann 1986: 220-1, 2002a; Türk 1989; Egeberg 1994; Christensen et al. 2001; see also König 1979; Bogumil et al. 2006: 17-8).⁴ Although all these authors argue convincingly that administrative policies are inherently limited in their results because of the congruence of policy subjects and policy objects, one may counter that if such policies are enacted in legislation, i.e. transferred to the legislative arena, the dual role of executive actors is somewhat reduced – at least when parliaments use their powers to amend or reject such administrative policies.

The new institutionalist turn in social sciences strengthened interdisciplinary communication, heralded in various 'catalogues' of its basic claim that 'institutions matter' (Hall/Taylor 1996; Goodin 1996a; Kato 1996; Lowndes 1996; Edeling 1998; Schmidt 2008, 2010). As a consequence, the two previously rather separated scholarly perspectives on institutional politics intersected (see Figure B.1). On the one hand, organisation theorists reconceptualised their *explanans* of the organisation's institutional context (Rowan 1982; Tolbert/Zucker 1983; see also Augier et al. 2005). They presented cataloguing schemes of new institutionalist subsets in organisation theory emphasising the key explanatory perspectives on these causal interactions between institutions and organisations (Scott 1995, 2001, 2008b; Christensen et al. 2007). Yet, these schemata focused rather on structure- than on agency-oriented explanations (see Kieser/Walgenbach 2007, Walgenbach/Meyer 2008).

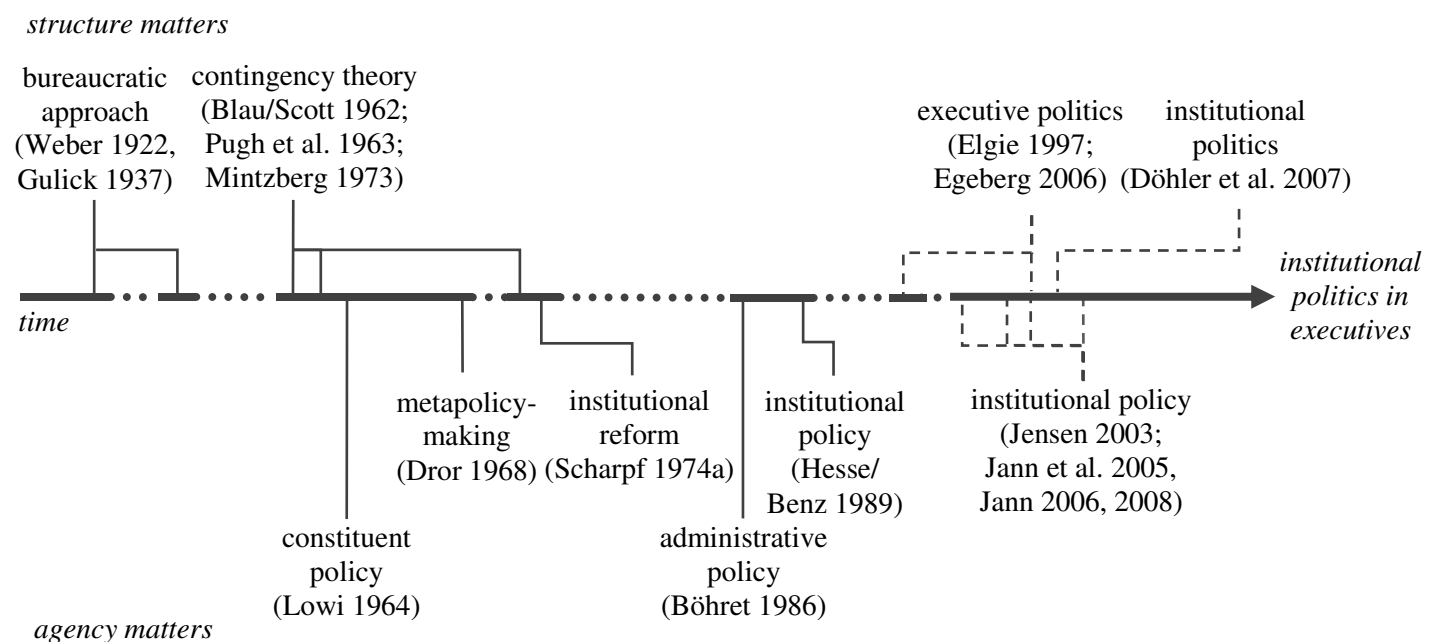
On the other hand, policy analysts examining dynamics in executives broadened their *explanantia* and applied a broader definition of institutions in order to reconceptualise central government organisations (e.g. Kooiman 1999: 78-9, Kooiman/Jentoft 2009; Jessop

⁴ Other authors apply a similar argument on changes of institutional features at the level of nation-states or the EU (Scharpf 1986; Hesse/Benz 1990a, 1990b, Benz et al. 1995; Grotz 2007).

1998: 42-3, 2002: 242; Bräuninger 2000; Jann 2001, 2002a, 2003a, 2003b, 2006). Some authors referred to 'executive politics' in order to stress the particular context of such dynamics (see already Elgie 1997, 2011; Heffernan 2003; Egeberg 2006). Yet, they again focused on how institutions affect interactions within executives instead to study the recursive nature of such institutionalisation processes. Other policy scholars followed the new institutionalist turn and redefined their former research interest in administrative policy as 'institutional policy' (Jensen 2003a, 2003b; Haus 2007, 2008; Döhler et al. 2007; Jann 2006, 2008), studying

'the intended change of organisational, procedural and cognitive aspects of central government organisation (...) which aims either to increase its capacity as collective actor or is caused by [governmental actors'] self-interests or rather power-political motives' (Jann et al. 2005: 5-6)

Figure B.1 Key scholarly perspectives on institutional politics



Note: The figure does not claim completeness. References with dashed lines are located according to their main emphasis on structure or agency, albeit they seek to integrate both to a varying extent.

Source: Own illustration.

This study's theoretical key argument derives from this recent intersection of the two previously rather separated research agendas applying a structure- and an agency-oriented perspective to understand institutionalisation processes in executives. It argues that such processes are influenced by structure, i.e. the institutional context, and actors interested in maintaining or altering the institutional status quo. Consequently, institutionalisation processes in executives are always recursive in the sense that those institutions imposing consequences on actors are simultaneously most likely to be addressed by would-be change agents. Therefore, such institutionalisation processes unfold often gradually and incrementally, while the overall institutional setting preserves its stability. This study argues that the term institutional politics is best suited to describe these recursive interactions in order to emphasise that such processes are prone to conflict, especially since

executive actors presumably differ with regard to their interests to maintain or change their institutional context (Mahoney/Thelen 2010a, Hall/Thelen 2009; see chap. B.4 below).

2 Theorising institutional politics in executives

New institutionalism in the social sciences emerged as criticism of the previously dominant atomistic view on social action assuming that purely goal-oriented and rational actors follow an 'asocial conception of the contexts in which these goals are pursued' (DiMaggio/Powell 1991a: 5). In contrast to 'old institutionalism' focussing on formal political institutions (Coase 1937; Finer 1954; Selznick 1957; see also Stinchcombe 1997), new institutionalism broadened the definition of institutions (for many: March/Olsen 1989). Following this turn, organisation theorists addressed institutionalisation as causal interactions between institutions and organisational actors: Whereas the so-called 'institutions-as-environment school' argues that institutionalisation is a causal relationship between institutions and organisations as separate entities, the so-called 'organisations-as-institutions school' claims that organisations become eventually institutionalised and that organisations and institutions are identical (see Zucker 1987: 444-7).

This study follows the former perspective and argues that institutions and organisations are different entities that causally interact. These interactions can be examined from two perspectives. A structure-oriented perspective presumes institutions as *independent* variables and examines how they affect organisational actors (Meyer/Rowan 1977; DiMaggio/Powell 1983; Meyer/Scott 1983; Scott 2008b: 76). In contrast, an agency-oriented perspective analyses institutions as *dependent* variables and scrutinises how institutions are created, maintained, and changed (DiMaggio 1988; Powell 1991; Scott et al. 2000, Scott 2008b: 77). These two explanatory perspectives refer to a distinct perception of institutionalisation as process or outcome (Zucker 1977: 728):

'Institutionalization as an outcome places organizational structures and practices beyond the reach of interest and politics. By contrast, institutionalization as a process is profoundly political and reflects the relative power of organized interest and the actors who mobilize around them' (DiMaggio 1988: 13).

This study's interest in analysing interactions between structure and agency implies an analytical focus on institutionalisation as a *process* (Scott 2008b: 78). In the current literature, the structure-oriented view on these institutionalisation processes addresses various empirical phenomena synonymously:

'It is somewhat arbitrary to distinguish the processes involved in creating institutions from those employed to change them. Institutions do not emerge in a vacuum; they always challenge, borrow from, and, to varying degrees, displace prior institutions' (Scott 2008b: 94).

In turn, it is mainly the scholar's focus that determines whether institutionalisation addresses the creation, maintenance, or change of institutions (Czada/Schimank 2000; Scott 2008b: 94; Mahoney/Thelen 2010a: 10). Particularly institutional maintenance is often neglected by new institutionalists because the idea of persistence is virtually built into the definition of institutions, i.e. institutionalisation is characterised as 'an absorbing state [that], once completed, requires no further effort at maintenance' (Scott 2008b: 128). This study's structure-oriented perspective on institutional politics comprises all kinds of

actors' activities influencing central government organisations as their institutional context, covering institutional creation, maintenance, and change.

Many authors define institutions according to their disciplinary origin and follow the seminal differentiation by Hall and Taylor (1996), distinguishing Rational Choice Institutionalism, Historical Institutionalism, and Sociological Institutionalism.⁵ In contrast, this study follows the definition provided by W. Richard Scott, referring to the emphasis of new institutionalists for different institutional pillars:

'[I]nstitutions are comprised of regulative, normative, and cultural-cognitive elements that, together with associated activities and resources, provide stability and meaning to social life' (Scott 2008b: 48).

Accordingly, institutions comprise different regulative, normative, and cognitive elements that interact (Scott 2008b: 50-9, 119; Scott/Davis 2003: 258).⁶ Sometimes one institutional pillar 'will operate virtually alone (...), in many situations a given pillar will assume primacy' (Scott 2008b: 62; 2005: 465; Hoffman 2001: 27, 173; Walgenbach/Meyer 2008: 57). The three commonly differentiated new institutionalist subsets do not focus on one of these three institutional pillars; instead their explanatory attention varies (see Scott 2008b: 89): Many rational choice institutionalists emphasise the regulative pillar (Williamson 1975; Moe 1984; North 1990), whereas traditional sociologists and organisation scholars highlight often normative elements (Hughes 1939; Selznick 1949; Stinchcombe 1997; March/Olsen 1989). Historical institutionalists as well as other new institutionalist approaches such as 'actor-centred institutionalism' emphasise both regulative and normative elements (Mayntz/Scharpf 1995; Scharpf 1997: 38). In contrast, organisational sociologists stress the relevance of cognitive elements (Zucker 1977; DiMaggio/Powell 1991b), albeit many sociological institutionalists emphasise both normative and cognitive pillars (Campbell 2002: 25; Lindenberg 1998).

Scott identifies the three ideal-typed institutional pillars at different analytical levels or 'jurisdictions' (Scott 2008b: 85), distinguished as world system, society, organisational field, organisational population, individual organisation, and organisational subsystem (ibid.: 86-90). Organisational fields gained particular scholarly attention for studying interactions between institutions and organisational actors (Scott/Meyer 1991, Scott 2008b: 44, 89). Influenced by Bordieu's (1977) notion of a 'social field', they were defined as

'organizations that, in the aggregate, constitute a recognized area of institutional life: key suppliers, resource and product consumers, regulatory agencies, and other organizations that produce similar services or products.' (DiMaggio/Powell 1983: 148)

These organisational fields are assumed to emerge by 'structuration', i.e. by increasing interactions among organisational actors, cumulating information and supporting their mutual awareness to be involved in a common enterprise (DiMaggio/Powell 1983: 148; Scott/Meyer 1991). Accordingly, organisational fields 'cannot be determined *a priori* but must be defined on the basis of empirical investigation' (emphasis JF, DiMaggio/Powell 1983: 148). Organisational fields are assumed to develop around e.g. settled markets,

⁵ Some scholars present also combining approaches (Mayntz/Scharpf 1995, Scharpf 1997, 2000). Others introduce additional subsets, resulting in catalogues of four (Campbell/Pedersen 2001; Reich 2000), or up to seven new institutional subsets (Peters 1999, 2000).

⁶ The differentiations by Scott (2008b) and Christensen et al. (2007) overlap to a certain extent.

technologies, policy domains, but also central disputes (ibid.; Scott/Davis 2003: 270-1). From this perspective, the boundaries of an organisational field are primarily defined by the major activity in which actors are involved.

Later, new institutionalist organisation theorists redefined this concept along the broader definition of institutions, i.e. organisational fields are shaped by

'admixture of regulative and governance arrangements; cultural-cognitive conceptions of identity and a sense of 'being in the same boat'; normative and ethical frameworks that provide common rules and standards; and interdependencies borne of technical connections or dependence on similar types of material resources' (Dacin et al. 2002: 51).

This study argues that the concept of organisational fields can also be applied on central government organisations (Jann 2008: 10; see also Andeweg 2003). According to DiMaggio and Powell (1983: 148), organisational actors at central government organisations 'produce' government policies as collective decisions (Etheridge 1981: 124), this holds for corporate actors such as ministries as well as for individual actors like prime ministers or cabinet ministers (Müller/Strøm 1999).⁷ Following the latter definition of organisational fields noted above, central government organisations are 'institutional structures' (Campbell/Lindberg 1990) comprising distinct regulative, normative and cognitive elements that interact (Scott/Davis 2003: 266-8; Jann 2008).

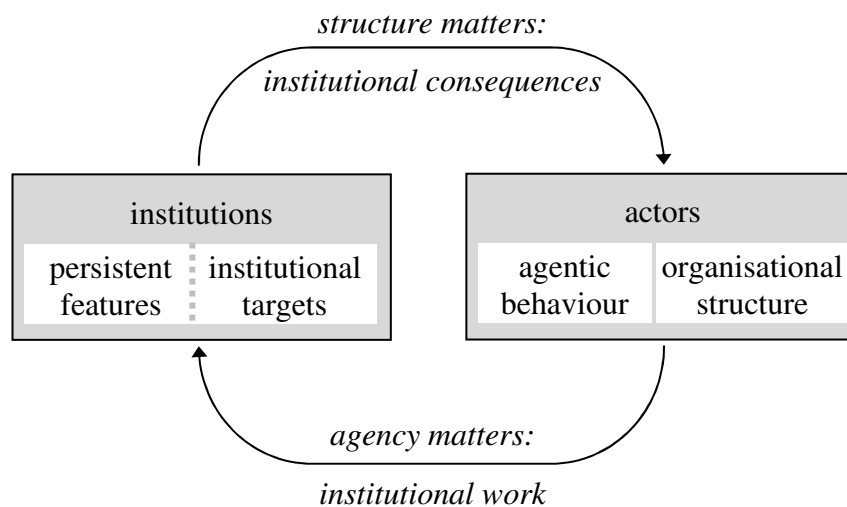
This understanding of central government organisations as organisational fields affects the explanatory scope of this study's theoretical framework. It limits the number of field constituents that are affected by institutional consequences and, in turn, may act as change agents in institutional politics. Equally important, it confines institutional targets in institutional politics to institutional elements at the level of central government organisations as the 'fabric to be used' (Lawrence 2008: 182; Garud et al. 2007: 962), characterised as 'institutional underpinnings to govern' or as 'rules of the executive game', entailing regulative, normative, and cognitive elements (see chap. B.4.4.2 below).

In sum, this study's theoretical key argument claims that institutional politics are recursive institutionalisation processes between the institutional context imposing 'institutional consequences' on executive actors, which act as would-be change agents pursuing 'institutional strategies' to influence their institutional environment (Lawrence 1999, 2008: 167-71, Lawrence et al. 2009; Jann 2008: 9-12; Scott 2008b: 95).⁸ Given the rather deterministic constraints of an institutional context, this study assumes that next to agentic behaviour also organisational features are relevant for change agents' 'institutional work' (Lawrence/Suddaby 2006, Lawrence et al. 2009; see Figure B.2).

⁷ Next to policy-seeking, scholars in comparative politics assume that actors conduct also vote- and office-seeking (see Müller/Strøm 1999).

⁸ Lawrence characterises these two dimensions as 'institutional control' and 'institutional agency' respectively and adds 'institutional resistance' as actors' activities to resist both (2008: 172-3).

Figure B.2 A recursive model of institutional politics



Source: Own illustration.

This recursive understanding of institutional politics unfolding within executives is inevitably fraught with a methodological dilemma because it implies that structure and agency are simultaneously independent and dependent variables. Such a dilemma could be solved by sequencing institutional politics into periods or cycles during which structure matters and periods or cycles during which agency dominates. Yet this study seeks to acknowledge the recursive nature of these processes and presumes that institutional features may become 'institutional targets' in institutional politics *despite* their persistent imposition of contextual ramifications on actors in institutional politics. Put differently: This study is particularly interested in scrutinising the dynamics of gradual institutional change that unfolds disregard a general notion of institutional stability, reasoning that the institutional underpinnings of executive decision-making are more often shaped by such a 'bounded institutionalisation' than by radical make-overs – also because they constrain those actors that may alter them as would-be change agents.

3 Structure *or* agency matters:

A new institutionalist perspective on institutional politics in executives

The 'lion's share of theory and research in recent decades' (Scott 2008b: 93) examines how institutions affect organisational actors (Ortmann 1996: 23-5). DiMaggio claimed already during the beginnings of the new institutionalist debate in organisation theory that it is 'focused on *circumstances that cause actors who do recognize and try to act on their interests to be unable to do so effectively*' (emphasis original, 1988: 4; see also March/Olsen 1976). This dominant research perspective on explaining how institutions affect actors resulted almost inevitably in a theoretical conceptualisation of institutionalisation as *exogenous* – with the underlying assumption that actors comply with institutional requirements (Walgenbach/Meyer 2008: 116-7; Battilana/D'Aunno 2009: 319).

Over time, however, this 'lack (...) [of] attention to the role of organizational self-interests and active agency' (Oliver 1991: 145)⁹ was criticised and a growing number of scholarly work analysed the reverse interaction between organisational actors and their institutional environment. These authors define institutionalisation as *endogenous*, i.e. organisational actors influence institutional context features that guide – not determine – their actions (Sheingate 2003: 186; Scott 2005: 466-7; Greenwood/Suddaby 2006). They perceive actors' organisational structure and their behaviour as two components of agency (Clements 1999), albeit most scholars focus on agentic behaviour.¹⁰ The organisational structure of actors is widely neglected (Hall 1982; Mense-Petermann 2008: 72), corresponding with the initial focus of new institutionalist organisation theory which

'defocalizes, or distracts attention from, the ways in which variation in the strategies and practices of goal-oriented actors may be related to variation in organizational structures, practices, and forms' (DiMaggio 1988: 4).

More broadly, the new institutionalist turn in social sciences marked also a turn towards a more 'totalistic or monolithic view of organizational and societal structures or processes' (Scott 2008b: 211). As a consequence, this study's theoretical framework stresses in its discussion of agency-oriented explanatory perspectives primarily theoretical arguments on agentic behaviour, but includes actors' organisational characteristics by referring to traditional approaches in organisation theory examining these features in more detail, albeit with a rather static perspective (Tolbert/Zucker 1983: 25).

Based upon Scott's schematic taxonomy (2008b), the next two subchapters address structure- and agency-oriented explanatory perspectives on institutionalisation processes. The final subchapter discusses their explanatory strength and concludes that they lack attention for the co-generative nature of structure and agency in institutionalisation – which has been recently addressed by new institutionalist scholars focussing on the mechanisms of such recursive processes.

3.1 Structure matters: The explanatory relevance of institutional consequences

New institutionalists emphasise different institutional pillars and thus different explanatory perspectives on how structure matters in institutionalisation (see Table B.1). First, scholars stressing the *regulative* pillar define institutions as systems of rules which constrain, but also permit actors' behaviour, i.e. they 'are sometimes violated and punishment is enacted. Therefore, an essential part of the functioning of institutions is the costliness of ascertaining violations and the severity of punishment' (North 1990: 4). The regulative pillar of institutions constrains and regulates actors' behaviour and structure (Campbell 2004: 36; Alt/Shepsle 1986). Whereas earlier accounts by economists and rational choice institutionalists refer to the 'institutional environment' as background constraints affecting actors, subsequent studies introduced institutional arrangements as intentionally designed rules that structure relationships between actors (Williamson 1985, 1996b). Hence,

⁹ Earlier exceptions include e.g. Meyer/Rowan (1977).

¹⁰ In some respects, this focus on agentic behaviour replicates old institutionalists' work from Selznick (1949) or Stinchcombe (1965) arguing that conflict and power are crucial to understand institutionalisation processes (Greenwood/Hinnings 1996: 103-4).

institutions are assumed as exogenously given entities¹¹ to which actors comply because of their 'relatively clear demands, effective surveillance, and significant sanctions' (Scott 2008b: 134; Scharpf 1997: 64; Dobbin et al. 1988; Edelman 1990, 1992; Suchman 1995; Scott/Davis 2003: 259; Christensen et al. 2007). Accordingly, 'the expected costs and extent of non-compliance are factored into the strategic behavior of the actors' (Mahoney/Thelen 2010a: 13).

Table B.1 A threefold definition of institutional consequences

	regulative	normative	cognitive
logic	• consequentiality	• appropriateness	• orthodoxy
indicators	• law • formal regulations	• values • expectations • norms	• common beliefs • shared logics of action • doctrines
basis of compliance	• expedience and surveillance	• social obligation	• taken-for-grantedness
basis of legitimacy	• legally/economically sanctioned	• morally supported	• conceptually correct

Source: adapted from Scott 2008b: 51, 79, chap. 6.

Second, many traditional sociologists emphasise the *normative* pillar of institutions as the moral framework for actors in the conduct of social life (Selznick 1996; Scott/Davis 2003: 260). Normative institutions comprise values and expectations as 'relatively stable collection of practises and rules defining appropriate behaviour for specific groups of actors in specific situations' (March/Olsen 1989: 308). Normative institutions involve principles prescribing the goals of behaviour and the appropriate ways to pursue them (Campbell 2004: 36; Torre-Castro/Lindström 2009: 2). Whereas *norms* refer to the legitimate means by which things should be done, *values* are defined as prescriptions about what is preferred or desirable (Scott 2008b: 54). Unlike regulatory institutions, normative institutions are internalised by actors and range from generalised societal norms to standards to which professions' participants subscribe (Ruef/Scott 1998: 878; Scott 2008c). The application of distinct values and norms on particular actors results in *roles*, i.e. in 'conceptions of appropriate goals and activities' – with which actors comply because of social obligation, fear of being regarded as unethical or through mechanisms like 'naming and shaming' (Scott 2008b: 55-6). If actors may pursue diverging normative views and reveal deviant behaviour, they face the possible consequence of social disapproval (Scharpf 1997: 61).

Lastly, many new institutionalist sociologists highlight the *cultural-cognitive* pillar of institutions (henceforth: cognitive), referring to 'taken-for-granted descriptions' that 'specify cause and effect relationships' (Campbell 2002: 22), thus limiting the alternatives considered by actors (see also Sural 2000: 498). They are

¹¹ Although some scholars acknowledge endogenous self-enforcing rules, emerging as equilibriums of repeated games (see Greif 1993, 1994; Aoki 2001).

'culturally conditioned rules which manifest themselves in certain routines for action and which give meaning to those actions. They reflect relatively stable values, interests, opinions, expectations and resources' (Brunsson/Olsen 1993: 4).¹²

These 'cognitive maps' (Tolman 1948) guide actors' behaviour and prescribe their 'world known in common' (Zucker 1986: 57-8; DiMaggio/Powell 1991a: 15-8; Immergut/Anderson 2008: 358):

'Cultural cognitive frameworks provide the deeper foundations of institutional forms. In formulating the classificatory systems, assumptions, and premises that underlie institutional logics, they provide the infrastructure on which not only beliefs, but norms and rules rest.' (Scott 2008a: 429)

Cognitive elements may occur either at individual level as 'factual and causal knowledge' (Schimank 2007: 172) or at the level of corporate actors sharing observations, interpretations, and conceptions of situations (Scott 2008b: 56-9). As such, they provide both individual and collective identities as the 'software of the mind' (Hofstede 1991: 4; see also Hofstede et al. 1990) and

'specify what types of actors are allowed to exist, what structurally features they exhibit, what procedures they can follow, and what meanings are associated with these actions' (Ruef/Scott 1998: 879).

Therefore, cognitive components refer to *internal* interpretive processes shaped by *external* cultural frameworks (Scott 2008b: 57). Other authors stress cognitive elements as 'myths' that constitute social reality and mediate 'between the external world of stimuli and the response of the individual organism' (ibid.):

'Popular recipes from institutional environments may also be called "institutionalized standards" or "rationalized myths", that is, institutionalized and widely spread ideas for what kind of formal structures, technologies, processes, procedures and ideologies an organization should adopt. (...) [T]hey are (...) institutionalized in the sense that for a period of time [they are] taken for granted' (Christensen et al. 2007: 59).

Actors respond to cognitive requirements with 'non-choice behaviour' (Oliver 1991: 148; Scott 2008b: 58), i.e. cognitive templates are unconsciously enacted because actors 'presumably do not think about not complying' (Mahoney/Thelen 2010a: 13). In turn, 'unorthodox behaviour' of actors is perceived as taboo and if so, actors are simply seen as being 'out of their minds' (Lerum Boasson 2006: 5).

These three institutional pillars imply different ontological assumptions on how actors make choices: Whereas scholars emphasising the regulative pillar assume that 'bounded rational' actors (Dearborn/Simon 1958) act according to a 'logic of instrumentality' prescribing behavioural accordance with formal rules, scholars referring to the normative pillar argue that actors' correspond to a 'logic of appropriateness' prescribing morally correct action (March/Olsen 1989, March 1991, 1994). In contrast, researchers focussing on the cognitive pillar assume that actors follow a logic of orthodoxy describing appropriate behaviour that demonstrates consequentiality (Scott 2008b: 68).

Empirically, the three distinguished institutional pillars also interact: The regulatory pillar relies on the normative pillar for much of its robustness, whereas the normative pillar

¹² Here, Brunsson and Olsen (1993) argue that cognitive elements construct regulative and normative elements (see also Rein/Schon 1996: 89; Capano 2003: 783).

is very often established by a regulative pillar ensuring actors' compliance (Scott 2008b: 53). The cognitive pillar provides those social objects and categories on which regulative and normative pillars are constructed (Ruef/Scott 1998: 879; Scott/Davis 2003: 261; Campbell 2005; Christensen et al. 2007: 45). In turn, cognitive elements may also be shaped by regulatory incentives and norms (Dearborn/Simon 1958; Scharpf 2000: 771).

3.2 Agency matters: The explanatory relevance of institutional work

In general, institutional work encompasses 'the purposive action of individuals and organisations aimed at creating, maintaining and disrupting institutions' (Lawrence/Suddaby 2006: 215, Lawrence et al. 2009). Yet, agency is rarely analytically differentiated in order to separate agentic behaviour and organisational capabilities, also because the new institutionalist debate lacks explanations for the latter. Instead, the last extensive debate on the explanatory relevance of agentic structural capabilities as internal organisation characteristics dates back to the 1960s. The next section discusses the key explanatory perspectives to agentic behaviour in institutional work, followed by an overview of organisation research on structural attributes of agents in institutional politics.

3.2.1 Agentic behaviour in institutionalisation processes

In general, the explanatory emphasis for agentic behaviour differs across scholars addressing different institutional pillars (DiMaggio/Powell 1991a: 8; Hoffmann 2001: 173):

'Those examining *regulative* elements (...) assume that individuals function as agents, constructing rules and requirements by some kind of deliberative, strategic, or calculative process. (...) Analysts examining institutions made up of *normative* elements are more likely to posit a more naturalist process, as moral imperatives evolve and obligatory expectations develop in the course of repeated actions. *Cognitive* institutions seem to emerge from the operation of even more ephemeral processes (...), shared understandings, common meaning, and taken-for-granted truths seem to have no parents' (emphasis JF, Scott 2008b: 96-7).

Yet, the existing agency-oriented explanations for institutional creation, maintenance, and change differ with regard to whether actors *respond* deliberately to institutional pressures (Lawrence 1999: 162), or *affect* institutions (Mintzberg/Waters 1985; Lawrence 1999: 167; see Table B.2). The following presentation of these new institutionalist agent-related arguments distinguishes those focussing on actors' active response and those conceptualising actors' deliberate activities vis-à-vis their institutional environment.

First, new institutionalists referring to the *regulative* pillar of institutions put the comparatively strongest emphasis on agency to explain institutionalisation (Campbell 2004: 101). They argue that actors construct institutions by deliberative, strategic, and calculative processes and ensure their maintenance by conscious controls and a scheme of rewards and sanctions (Moe 1984; Pratt/Zeckhauser 1985; Scott 2008b: 96). In turn, actors contribute to the diffusion of regulatory elements with 'positive feedbacks' caused by 'increasing returns' (Scott 2008b: 122-3). Originally these arguments evolved in economics as a critical response to efficiency assumptions of neo-classical economic theories and questioning whether technology evolution brings always up the most efficient alternative (David 1985, Arthur 1989, 1994). Eventually, the argument became popular in the social sciences as 'path dependency' (North 1990), and was further refined (Collier/Collier

1991; Arthur 1994; Pierson 2000, 2004; Mahoney 2000a; Greener 2005; Peters et al. 2005). In short, these scholars argue that a 'critical juncture', defined as a period of significant change, forces distant units of analysis to move in a particular direction (Collier/Collier 1991: 27). Because they experience increasing returns to change direction, units follow this particular path. Although minor changes may occur, they eventually stabilise around an enduring equilibrium and become 'locked-in' (Arthur 1994).

Table B.2 The explanatory relevance of agentic behaviour in institutionalisation

	regulative	normative	cognitive
<i>agentic behaviour as deliberate response</i>			
institutional creation	• deliberate, calculative processes	• repeated actions	• ephemeral processes (without propagators)
institutional maintenance	• rewards and sanctions • control, surveillance	• internalisation • professionalisation	• replication • dissemination
institutional change	• positive feedbacks • increasing returns • coercive isomorphism	• mutual commitments • norm advocacy • normative isomorphism	• institutional entrepreneurship • mimetic isomorphism
<i>agentic behaviour as deliberate action</i>			
status of actors	• expedient role that defeats competitors	• appropriate role that persuades other actors	• orthodox role that is framed for other actors
legitimacy of actors	• pragmatic legitimacy	• morale legitimacy	• cognitive legitimacy
characteristics of actors	• (delegated) formal authority	• recognition as leading the profession	• position in the organisational field

Source: Own illustration; see Jensen 2005; Scott 2008b: 121-8, 132-40.

In contrast, sociologists analyse actors' intentions to affect regulative elements as 'coercive isomorphism': Regulative demands are exerted on organisations by other organisations on which they depend, e.g. via a common legal framework (DiMaggio/Powell 1983: 150-1, 1991b: 67). As a consequence, actors engaged in affecting regulative elements carried by formal power as well as rewards and sanctions need authoritative power and the 'recognised right to make decisions' (Phillips et al. 2000: 33) – allowing them to set incentives and sanctions for other actors. Put differently: '*regulative professionals*' are able 'to legitimately lay claim to a wider range of coercive power (...) to exert hierarchical control' (Scott 2008c: 226). In turn, organisational actors addressing the regulative pillar of institutions require 'pragmatic legitimacy':

'Pragmatic legitimacy rests on the self-interested calculations of an organization's most immediate audiences. Often, this immediacy involves direct exchanges between organization and audience (...), audiences are likely to become constituencies, scrutinizing organizational behavior to determine the practical consequences, for them, of any given line of activity' (Suchman 1995: 578).

Second, new institutionalists highlighting the normative pillar of institutions provide less agency-oriented explanations for institutionalisation processes. They refer to institutional creation as 'a more naturalist process as moral imperatives evolve and obligatory expectations develop in the course of repeated actions' (Scott 2008b: 96). Likewise, the maintenance of normative elements is perceived as the internalisation of norms and values that unfolds rather within than between organisational actors (Tolbert 1988). The change of normative elements is nearly neglected in theoretical claims on actors following the logic of appropriateness (Finnemore/Sikkink 1998: 888; see also Finnemore 1996):

'Precisely because norms are made constitutive for actors' identities and are followed because of a 'conception of necessity', however, the LoA [logic of appropriateness, JF] cannot account for the action-mechanism implied in the change from one normative context to another' (Sending 2002: 460).

Thus, scholars analysing the change of normative elements apply a passive understanding of agency and focus on norm compliance (Stacey/Rittberger 2003: 866). Some authors examine the reproduction of normative elements and refer to the relevance of relational structures such as formal networks and informal ties shaping actors' behaviour by increasing mutual commitments (Meyer/Rowan 1977: 340; DiMaggio/Powell 1991a: 27; Scott 2008b: 115). Hence, organisational actors engage in 'norm advocacy' as 'norm-generating and norm-spreading capability exercised in order to change normative convictions and to set normative standards' (Björkdahl 2008: 136). Put differently, they raise moral consciousness about 'the right thing to do'. In turn, these organisational actors require 'moral legitimacy':

'Moral legitimacy reflects a positive normative evaluation of the organization and its activities (...). Unlike pragmatic legitimacy, moral legitimacy is "sociotropic" – it rests not on judgments about whether a given activity benefits the evaluator, but rather on judgments about whether the activity is "the right thing to do." (...) Of course, this altruistic grounding does not necessarily render moral legitimacy entirely "interest-free." (...) Nonetheless, at its core, moral legitimacy reflects a prosocial logic that differs fundamentally from narrow self-interest.' (Suchman 1995: 579)

Other sociologists argue that organisational actors contribute to the diffusion of normative elements in their organisational field by 'normative isomorphism', i.e. members of a profession define the conditions of their work and relationships amongst themselves and with external actors (DiMaggio/Powell 1983: 152-3, 1991b: 70-4; Greenwood et al. 2002). As a consequence, actors seeking to affect normative elements seek to acquire a particular status and reputation assigning them as authoritative 'relevant interpreter' – and insist on their role when others protest (Christensen et al. 2007: 126; Olsen 2000). In turn, the recognition as 'professionals' provides capabilities for distributing normative obligations across an organisational field (Scott 2008c: 225-6; see also Jarillo 1988; Markowski et al. 1988; Hay/Richards 2000: 13).

Lastly, new institutionalists emphasising the *cognitive* pillar of institutions offer less agency-oriented explanations for institutionalisation processes. Instead, they argue that cognitive worldviews are taken-for-granted 'without a driving actor in front or behind' (Scott 2008b: 97, 125-6; Downs/Stein 1974; Christensen et al. 2007: 43). Similarly, the persistence of cognitive elements is not actively driven by actors (Zucker 1977, Tolbert/Zucker 1996; Greenwood/Hinings 1993; Goldstein 1993; Torfing 2001). Other scholars refer to social

movement theory and claim that 'institutional entrepreneurs' (DiMaggio 1988: 14)¹³ with particular 'social skills' and a distinct position within their organisational field are capable to affect cognitive elements (Eisenstadt 1964; Snow et al. 1986, Benford/Snow 1992; Powell 1988: 124; Gamson 1992; Fligstein/Mara-Drita 1996; Fligstein 1997, 2001; Garud et al. 2002; Strang/Sine 2002; Battilana 2006; Hargrave/van de Ven 2006; *Organization Studies* 2007, 28(7)). These actors formulate 'frames' or 'narratives' that 'condense large amounts of factual information intermixed with the normative assumptions and value orientations that assign meaning to them' (Fischer 2003: 87; Bates et al. 1998; Johnson/Greenwood 2007: 25).¹⁴

Other sociologists stress that organisational actors contribute to the diffusion of cognitive institutions by 'mimetic isomorphism': If actors are uncertain, they are very likely to follow practices disseminated in their organisational field (DiMaggio/Powell 1983: 151-2). This provision of a mutual cognitive understanding may occur as implicit modelling through a transfer of members between different organisations or as explicit modelling supported by consulting actors (ibid.; Galaskiewicz/Wasserman 1989).¹⁵ As a consequence, actors engaged in affecting cognitive elements require distinct skills and capacities to propagate such elements (Dacin et al. 2002, Dacin/Dacin 2008; Greenwood et al. 2002, Suddaby/Greenwood 2005; Maguire et al. 2004). In turn, agents in institutional politics are likely to formulate cognitive worldviews that include their own role and support them to insist on their chosen role (Scott 2008c: 224-5). In turn, they require 'cognitive legitimacy':

'To the extent that it is attainable, this kind of taken-for-grantedness represents both the most subtle and the most powerful source of legitimacy identified to date. If alternatives become unthinkable, challenges become impossible, and the legitimated entity becomes unassailable.' (Suchman 1995: 583)

In sum, agentic behaviour in institutionalisation processes can be regarded as either deliberate response towards institutional consequences or as deliberate activities addressing distinct institutional targets. Moreover, this agentic behaviour is related to three differentiated types of organisational legitimacy.

3.2.2 Structural capabilities in institutionalisation processes

Due to the neglect of new institutionalist organisation theory for structural capabilities of organisational actors, this study refers to the scholarly work of the 'Aston School', promoting contingency theory throughout the 1960s, and its successors as most fruitful for discussing some basic structural attributes for its empirical analyses. Broadly speaking, the Aston school claimed that the contingent environment of an organisation affects its internal structure, albeit these authors were less interested in these causal interactions and provided instead an explicitly prescriptive and empirically based theory to identify 'optimal structure-context congruence' that enables organisational actors to enhance their

¹³ This term derives from the 'political entrepreneur' that originates with Schumpeter (1942), but can be traced back in political science to Dahl (1961).

¹⁴ This repeats the assumption that cognitive pillars serve as basis for regulative and normative pillars.

¹⁵ Many public administration researchers apply this perspective to administrative reforms and argue that these changes disseminate by mimetic isomorphism (e.g. Pollitt/Bouckaert 2004). But they often analyse isomorphism as a cause rather than as institutional diffusion (Boxenbaum/Jonsson 2008: 79).

performance (Battilana/D'Aunno 2009: 35). In particular, these scholars argued that an organisation's structure is affected by its task environment, comprising an organisation's size and age, technology, and environmental characteristics (Pugh et al. 1963, 1968, 1969, Pugh et al. 1969, Pugh/Hickson 1972, 1976, Hickson et al. 1969; Udy 1965; Holdoway/Blowers 1971; Hollander 1971; Meyer 1972; Reimann 1973; Child 1972a, 1972b, 1973, 1976, 1977; Miles et al. 1974, Miles/Snow 1978, Miles et al. 1978). Furthermore, the size of an organisation was assumed to affect several organisational attributes, defined as configuration, specialisation, centralisation, standardisation, and formalisation (e.g. Pugh et al. 1963, 1968, 1969).¹⁶ For bureaucratic organisations, however, these scholars admitted that

'[A]s soon as one moves to the intensive investigation of a homogenous set of organisations the original measures may no longer discriminate adequately (...). [W]hen solely examining such bureaucracies more detailed, particular measures discriminating between them are necessary' (Pugh/Hinings 1976: xi).

As a response to these limits in defining discriminatory and insightful indicators for assessing bureaucracies, Hood and Dunsire suggested in their seminal study of British ministerial departments (1981) 'bureaumatic' indicators. They argued that the indicators from contingency theorists are less applicable to bureaucratic organisations because the government apparatus is often seen as an individual organisation, underlined by the paradigm of the 'unified public service' and external pressures from Parliament or interest groups that 'work in the direction of authoritative imposition of structural patterns' – resulting in a homogeneity of organisational structures (Hood/Dunsire 1981: 58-9, 99-109, 114-7). Their indicators to measure the organisational structure of bureaucracies are defined as specialisation, differentiation, expertness, dispersion, associated bodies, and hierarchy (Hood/Dunsire 1981: 127-33, chap. 4).

This study follows the research categories of the Aston School but rejects several of its basic tenets: First, it rejects its definition of *task environment* (Pugh et al. 1963, 1968, 1969) as too narrow compared to the new institutionalist concept of *institutional environment*. It argues that the institutional context of advisory arrangements, composed of regulative, normative, and cognitive elements, shapes their organisational structure. Second, it refuses the argument that organisational structure changes in order to increase efficiency, applying a rational concept of actors' behaviour. Instead, it follows new institutionalist organisation theory and claims that the organisational structure of advisory arrangements is mostly oriented towards maintaining or enhancing organisational legitimacy (DiMaggio/Powell 1983, 1991a, 1991b):

'Legitimacy enhances both the stability and the comprehensibility of organizational activities, and stability and comprehensibility often enhance each other. (...) At the same time, legitimacy affects not only how people act toward organizations, but also how they understand them. Thus, audiences perceive the legitimate organization not only as more worthy, but also as more meaningful, more predictable, and more *trustworthy*.' (emphasis original, Suchman 1995: 574-5)

¹⁶ The initial concept includes also flexibility as a structural feature which characterises the determination of changes in an organisation over a given period of time (Pugh et al. 1963: 306-7); later this dimension has been excluded (Pugh et al. 1968, 1969).

Put differently, this study assumes that the organisational structure of advisory arrangements embodies pragmatic, moral, and cognitive legitimacy noted above, and is thus regarded as a necessary precondition for exploiting institutional strategies in institutional politics. Lastly, this study rejects its subjugation of qualitative to quantitative methods that is partly related to its account of rationality (see Kühl et al. 2005: 21-3; Kubicek/Welter 1985: 6-9).

Nonetheless, this study applies some of its indicators for organisational attributes in order to study the organisational structure of would-be change agents in institutional politics. Consequently, it is confined to the *formal* organisation of advisory arrangements and thus neglects their *informal* organisation, reasoning that the latter may be highly relevant in practice but is very difficult to assess. In more detail, this study focuses on five indicators to analyse the formal organisational structure of advisory arrangements, i.e. (1) durability, (2) internal affiliation, (3) size, (4) fragmentation, and (5) expertness. Although these indicators are informed by contingency theorists, some have been also discussed by new institutionalists.

(1) The durability of an organisation refers to its 'liability of newness' or 'liability of adolescence' respectively that are assumed to affect the accomplishment of its tasks – although the literature is rather contested whether 'new' organisations or 'old' organisations perform better (see Stinchcombe 1965: 148-50; Brüderl/Schüssler 1990; Kimberly 1979: 438, Kimberly/Miles 1980; Miles/Randolph 1980: 46, 72; Pitt/Smith 1981: 51; Singh et al. 1986; Glazer 1989, 1993; Gersbach 1993; Olsen 1997: 217). Also new institutionalists discuss how organisational durability affects institutionalisation processes, particularly those emphasising normative pillars. In that respect, the age of an organisation is argued to influence its vulnerability to adopt normative requirements within its organisational field, with older organisations being equipped with better networks than new organisations, albeit the latter may enjoy a 'honeymoon period' (Blichner 1995) accompanied by a particular initial status in its organisational field (Tolbert/Zucker 1983; Baron et al. 1986; Westphal et al. 1997; Burns/Wholey 1993; Palmer et al. 1993; Sherer/Lee 2002).

(2) The internal affiliation of organisational actors within their parent organisation is often dated back to the classic debate about 'staff' versus 'line' (Gaus 1938):

'included in staff [are] all of those persons who devote their time exclusively to the knowing, thinking and planning functions, and in the line [are] all of the remainder who are, thus, chiefly concerned with the doing functions' (Gulick 1937: 31).

These different internal affiliations are associated with different access and proximity to the parent organisation's leadership that, in turn, is more likely to transfer its authority to closer organisational sub-units – providing capacities to affect the institutional environment (Neustadt 2001: 10). Other authors emphasise that internal affiliation is most often connected to the 'deep structure' (Andrew et al. 1999) of an organisation, i.e. its physical location and space (Egeberg 2003: 118; Davis 1984) – which likewise reflect access and proximity to an organisational leadership (Pettigrew 1972; Goodsell 1977; Pfeffer 1982: 260-71; Tushman/Nadler 1982: 246). Such attributes are particularly relevant in bureaucratic organisations:

'One of the traditionally highly prized skills of senior civil servants has been their ability to read the symbolic significance of apparently mundane events – such as office location.' (Metcalf/Richards 1987: 9)

(3) Organisational research assesses size differently, e.g. as number of employees, annual levels of personnel expenditures, the total budget, the amount of sales, or the capital investment (Kimberly 1976; McKinley 1992; Sutton/D'Aunno 1992). Most authors refer to size either as members or as budget: Whereas the number of personnel co-defines *how* an organisation conducts its business, the budget limits encroachments by other organisations and thus co-defines *what* an organisation's business is (Ragsdale/Theis III 1997: 1297). The contingency theory debate discusses extensively the explanatory relevance of size for an organisation's capacity to respond to demands from its task environment (Pugh et al. 1963, 1968, 1969; Hickson et al. 1969; Udy 1965). But also new institutionalists discuss the effects of size, arguing that larger organisational actors are equipped with more access points to other actors in their organisational field than smaller organisational actors (Greening/Gray 1994; Walgenbach/Beck 2003, Beck/Walgenbach 2003).

(4) The fragmentation of an organisation is discussed differently; this study differentiates horizontal and vertical fragmentation. The *horizontal* fragmentation assesses an organisation's *specialisation* and describes to which extent duties are divided across discrete, identifiable functional areas, and within these areas between discrete, identifiable positions (Blau 1970; Lawrence/Lorsch 1967). A simple indicator for specialisation is the number of 'first-level commands' inside an organisation, also called 'chief executive's span of control', i.e. the numbers of different formal entities encompassing permanent responsibility areas for organisational members that are subordinated to the organisational top (Hood/Dunsire 1981: 62; Meier/Bothe 2000).

The *vertical* fragmentation of an organisation describes its '*authority configuration*' and '*status configuration*': The former maps the 'system of relationships between positions or jobs described in terms of the authority of superiors and the responsibility of subordinates' (Pugh et al. 1963: 305; Meyer 1963) and is usually measured with the number of formal authority levels. The latter measures the number of status ranks or grades inside an organisation that are e.g. expressed in official titles (Pugh et al. 1963: 306).

(5) The expertness of an organisation is defined by Hood and Dunsire as the extent and type of formal expertise rested inside an organisation (1981: 62-4). Because it seems less useful for government organisations to apply the ratio between administrative and production staff (e.g. Hollander 1971; Pugh/Hickson 1972, 1976), they suggest to measure the qualification and occupational background of officials.¹⁷ As a result, the expertness of an organisation may oscillate between a more 'generalist' and a more 'specialist' orientation of its members (see Ridley 1968; Jann/Wegrich 2008). In addition, other authors stress that the tenure and turnover of staff influences the knowledge, memory, and skills of an organisation (Benoit 2006: 171; Meier/Hicklin 2008).

To conclude, this study distinguishes between agentic behaviour and organisational structure. Whereas new institutionalist organisation theory offers three explanatory perspectives for agentic behaviour in institutionalisation processes, i.e. for actors'

¹⁷ They also assessed the number of departmental grades (Hood/Dunsire 1981: 63).

deliberate responses to institutions and their deliberate actions towards institutional targets, it rarely discusses the organisational structure of actors. Therefore, the five selected structural attributes of agents in institutional politics to be examined in this study are informed by contingency theory, which examines organisational structure primarily as a dependent variable instead of an explanatory variable in institutionalisation processes.

3.3 The explanatory strength of a new institutionalist organisation theory perspective on institutional politics in executives

The explanatory strength of Scott's (2008b) taxonomy of new institutionalist organisation theory has been criticised on several grounds. First, authors stress that the inclusion of cognitive elements into a definition of institutions is 'crypto-deterministic' because such taken-for-granted institutions obstruct any room for action – and for scientific observation (Mayntz/Scharpf 1995: 45-6; see also Türk 1997: 146). In a similar vein, albeit less radical, other scholars question the equality of all three pillars and stress the lacking conceptualisation of inter-pillar communication (see Hirsch 1997: 1709; Clark 1998). They argue that the cognitive pillar presents rather a 'proto-stage of perception' (Senge 2006: 41) on which regulative and normative pillars are based upon (Brunsson/Olsen 1993: 4; Goldstein/Keohane 1993: 10; Barley/Tolbert 1997: 93; Klatetzki 2006; Haus 2008: 101). Similarly, sociologists discuss cognitive elements as 'institutional logics' constructing regulative and normative elements (Alford/Friedland 1985; Jackall 1988; Lepsius 1997; Thornton/Ocasio 1999, 2008). Even Scott himself argues that cognitive worldviews may construct regulative and normative elements (1994: 56; 2008b: 429).

Besides, other authors criticise the conceptually vague distinction between normative and cognitive elements – albeit this seems to be inherent in new institutionalist organisation theory: The 'cognitive turn' (DiMaggio/Powell 1991a: 22) shifted sociologists 'from an early focus on shared norms and values (...) to an emphasis on shared knowledge and belief systems' (Scott 2001: 39). Thus, whereas initially normative components of institutions were emphasised and actors were perceived to internalise societal or professional norms (see also Selznick 1949; Parsons 1951; Scott 2008c), new institutionalist sociologists argue that actors internalise cognitive requirements and compliance is thus no deliberate action (Meyer/Rowan 1977; Zucker 1977; Finnemore 1996). As a consequence of this theoretical development, sociologists often lack a clear distinction between normative and cognitive elements (e.g. Miller/Banaszak-Holl 2005).

In defence, Scott argues that his schema of new institutionalist perspectives in organisation theory does not imply *ontological equivalence* of regulative, normative, and cognitive elements. Instead, the three institutional pillars are emphasised by different new institutionalists with different definitions of institutions and expectations about actors. In fact, the taxonomy aims at an *equal treatment* of all three perspectives (Scott 2008b: 50):

"The framework (...) is not a theory, but a conceptual schema. It depicts and differentiates among three complexes of ideas, each of which provide the ingredients for an alternative conception of and explanation for institutions. The framework attempts to capture both the commonality and diversity of theorizing about institutions, past and present' (Scott 2005: 465).

Thus, the three ideal-typed pillars represent different ontological assumptions and methodological approaches and the schematic overview is not 'an integrated theory of institutions', but an encompassing framework in order to 'enable us to compare and contrast the diverse conceptions of institutional theory' (Scott 2005: 465):

[Scott's] aim is not to distil some substantive theory (...), but to represent the existing variety of institutional concepts, and to identify what is distinctive about the new institutionalism in organizational analysis' (Mayntz 1996: 539).

Second, the threefold definition of institutions has been criticised from a methodological perspective. While regulative pillars might be documented and laid down as explicit or technical knowledge, normative and cognitive pillars are more informal in nature and thus rarely communicated through written means available to researchers (Axelrod 1976; Morrison 1993; Mayntz/Scharpf 1995: 45-6, Scharpf 1997: 64; Türk 1997: 146; Roland 2004; Christensen et al. 2007: 38).

Lastly, the taxonomy has been criticised for neglecting institutional maintenance (Zucker 1988; Lawrence 2008: 189-90) and for implying convergent institutional diffusion (Ortmann 1996: 23-5; Streeck/Thelen 2005: 7; Scott 2008b: 93, 132-40). This focus on institutional convergence is criticised for exhibiting 'an almost wilful lack of concern for power and interests of actors' (Ferner/Tempel 2006: 20; March/Olsen 1989: 170-1; Lawrence 2008: 183). However, particularly scholars emphasising the cognitive pillar stress that also divergent and disruptive institutionalisation processes may occur, although these authors focus rather on actors' responses to institutional constraints than provide an agency-oriented explanation for endogenous institutionalisation (Thelen 2009: 492).

In addition, one may criticise the schematic overview of new institutionalist organisation theory in two other respects. On the one hand, the theoretical state of the art lacks attention for the explanatory relevance of organisational structure as component of agency in institutionalisation. On the other hand, most scholars follow either a structure- or an agency-oriented perspective to institutionalisation and neglect the recursive nature of such processes – except certain tenets of structuration theory by Anthony Giddens (1976, 1979) and others (Ranson et al. 1980; Pettigrew 1985, 1987; Willmott 1987; Sewell 1992). This lacking conceptualisation of recursive dynamics between structure and agency is also referred to as the 'paradox of embedded agency' (Hult 2003: 150; Holm 1995; Hay/Wincott 1998; Hall/Taylor 1998; Seo/Creed 2002: 226; Maguire 2007):

'If institutions are coercive, normative or cognitively taken-for-granted rules that constrain action, how may actors change their relationships to those constraints in ways that transform institutions?' (Jackson 2005: 231)

The short answer is that: While institutions enable and constrain action, substantial indeterminacy and situational ambiguity remain. Yet this gap between institutional context and intentional action has not been sufficiently explored in the new institutionalist organisation theory debate so far (Jackson 2005: 231; see also Jackson 2010). This study could avoid this conceptual paradox and follow either a structure- or an agency-oriented perspective to examine institutional politics within executives. A focus on structure would result in an illustration of 'institutional capacities' for institutional politics (see e.g. Hesse/Benz 1989; Weaver/Rockman 1993). A focus on agency would provide an overview on different 'institutional strategies' employed by change agents – but refers rather to

institutional *policy* than institutional *politics* (see Jann et al. 2005). In contrast, this study aims to uncover the recursive dynamics in institutional politics and therefore combines structure- and agency-related explanations without attributing ontological primacy to one of them. It applies the new institutionalist power-distributional approach to institutionalisation following the threefold definition of institutions noted above (Hacker 2004a, 2005a, 2005b; Thelen 2004, 2009, Streeck/Thelen 2005, Mahoney/Thelen 2010b; Lawrence/Suddaby 2006, Lawrence 2008; Garud et al. 2007).

4 Structure and agency matters:

A power-distributional perspective on institutional politics in executives

The power-distributional approach to institutionalisation claims that if institutional structures constrain action but are also affected by agency, their basic properties 'must be defined in ways that provide some dynamic element that permits such change' (Mahoney/Thelen 2010a: 7; see also Orren/Skowronek 1994). In addition, institutions are regarded as power-distributional because they provide access to power and prescribe its dissemination (see also: DiMaggio/Powell 1983; Hall 1986; Stinchcombe 1987; Knight 1992; Dobbin 1994; Skocpol 1995; Moe 2005).¹⁸ Consequently, the power-distributional approach argues that all institutionalisation processes reflect institutional politics because they affect the institutional status quo and thus the access to and distribution of power (Mahoney/Thelen 2010a: FN 7).

The power-distributional approach by Mahoney and Thelen (2010a) departs from their previous seminal contributions to historical institutionalism by focussing on *gradual* institutionalisation processes of institutions that are already in place, e.g. at the level of nation states, political economies, or organisational fields (Thelen 2009: 476; Mahoney/Thelen 2010a: 8). Accordingly, the power-distributional approach addresses *endogenous* institutionalisation, reasoning that 'periods of institutional stability are often characterised by incremental change' (van der Heijden 2010: 231). Put differently: The power-distributional approach aims to analyse gradual institutional changes, arguing that 'it is not so useful to draw a sharp line of institutional stability *versus* change'; instead institutionalisation processes should be regarded as 'the kind of incremental or bounded change that (...) constitute the more common ways that things move in politics' (emphasis original, Thelen 2000: 106-7). As such, the approach is particularly suitable for analysing institutionalisation processes within central government organisations.

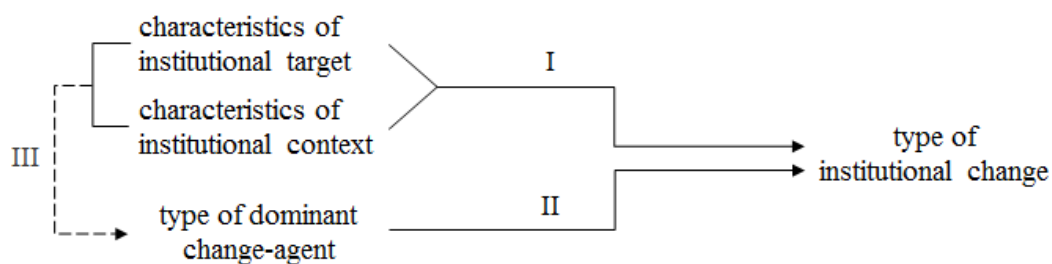
Moreover, the authors maintain their 'conceptual favour' for retrospective analyses, but reject the historical institutionalist understanding of institutionalisation as punctuated equilibriums interrupted by critical junctures (see Béland 2007: 22). In contrast, the power-distributional approach defines institutions broader as historical institutionalist definitions, which often emphasise regulative and normative pillars, and refers explicitly to new institutionalist organisation theory by stressing the regulative, normative, and cognitive pillars of institutions (Mahoney/Thelen 2010a: 8).

¹⁸ Also policy analysis applied preceding arguments to the power-distributional approach (e.g. Hacker 1998, 2004a, 2004b, 2005a, 2005b; Béland 2005, 2007, 2009; see also May et al. 2005).

In a nutshell, the power-distributional approach argues that gradual institutional change is a recursive institutionalisation process between structure and agency (see Figure B.3).¹⁹ The *structure-oriented* explanation distinguishes the characteristics of the institutional context and the characteristics of institutional targets (link I), referring to the power-distributional nature of institutions providing constraints and opportunities for institutionalisation: On the one hand, the institutional context and its features may obstruct or facilitate processes of institutional change (Thelen 2009: 488; Mahoney/Thelen 2010a: 18-20). On the other hand, institutions are characterised by a distinct ambiguity at enforcement level that provides 'critical openings for creativity and agency' and thus turns them into 'objects of political skirmishing' (Mahoney/Thelen 2010a: 12) – or in this study's terms: into targets of institutional politics (Orren/Skowroneck 1994: 322; Jackson 2005: 249; Thelen 2009: 488-9; Mahoney/Thelen 2010a: 20-2).²⁰

The *agency-oriented* explanation refers to characteristics of change agents (link II), i.e. their ambitions to change or preserve the institutional status quo and their compliant or defiant behaviour to their institutional context (Mahoney/Thelen 2010a: 22-8). Yet, the second agency-oriented explanatory dimension is problematic because the authors link compliant or defiant behavior of change agents with the strong or weak constraints of their institutional context respectively. In contrast, van der Heijden argues convincingly that change agents may comply with or defy to their institutional context disregard whether it imposes strong or weak consequences (2010: 236-7). As a consequence, this study excludes this second agent-oriented explanatory dimension and focuses on their first dimension whereby actors have different ambitions to become change agents in institutional politics and thus influence the mechanisms of institutional politics.

Figure B.3 Framework for explaining modes of institutional change



Source: Own illustration, adapted from Mahoney/Thelen 2010a: 15.

In addition, a third causal connection is conceptualised between the characteristics of structure and agency (link III), reasoning that one can derive 'propositions concerning the kind of environments in which different agents are likely to emerge and thrive' (Mahoney/Thelen 2010a: 28).

¹⁹ As such, the power-distributional approach echoes the argument by Czada and Schimank (2000) that institutionalisation processes are always characterised by institutional dynamics, i.e. consequences imposed by the context, and intentions of actors to change their institutional environment.

²⁰ Similarly, the seminal work by March and Olsen (1976) refers to the ambiguity of the institutional context of organisations. Other authors discuss this as 'veil of vagueness' in institutional reforms (Christiansen/Klitgaard 2010; see also Gibson/Goodin 1999).

More importantly, the power-distributional approach distinguishes four ideal-typed mechanisms of institutional change and corresponding would-be change agents, in a sense outlining two matching structure- and agency-oriented explanatory templates for institutional politics. This study applies primarily the structure-oriented template, reasoning that one of the two agency-oriented explanatory dimensions must be regarded as less suitable for empirical analysis (see above) whereas the other agency-oriented explanatory dimension, i.e. actors' ambitions to become change agents in institutional politics, is actually expressed in their selection and de-selection of institutional strategies targeting the different institutional underpinnings to govern – and thus closely related to the structure-oriented explanatory dimension on institutional targets' ambiguity at enforcement level. Put differently: Any assessment of the ambiguity of institutional targets at enforcement level is inherently concerned with actors' targeting decisions. As a result, this study distinguishes four ideal-types mechanisms of institutional politics that correspond with four types of would-be change agents (see Figure B.4).²¹

Figure B.4 Four ideal-typed mechanisms and change agents of institutional politics

		enforcement of institutional targets	
		clear	ambiguous
institutional context	strong	layering <i>[subversives]</i>	drift <i>[symbionts]</i>
	weak	displacement <i>[insurrectionaries]</i>	conversion <i>[opportunists]</i>

Note: Mechanisms of institutionalisation are plain; types of change agents are italic.

Source: Own illustration, adapted from Mahoney/Thelen 2010a: 28.

The next section outlines these four types of institutional change or rather mechanisms of institutional politics in more detail, linking the structure- and agency-oriented explanatory perspectives. The subsequent two sections refine these explanatory dimensions in order to apply this approach on institutional politics in executives and formulate this study's expectation hypotheses.

4.1 Four ideal-typed mechanisms of institutional politics

First, *subversives* disguise their strong ambitions to change the institutional status quo

'by introducing amendments that can initially be 'sold' as refinements of or correctives to existing institutions. Since the new layers created in this way do not as such and directly undermine existing institutions, they typically do not provoke countermobilization by defenders of the status quo' (Streeck/Thelen 2005: 23).

²¹ In an earlier account, Streeck and Thelen (2005) differentiate five ideal-typed mechanisms of institutionalisation referring only to institutional ambiguity at enforcement level (Werle 2007: 128).

Hence, 'layering' promotes new institutions on the edges of old ones, 'siphoning off support for the previous arrangements' (Mahoney/Thelen 2010a: 26; Crouch/Keune 2005: 99; Campbell 2010; see also Moe 1989: 285; Thelen 2002, 2004).²² Layering is very likely to occur with institutions of low discretion at enforcement level and in highly constraining institutional contexts. In turn, subversive actors engaged in layering often 'work on their own, behind the scenes or in the shadows' (Mahoney/Thelen 2010a: 31).

Notably, contemporary scholarship applies increasingly the concept of layering, e.g. for explaining the changes of formal rules in the U.S. congress that were continuously amended by new rules without disassembling pre-existing ones (Schickler 2001; see also Sheingate 2010). Likewise, constitutional changes can be explained as layering, i.e. constitutions are often affected by introducing new rules without changing old ones (Bennett 2002; Campbell 2004: 73; see also Kaiser 2002). At the level of central government organisations, scholars have studied the emergence of the U.S. administrative state as a process of layering (Orren/Skowronek 1994, 2007). Others apply layering on the formal rules for departmental policy-making, often compiled in 'rulebooks', and argue that they are mostly changed by inserting new rules alongside pre-existing ones (for Britain: Baker 2000; for Germany: Sperl 2001; Zypries/Peters 2000). Likewise, new forms of controlling higher civil servants within the German administrative system did not replace traditional forms of oversight, but were rather 'laid [sic!] on top of them, to produce a more "redundant" pattern of control' (Derlien 2004: 155). In addition, layering may also affect normative or cognitive repertoires, e.g. when public sector reforms introduce managerial ideas that do not replace pre-existing dominant values or common beliefs (Chapman 1992; Christoph 1992; Parrado 2008: 232).

Second, *insurrectionaries* seek to accomplish their strong ambitions to eliminate elements of the institutional status quo by actively mobilising against their institutional context (Mahoney/Thelen 2010a: 31), aiming towards a 'displacement':

'Change through displacement can occur endogenously through the rediscovery or activation of previously suppressed or suspended possibilities. But it can also occur through (...) 'invasion', either in a literal or a metaphoric sense' (Streeck/Thelen 2005: 21).

Thus, displacement often entails the dismantling of pre-existing institutions (Byrkjeflot/Neby 2008: 336) and calling into question their primacy (Streeck/Thelen 2005: 21). It may also express an invasion of institutions from other institutional jurisdictions (Thelen 2009: 488; Mahoney/Thelen 2010a: 24). Similar to layering, displacement occurs often with clearly enforced institutional arrangements. In contrast to layering, though, displacement is most likely to occur when institutional environments impose weak constraints and allow such visible institutional changes.

Empirically, the wide-ranging debate on administrative reforms provides numerous examples how pre-existing domestic practices are displaced by foreign ones:

'[T]aken-for-granted beliefs and arrangements are challenged by new or increased contact between previously separated entities based on different normative and organizational principles' (Olsen 2010: 133).

²² Other authors discuss this recombination and reshuffling of preexisting institutional components as 'institutional bricolage' – albeit with less emphasis on actors (Levi-Strauss 1962; Campbell 2004).

These dynamics are observed for formal structures and procedures (e.g. Pollitt/Bouckaert 2004; Lægreid/Verhoest 2010). Similarly, displacement is identified for normative and cognitive prerogatives such as *Leitbilder*²³ promoting entrepreneurial principles of the private sector across countries (Jann 2002a: 280; Thelen 2002: 217; du Gay 2007: chap. 6; see also Powell 1991: 27, 31; Rao et al. 2003: 835; Hasse/Krücken 2008: 164).²⁴

Third, *symbionts* have rather weak ambitions to change the institutional status quo but may undermine institutional elements in order to contradict their purpose (Thelen 2009: 482; see also Hacker 2005a, 2005b). Accordingly, these would-be change agents exploit the fact that environmental changes may distort the intended effects of an institution in a way that fits their interests (Streeck 2009: 124). They engage in 'drift', deliberately rejecting a reorientation of institutions towards new environmental circumstances:

'Drift occurs when rules remain formally the same but their impact changes as a result of shifts in external conditions (...). When actors choose not to respond to such environmental changes, their very inaction can cause change in the impact of the institution' (Mahoney/Thelen 2010a: 17).

Drift occurs when actors take non-decisions to update institutions towards a changing environment or, put differently, occur because of 'active attempts to block adaptation of institutions to changing circumstances' (Hacker 2004a: 248, 2005a: 42, 2005b: 45-6; Bezes/Lodge 2007: 133). Drift is very likely to affect institutions enforced with large discretion – which enables actors to neglect the necessary institutional maintenance (Pritzlaff/Nullmeier 2009: 17-8; Olsen 2010: 133). Besides, drift occurs particularly in institutional contexts with strong constraints obstructing direct and clearly visible changes of the institutional status quo (Mahoney/Thelen 2010a: 28). As a consequence, drift is often 'masked by stability on the surface' (Streeck/Thelen 2005: 25).

In empirical research, institutional drift at the level of central government organisations has been examined e.g. for codes of conduct in diplomatic services prescribing behavioural rules that are not updated towards the increasing use of electronic communication: Although technical innovation requires new communication standards, responsible actors insist on pre-existing norms of appropriate communication (Bátora/Neumann 2002, Bátora 2003, 2008). Similarly, the changes of basic values and norms of the civil service may be deliberately withheld despite radical changes in its environment, e.g. observed during the transformation of several Central and Eastern European countries (e.g. Jowitt 1992; Nunberg 1999; Lagerspetz/Rikmann 2009). Likewise, administrative cultures in a narrow sense may be affected by drift when underlying means-end relations are not updated towards new environmental circumstances, e.g. when departments refuse to redirect their 'departmental philosophies' towards new objectives in their policy field – eventually resulting in an out-dated adherence to departmental objectives that are not achievable or conceivable anymore (Smeddinck/Tils 2002, Tils 2002; Janning 2004; Christensen/Lægreid 2008).

²³ *Leitbilder* comprise both normative expectations about *how* actors should behave as well as cognitive views about *why* certain behaviour is desirable (Jann 2002a: 280).

²⁴ In practice, *Leitbilder* are often highly contested and thus less easily displaceable (see Jann 2002a).

Lastly, *opportunists* do not actively engage in institutional change and instead exploit given opportunities. When they act as change agents, opportunists often engage in 'conversion' (Mahoney/Thelen 2010a: 26-7):

'Such redirection may come about as a result of environmental challenges, to which [actors, JF] respond by deploying existing institutional resources to new ends. Or it can come about through changes in power relations, such that actors who were not involved in the original design of an institution and whose participation in it may not have been reckoned with, take it over and turn it to new ends' (Streeck/Thelen 2005: 26).

Similar to drift, conversion is very likely to affect vaguely enforced institutions – which allow assigning new purposes to them (Thelen 2000: 107; Streeck/Thelen 2005: EN 21; Campbell 2010). As such, conversion is the typically mechanism of institutional politics involving institutional elements with ambiguous enforcement. Moreover, conversion as exploitation of institutions occurs particularly in institutional contexts envisaging less means for blocking institutional change.

Empirically, conversion has been studied for various institutional elements at the level of central government organisations that retain but are redirected towards new objectives and purposes, e.g. the normative and cognitive fundamentals of civil service systems have been aligned towards a stronger functional politicisation while maintaining their formal structures and processes (see Putnam 1973; Fry 1979, 1981, 1985, 1998; Aberbach et al. 1981, 1990, Aberbach 2006; Jann 2001; Schröter 2001, 2005).

In sum, the power-distributional approach distinguishes four ideal-typed mechanisms of institutional politics with corresponding types of would-be change agents. The structure-oriented explanatory perspective distinguishes two dimensions, i.e. the institutional target's ambiguity at enforcement level and the institutional context and its consequences on institutionalisation processes. Accordingly, clearly enforced institutional targets are more likely to be changed via layering and displacement. To the contrary, ambiguously enforced institutional targets are more likely to be changed via drift and conversion. In addition, a institutional context with various constraints allows institutional change via layering or drift, whereas an institutional context with fewer constraints enables institutional change via displacement or conversion (Mahoney/Thelen 2010a: 19). In turn, would-be change agents may act as different types corresponding to the mechanisms of institutional change:

'[A]ny given actor may occupy different roles in the context of different institutional politics – for example, adopting an opportunist stance in one arena but assuming the role of insurrectionary in another context or at another time.' (Mahoney/Thelen 2010a: FN 7)

The power-distributional approach has also been criticised, e.g. that it lacks a comprehensive discussion of causalities and 'present[s] rather a combination of induction and deduction to confirm [its] association between explanans and explanandum' (van der Heijden 2010: 237). In addition, its linking of the originally two agency-oriented explanatory dimensions to modes of institutional change requires further conceptualisation (van der Heijden 2010). Other scholars criticise the lacking theoretical conceptualisation of interactions between the four ideal-typed mechanisms of institutionalisation (Campbell 2010; van der Heijden 2010). Such theoretical refinements are beyond the scope of this study's theoretical framework but it specifies the two structure-oriented explanatory dimensions, i.e. institutional ambiguity and institutional consequences, which inherently

specifies also some assumptions on would-be change agents due to the third conceptualised link between the characteristics of structure and agency.

4.2 Institutional ambiguity in institutional politics:

A new institutionalist organisation theory perspective

The power-distributional approach argues that ambiguities between institutions and their actual enforcement exist by design or emerge over time (Thelen 2009: 491; see also already Streeck/Thelen 2005: 11). Although different sources of institutional ambiguity are identified, e.g. actors' limited capacities to anticipate later enforcement, conflicts in institution-building resulting in ambiguous compromises, or the timeframe that may change the context of institutions' enforcement (Thelen 2009: 491-2), no detailed theoretical conceptualisation is provided. Instead, the authors 'are concerned simply with the variation in the extent of discretion that actors have' at enforcement levels and 'not with identifying the sources of such variation' (Mahoney/Thelen 2010a: 21).

Similarly, new institutionalist organisation theory observes institutional ambiguity as 'internal logic of contradiction' (DiMaggio 1988: 13; Barley/Kunda 1992: 386) and regards it as 'opportunity for strategic and agentic behaviour' (Scott 2005: 466-7).²⁵ On the one hand, new institutionalist organisation scholars argue that institutional ambiguity emerges because the regulative, normative or cognitive pillar of institutions may 'move out of alignment' (Scott 2001: 203; Burns/Flam 1987; Jepperson 1991; Friedland/Alford 1991; Orren/Skowronek 1994; Hoffmann 2001: 36-8; Seo/Creed 2002). This imbalance is also discussed as institutions' 'robustness' (*Härtegrad*), i.e. an institution is more clearly enforced if its regulative, normative, and cognitive elements are consistent with each other (Hasse/Krücken 2008: 163; see also Djelic/Quack 2003: FN 41). On the other hand, new institutionalist organisation scholars argue that institutional ambiguity emerges because each institutional pillar is predominantly enforced with different discretion – and very often one pillar 'operates virtually alone' or achieves 'primacy' (Scott 2008b: 62, 50-9, 119; 2005: 465, Scott/Davis 2003: 258; Hoffman 2001: 27, 173; Campbell 2004; Walgenbach/Meyer 2008: 57, 105-6).

Given the restrictions to assess all institutional pillars with similar depth in order to examine their balance (Campbell 2004: 36; Roland 2004; Christensen et al. 2007: 38), this study focuses on the distinct ambiguities of the three differentiated institutional pillars and argues that their ambiguity at enforcement level can be arrayed on a *heuristic spectrum*. First, institutions dominated by *regulative* components are designed to reduce uncertainty and thus clearly enforced by coercion, ensuring actors' compliance with rewards and sanctions and often accompanied by surveillance mechanisms. Yet, this low discretion at enforcement level may increase when regulative elements are imprecise or surveillance is insufficient (Edelman 1992; Halliday/Carruthers 2007: 1149; Scott 2008b: 54).²⁶ Second, institutions dominated by *normative* elements are often characterised by substantial inconsistency at enforcement level but at the level of central government the complexity of

²⁵ Institutional ambiguity is discussed for organisational fields (Thornton/Ocasio 1999, 2008; Meyer/Hammerschmid 2006) but also for individual organisations (March/Olsen 1976).

²⁶ In jurisprudence, the school of 'critical legal studies' argues that law is coercively enforced but inherently ambiguous and subject to interpretive confusion or manoeuvre (Baumann 1996, 2002).

public policy 'produces inconsistencies and multiplicity, giving rise to competing definitions of which attitudes and actions are (...) appropriate' (Christensen et al. 2007: 42). This high discretion may be reduced when values and norms stem from either consensus or the overwhelming dominance of certain actors (March 1978: 589; March/Olsen 1984: 744; Jackson 2005: 234-5). Lastly, institutions dominated by *cognitive* elements are taken-for-granted and thus can be assumed to be clearly enforced. However, if these institutions entail tensions about cause-effect relationships, their discretion at enforcement level becomes also rather vague (Brunsson 1993: 494-6). Put differently, cognitive institutions are robust and clearly enforced if they are commonly shared by actors, but if actors differ about the cause-effect relationships their almost automatic enforcement may become ambiguous.

Applying this argument on institutional politics at the level of central government organisations, this study argues that would-be change agents may pursue institutional strategies targeting at different institutional pillars, although not necessarily those with situational primacy. First, the *regulative* underpinnings to govern are entrenched in constitutions, laws, property rights, formal enforcement procedures, but also in informal guidelines and mechanisms like 'shaming and shunning activities'. They instruct governmental actors how to formulate government policies in a formally correct manner and often entail some sort of surveillance and sanctioning mechanism in case of non-compliant behaviour (Alexander/Scott 1984; Scott 2008b: 52; Jann 2008: 18; Rhodes et al. 2008). These rules of the executive game could either address the basic interactions between executive actors in general or refer to executive actors in distinct policy areas.

Second, *normative* underpinnings to govern suggest to governmental actors appropriate behaviour in government policy-making. Such norms and professional standards disseminate throughout central government organisations (Wagener 1979; Sabatier 1987; Haas 1992; Sabatier/Jenkins-Smith 1993; Rhodes et al. 2008; Jann 2008: 18; Scott 2008b: 97). In addition, also policy-specific norms exist, prescribing to executive actors the legitimate and preferable or desirable policy instruments to achieve certain objectives, thus guiding appropriate policy behaviour (Scott 2008b: 54).

Lastly, the *cognitive* underpinnings to govern are often characterised as those 'administrative doctrines [that] are not questioned' and prescribe 'what must be done' in central government (Dunsire 1973: 39; Jann 1983, 2002b; Peters 2001: chap. 2). In addition, these taken-for-granted worldviews in executives may also exist in single organisational actors (Jann 1983, 2002b; Marsh et al. 2001: chap. 4; Derlien 2002; Howlett 2002; Patzelt 2008; Richards et al. 2008: 492; Rhodes et al. 2008: 463). Moreover, they are also expressed in 'policy paradigms' underlying policy controversies and shaping the policy choices of governmental actors (Hall 1989, 1992, 1993; Ziegler 1997; McNamara 1998; Hay 2001; Sahlin-Andersson 1996; Meyer/Hammerschmid 2006; Smullen 2010), also discussed as 'departmental philosophies' (Pitt/Smith 1981: 51).

In sum, this study argues that the institutional targets in institutional politics in executives include basic as well as policy-specific regulative, normative, and cognitive underpinnings to govern, affecting government policy-making in general and in specific policy areas. Here, the policy-specific rules of the *executive* game are confined to distinct

policy areas, focussing on *executive* actors and thus neglecting institutional elements which may impose consequences on other actors in a given policy field that act outside central government. Yet, these policy-specific institutional targets provide a broader influence on government policy-making if they address various policy issues simultaneously and over time, also including policy issues that can be regarded as cutting across traditional departmental portfolios. Therefore, this study aims to assess both the basic and the policy-specific institutional targets in institutional politics, reasoning that they interact and thus institutional strategies addressing the rules in distinct policy areas may spill-over to the basic institutional underpinnings to govern and vice versa. However, this study assumes that the basic rules of the executive game are more clearly enforced than the policy-specific rules of the executive game, i.e. their basic application across central government somewhat reflects their relevance in reducing uncertainty among executive actors in regulative, normative, and cognitive terms. In turn, policy-specific institutional underpinnings to govern, especially policy norms and cognitive sectoral paradigms, are presumably more vague and contested among executive actors.

More importantly, the power-distributional approach links these characteristics of institutional targets to the types of would-be change agents, which select or de-select institutional strategies in order to address these regulative, normative, and cognitive targets – and their exploitable ambiguity at enforcement level. Accordingly, this study assumes that ambitious change agents that seek to change the institutional status quo are more likely to address the basic clearly enforced institutional underpinnings to govern than the ambiguously enforced policy-specific institutional underpinnings to govern.

Yet, as noted above, institutional ambiguity may also differ across time, i.e. regulative pillars may lose their clarity at enforcement level, normative pillars may become more clearly enforced, and cognitive pillars are generally understood as more volatile in terms of enforcement. In turn, institutional ambiguity cannot be assessed *a priori* (Scott 2005: 465, 2008b: 62), obstructing the formulation of expectation hypotheses on the explanatory relevance of institutional ambiguity for an empirical analysis – and thus also on the distinct selection and de-selection of institutional strategies by would-be change agents in institutional politics. Instead, this study scrutinises institutional ambiguity empirically and assumes that advisory arrangements target different pillars of the basic and policy-specific institutional underpinnings to govern that are characterised with a specific ambiguity at enforcement level.

4.3 Institutional consequences in institutional politics:

A configurative perspective

The power-distributional approach argues that the institutional context imposes distinct institutional consequences on actors in institutional politics (Mahoney/Thelen 2010a). How the institutional context affects actors, though, is not further conceptualised. Instead, different theoretical approaches are suggested to examine these institutional consequences, including e.g. the veto player approach (Mahoney/Thelen 2010a: 18-9; see Immergut 1990, 1992; Tsebelis 1995, 2002; Kaiser 1998).

This study follows new institutionalist organisation theory and defines the institutional context as a set of interacting institutional features comprising regulative, normative and cognitive elements (Deeg/Jackson 2006: 162; Scott 2008b). According to this study's definition of institutional politics, some elements of these features may become institutional targets while others are assumed to maintain and persist, resulting in significant *and* constant differences between central government organisations as the institutional contexts of institutional politics. The new institutionalist organisation theory perspective argues that these context features interact, but lacks any further theoretical conceptualisation of such inter-pillar interactions (see chap. B.3.3 above). To specify these interactions, this study follows the configurative understanding of institutions suggested by the varieties of capitalism (VoC) approach that echoes new institutionalist organisation theory in defining institutions as 'set of rules, formal or informal, that actors generally follow, whether for normative, cognitive, or material reasons' (Hall/Soskice 2001: 9).²⁷ In addition, the VoC approach is particularly suitable to specify the understanding of institutional consequences by the power-distributional approach because it serves as one of its foundations and shares its ontological premises (Thelen 2009; Hall 2010).

Broadly speaking, the VoC approach argues that institutions are 'complementary', i.e. 'one (or more) institution(s) may enhance the effects of another institution (or several institutions)' (Hall, quoted by Crouch et al. 2005: 373). These complementary institutions are compound in 'institutional configurations' affecting the interactions of actors (Hall/Soskice 2001: 17; Amable 2003; Hall/Gingerich 2004: 7-8). This complementary understanding of institutions informs a typology of four ideal-typed advanced political economies (Hall/Soskice 2001). Although this typology has been criticised, particularly for its deterministic understanding of actors and institutional change (e.g. Blyth 2003; Crouch 2005; Streeck/Thelen 2005; Deeg 2007, Deeg/Jackson 2007; Immergut/Anderson 2008: 356),²⁸ this study acknowledges the VoC approach's basic focus on persistent and simultaneously interacting institutional features in order to specify institutional consequences from a power-distributional perspective. It assumes that institutional features at central government organisations can be arrayed in institutional configurations imposing distinct consequences on institutional politics. This configurative understanding of the institutional context allows formulating 'robust and consistent postulates about what kind of institutions matter and how they affect behaviour' (Hall/Soskice 2001: 14).

In more detail, this study selects four institutional features, based on the existing literature on advisory arrangements in government policy-making (see chap. A.3 above). The state structure is excluded because this study is confined to analysing the role of advisory arrangements in the formative stages government policy-making (see chap. A.2), neglecting if they may also be engaged in policy implementation. Although one may counter that such a dual occupation in policy formulation and policy implementation

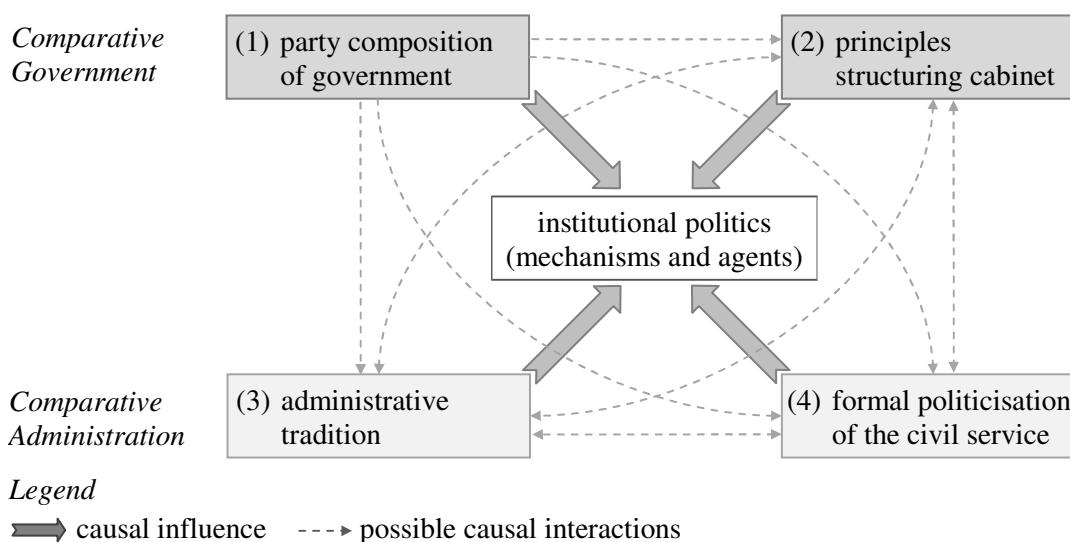
²⁷ Similarly, Kostova (1999) applies the VoC approach to identify 'country institutional profiles' as set of regulative, normative, and cognitive features at the level of nation-states (see also Kostova/Zaheer 1999; for other applications see e.g. the symposium in *Socio-Economic Review* 2005, 3(2)).

²⁸ Besides, the VoC approach has been criticised for its claim that institutional complementarities are coherent and result in equilibrium (see also the review symposium in *Comparative European Politics* 2003, 1(2), the symposium in *Socio-Economic Review* 2005, 3(2), and the special issue in *Socio-Economic Review* 2009, 7(1)).

affects their activities in the formative stage of policy-making, this may hold likewise for other 'distractions' such as performing routine tasks. Moreover, two institutional features are modified to make this study feasible. On the one hand, and following Katz (1986: 43), party government in parliamentary systems refers to three aspects: governments are formed by officially elected parties, government's highest offices, most notably cabinet positions, are recruited through parties, and governing parties formulate policies in cohesive action (see also Cotta 2000). This study focuses only on the first aspect, i.e. the party composition of governments. On the other hand, the politicisation of the civil service takes various forms, which can be distinguished as functional, formal, and party-political politicisation (see chap. A.3.2.2 above). This study focuses on the *formal* politicisation of civil service systems, also because the other two types are perceived as considerably volatile over time and thus less suitable for this study's research design, requiring rather persistent and stable context features (e.g. Jann 1988; Peters/Pierre 2004: 11).²⁹

Consequently, this study argues that a configuration of four institutional features with distinct regulative, normative, and cognitive pillars imposes consequences in institutional politics: (1) The party composition of government, (2) the principles structuring cabinet, (3) the administrative tradition, and (4) the formal politicisation of the civil service. These four selected institutional features address two dominant research perspectives on the inner workings of executives (Goetz 2003a: 74, 2003c: 61-2): The party composition of government and the structuring principles of cabinets are studied by scholars of Comparative Government following a *governmental* perspective on executives 'from above'. In contrast, the administrative tradition and the formal politicisation of civil service systems are examined by researchers of Comparative Administration following an *administrative* perspective on executives 'from below' (see Figure B.5).

Figure B.5 Institutional consequences in institutional politics



Source: Own illustration.

²⁹ Some authors observe also changes with regard to the formal politicisation of civil service systems, most often caused by administrative reforms (Rouban 2007a).

Such a configurative understanding of the institutional context suggests different interactions between its features. Although a detailed analysis of these interactions is beyond the scope of this study, the literature provides various arguments that suffice to illustrate interactions between governmental and administrative features as well as among governmental and among administrative features respectively.

First, studies show that the party composition of governments affects the formal politicisation of civil service systems: Countries with single-party systems are more likely to require a neutral permanent civil service and prohibit formal political appointments than multi-party systems (Peters 1997: 240; Halligan 2007: 99; Page/Wright 1999a: 275). Likewise, the principles structuring cabinet interact with the administrative tradition setting out the framework of duties and responsibilities of the ministerial bureaucracy (Fry 2008: 146). This is particularly relevant for parliamentary systems with cabinet ministers acting simultaneously as heads of departments: In countries with strong individual responsibility of cabinet ministers, it is very likely that the administrative tradition comprises strong provisions for structures and procedures that enable a direct transfer of ministers' orders to departmental officials (Page 1992: 120-1; Saalfeld 1999: 145; Huber 2000: 397). In turn, the formal politicisation of the civil service may reiterate the principles structuring cabinet, e.g. in countries with rather adversarial cabinet decision-making it is very likely that political appointees are recruited at the top echelons of the ministerial bureaucracy to support their minister's proposals. In turn, collective cabinet decision-making may request less of such resources for cabinet ministers (Bourgault 2011; Dahlström et al. 2011a).

Second, coalition research argues that the party composition of government influences the principles structuring cabinet decision-making, e.g. coalition governments create more often mechanisms to ensure the involvement of cabinet members from all coalition parties in cabinet decisions than single-party governments (Saalfeld 1999: 145; see also Lijphart 1984b, 1999; Blondel/Müller-Rommel 1993, Blondel/Cotta 2000, Blondel et al. 2007: 105-11; Müller/Strøm 2000: 577). Apparently, single party governments are more likely to develop a consensual style of decision-making because their members are usually more united over a wide range of issues. Conversely, members of coalition governments are more likely to disagree on political issues – albeit this does not cause automatically a conflict-oriented cabinet (Blondel/Malova 2004).

Lastly, comparative public administration research illustrates that the administrative tradition interacts with the formal politicisation of civil service systems; several authors even discuss the latter as an element of the former (e.g. Peters 2001, 2008). Accordingly, bureaucracies following an administrative tradition with a strong legal orientation are more likely to regulate political appointments in a formal and extensive manner than bureaucracies following an administrative tradition with lower legal entrenchment (Page/Wright 1999a: 275; Halligan 2007: 99; Dahlström 2009). In turn, an administrative tradition emphasising the neutral position of the bureaucracy vis-à-vis societal interests is very likely to prohibit a formal politicisation of the civil service in order to ensure this neutrality in bureaucratic advice.

In short, this study assumes that four institutional features impose institutional consequences on actors in institutional politics at the level of central government

organisations, i.e. (1) the party composition of government, (2) the principles structuring cabinet, (3) the administrative tradition, and (4) the formal politicisation of the civil service. More importantly, these four features, defined as sets of regulative, normative, and cognitive pillars, interact in institutional configurations. In turn, they inform four expectation hypotheses for analysing institutional politics in executives that are discussed in the next four sections.

4.3.1 The party composition of governments and institutional politics in executives

A wide-ranging literature predicts government formation by stressing three interrelated motives of parties: The literature referring to the *office-seeking* argument considers the party breakdown in the legislature and claims that parties winning elections are interested in cabinet offices (von Neumann/Morgenstern 1944; Gamson 1961; Riker 1962). Other authors following the *policy-seeking* argument claim that the ideological propinquity of parties and their programmatic positions account for the formation of governments by distinct parties and thus the composition of cabinets (Axelrod 1970; De Swaan 1973; Laver/Schofield 1990, 1998; see also Budge/Keman 1990; Strøm/Müller 1999, Müller/Strøm 2000; Warwick 2006). Besides, scholars applying the *vote-seeking* argument stress that parties are interested to gain votes for re-election – with apparent effects on government formations and cabinet compositions (Strøm/Müller 1999: 8). The resulting party composition of governments is shaped by three institutional pillars.

First, *regulative* institutions prescribe the behaviour of government forming parties, e.g. investiture rules stipulate whether a new government must pass a formal vote in the legislature and with what majority. Corresponding to these rules, parties are expected to form single-party governments or – in case the electoral turnout prohibits such governments – minimum winning coalitions which control Parliament with simple majority (Riker 1962; Baron/Ferejohn 1989; DeWinter/Dumont 2006). In some systems, parties may form oversized coalitions, thus somewhat 'over-complying' with these formal rules, often associated with the presence of a second legislative chamber inducing potential instability (Druckman et al. 2005). In other systems, parties form coalitions lacking parliamentary majority, but still manage to comply with the obligatory investiture rules (Laver/Schofield 1990, 1998).

Second, scholars emphasise also *normative* requirements for government formation, e.g. 'recognition rules' stipulating which party or parties will be asked to form a government, and in what order (e.g. Downs 1956; Axelrod 1970; Frogner 2000). Most often, the largest party tends to become the *formateur* party (Diermeier/Merlo 1999) or the median party in systems where the head of state has discretionary power over the selection of *formateurs* (Morelli 1999). Likewise, parties in two-party systems are also normatively encouraged to form single-party governments even if the electoral turnout allows government coalitions, symbolised e.g. in Britain with the term 'hung parliament' for such parliamentary breakdowns – implying that this situation should be terminated as soon as possible (Hennessy/Coates 1991). Other behavioural rules for government formation are e.g. the respect for pre-electoral commitments between parties to form the next government, which are followed because credibility is perceived as a crucial asset in coalition building (Golder 2004; DeWinter/Dumont 2006). Recent research shows that

such pre-electoral commitments on forged or rejected alliances have greater explanatory power for coalition formation than multi-dimensional policy-seeking models (Debus 2009).

Lastly, the party composition of governments serves also as a 'legitimizing myth' (Katz 1987: 3) about representation in democracies, discussed along two *cognitive* paradigms (see Lijphart 1984b, 1999): The *majoritarian* principle emphasises democracy as government by the majority of the people based on a concentration of power – promoting single-party governments. In contrast, the *consensus* principle encourages the idea that democracy should represent as many people as possible and thus provides multiple checks and balances and represents a broader array of interests – thereby cognitively supporting coalition governments (Vatter 2009: 125).

In sum, the party composition of governments entails regulative, normative, and cognitive elements, providing means to obstruct institutionalisation in central government organisations by determining actor constellations and interactions (see Scharpf 2000: 776): Whereas single-party governments obtain less means to block institutionalisation, coalition governments offer various means to oppose to such processes. Therefore:

H₁: Single-party governments impose fewer constraints on institutional politics in executives than coalition governments.

4.3.2 The principles structuring cabinet and institutional politics in executives

The principles structuring cabinet decision-making assign authority and competencies among cabinet members (Andeweg 1993; Laver/Shepsle 1994: 297-8; Strøm 1994: 313; Blondel et al. 2007: 64). They stipulate how decisions are made, who should participate at which stage of the process, or who may raise objections. In parliamentary systems, the two key decision principles are the *collegiality* of cabinet, simplified as 'one member, one vote' which implies that all members are equal, and the *collectivism* of cabinet, which refers to the collective deliberation among cabinet members (Andeweg 2000: 380; see also Page 1992: 109-15). Empirically, adaptations and varieties to these two principles exist, resulting in various models of cabinet decision-making (Andeweg 1993, 1997).

Many authors distinguish two ideal-types of cabinets as collective or consensual versus hierarchical or majoritarian (see e.g. Blondel/Thiebault 1988; Weller/Bakvis 1997: 4-5; Andeweg 2003: 47-8; Pollitt/Bouckaert 2004: 46). In consensual cabinets, decision-making is structured by principles assigning equal authority to all cabinet members and thus facilitating open debate and dissent as well as means to solve it – in collective decisions. In contrast, decision-making in hierarchical cabinets is structured by principles assigning different power across cabinet (often providing the Prime Minister with highest authority) in order to avoid open debates and disagreement – leading to majoritarian decisions (Blondel et al. 2007: 77-8).

First, in most advanced democracies *regulative* elements exist for defining the principles structuring cabinet, including the constitution or quasi-constitutional provisions, joint rules of procedure, codes of conduct or the like (Blondel et al. 2007: 64). These principles may regulate the size of cabinet, the formal competencies of its members, often distinguished in the literature as collective versus individual ministerial responsibility, the

procedure of cabinet decision-making etc. (Blondel/Müller-Rommel 1993; Peters et al. 2000a). In many countries, additional offices are created as secretariats servicing cabinet to support the application of these obligatory rules (James/Ben-Gera 2004; Dahlström et al. 2011b).

Second, the principles structuring cabinet are entrenched in *normative* elements, prescribing e.g. whether decisions should be taken after open debates in a collective manner or rather hierarchically via adversarial processes. Other norms include e.g. the fact that in most cabinets it is perceived as appropriate for ministers to refrain from interferences in matters outside their own portfolio (Mayntz/Scharpf 1975, Mayntz 1980; Blondel 1985). Other norms are more flexible, e.g. those prescribing the appropriate length of cabinet meetings. In many countries, the average duration of cabinet meetings decreased over time – revealing fewer open debate and a centralisation of authority (Webb/Poguntke 2005: 340).

Lastly, the principles structuring cabinet are also prescribed in distinct *cognitive* paradigms suggesting why cabinet decisions are taken in a particular manner. These 'governing conventions' (Pollitt/Bouckaert 2004: 46) stipulate different worldviews for consensual and adversarial cabinets: Whereas the former rests upon the cognitive paradigm of equal participation of all cabinet members, often also supported by strong collective cabinet responsibility, the latter is less concerned about equality in cabinet and, in addition, stresses the relevance of individual ministerial responsibility (Peters et al. 2000b).

In sum, the principles structuring cabinet comprise different regulative, normative, and cognitive components, offering means to block institutionalisation at the level of central government organisations: Cabinets characterised by centralised decision-making that are dominated by one pivotal actor provide less means to obstruct such institutionalisation than cabinets with various actors possessing similar authority. Hence:

H₂: The more centralised cabinet decision-making, the fewer constraints are imposed on institutional politics in executives.

4.3.3 The administrative tradition and institutional politics in executives

In general, the literature uses the term administrative tradition (Painter/Peters 2010; Yesilkagit 2010, Meyer-Sahling/Yesilkagit 2011) often interchangeably with 'state traditions' (e.g. Dyson 1980; Peters 1997; Christensen/Lægreid 2001), 'legal entrenchment' (Knill 2001: 105-6), 'legal origins' (e.g. Schnapp 2004), or 'administrative styles' (Howlett 2002) – also depending on which aspect it emphasises. As a result, though, some confusion exists about what administrative traditions comprise and how they work (Yesilkagit 2010, Meyer-Sahling/Yesilkagit 2011).³⁰ Most authors seem to agree that administrative traditions entail 'an historically based' set of 'structures and relationships with other institutions that defines the nature of appropriate public administration *within society*' (emphasis JF, Peters 2008: 118). In turn, they refer to legal scholars and distinguish a Common Law, a Roman-French, a Roman-Germanic, and a Roman-Scandinavian tradition (Reynolds/Flores 1989; La Porta et al. 1999, 2008), often abbreviated as Anglo-American,

³⁰ Some authors presume also the politicisation of civil service systems as one element of administrative traditions (Peters 2008; Painter/Peters 2010).

Napoleonic, Germanic, and Scandinavian tradition respectively (e.g. Schnapp 2004; Pollitt/Bouckaert 2004). In addition, the scholarly debate implies that these four ideal-types of legal entrenchment are rather stationary and neglects potential dynamics over time (for exceptions see Peters 2008: 119-20; Barzelay/Gallego 2010; Meyer-Sahling/Yesilkagit 2011).

This study follows recent contributions to the debate (Yesilkagit 2010; Meyer-Sahling/Yesilkagit 2011) and argues that administrative traditions comprise distinct regulative, normative, and cognitive pillars. First, in *regulative* terms, the administrative tradition encompasses the 'structural encoding' or 'administrative heritage' inherited from historical legacies that shape 'the institutional structure of (...) formal organizations, which distributes (...) material resources' (Yesilkagit 2010: 155). Thus, the administrative tradition entails various formal rules that have been identified already by Max Weber as essential facilitators for the emergence of a rational-legal bureaucracy (Page 1992: 19-24; see also Ziller 2008: 170-1).

Second, the normative pillar of the administrative tradition includes distinct ideas and beliefs with regard to the structures and processes of central government, the ministerial bureaucracy as well as single governmental actors, transported as distinct 'professional standards' (Yesilkagit 2010: 153; Dahlström et al. 2011a). Especially the very basic values and norms entrenched in administrative traditions can be regarded as highly relevant, also strengthening the emergence of a distinct bureaucratic ethos.

Lastly, the *cognitive* pillar of the administrative tradition is often discussed in the literature as administrative culture *in a wider sense*, incorporating taken-for-granted views *on* public administrations, and administrative culture *in a narrow sense* as cognitive understandings shared *within* public administrations, either across central government or within single bureaucratic organisations (Jann 2000, 2002b; see also already Heclo/Wildavsky 1974: 1). Many existing studies on administrative traditions refer to the administrative culture in a wider sense by highlighting the position of the public administration within society.

These regulative, normative, and cognitive features of administrative traditions can be differentiated across two ideal-types, i.e. a '*Rechtsstaat*' and a 'public interest' bureaucracy (Page 1992, 2003a; Pierre 1995: 8; Pollitt/Bouckaert 2004: 52-3; see also Lüder 2001: 4-5). The *Rechtsstaat* model assigns to the state a central role within society with a ministerial bureaucracy responsible for preparing, formulating, and enforcing laws. Accordingly, *Rechtsstaat* bureaucracies are characterised by a variety of *regulative* requirements on governmental structures and procedures (Knill 1999: 121; Christoph 1993: 524; Goetz 2003a: 74; Bezes/Lodge 2007: 124). Moreover, *Rechtsstaat* bureaucracies entail *normative* elements prescribing e.g. the respect for the authority of the law, rule-following, correctness, and legal control (Pollitt/Bouckaert 2004: 53). Most scholars, however, equate the term *Rechtsstaat* with its *cognitive* entrenchment in administrative culture stipulating a strong 'legal programming' (Knill 1999: 124) of civil servants. Accordingly, a *Rechtsstaat* bureaucracy is characterised by a strong legal orientation of bureaucratic action and a general preference to maintain the institutional status quo (Peters 1997; Pollitt/Bouckaert 2004: 52).

In contrast, the public interest model accords the state a less dominant role within society and although law is an essential component, it is less central in shaping ministerial bureaucracies (Dreier 1991, 1992; Cassese 2000: 66-70). Accordingly, *regulative* requirements on governmental structures and procedures are less demanding. Besides, public interest bureaucracies are underpinned by a set of *normative* elements emphasising that the bureaucracy is 'seeking to obtain the public's consent (...) for measures devised in the public (general, national) interest' (Pollitt/Bouckaert 2004: 53). In turn, fairness and independence of ministerial bureaucracies towards societal interests (instead of getting drawn on one side) are highly important values of bureaucratic action (ibid.). Similar to the *Rechtsstaat* bureaucracy, also the public interest bureaucracy is most often used to describe its underlying *cognitive* paradigm prescribing more flexible bureaucratic structures and processes allowing frequent adaptation and change in order to express the distinct relationship between bureaucracy and society (Page 1992; Pierre 1995).

In sum, the administrative tradition is expressed in different regulative, normative, and cognitive components, imposing consequences on institutionalisation in central government organisations: *Rechtsstaat* bureaucracies provide arguably more means for blocking changes of the institutional status quo than public interest bureaucracies providing less means to obstruct such institutionalisation processes. Thus:

H₃: A Rechtsstaat bureaucracy imposes more constraints on institutional politics in executives than a public interest bureaucracy.

4.3.4 The formal politicisation of the civil service and institutional politics in executives

The formal politicisation of civil service systems is widely perceived as 'primary locus of politicisation' (Eichbaum/Shaw 2008: 341), and refers to the formal opportunities of political appointments in the civil service (Huber 2000: 399; Manow 2002; Derlien 2003a: 109-11; Rouban 2003b: 313-7). Page and Wright differentiate three ideal-typed models of formal politicisation, the 'neutrality', 'commanding height', and 'party patronage' model (1999: 270-1). The neutrality model refers to absolute neutrality of all civil servants, most often applied in countries with a Westminster tradition (Chapman 1988, 1991; Horton 2006). In contrast, the political patronage model of civil service systems with most positions eligible for partisan recruitment exists only rarely, they are also characterised as 'direct loyalist' or 'instrumental' systems (Hecl 1977a; Meyer-Sahling 2004; Bezes/Lodge 2007: 125). In between, the commanding heights model accepts that it is legitimate and functionally reasonable to recruit political appointees at senior positions, often resulting in a particular cadre of politically appointed civil servants (Echtler 1973; Steinkemper 1974, 1979). All three ideal-typed systems of formal politicisation entail different institutional pillars.

First, in most advanced democracies *regulative* elements such as laws or other equivalent provisions stipulate the number or positions or obstruct such partisan appointments respectively. Likewise, these rules instruct the dismissal of such appointees, most often they are bound to their political masters' will and/or tenure in office.

Second, the three types of formal politicisation of civil service systems are associated with *normative* ideals referring to the political-administrative nexus: The neutral model

rejects partisan appointments and correspondingly its underlying normative expectations strongly refuse a lack of loyalty among civil servants to their political masters. However, particularly these systems experienced most radical changes throughout the last decades, often introducing positions alongside the permanent bureaucracy that are filled with partisan appointees but lack any formal statutory power vis-à-vis the permanent bureaucracy (most often 'special advisers', see Eichbaum/Shaw 2010). In systems of the instrumental model, the large number of partisan appointments is perceived appropriate because their political loyalty vis-à-vis politicians is asserted as a strong value in government policy-making (Dahlström 2011). In the hybrid model, the political aides in the civil service are seen as an appropriate addition to act as 'transmission belt' (Luhmann 1971: 75-6; Hesse/Ellwein 1987: 357) between the line bureaucracy and politicians.

Lastly, the different models of formal politicisation of civil service systems are preserved in *cognitive* worldviews. Again, these cognitive components refer to the nexus between politicians and bureaucrats because these relationships work 'best where they share the same worldview or where their worldviews are compatible and thus can be accommodated' (Laffin 1997: 54). The neutral model assumes that politicians and the neutral permanent bureaucracy may indeed not share an identical cognitive worldview, but in an idealistic understanding the latter serves the former with neutral expertise that, in turn, provides politicians with a range of options and leaves them larger authority in decision-making. In contrast, in the party patronage model and to some extent also in the commanding height model, politicians and the permanent bureaucracy are perceived to have rather incongruent worldviews – thus requiring a certain number of political appointees sharing politicians' taken-for-granted perceptions of the world.

In sum, the formal politicisation of the civil service includes regulative, normative, and cognitive elements, imposing distinct consequences on institutionalisation processes in executives: Civil service systems with a high formal politicisation provide more means to block institutionalisation processes than civil service systems with low formal politicisation. Those civil service systems with medium formal politicisation provide presumably medium opportunities to obstruct such processes. Therefore:

H4: A civil service system with low formal politicisation imposes fewer constraints on institutional politics in executives than a civil service system with high formal politicisation.

To conclude, this study claims that politico-administrative systems with an institutional configuration comprising coalition government, centrifugal cabinet decision-making, a *Rechtsstaat* bureaucracy, and a higher formal politicisation of the civil service are characterised by several means to block institutionalisation processes in executives. In contrast, politico-administrative systems with a single-party government, centripetal cabinet decision-making, a public interest bureaucracy, and low formal politicisation of the civil service provide less means to obstruct institutionalisation processes in executives.

Furthermore, the power-distributional approach emphasises the causal link between these characteristics of the institutional context and types of would-be change agents. Accordingly, one may assume that institutional contexts with rather strong constraints on

institutional politics are less likely to witness ambitious change agents seeking to shape the institutional status quo than those institutional contexts with rather low constraints on institutional politics in which ambitious change agents are more likely to thrive.

5 Concluding remarks:

A power-distributional approach to study policy advice and institutional politics

This study's theoretical framework embodies the recent intersection of two scholarly perspectives on institutionalisation processes in executives. Following new institutionalist organisation theory, it argues that such processes can be regarded as causal interactions between structure and agency. In addition, it follows a wider definition of institutions from new institutionalist organisation theory emphasising their regulative, normative, and cognitive pillars. Following this definition, this study illustrated three explanatory perspectives on how structure affects agency and vice versa. However, this schema lacks conceptual attention for the recursive nature of institutionalisation processes.

Therefore, this study applies the power-distributional approach that conceptualises gradual institutionalisation processes as institutional politics and combines structure- and agency-oriented explanations: The characteristics of institutions refer to the ambiguity of institutional targets at enforcement level and the institutional context that obstructs or facilitates changes of the institutional status quo. The characteristics of agency refer to the ambitions of actors to act as would-be change agents and change the institutional status quo. As a result, this approach distinguishes four ideal-typed mechanisms of institutional politics – layering, displacement, drift, and conversion – and corresponding ideal-types of change agents.

The institutional ambiguity at enforcement level is further specified by a heuristic spectrum following the threefold understanding of institutions in new institutionalist organisation theory. Accordingly, institutions dominated by regulative pillars are often enforced more clearly than those dominated by normative pillars with a more vague enforcement, whereas the clarity of enforcement of institutions dominated by cognitive pillars varies. Yet, institutional ambiguity is a dynamic property and cannot be predicted prior empirical assessment. Therefore, this study is confined to the general assumption that would-be change agents address distinct pillars of the basic and policy-specific institutional underpinnings to govern that vary in terms of discretion at enforcement level. However, it assumes that the basic rules of the executive game are – due to their basic nature and application across policy fields – more clearly enforced than policy-specific rules of the executive game applied on a set of executive actors in a given policy area.

The institutional consequences imposed on institutionalisation processes are specified by conceptualising the institutional context as a configuration of interacting institutions consisting of regulative, normative, and cognitive pillars. More precisely, this study selects four institutional features at the level of central government organisations that differ across countries, namely the party composition of government, the principles structuring cabinet, the administrative tradition, and the formal politicisation of the civil service. These context features inform hypotheses on how the institutional configuration imposes consequences on institutional politics in executives.

In addition, this study argues that agency in institutionalisation processes comprises both agentic behaviour and organisational structure. The power-distributional approach incorporates agentic behaviour by stressing the distinct interests of actors to preserve or change the institutional status quo. Here, this study argues that such ambitions must be observed empirically, although the power-distributional approach emphasises that the characteristics of institutions are linked to the types of change agents and thus one may assume that change agents with strong ambitions to accomplish institutional change target more often the rather clearly enforced and basic institutional underpinnings to govern. Likewise, institutional contexts with fewer means to block institutionalisation processes are more likely to witness more ambitious change agents seeking institutional change.

In contrast, the structural capabilities of would-be change agents are not further conceptualised. Yet, this study assumes that agentic behaviour in institutional politics is related to structural capabilities. Accordingly, this study analyses the structural attributes of advisory arrangements empirically in order to generate hypotheses on their explanatory relevance for agency in institutional politics, i.e. for change agent's interests to maintain or alter the institutional status quo. More specifically, it analyses five organisational features, i.e. durability, internal affiliation, size, fragmentation, and expertness of advisory arrangements as would-be change agents.

To conclude, this study defines institutional politics in executives as recursive institutionalisation processes between structure and agency. The mechanisms of institutional politics are influenced by characteristics of the institutional targets and the institutional context as well as by characteristics of would-be change agents, i.e. their interests to change or preserve the institutional status quo.

'Having recognized the importance of comparison for the development of our thinking about public administration, we now come to the awful truth that the comparative study of public administration is perhaps the least well developed aspect of the study of comparative politics and government despite the long and honorable history of the field.'
(Peters 1988: 8)

Chapter C Research design

This chapter informs on this study's research design, which aims to conduct a 'causal reconstruction' by conducting comparative case studies that enable to assess the explanatory relevance of the four distinguished expectation hypotheses noted in the theoretical framework above. In addition, it informs about this study's case selection and discusses the data sources for the case studies and their implications for the analysis.

1 Analysing the causal mechanisms of institutional politics in executives

Early social scientists analysed causal inference as causal *effects*, i.e. as

'impact of a given explanatory variable on a particular outcome. More specifically, other things being equal, the causal effect is the difference between the two values of the dependent variable that arise according to whether an independent variable assumes one of two specific values' (Collier et al. 2004: 275-6).

Thus, causal effects simply state the concurrence or correlation of certain phenomena or events, i.e. *that* a particular independent variable accounts for a particular outcome. In contrast, most social scientists nowadays analyse causal inference as causal *mechanisms* in order to examine *how* a particular independent variable accounts for a particular outcome (Mayntz 2004: 241). Although causal mechanisms are defined differently (see Mahoney 2001: 579-80), most authors agree that they 'describe the relationships or the action taking place among the units of analysis or in the cases of study. Mechanisms tell us how things happen' (Faletti/Lynch 2009: 1147). Thus, causal mechanisms yield insight into how independent variables produce the outcome (Hedström/Svedberg 1996, 1998; Bunge 1997: 439; Mayntz 2004: 241). To put it differently: Causal mechanisms enable a 'more fine-grained level of analysis' (Collier et al. 2004: 277) that 'opens the "black box" of law-like or probability statements that simply state the concurrence or correlation of certain phenomena' (Faletti/Lynch 2009: 1146). Many authors follow the methodological individualist tradition and conceive causal mechanisms as the result of motivated individuals and their activities, often illustrated by Coleman's model of sociological explanation (1986, 1990; see also Esser 1993; Boudon 1998: 199). Other authors argue that mechanisms may occur at a variety of levels of analysis and in different types of contexts – thus, micro-level mechanisms are not more fundamental than macro-level ones (Mahoney 2003: 5; Stinchcombe 1991; George/Bennett 2005: 142; Faletti/Lynch 2009). This study follows the latter group of authors and argues that causal mechanisms may occur at micro- and macro-level – also avoiding the need for a further discussion of causal aggregation.

Yet a central disagreement remains in the literature as to whether causal mechanisms deserve an ontological status distinct from variables. Whereas several authors argue that causal mechanisms provide chains of intervening variables to connect independent and

dependent variables and thus must be perceived as attributes of the units of analysis (King et al. 1994: 86-7; Collier et al. 2004: 277), others stress that causal mechanisms are relational concepts residing above and outside the units in question (Mahoney 2001: 578). For the latter, causal mechanisms are ontologically different from intervening variables because they do not measure attributes of specific cases, but uncover the underlying connection (Falletti/Lynch 2009). This study follows this latter understanding of causal mechanisms and perceives causal mechanisms as distinct from the variables attached to particular cases. As such, causal mechanisms are portable constructs that apply to different contexts: Causal mechanisms describe the underlying processes unfolding between independent and dependent variables, irrespective of the distinct context of their causal relation (Mayntz 2004: 242; Elster 1998: 7; see also Falletti/Lynch 2009):¹

'Mechanisms may consist of a sequence of actions involving different social elements, as in a diffusion process. But they can also involve repeated actions of the same elements, as in an escalation process. (...) The causal structure of mechanisms can, in other words, be linear as well as nonlinear' (Mayntz 2004: 242).

In addition, authors discuss whether causal mechanisms by themselves may cause outcomes: Some authors argue that causal mechanisms are an 'entity that – when activated – generates an outcome of interest' and assume that 'if the mechanism actually operates, it will always produce the outcome of interest' (Mahoney 2001: 580). In contrast, other authors argue that if causal mechanisms are portable concepts operating in different contexts, they probably interact with the context and thus the outcome of the process cannot be determined a priori by knowing the type of mechanism at work (Falletti/Lynch 2009). Some authors emphasise time as such a distinct feature of the context that is very likely to interact with causal mechanisms (Streeck 2009: 122). This study, however, neglects potential effects of such contextual features on causal mechanisms and follows the more simplistic view by characterising causal mechanisms as law-like statements working in different contexts. Accordingly, it expects that the same causal mechanism occurs between the same type of independent and dependent variables across different contexts.

For many authors, though, the 'hallmark of causal mechanisms is their unobservability' (Gerring 2008: 166; see also Simon 1979: 71; Hedström/Swedberg 1998: 13-5; Mahoney 2001, 2004; George/Bennett 2005: 143; Johnson 2006: 247). In turn, an explanation by causal mechanisms requires 'that the analyst posit some entity, process, or structure that is treated "as if" it exists, even though at the present time scholars cannot be certain that the entity, process, or structure really does exist' (Mahoney 2001: 581). It follows that,

'[i]f the mechanism were directly observable, it would be clear that this mechanism is not actually the final mover of outcomes in the world, but rather must itself be explained. Hence, causal mechanisms that become observable because of better measurement start to lose their status as causal mechanisms and become regular variables' (Mahoney 2003: 5).

In contrast, Mayntz argues that the causal mechanisms 'are not necessarily and by definition unobservable' (2004: 243) – but acknowledges that they are *de facto* often theoretically constructed and impossible to measure. This study follows this argument and expects that causal mechanisms are not directly observable but rather interpreted as such.

¹ If a cause produces an effect without intermediate steps, no mechanism is involved, and the stated relationship is probably a tautology (Kitschelt 2003, quoted by Mayntz 2004: 242).

Moreover, many authors analysing causal mechanisms share a general scepticism about standard statistical models to explain such social processes (Gerring 2008: 171). Several authors even stress that the investigation of causal mechanisms requires the application of qualitative methods (Hedström/Swedberg 1996: 17; see also Stinchcombe 1991; Bennett/Elman 2006). This study follows this general scepticism and applies the case study method with its strong understanding of empirical phenomena in order to analyse and explain causal mechanisms (Mayntz 1985: 47).

The case study method is particularly well-suited for this study's research puzzle. It offers causal conclusions on the *relevance* of considered explanations, but not on the *occurrence* of a distinct configuration of such explanations (Ragin 1987). Instead, case studies

'can make only tentative conclusions on how much gradations of a particular variable affect the outcome in a particular case or how much they generally contribute to outcomes in a class or type of cases. Case studies are much stronger at identifying the scope conditions of theories and assessing arguments about causal necessity or sufficiency in particular cases than they are at estimating the generalized causal effects or causal weight of variables across a range of cases.' (George/Bennett 2005: 25)

Accordingly, case studies lack definitive knowledge on the explanatory strength of each independent variable and are not able to discriminate the explanatory relevance of different features. Put differently, case studies do not predict which of the explanations matters most and which least.

This study's comparative research interest requests a comparative case study design for which distinct methods are discussed in the literature, such as 'pattern matching' (Campbell 1975; Yin/Heald 1975, Yin 1994), the 'congruence method' (George 1979), 'causal-process-observations' (Collier et al. 2004: 252-8), 'colligation' (Roberts 1996), or 'process-tracing' (George/McKeown 1985; George/Bennett 1997).² This study applies process-tracing in order

'to uncover what stimuli the actors attend to; the decision process that makes use of these stimuli to arrive at decisions; the actual behavior that then occurs; the effect of various institutional arrangements on attention, processing, and behavior; and the effect of other variables of interest on attention, processing, and behavior.' (George/McKeown 1985: 35)

Hence, process-tracing examines the processes through which an explanatory variable exerts effects on an outcome – and is thus well-suited to analyse causal mechanisms. Bennett and George (1997) distinguish two types of process tracing: Whereas 'process verification' formulates hypotheses about causal mechanisms on the basis of existing theories in order to confirm them, 'process induction' excludes any specification of causal mechanisms before conducting the case study in order to generate hypotheses consistent with the discovered causal mechanisms. This study conducts the former type of process-tracing in order to verify expectation hypotheses (*Erwartungshypothesen*) that are theoretically informed by its new institutionalist framework instead of causal hypotheses (*Kausalhypothesen*) that are most often only testable by statistical methods (Lehmbruch et al. 1988: 255; Fearon 1991; see chap. B.4.4.2 above). As such, this study aims to

² Some authors assume process-tracing as a subtype of pattern matching (Mahoney 2000b: 409).

'explicate what the authors of "good" case studies always have in the back of their minds: a "framework" that organizes our prior (scientific and prescientific) knowledge about what to expect in the province of the world that is of interest (...), that emphasizes the questions that are worthwhile asking, the factors that are likely to have high explanatory potential' (Scharpf 1997: 29-30).

However, process-tracing also faces some problems, e.g. misinterpretation, bad measurement, and 'data fitting' (Munck 1998). Moreover, the method is also weakened when the information on key steps within a hypothesised causal mechanism are incomplete or inadequate or when theories are underspecified – limiting the elimination of plausible alternative causal processes that fit the empirical evidence equally well:

'Process tracing is no guarantee that a study can establish internal validity, or that it will uncover only relationships that are truly causal. Both false positives, or processes that appear to fit the evidence even though they are not causal in the case at hand, and false negatives, processes that are causal but do not appear to be so, are still possible through measurement error or under-specified or mis-specified theories. External validity, or the ability to generalize results to other cases, also remains a difficult standard' (Bennett/George 1997: n.p.).

Thus, the conduct of process-tracing requires a structured data analysis as well as a cautious interpretation of its results, particularly with regard to generalisation (Gerring 2004). In a similar vein, other authors add that process-tracing provides rather 'interim answers' and hence is 'non-proven' in epistemological terms due to its explicit exclusion of possibilities for falsification – even with the correct identification of relevant causal mechanisms (Skocpol/Somers 1980).

2 A most similar systems design: Case selection

In general, case study research is often criticised for its limits in validating findings and its 'conceptual stretching' (Sartori 1970: 1034). To diminish these risks, one alternative could be to increase the number of cases (Lijphart 1971) – which is, however, difficult to achieve for many research puzzles in the social sciences, including this study's research interest. The other alternative, though, is to achieve a 'controlled comparison' (Przeworski/Teune 1970), putting a strong emphasis on the systematic comparison of cases, i.e. '[e]xplanations may be tailored to the specific case, but they must be made of the same material and follow the same rules of tailoring' (Verba 1967: 115; Sartori 1970; Lijphart 1971, 1975; Derlien 1992). Such a controlled comparison should be *structured* by general questions and distinct criteria in order to guide data collection and analysis and *focused* by covering only selected aspects of cases (George 1979: 61-2, George/Bennett 2005: chap. 3, Bennett/Elman 2006).

The essentials of this controlled comparison method derive from Mill's (1983) distinction of a 'method of agreement' and a 'method of difference'. Many authors claim that the two general case selection designs proposed by Przeworski and Teune (1970) correspond to these two Millian methods, which also generates some semantic confusion (Blatter et al. 2007: 142).³ Accordingly, the 'method of agreement' corresponds to the 'most different systems design', selecting cases that are similar on the dependent variable and dissimilar on all independent variables except those of interest. In contrast, the 'method of

³ Several authors argue that this direct correspondence to Mill's approach has to be taken with caution (e.g. Jahn 2005: 10-1).

difference' refers to the 'most similar systems design' that employs in its purest form a comparison of minimum two cases with a different outcome of the dependent variable but similar on all independent variables except those of interest (Przeworski/Teune 1970).

The next paragraphs inform about this study's general selection of cases, which follows the most similar systems design and selects advisory arrangements that differ with respect to the explanatory factors while being most similar with respect to as many other explanatory features as possible except those of interest. First, this study compares advisory arrangements in two politico-administrative systems to enable qualitative case study research with a manageable range of empirical information and data. Second, this study neglects the explanatory relevance of the separation of powers as governmental feature and examines only advisory arrangements in parliamentary democracies. Although the definition of parliamentary systems remains contested in the literature (see e.g. Verney 1959; Sartori 1997), this study relies upon Lijphart's definition (1999: 117-8) whereas in parliamentary systems (1) the government depends on parliament's confidence and can be removed from office through a vote of no confidence, (2) the head of government is selected by Parliament and (3) cabinet is collective or collegial. However, to cover the empirical spectrum of parliamentary systems, one of the two cases is required to be a parliamentary system following Westminster principles. Lastly, this study neglects the explanatory relevance of horizontal and vertical fragmentation in central governments as administrative feature and is confined to advisory arrangements at the disposal of clients with cross-cutting responsibilities in central government – which are more likely to gain an interest in institutional politics in executives because of their 'institutional understanding' of governing and government, i.e. they perceive the institutional underpinnings to govern as means to accomplish their goals *and* to affect government policy-making in general (Blondel/Thiebault 1988; King 1994; Jann et al. 2005). This study presumes that advisory arrangements at the disposal of such clients are very likely to become agents in institutional politics in executives, pursuing institutional strategies in order to shape the basic rules of the executive game as well as policy-specific institutional underpinnings to govern in various policy fields simultaneously and over time, particularly also in those policy issues that can be regarded as cutting across departmental portfolios. In turn, clients with strong sectoral responsibilities are expected to have less interest in such institutional politics and may not require or even obstruct advisory arrangements at their disposal to get engaged in such activities.

To identify clients with such an institutional understanding of governing and government, this study follows Gulick's distinction between 'process departments' organised on the basis of a process, e.g. the finance ministry on the budgetary process, and 'vertical departments' organised 'by purpose' (1937: 15-20) whereby 'process departments may be more interested in *how* things are done than in *what* is accomplished' (emphasis original; Gulick 1937: 24). Since institutional politics address *how* executive decisions are made rather than *what* is accomplished, this study selects advisory arrangements in process departments that 'wield considerable clout within the executive' (Rockman 1984: 393; see also Laver/Hunt 1992). These process departments are servicing the cabinet, the head of government, and the Finance Minister (Campbell/Szablowski 1979; Painter 1981; Peters 1998: 29; Di Francesco 2000a; Evans/Manning 2003: ii). In turn, they are widely regarded

as most salient actors in central governments (Browne/Franklin 1973, Brown/Feste 1975, Browne/Frendreis 1980; Müller-Rommel 1993; Warwick/Druckman 2001, Druckman/Warwick 2005, Druckman/Roberts 2007, 2008; Rose 2005: 89).

In many countries, one office services both the cabinet and the head of government, whereas in others two separate offices perform these functions. However, all these offices have only very few statutory authority or responsibilities, if any (see Campbell/Szablowski 1979; James/Ben-Gera 2004; Dahlström et al. 2011b). In contrast, finance ministries play a key role in government policy-making through their responsibilities in the budgetary process and develop very often a considerable interest into all kinds of government policies requiring public expenditure (Larsson 1993; Sturm 1994: 90; Hallerberg 2000, Hallerberg et al. 2007; Blondel et al. 2007: 176). In addition, finance ministries perform distinct sectoral functions, e.g. in tax regulation, financial market regulation, or macro-economic policies (see e.g. Woods 1954; Beer 1955, 1956; Hamilton 1955; Burton 1966; Roseveare 1969; Wright 1969, 1977; Hecló/Wildavsky 1974; Weller/Cutt 1976, Weller 1977; Pollitt 1982; Thain 1984, 1985; Schick 1990; Deakin/Parry 2000; Jensen 2003b; Krause 2011).⁴ Because of these differences, it is plausible to assume that advisory arrangements at the disposal of the Finance Minister are less engaged in institutional politics than those servicing cabinet and/or the head of government because their client is also responsible for various sectoral policies.

Lastly, this study examines advisory arrangements over a longer period of time in order to avoid a 'snapshot view' fraught with biased assessments:

'[c]ontemporary social scientists typically take a 'snapshot' view of political life, but there is often a strong case to be made for shifting from snapshots to moving pictures. This means systematically situating particular moments (including the present) in a temporal sequence of events and processes stretching over extended periods' (Pierson 2004: 1-2).

Thus, a 'moving picture' broadens the basis of comparison and allows detecting *patterns* of institutional politics. The existing literature on advisory arrangements suggests that this study should cover a time period starting in the late 1960s, marking the first empirical appearance of advisory arrangements in several countries and the beginning of a wider scholarly debate, and ending during the mid-2000s when the scholarly and practitioners' interest in advisory arrangements revitalised. This general time period is differentiated into three single time periods as the simplest way to validate patterns: The start and endpoint of a longer time period is compared at least to one other point in-between to achieve robust knowledge on the general pattern over time. This study selects three different governments in office in order to delineate these three time periods, selected by the party composition in cabinet as 'simple indicator' for a valid assessment for government duration (Lijphart 1984a; see also Blondel 1968; Lupia/Strøm 1995).

According to this study's most similar systems design, the selected cases should differ on those explanatory features that are expected to cause the different outcomes while keeping alternative explanatory variables as stable as possible (Berg-Schlosser 2003: 114-6). The selection of independent variables is informed by the existing literature and this

⁴ Recently, scholars turned towards finance ministries in South American and Asian countries, examining their 'bottleneck function' in managing development aid and governing emerging markets (Alesina et al. 2004; Krause 2010).

study's theoretical key argument that *institutional* features and agency are relevant to understand institutional politics, including agentic behaviour as well as *organisational* structure. The alternative explanations provided in the literature referring to *external* or *individual* features are required to be as similar as possible across the cases under scrutiny.

To reduce the variance of *external* explanatory features, this study selects advisory arrangements in parliamentary systems with a rather similar 'external situation' (Scharpf 1982: 99). Accordingly, both countries under scrutiny have similar socio-economic conditions, including their economic and industrial development, GDP share of public expenditure, education, standards of living as well as well-developed and effective administrative systems (Knill 1999: 118). In addition, both countries are EU member states in order to decrease the variance of external dynamics such as the European integration. In accordance with the narrowing of the population noted above, Britain is selected as the first country because it represents *the* Westminster system among EU member states. As second country, this study selects Germany as an EU member state with a parliamentary system and comparable environmental conditions to Britain (see also e.g. Knill 1999).

To reduce the variance of *individual* explanatory features is more difficult because a comparative analysis across countries and time addresses inevitably various clients with corresponding different professional expertise and personal characteristics. However, this study analyses advisory arrangements during phases of 'leadership duration, defined as the head of government's tenure in office' (Lijphart 1984b: 269; Dodd 1984: 160; Woldendorp et al. 1993: 5). Although this study addresses cabinet and the Finance Minister as clients of advisory arrangements, it argues that the head of government's tenure in office is most relevant because he acts as most pivotal actor in cabinets of parliamentary democracies (Smith 1999; Poguntke/Webb 2005). Therefore, this study selects three time periods, each with two consecutive legislative terms of a head of government in power, if applicable, assuming that their different previous experiences during the first term in office are somewhat marginalised during their second term (see Table C.1).

Table C.1 The three time periods under scrutiny

elected	Federal Chancellor	Prime Minister	appointed
<i>Time period I (TP I): late 1960s/mid-1970s</i>			
21.10.1969	Willy Brandt (SPD)	Edward Heath (Conservative Party)	22.06.1970
<i>Time period II (TP II): early/mid-1980s</i>			
01.10.1982	Helmut Kohl (CDU)	Margaret Thatcher (Conservative Party)	05.05.1979
<i>Time period III (TP III): late 1990s/ early 2000s</i>			
27.10.1998	Gerhard Schröder (SPD)	Tony Blair (Labour Party)	03.05.1997

Note: German chancellors are elected by Parliament (Art. 63.1 GG; see Boenau 1989; Helms 1996a: 698-701), British PMs are appointed by the Queen (see e.g. Loewenstein 1966).

Source: Own illustration.

For the first time period starting in the late 1960s, the coalition of SPD and FDP was elected in 1969 and governed under Chancellor Willy Brandt, whereas in Britain the Conservative Party under PM Edward Heath came into power in 1970. The German Chancellor resigned in May 1974, although his coalition had won a preponed general election in 1972.⁵ The British PM served the whole legislative term until 1974 when he was followed by the previous PM Harold Wilson. The second time period under scrutiny covers the next change of party composition and the head of government in both countries, bringing Conservative governments into power in both countries: In Germany, a new governing coalition of CDU/CSU and FDP came into office under Chancellor Helmut Kohl by a vote of no-confidence in Parliament in 1982 (Boenau 1989). His first term was officially limited by himself announcing on the day of his election that a general election will be held in 1983 (Kohl 1982); his second term in office run until 1987.⁶ In Britain, PM Margaret Thatcher came into office in 1979, her second term in office terminated with the general election in 1987. The last time period under scrutiny starts with the subsequent change of party composition in cabinet and new heads of government during the late 1990s with new centre/left governments in both countries: In Germany, a new coalition of SPD and B90/Greens⁷ won the general election in 1998 and the new Chancellor Gerhard Schröder remained in office for two legislative terms until 2005. In Britain, the Labour Party came into power in 1997 under the new PM Tony Blair who remained three terms in office, the second was terminated in 2005. As a consequence, the first time period under scrutiny is in both countries comparatively shorter than the other two time periods under scrutiny.

In sum, this study compares advisory arrangements servicing the cabinet, the head of government and the Finance Minister in Germany and Britain, which thus vary with regard to their institutional context. Following the most similar systems design requiring that the selected cases differ most with respect to the explanatory factors while being most similar with respect to as many other features as possible, advisory arrangements in these two countries have been selected because Germany and Britain are characterised by 'rather similar socio-economic and political conditions, including economic and industrial development, education, population density, standards of living and social services', as well as 'liberal-democratic politics with party and interest group participation in policy-making' (Knill 1999: 117-8).

3 Data collection, operationalisation, and implications for analysis

In general, research on central government organisations is inevitably hindered by a number of obstacles, among others the secrecy under which the objects of analysis operate, resulting in difficulties to obtain reliable data, and the fragmentation and incompleteness of sources (King 1975: 173; Pollitt/Bouckaert 2000: 131). To increase the explanatory

⁵ The general election was necessary because a vote of no-confidence against the Chancellor had failed in April 1972 but the Chancellor delayed the confidence vote, officially to avoid the crossing of the electoral campaign with the Olympic Games held in Munich in 1972 (Nielauß 1988: 123).

⁶ The alternative – to select also the complete following legislative term – would cause greater problems of comparability given the extraordinary external challenge of German reunification.

⁷ The German Green Party changed its name throughout the time periods under scrutiny, henceforth the study refers also to B90/Greens.

strength of this study's case studies, their data was gathered from primary and secondary sources that have been 'triangulated' (Jick 1979, 1983), also discussed in the literature as 'methodological pluralism' or 'crystallization' (Garz/Kraimer 1991; Patzelt 1992: 193-231; Richardson 1994: 522). The following paragraphs illustrate this study's data gathering and analysis and discuss its implications for the empirical analysis.

The case studies in this study are based on an extensive document analyses. As primary sources, they examine archival records such as files and other material, including policy briefs and equivalent papers, press releases as well as personal correspondences. For the British case studies, these primary documents have been compiled from the National Archives as well as the Churchill Archives Centre (for personal minutes of the head of the British Policy Unit during the first time period under scrutiny). For the German case studies, they have been compiled from the German Federal Archives (*Bundesarchiv Koblenz*, BAK) as well as the archive of the Friedrich Ebert Foundation (*Archiv der sozialen Demokratie der Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung*, AsdD), the latter particularly for private papers of former officeholders such as the head of the Planning Division at the Chancellery during the first time period under scrutiny. Due to the '30-years-rule' regulating the access to public records in both countries, this obtained archived documents are particularly relevant for the first time span under scrutiny.⁸ In addition, the author obtained original documents and files from the private archives of four interviewees.⁹

The analysis of the organisational structure is based on assessing various documents. For the German cases, this study compiled organisational data from the 'Overview on the Organisation and Personnel of the Federal Administration' that was published irregularly by the Federal Ministry of Finance, but suspended in 2000.¹⁰ In addition, the study gathered empirical information from organisational charts (see Blum 1980a, 1980b) and 'task-allocation plans' (*Geschäftsverteilungsplan*, GVPI) that are issued by German ministries on a regular basis. These organisational charts and task allocation plans have been compiled from the German Federal Archives and private archives of interviewed experts. Besides, departmental materials have been examined, e.g. internal circulars, obtained from interviewed experts and the German Ministry of Finance's departmental archive. For the British cases, these include the *British Imperial Calendar* and the *Civil Service List*, which became in 1974 the *Civil Service Year Book* providing information about departmental organisation on an annual basis. Additional organisational data was obtained from annual departmental reports.¹¹

In addition, the organisational structure analysis is based on parliamentary documents. In Germany, the number of parliamentary written and oral questions relevant for this study is comparatively small and some information is presented rather vaguely. In Britain, the number and frequency of written answers and statements in Parliament about advisory arrangements is comparatively higher, it increased considerably over time and amounts to

⁸ To simplify matters, these archived files are presented in footnotes and not tacitly translated.

⁹ These are quoted with the interview code (see FN 15 below) and the prefix PA- for 'personal archive'.

¹⁰ See the volumes in the bibliography as BMF 1980, 1982, 1985, 1989b, 1991, 1993, 1995, 1998, 2000.

¹¹ It is telling that the Cabinet Office praises the publication of its own organisational charts in 2010 as 'part of its on-going drive to make Government more accountable and more transparent than ever before' (<http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/resource-library/structure-charts-cabinet-office>, accessed 21/01/2011).

approx. 250 between 1970 and 2005.¹² Since 2000, the British PM issues an annual statement to Parliament setting out the names and pay bands of special advisers, their appointing Minister and the overall salary cost (§ 2.11 MCC [2005]). Yet the accurateness of this data is limited, e.g. the lists of British special advisers do not always distinguish between paid and unpaid advisers as well as between full- and part-time advisers.

In sum, not all information provided in these documents has the same level of detailedness and liability. Therefore, this information is triangulated with additional information from other sources in order to analyse the organisational structure of advisory arrangements (see below). More specifically, this study's organisational structure analysis addresses five structural attributes of advisory arrangements: (1) durability, (2) internal affiliation, (3) size, (4) fragmentation, and (5) expertness. The operationalisation of these five attributes leads to various indicators, measured primarily with the aforementioned documents (see Table C.2).

Table C.2 The structural capabilities of agents in institutional politics

feature	operationalisation
(1) durability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ex ante: temporal mandate • ex tempore: lifespan since inception/considerable reorganisation
(2) internal affiliation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • staff or line affiliation • [physical location]
(3) size	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • total members (headcount)
(4) fragmentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • horizontal: number of demarcated branches • vertical: number of formal authority levels
(5) expertness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • professional background (head and members) • tenure in office (head and members) • turnover (head and members)

Legend

→ causal relationship (according to contingency theory)

Source: Own illustration.

The analysis of the organisational structure of advisory arrangements faces similar problems of measurability and comparability as other scholars in studies on the structural anatomy of central governments that have to be further addressed (e.g. Hood/Dunsire 1981; Kuhlmann 2010: 145; Roness/Rolland 2011; see below).

(1) The measurement of the durability of advisory arrangements suffers from a clear definition of organisational events such as 'creation' and 'termination' in central government organisations, which tend to be 'immortal' (Kaufman 1976) in the sense that rarely new entities are created or existing ones completely abolished. Despite the scholarly debate, no superior measurement has emerged yet. Similarly, this study takes the role of advisory arrangements as point of departure for an operationalisation. It measures the

¹² This number includes oral and written answers as well as written statements by various officeholders (see Table App. 2 in the appendix for all quoted Hansard debates). They are quoted in footnotes, whereas printed papers of parliaments are provided in the text with their number and creation year.

durability of advisory arrangements *ex ante*, i.e. the temporal limitation of their mandate set by their clients, and *ex tempore*, i.e. the time they survive since their inception, which ends with organisational events such as abolition, split or merger – but not with name changes or functional reorientations. Moreover, the abolition or 'death' of an advisory arrangement occurs if its organisational structure ceases to exist, including also rearrangements to its affiliation, size, fragmentation or expertness. A key source informing on such events are the organisational charts but also official statements.

(2) The affiliation of advisory arrangements is assessed by distinguishing a staff affiliation at the organisational top-level and a line affiliation. This information can be drawn from organisational charts, although, as noted above, especially the British documents are very likely to need further confirmation by secondary material and expert interviews given the infrequency and lower reliability of the documents. If applicable, also information on the physical proximity of the advisory arrangement to its client in terms of location is gathered.

(3) For the size of advisory arrangements, this study selects one of the most common indicators, the number of staff, measured as headcount, neglecting whether they are paid by public funds or are unpaid. The study assumes that this indicator is informative and reliable but also reasonable given the cross-country case study design which limits the comparability of alternative measures such as the budget of advisory arrangements.

(4) The study assesses the horizontal and vertical fragmentation of advisory arrangements differently. For horizontal fragmentation, this study measures the head's span of control, assessed as the total number of formal positions at the secondary authority level of an advisory arrangement. Yet, it adds qualitative information on the authority of those members because advisory arrangements that are e.g. organised with a project-oriented structure may have a number of deputies subordinated to the head (resulting in an apparent head's span of control), but they do not have formal authority over a *demarcated* and *permanent* branch, which is at the heart of the concept of horizontal fragmentation. Therefore, this study is confined to measure the formal horizontal fragmentation as formal head's span of control, counting those positions at the secondary authority level that demarcate functional branches. The vertical fragmentation of advisory arrangements is measured as the number of formal authority levels, including the leadership level. Again, the information on the fragmentation of German advisory arrangements displayed in the aforementioned documents, i.e. the task allocation plans and organisational charts, can be regarded as a reliable source. The data on the fragmentation of British advisory arrangements from these documents is expected to be less reliable and thus has to be triangulated with other information.

(5) Lastly, this study examines the expertness of advisory arrangements with three indicators. It is beyond of this study's scope to contribute to the currently rather vivid social science debate on the role of 'expertise' in government policy-making, including conceptualisations of different forms of expertise. Instead, this study is confined to the arguments by early organisation scholars that the expertness of advisory arrangements is strongly influenced and thus measurable with the professional background of their heads and members, thus neglecting a systematic study of their educational and socio-demographic backgrounds due to data restrictions. Due to lacking full biographical records

of all members in such advisory arrangements, this study focusses on the occupational background of heads and deputy heads. In addition, it assesses the tenure of heads and members as well as the turnover of staff, reasoning that both contributes considerably to organisational memories and thus to the procedural or rather operational as well as the substantial expertise of advisory arrangements. The professional backgrounds are assessed qualitatively, examining previous positions from sources such as *Who is Who*, biographical datasets, and a press analysis. In contrast, the tenure and the turnover are assessed quantitatively, i.e. the staff turnover is measured as the entry and exit of all members in relation to the total size of an advisory arrangement whereas the tenure takes also their functional responsibilities into account, i.e. considering each formal position within an advisory arrangement as a single position, resulting in a distinct tenure disregard whether members move horizontally between formal branches or vertically in the events of promotions. The tenure is displayed for distinct categories of staff, which differ across countries due to the available information. The German task allocation plans are a reliable source for obtaining information about all members but are not issued in regular intervals. In turn, the analysis is then confined to the tenure and turnover of those members ranked as section heads and above, which are not only displayed in the task allocation plans but also included in the more regularly issued organisational charts. In contrast, the CSYB provides not always complete information down to the lowest hierarchical level. As a consequence, additional material is consulted or if the measurement is too unreliable, this indicator has been excluded from the descriptive quantitative analysis.

As secondary sources for its case studies, this study refers to the existing academic literature, which is less comprehensive for Germany than for Britain (see chap. A.1 above). Besides, it examined memoirs and authorised biographies, albeit such accounts provide mostly 'anecdotic evidence' (see Bosbach/Brechtken 2005; Richards/Mathers 2010). In Germany, heads or members of advisory arrangements published rather rarely personal accounts (e.g. Lepper 1972a, 1972b, 1974, 1976a, 1976b; Hegelau 1977; Möller 1978; Thies 1988; Ackermann 1994). Similarly, less memoirs or authorised biographies are available for German chancellors, cabinet ministers, albeit in contrast to Britain also few senior officials published their autobiographies (e.g. Brandt 1976; Schmidt 1986; Bahr 1996; Filc 1999; Lafontaine 1999; Harpprecht 2000; Kohl 2005, 2007; Schröder 2006; Wilke 2010). In Britain, various heads or members of advisory arrangements published personal accounts (e.g. Williams 1972, 1983; Mitchell 1978; Hurd 1979; Kemp 1986, 2007; Donoughue 1987; Willetts 1987; Blackstone/Plowden 1988; Hoskyns 2000; Barber 2007; Campbell 2007; Powell 2010; Price 2010). Likewise, memoirs and biographies have been published or authorised by their clients (Thatcher 1993, 1995; Heath 1998; Seldon 2004, 2009; Blair 2010; Mandelson 2010).¹³ Besides, also personal accounts given elsewhere are collected and analysed, such as minutes of evidence for parliamentary hearings and enquiries. However, these written personal accounts are also fraught with ramifications because they are presumably biased and instruct the researcher to confront these with contrasting empirical information from other sources.

¹³ The ERSC Whitehall Programme gathered 185 memoirs published between 1947 and 1997 (Rhodes 2000; Bellamy 2011). Recently, a public debate arose about the rules for ministers and special advisers regarding the publication of their memoirs compared to civil servants (HC 689-i [2006], HC 664 [2008]).

To enable such a 'confrontation' and gather information for triangulation, this study conducted 75 semi-structured expert interviews, based on a questionnaire (see Table C.3). Although the number of interviews does not allow for a systematic analysis, they provide information that goes well beyond reporting anecdotes and random observations (Hammer/Wildavsky 1993: 57; Weiss 1995: 9; Abels/Behrens 1998; Kumar 2002b). The general aim of expert selection was to gain a sample of experts varying across different criteria, including the advisory arrangement and time period under scrutiny, their official position, and their tenure in office. The selection of experts was informed by the document analysis indicating relevant persons in office during the three distinguished time spans. In addition, experts were selected by a 'process of referral' whereby personal contacts of interviewees are used to gain access to other experts (Goldstein 2002: 671; Larsen et al. 2006: 632).¹⁴

Table C.3 List of interviewed experts

		Germany	United Kingdom
advisory	special adviser	---	7*
arrangement	head of advisory arrangement	8 [†]	6
	team leader or subdivision/section head	12	11
	team member or section official	9	3
parent	senior civil servant [‡]	1	6
organisation	civil servant	5	1
external	parliamentary staff	0	1
	academic/think tank expert	1	4
total		36	39

Legend

* including two experts commissioning independent reviews.

[†] including one deputy division head.

[‡] including Cabinet Secretaries, permanent secretaries, PPS to the PM, ChefBK.

Note: The position in the table refers to the interviewees' first occupation.

Source: Own illustration.

As a result, 36 expert interviews have been conducted in Germany, 39 in Britain. The distribution of expert interviews across the advisory arrangements or rather their parent organisations differed within each country, although one has to keep in mind that various interviewed experts changed positions throughout their careers. In total, 21 of German interviewees had a professional occupation in the Chancellery and 15 in the Ministry of Finance, whereas eight British interviewees had a professional occupation in the Prime Minister's Office, 18 in the Cabinet Office, and ten in the Treasury. However, the ratio of interviewed experts with a first professional occupation in one of the offices servicing the head of government and cabinet, i.e. the German Chancellery as well as the British Prime Minister's Office or the Cabinet Office, compared to the German Ministry of Finance and

¹⁴ Although this technique has also disadvantages, especially when experts recommend experts who generally agree with their own experience and opinion.

the Treasury is in both countries nearly the same. In addition one interview has been conducted with an expert from a German think tank and five interviews have been conducted with experts from academia and the parliamentary staff in Britain.

All expert interviews were based upon a semi-structured questionnaire and conducted between September 2006 and December 2008. Except for two interviews all interviews have been recorded and were transcribed; they lasted between 30 minutes and three hours. To provide anonymity, all references to these expert interviews in this study are coded with letters indicating the expert's country background ('I' for interview, followed by 'D' for Germany or 'UK' for United Kingdom).¹⁵ Some respondents worked in different positions throughout their career and thus the interviews were split into different parts attributed to their distinct professional occupations.

In general, expert interviews face several biases; one of the major problems is how to deal with 'knowledgeable respondents', i.e. the lacking neutrality of the provided information (Moyser/Wagstaffe 1987). Moreover, most experts are biased by a loss or change of personal memory as well as by individual ex-post rationalisations (Aberbach/Rockman 2002; Berry 2002; Leech 2002). To minimise these possible biases, the expert's statements covering the same time period under scrutiny and/or the same empirical incident were compared, and interview statements were triangulated with other primary and secondary material.

The triangulation of this collected data from primary and secondary sources to find generalisable answers to this study's research questions has to be taken by caution because the data for the three time periods under scrutiny differs. Whereas the first time period offers archived files and public records, accompanied by a strong scholarly debate, the case studies analysing the second time period under scrutiny suffer from comparatively limited empirical material, i.e. a smaller number of interviews in both countries and especially in Germany a wider neglect of the phenomenon in the scholarly debate. Accordingly, empirical conclusions drawn for this time period, especially for the role of advisory arrangements at the centre of German government, have to be taken by caution. The final time period of analysis provides utmost evidence from interviewed experts as well as a strong academic debate in Britain, but lacks any other material such as original files for triangulation.

To conclude, this study aims to examine the causal mechanisms which explain the role of advisory arrangements as would-be change agents in institutional politics. This study's empirical analyses triangulate information from various sources to minimise their shortcomings in terms of liability and bias. In particular, this study conducts six empirical case studies on advisory arrangements servicing the cabinet as a whole, the head of government, and the Finance Minister in Germany and Britain. They are scrutinised over a longer period of time, focussing on three distinct time periods in order to assess general patterns, i.e. covering the late 1960s and early 1970s (time period I), the early and mid-1980s (time period II), and the late 1990s and early 2000s (time period III). Due to this study's focus on organised policy advice in executives, the case studies on the first two time periods address advisory arrangements servicing the cabinet as a whole and/or the

¹⁵ See Table App. 1 in the appendix for the list of interview codes with position and parent organisation.

head of government in Germany and Britain, whereas the two case studies about the last time period address also those arrangements in the German Ministry of Finance and the British Treasury.

'[C]entral agencies house those units of government most consistently in the line of fire when political executives struggle (...). [They] perform the functions essential to co-ordination and control of bureaucracy throughout government.'
(Campbell 1983: 3)

Chapter D The habitat of advisory arrangements in Germany and Britain

Following this study's theoretical framework, the next subchapter presents the institutional configuration of the German and British politico-administrative system, including (1) the party composition of government, (2) the principles structuring cabinet, (3) the administrative tradition, and (4) the formal politicisation of the civil service. The second subchapter outlines key characteristics of the governmental offices servicing the clients of the advisory arrangements of interest in this study, i.e. the cabinet, head of government, and Finance Minister in Germany and Britain. As hosts of the advisory arrangements under scrutiny, a more nuanced view of their organisational structure may inform the empirical study of organisational attributes of advisory arrangements, also to assess whether their structural characteristics can be regarded as rather ordinary or rather exceptional compared to other organisational entities within their parent organisation. The final subchapter presents a general overview of all types of advisory arrangements servicing the clients of interest and informs about the distinct selection of advisory arrangements for this study's empirical analyses.

1 The German and British institutional configuration

The institutional configurations in Germany and Britain in this study include four institutional features encompassing different regulative, normative, and cognitive features. This subchapter provides a general overview of these four context features in each of the two countries in order to illustrate their empirical variance and to specify the expectation hypotheses for this study's empirical analysis.

1.1 The party composition of governments:

Coalition governments in Germany versus single-party governments in Britain

The personalised proportional representation in Germany results traditionally in 'minimal winning coalitions', controlling the majority in Parliament with a minimum number of seats – and most often formed by one catch-all party and one smaller party (Gamson 1961; Riker 1962).¹ Only twice, during the late 1960s and the late 2000s, Germany experienced a so-called 'Grand Coalition' formed by the two catch-all parties. During the time periods under scrutiny, however, the German government was formed by traditional coalition governments: The governing coalition of SPD and FDP stayed in office from 1969 until 1982 and was replaced by a coalition of CDU/CSU and FDP for the next 16 years, followed in 1998 by a coalition of SPD and Bündnis 90/Greens that governed until 2005.

¹ Since 1949, the only exception occurred during the early 1960s when the governing coalition of CDU/CSU and DP silently transformed into a single party CDU/CSU government due to the change of the party membership of the two DP cabinet ministers during the second half of the legislative term (Helms 1996a: EN 34).

In contrast, the British electoral system of 'first-past-the-post' produces regularly a voting majority for a single party in Parliament forming the government. The rare occasions of coalition governments are characterised meaningfully as 'hung parliament' – which reflects their traditionally short-time character (Burkett/Byrne 1979: 357; Paun/Hazell 2010).² Whereas until the 1970s the governing party changed frequently, the following three decades were dominated by two governments in power – the Conservative Party³ which was in office for 18 years between 1979 and 1997 and the Labour Party which took over power for the subsequent 13 years until 2010 (see Table D.1).

Table D.1 Party composition of German and British governments under scrutiny

	tenure	Germany	tenure	United Kingdom
<i>Time period I</i>	1969-1974	SPD and FDP	1970-1974	Conservative Party
<i>Time period II</i>	1982-1987	CDU/CSU and FDP	1979-1987	Conservative Party
<i>Time period III</i>	1998-2005	SPD and B90/Greens	1997-2005	Labour Party

Source: Own illustration.

Accordingly, the party composition of German and British governments during the three time periods under scrutiny differs: Germany experienced coalition governments comprising a major and a minor party whereas Britain has been governed by single-party governments. These different government compositions impose distinct consequences on advisory arrangements in institutional politics. To refine the first expectation hypothesis, the German coalition governments impose more constraints on institutional politics in the central government organisation than the British single-party governments.

1.2 The structuring principles for cabinet:

Centrifugal cabinets in Germany versus centripetal cabinets in Britain

The German Basic Law (*Grundgesetz*, GG) serves as 'legal backbone' for the principles structuring cabinet, accompanied by other codified imperatives, most notably the 'Rules of Procedure of the Federal Government' (*Geschäftsordnung der Bundesregierung*, GOBReg) that are issued by the government and approved by the Federal President (Art. 65 GG).⁴ The German cabinet comprises only Federal Ministers but is not formally limited to a certain number of positions. Accordingly, the terms cabinet and government are used interchangeably, also in legal terms they are interpreted to define the same entity.⁵ A single article of the Basic Law outlines the key principles structuring cabinet or rather the 'constitutional framework of executive action' (Mayntz 1980: 142):

² Between 1945 and 2010, this situation occurred twice: During PM Wilson's second premiership between March and October 1974, and under PM James Callaghan between November 1976 and March 1979.

³ The official title is 'Conservative and Unionist Party', but it will be labelled with its customary title throughout this study.

⁴ The GOBReg have been promulgated in 1951 on the basis of rules dating back to the 1920s (Karehnke 1974c: 105). The GOBReg have been changed seven times since 1951, mostly in the 1960s and 1970s.

⁵ As a consequence, several formal provisions governing cabinet refer to the Federal government.

'The Chancellor determines and is responsible for the general policy guidelines. Within the limits set by these guidelines, each Federal Minister conducts the affairs of his ministry independently and on his own responsibility. The Government decides any dissent between Federal ministers (...)' (Art. 65 GG).

Although this triangle of the principle of leadership by the Chancellor (*Kanzlerprinzip*), by cabinet (*Kabinettsprinzip*), and by departmental ministers (*Ressortprinzip*) is perceived to be in permanent unbalance, in practice the third is the most recognised and protected (Johnson 1983: 110; Mayntz 1987: 4).⁶

The first constitutional principle of leadership by the Chancellor is expressed in several 'chancellorial prerogatives' (Paterson 1981: 14) that contribute to the German 'Chancellor democracy' (Haungs 1986; Niclauß 1988, 2004; see also Murswieck 1990).⁷ Most authors argue that their emergence was considerably influenced by the first Chancellor Adenauer and his application of the German constitution (Gruber 1964; Hennis 1964). First, the German Chancellor recommends the appointments and dismissals of ministers to the Federal President (Art. 64 GG; Böckenförde 1964; Mayntz 1980: 142). Nevertheless, several constraints exist: On the one hand, it became convention that this authority is exercised on candidates from the Chancellor's party and not the coalescing party (Padgett 1994: 6; Poguntke 2005: 66). On the other hand, the cabinet is supposed to be 'balanced', thus satisfying the different factions of the parties, as well as in terms of age, gender, and regional background (Schreckenberger 1994; Sturm 1994: 82; Helms 1996b: 111-2; Saalfeld 2003: 365-6). Second, the German Chancellor organises the federal ministries by 'organisational decrees' (*Organisationserlass des Bundeskanzlers*, Art. 65.1 GG; Lehnguth/Vogelgesang 1988). Yet, these responsibilities are strongly constrained by the departmental principle and the inner workings of coalition governments as well as the authority of ministers to organise their own ministry (Derlien 1996b; see below). Lastly, the Chancellor issues general policy guidelines, often formulated in government declarations before Parliament or announced in cabinet (Junker 1963; Pfister 1974; von Beyme 1979; König 1986a: 44, 1991a: 209, 216; Schreckenberger 1992). Although they refer to general policy directions rather than single policy decisions (Knöpfle 1965: 859), it is 'sometimes ambiguous' whether an issue 'falls under a departmental minister's competencies or the chancellor's right to determine the government's overall policy' (Saalfeld 2000: 51) – resulting in chancellors' 'selective voluntarism' (Mayntz 1980: 146; Helms 1996a: 703-4). Whereas some authors argue that this authority is exercised 'in the backyard' of chancellor's competencies and serves as 'authority reserve' (Holtmann 2008), others refer to the constraints of coalition government, party competition, and the relevance of parliamentary parties in the German parliamentary system as limitations to this prerogative and the frequency of its application (Mayntz/Scharpf 1975: 38; Haungs 1989; König 1991a: 207; Padgett 1994: 5-8; König/Knoll 2002: 187-91; Schuett-Wetschky 2003, 2004a, 2004b, 2008; see also Heidenheimer 1961).

⁶ In contrast, recent authors argue that the powers of the Chancellery vis-à-vis the federal ministries increased over time, accompanied by a decline of the departmental principle (Goetz 2005: 242).

⁷ In addition to the crucial position of German chancellors within the executive, the term refers also to the demise of party government in favour of a more personalised regime, and the dependence of the Chancellor on the electorate (Mayntz 1980; Smith 1991: 57; Sturm 1994; Helms 2001b: 155).

The second constitutional principle of leadership by departmental ministers refers primarily to the individual ministerial responsibility of cabinet ministers for their ministry – which they conduct 'independently' and 'on their own responsibility' (Art. 65 GG). Unlike their British counterparts, German cabinet ministers are not individually responsible to Parliament (Ridley 1966: 448; see also Guillaume 1960; Mehde 2001; Koch 2005). Given the rare events of cabinet reshuffles, German cabinet ministers 'become wedded to their particular departments and tend to acquire a departmental perspective' (Smith 1991: 49; see also Merz 2003). In addition, the GOBReg distribute further competencies among cabinet members. They refine the provision of policy guidelines issued by the Chancellor as 'binding' for cabinet ministers (§ 1.1 GOBReg [2002]). Besides, they assign certain privileges to distinct federal ministers: The Finance Minister enjoys a 'qualified veto' that 'can only be overruled by a simple majority in cabinet supported by the chancellor' (§ 26.1 GOBReg [2002]; Eschenburg 1954: 195; Mayntz/Scharpf 1975: 47; Mayntz 1980: 157).⁸ Similarly, the Ministers of Interior and of Justice may veto cabinet decisions if existing legal or constitutional regulations are violated (§ 26.2 GOBReg [2002]). Moreover, the GOBReg rule the conduct of cabinet, e.g. the participation of other actors in cabinet meetings (§ 23.1 GOBReg [2002]), or the secrecy of cabinet meetings (§ 22.3 GOBReg [2002]).⁹

The third constitutional principle of leadership by the cabinet is, broadly interpreted, an indication of collective responsibility for governmental decisions (Guillaume 1961). It is also further codified in the GOBReg, requiring that issues of controversy are solved by cabinet, albeit the Chancellor may chair a meeting of affected ministers prior cabinet (§ 17 GOBReg [2002]). Hence, the first arbiter for conflicts between cabinet ministers is the cabinet, although the Chancellor plays a pivotal role in achieving a compromise (Kölble 1973: 3; Müller-Rommel 1994b: 154). In practice, though, conflicts between cabinet ministers are often diminished by either re-defining the subject to broaden the number of affected ministries or by solving the conflict in coalition meetings if cabinet ministers are from different parties or in party bodies in case of conflicts between cabinet ministers from the same party (König 1991a: 210-1). Cabinet decision-making follows the principle of collegiality, although formally the cabinet decides with majority – unless the Chancellor rejects the majority decision with reference to the chancellor principle (Ellwein/Hesse 1988: 319-20). However, in practice, no voting occurs in cabinet. Furthermore, by convention German cabinet ministers are restrained to criticise their cabinet colleagues' proposals if their own jurisdiction is not affected (Hecl/Wildavsky 1974: 141-3; Mayntz 1980: 156). In addition, German cabinet decisions are not prepared and (pre)decided in cabinet committees, albeit a few of these committees exist (Honnacker/Grimm 1969: 68; Morkel 1973; Mayntz/Scharpf 1975: 44; Lepper 1976a; Wengst 1984: 255; Busse 1993; Müller-Rommel 1994b: 155; Sturm 1994: 95; Rudzio 2006: 247). Informal party bodies to manage coalition government serve as functional equivalents, especially the 'coalition

⁸ If the Finance Minister vetoes a decision, it has to be addressed in the subsequent cabinet meeting again, resulting in either a rejection or approval of the veto (Gorges 1992: 40).

⁹ This principle was also confirmed by the Federal Constitutional Court (BVerfGE 9, 268 (281), 67, 100 (139)).

committee' comprising the senior figures from the coalescing parties (Rudzio 1970; Helms 2005a: 70-96; Miller/Müller 2010, Müller/Miller 2010, Miller 2011).¹⁰

In contrast to Germany, Britain lacks a written constitution in its narrow sense, i.e. a single document stipulating the legal framework and functions of the government organs and the rules by which they should operate. In contrast, a collection of rules exist, based on *Acts of Parliament* and *Orders in Council*.¹¹ Next to these, judicial decisions, political practice, and 'detailed procedures established by various organs of government for carrying out their own tasks' (Savoie 2008: 138) contribute to the set of principles structuring cabinet decision-making in Britain.

The British cabinet comprises only members from both Houses of Parliament, but includes next to departmental ministers also other sinecure offices such as the Leader of the House of Commons, the Lord Chancellor, the Paymaster General, or the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster.¹² The size of British cabinets is limited by the *Ministerial and Other Salaries Act* [1975]¹³ to a maximum of 21 cabinet ministers.¹⁴

The conventions on cabinet decision-making in Britain allocate different competencies among its members. For the PM, most scholars identify a set of 'royal prerogatives' that derive from his role as head of Her Majesty's government (Amery 1952: 64-5; Crossman 1963: 51-6, 1972: 62-8; Mackintosh 1968a: 529, chap. 20, 1968b; King 1991; Gay 2005, Durkin/Gay 2005). First, the PM advises the Crown on the appointment and dismissal of departmental ministers, but also of other positions such as the Speaker of the House, all members of the House of Lords, the Privy Councillors, and memberships in other boards and bodies, including the Church of England (King 1991: 32).¹⁵ Several constraints for the selection of departmental ministers exist by convention, e.g. to favour senior members of the parliamentary party and to balance cabinet in terms of gender, age, and regional background (Jones 1975a: 38; Allen/Ward 2009). The PM exercises this authority in frequent cabinet reshuffles that are widely perceived as either a response to lacking confidence in individual cabinet members, poor departmental performance – or just as means 'to regain an image of freshness and efficiency' (Headey 1974: 97; Alderman 1976, Alderman/Cross 1979, 1985, 1986, 1987, Alderman/Carter 1991, 1992; Wilson 2006: 162). Second, the British PM determines the organisation of central government and decides upon portfolio allocation, expressed in the regular cabinet reshuffles noted above (King 1991: 36-7; see also Gray/Jenkins 1991, 2004).¹⁶ This prerogative of organising central government may also include internal organisational shifts if they are declared as the PM's

¹⁰ The coalition agreement of the Red-Green government in 1998 envisaged no permanent coalition committee. However, it was re-established quickly (Goetz 2005: 253; Miller 2011).

¹¹ These orders serve as statutory instruments and are formally released in the name of the Queen by the Privy Council; some require an approval by a resolution of either House, or, exceptionally, both Houses ('affirmative resolution procedure', see *Statutory Instruments Act* [1946]). They may only be annulled by a resolution of one of the Houses ('negative resolution procedure').

¹² In addition, cabinet may be attended by distinct office holders, e.g. the chief whip.

¹³ Meanwhile, it has been amended, but only with regard to salaries and not the total number of ministerial positions (see *Ministerial and Other Pensions and Salaries Act* [1991]).

¹⁴ This number excludes the Lord Chancellor whose salary is paid by virtue of the *Ministerial and Other Pensions and Salaries Act* [1991].

¹⁵ See for a full list of the positions HC 165 [2003].

¹⁶ The *Ministers of the Crown Act* [1975] acknowledges the PM's right to organise the structure of the Government (see also HC 672 [2007]; HC 514 [2008]).

priority. Moreover, the PM is also involved in all appointments to the two top levels of the domestic civil service (permanent secretary and deputy secretary)¹⁷ as well as all major appointments in the diplomatic service, including important ambassadorships. Third, the PM controls the agenda of cabinet meetings. Traditionally, British cabinets do not make decisions per vote; instead the PM announces the sense of the meeting in his summing up of the discussion which is recorded in the cabinet minutes (Rose 1980: 25; Kaiser 2007: 33). Fourth, the PM presides over the creation, composition and definition of the subject matter of cabinet committees¹⁸ that play an important role as British cabinets' 'upper tier' (Chester 1950: 41-8). The British cabinet committees provide arenas to formulate binding decisions for cabinet as a former Cabinet Secretary explains (Jones 1975a: 48-9; Mackie/Hogwood 1984; Burch 1988: 41; Hennessy 2000c: 388):

'A cabinet committee can take decisions which stand with the full authority of the cabinet if they are accepted by all the members of the cabinet committee concerned, and when the minutes are circulated nobody raises objection to them' (Armstrong, quoted by Hennessy 1994a: 448).

Fifth, one of the very few legal powers of British PMs derives from their role as Minister for the Civil Service, although these responsibilities are to a great extent conducted by the Cabinet Office or the Treasury (Lee et al. 1998: 231).¹⁹ Lastly, the PM may call a general election at any time, making the strategic timing of elections to maximise governments' re-election chances 'a key in the armory of the incumbent' (Smith 2004: 11; Marshall 1984: chap. 3).²⁰ As a consequence from these various prerogatives, British PMs are perceived as comparatively powerful, yet the effects on cabinet decision-making vary – also depending upon the selection and application of these prerogatives by the distinct office holder.

Similar to the PM's prerogatives, the competencies of British cabinet ministers are characterised by the 'famed informality of the British constitution [that] is nowhere more evident' (Campbell/Wilson 1995: 9; see Headey 1974). Likewise, the 'Ministerial Code of Conduct' (MCC)²¹ that serves as a 'rulebook' (Baker 2000) for the operation of cabinet, is perceived as 'neither comprehensive nor absolute. Ministers are accountable to Parliament, not a piece of paper' (Butler, quoted by Baker 2000: vii). In turn, the MCC is renewed with each new PM entering office,²² supporting the fact that it is at the PM's discretion to amend or abolish these rules – and to decide whether the code has been broken (Hennessy 1995: 214; Gay 2006b, 2007).

Yet two key principles emerged for British cabinet as 'constitutional conventions' (Marshall 1985) that are at least partly supported by the MCC. On the one hand, cabinet

¹⁷ For domestic posts, the PM is advised by the Cabinet Secretary, who, in turn, is advised by the 'Senior Appointments Selection Committee' (King 1991: 32).

¹⁸ They had been developed by the Anderson Committee and emerged after 1945 (Hennessy 2000c: 388).

¹⁹ Except for those years during which the Civil Service Department existed.

²⁰ This prerogative was acquired 'almost by accident' (King 1991: 33) during the First World War; before 1914 the timing of general elections was decided by cabinet collectively.

²¹ The MCC was renamed in 1997. Before, it was known as 'Questions of Procedures for Ministers' (QPM). PM John Major allowed releasing the QPM publicly for the first time in British history in May 1992 (CO 1992; see Baker 2000: 68-9; Weller 2001c: 54).

²² Since the first MCC in 1997, the code was revised after each general election or change of the PM (CO 1997a, 2001b, 2005a, 2007, 2010).

ministers are individually responsible for their department's activities before Parliament (Ridley 1966: 448; Doherty 1988: 51; Flinders 2000: 74; Gay/Powell 2004a, 2004b).²³ On the other hand, cabinet members act under the convention of collective cabinet responsibility to Parliament (Jones 1975a: 33; Jordan 1994: chap. 8, 9; Brady 1999). In practice, the latter principle is also strongly related to the convention of public unanimity, i.e. cabinet ministers should not publicly disassociate themselves from the government and if they wish to do so, they should resign (Amery 1952: 60; Jennings 1965: 277; Jones 1975a: 55; Doherty 1988: 51; Marshall 1985). In turn, all decisions are recognised as collective decisions:

'The internal process through which a decision has been made, or the level of Committee by which it was taken, should not be disclosed. Decisions reached by the cabinet or Ministerial Committees are binding on all members of the Government. They are, however, normally announced and explained as the decision of the Minister concerned' (MCC [2010]: para 2.3).

Accordingly, collective responsibility applies even where a cabinet member had no part in the discussion or decision, or 'to decisions of which a Minister was not aware at the time but to which he subsequently gave his tacit approval by continuing in office' (de Smith/Brazier 1998: 207). In turn, British cabinets operate also under confidentiality in order to maintain frank ministerial discussion (MCC [2010]: para 2.1).

These basic principles structuring British cabinet decision-making are often summarised in the literature as a distinct model of 'cabinet government' with the PM as 'first among equals' (Bagehot [1867] (1964)). However, many authors observe an emerging 'prime ministerial government' replacing the traditional cabinet government model and stress that the PM's authority is increasingly dominant in cabinet, resulting in a 'quasi-presidential government' (Foley 1993, 2000, 2004) or 'court government' around the PM as most pivotal actor in cabinet (Savoie 2008; see also Benn 1979; Smith 1999; Heffernan 2003, 2005, Heffernan/Webb 2005; Rhodes 2006: 327-9). To the contrary, other authors observe the prevalence of cabinet government and argue that disregard of the PM's increasing influence, his powers are also constrained, e.g. by the governing party because each PM is conventionally party leader and a dismissal from this office may ultimately lead to his resignation (see Jones 1964, 1975a, 1975b, 1985, 1991). Moreover, these authors stress that prime ministers lack expertise and capacity to counteract all cabinet ministers and their departmental support (Jones 1975a, 1985; Madgwick 1986, 1991; Norton 1988; Hennessy 1989: 383; Wilson 2006: 161). Therefore, collective cabinet is assumed to sustain its 'undoubted constitutional superiority' (King 1991: 35; Weller 1983a; Alderman/Carter 1991; Rhodes 1995: 13, 19).

In comparison, the different principles structuring cabinet in Germany and Britain impose different consequences on institutional politics. In Germany, cabinets are multiple-actor constellations of rather independent cabinet ministers with separate and potentially conflicting preferences (see also Scharpf 2000: 775-6, FN 12). In contrast, the PM acts as most pivotal actor in British cabinets. Refining the second expectation hypotheses, the

²³ Accordingly, cabinet ministers are not distinguishable in terms of authority, although during various periods the PM appointed a 'Deputy Prime Minister' (Gay 2006a).

centrifugal German cabinets impose more constraints on institutional politics in the central government organisation than the British centralised cabinets.

1.3 The administrative tradition:

Rechtsstaat in Germany versus public interest in Britain

In general, the *Rechtsstaat* tradition of the German ministerial bureaucracy reflects the legalism as basic principle for government activities (Johnson 1978; Derlien 1991a; König 1996). A comparatively huge variety of legal requirements exists, displaying the authority of the law.²⁴ The most important guidelines regulating the German ministerial bureaucracy are next to the constitution and the GOBReg noted above the 'Joint Rules of Procedure of the Federal Ministries' (*Gemeinsame Geschäftsordnung der Bundesministerien*, GGO). Since 1958, these rules are issued by the Ministry of Interior in consultation with all other federal ministries and approved by cabinet, many of these rules reflect previous rules enacted in the 1920s (Brecht 1927; Brecht/Glaser 1940: 13-6; Lepper 1977; Goetz 2000; Zypries/Peters 2000).²⁵

Furthermore, the GGO allocate responsibilities across ministries: The federal Ministries of Interior and of Justice must be involved in examining all legal norms for compatibility with the Basic Law and in all other cases where doubts arise as to the application of the Basic Law respectively (§ 54.1, § 46 GGO [2009]). Besides, the Ministry of Justice participates in preparing the legal drafting (§ 46 GGO [2009]; see also Page 2010a: 1026).²⁶ The Ministry of Finance must give its consent in the case of provisions on taxes and other duties or if the income or expenditure of the Federation, the *Länder* or local governments are affected (§ 51; Annex 6.4 GGO [2009]). In addition, almost every other ministry must be consulted nowadays for distinct issues affecting its portfolio, ranging from gender mainstreaming to regulatory impact assessment (Annex 6.9 GGO [2009]).

Moreover, the GGO stipulates formal requirements for inter-ministerial policy-making by prescribing 'ministry drafts' (*Referentenentwürfe*) as key products (§ 45.4 GGO [2009]; König 1987; Benzner 1989: 112-22; Smeddinck/Tils 2002: 314-20; Page 2007). Accordingly, one ministry sponsors each initiative (*Federführung*) and secures that all other ministries concerned with the issue are consulted via co-signature (*Mitzeichnung*; § 15 GGO [2009]). In practice, the ministry with the broadest jurisdiction on the issue usually serves as lead ministry; in cases of conflict over the lead, the cabinet decides.²⁷ As a consequence, the involvement of political superiors in setting up initiatives is perceived as 'scarce commodity' (Müller 2001: 19; Smeddinck/Tils 2002: 316-7), often referring to issues stipulated in the coalition agreement or confined to crises or highly sensitive and publicly debated issues, responses to critics on the ministry, or issues suggested by the

²⁴ In addition, a separate judicial system for administrative law emerged (von Gneist 1879; von Oertzen/Hauschild 1998: 675-6).

²⁵ The first GGO was approved in cabinet in January 1958 (BAK, B 136/36117, 108. Kabinettssitzung, 08 January 1958).

²⁶ Since 1991, the ministry issues a 'Manual on Legal Drafting' (*Handbuch der Rechtsförmlichkeit*) as successor to the work guidelines (*Arbeitshilfen*) that existed since 1979 (Otto 2005; Ben-Gera 2007: 43).

²⁷ Moreover, the 'Manual for Drafting Legal Provisions and Administrative Regulations' (*Handbuch zur Vorbereitung von Rechts- und Verwaltungsvorschriften*), issued by the Federal Ministry of the Interior provides support for preparing legislation.

parliamentary party, cabinet or influential political personalities (Mayntz/Scharpf 1975: 91; Mayntz 1997: 192; Smeddinck/Tils 2002: 308-9). However, if a policy initiative is initiated by the top-level, it receives utmost attention by line officials (Mayntz-Trier et al. 1972: 90). In accordance to the comparatively stronger formal legal entrenchment of the German ministerial bureaucracy, the administrative culture in a narrow sense follows the Germanic tradition and is characterised by a strong legalistic orientation (Jann 2002b).

In contrast, Whitehall²⁸ is commonly perceived as a public interest bureaucracy lacking 'detailed and tightly-coupled rules guiding administrative practice and procedures' (Knill 1999: 130).²⁹ Accordingly, a memorandum of a Cabinet Secretary titled 'The Duties and Responsibilities of Civil Servants in Relation to Ministers' stressed that

'in general the executive powers of the Crown are exercised by and in the advice of Her Majesty's Ministers, who are in turn answerable to Parliament. The Civil Service as such has no constitutional personality or responsibility separate from the duly elected Government of the day' (Armstrong, quoted by Thatcher 1993: 46).

Very recently, and after the time periods under scrutiny in this study, the Whitehall bureaucracy witnessed some formalisation with the *Constitutional Reform and Governance Act* in 2010 that consolidated the various provisions³⁰ previously founded in diverse executive *Orders in Council* and placed the British civil service onto a 'statutory footing' (Pyper/Burnham 2010: 190).³¹

Also the dominant prescriptions of appropriate inter-departmental policy-making are less enshrined in formal rules and rather conventional. Since 1967, Whitehall departments issue Green Papers as consultation documents that are cleared between affected departments and contain policy proposals before a final decision is taken, often including alternative policy options and announcing consultation with stakeholders (Silkin 1973: 427). Firmer recommendations are conventionally published in subsequent White Papers that are issued by a distinct department and contain detailed policy proposals. A White Paper is often issued with a statement in Parliament by the Secretary of State sponsoring the proposal. Following the White Paper, departmental officials prepare a draft for submission to cabinet (Page 2010b, 2010c). Both Green and White Papers are command papers and as such subject of statements or debates in the House of Commons. Within central government, they require stronger bottom-up coordination between affected departments than coordinating action until the smallest common denominator has been reached (Page 2010b). Correspondingly, the Whitehall culture is characterised as

'a paternalist, statist canon, with emphasis on collective action and faith in bureaucratic rationality and professional autonomy; its leading values were equity, justice, impartiality and conspicuous uprightness, with liberty and participation relegated to representative organs' (Dunsire 1995: 28).

²⁸ This term is often used in the literature interchangeably with the British ministerial bureaucracy and refers to the location of most British departments in London.

²⁹ In addition, its administrative law was less differentiated compared to other countries (Knill 1999: 129; Cassese 2000: 66-70).

³⁰ These provisions were gathered together for the first time in the public domain in 1993 by the Treasury and Civil Service Select Committee (Hennessy 1995: 226).

³¹ The act altered the status of civil servants from 'crown servants' to 'servants of the state', which 'may be seen as investing them with greater autonomy, since they are now working for an abstract entity rather than the Crown' (Blick/Jones 2010b: 8) but is regarded as stronger linkage to the government of the day.

Yet the radical administrative reforms since the 1980s are said to have changed these underlying normative and cognitive provisions of Whitehall, introducing entrepreneurial principles and resulting in a shift in departmental decision-making towards more bargaining and negotiation (Peters 2001: 37; Hood 2002, Hood/Lodge 2006).

In comparison, the administrative traditions in Germany and Britain impose different constraints on advisory arrangements as actors in institutional politics. To refine the third expectation hypothesis: The German *Rechtsstaat* bureaucracy imposes more constraints on institutional politics in the central government organisation than the British public interest bureaucracy.

1.4 The formal politicisation of the civil service:

Political civil servants in Germany versus neutrality in Britain

The first appointments of 'political civil servants' (*politische Beamte*) to the German civil service date back to 1848 when the newly established Prussian Parliament aimed to limit the powers of a politically independent bureaucracy disconnected to the new government's political programme (Kugele 1976: 20-4; Derlien 1996a: 157; Priebe 1997: 27-30). Today, it is not a legal term in a strict sense; instead, political civil servants are a special group of civil servants who can be put on temporary retirement at any point in time and without justification because they hold high-ranking positions inside the federal bureaucracy where full agreement with the goals of the government is perceived as essential (Kugele 1976: 10-1; Mayntz 1984: 183; Derlien 1999: 17).³² Since 1953, the members of this group of political civil servants are defined by the Federal Civil Service Law, comprising approx. 150 office holders (§ 54 BBG [2009]). They comprise at the federal direct administration all Administrative State Secretaries and civil servants ranked as *Ministerialdirektor* (roughly all division heads in federal ministries), high-ranking civil servants in the diplomatic service, ambassadors, senior officials in the intelligence services as well as positions such as the director of the *Bundestag* administration (§ 54 BBG [2009]). Political civil servants are not appointed as such, but move into this special category by promotion or recruitment to the corresponding pay grade and rank (Kugele 1976; Mayntz 1984: 183-4). All of these appointments must be submitted to the federal government in advance (§ 15 GOBReg [2002]).³³ In practice, ministers are particularly involved in the recruitment and promotion procedures of political civil servants inside federal ministries, not only for Administrative State Secretaries, but also division heads (Goetz 1997: 771).

The numbers of political civil servants put on temporary retirement after general elections resulting in government changes fluctuated over the last decades – and reveal that the cadre of German political appointees is rarely replaced completely after such government turnovers (see Table D.2; Derlien 1984, 1988b, 1989, 2001b, 2003b; Maurer 1999: 44-6; Otremba 1999; Manow 2005: 251-2; Schwanke/Ebinger 2006, Ebinger/Jochheim 2009, Schwanke 2010).

³² Officials may apply for early retirement at the age of 63 (§ 52.3 BBG [2009]) – interpreted by authors also as partisan even if they were not ranked as political civil servants (Derlien 1984: 693).

³³ For senior officials on the B scale, the grade and hierarchical rank are strictly linked (Goetz 1999: 155).

Table D.2 Turnover of political appointees in Germany after general elections with government turnover, 1969-2005

	10/1969 – 06/1970	10/1982 – 06/1983	09/1998 – 03/1999	10/2005 – 06/2006
StS number of changes	15	15	17	12
number of positions	27	25	24	26
turnover rate	56%	60%	71%	46%
AL number of changes	34	37	65	26
number of positions	88	104	112	115
turnover rate	39%	36%	58%	23%
total number of changes	49	52	82	38
number of positions	115	128	136	141
turnover rate	43%	41%	60%	27%

Note: Numbers include only Administrative State Secretaries and division heads. The length of the 'transition period' varies between nine (1969/70, 1982/83, and 2005/06) and six months (1998/99).

Source: Derlien 1984: 692, Derlien/Lang 2005: 139; BT-Drs. 13/8518 [1997], BT-Drs. 16/2883 [2006], BT-Drs. 15/5195 [2005]; Schwanke/Ebinger 2006: 241.

In contrast, Britain developed since the middle of the nineteenth century into a 'constitutional bureaucracy' (Rhodes/Wanna 2007: 407) with 'an unpolitical civil service whose primary connexion was with the Crown, and which, while subordinated to party governments, is unaffected by their changes' (Parris 1969: 49; Barker/Wilson 1997).³⁴ The key document with 'totemic status for students of the British civil service' (Greenaway 2004: 1) is the Northcote-Trevelyan Report on the 'Organisation of the Permanent Civil Service' [1854].³⁵ The report stipulated several recommendations, including the principles of the merit based and neutral civil service (*Act of Establishment* [1907]; Birnbaum 1978: 109). In turn, British civil servants are perceived as altruistic public servants ensuring that politicians, associated with political authority, service the general interest and 'act in a public service manner to deliver public goods' (Richards/Smith 2006: 327; Birch 1964: 241-2; Christoph 1993: 524; Page 2007). In practice, this obligation for the elected government may not necessarily refer to individual ministers, as a former Economic Secretary to the Treasury,³⁶ explains with an anecdote:

'I ventured to suggest to him [his Principal Private Secretary, JF] that the constitutional duty of the civil servant (...) might indeed be to warn his Minister of potential pitfalls on the course he wished to follow; but also to back the Minister to the best of his ability once the Minister had laid down his decision. "Not at all," my informant replied. "That's a misreading of the constitution. Our duty is to support and execute the policies of the

³⁴ But see recent changes for the primary connection of the civil service as enacted in 2010.

³⁵ The Northcote-Trevelyan Report was laid before Parliament on 23 November 1853 and developed out of an enquiry that had been set up in the Treasury in 1848 (Duggett 1997: 3; see Greenaway 1985).

³⁶ This post is filled since 1981; the office holder is ranked beyond the Financial Secretary to the Treasury and does not attend cabinet.

Government. If our Minister's policies are in conflict with those of the Government, then it's the Government we must back.'" (emphasis original, Bruce-Gardyne 1987: 9)

However, as a consequence from these duties to service the government by all neutral means, British civil servants are not permitted to stand for public office or canvass for political parties. Although some authors stress that this neutrality is a 'constitutional lore' (Christoph 1993: 522) and more myth than reality, it remains still the operational code under which British civil servants are socialised.

Correspondingly, British ministers are obliged 'to ensure that influence over appointments is not abused for partisan purposes' (MCC [2010]: para 3.1). A transfer of officials at the same level is decided by the Cabinet Secretary (Matheson et al. 2007: 18).³⁷ In practice, though, it became a longstanding convention that if a senior official has lost the confidence of a Minister he will be moved (Matheson et al. 2007: EN 22; see Barberis 1996). Another informal exception to the rule of no intervention by ministers in recruitment and career issues is that principal private secretaries to cabinet ministers may move with their political superiors to a new ministry in a cabinet reshuffle (IUK37).

In comparison, the German civil service follows a commanding height model of partisan appointments for a cadre of senior civil servants at the two top levels in federal ministries whereas the neutral civil service in Britain is characterised by almost no formal politicisation. These degrees of formal politicisation affect institutional politics. To refine the final expectation hypothesis, the German civil service system with its higher formal politicisation imposes more constraints on institutional politics in the central government organisation than the British civil service system with its low formal politicisation.

To conclude, the German and the British institutional configuration differ (see Table D.3). According to the four selected institutional features and their distinctive regulative, normative, and cognitive characteristics, this study assumes that advisory arrangements at the centre of German government face greater constraints in institutional politics than advisory arrangements at the British centre of government.

Table D.3 The German and British institutional configuration

	Germany	United Kingdom
type of party government	• coalition government	• single-party government
structuring principles for cabinet	• triangle of constitutional principles	• cabinet government versus prime ministerial government
administrative tradition	• <i>Rechtsstaat</i> bureaucracy	• public interest bureaucracy
formal politicisation of the civil service	• political civil servants	• notion of neutrality

Source: Own illustration.

³⁷ Especially PM Thatcher was heavily criticised for influencing the recruitment of senior positions (Shepherd 1987; Doherty 1988: 56; Page/Wright 1999a: 276), albeit she benefited from replacing a large number of permanent and deputy secretaries who retired between 1979 and 1985 (more than 180, Richards 1993; Doherty 1988: 56; Clifford/Wright 1999: 47; Fry 2008: 142-3).

2 The parent organisations of German and British advisory arrangements

This study analyses the role of selected advisory arrangements servicing cabinet and/or the head of government as well as the Finance Minister. In Germany, these advisory arrangements are affiliated to two parent organisations, namely the Federal Chancellery and the Federal Ministry of Finance. In Britain, they are affiliated to three different parent organisations, i.e. the Cabinet Office, the Prime Minister's Office, and the Treasury. All five parent organisations underwent several changes throughout the time periods under scrutiny, albeit the British parent organisations experienced more radical changes than their German counterparts. The next paragraphs provide a brief illustration of their functional and organisational key characteristics in order to illustrate the organisational habitat of the advisory arrangements under scrutiny.

2.1 The German parent organisations: Two pivotal actors in central government

Historically, the German Chancellery emerged when the German Emperor William I renamed the Federal Chancellery of the North German Confederation into 'Imperial Chancellery' (*Reichskanzlei*), which served as organisational basis for all other succeeding imperial ministries and offices (Medicus 1940; Hintze 1970).³⁸ Although it was not mentioned in the Basic Law [1949], the first Chancellor Konrad Adenauer recreated a Federal Chancellery (*Bundeskanzleramt*, BKAm^t)³⁹ by referring to his prerogative to organise the federal government (Nielaß 1999: 31). In turn, the Chancellery receives its responsibilities directly from the Chancellor's constitutional position – albeit it services both the Chancellor and the cabinet (Hüttl 1967: 13; Kölble 1973: 6; Bakvis 1997: 89; Goetz 2005, 2007: 167; Bröchler 2008: 103-4; Holtmann 2008: 80-1; Busse/Hofmann 2010; Fleischer 2011a, 2011b; Knoll 2010: 202; critical: Müller-Rommel 1988, 1993: 132, 1994b: 164). In turn, the Chancellery employs only few own departmental responsibilities, e.g. it is responsible for the Federal Intelligence Service, and acquires most of its role in the central government organisation from its support of cabinet and the Chancellor (Müller-Rommel 1994a: 124; König/Knoll 2002: 197, Knoll 2010: 210).

In its internal organisation, no distinction is made between its two core responsibilities as cabinet secretariat and Chancellor's personal office (Goetz 2005: 251; Korte 2010). At the organisational leadership level, a 'Chief of Staff' (*Chef des Bundeskanzleramtes*, ChefBK) is appointed since 1964 (Bachmann 1967: 175)⁴⁰ and ranked either as Administrative State Secretary or Minister (Mähler 1976; Knoll 2004: 421-3; FAZ, 17 July 2006: 4).⁴¹ Yet, for two short time periods, a dual leadership was established with an

³⁸ Except the Imperial Marine Agency which emerged from the Imperial Admiralty, the Prussian Marine Ministry, and the Foreign Office (Huber 1988: 836).

³⁹ In fact, the first senior official 'ranked as *Ministerialdirektor* to fulfil the role of an Administrative State Secretary at the Ministry of Interior' (BAK, B106/45735), Hans Globke, was rather autonomous in drafting the first organisational charts of the Chancellery – strongly inspired by the recommendations of the Organisation Committee of *Länder* PMs (*Organisationsausschuss der Ministerpräsidenten*) that included also a governmental headquarters as hub of executive coordination (Wengst 1984: 143).

⁴⁰ The title ChefBK was created when the office holder was ranked as cabinet minister because he turned seventy and an extension of his length of service as Administrative State Secretary was prohibited by law (Schöne 1968: 213; Knoll 2004: 393, FN 17).

⁴¹ A ChefBK ranked as cabinet minister is appointed as 'Minister for Special Issues' to emphasise his lack of direct instruction competencies over other Ministers and Ministries (Korte 2006: 176).

additional Administrative State Secretary at the organisational top-level (Murswieck 2003: 128). In practice, the ChefBK corresponds to the Chancellery's dual function and serves as 'filter' to decide on the relevance of issues send to the Chancellor (Korte 2006: 177; König/Knoll 2002: 192). Moreover, the ChefBK invites to cabinet meetings following a briefing by the chancellor, sets up the cabinet meeting's agenda (§ 21.2 GOBReg [2002]), and decides whether an issue is handled in cabinet by the circulation procedure or the cabinet meeting. If cabinet submissions are controversial between ministries, they have to be send previously to the ChefBK (§§ 16.1, 16.2 GOBReg [2002]). Moreover, the ChefBK chairs a weekly meeting of Administrative State Secretaries to prepare the cabinet agenda and clear inter-departmental conflicts (*St-Lage*). Since 1969, each ministry sends one Administrative State Secretary (ID18; ID26; see also Behrendt 1967: 51; Derlien 1991b: 6; Müller-Rommel/Pieper 1991: 6; Ehmke 1994: 110; König/Knoll 2002: 192).⁴² These meetings are held without a formal protocol – in order to avoid criticism if its decisions are not followed (Echtler 1973: 175-6).

From the beginning, the ChefBK was supported by a personal assistant, later a small staff, including also sections for speechwriting, policy analysis etc. Although these staffs are primarily devoted to service the ChefBK, they may likewise service the Chancellor due to the close relationships between both office holders. In addition, the chancellor's private office is traditionally part of the organisational leadership. Since 1967, additional Parliamentary State Secretaries (*Parlamentarische Staatssekretäre*, PStS) are appointed in the Chancellery (see Laufer 1969; Nuscheler 1970; Hefty 2005).⁴³ Likewise, a number of 'Federal commissioners' (*Bundesbeauftragte*) has been appointed since the 1970s, either on a legal basis, e.g. the Commissioner for Migration Policy (§ 92 *Aufenthaltsgesetz* [2008]) or by an organisational decree of the chancellor, e.g. the ChefBK acting as Federal Commissioner for the Intelligence Services (Knoll 2004: 230; see also Püttner 2000).⁴⁴ The number of these commissioners remained small and although their policy impact derives partly from their formal affiliation to the centre of government, they are not perceived as chancellor's aides – but may offer the latter opportunities to get involved in these policy areas (Clemens 2009: 133).

At the operational level, the Chancellery is organised into several line divisions led by division heads widely perceived as equal to Administrative State Secretaries in ministries (ID10). The line divisions are organised into sections; since the 1970s partly summarised as groups addressing a broader range of issues (BT-Drs. 8/733 [1977]; König 1993: 34; Busse 1998: 140-1; König/Knoll 2002: 195). The majority of line sections are 'mirror

⁴² In ministries with more than one Administrative State Secretary the participant in these meetings changes, also depending upon the meetings' agenda and the minister's requests (ID16; ID26). Before 1969, this preparatory meeting included only four Administrative State Secretaries, i.e. the officeholder at the Foreign Office, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry for Economic Affairs, and the Ministry for Agriculture (Derlien 1991b: 6).

⁴³ These are called 'State Ministers', a title assigned by the Federal President to Administrative State Secretaries (§ 8 ParlStG [2009]) in the Chancellery and the Foreign Office, mostly installed in order to increase their status vis-à-vis foreign officeholders (Knoll/Kölble 2002: 193). Initially, the introduction of parliamentary state secretaries across the federal ministerial bureaucracy was perceived as a compensation for an increased workload on ministers (DER SPIEGEL, 51/1966; Hefty 2005). Soon, however, they became means to compensate between the coalition parties (Manow/Zorn 2004).

⁴⁴ Recently, also agency heads have been appointed as commissioners, e.g. the commissioner for the Stasi records (§ 35.1 *Stasi-Unterlagen-Gesetz* [1991]).

sections' (*Spiegelreferate*) monitoring federal ministries (Mayntz/Scharpf 1975: 117; König 1993: 38; Müller-Rommel 1993: 135, 1994a: 110; Goetz 1997: 760-1; Busse 1998, 2008: 71, Busse/Hofmann 2010; Schröter 2002: 6; Sturm/Pehle 2007). This line structure changed most radically after the government turnover in 1969 when the former three line divisions were expanded to five line divisions.⁴⁵ The size of the Chancellery maintained since the 1970s at about 500 officials (Federal Budget Plans 1970, 1985, 2005), its higher civil servants are seconded from departments, nowadays approx. 120 officials (Federal Budget Plan 2008; Knoll 2004: 360; Busse 2010: 141-2). This so-called 'rotation principle' was introduced by ChefBK Globke in 1950 and lasted for several years (Ellwein 1967: 327; Jochimsen 1971a: 39; Mayntz/Scharpf 1975: 117; Knoll 2010: 204).⁴⁶ In 1970, it was formally reintroduced as a cabinet decision (reprinted in Seemann 1975: 109-11) and gained considerable importance with the rapid increase of Chancellery staff (Carstens 1971: 181; Knoll 2004: 216-7; see also Müller-Rommel 2000; Schröter 2002: 6).⁴⁷ These secondees are generally regarded as highly talented and many are offered a promotion when they return to their parent ministry, among practitioners known as 'rotation with twist' (*Rotation mit Spirale*; ID10). Since a revision of the rotary principle in 1995, initiated by the Head of the Division for Administrative Affairs in the Chancellery, all higher civil servants in the Chancellery are associated to a 'parent ministry', even if they are initially recruited from outside central government (Knoll 2004: 360; Busse/Hofmann 2010: 145-6).⁴⁸ After general elections with government changes, over 30% of these officials are sent back to their ministries or seconded to other bodies (BT-Drs. 14/5480 [2001]: 3). The number of seconded officials varies across federal ministries, reflecting their different size and available rotation positions, but also the Chancellery's requirements for expertise, except the Foreign Office which continuously rotates personnel with the Chancellery due to provisions of the diplomatic service. During the 1980s, most officials were seconded from the Federal Ministries for Labour and for Education, whereas during the 1990s and 2000s the Federal Ministries of Finance, for Economic Affairs, and of Defence became more dominant. These dynamics can be partly explained with the increasing relevance of financial and economic policies due to European integration as well as the stronger military engagement of Germany. Besides, the increasing number of officials from the Ministry for Economic Affairs is probably related to the Chancellor's agenda in privatisation policy during the late 1980s, whereas officials from the Ministry of Finance are also seconded because they are generally perceived as having a valuable overview on other ministries (ID10).

The German Federal Ministry of Finance is responsible for budgetary and fiscal policy but lacks wide-ranging responsibilities in economic affairs. Its pivotal role is inter alia expressed by the 'qualified veto' of the Finance Minister in cabinet (§ 26.1 GOBreg [2002];

⁴⁵ Later changes were rather minor, e.g. in 1975 the so-called 'Guillaume affair' caused the creation of an extra Division for the Intelligence Services (Knoll 2004: 230) or in 2002 the Planning Division was substituted with a Division for EU Affairs (Beichelt 2007).

⁴⁶ The principle was at that time mainly focussing on ministries with responsibilities in foreign and security policy as well as Intra-German policy (*Deutschlandpolitik*) and was abandoned after 1959 when the general leadership style of Chancellor Adenauer became more collegial (Jochimsen 1971a: 39).

⁴⁷ Cabinet decisions of 25 March 1970 and of 04 May 1995.

⁴⁸ As a consequence, these parent ministries must formally approve any promotions of their secondees during their secondment to the Chancellery (ID10).

Eschenburg 1954: 195; Scheuner 1966: 919; Mayntz/Scharpf 1975: 47, Mayntz 1980: 157).⁴⁹ However, the veto is rarely practiced – also because it would in most cases damage the balance of power in a cabinet made up of coalition parties and instead the Finance Minister mostly stems his authority in cabinet from the responsibility for controlling the budget (Sturm 1994: 90). Although the Ministry of Finance must be consulted at an early stage of policy proposals requiring government expenditure (§ 51.5 GGO [2009]), the annual budget's status as a law and additional legal norms restrain its potential dominance in the budgetary process (Mayntz 1980: 157). The prerogative of the Ministry of Finance to scrutinise departmental financial proposals and seek reductions is not questioned, but far less recognised as a need to continuously involve it in the formative stage of policies with financial implications. As a result, the German Ministry of Finance is not as closely concerned with policy development as the British Treasury (Johnson 1983: 114).

In organisational terms, the German Ministry of Finance remained rather stable over the decades. The most radical changes occurred between May 1971 and December 1972 when it was merged with the Ministry for Economic Affairs into a Ministry for Economic Affairs and Finance.⁵⁰ The size of the ministry changed: During the early 1970s it contained approx. 1,700 officials, since the 1990s until today the number increased to approx. 2,000 officials (Federal Budget Plans 2010).

The departmental leadership of the Ministry of Finance comprises Administrative State Secretaries, Parliamentary State Secretaries and staffs at the disposal of the Minister or the two aforementioned officeholders. The number of Administrative State Secretaries inside the BMF increased over time, nowadays three Administrative State Secretaries are appointed. Likewise, the number of Parliamentary State Secretaries increased since their inception in 1967 from one to two office holders today. Moreover, the minister's support staff comprises the minister's office, a unit for liaison with cabinet and Parliament and a press and information office, accompanied by sections for special issues such as postal stamps. Since 1991, these sections are organised in a leadership staff (*Leitungsstab*). In the line structure, the Ministry of Finance comprises a number of line divisions with subdivisions and sections. Like in other federal ministries, one of these divisions is responsible for administrative affairs (*Z-Abteilung*). Similarly, a Division for General Affairs services the Finance Minister as internal think tank (see chap. D.3.1 below).

In contrast to Britain, the German Federal Chancellery and the Federal Ministry of Finance are less closely related. However, they have close formal contacts, e.g. 'Minister meetings' (*Chefgespräche*) that are scheduled if the Finance Minister and a spending Minister cannot compromise about the departmental budget are traditionally mediated by the ChefBK.

⁴⁹ Other authors argue that the veto rights derive from the constitutional departmental principle, referring to the BMF as an organ of cabinet (Faber 1973: FN 886; 190-1).

⁵⁰ This merger aimed to secure partisan control over economic affairs and finance after the finance Minister Möller (SPD) resigned and the SPD was reluctant to hand over the ministry to the FDP as coalition partner (Sturm 1994: 84-7).

2.2 The British parent organisations:

Three 'engines'⁵¹ of the machinery of government

For most scholars in British history, Robert Walpole is seen as the first Prime Minister of Great Britain because he held as First Lord and Chancellor of the Exchequer the confidence of both the monarch and the House of Commons for many years (Blick/Jones 2010a: 51-8). Hence, from the 1720s until the 1840s, the Treasury was the only organised key actor at the centre of British government, servicing in effect as department of the PM in his office as First Lord and Chancellor of the Exchequer. In 1841, PM Peel decided to divest himself of the financial tasks of the Treasury by no longer holding both offices. From then on, except for a short period when PM Gladstone took over both roles in 1873, the two posts remained separate – and the PM no longer had a department at his disposal. Instead, the PM had two private secretaries paid from public funds since the early 19th century, usually supported by one or two staff members in a small secretariat.

In 1916, this tradition was interrupted by PM Lloyd George who created two new organisations, the Prime Minister's Secretariat, which was located in huts in No. 10's gardens and is therefore commonly known as the 'Garden Suburb', and the Cabinet Secretariat, succeeding the Committee of Imperial Defence, which had supported cabinet during war times (Chester 1950: 37-41; Daalder 1964; Morgan 1970: 148; Blackstone/Plowden 1988: 2).⁵² The following PM Bonar Law abolished the Garden Suburb and reduced the size of the Cabinet Secretariat – a significant development that gave collective cabinet government an 'administrative backing' (Blick/Jones 2010b: 12). In turn, the Cabinet Secretariat assisted the PM only in his capacity as chairman of the cabinet. The PM was still only supported by a private office with private secretaries. During the next fifty years, though, the Cabinet Office developed into a 'ragbag of functions' (Fawcett/Rhodes 2007: 83) – while having only few formal powers as a former Cabinet Secretary stresses:

'What is distinctive about the Cabinet Office is that it is not a conventional department. It has few powers, few people, (...), and even less money. So it is not equipped to run an operation directly. It has to do that through the people that do have the powers, the money and the organisations.' (Turnbull at Iraq Inquiry, 13 January 2010: 2)

At the organisational top-level, several junior ministers appointed by the PM run the Cabinet Office; many of them are later promoted to higher offices (Lee 1974: 182-3; Heffernan 2003: 361). Since PM Major, also a Minister for the Cabinet Office with cabinet rank is appointed at the organisational top. The administrative head of the Cabinet Office is the so-called 'Secretary of the Cabinet', commonly known as 'Cabinet Secretary' and since 1981 acting as 'Head of the Home Civil Service' on behalf of the PM.⁵³

At the operational level, all Cabinet Office officials are seconded from Whitehall departments (Seldon 1990: 109; Campbell 1997; CO 2005b). Reflecting its dual role, the Cabinet Office was initially divided into two branches, i.e. the 'Cabinet Secretariat' and the

⁵¹ (Mandelson/Liddle 1996: 240).

⁵² The Treasury tried to shut down the Cabinet Office after 1918 on the grounds that the exceptional need had passed – but failed (Anderson 1996: 479-80).

⁵³ Between November 1981 and April 1983, Robert Armstrong and Douglas Wass (PermSec at the Treasury) were appointed as joint Heads of the Home Civil Service (Seldon 1990: 105; Fry 1984: 331).

organisational units responsible for the civil service – except between 1968 and 1981 when a Civil Service Department was established to perform the latter functions (Armstrong 1970). The Cabinet Secretariat supports cabinet business and is structured in different secretariats ensuring the flow of information through the cabinet and its committees, taking minutes, recording cabinet conclusions (Hennessy 1986: 26; Burch 1988: 37-8). These secretariats are devoted to specific policy areas and include a Domestic Secretariat, an Economic Secretariat (since the 1960s), a Defence and Overseas Secretariat, and a Joint Intelligence Secretariat. In 1973, a European Secretariat was added (Seldon 1990: 107). Later, also a Science and Technology Secretariat was created (Hennessy 1986: 26; Burch 1988: 37-8; Kavanagh/Seldon 1999: 108).

In contrast, the organisational units responsible for the civil service and the machinery of government varied over time. After the abolition of the Civil Service Department in 1981, the management services functions were transferred to a 'Management and Personnel Office' (MPO) in the Cabinet Office which later developed into the 'Office of the Minister for the Civil Service', subsequently the 'Office of Public Service and Science' (1992-1995), the 'Office of Public Service' (1995-2001), and the 'Civil Service Capability Group' (since 2001). In addition, several units have been established in the Cabinet Office throughout its history with responsibilities in government efficiency, performance and innovation, or strategy (see below), as well as units for distinct issues such as the Citizen's Charter, social exclusion, women's issues, anti-drug policy or the third sector. According to its varying functions, the size of the Cabinet Office fluctuated strongly over the last decades, growing from about 650 officials in the 1970s until the mid-1990s, to 1,790 in 2004; its peak was 2,020 members in 2002 (Blick/Jones 2010b: 2).

The Prime Minister's Office is officially called as such since 1977 (Blick/Jones 2010b: 12). In formal terms, it is a 'management unit of the Cabinet Office' (CO 2006: 12; see also Burnham/Jones 1993, 2000b: 83, Blick/Jones 2010a).⁵⁴ At the organisational top-level, the Principal Private Secretary (PPS) to the PM acts as formal administrative head, but for several years under PM Thatcher as well as under PM Blair, the PPS to the PM was subordinated to a 'Chief of Staff'. This new position was responsible for all issues of the PM's interest as one of its occupants summarises:⁵⁵

'When he [the PM, JF] wanted a particular issue followed up, I would do so, I would make sure that things were happening. I sat outside his office so that I could ensure that he was kept up-to-date with things. If he made a decision, that could be communicated rapidly. (...) my job would also be to bounce ideas off the Prime Minister. If things were developing, I could suggest particular ways we could go.' (Powell at the Iraq Inquiry, 18 January 2010: 5-6)

At the operational level, the PMO comprises civil servants seconded from Whitehall departments, special advisers recruited as temporary civil servants as well as unpaid advisers. Although each PM may organise the PMO according to his demands, some elements 'seem to stand the test of time' (Campbell 1983: 51); these include the Private Office, the Political Office, the Press Office, and the Policy Unit (Burnham/Jones 2000c,

⁵⁴ Referring to its postal address in London, the PMO is called '10 Downing Street', 'Downing Street' or 'Number Ten'. This study uses these terms synonymously.

⁵⁵ Recently, a Permanent Secretary was installed as administrative head of the PMO, increasing the general appearance as any other Whitehall department (Heffernan, quoted by HL 30 [2010]: Q35).

Jones/Burnham 2000; Hennessy 2000c). The Private Office provides administrative support to the PM and exists since 1924, without major changes since 1945 (Burnham/Jones 2002: 83). The Political Office emerged under PM Wilson's first premiership in order to fight the 1966 general election when Labour scraped in with a very thin majority in 1964 (Rentoul 2001: 537). It is responsible for liaison with the party. The Press Office is responsible for media and communication, it was reorganised as Strategic Communications Unit in 1997 and gained considerable influence across Whitehall by directing the government's message under the powerful Press Secretary and later Director for Communications and Strategy Alastair Campbell. Later, this group was dismantled and nowadays two deputy directors are subordinated to the PM's official spokesman to fulfil these functions. The Policy Unit was founded by PM Wilson in 1974 and provides policy advice to the PM. In 2001, the Private Office was attached to the Policy Unit, which was renamed as 'Policy Directorate', but separated again after three years (Blick/Jones 2010a: 141). In addition, individual special advisers are frequently appointed at the Prime Minister's Office for distinct issues such as foreign and defence affairs or government efficiency (Hennessy 1989: 646-7; Lee et al. 1998: 100; Richards/Smith 2006: 330). In sum, the functional and organisational structure of the PMO is comparatively flexible:

'No hard-and-fast boundary can be drawn around "the Prime Minister's Office". (...) It can incorporate aides in a variety of Whitehall offices to work for the Prime Minister (...). Its porous boundaries enable staff appointed to other ministries or offices to liaise so closely and so frequently with No.10 that it becomes a quibble whether they work for the Prime Minister, the chief whip, the cabinet or the Treasury' (Burnham/Jones 2000a: n.p.).

Thus, the Prime Minister's Office experienced not only a 'considerable waxing of functions' (Hennessy 2000c: 59), but also its functional and organisational boundaries to the Cabinet Office became blurred under PM Blair, resulting in an 'executive office in all but name' (Burch/Holliday 1999; Hennessy 2000b: 388; Goetz/Margetts 1999: 436-7; Levitt/Solesbury 2005: 30). The size of the PMO increased rapidly over the years, i.e. during the 1970s it comprised approx. 60, during the mid-1980s approx. 70 and the mid-2000s approx. 180 staff members (CSYB 1970, 1985, 2001, 2005).

As mentioned above, the Treasury existed far before the Cabinet Office and the Prime Minister's Office had been created. Traditionally, it is the nexus of financial and economic policy in Britain and the most powerful department in Whitehall (Brittain 1961; Bridges 1964; Brittan 1964, 1971; Hecló/Wildavsky 1974; Pliatzky 1982, 1989; Roseveare 1969; Thain/Wright 1990; Young/Sloman 1982, 1984; Chapman 1997; see also Moran 1984). This power results from its responsibilities for public finances, including taxation and spending (Thain/Wright 1992a, 1992b, 1995, Thain 2010; Parry et al. 1997; Parry/Deakin 2000). As Hecló and Wildavsky argue: 'since nearly all policy involves some expenditure, the Treasury gets the opportunity to know about the principles and has some hand in the shaping of all departmental policies' (1974: 39). Although allegedly a three-year cycle, CSR has turned out to be a two-year cycle but with three-year plans (starting in 1998 with the first CSR). In addition, the Treasury is responsible for macro-economic policy, although some of these functions were removed, e.g. interest rate policy was transferred to the Bank of England in 1997. Besides, the Treasury has also been responsible for relevant aspects of civil service management, e.g. the control of civil service pay and numbers (Fry 1984: 330-1; Bellamy 1988; Seldon 1990: 106).

The Treasury is organised like other British departments and comprises at its departmental top-level three tiers of ministers: The Chancellor of the Exchequer ranked as Secretary of State, the 'Chief Secretary to the Treasury', which is appointed since 1961 as Minister attending cabinet with responsibilities for expenditure (Brittan 1964: 54), and the 'Financial Secretary to the Treasury' ranked as 'Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State' (P.U.S.S), commonly known as 'Parliamentary Secretary'.⁵⁶ Moreover, the 'departmental court' (Rhodes 2009: 440) hosts the Permanent Secretary as most senior civil servant at the Treasury, to various times two permanent secretaries have been appointed. Key management issues are nowadays decided by the 'Treasury Management Board' chaired by the PermSec and including all Treasury director-generals. Since 1999, also non-executive members are appointed to the board. In addition, the departmental leadership entails the private office of the Chancellor of the Exchequer that is rather small and mirrors the directorates with each Private Secretary being responsible for one directorate.

At the operational level, the Treasury is organised along various directorates with subordinated teams. The influential public expenditure directorate contains expenditure teams concentrating on the spending of particular Whitehall departments (Kingdom 1991: 386). Due to the changing functional responsibilities of the Treasury, the number of staff fluctuated over the years, during the 1970s as well as nowadays it comprises approx. 1,000 officials, whereas during the mid-1980s it comprised up to 3,300 staff members (Civil Service Statistics 1970, 1985; Public Sector Employment National Statistics 2005).

In sum, the three parent organisations evolved out of the historical legacy of the British PM as First Lord of Treasury and are nowadays referred together as centre of British government. In *organisational* terms, all three offices differ, whereas the Treasury is mainly organised like any other Whitehall department, the Cabinet Office entails structural and procedural elements that are similar and dissimilar to Whitehall departments. The PMO is characterised by the most unusual organisational structure compared to Whitehall departments. In *functional* terms, the three offices share some functions and differ in others. The role of the Cabinet Office changed towards supporting the PM most strongly, resembling almost an 'institutional schizophrenia' (Blick, quoted by HL 30 [2010]: 174) regarding its multiple responsibilities. In practice, the relationships between the PMO and the CO as support of the PM on the one hand and the Treasury servicing the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the other are 'the San Andreas Fault of government. If governments collapse, that is where it happens' (Turnbull, quoted by HC 30 [2010]: Q176).

To conclude, the support for the British PM and cabinet is organised in two offices which recently intersect and are comparatively more amorphous than the German Chancellery. In contrast, the internal organisation of the two finance ministries in Germany and Britain remained rather stable, albeit the British Treasury witnessed more changes than the German Ministry of Finance. In functional terms, the parent organisations in this study belong to the centre of government and as such are engaged in coordinating departmental actors – albeit with different means. It follows that advisory arrangements affiliated to these parent organisations are very likely to become agents in institutional politics, with

⁵⁶ If the 'Paymaster General' is appointed as Minister to the Treasury, he ranks third in the hierarchy. However, most often the Paymaster General is appointed as Minister to the Cabinet Office.

those at the central government office being presumably more strongly engaged than those at the disposal of the Finance Minister.

3 The advisory system at the centre of German and British governments

To identify the advisory arrangements for this study, it follows its functional typology (see Figure A.1 above) and selects those organised entities that are functionally equivalent in providing policy advice, i.e. that engage proactively in policy formulation and may counteract bureaucratic advice provided by line officials. Admittedly, a selection by functional equivalence is difficult (see Jann 1987; Page 1987; Derlien 1992; Pollitt 2011).

Over time, various advisory arrangements have been created at the centre of German and British governments – albeit the latter reveals more organisational variety than the former. To situate the advisory arrangements under scrutiny in this study into a broader context, this section illustrates the key elements of both advisory systems over time, also covering years before and between the three distinct time periods of empirical analysis.

3.1 Advisory arrangements at the centre of German governments

The German advisory system at the centre of government can be broadly distinguished into two types, namely staff and line units. For the former, the Chancellery and various ministries, including the Finance Ministry, comprise a ministers' private office as staff at the departmental top-level since 1949. For the latter, the Foreign Office created the first advisory arrangement at the operational line structure in 1963 (Bebermeyer 1970: 719). During the following years, particularly under the Grand Coalition between 1966 and 1969, a wider debate on advisory arrangements arose, mainly accompanied by the 'Project Group on Government and Administrative Reform' (PRVR; see chap. E.4.4 below). The PRVR issued several recommendations on the organisation of policy advice and suggested inter alia the creation of a 'leadership centre' (*Leitungszentrum*) in each federal ministry, comprising the minister, the Administrative State Secretary and three new 'Administrative State Under-secretaries' (*Unterstaatssekretäre*) to enhance intra- and interdepartmental coordination (PRVR 1972: Part II; Karehnke 1974b: 118). However, these recommendations were neither followed by the centre of government nor by federal ministries.

At the Chancellery, initially a Planning Staff was created for planning issues (Bachmann 1967: 179-80; Ellwein 1967: 336-7; Bebermeyer 1970: 717; Flohr 1970: 6; Lehguth/Vogelgesang 1988: 567; Süß 2004: 351-7; Pokorni 2005: 335; Seifert 2010: 41-2; see chap. E.1 below). After the general election in 1969, a Planning Division was established and reoriented in 1982 under the new Conservative government towards press and media relations for the Chancellor while its previous planning responsibilities were transferred to a Planning Group in the Division for Domestic Policies (Knoll 2004). Later, these planning tasks were moved to the Division for Administrative Affairs. After the next government turnover in 1998, the new ChefBK created two staffs at the organisational top-level, a Working Staff ChefBK (*Arbeitsstab ChefBK*) and a newly established Office

ChefBK (*Büro ChefBK*),⁵⁷ parallel to the remaining Planning Group. However, the Working Staff ChefBK was a rather virtual entity that lacked a formal head, section heads and officials. It never became operative as a distinct entity at the organisational top-level and instead its tasks were mostly fulfilled by the Office ChefBK (ID01, ID08, ID24).

All three entities were merged into a re-launched Planning Division when a new ChefBK took office in 1999, except that he kept the formal positions allocated for the Office ChefBK. However, the Planning Division was abolished after the first term in office in 2002; its functions were partly integrated into the Office ChefBK whereas others were transferred into a Planning Group in the Division for Administrative Affairs.

From the mid-1980s onwards, several staffs were established at the Chancellery's organisational top-level as temporary advisory arrangements, e.g. for German reunification or the reconstruction of Eastern Germany (Rudzio 2006: 259-60; Knoll 2004: 391-4). These staffs were responsible for policy areas that cut across ministries and support the Chancellor. Moreover, units in the line structure have been created which likewise serve as temporary advisory arrangements, linked to the work of external expert councils or commissions e.g. on migration, labour market, pension, health, or biotechnology (Siefken 2003, 2006a, 2006b, 2007; Schneider 2010; Rudzio 2006: 259-60). Recently, also standing liaison sections for expert bodies have been created, namely to support the National Regulatory Control Council (Veit 2010: 78-80).

At the Ministry of Finance, the first advisory arrangement was created in 1966 as successor for a group on macroeconomic policy that had existed since 1957. One year later, it was renamed as Division for 'General Affairs of Fiscal Policy, Relations to the *Länder*, and Fiscal Reform' (GVPl BMF [1967]). Despite its formal title implying a sectoral orientation, this line division acted as internal advisory arrangement for the Finance Minister ever since, servicing as functional equivalent to similar divisions for political planning in other federal ministries (Bebermeyer 1970: 719-20; ID20).

In addition, a section for 'special issues' was created at the departmental top-level during the late 1970s and between 1982 and 1983.⁵⁸ In 1991, a similar unit was re-created again, although integrated into the newly established 'leadership staff' (*Leitungsstab*), together with the minister's private office, and other sections responsible for liaison to cabinet, parliament, and the media.⁵⁹ After the resignation of Finance Minister Oskar Lafontaine in 1999, this section was abolished, but re-established in 2005 and exists until today, renamed in 2009 as section for 'policy and strategy'. Yet the key responsibilities of this single section oscillated over the decades between coalition politics, media strategies, and partisan advice (ID09, ID16).

3.2 Advisory arrangements at the centre of British governments

The British advisory system comprised various arrangements that can be distinguished into four types: (1) policy units at the PM's direct disposal, (2), units providing policy advice

⁵⁷ Under previous governments, the ChefBK was officially only supported by a personal assistant, but may have had additional support from other staff sections at the organisational top-level.

⁵⁸ This section was led by Horst Köhler, later head of the division for general affairs.

⁵⁹ During the 1990s, most ministries established such leadership staffs (Goetz 1999; BT-Drs. 14/9822 [2002]: 10; Hustedt 2009).

for cabinet as a whole and/or the PM with a cross-cutting remit, (3) line units, and (4) individual special advisers appointed by the PM or the Chancellor of the Exchequer (cabinet as a whole does not appoint individual special advisers). Although special advisers are not organisational arrangements, they are illustrated in the following as elements of the advisory system, also because some organisational arrangements are composed entirely or partly by members recruited on these terms.

3.2.1 Organised policy advice at the centre of British governments

Most authors refer to the so called 'Garden Suburb' as first advisory arrangement at the centre of British central government (Blackstone/Plowden 1988: 2; Hamilton 2001; Blick 2004). Named after their location in temporary huts in the garden of 10 Downing Street, this famous group of five members served as a personal secretariat of PM Lloyd George during the First World War (Morgan 1970: 135; Turner 1977, 1980: 1; Kavanagh/Seldon 1999: 45-7; Hamilton 2001).⁶⁰ However, its proceedings overlapped strongly with the Cabinet Secretariat (Morgan 1970: 136). The 'Committee on the Machinery of Government' at the Ministry of Reconstruction chaired by Richard Haldane recommended the creation of 'policy planning units' in each department (Cd. 9230 [1918], Daalder 1963), but its conclusions were ignored and thus the suburb's members followed other careers after the War and the unit was ultimately dismantled in 1922 by PM Bonar Law (Kavanagh/Seldon 1999: 47; Plowden 1991: 221-3). The next attempt to establish an advisory arrangement at the centre of British government was made by PM Winston Churchill who brought a personal staff he had established in the Admiralty to advise him on scientific and statistical issues. This 'Prime Minister's Statistical Section' advised the PM primarily on resource allocation during the Second World War (Plowden 1991: 223-5; Jones 1973; Blick 2004: 39-40). When Churchill was defeated in 1945 by PM Clemens Attlee, the section was abolished and not replaced. One year later, an interdepartmental 'Central Economic Planning Staff' was set up in order to advise ministers collectively on the adjustment of existing plans in order to cope with a severe economic crisis, comprising the Chief Planning Office as well as temporary civil servants from the private sector (Milne 1952; Plowden 1989; Blackstone/Plowden 1988: 5). When the staff was affiliated to the Ministry for Economic Affairs and the Minister became Chancellor of the Exchequer, it was transferred to the Treasury (Finer 1948: 245; Cairncross 1984; Bridgen 2000: FN 18; Peden 2000: 441). However, with the resignation of the Chief Planning Officer in 1953, the staff became marginalised and subject to dismissive criticism, particularly from the Treasury's economic section. By the end of 1954, it had been completely absorbed into the regular Treasury machinery (Hennessy 1989: 154). Over the following decades, the British advisory system witnessed no further developments, except the occasional notion of the advisory role of PM's private secretaries (Jones 1976).

Under PM Wilson, a 'Committee on the Civil Service' was established under the chairmanship of John Scott Fulton (commonly known as Fulton committee), which

⁶⁰ Next to Prof. W.G.S. Adams from Oxford University as chief secretary responsible for Irish and agricultural affairs and the machinery of government, two millionaires, one a grandson of Wales' railway king the other the owner of the *Observer*, as well as the editor of the *Round Table* belonged to the group. Besides, a commercial statistician handled statistics about commerce, shipping and food imports (Davies 1951; Morgan 1970: 136; Campbell 1983: 216).

somewhat repeated the recommendation of the Haldane Committee by stipulating *inter alia* the creation of 'planning and research units' for long-term policy-planning in each Whitehall department (Cmnd. 3638 [1968]: 51). In practice, however, only few departments created such entities, most often integrated in the line structure (Armstrong 1969; Fry 1972, 1993; Klein/Lewis 1977; Prince 1979, 1983).

In 1970, the new conservative PM Edward Heath established a 'Central Policy Review Staff' (CPRS) in the Cabinet Office as first advisory arrangement at the disposal of a British cabinet as a whole (Pollitt 1974, 1980; Plowden 1974, 1981; James 1986; Blackstone/Plowden 1988). Besides, a businessmen group was created in the Civil Service Department for two years, with a direct reporting line to the PM, to review the organisation of government in close cooperation with the Treasury, other departments and the Cabinet Office (Jones 1973: 369; Pollitt 1980: 92-3).⁶¹ One of their reviews addressed the organisation of ministers' private offices and recommended to develop these further into French-style ministerial cabinets but the civil service successfully resisted against such an innovation (Pollitt 1980: 88-9).

In 1974, the re-elected PM Harold Wilson appointed again special advisers, but this time within a newly established 'Policy Unit' (PU) at the Prime Minister's Office which is widely recognised as one of the 'most substantial constitutional changes in Britain since 1945' (Rose 1980: 45; Pryce 1997: 133). With PM Thatcher coming into office in 1979, a small debate on creating personal cabinets for ministers arose (Cm 9841 [1986]; RIPA 1987), but the Prime Minister rejected this organisational innovation. Moreover, she established an 'Efficiency Unit' in the Cabinet Office at her direct disposal, thus initiating another new type of advisory arrangement (Beesley 1983; Greenaway 1984: 74-5; Pollitt 1984: 85-103; Metcalfe/Richards 1987: 9; Jenkins/Gray 1990, Jenkins 2008b; Brereton 1992; Metcalfe 1993: 356-60; see also Rayner 1973). The unit was designated to address civil service inefficiency and its members were recruited as special advisers, seconded from management consultancies or private business such as Marks & Spencer (Bray 1987; Lee et al. 1998: 128; Theakston 1999: chap. 10).⁶² The unit conducted 'efficiency scrutinies' across central government to examine all departmental proposals regarding management and efficiency improvements (Greenaway 1984: 73; Bray 1987; Barzelay/Füchtner 2003: 12). Hence, the unit was specialised into a particular area, albeit with a rather cross-cutting mandate.⁶³ With the beginning of her second prime ministerial term in 1983, PM Thatcher abolished the CPRS and transferred some of its staff to the Policy Unit.

At the Treasury, a similar unit as the Efficiency Unit was established as a joint venture with the Management and Personnel Office (MPO) at the Cabinet Office: The 'Financial Management Unit' (FMU) supported the 'Financial Management Initiative' aiming at improving efficiency inside the civil service by introducing a system of 'management by objectives' (Russell 1984; FMU 1985a, 1985b; Fry 1988; Jackson 1988: 256; Kemp 1990:

⁶¹ See also HC Deb 14 November 1972 vol 846 cc207-8.

⁶² For an overview of the Efficiency Unit's composition see HC Deb 27 July 1983 vol 46 cc458-9W.

⁶³ In 1981, it was transferred to the 'Management and Personnel Office' inside the Cabinet Office, albeit with a direct reporting line to the PM (Greenaway 1984: 74). Two years later, however, PM Thatcher transferred the unit back to the PMO.

187; Greer 1994; Barberis 1995: 40; McSweeney/Duncan 1998).⁶⁴ The FMU focused on the creation of top management information systems, procedures and practices for delegated budgeting within departments, and arrangements for managing programme expenditure (Metcalf 1993: 360). Again, the unit comprised next to Treasury and MPO officials also secondees from management consultancies (Starkey 1983: 222; Greenaway 1984: 74-5; Russell, 1984: 146-7; Smith/Young 1996: 142; Kipping 2001; Saint-Martin 1998). In 1985, it was renamed as 'Joint Management Unit' and absorbed into the Treasury's Financial Management Directorate two years later (Jenkins/Gray 1990: 60; Lee et al. 1998: 243). During the years under PM Major, the advisory system at the British centre remained stable and no new organisational units were created, although the FMU was abolished (see for an analysis of the Policy Unit: Lee et al. 1998; see also *The Economist*, 1993: 40, 2003: 33-4).

The last major innovation to the British advisory system occurred in 1997 under the new Labour PM Blair. At the Cabinet Office, various units were created to address government policy-making from a cross-cutting perspective, e.g. the 'Social Exclusion Unit' focussing on interlocking issues of social policy, law and order, and education and training (Taylor 2000; Sturm 2009: 276; see also Mandelson 1997). In 1998, a 'Performance and Innovation Unit' (PIU) was created to advise cabinet and the PM on 'major cross-cutting policy issues and design strategic solutions'.⁶⁵ At the Treasury, the Chancellor of the Exchequer created a 'Council of Economic Advisers' (CEA) to host an additional small number of special advisers. Moreover, a 'Productivity Team' was established in 1999 at the direct disposal of the Chancellor of the Exchequer and his special advisers (Page 2007: 4).

At the beginning of PM Blair's second term, this advisory system underwent several changes. At the Cabinet Office, the PM created two new units responsible for policy implementation, the 'Delivery Unit' and the 'Office of Public Services Reform' (Levitt/Solesbury 2005: 30-1). Particularly the former gained considerable attention among practitioners and academics for its radical approach in assessing departmental policy delivery (Ling 2002; Kelman 2006; Richards/Smith 2006; Barber 2007). Moreover, the PM created a 'Forward Strategy Unit' (FSU) as sister unit to the Performance and Innovation Unit in order to provide the PM with personal advice on priority policy areas. In 2002, both were merged into a 'Strategy Unit'. At the Prime Minister's Office, the Private Office was attached to the Policy Unit, which was renamed as Policy Directorate. Besides, a newly established 'European and Foreign Policy Adviser's Office' was headed by a special adviser who later became Head of the Foreign Secretariat in the Cabinet Office.⁶⁶ The Treasury remained its advisory system of the Council of Economic Advisers, individual special advisers and the Productivity Team, albeit the Delivery Unit was moved into it (Barber 2007).

⁶⁴ The FMI based upon a departmental initiative by the Secretary of State for the Environment, called 'Ministerial Information System' (MINIS) and was also perceived as an attempt to achieve the results that the CSD failed to provide (Wilding 1983: 41; Fry 1984: 332-3; see also Cmnd. 8616 [1982]; Cmnd. 9058 [1983]; Cmnd. 9297 [1984]; RIPA 1983, 1985).

⁶⁵ See also HC Deb 14 January 2002 vol 378 cc85-6W.

⁶⁶ HC Deb 25 March 2003 vol 402 cc125-7W.

3.2.2 *Individual policy advice: The rise of the 'special adviserdom'*⁶⁷

In Britain, special adviser (SpAd) date back to the 19th century (HL 30 [2010]: para 68). However, the title occurred in British Public Record Office files for the first time only in the 1950s for aides to foreign diplomats or experts on special issues appointed by the PM (Blick 2004: 64). In general, PM Wilson is widely perceived as 'constitutional innovator' (Blick 2004: 183) of special advisers with his recruitment of economic advisers into the Cabinet Office and the Treasury in 1964 (Pryce 1997: 133). These were mainly technical or expert advisers who were not fully integrated into the team surrounding the Minister and paid by the Labour Party (Richards et al. 2008: 490). Moreover, he permitted as first PM in British history departmental ministers to appoint special advisers on a permanent and regular basis, albeit without supporting staff (Rhodes 2009: 440).⁶⁸ When PM Heath succeeded Wilson in 1970, the number of advisers decreased down to five so called 'businessmen' based in the Civil Service Department to advise the government on organisational and managerial matters and one special adviser on machinery of government issues who operated separately. Besides, the Chancellor of the Exchequer appointed one special adviser (Smith/Stanyer 1971: 413; Pollitt 1980: 89; Blick 2004: 123-4). Most of them were officially called 'political secretaries' and paid by the Conservative Party (see Hudson 1976).

After his re-election in 1974, PM Wilson created with the Policy Unit a formal arrangement to host special advisers in the PMO and recommended cabinet ministers to appoint special advisers themselves (Theakston 1990: 44). After discussions with the Civil Service Department, the PMO issued a first memorandum of guidance for the terms of their appointment (Smith/Stanyer 1977: 390; Mitchell 1978: 87).⁶⁹ It also included that special advisers should be paid by public funds; most special advisers were given the salary of principals or assistant secretaries. In addition, PM Wilson initiated the so called 'two-per rule' – two special advisers per secretary of state, except for the PM and the Chancellor of the Exchequer who are allowed to appoint more than two special advisers (HC 153 [1996]: 2; Theakston 1996: 98; Turnbull, quoted by HL 30 [2010]: Q181). When PM Thatcher came into office in 1979, this rule was decreased to one special adviser for cabinet ministers, except for the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Foreign Secretary (Cmnd. 9841 [1986]: 9; Smith/Stanyer 1980: 399; Butler/Butler 1994: 286). After the general election in 1983, a maximum of two special advisers per ministers became convention again (IUK22; Polsby 2001: 15; Rentoul 2001: 535). Since 2010, also the Deputy Prime Minister is included to the cabinet members allowed to appoint more than two special advisers (MCC [2010]: 3.2).

In general, British special advisers are 'licensed to be political' (Coleman 1991: 421). Yet, scholars and practitioners distinguish two key functions, which are also reflected in a common differentiation of 'political adviser' versus 'expert adviser' that existed until the

⁶⁷ (Hennessy 2000c: 487).

⁶⁸ Particularly the first special advisers appointed by PM Wilson in the 1960s were supported by their own staff (NA, PRO, PREM 13/1555, 1966).

⁶⁹ HC Deb 29 January 1976 vol 904 c308W. When the new Conservative ministers started to appoint special advisers, the Labour Party seconded staff to shadow cabinet members (Rose 1974) and the Rowntree Trust funded a number of these assistants (Polsby 2001: 15; NA, PRO, CAB 129/176/16).

early 1990s (Fabian Society 1964: 42; Cmnd. 9841 [1986]: 8-9; HC 153 [1996]: 1-2; Hennessy et al. 1997): Political advisers assist Ministers with their governmental and political work and act as their 'political antennae', serving as links and liaison to other ministries, the PMO, the Cabinet Office, but also the party (Klein/Lewis 1977; Mitchell 1978; Prescott 2008: 256). In contrast, expert advisers are the 'guardian angels of the political agenda which the Minister came to office with' (Hennessy et al. 1997; Mitchell 1978) and complement expert advice given by the permanent bureaucracy.⁷⁰ Over time, the former function became more relevant:

'the evidence suggests that ministerial, as opposed to prime ministerial, advisers occupy a relatively marginal place within ministries. (...) ministers tended to use advisers to help present the ministry's policies to public and party audiences rather than to actually formulate them – to give the dry, officially drafted statement a bit of political style' (Page 1992: 129).

Since 1974, special advisers are formally recruited as temporary civil servants and thus their appointments are terminated either when a general election is called, the PM or Minister resigns or dismisses them (Lee et al. 1998: 101). Any recruitment of a special adviser is formally approved by the PM (Wagener/Rückwardt 1982: 58; Eichbaum/Shaw 2003: 8). In the course of their duties, they have to comply with the *Civil Service Code* [2010], albeit they are exempted from provisions relating to impartiality, objectivity and party-political activities (HC Deb 25 April 1994 vol 242 cc5-6W). Besides, they are cleared to see official papers under the *Officials Secrets Act*.

Under the Blair government, the *Civil Service Order in Council* [1997] was amended allowing three special advisers in the PMO to perform also executive powers such as issuing orders to civil servants (O'Toole 2006: 73; Powell 2010).⁷¹ Besides, a new *Model Contract for Special Advisers* (CO 1997b) replaced the previous guidance on the appointment of special advisers, including a brief description of terms and conditions (HC 153 [1996]: Annex C). In 2001, an additional *Code of Conduct for Special Advisers* (CO 2001a) was published (Eichbaum/Shaw 2006a: 8-9; O'Toole 2006: 75; see also Ives 2002; Wilson 2003).⁷² Most recently, the *Civil Service Act* [2010] formalised the role of special advisers appointed under these terms.

Next to the ministerial special advisers, the PM may appoint an unlimited number of special advisers at his disposal. Several of these special advisers have been appointed on an individual basis, e.g. for foreign affairs, defence or government efficiency (Hennessy 1989: 647; Lee et al. 1998: 100,127; Richards/Smith 2006: 330). Other special advisers were appointed as members of particular organisational entities inside the PMO, most notably the Policy Unit which exists since 1974. Overall, the number of special advisers in British central government increased (see Figure D.1).

The figure shows that the total headcount of special advisers grew from approx. five special advisers during PM Wilson's first premiership up to more than 80 special advisers

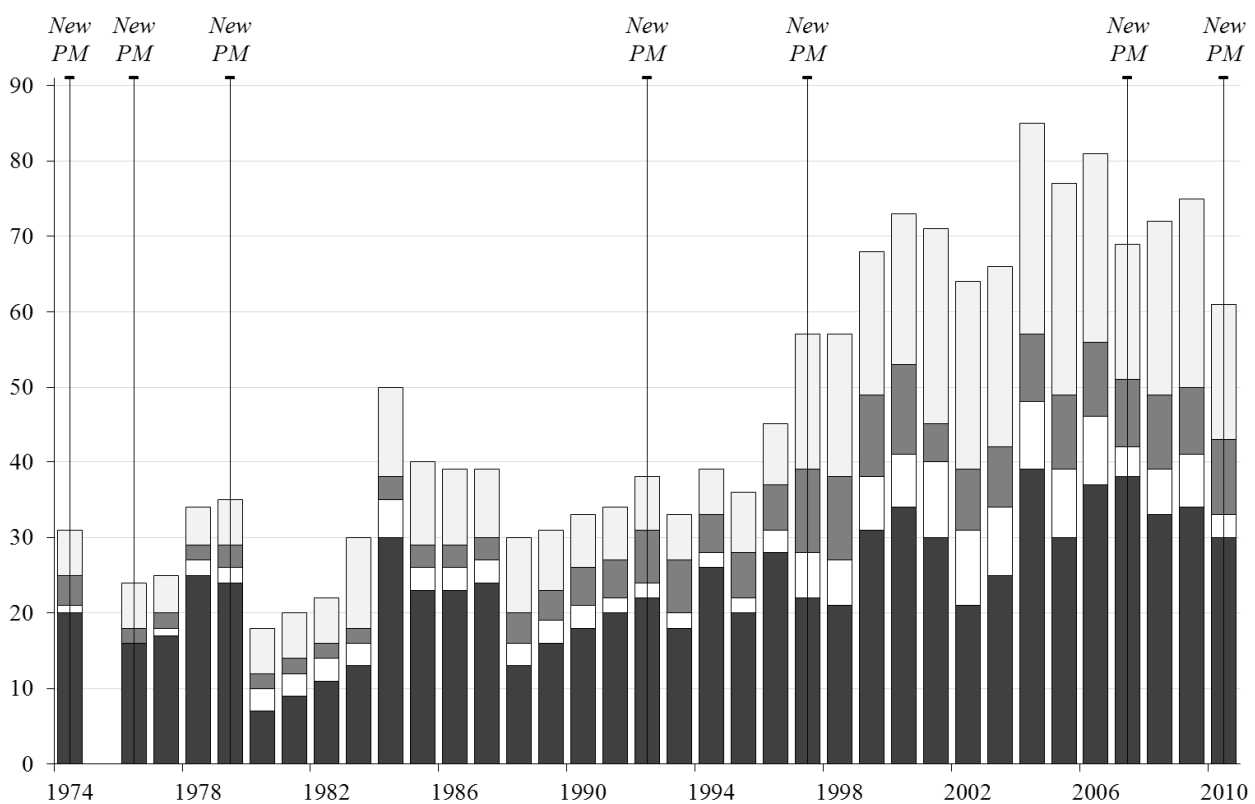
⁷⁰ HC Deb 28 February 1995 vol 255 cc482-3W.

⁷¹ After 2004, the PM followed the recommendation of the review on government communications (Phyllis Review) and withdrew any executive powers from the Director of Communications.

⁷² In fact, the formulation of a particular Code of Conduct for special advisers was partly a response to an earlier report of the House of Commons Select Committee on Public Administration and a report by the Committee on Standards in Public Life (Hennessy 2002a: 21; O'Toole 2006: 75).

under PM Blair. In 1979, the number of special advisers was cut in half, but increased over previous numbers after the next general election in 1983. After the general election in 1997, the number of special advisers increased considerably, mainly caused by the increase of special advisers servicing at the centre of government, i.e. the PMO, the Cabinet Office, the Treasury, or other sinecure offices that are traditionally recruited with PM's aides such as the Lord Chancellor. Whereas under PM Wilson the centre appointed approx. 40% of all special advisers, the decrease of special advisers under PM Thatcher resulted in a much higher share of special advisers at the centre (approx. 70%); a similar high share occurred at the end of PM Blair's first term in office. Afterwards, it dropped but was still higher than under previous Conservative governments.

Figure D.1 The number of British special advisers, 1974-2010 (headcount)



Legend

- N° special adviser in Whitehall departments
- N° special adviser servicing sinecure office holders
- N° special adviser in HM Treasury
- N° special adviser at the Prime Minister's Office and the Cabinet Office

Note: Numbers include only special advisers paid by public funds.

Source: Own dataset, data compiled from oral and written answers as well as written statements in Parliament; the Civil Service Year Book (1974-2010); HC 727-i [2000], HC 727-ii [2000]; GMB 2006; Gay 2009, 2010.

3.3 The selection of advisory arrangements in Germany and Britain

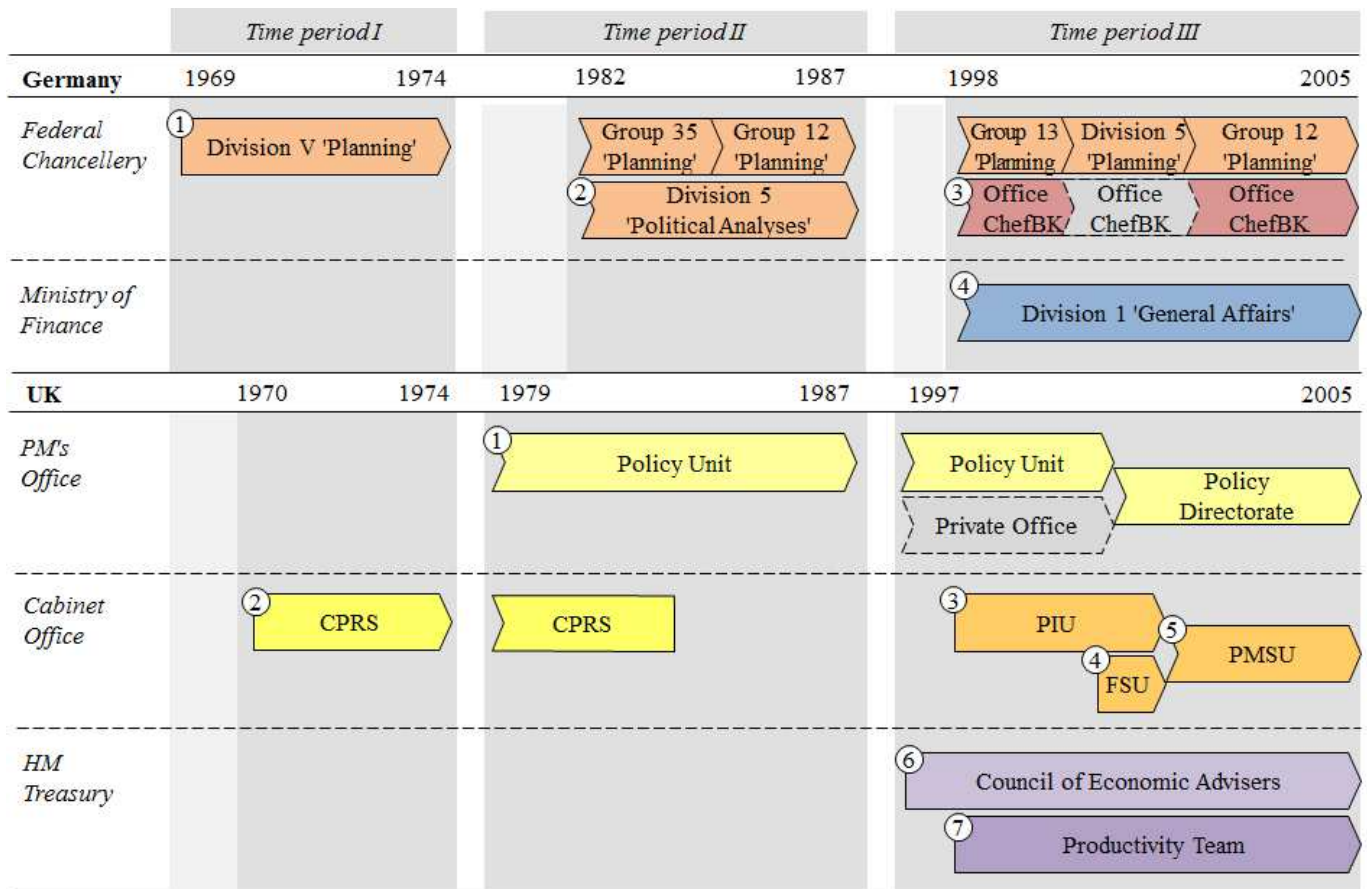
This study's selection of advisory arrangements under scrutiny is informed by various criteria referring to its definition of advisory arrangements as well as its theoretical key argument. First, this study addresses advisory arrangements primarily concerned with policy advice, i.e. influencing the *formative phase* of government policy-making (see also chap. A.2 above). As a consequence, private offices are excluded from this study because they are primarily responsible for administrative support. Likewise, this study excludes units with a focus on policy implementation such as the British Delivery Unit. Second, this study aims to study advisory arrangements with a primary orientation towards *government-wide* activities, which are assumed to be more likely to get engaged in institutional politics. Therefore, arrangements with clear statutory responsibilities are excluded from analysis, e.g. the Efficiency Unit, the Financial Management Unit as well as the sectoral oriented units in the Cabinet Office. Lastly, this study's theoretical key argument derives from new institutionalist organisation theory and addresses *organised actors*, perceiving organisational structure as a crucial component of agency. Accordingly, this study excludes the Working Staff ChefBK that existed only virtually and did not come into full operation during the first months of the Schröder government. Similarly, it excludes individual actors such as British special advisers from its empirical analyses.

This theoretically driven selection affects this study's research design because the British Treasury hosted *organised* advisory arrangements only since the late 1990s. Yet, this study's research interest in *institutionalist* explanations makes it reasonable to include the advisory arrangements in the German and British finance ministry only for the last time period under scrutiny, although this limits the diachronic comparability of advisory arrangements servicing different clients.

In sum, this study compares four advisory arrangements in Germany with seven advisory arrangements in Britain. For Germany, these include the Planning Division, later split into a Planning Group and a Division for Political Analyses and merged again, and the Office ChefBK at the Chancellery as well as the Division for General Affairs at the Ministry of Finance. For Britain, they include the Policy Unit, later Policy Directorate, at the PM's Office, the CPRS and the PM's Strategy Unit (with its predecessors PIU and FSU) at the Cabinet Office, as well as the Council of Economic Advisers and the Productivity Team at the Treasury (see Figure D.2).

This selection of advisory arrangements results in some methodological caveats that have to be discussed. As noted above, this study's research interest in organised sources of advisory arrangements limits a diachronic comparison of advisory arrangements in institutional politics to those servicing the cabinet and/or the head of government. Moreover, advisory arrangements rarely existed throughout all three time periods under scrutiny, thus limiting a longitudinal comparison due to lacking predecessors or succeeding entities. Yet, this study argues that their comparability is sufficient because they service particular clients, i.e. the fact that these clients at the centre of German and British governments created, maintained, and terminated organised policy advice at their disposal supports this study's understanding of agency in institutional politics as agentic behaviour *and* organisational structure.

Figure D.2 Selected advisory arrangements in Germany and Britain, 1969-2005



Note: The figure displays not all full official denominations in order to facilitate the reading.

Source: Own illustration.

Given the different numbers of advisory arrangements across countries and time, the German case studies are less complex than the British case studies, and the last time period under scrutiny is more complex than the previous two, also because it includes the advisory arrangements servicing the Finance Minister. Following this study's theoretical framework, each of the case studies encompasses four parts. First, it examines the evolution of advisory arrangements in order to identify actor constellations and key motives. Second, it studies the mandate of such would-be change agents. Third, it scrutinises their organisational capabilities along the five selected attributes to assess their capabilities in institutional politics, i.e. their durability, affiliation, size, fragmentation, and expertness. Lastly, the key emphasis of the empirical case studies refers to their role in government policy-making, most notably their key advisory activities that are regarded as carriers for institutional strategies aiming to shape the institutional underpinnings to govern in order to answer this study's research question of how advisory arrangements influence government policy-making in institutional politics and why their role may differ across countries and time.

Part II Policy Advice at the centre of German governments

'The new approaches to plan the conduct of government more rigorously and effectively did not lead very far. On the one hand, they were probably too unrealistic; on the other hand, they failed due to the inertia of the apparatus and the individualism of cabinet ministers.'
(Brandt 1976: 310)

Chapter E Policy advice under the Brandt government, 1969-1974

Under Chancellor Willy Brandt, the Planning Division in the Chancellery acted as the new key advisory arrangement at the centre of German government. Its organisational structure was rather unique and it fulfilled an innovative mandate to co-formulate governmental strategy and ensure that cabinet and federal ministries follow certain priorities. To influence government policy-making, the Planning Division benefitted from its strong support by the new ChefBK as well as the initial 'planning euphoria' across federal government. The next subchapter describes the major developments prior the general election of 1969, resulting in the establishment of the Planning Division in the Chancellery, which is examined in the second subchapter. The third subchapter analyses the organisational structure of the Planning Division. The final subchapter scrutinises the Planning Division's major activities as carriers for institutional strategies in order to affect the institutional underpinnings of government policy-making.

1 Prologue: Planning as a prerequisite for 'internal reforms'

During the 1960s, conservative public law scholars initiated a renaissance of planning by departing from its previous notion related to socialist planning in Eastern Germany (e.g. Grebing 2005). Instead, they elaborated the legal concept of *Daseinsvorsorge*, denoting the state's responsibility to provide adequate services for its citizens as a prerequisite for social and economic development, – which required long-term planning by governments (see Burhenne 1964; von Dohnany 1964; Kaiser 1965b, 1966, 1968).¹ Eventually, the debate reached politics, and German politicians supported the argumentative turn towards planning in the advent of the first recession in Germany after the Second World War, which initiated debates about sectoral planning, particularly in policy fields related to economic growth such as budget, economic, social, and education policy (Scharpf 1976: 237; see also Guillaume 1965; Wittkämper 1969; Böhret 1970: 14-5; Wagener 1970, 1973: 67; Jochimsen/Treuner 1972, Jochimsen 1971c: 468; Ehmke 1973: 317-8; Schäfers 1973; Ronge 1977c: 484; Schatz 1978a: 245-6; Ruck 2000: 375; Metzler 2005a). Increasingly, planning was perceived as key precondition for formulating both sectoral *and* organisational reforms in central government (Naschold/Väth 1973; Ronge 1977c: 485; Müller 1978: 49; Bebermeyer 1985: 53, 57; Metzler 2005b: 368).

Among scholars, planning was particularly discussed in economic and social sciences (Lompe 1968: 23-5; Ronge 1977c: 484; Bebermeyer 1985: 17; see also Ellwein 1967, 1968; Kaiser 1965b, 1966, 1968, 1970, 1972, Coing/Kaiser 1971). In the social science

¹ The turning point of the German planning debate is often traced back to a memorandum on the second stage of the European integration process in 1962 that emphasised the advantages of the French planning doctrine (Jochimsen/Treuner 1972: 31; Ruck 2000: 371-2; Süß 2003: 359).

debate, two branches emerged (Naschold 1972): On the one hand, those scholars advising on central government reforms pledged planning as a mean to achieve efficiency within central government and to support policy reforms. On the other hand, the renaissance of Marxist theories paved the way for scholarly debates about the societal relevance of planning and its systemic conditions (Lehmbruch 1999: 46-7).

Under the first German Grand Coalition, particularly the Social Democrats addressed the virtues of planning for central government reforms (Bebermeyer 1985: 53). Already shortly after the general election in 1966, they discussed the 'application of modern management methods' in a strategy paper on 'Organisational Issues of the Federal Government',² concluding that more scientific evidence was needed in order to design planning methods that are applicable to central government. Partly, this increased interest was also driven by SPD ministers new in government confronted with senior civil servants that were more loyal to the Conservative coalition partner (Süß 2004: 332).

However, also the CDU Chancellor Kiesinger reacted to the increasing planning debate and expanded the pre-existing planning section at the Chancellor's private office into a 'Planning Staff' (Bachmann 1967: 179-80; Ellwein 1967: 336-7; Bebermeyer 1970: 717; Flohr 1970: 6; Lehnguth/Vogelgesang 1988: 567; Süß 2004: 351-7; Pokorni 2005: 335; Seifert 2010: 41-2).³ Supporting the new 'philosophy of trust' (Dyson 1974a: 366) between the Chancellery and the federal ministries and following recommendations from the Federal Commissioner for Efficiency in Central Government Administration,⁴ the Planning Staff was designated to gather information and act as a 'National Goals Staff' (Jochimsen 1972e: 1183), mediating inter-ministerial conflicts rather than controlling their activities (Knorr 1975: 218; Flohr 1970: 6; Bebermeyer 1970: 717; Hildebrandt 1971: 60-3; Dyson 1974a: 366; Pilz 1976: 171; Lehnguth/Vogelgesang 1988: 562; Süß 2004: 352-3). Initially, it was designated to focus on selected policy fields, including foreign and security policy, economic and fiscal policy as well as science policy (Bebermeyer 1985: 26-7; Lehnguth/Vogelgesang 1988: 567; Süß 2003: 354-5; Seifert 2010: 41-2).⁵ However, its organisational resources were limited⁶ and it was affiliated to the line structure without direct access to the Chancellor, diminishing its scope and influence (DER SPIEGEL, 24/1967: 38; Bebermeyer 1970: 718). Although these organisational incapacities were partly compensated by including external scientific advice (Bebermeyer 1970: 718, EN 31), the Planning Staff suffered from conflicts inherent in its vague mandate and its dependence upon the Chancellor's support – which decreased rapidly when the government succeeded in coping with the financial and economic crisis after the recession (Bebermeyer 1970: 718-9; Wagener 1970: 96; Hildebrandt 1971: Annex II, FN 3; Dyson 1973: 348, 353; Mayntz/Scharpf 1975: 118; Schatz 1977: 202; Müller-Rommel 1994a: 117; Süß 2003:

² AdsD, I/HEAA00277, Horst Ehmke, 'Organisationsfragen der Bundesregierung', October 1966.

³ The previous planning section was mainly responsible for coordinating an informal advisory council of Chancellor Erhard (Hildebrandt 1971: 51; Seifert 2010: 42). The establishment of a distinct Planning Staff has also been related to the individual head (Bachmann 1967: 177).

⁴ In Germany, this federal commissioner is simultaneously President of the Federal Court of Auditors, see BAK B136/4895, BRH, 'Überlegungen zur Finanzplanung und der Organisation der Bundesregierung', 22 November 1966 (see also Hegelau 1977: 167; Pokorni 2005: 235).

⁵ In addition, it was also responsible for mirroring the Federal Ministry of Defence (Ehmke 1994: 109).

⁶ Also because Parliament approved less than a third of the requested positions (Hildebrandt 1971: 51; Dyson 1974a: 167; Seifert 2010: 42).

357, 2004: 356; Metzler 2005b: 345; Seifert 2010: 36-7, 41-2, 44, 72-3).⁷ In 1967, the SPD created a 'Reorganisation Committee' of senior party members to assess the application of planning in central government, chaired by the Administrative State Secretary at the Ministry of Justice, Horst Ehmke (Lepper 1976: 479; Süß 2004: FN 14; Metzler 2005b: 343; Seifert 2010: 52-3; see also Schatz 1977: 201).⁸ Various social scientists participated, including Fritz W. Scharpf, a former PhD student of Ehmke (Lepper 1976a: 479; Ruck 2000: 388; Süß 2004: 333; Scharpf 2007).⁹

When SPD party leader and Foreign Minister Brandt urged the Chancellor to increase his reform efforts in central government, Kiesinger commissioned the Ministers of Interior and of Justice to formulate a concept (Schatz 1977: 202-3; Süß 2004: 334; Schubert 1991: 80). After serious discussions in the Coalition Committee (e.g. Lepper 1976a: 479-80), a cabinet committee on 'government and administration reform' was created, comprising next to the Chancellor also the Ministers of Interior, of Justice, of Finance, for Education and Science, for Research and Technology, for Defence, for Economic Affairs, and for Urban Development.¹⁰ The cabinet committee directed a newly created inter-ministerial Project Group on Government and Administration Reform that was formally affiliated to the Minister of Interior (Bebermeyer 1970: 720; Lepper 1976a: 479; Metzler 2004: 49-50; Süß 2004: 335; see chap. D.3.1 above). It comprised maximum two officials from each federal ministry and was chaired by the Head of the Chancellery's Planning Staff (Bebermeyer 1970: 719; Lepper 1976a: 486-7, 495; Stargardt 1992: 11; Süß 2004: 335).¹¹ In addition, the Chancellor demanded the formal inclusion of scientific advice – also acknowledging the low expertise of departmental officials.¹² Formally, the project group was supervised by the Minister of Interior (*Dienstaufsicht*), its substantial supervision (*Fachaufsicht*) was conducted by the Chancellery (Müller 1978: 68; see chap. H.4.4.3).

The effects of the PRVR on German central government organisation as well as German social sciences in general are widely recognised (Lepper 1976: 497-8; Ronge 1977b; Wagner/Wollmann 1986: 214; Jann 2009: 480),¹³ for this study, two are most relevant. On the one hand, the PRVR contributed to a cross-party consensus about planning as key prerogative for 'active policy-making' (*aktive Politik*),¹⁴ i.e. policy-making driven by the 'primacy of leadership' (*Primat der Leitung*) that aims at comprehensive and long-term changes of the status quo (Scharpf 1971, 1972a; Mayntz/Scharpf 1973: 122-3;

⁷ BAK, B 136/14060, Bebermeyer/Schmoeckel/Stöber/Wagenknecht, 'Ausweitung der politischen Planung im Bundeskanzleramt', 20 October 1969.

⁸ The committee members included a cabinet minister, a Parliamentary State Secretary, two MdBs, and a division head from the Ministry of Finance (AdsD, 1/HEAA00272, Horst Ehmke, 'Organisationsfragen der Bundesregierung', 01 August 1967). Another idea of Ehmke, to create a German-U.S. expert commission funded by the Ford Foundation, failed due to strong rejections by the Parliamentary State Secretary in the Chancellery (see BAK B136/4805, Guttenberg an Kiesinger, 30 October 1967).

⁹ AdsD, 1/HEAA00277, Horst Ehmke, 05 October 1967.

¹⁰ ACDP, I-564-011/2, Cabinet Protocol, 25 September 1968. The Federal Commissioner for Efficiency in Central Government Administration participated also at meetings, but without a vote (Müller 1978: EN 55).

¹¹ BAK, B 106/56429, Werner Krüger, 'Protokoll der einführenden Sitzung des Kabinettsausschusses Regierungs- und Verwaltungsreform am 3.12.1968', 05 December 1968.

¹² BAK, B 106/14062, Heribert Schatz, 'Protokoll der einführenden Sitzung des Kabinettsausschusses Regierungs- und Verwaltungsreform am 3.12.1968', 10 December 1968, p. 4.

¹³ See the detailed accounts by Lepper 1976a and Hegelau 1977.

¹⁴ The term was inspired by Etzioni's (1968) book on 'The Active Society'.

see also Jochimsen 1970: 952, 1972c, 1972f: 187; Dyson 1973: 348, 1975: 160, FN 2; Hegelau 1977: 187; Derlien 1996a: 150-1; Süß 2003: 361; Pokorni 2005: 238). On the other hand, the PRVR's first report, issued before the general election in 1969, recommended inter alia more efforts into 'task planning' (*Aufgabenplanung*) within German federal government, complementary to the existing financial planning (Theis 1969b: 685-6, 1970: 75; Ronge 1977b: 238; Hegelau 1977: 186; Seiler 1981: 241; Jäger 1986: 28; Pokorni 2005: 237). The PRVR proposed three models of how to organise planning in federal government, assigning key responsibilities either to federal ministries, the Chancellery, or, in a combined model, to the Chancellery with a network of planning entities inside the federal ministries (PRVR 1969: part III).¹⁵

2 The expansion and reorientation of advisory capacities at the centre

When after the general election in 1969 the Social Democrats coalesced with the Liberal Party and a SPD Chancellor was elected for the first time in German history, the pre-existing advisory arrangements in the Chancellery have been changed significantly. The new ChefBK and Minister for the *Bundesrat*,¹⁶ Horst Ehmke expanded the Chancellery from 250 up to 400 officials (Ehmke 1994: 107; Müller-Rommel 1994a: 119). In addition, the 'rotation principle' was revived in order to exchange all division heads, most group heads, and a number of section heads and thus 'free the Chancellery from Conservative supporters' (DER SPIEGEL, 45/1969, 50/1969: 24, 03/1970: 25, 10/1970, 11/1970; Hildebrandt 1971: 69; Flohr 1972: 62; Dyson 1973: 353, 1974a: 368, 370; Seemann 1975: 34-6, 1978: 10-1; Walter/Müller 2002: 484; Metzler 2005b: 365). Besides, Ehmke set up regular meetings of *all* Administrative State Secretaries to prepare cabinet (Dyson 1973: 351, 1974a: 369; Derlien 1991b: 6).¹⁷

The pre-existing Planning Staff was reorganised as new Division V for 'Planning', corresponding to recommendations from the PRVR's first report, the SPD working group, and Ehmke's experiences in his previous occupation (Bebermeyer 1970: 722-3; Flohr 1970: 1; Seemann 1971: 9; Jochimsen 1972d: 62; Lehnguth/Vogelgesang 1988: 568; Ehmke 1994: 113-4; Seifert 2010: 74).

After the general election in November 1972, ChefBK Ehmke and the head of the Planning Division left office and the Chancellery's organisation was rearranged, particularly at the departmental top-level (DER SPIEGEL, 49/1972: 21; Dyson 1974a: 370; Reese 1975b: 275; Walter/Müller 2002: 487-8). Moreover, the role of the Chancellery was redefined towards interfering less in ministries' business (Mayntz 1980: 165-6). Accordingly, the Planning Division was functionally rearranged, one part was transferred together with the previous head to the Division for Economic and Fiscal Policy in the

¹⁵ The project group discussed also the introduction of so-called 'counter-officials' (*Gegenreferenten*) to review all departmental policy proposals within a ministry and the Chancellery, but this idea was not included in the final report (PRVR 1969: FN 12; Oschatz 2003: 7; Pokorni 2005: 239).

¹⁶ An appointment as Minister without portfolio was less appropriate given the legacy of ChefBK Westrick under Chancellor Erhard, therefore the new ChefBK was officially appointed as Minister at the Bundesrat Ministry (Wiedemeyer 1969: 150).

¹⁷ Previously, only Administrative State Secretaries from four ministries met with the ChefBK to prepare cabinet, i.e. the Foreign Office, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry for Economic Affairs, and the Ministry for Agriculture (Derlien 1991b: 6).

Chancellery, and a minor part was transferred to the SPD party headquarters. The remaining Planning Division shifted its role more towards the new overall role of the Chancellery as hub of executive coordination.

3 The organisation of the Planning Division at the Chancellery

Although various planning units had been created across Germany before 1969, no superior organisational model had evolved:

'So far, approaches of organising political planning differ at federal and Länder level, as well as abroad with regard to their arrangement, aims, scope, and experiences. Concluding recommendations for creating a certain organisational solution are thus impossible' (PRVR 1969: 202).

A closer analysis of the organisational structure of the Planning Division reveals various differences to the traditional organisation principles within the Chancellery and the federal bureaucracy with regard to its (1) durability, (2) internal affiliation, (3) size, (4) fragmentation, and (5) expertness.

(1) Similar to other divisions in the Chancellery, the Planning Division was established in the context of a larger reorganisation of its parent organisation, which was supposed to prolong the next general election. In turn, the division had no limited ex ante durability (ID06, ID11; Ehmke 1994: 107-19). It survived not only the next general election in 1972, but also the next SPD Chancellor Helmut Schmidt and was only radically reoriented when Chancellor Helmut Kohl took office (see chap. F.3 below).

(2) The Planning Division was created as line division for several reasons. On the one hand, it signalled that the new government's ambitious agenda in planning is an equally important task as coordinating departmental policies in policy fields, which is mostly conducted by the other line divisions in the Chancellery (Dyson 1973: 353; Seifert 2010: 74). In addition, it enabled its head to interact with the other division heads 'on par' and aimed to diminish possible isolation from other line divisions in the Chancellery (ID06, ID11; Dyson 1973: 353; Mayntz 1980: 164). Yet, this reducing the danger of isolation was also supposed to reduce the risk that ideas from such 'blue-sky-thinkers' are communicated to other actors outside the Chancellery without previous consideration and control – because the line structure inherently required compliance to certain formal rules of flow of information etc. (ID06). Yet, the official location of the new Planning Division did not reflect the last concern: Instead of the Chancellery's main building *Palais Schaumburg*, the Planning Division was located in the building of the former *Bundesrat* ministry and moved soon to another building, resulting in a physical isolation of its members from other Chancellery officials (Dyson 1975: 167; Knoll 2004: FN 117). Officially, this accommodation was necessary because the increased size of the Chancellery under the new government required more office space, but it resulted also in rather ambivalent opinions among other Chancellery officials on the new division, also because of lacking day-to-day contact (ID06).

(3) Despite the ChefBK's strong claim for a full-fledged Planning Division, the division was comparatively smaller than other line divisions in the Chancellery, albeit it grew quickly from initially 25 up to 38 officials (Dyson 1974a: 369; see Figure E.1 below).

In addition, and also very different from the other line divisions and as a compensation for its limited number of official positions, the Planning Division contracted external members on a short-term basis, thus comprising at maximum 70 members (Mayntz 1980: 164; Bebermeyer 1985: 118 (Flohr 1972: 55, 65; Knoll 2004: 191).¹⁸ After 1972, the Planning Division was slightly reduced in size, also because its first head kept various formal responsibilities when he changed divisions (see *DER SPIEGEL*, 53/1972, 40/1973; Echtler 1973: 210-1; see below).

(4) The fragmentation of the Planning Division was rather similar to other line divisions in the Chancellery. Its leadership structure comprised one division head at the primary authority level and between two and three group heads at the secondary authority level, each with at least one subordinated line section. In addition, and very usual in the Chancellery at that time, between one and two sections were also organised at the secondary authority level, thus directly subordinated to the division head.¹⁹ Although these sections lacked formal authority over other subordinated entities, because they presented already the smallest formal organisational entity in the German ministerial bureaucracy, they have to be included in this study's assessment of formal fragmentation because they clearly demarcated areas of permanent responsibility at the secondary authority level. Put together, the division was medium fragmented in horizontal terms, i.e. roughly four branches existed. These were responsible for 'political planning', 'medium- and long-term planning', and 'fiscal planning' (Bebermeyer 1970: 723; Seemann 1974: 38-9). The last branch was 'data processing', which was organised as section because the external expert on data possessing demanded a position as section head (Knoll 2004: 190, FN 127). In turn, the vertical fragmentation included the four regular formal authority levels within the Chancellery, i.e. the division head, the group heads, the section heads as well as the section officials.

(5) The expertness of the Planning Division can be regarded as the organisational feature that differed most from the rest of the Chancellery. The ChefBK recruited one of his friends from university days, Reimut Jochimsen, a Professor for Economic and Political Sciences, as first head of the new Planning Division (*DER SPIEGEL*, 05/1970; Dyson 1974a: 368; Süß 2003: 359; Seifert 2010: 87; see Table E.1). Similar to the ChefBK, the new head had studied in the U.S. where he had gained considerable expertise on planning techniques (Jochimsen 1970, 1972c, 1972f, 1972g; Dyson 1975: 169; Süß 2003: 359).

When Jochimsen asked to change positions after the general election in 1972,²⁰ he was succeeded by Albrecht Müller, a former ghost-writer of the Minister for Economic Affairs and chief strategist of the SPD general election campaign in 1969, who was well-known to Jochimsen and most other cabinet members as well as SPD senior figures (*DER SPIEGEL*, 42/1970: 38-9). In contrast, most group heads in the new Planning Division were promoted

¹⁸ Yet, the concrete number of these short-term members could not be assessed with the available sources.

¹⁹ This mixed allocation of groups and sections at the secondary authority level of divisions in the Chancellery was abolished in 1990, since then all divisions comprise only groups at secondary authority level, except the Division for the Intelligence Services between 1996 and 2003 and the Planning Division between 1999 and 2002, both comprised only line sections (see for the latter chap. G.3 below).

²⁰ Jochimsen changed divisions as new Head of the Division for Economic and Fiscal Policy in the Chancellery, later he became StS to the Ministry for Education and Science.

from previous positions as section heads in the Chancellery,²¹ one of them had been a previous member of the Planning Staff, another a seconded departmental official to the PRVR (Lepper 1976: 495; Süß 2004: FN 82).

Table E.1 The leadership structure of the Planning Division, 1969-1974

tenure in office	name	previous position/s	subsequent position
07/1970-02/1973	Prof. Dr. Reimut Jochimsen	Professor for Economic and Political Sciences at the University of Kiel	BKAmt, Head of Division IV (Economic, financial and social policies); StS to the Federal Ministry for Education and Science
07/1970-02/1973	Hartmut Bebermeyer (Group V/1)	BKAmt, Head of Section III/2 (Planning), Member of the Planning Staff	BMW, Head of Subdivision ZB (Law, economic issues of defence, security issues).
07/1970-07/1974	Hans Joachim Hegelau (Group V/4, V/2)	BMJ, departmental official seconded to the PRVR	BKAmt, Head of Group V/3 (Central Government and Administration Reform, PRVR)
07/1971-05/1972	Dr. Ursula Krips (Group V/2)	MdB (SPD); BKAmt, Head of Group IV/2 (Economic and fiscal projection)	BKAmt, Head of Group IV/5 (Multi-annual financial planning)
02/1973-09/1982	Albrecht Müller	Speech writer of the Minister for Economic Affairs; SPD headquarters, Head of Public Affairs Division	freelance journalist and policy adviser; MdB
06/1973-12/1976	Werner Tegtmeier (Group V/1)	BKAmt, Head of Section IV/3 (Mirror section to the BMA)	BMA, Head of Division 1 (General Affairs)

Legend

Division head Group head

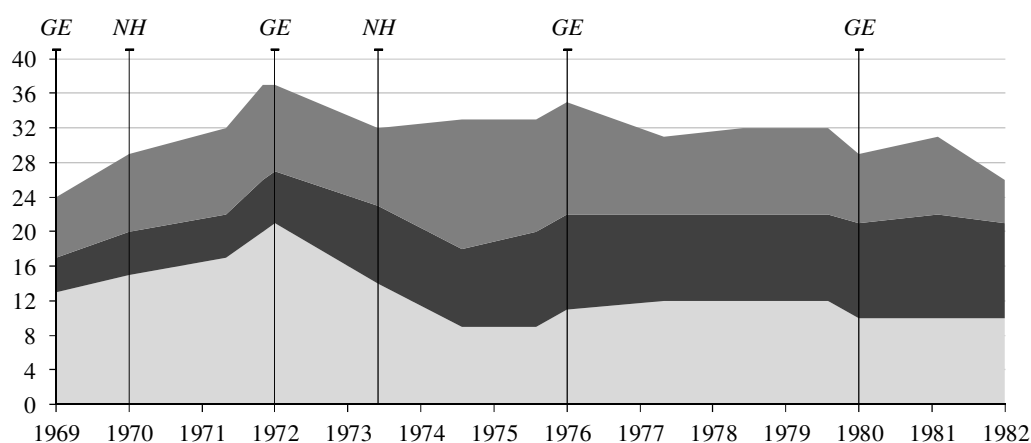
Note: Group heads are displayed under the division head in office at time of their appointment.

Source: Own illustration; data compiled from archived task allocation plans and organisational charts (BAK); DER SPIEGEL, 03/1970: 26; Lepper 1976: 495; Süß 2003: FN 125; Seifert 2010: 87-8; Munzinger Archive.




Following the rotary principle, about half of its members were seconded from federal ministries (Schatz 1975: 312). The other half comprised Chancellery officials but also members recruited from outside central government, mostly academia and private IT firms (DER SPIEGEL, 29/1971: 26-7; Flohr 1972: 55; Ruck 2000: 371; Süß 2003: 365; Seifert 2010: 87-8; see Figure E.1). This particular mix of in- and outsiders was a very unusual composition for a division in the Chancellery and federal government in general. Moreover, the division included therefore not only a mix of members with varying professional backgrounds but also a mix in terms of 'contract status', i.e. not only civil servants and public employees but also short-term contracted external experts – which were also clearly earmarked in the Chancellery's task allocation plans as 'scientists' in order to inform about their specific status.

²¹ One group head was a previous Member of Parliament for the constituency where the new ChefBK came from (DER SPIEGEL, 03/1970: 26).

Figure E.1 The size and composition of the Planning Division, 1969-1982



Legend

	civil servants	<i>GE</i>	general election
	public employees	<i>NH</i>	new head
	scientists (including IT staff)		

Source: Own illustration, information compiled from archived task allocation plans (BAK); DER SPIEGEL, 12/1971; Seifert 2010: 87-8.

This mix of members had immediate effects on the working style within the division, as e.g. visible by the 'scientific members' criticising that they were supposed to work on one particular area of responsibility permanently instead of various issues over time (Flohr 1972: 63) or the observation that these scientists had infected the internal communication within the division with a distinct 'scientific jargon' (Metzler 2005b: 364) that was immediately recognised as different by Chancellery and ministerial officials (*ibid.*).

The departmental secondees returned to their parent ministry after a certain time period, resulting in a rather young average age of Planning Division members and contributing to a highly collaborative working atmosphere (ID06, ID15). Many were regarded as highflyers. Although data restrictions obstruct a comprehensive study on all Planning Division members, several made a bureaucratic and/or political career afterwards, e.g. Werner Tegtmeier became later StS to the Ministry for Labour and Social Affairs, Edda Müller became Minister for Nature and Environment in Schleswig-Holstein, and Bert Rürup became a member of the German Council of Economic Experts.

Also the educational background of Planning Division members differed in comparison to other Chancellery officials; only one group head was trained as a lawyer, all others were economists or social scientists (Süß 2003: 365). Likewise, most section heads and officials had university qualifications, often also post-graduate degrees, in economics or social sciences. In addition, many division members were SPD members or open supporters (ID15; Grottian 1974: 95, FN 65; Knoll 2004: 260; Pokorni 2005: 243).

The tenure varied across Planning Division members. The first division head stayed three years, his successor almost ten years, leading to a high average tenure of its heads. In contrast, group and section heads recruited under the Brandt government left the division on average after two years (see Table E.2). The tenure of the scientists differed: Those

responsible for data management stayed as long as group and section heads whereas those engaged in policy advice left earlier, on average after one and a half year, thus staying from all distinguished personnel group types the shortest time. Although the subsequent developments after 1974 are not scrutinised in this study, the table includes these tenure figures in order to show that no clear overall trends in tenure patterns emerged over time, except that the tenure of section heads and IT scientists increased later on.

Table E.2 The tenure of Planning Division members (in months), 1969-1982

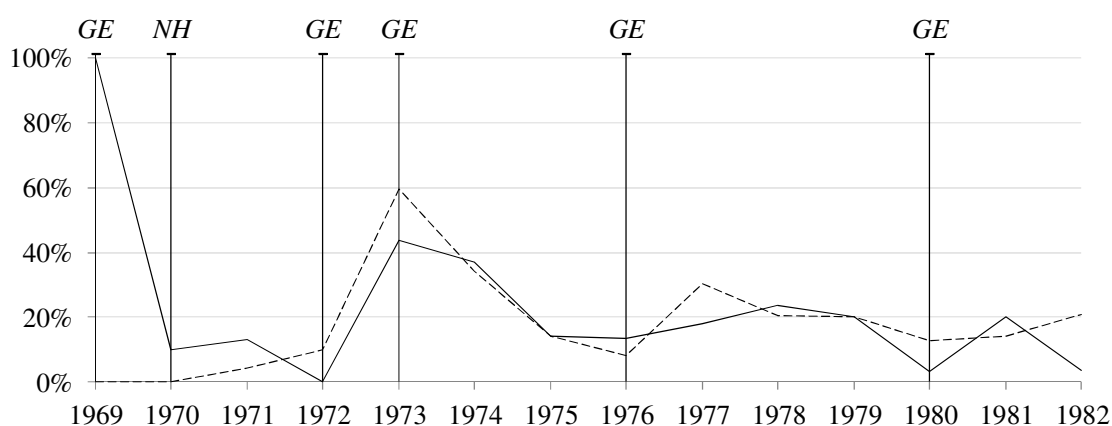
	Brandt (1969-74)	Schmidt (1974-76)	Schmidt (1976-80)	Schmidt (1980-82)	mean
division heads	74.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	18.7
group heads	25.6	17.3	45.8	13.4	25.5
section heads	25.8	32.0	54.1	0.0	28.0
mean (ranks)	42.0	16.4	33.3	13.4	26.3
scientists	18.3	9.1	23.4	26.5	19.3
scientists (IT)	23.3	28.2	37.9	---	22.4
mean (scientists)	20.8	18.7	30.7	26.5	24.2

Note: Numbers display all first appointments. After 1980, the data does not differentiate the two types of scientists, thus the tenure is displayed only in one cell.

Source: Own illustration, information compiled from archived task allocation plans (BAK).

Lastly, a closer analysis of the turnover shows that the recruitment of new division members was often a compensation for the exit of previous members (see Figure E.2). Until 1972, though, almost no members left the Planning Division. The peak of exits in 1973, one year after the general election, is partly related to the division head transferring to a different division in the Chancellery together with various officials.

Figure E.2 The turnover of Planning Division members, 1969-1982



Legend

— influx (related to total size) GE general election
 -- exit (related to total size) NH new head

Source: Own illustration, information compiled from archived task allocation plans (BAK).

More importantly, this 'dismantlement of the Planning Division' (Dyson 1973: 356) was accompanied by a functional reorientation, as a division members explains:

'The idea was to bring in some new, fresh ideas – for which you need new people, coming from different backgrounds. They were also better able to follow the new direction of the division – and to leave the previous experiments with full-fledged planning ahead (...). It was just easier with them to terminate things that didn't work obviously.' (ID06)

Moreover, the general election in 1972 with a new head coming into office had comparatively more impact on the turnover of staff than subsequent general elections.

In addition, the Planning Division lost in 1973 also its rare privilege of budget and personnel autonomy, which had been initially delegated to facilitate the management of the comparatively large budgets needed for computers (Knoll 2004: 190-1; Seifert 2010: 85). Yet, this managerial autonomy had raised severe critics, especially from the usually responsible division, also because of the high expenses and the contracts with outsiders (Knoll 2004: 195). The aftermath of the general election in 1972 as well as the developments of the Planning System (see below) enabled the Division for Administrative Affairs to claim back this authority and thus terminate the division's previous budgetary and personnel autonomy. However, this had no severe effects on recruitment (ID06).

In contrast to the other line divisions, the ChefBK Ehmke was personally heavily engaged in shaping the modus operandi of the new Planning Division and encouraged the division to try new working methods (Flohr 1972: 63-4, Süß 2004: 337, 361), including inter alia to invite external consultants (*Quickborner Team*) for advice on new working methods such as brainstorming (Seemann 1974: 21-32; Flohr 1972: 64; Lenz 2002; Metzler 2005b: 365-6; special issue of *Minerva* 2006, 44(2), Brinckmann 2006a, 2006b) – which was at that time a revolutionary working practice in German federal bureaucracy (Mayntz 1980: 164-5). More generally, the members of the Planning Division perceived themselves as 'artists' (Jochimsen 1971a), i.e. their working mode was clearly distinguishable from other Chancellery officials – and necessary for accomplishing their tasks (ibid.). Interestingly, though, too 'non-bureaucratic' procedures were also perceived as a problem, especially by the departmental secondees, e.g. complaining that the few regular internal working procedures were not laid down formally and demanding the enactment of some written rules by the divisional leadership (Flohr 1972: 72-4). Yet, the division head rejected such a formalisation of procedures and instead favoured the ChefBK's motto 'plan as you go' (Ehmke 1973: 321).

In sum, the Planning Division served as a 'pilot within central government' (Süß 2004: 343; Dyson 1974a: 368; Seifert 2010: 85) and its organisation can be regarded as rather unconventional compared with the organisational principles in the German federal bureaucracy. Similar to other bureaucratic entities, it was established with an infinite ex ante durability and survived not only the Brandt government but also succeeding governments. It was formally affiliated as a line division in the Chancellery, albeit located in a remote building, and reported to the ChefBK. It was smaller than the other line divisions, but expanded its size towards a similar number of members as other line divisions in the Chancellery by contracting temporary members. Its horizontal and vertical fragmentation were rather similar to other line divisions in the Chancellery, comprising a number of group and section heads leading distinguishable functional branches at the

secondary authority level, resulting in the presence of all four authority levels from a division head to a section member. Yet, its most unconventional organisational feature was its expertness: The first division head was recruited from academia, his successor from the SPD party headquarters. More importantly, the division members included Chancellery officials and departmental secondees but also outsiders from diverse backgrounds. The comparatively shorter tenure and a more rapid turnover than bureaucratic convention supported its unique status in central government organisation.

4 The Planning Division as agent in institutional politics

Although most politicians perceived planning as a crucial precondition to formulate structural and policy reforms in federal government, the meaning of planning was rather ambiguous, as the first Planning Division head admitted after his investiture:

'Ideas about the concrete meaning of political planning in our system of government and about the administrative procedures adequate to carry it out are still in a state of considerable flux.' (Jochimsen 1970: 949)

The official mandate of the new Planning Division in the Chancellery was formulated along the new ChefBK's understanding of planning, strongly influenced by his observations of the PPBS system in the U.S. (Jochimsen 1970, 1972f, 1972g; Ritter 1987: 324; Ruck 2000: 389; Pokorni 2005: 240-1):

'This division will be responsible for the development and implementation of long-term policy programmes of the federal government. By establishing work and time plans, coordinated with the ministries, it will ensure a long-term perspective in all policy areas, the timely setting of priorities, the harmonisation of federal government's activities, and a permanent evaluation, i.e. the monitoring of all projects with regard to their implementation, but also their implementation opportunities.' (Ehmke, quoted by Bebermeyer 1970: 722)

Reflecting the relevance of external blueprints that the ChefBK had observed, he requested the new Planning Division to fulfil two major functions: A strategy function, ensuring that government decisions are taken within the framework of long-term objectives, and a policy analysis and review function (Wiedemeyer 1969: 147; Jochimsen 1972e: 1183; Wahl 1972: 466; Knöpfle 1973: 103, 109; Dyson 1973: 362, 1975: 169; Ronge 1977b: 240; Süß 2003: 359; Metzler 2005b: 370). As such,

'[t]he new Planning Division in the Chancellery gets with these responsibilities not only a distinct operative mandate, but also a completely new function within its parent organisation. It entails a kind of cross-cutting function, similar to divisions for general affairs in larger federal ministries. Together with the other line divisions it is designated to increase the analytical and programmatic capacities of the Chancellery with regard to task and objective planning.' (Bebermeyer 1970: 369)

Accordingly, the new Planning Division departed from the pre-existing Planning Staff's focus on distinct policy areas (Dyson 1975: 166; Pilz 1976: 171, FN 178; Bebermeyer 1985: 26-7). In turn, it was designated as an advisory arrangement servicing cabinet as a whole rather than the Chancellor (Jochimsen 1970: 949-51, 1971a: 40-1; Ehmke 1971: 2030; Dyson 1973: 353), supporting the new emphasis on cabinet as key coordination arena and diminishing the number of

'[c]abinet meetings in which ministers participate as departmental heads speaking only on matters related to their ministry that maintain the practice of negative coordination that is confined to shutting the stable door after the horse has bolted. To stay in that metaphor: The construction and security of the stable is left unattended' (Jochimsen 1970: 950)

More specifically, the groups and sections in the Planning Division were responsible for different activities: (1) One group and one section established and managed a new Planning System and (2) formulated medium- and long-term government plans (Dyson 1974a: 369; see also Flohr 1970: 1; Theis 1970; Murswieck 1975: 27; Schatz 1975: 311-2; Süß 2003: 366; Hunemörder 2004: 10). In addition, they prepared (3) policy briefs, reports, and contributions to government declarations. The other group and the second section (4) supported and contributed to the machinery of government reforms.²²

4.1 The Planning Division reducing 'ministerial roadblocks':²³ The Planning System

After the general election in 1969, the considerations of the previous Planning Staff in the Chancellery, the recommendations of the PRVR, particularly those about an 'Early Warning System' (*Frühwarnsystem*, PRVR 1969: part III), and the proposals of the SPD reorganisation committee were put together into a cabinet decision that created a new Planning System (*Planungsverbund*) at federal level (Bebermeyer 1970: 721; Jochimsen 1970: 952, 1971a: 41, 1972c, 1972f: 187; Hildebrandt 1971: 76; Schatz 1975: 312; Pilz 1976: 173; Böhret 1990: 124; Scharpf 2007: 142; Seifert 2010: 74, 95). The ChefBK defined five functions of this new planning system: an *information* function providing information on departmental initiatives, a *coordination* function supporting coordinated action in central government, an *integration* function enabling an earlier integration of departmental policy proposals, an *initiation* function identifying gaps or conflicts between departmental proposals that needed attention, and a *control* function providing a 'governmental bookkeeping with success control' (Ehmke 1972: 27-8, 1973: 322-3). Because the first two functions were perceived as prerequisites to perform the latter three (Jochimsen 1972f: 187; Ehmke 1973: 323), the Planning Division focused initially on gathering information about federal ministries' activities and turning inter-ministerial coordination into a 'positive activity, with ministries responding to initiatives and restrictions from the centre instead of vice-versa' (Dyson 1973: 353).

Correspondingly, the newly established *Planungsverbund* aimed to facilitate the information flow between the Chancellery and federal ministries, also to reduce departmentalist thinking in government policy-making and the dominant attitudes among ministry officials to follow the maxim 'information is power, and rejection of information is double power' (Bebermeyer, quoted by DER SPIEGEL, 06/1970: 23; Dyson 1973: 353). In addition, scientific advice from outside the civil service was supposed to get ministerial bureaucrats 'accustomed to planning' (Flohr 1970: 2, 1972: 57; Ehmke 1972: 29), as the first division head put it:

'Today, planning is accepted as a support and systematisation of decision-making in a democratic state, playing a necessary and legitimate role for efficiency and transparency.' (Jochimsen/Treuner 1972: 45)

²² The second group (V/4) existed only until 1972.

²³ (König 1985b: 134).

In formal terms, the new Planning System was introduced on the basis of a decree from 1950 stating that all federal ministries shall deliver a report to the Chancellery every month about their activities of general interest (Jochimsen 1972f: 187; Seifert 2010: 94). However, the new Planning System expanded this decree, covering

'all projects which will develop into cabinet proposals or exit the federal government in other ways or which are of general political importance will be notified in order to develop a general information basis. This information basis is created in its beginnings.' (Jochimsen 1970: 953)

In practice, the new Planning System was based on datasheets containing initially 26 information categories about different aspects of ministerial policy proposals, including e.g. their costs, schedule, impact on medium-term financial planning, and influence on other policies (Flohr 1972: 56-7; Dyson 1973: 354; Dahms 1975; Schatz 1978a: 247; Seiler 1981: 244-5; König 1986: 44-5). The Planning Division collected these datasheets and analysed them with a computer programme.²⁴ Afterwards, the proposals were summarised and presented in different lists (Bebermeyer 1985: 61-2; König 1986: 45).²⁵ Soon, however, the information requests by the Planning Division grew and the datasheet was expanded (Ehmke 1972: 36; Schatz 1978a: 249). Until the end of the legislative period, almost 650 departmental proposals were incorporated into the new Planning System (Süß 2003: 367), albeit these included only those proposals requiring cabinet approval and their salience and complexity varied considerably (Schatz 1974: 23). The information in the datasheets was gathered by 'planning delegates' (*Planungsbeauftragte*)²⁶ appointed in each ministry, usually ranked as heads of newly created divisions responsible for 'general issues' or 'planning and policy' (Bebermeyer 1970: 723, 1985: 49-50; Flohr 1970: 1; Dyson 1973: 353-4; Ehmke 1973: 323-4; Kölble 1973: 11; Murswieck 1975: 27; Schatz 1975: 304; Permantier 1978: 263, 269; Süß 2003: 359, 364; Pokorni 2005: 240-1). Accordingly, the new Planning System was also supposed to allow 'meta-policy-making' (*Planung der Planung*, Derlien 1985: 8) – because it was deliberately linked with departmental planning structures and processes.²⁷

Initially, the *Planungsverbund* operated quite successfully and made remarkable progress, also due to the strong support by the ChefBK (Flohr 1970: 4; Schatz 1978b: 15). At cabinet level, ministers were rather satisfied because the new Planning System offered for the first time a full disclosure of other ministers' policy proposals. In addition, it provided information about their own departmental policies and various cabinet ministers were 'surprised what was going on in their own ministry' (Schatz 1974: 23; see also Ehmke 1972: 36, 1973: 325-6). But support in cabinet varied and soon several ministers started to criticise the new Planning System, either because they favoured the planning exercises in their own ministries, such as the Defence Minister or the Transport Minister (Schmidt

²⁴ The establishment of the new Planning System based upon special forms designed for computer storage and corresponded to the increasing role of data management (e.g. Lohmann 1975).

²⁵ The data was fed to a computer at the Ministry of Defence in order to provide four different lists: A breakdown by the subject, the lead department, the political priority, and temporal sequence (DER SPIEGEL, 06/1970: 23; Die Zeit 50/1971: 37, 51/1971: 42).

²⁶ In addition, many ministries appointed a 'technical delegate' (*technische Beauftragte*) for IT and data management (Murswieck 1975: 32).

²⁷ Although many federal ministries increased their resources for planning by creating distinct staffs, sections or divisions, their functions varied (Ehmke 1972: 31).

1971; Dyson 1973: 357, 1975: 168; Ehmke 1994: 117), or because they acknowledged the potentials of the new system to provide the Chancellery with additional capabilities to control departmental activities and rejected any further empowerment of the new ChefBK (Dyson 1973: 357, 1975: 167; Pokorni 2005: 243; Süß 2003: 377; Seifert 2010: 77).²⁸ In addition, the Finance Minister recognised the conflicts between this new task planning at the Chancellery and the financial planning established in his own ministry,²⁹ as expressed by the Planning Division head:

[In the Chancellery, are the] "good guys", these are the task planners, who develop conceptual ideas upon an utopian-futurological background and set priorities [whereas in the finance ministry are] the "bad guys", these are the financial planners, who destroy or mangle every good idea by reducing the money, very often across-the-board' (Jochimsen 1972g: 138).

Moreover, the SPD depended upon the FDP's support in Parliament and thus rejections were also made on partisan grounds, arguing that policy consensus is a precondition for more substantial planning in government – and questioning whether the Planning Division pursued activities that would service the whole coalition or just the SPD Chancellor and ChefBK (Dyson 1973: 351; Metzler 2005b: 411-2).

Likewise, the new Planning System influenced also government policy-making at departmental level. In general, the *Planungsverbund* was 'surrounded by an array of councils and working groups between the ministries and in each ministry on different levels' (Jochimsen 1971c: 469; Bebermeyer 1985: 61). Thus, the introduction of the new Planning System resulted in various organisational changes within and across federal ministries in order to collect and provide the necessary information. Yet, this information increased the likelihood of inter-ministerial conflicts:

'Anyone who knows the decision process within the [German, JF] ministerial bureaucracy knows the fate of countless decision initiatives which are "coordinated to death" by their adversaries with infinite patience. To avoid this fate, the proposal's initiators will make (...) every reasonable concession within the process of negative coordination in order to submit the proposal to the departmental leadership or cabinet without any open controversy. (...) In this given organisation structure and coordination pattern *more information should initially result in the discovery of previously latent conflicts of interest*' (emphasis JF, Scharpf 1976: 236).

These rising conflicts based upon the basic feature of the new Planning System, namely the provision of additional information, but were also echoed in executive decision-making. On the one hand, conflicts occurred within the Chancellery, mainly because seconded departmental officials in the mirror sections repeated concerns by their parent ministries against the Planning Division (Flohr 1972: 61, 63; Mayntz 1980: 165; Metzler 2005b: 345). Partly, they perceived planning as an inherent element of their own role as transmission belt between the federal ministries and the government headquarters (Seemann 1974: 83; Pokorni 2005: 244). In addition, they criticised the access of the large

²⁸ Ehmke was strive for becoming the next Chancellor candidate and therefore heavily criticised to act like a 'sub-chancellor' (Flohr 1970: 3; Morkel 1970: 42).

²⁹ In addition, the Finance Minister was afraid to lose his 'information monopoly' in budgetary negotiations (Permantier 1978: 268; Süß 2003: 364, FN 144). Accordingly, the Planning Division had particular difficult relations with the sections in the Finance Ministry responsible for medium-term financial planning in the Division for General Affairs (ID22; Dyson 1975: 168).

number of external scientific staff in the Planning Division to the 'arcane knowledge' of the federal government (Dyson 1975: 167; Knoll 2004: 204-5; Seifert 2010: 85). As a response, the other line divisions in the Chancellery started to side-line the Planning Division, also facilitated by the latter's isolated physical location (Dyson 1975: 167).

On the other hand, conflicts with ministry officials became also apparent over time. Initially, ministerial officials were rather open to planning, albeit more from a technocratic perspective (Flohr 1970: 13). In addition, ministerial officials were convinced that the Planning Division had a considerable influence because of its direct interactions with cabinet ministers (Mayntz/Scharpf 1975: 109). Besides, the fact that the Planning Division mostly interacted with ministry officials through the planning delegates as intermediaries (Dyson 1975: 167) lowered departmental resistance. Although initial attempts to formalise the role of planning delegates had failed,³⁰ they gained considerable status due to their 'filter function' for submitting departmental policy proposals to the new Planning System and other aspects of their work such as the regular meetings of all planning delegates in the Chancellery, headed by the Planning Division head and informing the meeting of Administrative State Secretaries preparing cabinet (Bebermeyer 1970: 724; Hildebrandt 1971: 78; Schatz 1975: 312-3; see also Dyson 1973: 354; Reese 1975b: 270). Yet, although this committee of planning delegates provided an arena for 'testing cautiously ministries' reactions and channelling new projects in the Chancellery's area of influence' (Reese 1975b: 271),³¹ the ChefBK never applied the possibility to postpone issues on the cabinet agenda that lacked the approval of planning delegates (Süß 2003: 366).

Soon, though, civil servants started to criticise the scientific approach of the Planning Division and its 'inability to turn theoretical concerns in practical use' (Dyson 1973: 357-8). Moreover, they criticised that the Planning Division's members lacked practical administrative experience of 'how the machine operated' (Dyson 1975: 167), down to the fact that their papers were less easy readable than those from other line divisions in the Chancellery (Murswieck 1975: 82; Lutterbeck 1975; Mayntz 1980: 165; König 1986: 35; Ehmke 1994: 115). Arguably, these critics responded to the distinct composition of the Planning Division and its members' previous professional occupation outside central government. But their rejections against the *Planungsverbund* were more general, i.e. planning activities were not at the core of ministerial routine tasks and thus rejected because of their alien nature (Murswieck 1975: 43). As such, the Planning Division did not succeed in building up 'a consensus with the actors concerned or at least perceived as legitimate by actors involved' (Scharpf 1974b: 9; Schatz 1975: 315). Hence, the Planning Division was nicknamed 'faith, love, and hope' (SZ, 30 October 2003: 15, FAZ, 23 August 2005: 6), expressing the discrepancies between its own expectations and the perceptions of its role among ministerial officials (ID06).

Reflecting these critics, the status of planning delegates declined and line officials started to criticise their 'aura of dominating the whole ministry with imperial planning' (Grottian 1972: 136; Flohr 1970: 12; Dyson 1973: 358; Brauswetter 1976: 42, FN 160;

³⁰ A task description formulated by the chancellery was 'generally approved' (Süß 2003: FN 91) by the Administrative State Secretaries but not formally decided upon in cabinet (AdsD, 1/RJA000015, Andreas Jentzsch, Brief an Reimut Jochimsen, 02 February 1970; see also Bebermeyer 1985: 50, Seifert 2010: 93).

³¹ BAK, B136/4777, 'Protokoll der ersten Sitzung der Planungsbeauftragten am 28 November 1969'.

Permantier 1978: 272). As a consequence, the planning delegates faced increasingly problems to gather the information for the datasheets of the Planning System.³² In turn, they lacked own organisational support to compensate the increasing reluctance of civil servants to contribute to the Planning System (Grottian 1972, 1974; see also Theis 1970: 83).³³ Accordingly, they demanded from the Planning Division that some policy projects are 'more explicitly declared as its core interest' while arguing towards their parent ministries that 'the Chancellery wants it this way' (Reese 1975b: 271). However, the Planning Division did not respond to their requests and, in turn, engaged in additional activities to formulate policy priorities for the medium- and long-term (see below). Eventually, the planning delegates departed from their initial cross-cutting planning perspectives and followed the traditional departmentalist view:

'Most of them tried to use the planning system in the usual manner for realising departmental objectives or at least obstruct that in one of the planning delegates meetings something would be decided negatively for their ministry.' (Süß 2003: 377)

Yet, the new Planning System did force ministerial officials to *think* more strongly about their policy proposals and underlying premises e.g. in terms of time schedule, financial implications, or unintended side effects (Schatz 1975: 303; Seifert 2010: 95). As such, it increased the 'planning consciousness' (Dyson 1975: 168) of departmental officials (Grottian 1972, 1974; Bebermeyer 1976: 83, 1985: 61-2; Hunemörder 2004: 13).

As a response to the growing tensions with the federal ministries, the committee of planning delegates set up inter-ministerial working groups for distinct issues related to the Planning System, including e.g. the reporting system of the federal government, social indicators,³⁴ long-term functional planning, or the further development of the datasheet (Permantier 1978: 271). These working groups were supposed to enlarge the number of officials working closely with the Planning Division and thus strengthening the Planning System across central government. However, after the general election in 1972, the ministries succeeded in rejecting a continuation of these inter-ministerial working groups (ibid.).

Also the expansion of the Planning System to the *Länder* level in order to compensate the declining cooperation of federal ministries did not improve the overall impact of the system on government policy-making (Dyson 1973: 358; Reese 1975b: 271-3; Schatz 1973: 40, 1975: 313; König 1976; see also Scharpf 1969). In fact, it reiterated underlying party-political conflicts by incorporating *Länder* governed by the SPD that supported the new social-liberal coalition at federal level and *Länder* governed by the CDU that feared the expanding planning activities may favour the federal government (Reese 1975b: 271-4; Schatz 1973: 40). In addition, it increased conflicts between *Länder* focussing on different planning issues as well as between the federal and the *Länder* level (Scharpf 1972b: 105; Ruck 2000: 390). After two years in operation the PRVR concluded that

³² AdsD, 1/RJAC000029, 'Erster Bericht der Planungsbeauftragten an die Staatssekretäre zu Organisation und Kapazitätsproblemen der Planung in den Bundesministerien', 22 February 1972.

³³ Grottian conducted a comprehensive study on the dominant understandings of planning at federal ministries (1972, 1974).

³⁴ The Working Group Social Indicators was led by the Minister for Labour and Social Affairs, screening official statistics for data on the current and future situation of German society (Bartholomäi 1974: 184).

'[t]he early coordination of departmental projects oriented towards the objectives in the governmental programme was neither promoted by the datasheet procedure, nor the institution of the planning delegate in the desired manner. Instead, the early coordination is still conducted by the procedures following the Rules of Procedure, mainly oriented towards policy issues.' (PRVR 1972, Vol I: 12)

Besides, the Planning Division organised rather intensive media coverage of the new Planning System – in order to avoid the impression of secret planning (e.g. Jochimsen 1969; Theis 1969a, 1969b, 1970; Flohr 1970: 3; Schatz 1975, 1978b; Müller 1978; Permantier 1978).

After the general election in 1972, the Planning System was rearranged in order to regain its initial relevance for government policy-making (Reese 1975b: 275; Süß 2004: 344). On the one hand, its *functional* orientation changed, i.e. the general understanding of planning was reformulated towards a less demanding variant in terms of assessing the status quo and forecasting future action (Derlien 1978: 86; Bebermeyer 1985: 56-63; Süß 2003: 374). Yet, the Planning Division presented a completely overhauled datasheet containing nearly twice as many indicators as before (Mäding 1987: 1050-1). In addition, the Planning Division identified key areas for which it wanted to conduct more detailed planning (Pilz 1976: 176-7). On the other hand, its *operational* orientation was adjusted, e.g. the frequency of meetings of the planning delegates decreased and they met only twice a year – reflecting their demise (ID06; Permantier 1978: 270). In turn, the Planning Division acted less as head of a planning hierarchy and more as a background coordinator (Dyson 1973: 356). Eventually, the Planning System turned into 'a book-keeping of ministries' activities without any policy influence' (Ronge 1977a: 81):

'Even with a broader information basis and better planning procedures, political decisions will always favour and disfavour different interests to a different degree and will therefore be assessed differently by the actors involved. Policy-making remains a contentious process which includes power and needs consensus before decision proposals can be realised. These basic conditions of policy-making cannot be eliminated by new information processing and planning, and can only be changed to a small extent.' (Scharpf 1976: 231)

4.2 The Planning Division writing a 'ship's log'³⁵ for cabinet

In addition to the new Planning System, the Planning Division formulated government reform programmes to support the new government's policy agenda. Already after the general election in 1969, the Planning Division started to register all departmental projects related to the government declaration of 1969 to identify the priority fields of action for the government (Süß 2003: 367; Seifert 2010: 101). The key objective was to enhance the policy coherence (Flohr 1972: 57; Dyson 1973: 354; Seiler 1981: 245):

'It is not an "over-planning" or to impose a conception of political objectives from the government programme onto departmental planning or a theoretical "planning from the top", it is rather an attempt to coordinate the sectoral and cross-cutting plans with their functions, their contexts, their levels of detail, their time horizons, their underlying assumptions, and methodological approaches to align these different plans along rather than confronting each other in order to realise the governmental programme' (Jochimsen/Treuner 1972: 43)

³⁵ (Jochimsen 1972h: 39).

Together with reports specifying the government declaration (see below), the Planning Division drafted a government work programme for the second half of 1970 on the basis of its registry (Jochimsen 1971c: 468-9; Flohr 1972: 57; Dyson 1973: 354, Bebermeyer 1974: 68; Schatz 1978a: 248; Böhret 1990: 124).³⁶ The 'Key Reform Programme' (*Reformschwerpunkteprogramm*) comprised 27 reform areas, further differentiated as 65 core and peripheral reforms (BT-Drs. VI/1953 [1971]; Ehmke 1973: 328):

'As peripheral reforms, we refer to those reforms which are not important enough, which are not important for achieving the Key Reform Programme or which are probably achievable after 1973. (...) To me it seems indispensable to define only those projects as core reforms which can be securely achieved until 1973' (Jochimsen [1970]).³⁷

The Key Reform Programme was presented to cabinet in October 1970, illustrating for each project its status quo, its objectives announced in the government declaration, its time horizon, budget, and a general assessment of its political importance (Ehmke 1973: 330; Reese 1975a; Seifert 2010: 104).³⁸ Thus, the Key Reform Programme served as

'a kind of ship's log with exact information about what, when, and how the government steam ship can substantially coordinate and financially store aboard until the end of the legislative term.' (Jochimsen 1971a: 44)

At a retreat, the cabinet discussed the Key Reform Programme and selected five key reform areas – not those with long-term relevance, rather those with short-term electoral appeal (DER SPIEGEL, 06/1971: 32; Dyson 1974a: 369, 1975: 159).³⁹ Nevertheless, cabinet approved the programme in October 1970 and also agreed to the scheduling of the reforms, all cabinet ministers assured to inform the Chancellery on the current status of projects in their responsibility every three months (Seifert 2010: 105). This cabinet approval was a major threat for the Finance Ministry's prerogative in financial planning (Dyson 1973: 354, 1975: 168; Scharpf 2007: 143). Therefore, the Planning Division decided to assess the financial aspects of the programme in a rather clandestine manner without involving the responsible sections in the Ministry of Finance.⁴⁰ In addition, the Planning Division was designated to review the Key Reform Programme in terms of policy and financial implications on an annual basis (Jochimsen 1971c: 468; Ehmke 1973: 327; Seifert 2010: 105).⁴¹

Most other federal ministries responded to the drafting of the reform programme by submitting all kinds of policy proposals, resulting in a 'reform inflation' that was rather difficult to deal with (Ehmke 1994: 116). In addition, many ministries send almost completed reform proposals to the Chancellery – which could not be changed easily (Schatz 1973: 35; Bebermeyer 1974: 60). Other proposals lacked the necessary assessment

³⁶ AdsD, 1/RJAC000016, Hartmut Bebermeyer, 'Papier zur Arbeit der Planungsabteilung im Bundeskanzleramt', 07 December 1970.

³⁷ AdsD, 1/RJAC000036, Reimut Jochimsen, Brief an die Planungsbeauftragten der Bundesministerien, 17 September 1970.

³⁸ BAK, B 136/4778, Reformschwerpunkteprogramm, final version of February 1971.

³⁹ AdsD, 1/RJAC000036, Horst Ehmke, Brief an die beamteten Staatssekretäre der Bundesministerien, 02 October 1970.

⁴⁰ AdsD, 1/RJAC000036, Hartmut Bebermeyer, Brief an Reimut Jochimsen, 18 September 1970.

⁴¹ The latter was perceived as an additional attempt to integrate the chancellery's task planning with the financial planning conducted at the Ministry of Finance.

of financial implications or a detailed time plan to be considered for the government work programme (Bebermeyer 1985: 57; Reese 1975a).

The first Key Reform Programme had been prepared without involving the planning delegates – in order to avoid a selection of priorities based on departmental perspectives and to check the reforms against the returning of the first ministries' data sheets (Schatz 1974: 24). The Planning Division perceived it as a success since it presented 'the first big visible output of the reform of government and administration with regard to planning and early coordination' (Jochimsen 1971c: 169). However, this revived the frictions between the Planning Division and federal ministries (Schatz 1975: 314, 1978a: 249, 1985: 35-6; Ehmke 1994: 114-5; Scharpf 2007: 143; Seifert 2010: 102-3), the former arguing that

'the reform programme (...) does not meet the initial claim to contain a substantive, financially secure and holistic description of the key reforms. Rather it became apparent in different ways that the requirements to ensure the implementation of key reforms have been underestimated'.⁴²

As a consequence, the ministries re-formalised their interactions with the Chancellery, in many cases from thereon not planning delegates, but Administrative State Secretaries or even Ministers decided which departmental project would be sent to the Chancellery at which preparatory stage (Schatz 1973: 35-6, 1978b: 13; Seifert 2010: 103). In addition, the opposition became aware of the confidential Key Reform Programme and issued two major interpellations consuming many of the division's resources (BT-Drs. VI/1953 [1971], BT-Drs. VI/2709 [1971]; Jochimsen 1971c: 468; Schatz 1978a: 249; Süß 2003: 370).

Nevertheless, the Key Reform Programme was renewed seven times until 1972 (Bebermeyer 1974: 65-6; DER SPIEGEL, 29/1971: 26-7; Schatz 1978a: 249; Mäding 1987: 1050; Süß 2003: 370). After the general election in 1972, it was not updated anymore (Bebermeyer 1985: 56). Instead, the Planning Division turned its attention towards long-term planning, responding also to activities of the Finance Ministry to assess the budgetary demands of all federal ministries in the long-term (Schatz 1973: 38).⁴³ The Planning Division explained its shift towards long-term planning by arguing that long-term developments may also affect short- and medium-term policy decisions and thus such a focus would increase its influence in government policy-making (Reese 1975b: 270; Schatz 1975: 313, 1978a: 250; Seifert 2010: 109, 113). In addition, these activities were assumed to put the Planning Division 'a little bit aside the spectacular daily policy business operating planning system' (Jochimsen 1972e: 1183) and thus reducing the critics by federal ministries. Simultaneously, this focus on long-term planning was echoed by various activities within the Social Democratic Party (Jochimsen 1972a; Bebermeyer 1985: 12; Süß 2003: 370).

Accordingly, the Planning Division was asked by the ChefBK and the Chancellor to prepare a 'Complete Problem Analysis of Public Responsibilities 1976-85' (*Gesamtsproblemanalyse öffentlicher Aufgaben 1976-85*; Jochimsen 1971b: 2139; Ehmke

⁴² BAK, B136/4779, 'Entwurf des Berichts der Planungsbeauftragten über Stand und Umsetzung des Reformschwerpunkteprogramms seit 1973', 15 February 1971.

⁴³ The Ministry of Finance used its chairmanship in the Financial Planning Council (*Finanzplanungsrat*) that was created with the StWG [1967] and coordinated financial and expenditure policy between the federal level, the *Länder*, and the municipalities (Schatz 1974: 25; König 1986: 42).

1973: 332; Grottian 1977: 81; Böhret 1990: 124). This analysis aimed to give 'long-term orientations and decisions about political objectives at least equal relevance as traditional regulatory (...) activities of the state' (Jochimsen [1971];⁴⁴ Ehmke 1971: 2027; see also Dyson 1975: 160; Süß 2003: 363). As such, the long-term planning exercise aimed 'to break the tyranny of the annual budget and open greater room for political manoeuvre and choice' (Dyson 1973: 355-6). In turn, it was supposed to reduce departmentalist thinking and support inter-departmental policy-making, unifying the time horizons⁴⁵ and planning methods of federal ministries.

The long-term planning time horizon was deliberately set for the period from 1976 until 1985 in order to avoid resistance from federal ministries due to their existing planning for the current legislative period (Schatz 1974: 25-6; Mäding 1987: 1050). However, it aimed only at policy fields of particular importance and/or with high public expenditure, including structural policy, research, technology and innovation policy, governmental organisation, and resource planning (Flohr 1972: 58-9; Süß 2003: 371, FN 119). As the Planning Division head pointed out:

'At first, we will conduct a problem analysis about governmental tasks for the years 1976 to 1985. It will start with an inventory of those tasks and resources set out already in plans, laws, etc. beyond the medium-term perspective. Such an inventory should contain a listing of all existing programmes and their resource requests. Common or different objectives, assumptions and methods of previous, usually medium-term plans are to be stressed as well as gaps in the planning.' (Jochimsen 1971b, quoted by Flohr 1972: 58)

In practice, the problem analysis was conducted in three stages. First, the Planning Division gathered information about the departmental programmes and their demands in terms of resources as well as their underlying planning assumptions and methods, also drawing upon information in the new Planning System.⁴⁶ Second, a 'deficiency analysis' of these plans was conducted, critically reviewing their coherence in terms of goal assumptions and resources. Lastly, in areas of recognised difficulty, the Planning Division developed alternative programmes (Dyson 1973: 355).

In addition, seven inter-ministerial project groups were set up by the committee of planning delegates to address distinct long-term challenges (Jochimsen 1971c: 471; Flohr 1972: 58-9; Bebermeyer 1974: 74-5; Schatz 1974: 26; Reese 1975b: 271; Seiler 1981: 243; Mäding 1987: 1050; Süß 2003: 371). The project groups were organised across departmental responsibilities⁴⁷ and comprised approx. twelve members, including Planning Division members, planning delegates, and six to seven departmental secondees from affected ministries (Flohr 1972: 58-9; Reese 1975b: 271; Seiler 1981: 243). In addition, a full-time secretary supported each project group (Flohr 1972: 58).

⁴⁴ BAK, B 136/14072, Reimut Jochimsen, 'Überlegungen zur mittel- und langfristigen Aufgabenplanung und deren Einfluss auf die Vorbereitung der Haushaltsentscheidungen', Presentation to the Budget Committee of the European Community, 15 May 1971.

⁴⁵ BAK, B 136/4773, Planungsabteilung, 'Überlegungen zur Langfristplanung', 04 December 1970.

⁴⁶ BAK, B 136/4778, Protokoll der 24. Sitzung der Planungsbeauftragten, 11 December 1970.

⁴⁷ These project groups addressed the following policy issues: life provision (*Lebensvorsorge*), structural policy, regulatory and distributive policy, research, technology, and innovation policy, governmental organisation, development aid, and resources (Flohr 1972: 59; Pilz 1976: 178).

This long-term planning activity raised severe critics by ministerial officials, also because its underlying request for more 'blue skies' thinking about potential threats and problems for the next decade was not at the heart of their usual activities (Schatz 1978a: 250-1; Süß 2003: 371). Besides, they feared that it may jeopardise their own achievements:

'Several ministries seemed to fear that the working groups with their independent mandate in order to avoid political-tactical considerations may expound the problems of existing programmes and their failures, may wake "sleeping dogs", or may put hard negotiated compromises with interest groups or other federal ministries at risk.' (Schatz 1974: 26)

As a consequence, cabinet ministers became reluctant to send officials in these project groups (Schatz 1975: 312, 1978a: 251; Seiler 1981: 243-4). Hence, the project group on resources was unable to work for several months because the Ministry for Economic Affairs rejected to send a civil servant with economic training who could conduct the relevant calculations (Süß 2003: 371). These lacking methodological skills were also responsible for little progress in other project groups (Bebermeyer 1976: 85; Scharpf 1976: 230). Besides, the Planning Division members were only working on their project group part-time, thus their capacity to discuss these issues in detail and to influence their project groups was rather limited (Flohr 1972: 58-9).

The interim reports by the different project groups delivered in May 1971 outlined problems rather unconnected and vaguely – and lacked any emphasis on policy priorities (Schatz 1974: 27). Consequently, the formal expectations on long-term planning were downsized, referring from thereon to an analysis which would *not* formulate new programme objectives or new policies in order to avoid any prejudgement for the on-going long-term planning at federal level (Schatz 1974: 27, 1978a: 251; Seifert 2010: 117).⁴⁸

Moreover, as reaction to the disappointing intermediary results, the project groups were 'federalised' in June 1971 by including also *Länder* representatives (Ehmke 1973: 333; Schatz 1973: 40; Reese 1975b: 272; Mäding 1987: 1050).⁴⁹

'A 15 years horizon is rather difficult to imagine, and hence they [*Länder* governments, JF] said "Well, we can analyse it together, we will get along with each other", but clearly it had a party-political bias right from the beginning.' (ID26)

Given the reluctance of CDU-governed *Länder* to participate, the downsized project groups were scaled down even more by eliminating the term 'coordination' from the project description and designating the project groups to formulate 'guidelines' (Süß 2003: 372).⁵⁰ Moreover, the substantial preparation of project group meetings was transferred from the Planning Division to other line divisions in the Chancellery (Flohr 1972: 59).

After the general election in 1972, the inter-ministerial working groups for long-term planning were abandoned, partly caused by the increasing conflicts between the two major parties that were echoed in conflicts between departmental officials in these groups (ID06; Bebermeyer 1985: 57; Schatz 1978a: 251; Süß 2003: 372). As a substitute, the Planning Division established an internal project group to conduct task planning with a time horizon

⁴⁸ Some SPD-led *Länder*, including Hamburg, Hesse, and West Berlin, experimented already with sophisticated planning techniques and inspired also the federal level (Scharpf 1972b: 104; Dyson 1973: 358, 1975: 158).

⁴⁹ BAK, B 136/4779, Protokoll der 30. Sitzung der Planungsbeauftragten, 18 March 1971.

⁵⁰ BAK, B 136/4779, Protokoll der 24. Sitzung der Planungsbeauftragten, 18 March 1971.

of 15 years to prepare an integrated work programme for the government (Süß 2003: 369; Seifert 2010: 123).⁵¹ However, the project group was abolished in early 1973, eventually terminating the Planning Division's activities in drafting government reform programmes altogether (Metzler 2005b: 372). The Planning Division concentrated upon the planning of very few policy initiatives (Süß 2003: 369) – albeit rather reluctantly:

'We had to follow up the failed exercise of the government's problem analysis by updating the so-called "V-list" [V as initial of the German word *Vorhaben* (projects), JF]. I always thought that this is a waste of time and was very hesitant to invest any resources into that – but you have always some sort of "junk in the trunk".' (ID06)

4.3 The Planning Division preparing 'script[s] for policy-making':⁵²

Policy briefs, governmental reports, and government declarations

Next to the *Planungsverbund* and the closely related medium- and long-term planning, the Planning Division increased its engagement in (1) preparing policy briefs, mostly commenting on departmental cabinet submissions or upcoming projects according to the Planning System, (2) governmental reports, and (3) government declarations.

(1) Already under Jochimsen, the Planning Division prepared policy briefs on distinct policy areas such as environment, health, education, and urban planning (Jochimsen 1971c: 470, 1972b). Whereas the former two can be regarded as 'cross-cutting' areas that were handled by different ministries at that time, the latter two were policy areas with a considerable legacy in sectoral planning (see Jochimsen/Treuner 1972). Accordingly, they were perceived as particularly suitable for providing policy advice corresponding to the new governmental planning. Mostly, these briefs provided additional background information to the datasheet overviews for the ChefBK (ID11).

However, the Planning Division became really active in preparing policy briefs after the general election in 1972, when the ChefBK and the Planning Division head had changed (ID11; Bebermeyer 1984: 57-8). Put differently, the Planning System with its rather technical information and orientation remained, but the Planning Division accompanied it with policy papers – echoing a redefinition of planning as 'thinking ahead' (ID15; Schunck 1975; Reese 1978: 28). More importantly, the range of issues addressed by these policy briefs was not limited towards policy areas that were regarded as particularly cross-cutting and/or 'planning-friendly' (Bebermeyer 1985: 57). Most policy briefs were prepared for the ChefBK or the Chancellor and informed often inter-ministerial decision-making, e.g. the regular meetings of Administrative State Secretaries preparing cabinet (ID06, ID09).

In various retreats, the division discussed the selection of issues to prepare policy briefs as well as the key evidence to be gathered and the major recommendations (ID06, ID15). Each policy brief analysed the potential threats and risks in the current departmental policy in a particular area – and therefore departed on several occasions from departmental views (Pilz 1976: 176-7). More importantly, the policy briefs illustrated different alternatives – rather untypical in the German ministerial bureaucracy, which is used to

⁵¹ AdsD, 1/RJAC000053, Michael Bertrams, 'Notiz der Mitglieder der Arbeitsgruppe Mittelfristplanung', 24 August 1972.

⁵² Müller, quoted by (DER SPIEGEL, 09/1973: 28).

present one solution already pre-cooked with the responsible executive actors (Bebermeyer 1984: FN 28). In practice, policy briefs were prepared in three procedural variants:

'There were generally three ways of working: The first variant was to formulate your own proposal without any particular reference to anything going on inside the federal ministries. (...) The second variant was to write something as a follow-up to departmental proposals. That was really about providing a new perspective on issues, proposing new ideas. (...) The third variant was to add something to a pre-existing departmental proposal. We were asked for these additions by the ChefBK or sometimes recommended them ourselves.' (ID06)

The number of policy briefs outlining new policy ideas was much lower than the number of policy briefs commenting on departmental proposals that had been identified by the Planning Division e.g. through the Planning System or were on the agenda of the regular meetings chaired by the ChefBK that prepared cabinet.⁵³ In turn, the occasions to provide completely new policy ideas or adding a new policy idea to existing cabinet submissions in order to force the responsible federal ministries into a certain policy direction was rather moderate.

The majority of such policy papers were drafted 'after consideration with the federal ministries' (Müller, quoted by DER SPIEGEL, 9/1973: 28; see also Dyson 1975: 159; Pokorni 2005: 241). But in practice this consideration was mostly conducted via the mirror sections at the Chancellery acting as transmission belts between the Planning Division and the federal ministries. More generally, the Planning Division also relied upon the mirror sections because it aimed to receive information from the federal ministries while avoiding debates with ministerial officials, reasoning that its own capabilities could not counteract the latter's expertise and it was more likely to cause departmental resistance at an earlier stage than the preparatory meetings for cabinet. Put differently: The Planning Division assumed that an early direct involvement of the federal ministries increased the possibility that their policy ideas would be rejected. By including the mirror sections, federal ministries could interact with their 'usual access points' inside the Chancellery and were also perceived as less reluctant to provide the necessary information (ID06, ID14). As such, the Planning Division turned with its policy briefs towards 'intellectual persuasion':

'A forceful coordinating role for the Chancellery planners was gradually displaced by the idea of broad background planning at the centre. Intellectual persuasion rather than hierarchical control was the order of the day.' (Dyson 1975: 167)

Yet, the federal ministries were informed about these policy briefs at the latest during the preparatory meeting for cabinet and tried regularly to change their impetus or downsize their scope (ID14). Often, the federal ministries had either already assumed that a certain departmental policy initiative may get a second assessment by the Planning Division or had received information about such a brief by their mirror section in the Chancellery, and thus prepared an apparent brief to counter the potential arguments of the Planning Division. Moreover, even if policy briefs were put on the agenda of cabinet meetings, they could also be rejected by cabinet ministers, mostly referring to the departmental principle and their prerogative on policy initiatives in their portfolio. Yet, if the ChefBK could

⁵³ Among these are e.g. the successful rejection of a departmental proposal from the Minister of Interior to pay a bonus for each newborn or the new regulation of abortion law which had both been informed upon by the planning system, thus really working as an early warning system (ID06, ID15).

convince the responsible Administrative State Secretaries already during the preparatory meeting that an adjustment of the departmental policy proposal complying with the brief would get the Chancellor's support, cabinet ministers might also agree to these suggestions (ID06, ID14). In turn, only if the Chancellor explicitly favoured the policy brief in cabinet and asked the responsible cabinet colleague to follow up these lines, it was possible to implement its ideas. One of the key examples for a successful policy brief prepared by the Planning Division during these few years until the next general election was the introduction of the 'car-free Sunday' during the oil crisis in November 1973, responding to shortage in energy supply (ID06; Metzler 2005b: 412).

(2) A relevant advisory product of the Planning Division in government policy-making was related to the preparation of governmental reports (*Berichte der Bundesregierung*). Again, the new Chancellor had already referred in his government declaration to the importance of governmental reports as relevant means to clarify and specify the elements of machinery of government reforms (Flohr 1970: 8-9):

'The federal government will (...) announce in the following year, in addition to this declaration to Parliament and the general public, its plans and projects regarding internal reforms and issue single reports.' (Brandt, 28 October 1969)

All governmental reports were prepared by the federal ministries (ID06, ID09). Initially, the Planning Division aimed to use these reports as planning instruments (Bebermeyer 1974: 78-9), but that turned out as not feasible (Derlien 1975a: 46). However the Planning Division succeeded by engaging the planning delegates to set up a 'Working Council Governmental Reports' (*Arbeitskreis Berichte der Bundesregierung*) in order to direct the number and scope of reports to be delivered by the federal ministries (Derlien 1975a: 45, FN 4; Ismayr 1990).

As a result, the number of governmental reports increased considerably under the new government (Bebermeyer 1974: 78-9; Derlien 1975: 45; Linck 1979). Whereas the increase of reports on single issues was partly also caused by the federal ministries and their interest to assess their newly initiated policy programmes, the reports on policy areas grew particularly because of the planning delegates' engagement to harmonise the information gathering and methods (ID09). Already during the first one and a half years of the Planning Division in operation, the number of reports on selected policy areas increased from two to twelve (Flohr 1970: FN 5; Metzler 2005b: 363).

In practice, the Planning Division benefitted from these governmental reports because they provided additional information about departmental activities – and opportunities to steer their progress (Derlien 1975a: 47). In turn, the publication of governmental reports disciplined ministers and ministries because of the increased transparency, especially because of its information function to the Parliament (Linck 1979). However, these governmental reports described the status quo and outlined future areas of policy-making instead of providing policy recommendations. Nevertheless, they forced federal ministries to prepare a formal document on the status quo in a particular policy area and thus also to identify areas of future policy attention (ID15).

(3) A final mean to influence government policy-making was the Planning Division's lead responsibility in drafting government declarations, which are traditionally prepared in

close cooperation with federal ministries submitting their upcoming initiatives in the remit of the declaration (Scharpf 1974a: 63; Böhret 1991: 70, 77). In general, government declarations fulfil a 'steering function' by presenting 'future government policies' (König 1986: 44), but are often rather vague and offer only 'selective impulses' (Böhret 1979: 73; Wagener 1973; Diederich 1976: 70). In turn, policy announcements in the government declaration enjoy a particular priority in central government (Ellwein 1970: 60; Wagener 1973: 14; Scharpf 1974a: 63; Böhret 1979). Accordingly, drafting government declarations provided the Planning Division with an opportunity to attune their policy ideas with ministries' proposals (Süß 2003: 375). But government declarations did not put concrete requests on ministerial policy-making (Scharpf 1974a: 63; Böhret 1979: 67-8).

The new Planning Division was not fully established in order to provide input to the first government declaration of Willy Brandt (Flohr 1970: 6; Wilke 2010). The result was widely perceived as a catalogue of 'departmental hopes and desires, often imprecise and non-operational' (Dyson 1973: 351). Yet, the next government declaration prepared by the fully operative Planning Division in 1972 referred more to the political-ethical basics of future government policies rather than to concrete projects, mainly expressing the government's activities towards 'finishing the reforms' and 'reforms that cost nothing' (Böhret 1979: 64; Scharpf 1974a: 62; see also *DER SPIEGEL*, 2/1973: 17). In contrast, subsequent government declarations were more strongly based upon the Planning System, which increased their detailedness (Bebermeyer 1976: 85; Wilke 2010: 97),⁵⁴ as the then Personal Assistant of the Chancellor summarised it: 'The government declaration of 1969 was quoted frequently by us, whereas the government declaration of 1973 will be quoted by our political enemies' (Wilke 2010: 102).

4.4 The Planning Division as 'force for reform and modernization'?⁵⁵

Already in its first government declaration noted above, the new Chancellor Brandt stressed that the 'government must begin with itself if it talks about reforms' (Brandt, 28 October 1969). Following previous ambitions, the SPD plead for machinery of government reforms – understood as 'political processes and not as "technical" reorganisations' (Schatz 1975: 312, 1978b: 11). To link the new Planning System led by the Planning Division in the Chancellery with these 'internal reforms' (see Schmidt 1978), the second group in the division was responsible for general issues of central government organisation and its head became deputy head of the re-established PRVR (Bebermeyer 1970: 723-4; Hildebrandt 1971: 82; Flohr 1972: 60; Süß 2004: 336).⁵⁶

The work programme of the PRVR was formally decided by the reinstated cabinet committee on restructuring government and administration (Bebermeyer 1970: EN 54). In practice it met only eight times between 1969 and 1975 (BT-Drs. 7/2887 [1974]) and thus the committee of division heads guided mostly the PRVR's work programme (Lepper

⁵⁴ Wilke (2010: 94-102) provides a very detailed account of the preparation of the government declaration in January 1973, including the contribution of Reimut Jochimsen and his division.

⁵⁵ (Dyson 1973: 353).

⁵⁶ After the general election, it was discussed whether inter-departmental project groups are covered by the principle of 'organisational continuity'; the PRVR was formally re-established (Lepper 1976a: 480).

1976a: 486-7; Müller 1978: 68-9; Süß 2004: 346).⁵⁷ However, the low interest of these division heads resulted in the PRVR becoming rather autonomous in formulating its work programme (Lepper 1976a: 481-2; Hegelau 1977: 173; Schatz 1978b: 14-5).

As a result of the initial rows between the Minister of Interior and the ChefBK over the project group's formal affiliation,⁵⁸ the liaison office for the PRVR was set in the Ministry of Interior, responsible for the legal supervision, whereas the Planning Division conducted the substantial supervision (ID11). After 1972, the liaison office was transferred to the Planning Division, becoming also formally responsible for preparing the answers to appellations in Parliament about the government's attempts in machinery of government reforms (see BT-Drs. 7/2887 [1974]; Lehnguth/Vogelgesang 1988: 572).

More importantly, the Planning Division as key actor in the new Planning System was widely perceived among departmental officials as closely linked with the government's reform programme – and with the PRVR as external advisory body to support and advice on these reforms (Flohr 1972: 67; Bebermeyer 1984: 57). The Planning Division contributed mainly to the PRVR's work by proposing issues for their work programme or trying to circumvent others (ID15; Metzler 2005b: 385). In addition, the Planning Division benefitted from the projects undertaken by the PRVR as they often included next to PRVR members also external academics and departmental officials (Lepper 1976a: 488; Hegelau 1977: 178-85). Accordingly, the report teams could be used by the Planning Division to further strengthen the planning conscience but also to link its own planning attempts stronger with machinery of government reforms.

However, from the 48 PRVR reports only 13 addressed planning aspects (BT-Drs. 7/2887[1974]: 78-9; Pflaumer/Scholz 1979: 107).⁵⁹ An analysis of the PRVR's major reports and recommendations shows that the PRVR's focus changed over time (see Table E.3): Until 1972, the group was oriented towards machinery of government reforms; afterwards it concentrated on reports for single ministries, often answering demands from cabinet ministers (ID06; Hegelau 1977: 171, 186-7).⁶⁰

In fact, the written advisory work by the PRVR, which was submitted to the cabinet committee, was formally announced as 'experience reports' (*Erfahrungsberichte*) in order to downplay its relevance (Hegelau 1977: 175). This shift from advising on government organisational reforms towards internal ministry issues led to an increasing perception among cabinet members and departmental officials that PRVR members are 'canvassers of commercial consultancies' (Müller 1978: 70; Karehnke 1974a; Derlien 1975b; Lepper 1976a: 488).⁶¹ Others perceived the PRVR as 'too abstract and too theoretical' (Metzler 2005b: 386; ID06, ID15).

⁵⁷ This modus operandi was similar to the first months of its existence in 1969 (see Mauch 1969).

⁵⁸ In turn, the Minister of Interior succeeded with his demand that only departmental officials would prepare the project group's reports, resulting in extensive annexes with references to the scientific group members as well as the commissioning of various parts to external experts.

⁵⁹ The cabinet committee could not agree to publish these reports and therefore the PRVR ordered several hundred copies and distributed them upon request (Schatz 1977: 213).

⁶⁰ After 1972, the PRVR's head and three senior members left and it was equipped with more organisational support staff (Lepper 1976a: 481; Hegelau 1977: 169).

⁶¹ In some occasions, the PRVR members were not only formulating the reports issuing different reform proposals, but were also explicitly involved in implementing them (Mayntz 1978: 45-7).

Table E.3 Key recommendations of selected PRVR reports, 1969-1975

report/author(s)	key recommendation issues
<i>machinery of government</i>	
1969 PRVR: First Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • new portfolio allocation • introduction of an Early Warning System (planning system)
1971 Naschold et al.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • multi-annual budgeting
1972 PRVR: Second Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • agencification at federal level (functional disaggregation, without an explicit notion of contract management but proposing a limitation of substantial supervision (<i>Fachaufsicht</i>))
Friauf	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • centralisation of human resource management at federal level
1972 PRVR: Third Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • creation of a 'Cabinet Office for Planning and Organisation' • reform of the cabinet committee system • creation of a 'Leadership Office' (<i>Leitungsbüro</i>) in each federal ministry • establishment of cross-cutting coordination groups in each federal ministry, comprising officials from organisation, budget, and policy sections • formalisation of inter-ministerial project groups
1973 Morkel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reform of cabinet committees
<i>single federal ministries</i>	
1973 PRVR (with McKinsey)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • conceptualisation and implementation of a new management system in the Federal Ministry for Food, Agriculture, and Forestry
1975 Mayntz	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reorganisation of the advisory arrangements in the Federal Ministry for Youth, Families, and Health
Hegelau/Scharpf	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reorganisation of the Federal Ministry for Transport

Source: Own illustration, information compiled from BT-Drs. 7/2887 [1974]: 78-9, 87-8; PRVR 1969, 1972a, 1972b; Friauf 1972; Morkel 1973; Dyson 1974a: FN 2, 1975: 168; Hegelau/Scharpf 1975; Mayntz 1975; McKinsey 1973; Hegelau/Scharpf 1975; Derlien 1978: 73-4; Müller 1978: 50-62; Olivet 1978: 65-6; Seiler 1981: 246.

Moreover, this substantial shift changed the original 'worldview' (Ronge 1977b: 239) of PRVR members – planning defined as formulating objectives rather than assessing possible constraints – and reduced the advisory work for the cabinet as a whole in favour of a more limited 'planning scope' (PRVR 1972b, Vol. I: 5, 36; see also Karehnke 1974b; Seemann 1974: 85; Seiler 1981: 246). Strengthening of the political steering capacity was no longer perceived as one of the key objectives of governmental planning and thus the importance of the Planning Division was downplayed in favour of improving the planning capacities in federal ministries (PRVR 1972: part I/14; Ronge 1977b: 240).

As a consequence, also the suitability for the Planning Division to exploit the PRVR as a training ground for developing governmental planning declined to a certain extent because the PRVR was now working more closely with distinct ministries (Garlichs/Müller 1977, Müller 1978: 70) – disregard that the Planning Division gained the full oversight responsibility in 1972. In turn, the Planning Division's capabilities to inject its own ideas into the PRVR's work on the machinery of government declined (ID06).

To sum up, the PRVR was established as temporary external advisory arrangement to strengthen 'the intelligence of public administration' (König 1980: 23) and formally linked to the Planning Division. However, the division had only very limited influence on the project group's work and, in turn, did use its advisory work rather rarely.

4.5 Concluding remarks

The influence of the Planning Division on government policy-making under the Brandt government declined rather soon, as summarised by the Chancellor in his biography introducing this chapter. In practice, the Planning Division conducted various advisory activities as carriers of institutional strategies to shape the basic and policy-specific rules of the executive game at cabinet and departmental level.

First, the Planning Division aimed towards influencing the *regulative* underpinnings to govern at cabinet and departmental level e.g. by establishing a new Planning System, which was accompanied by medium- and long-term plans. Especially the Planning System introduced a new formal communication of departmental proposals to the Chancellery and, more importantly, increased the transparency among cabinet members about their future policy projects, establishing new means to support and block departmental policy proposals in cabinet. The Planning System affected also intra- and inter-ministerial structures and processes, visible e.g. in the appointment of planning delegates and the creation of organisational entities designated to accomplish the new planning functions. Similarly, the medium- and long-term plans for cabinet influenced not only inter-ministerial policy-making with their engagement of inter-ministerial project groups; they also affected processes within federal ministries, forcing them to submit projects to these plans. This strong initial influence of the Planning Division was supported by its direct affiliation to the ChefBK and his delegated authority in central government. Also the division's expertise contributed to this initial success, especially the inclusion of outsiders with expertise in planning systems and data management. Over time, though, the new information on departmental proposals increased inter-ministerial conflicts, accompanied by a growing perception of the Planning System as a superimposing structure upon traditional decision-making processes. Partly as compensation, the Planning Division increased its engagement in policy briefs after 1972, providing the Chancellor with additional information and strengthening his position in cabinet for selected policy issues. Besides, the Planning Division engaged in the establishment of a new system of governmental reporting to increase the monitoring within central government, but also to increase the authority of the Chancellery in executive decision-making processes.

Second, the Planning Division addressed the *normative* underpinnings to govern at cabinet and departmental level, particularly the Planning System aimed to establish new norms in government policy-making that assigned the centre a more crucial role in such processes. In addition, the Planning System established various planning standards and supported the emergence of a new profession in central government. Initially, the Planning Division succeeded in disseminating these new norms and standards. Eventually, though, the basic norm of how to formulate government policies as well as the planning standards were criticised among cabinet members and ministerial officials, e.g. cabinet ministers rejecting to agree upon a common mandate for planning delegates. A similar effect could

be observed for the medium- and long-term plans for cabinet: The cabinet members were almost immediately contested about the necessity of such plans and agreed only about very few priorities, ultimately abandoning the instrument altogether. In a similar manner, albeit less radically, the increasing number of policy briefs aimed towards establishing a new behavioural norm, prescribing the pro-active engagement of the Chancellery in selected policy areas as appropriate, as well as suggesting and advocating legitimate means to achieve certain policy objectives. Yet, the Planning Division rarely engaged in direct contacts with ministry officials and instead the mirror sections at the Chancellery were mostly responsible for enforcing these policy norms. Besides, the Planning Division's engagement in governmental reporting sought to prescribe professional reporting standards, but almost neglected its potential to disseminate policy-specific norms in those areas that have been covered by these governmental reports.

Lastly, the Planning Division aimed to shape the *cognitive* underpinnings to govern at cabinet and departmental level by establishing an overarching planning narrative for government policy-making, thus increasing the planning conscience across central government. The Planning System and the planning delegates as well as the engagement as liaison office for the PRVR have been used to accustom departmental officials to planning. However, the initially increasing planning consciousness and acceptance of the Chancellery as a 'hub of planning' declined rapidly. Put differently: The pre-formulated new shared logic of action clashed with the common understandings among cabinet ministers and departmental officials on the relationships between federal ministries and the Chancellery. As compensation, the Planning Division turned towards policy briefs in order to frame selected policy issues and direct policy choices in specific areas – although these were rather oriented towards cabinet ministers and, again, mostly the mirror sections at the Chancellery 'delivered the message' to the responsible ministries. In addition, government declarations provided opportunities for framing specific government policies, albeit they were mostly based upon submissions by the federal ministries and thus their potential for changing the status quo was rather small.

To conclude, the Planning Division under the Brandt government engaged predominantly in its new Planning System in order to shape the institutional underpinnings to govern, initiating new rules to force more centralisation in cabinet and in interactions between the centre and the federal ministries, strengthening this centralisation norm as well as disseminating a planning worldview across central government. Yet, these attempts were soon openly rejected by cabinet ministers and ministry officials, mostly arguing that such an interventionist centre would defy to the pre-existing institutional status quo. In addition, the Planning Division engaged in establishing a governmental reporting system, focussing especially on the promotion of reporting standards – which have been more willingly followed by the federal ministries, also because they were strongly involved in these processes. Partly as a response to the aforementioned departmental resistances against the Planning System and its underlying institutional strategies, the Planning Division turned later towards preparing policy briefs and government declarations that provided opportunities to shape more policy-specific institutional underpinnings to govern, mostly prescribing legitimate means to accomplish distinct policy objectives as well as policy frames linking these means and ends and thus influencing the policy options

available. Yet, these activities were often prepared in conjunction with the federal ministries, transmitted by the mirror sections, and thus provided opportunities for the federal ministries to circumvent any new policy norms or cognitive paradigms that would counteract their own departmental norms and philosophies.

'The new Division for "Communication, Documentation and Political Planning" (...) was [responsible for] the whole area of policy advice in all aspects of press and public relations (...). [It] acted behind and not on the political stage, but [it] did it with high efficiency.'
(Kohl 2005: 46)

Chapter F Policy advice under the Kohl government, 1982-1987

When Chancellor Helmut Kohl came into power in 1982 after a successful constructive vote of no-confidence in Parliament, the planning euphoria had turned into despair and the Planning Division had put its emphasis towards policy advice on selected policy issues, provided in policy briefs and reports. Under the new Conservative Chancellor, the pre-existing Planning Division was split up; several planning responsibilities were transferred as a Planning Group to the Division for Domestic and Social Policy whereas the remaining tasks were accompanied with additional tasks in governmental communication. As such, the new Division for Political Analyses was less engaged in direct interactions with federal ministries and more strongly oriented towards party-political advice to the Chancellor as its key client.¹ The next subchapter describes the key developments prior to the Chancellor election in 1982, resulting in the rearrangement of the advisory system at the centre of government that is examined in the second subchapter, including also the developments after the subsequent general election in 1983. The third subchapter scrutinises the organisational structure of the Division for Political Analyses and the Planning Group in the Chancellery. The final subchapter analyses their major activities seeking to influence the institutional underpinnings of government policy-making

1 Prologue: The demise of planning in central government

After the general election in 1974, the planning euphoria faded away, resulting in 'a general disillusionment (...) about the possibilities of political planning and spectacular organisational reforms in the machinery of government' (Derlien 1978: 67, 1985; Böhret 1990: 124; König 1991b: 74). Correspondingly, the new Chancellor Helmut Schmidt demanded a reorientation of the Planning Division towards more policy advice on short-term issues (Süß 2003: 375). In addition, the new government was less ambitious in terms of internal reforms and thus planning was not regarded as necessary as under the previous government (Bebermeyer 1984: 57). Over time, the Chancellery had turned into a 'finely honed instrument of executive coordination' (Müller-Rommel 1994a: 122; Die Zeit, 04/1977: 3).

The formal responsibilities for machinery of government issues and the liaison of the PRVR were transferred from the Planning Division to the Division for Administrative Affairs, whose head had always complained that these organisational issues should be regarded as constitutional and thus allocated in his division's remit (Knoll 2004: 232). However, given the reorientation of the Planning Division towards short-term policy advice; the head of the Planning Division did not object (ID06, ID15). In 1975, the PRVR

¹ Following conventions, this case study uses the terms 'Division for Political Analyses' and 'Division 5' synonymously in order to facilitate the reading.

was eventually abolished (Lepper 1976; Derlien 1985: 8; Böhret 1990: 124). Likewise, the Planning System was diminished and the status of the planning delegates in the federal ministries marginalised; also the established 'arrangements for political planning have been abandoned because (...) ministers doubt[ed] their usefulness' (Dyson 1977: 8; Derlien 1985: 7; Wollmann 1989: 262).

In functional terms, the Planning Division 'saw itself as the party's voice within a Chancellery which it believed inadequately reflected Socialist party policy' (Berry 1989: 345). Among their key activities was a 'Planning Paper', outlining for the respective legislative period the major policy issues, including a strength and weakness analysis of the current government policy, analyses on the opposition and findings from the polls.² More importantly, the Planning Paper included also a number of counter-strategies against potential critics from the opposition as well as a grid illustrating the most important dates such as *Länder* elections, party conferences, but also the upcoming submission of major departmental proposals drawn from the Planning System, themes for 'own offensives',³ and potential attacks by the opposition.⁴ In addition, the Planning Division prepared frequently its own strategy papers, e.g. addressing 'How to catch Strauß?', which included a detailed analysis of programmatic inconsistencies, intra-party problems, and personal flaws of the then Prime Minister of Bavaria.⁵ More generally, the Planning Division prepared policy briefs on a wider range of issues, commenting departmental proposals and formulating own policy ideas (ID06, ID15; Knoll 2004: 259-60). Yet, the overall assessment in the literature stresses that the Chancellor 'usually rejected the division's advice' (Berry 1989: 345) – although interviewees claimed that their advice was more often followed than not (ID06, ID15).

Accordingly, the division shifted partly from advising cabinet with the Planning System towards providing policy advice to the Chancellor and his close circle of personal aides (Helms 2005: 81). As a consequence, the division competed regularly with other line divisions in the Chancellery offering their bureaucratic advice – and succeeded only occasionally (ID15; Knoll 2004: 259-60, 263-4). The other line divisions were better equipped and, due to their mirroring structure, better connected to the federal ministries in order to provide comments on departmental policy proposals, but also to assess their political feasibility. More importantly, these line divisions could already influence departmental policy positions before their submission to cabinet. Partly as a result of these experiences, the Planning Division initiated internally a 'dual mirroring' (*Doppelspiegelung*, ID06) with its own sections and groups mirroring the other line divisions in the Chancellery (Knoll 2004: 237, FN 114). Moreover, the Planning Division increased its staff capabilities, especially in trend analyses, polls, and empirical social research (Knoll 2004: 237, FN 111).

² Notiz für das Gespräch mit dem Bundeskanzler und dem Kleeblatt über politische Planung', 27 January 1978 (PA-ID15).

³ These were further distinguished as 'very big issues' and 'other important issues'. The former category comprised e.g. employment policy, energy debate, education policy, pensions, cost pressure in the health system, debate on liberality and *Rechtsstaat*, Inner-German policy (see FN 2).

⁴ These attacks were further elaborated with an overview of the status quo of the opposition, pursued profile, its major attack lines and themes, its political programme, and counter-actions (see FN 2).

⁵ 'Strategiepapier 1979/1980 der Planungsabteilung an den Bundeskanzler', 21 March 1979 (PA-ID15).

However, the Planning Division experienced an increasing decline of the previous political support (Müller-Rommel/Pieper 1991: 9; Knoll 2004: 263-4). As compensation, it engaged more strongly in partisan advice, supported by the division head's professional background as former head of the Division for Public Affairs in the SPD party headquarters. Besides, the Planning Division advised the Chancellor on the regular meetings of the SPD parliamentary party and increased its activities in drafting government declarations and supporting coalition negotiations (Knoll 2004: 267; Pörksen 2005: 82). Although the latter activities provided opportunities to shape future government policies, the Planning Division's role in government policy-making diminished over time (Knoll 2004: 253-6).

2 The 'recession of the planning organisation':⁶ Dismantling at the centre

Due to the rare event of a constructive vote of no-confidence in Parliament that brought Chancellor Kohl into office, his close advisers were not well prepared to take over the governmental business (Die Zeit 46/1982: 7; Nölling 1986: 51; Korte 1998a: 82) and lacked plans for how to organise the centre of government or the advisory system (Korte 1998b: 388; Schmidtke 2001: 100). In addition, the new Chancellor was rather disinterested in organisational matters, i.e. 'he accepted the necessity of an organisation, but it had no priority to him' (Knoll 2004: 282). More generally, Kohl was well-known for his informal style of leadership, i.e. he did not follow the pre-existing hierarchical procedures and was less interested in written files and more in oral presentations – and called officials in the Chancellery as well as in federal ministries directly, disregard their rank (see DER SPIEGEL, 40/1983; Haungs 1989: 32; Müller-Rommel 1994a: 125).⁷

More importantly, the Chancellor announced in his first government declaration that the coalition parties had agreed to hold general elections in March 1983 (Kohl 1982). Hence, radical organisational changes across government were avoided (Lehnguth/Vogelgesang 1988: 577). In contrast, the internal organisation of the Chancellery was perceived as difficult to accommodate the personal needs of the new political leadership in office, also due to civil service law provisions circumventing a larger turnover of staff (Die Zeit, 46/1982: 7; Schmidtke 2001: 102). Nevertheless, the organisational top-level of the Chancellery was reorganised, installing Waldemar Schreckenberger as new ChefBK, a personal friend of Kohl and former head of the State Chancellery as well as Minister of Justice in Rhineland-Palatine, and Philip Jenninger as new Parliamentary State Secretary, former chief whip of the CDU parliamentary party in the Bundestag and also one of Kohl's close aides (DER SPIEGEL, 39/1982; DIE ZEIT, 41/1982). They discussed together with two newly appointed division heads in the Chancellery, Horst Teltschik and Eduard Ackermann, how to organise the office and which individuals should be recruited into which key positions (Ackermann 1994: 181).

As a response to the general demise of planning, the only immediate reorganisation at the operational level of the Chancellery addressed the pre-existing Planning Division (Die Zeit 46/1982: 7; Knoll 2004: 287). The Planning Division was abolished; the positions

⁶ (Derlien 1985: 7).

⁷ Kohl described himself as a 'key caller' (*Haupttelefonierer*, quoted by Knoll 2004: 279, FN 6).

responsible for the Planning System were transferred as a group to the Division for Domestic and Social Policy (Bebermeyer 1984: 59; Derlien 1985: 7; Böhret 1990: 123-4). This transfer was supposed to express that 'planning can never be an end in itself but essentially has a service function' (König 1985b: 135; Berry 1989: 347). Put differently: The Division for Domestic Policy mirrored several federal ministries and was thus particularly engaged across federal government – which was perceived as the optimal parent division for a newly established Planning Group connecting the governmental planning with the mirroring of departmental proposals. Besides, the new division head had a keen interest in planning (Knoll 2004: 287, FN 62), thus the Planning Group was initially directly affiliated to the division head. After the general election in 1983, the Planning Group's mandate was expanded, next to task planning and the planning of the legislative period it became also responsible for the evaluation of policy programmes (Derlien 1990a; Knoll 2004: 293-4).

In contrast, the former Planning Division was renamed into Division for 'Communication and Documentation' (*Abteilung Kommunikation und Dokumentation*), after the general election in 1983 its official title changed into Division for 'Societal and Political Analyses, Communication' (*Abteilung Gesellschaftliche und politische Analysen, Kommunikation*; henceforth: Division for Political Analyses; Hoffmann 2003: 533). The new name expressed the division's focus on societal and political developments and particularly its activities in political communication (Bebermeyer 1984: 59; Derlien 1985: 7). To justify its status as a line division after the transfer of most task planning responsibilities to the Planning Group, the Division for Political Analyses was expanded (ID14), especially with more resources for speechwriting, but also newly added responsibilities such as the liaison with the churches, the arts and culture, which had been transferred from the Division for Administrative Affairs (Knoll 2004: 294, FN 99). Whereas the churches were regarded as particularly relevant because of the high share of church members in the CDU/CSU electorate (ID26), arts and culture were a personal interest of the new Chancellor (Schmidt 2008).⁸

Broadly speaking, the Chancellery under the new Conservative government had sought to act less as a 'watchdog of the federal ministries' (ID09) and virtually nothing remained of its previous attempts to shape departmental policy proposals (Müller-Rommel 1994a: 125; Walter/Müller 2002: 490-2). Soon, though, the internal procedures and structures of the new Chancellery were criticised, they were linked to the new ChefBK and its alleged incapacity to run the office, summarised in the characterisation of the ChefBK's office as 'Bermuda triangle' (DER SPIEGEL, 18/1983, 40/1983; Walter/Müller 2002: 491).

Partly responding to these recurring critics, the Chancellor reorganised in 1984 the organisational top-level of the Chancellery and appointed Wolfgang Schäuble as new ChefBK in the formal rank of a cabinet minister (DER SPIEGEL, 47/1984; Korte 1998b:

⁸ As a response, the division head was member of the management committee of the German Historic Museum and in the curatorship of the House of History of the Federal Republic Germany, whose establishment had been announced in Kohl's first government declaration. In addition, a group head was in the curatorship of the new Federal Art and Exposition Hall in Bonn (Knoll 2004: 376, FN 777).

391),⁹ Schreckenberger remained in office but became responsible for less relevant issues (Schmidtke 2001: 100). After this change at the top-level, the Chancellery regained its previous influential role vis-à-vis the federal ministries (DIE ZEIT, 31/1985, 35/1985; Berry 1989: 347-8; Korte 1998a: 34-5; Goetz 2005: 252). Simultaneously, the Division for Political Analyses was expanded and the Planning Group directly affiliated to the new ChefBK (see below), thus facilitating the information flow on departmental initiatives gathered in the Planning System (ID09).

3 The dual organisation of policy advice at the Chancellery

The advisory system at the centre of the Kohl government during his first two terms in office comprised a dual organisational structure, i.e. a Planning Group and a Division for Political Analyses. This subchapter analyses their organisational structures jointly, revealing similarities and differences and, more importantly, in comparison to the traditional organisation inside the Chancellery and the federal bureaucracy with regard to their (1) durability, (2) internal affiliation, (3) size, (4) fragmentation, and (5) expertness.

(1) Both advisory arrangements were established with an infinite ex ante durability and survived the complete second time period under scrutiny, albeit the Planning Group was re-affiliated in 1986 to a different line division (see below). In turn, the Division for Political Analyses came into full operation only in 1983 because several members of the previous Planning Division had to be removed to other positions inside the Chancellery or rotated back to the federal ministries before it started to operate (Ackermann 1994: 185).

(2) Initially both advisory arrangements were directly subordinated to the ChefBK because the head of the Division for Domestic Policy was appointed as simultaneous head of the Planning Group. After the general election in 1983, the Planning Group became an 'ordinary group' with the appointment of a formal group head who was subordinated to the aforementioned division head. In 1986, it was transferred to the Division for Administrative Affairs but, more importantly, the ChefBK demanded that the group head should henceforth report directly to him instead of the division head – also because he perceived the latter as weak and overextended (DER SPIEGEL, 24/1986: 27; Schmidtke 2001: 106). In contrast, the Division for Political Analyses was directly subordinated to the ChefBK and enjoyed regular and close access to the Chancellor through its division head (ID14, ID26). In turn, the head of the Division for Political Analyses resided in an antechamber of the Chancellor's private office (Ackermann 1994: 184). Although he was supposed to move to the 'divisions' building' (*Abteilungsbau*), he stayed in the 'chancellor's wing' (*Kanzlertrakt*) to use the advantages of physical proximity (Die Zeit, 46/1982: 7; Ackermann 1994: 190-1; Rosumek 2007: 159). The Planning Group was located in the divisions' building.

(3) The new Division for Political Analyses had initially a size of approx. 20 officials (see Figure F.1 below), also keeping several members of the previous Planning Division in

⁹ Schäuble had previously acted as chief whip of the CDU parliamentary party in the Bundestag. In fact, from Jenninger to Bohl every ChefBK was before chief whip of the CDU parliamentary party and hence had good and close contacts to the parliamentary party (Horst 1995: 418; Gros 2000: 86; see also on the role of chief whips in the German parliament e.g. Peterson 2004).

office such as the two officials in the press relations section, mostly to exploit their well-established contacts to the press in Bonn (Ackermann 1994: 191). Therefore, the size of the division remained comparatively smaller than the Planning Division under the Brandt government, but additional members were contracted on short-term contracts (see below). Although subsequent developments after the general election in 1987 are beyond the scope of this case study, the figure reveals also that the division had its peak size during the years before and after German re-unification.

In comparison, the Planning Group was much smaller than the Division for Political Analyses; its size never exceeded 14 officials (see Figure F.2 below). Most of its members were recruited as permanent civil servants, although also the Planning Group attached several freelancers on fixed-term contracts (ID26), which was

'unusual in the German government system, [but] has proved highly effective: young academics in law, economics or administrative science introduce their knowledge from the forefront of their respective academic fields whole at the same time obtaining an insight into the workings of the Chancellery and of government as a whole' (König 1985b: 135).

In contrast to the Division for Political Analyses, the contracted members of the Planning Group were more often external experts. Yet, despite this continuing influx of external scientific knowledge into the Planning Group, it had lost the 'intellectuals' smell' (Böhret 1990: 127; ID08, ID09) of the previous Planning Division. Instead, it consisted of civil servants and public employees – and the external experts were also not officially notified in task allocation plans as before (ID14).

(4) The fragmentation of both advisory arrangements during the first two terms of Chancellor Kohl was rather similar to other divisions and groups respectively. The leadership structure of the Division for Political Analyses comprised the division head and one group head, leading a larger group of three to four sections, in addition to initially three, later two sections at the secondary authority level. Thus, the division was medium fragmented in horizontal terms, i.e. roughly three demarcated branches existed. The first was the largest, officially responsible for 'societal and political analyses', including e.g. the section of speechwriters, which had been transferred from the organisational top-level and was the largest section, and a section for 'participation in public relations' – the term 'participation' was deliberately chosen in order to avoid conflicts with the Federal Press and Information Office (*Bundespresseamt*, BPA), which is formally responsible for the government's public relations (Knoll 2004: 286-7, FN 60). The second and third branches were single sections, one responsible for the liaison with the press, political parties, and interest groups, the other for 'problems of societal changes, social indicators, and opinion polls' (Knoll 2004: 287). After the general election in 1983, the three branches were rearranged, and a fourth branch created, responsible for the liaison with the churches, the arts, and culture, which had been transferred from the Division for Administrative Affairs (Knoll 2004: FN 99).¹⁰ In turn, the vertical fragmentation of the Planning Division followed the regular pattern in the German federal bureaucracy and comprised four authority levels, i.e. the division head, the group heads, section heads and section officials.

¹⁰ In practice, the section acting as a liaison for the churches and religious communities was primarily responsible to organise appointments for the Chancellor with these groups (ID01).

In comparison, the leadership structure of the Planning Group comprised only its group head, leading initially three and later two sections at the secondary authority level. Thus, it was less fragmented in horizontal terms, i.e. roughly two distinguished branches existed, one responsible for task planning and the planning of the legislative period, the other for operating the Planning System, including the chairmanship of the committee of planning delegates. Initially also a third branch existed, which was responsible for evaluation (König 1985b: 135). However, when the Planning Group was transferred in 1986 to the Division for Administrative Affairs, it was incorporated into an existing group responsible for the coordination between the federal and the *Länder* level as well as the liaison for cabinet and parliament. As such, its horizontal fragmentation did not change in terms of numbers of branches, but their remit was clearly different than under its previous affiliation, simultaneously the engagement in evaluation was terminated (Derlien 1990a). In turn, the vertical fragmentation of the Planning Group never exceeded three formal authority levels, i.e. the group head, the subordinated section heads as well as section officials at the bottom of the group's internal hierarchy.

(5) Similar to their predecessor, the organisation of the two advisory arrangements in the Chancellery can be regarded as most deviant compared to the organisational practices within the government headquarters and federal bureaucracy in general. The first and solely head of the Division for Political Analyses during the second time period of analysis was Eduard Ackermann, a close confidant of the Chancellor from his former positions, inter alia as press spokesman of the CDU parliamentary party in the German Bundestag (Müller-Rommel 1994a: 124-5; Mertes 2001: 4; Schmidtke 2001: 100; see Table F.1).¹¹ Initially, Ackermann was supposed to become head of the BPA but an eye disease obstructed his appointment and thus he was appointed as head of the Division for Political Analyses in the Chancellery (Mertes 2007: FN 4). However, these original plans reveal already the basic role orientation of the new division head towards political communication and press relations. He was widely perceived as one of the Chancellor's closest advisers (Schreckenberger 1992: 612; FAZ, 13 January 1994: 8; Mertes 2001: 4; Schmidtke 2001: 100) – and in contrast to several others who lost their grace over time, Ackermann seemed to be uncriticisable, expressed in a famous saying among Bonn journalists: 'It's everybody's turn in Bonn now and then, except Edi Ackermann's' (Die Zeit, 34/1994: 60).¹² In contrast, the first group head in the new division was one of the officials continuing in office and had already acted as a group head in the previous Planning Division, but left office at the end of 1982 and was replaced by a line official from the Ministry for Research and Technology, again hand-picked by the Chancellor (DER SPIEGEL, 25/1987: 25). Also all section heads were removed (Berry 1989: 347).¹³

The new head of the Division for Domestic and Social Policy who acted simultaneously as first head of the Planning Group, Klaus König, was similarly well-known to the Chancellor from his times as Prime Minister of Rhineland-Palatine because

¹¹ The close friendship is also expressed in the famous nickname that Kohl gave the division head: 'Carbonara', after the former's favourite Italian dish – which he ordered very often during their regular dinners together (Kohl 2005: 45).

¹² The German version rhymes: 'In Bonn ist jeder einmal dran, nur nicht Edi Ackermann'.

¹³ In other divisions, the number of section heads who stayed in office although they had served already under the previous Chancellor oscillated between approx. 30% and 80% per division (Berry 1989: 350).

he was Professor for Administrative Sciences at the German University of Administrative Sciences in Speyer and had regularly advised the State Chancellery on various issues (Schmidtke 2001: 102). Also the first regular group head, which was appointed after the general election in 1983, was very well-known to the Chancellor from his previous position as head of the ChefBK's private office; this transfer was mainly motivated by severe conflicts with the Chancellor 'who rejected to read files' (DER SPIEGEL, 28/1983: 35) and, more importantly, with the Chancellor's private secretary, Juliane Weber, who was formally subordinated to him but acted in fact as the informal head of the Chancellor's private office (DER SPIEGEL, 24/1986: 26).

Table F.1 The leadership structure of the advisory system in the Chancellery, 1982-1987

tenure in office	name	previous position/s	subsequent position
<i>Division for Political Analyses</i>			
02/1982-08/1994	Eduard Ackermann	CDU Parliamentary Party, press spokesman	retirement
05/1977-12/1982	Dr. Stefan Pelny (Group 53)	BKAmt, Personal Assistant to the ChefBK	Vice-President of the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution
01/1983-08/1989	Claus Lutz (Group 51)	BMFT, line official	BMJFFG, Head of Division 5 (Family and social affairs)
<i>Planning Group in Division 3 (later Division 1)</i>			
02/1982-02/1983	Prof. Dr. Klaus König (Group 37)	Professor for Administrative Sciences at the DHV Speyer; BKAmt, Head of Division 3 (Domestic affairs, social policy and planning) [<i>concurrently</i>]	Professor for Administrative Sciences at the DHV Speyer
03/1983-05/1986	Dr. Wolfgang Burr (Group 35, later Group 34)	BKAmt, Head of the Chancellor's Private Office	BKAmt, Head of Group 11 (Human resources)
06/1986-02/1987	Dr. Alfons Bobbert (Group 12)	BKAmt, Head of Group 11 (Human resources)	n/a

Legend

Division head Group head

Note: Group heads are displayed under the division head in office at time of their appointment.

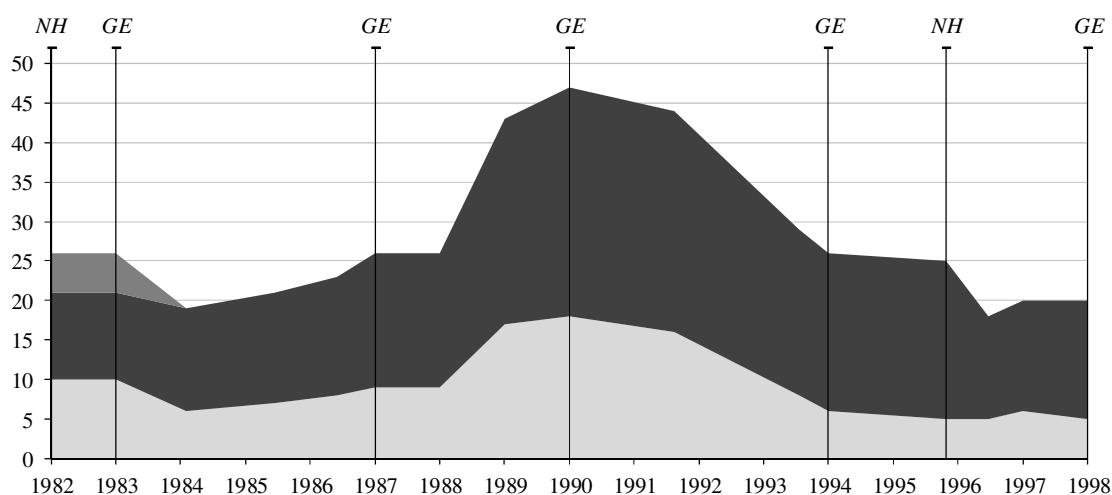
Source: Own illustration; data compiled from task allocation plans and organisational charts (BAK), DER SPIEGEL, 25/1987: 23, 33/1989: 16; Korte 1998a: 43, EN 147-150; Munzinger Archive.

The expertness of the members of the Division for Political Analysis was rather different from the rest of the line divisions in the Chancellery but also the previous Planning Division. On the one hand, the initial split of the previous Planning Division into the Division for Political Analyses and the Planning Group resulted in a situation where 'the people who were more strategic went to Ackermann, although there was nothing to gain because they were all too ideological.' (ID26). Put differently, the new division was




perceived as highly partisan and, due to its key branches, entrusted with a lot of rather ideological work – which required a certain partisan background (ID09, ID14). Besides, those division members recruited from outside the machinery of government had mostly previous positions in the CDU party organisation or the Conservative *Konrad-Adenauer-Foundation* – turning the new division into the most politicised division inside the Chancellery (ID14; Capital, 05/1983, 13; Ackermann 1994: 199; Berry 1989: 347, 349; Knoll 2004: 361, FN 634).¹⁴

In addition to the civil servants and public employees, the division continued with previous practice and contracted additional members for a fixed term, most of them were university graduates. Although their contracts were formally limited, they 'never complained about that, because all of them found very good jobs after their time in the Chancellery' (ID14). In turn, they were not notified as explicit scientific division members in task allocation plans. However, in contrast to the Planning Division of the early 1970s, it was a rather small number of contracted members which did not expand the general size of the division considerably (see Figure F.1).

Figure F.1 The size and composition of the Division for Political Analysis, 1982-1998



Legend

- | | |
|--|----------------------------|
|  civil servants | <i>GE</i> general election |
|  public employees | <i>NH</i> new head |
|  academics/freelancer | |

Source: Own illustration, information compiled from archived task allocation plans (BAK); BMF 1982, 1985, 1989b, 1991, 1993, 1995, 1998, 2000.

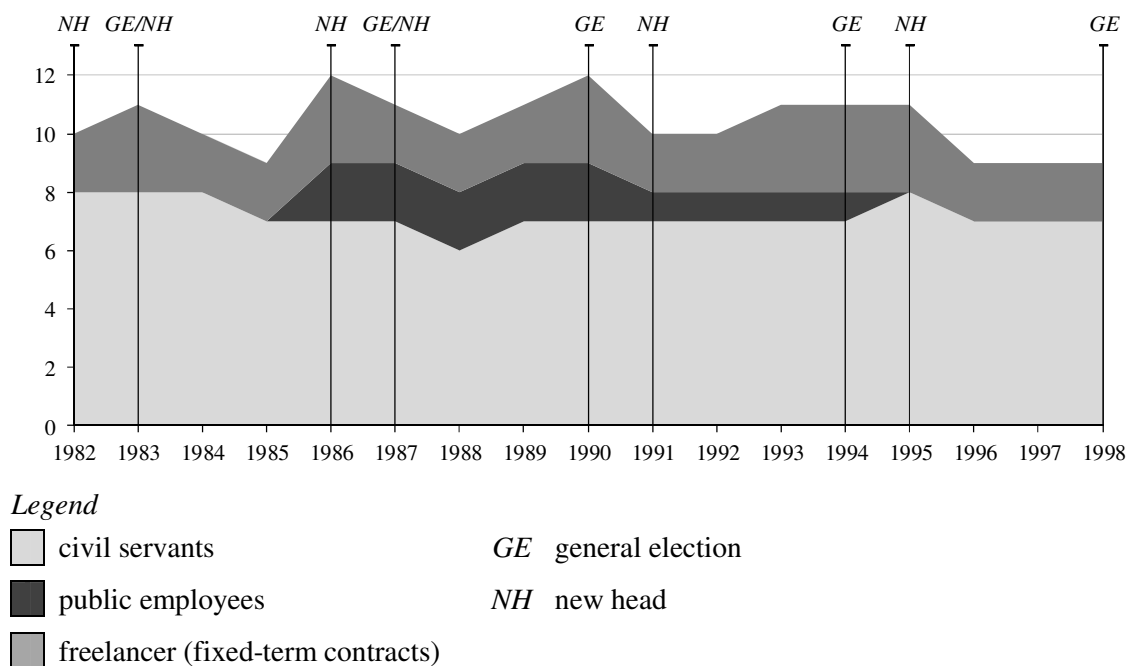
On the other hand, the tasks of the division were mostly in the realm of government communication and thus many members were newly recruited from outside the machinery of government, many had previous experience in journalism, especially the speechwriters. More generally, the division members had various educational backgrounds such as political science, history, philology – in a sense mirroring the comparatively high number of senior officials and political actors at the organisational top-level who were also not

¹⁴ Also other divisions in the Chancellery were prominently filled with members previously employed in the CDU party organisation (Müller-Rommel/Pieper 1991: 7).

trained as lawyers, incorporated in complaints about the influence of these 'loge brothers' (*Logenbrüder*,¹⁵ DER SPIEGEL, 24/1986: 24). However, some division members were also departmental secondees or had previous positions in other Chancellery divisions.

In comparison, the expertness of the Planning Group was not as different from the rest of the Chancellery as the Division 5, but variations still existed (see Figure F.2). In contrast to the Division 5, various members from the previous Planning Division remained in the Planning Group. As such, it also maintained the educational background of its members. Yet, no new recruitments were made and although several of its members had been once recruited into the previous Planning Division as outsiders, they had adopted in the meantime a rather bureaucratic attitude, partly fitting to the 'bureaucratisation' of the governmental planning as their major task. The background of contracted external experts remained a source of influx for new ideas and can be regarded as different to those contracted by the Division for Political Analyses noted above, because most of them were scientific experts with an apparent professional background.

Figure F.2 The size and composition of the Planning Group, 1982-1998



Source: Own illustration, information compiled from archived task allocation plans (BAK); BMF 1982, 1985, 1989b, 1991, 1993, 1995, 1998, 2000; ID14.

In addition, the members' tenure varied across the ranks – with apparent effects on internal working procedures but also the organisational memory and the continuous provision of a certain innovation capacity (see Table F.2). Whereas the Division 5 had a very long average tenure of its leadership, i.e. the division head and the first appointed group head stayed more than 13 years and five and a half year respectively, the three group heads in the Planning Group stayed between less than a year and not more than one and a half year in office. In contrast, the tenure of section heads was rather similar in both

¹⁵ *Logenbrüder* is a wordplay with their German professional titles ending with the suffix -loge. At the same time, the term 'loge' aims to signify their close access to the political leadership.

advisory arrangements, on average less than one and a half year. Again, the display of tenure figures during subsequent legislative terms is beyond this case study, but intriguing because it reveals e.g. the increasing tenure of officials in the Planning Group after the general election 1987 when it was transferred to the Division for Administrative Affairs and its sections were merged with sections of a different group. As already noted above, this may serve also as an indication of the changing status of governmental planning as a task of the Chancellery, not attracting any highflyers anymore – which would be regularly offered new positions.

Table F.2 The tenure of Division 5 and Planning Group members (in months), 1982-1998

		Kohl I (1982-83)	Kohl II (1983-87)	Kohl III (1987-90)	Kohl IV (1990-94)	Kohl V (1994-98)	mean
Division for Political Analyses	division head	157.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	40.1	39.6
	group heads	27.1	68.8	0.0	18.3	26.7	28.2
	section heads	10.8	17.5	39.3	23.8	22.9	22.9
	<i>mean</i>	65.2	28.8	13.1	14.0	29.9	30.2
Planning Group	group heads	10.8	24.1	42.9	55.9	48.3	36.4
	section heads	12.2	19.3	35.0	73.5	24.0	32.8
	<i>mean</i>	11.5	21.7	39.0	64.7	36.1	34.6

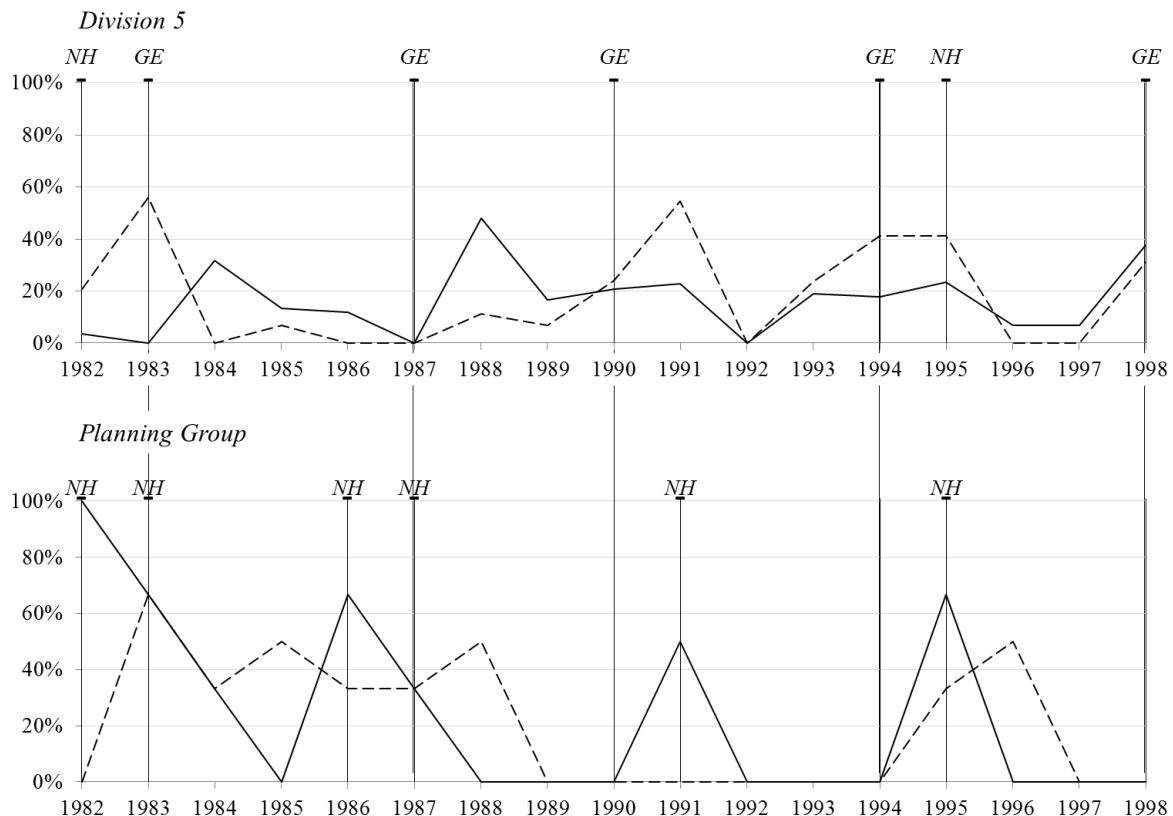
Note: Numbers display all first appointments.

Source: Own illustration, information compiled from archived task allocation plans and organisational charts (BAK).

Likewise, the turnover patterns differ between both advisory arrangements (see Figure F.3). Between 1983 and 1987, exits from the Division for Political Analyses were only partly compensated with the recruitment of new members, resulting in a small reduction of the division's size over time. In contrast, more members left the Planning Group during the first two terms of Chancellor Kohl; the general election in 1983 was followed by an almost complete turnover.¹⁶ In addition, Planning Group members were more often directly replaced, thus maintaining the size of the unit over time. Again, subsequent dynamics are beyond this case study, but both turnover patterns continue, i.e. the Division 5 reveals similar dynamics of non-substituted exits throughout the 1990s while the Planning Group was partly equipped with new members. In addition, general elections and the appointment of new heads tend to have a stronger impact on the turnover of staff in the Planning Group than in the Division 5.

¹⁶ The influx of new members was not a recruitment of new officials into the Chancellery, as said above, most members were instead transferred from the previous Planning Division.

Figure F.3 The turnover of Division for Political Analyses and Planning Group members, 1982-1998



Legend

— influx (related to total size) GE general election
 - - exit (related to total size) NH new head

Note: Numbers refer to first employments into the advisory arrangement and exclude staff employed under fixed-term contracts.

Source: Own illustration, information compiled from archived task allocation plans (BAK).

The modus operandi of the Division for Political Analyses differed from other line divisions in the Chancellery, its head was attending cabinet and had a very close access to the Chancellor (Kohl 2005: 26). In addition, he participated each morning in the 'situation meeting' (*kleine Morgenlage*) with the Chancellor and his close aides (Die Zeit, 46/1982: 7; Kohl 2005: 451; Murswieck 2008: 211), and in regular meetings with the other division heads¹⁷ – returning from these meetings with tasks to the division members (ID09). Besides, various division members had regular and close contacts with the press, thus working rather 'on journalistic than on bureaucratic terms' (ID14). More generally, the Division for Political Analyses also benefitted from the fact that the hierarchical procedures inside the Chancellery were weakened under the new Chancellor as noted above – and among those officials that the Chancellor consulted directly were its division head Ackermann as well as a section head (Müller-Rommel 1994a: 125; Korte 1998b: 392; Mertes 2001: 4; Niclaß 2004: 238-9). In contrast, the Planning Group followed mostly the

¹⁷ The division heads in the Chancellery under Chancellor Kohl were well-known to be rather competitive, i.e. temporarily they 'had to be forced to talk with each other' (DER SPIEGEL, 02/2008: 42).

pre-existing bureaucratic procedures within the hierarchical organisation of the Chancellery, even though its external contracted members also contributed to a more flexible internal working mode (ID06). In addition, the Planning Group benefitted only during the initial months when the division head acted simultaneously as group head from his strong interest in planning and his access to the political leadership level (ID14, ID26).

In sum, the organisation of the Division 5 and the Planning Group during the second time period under scrutiny resembled in many respects other line divisions and groups in the Chancellery, albeit several features were less congruent with the organisational principles of the federal bureaucracy. Both entities were established with an infinite *ex ante* durability and survived also the subsequent legislative terms of Chancellor Kohl, although the Division 5 was directly abolished when Chancellor Schröder came into office while the Planning Group survived another year. Likewise, their affiliation was analogous to other line divisions and groups in the Chancellery, i.e. the Division 5 was subordinated to the ChefBK whereas the Planning Group was initially affiliated to a division head and thus enjoyed initially a direct access to the ChefBK. In contrast, their size was less congruent to bureaucratic entities: Both were smaller than other line divisions and groups – but expanded their size with contracting members, albeit not as intensively as the Planning Division under Chancellor Brandt. The horizontal and vertical fragmentation was again rather similar to other line divisions and groups, comprising a distinct number of group and/or section heads at secondary authority level, representing three to four authority levels. Similar to its predecessor under the Brandt government, the most unconventional organisational feature of both advisory arrangements was their expertness: The first Head of Division 5 came from the CDU parliamentary party; similarly the first Head of the Planning Group, acting also as division head, had been recruited from academia. More importantly, the members of Division 5 included very few Chancellery officials and departmental secondees but more outsiders, especially with media experience, resulting in a professional background with less variety but a rather different focus than other line divisions. In contrast, the Planning Group members were mostly previous Planning Division members and had thus stayed in office, albeit they may have been once recruited as outsiders. The tenure of Division 5 members was longer than the tenure of Planning Group members; in contrast, the turnover of Division 5 members was slower than the turnover in the Planning Group.

4 The Planning Group and the Division for Political Analyses as agents in institutional politics

The responsibilities of the Planning Group under the Kohl government were rather clear to all actors, also because it mainly continued the work of the Planning Division. This included also the limits of their mandate, as an official from a federal ministry stresses:

'The planning system was still there, we met as planning delegates, but they didn't want to make such a fuss like Ehmke and his aides (...). You know, the federal ministries are rather autarkic and I think they didn't want to burn their fingers on that.' (ID22)

In contrast, the mandate of the new Division for Political Analyses was less clear to the division members as well as to other officials in the Chancellery, the federal ministries, and particularly the Federal Press and Information Office. Yet, the recruitment of Eduard

Ackermann and the division's formal denomination signalled already its major occupation, as a member explains:

'It was about governmental communication. The Federal Press and Information Office was not amused. They knew immediately that this would threaten them. But Kohl had appointed Ackermann and wanted to have him as his personal spokesman although the government's spokesman is sitting in the Federal Press and Information Office.' (ID14)

The demarcation of advisory roles between the two arrangements was clearly set from the beginning (ID09, ID26; König 1985b: 135): The Planning Group concentrated on the Planning System, whereas the Division for Political Analyses focused on media advice for the Chancellor as well as other think tank functions such as analysing the polls and documentation. Hence, both advisory arrangements worked separately and collaborated only very rarely, mostly in partisan advice. To continue with the advisory activities illustrated in the previous case study, the next subchapter analyses in the first subchapter the Planning Group, followed by the second subchapter on the advisory role of the Division for Political Analyses.

4.1 The Planning Group as a 'bookkeeper'¹⁸

The Planning Group was primarily responsible for managing the pre-existing Planning System (Derlien 1985: 6). Although this task was widely perceived as rather technocratic, it provided opportunities to influence government policy-making. In practice, the sections in the Planning Group accomplished different tasks: (1) Two sections managed the existing Planning System, expanded with a new Cabinet Scheduling, whereas the third section was engaged in (2) evaluating government programmes (König 1985b: 135). The following paragraphs study these key advisory activities, neglecting the administrative support provided by the section for the liaison with churches, art, and culture because it was widely perceived as unconnected to the policy advice function (ID09, ID14, ID22, ID26).

4.1.1 The Planning Group expanding the Planning System

One of the key responsibilities of the Planning Group was the maintenance and further development of the Planning System, which had experienced a general demise:

'In 1971-72 it was already apparent that the highly integrative approach of planning could not be maintained. On the one hand, as in many other countries, these approaches which had earned great merit in specified and highly controllable areas such as defence, could not keep up with the imponderabilities of social and economic development. On the other hand, the typically German constitutionalist aspect (...) also came into play, i.e. the considerable independence allowed to German cabinet ministers within their allotted policy fields.' (König 1985b: 133)

The term planning was redefined, corresponding to a more technocratic understanding of government policy-making (Böhret 1990: 125). Thus, the Planning Group applied a 'quite different meaning' (König 1985b: 137) of planning:

'It is certainly more practice-oriented. It is undoubtedly more communicative with regard to "line" administrators, and within the Chancellery it does not give rise to a general "dissenting opinion" operation. It is less flashy, to be sure, compared to the aspirations of the late 1960s, but within the German constitutional framework and orientations of

¹⁸ (Ronge 1977a: 81).

political culture, its functionality appears to be commensurate with the demands imposed upon it' (König 1985b: 137).

As a response, the Planning System had developed into a rather reactive information management on departmental policy proposals, according to a Chancellery senior official 'it was about bringing the ministries into the need to report their plans to the Chancellery, so that their plans (...) are seen by all' (ID09; König 1985a). As such, the Planning System had turned into a comparatively long listing of departmental policy proposals and the corresponding information on their schedule, costs, link to other departmental policy proposals as well as their general status for the government's legislative programme (ID26). More importantly, a 'common understanding' had developed between the Chancellery and the federal ministries that the Planning System would not be used for assessing the potential overlapping of departmental work or 'whether a federal ministry avoided the inclusion of others into a particular initiative and if so, why' (ID26). Put differently, the Planning System had lost its relevance as a 'referee' among federal ministries and was instead supposed to 'be silent if some didn't play by the rules' (ID26, ID09). Correspondingly, it was not used to draft a medium- or long-term government programmes but rather to keep track of the developments and their congruence with the coalition agreement and government declarations (König 1985b: 136).

However, the Planning Group recognised the potentials of the Planning System, as one of its section heads stressed:

'It would be a mistake to treat policy advice as the first-class merchandise and consign information to a minor role. Very often for days and – sometimes even for a week – no policy advice is needed, because the Chancellor is not required to take policy decisions, but during crisis management times, a great deal depends on information.' (Kaiser 1987: 19)

Initially, the pure technocratic setting of the Planning System had several dysfunctional aspects obstructing its use, as expressed by a Chancellery senior official:

'I asked the section officials "What does the datasheet procedure say?" – and they started to laugh. And then I saw why, I almost fell off my chair. The whole document was very long, more than 2,400 projects and then in small print, you could not read more than half a page before your eyes started to burn.' (ID26)

In turn, this appearance of the Planning System echoed its underlying function as a collection of departmental policy proposals – explicitly avoiding any further follow-up by the Chancellery to guide or direct inter-ministerial work, as a senior official explains:

'procedural planning means that (...) the programme of the government or the coalition for the legislative term will be processed and the Chancellery makes sure that this process follows the policy priorities. That has to be distinguished from political planning. Political planning is more directed forward and it is about helping the head of government (...) to develop political strategies and to develop government programmes, to provide the basic ideas of government declarations, at least for most relevant policy statements.' (ID09)

Accordingly, the Planning Group was primarily responsible for *procedural* policy planning, avoiding a proactive setting of priorities. Also the planning delegates were still in operation, although most officeholders did not enjoy the crucial status of their predecessors. This was also reflected in the formal ranks of planning delegates in the federal ministries: Whereas under the Brandt government most planning delegates had been division heads, thus securing regular access to the other line division heads and a

certain hierarchical position inside their parent ministry, the number of planning delegates ranked as subdivision and section heads had increased considerably (König 1985a; see Figure G.6 below).

To reorient the Planning System towards a stronger temporal scheduling, the Planning Group had sought to use the collected information for preparing cabinet and to establish a more formalised Cabinet Scheduling (*Kabinettszeitplanung*). In fact, the Chancellery had always scheduled the cabinet meetings as part of its duties as the cabinet's secretariat (ID26; König 1985a, 1991b: 77-8). But the Cabinet Scheduling was an attempt to *document* the departmental time schedules and thus increase their compliance, also in the medium-term (see critically: Böhret 1990: 123). The basic rationale was that the current Planning System did not allow prioritising or harmonising certain departmental policy proposals:

'So, if a Chancellor or the ChefBK knows 10% of the 2,400 projects, and that would actually be a flattery because it is in fact less than 5%, except Schäuble who is a very disciplined person and a workaholic, if you say he had substantial knowledge about roughly 120 government policy projects, it would be also an impressive number. But what about the others?' (ID26)

At first, the new political leadership rejected the Cabinet Scheduling as too technocratic (ID09, ID26) but a coincidence uplifted the cabinet Planning on the cabinet agenda:

'But then something happened. The Chancellor went to a congress, (...), and he got severely criticised that the government hadn't delivered anything yet. And then we had the new Cabinet Planning 14 days later in cabinet. (...) That was a "window of opportunity" to launch the Cabinet Scheduling and break departmental resistance in cabinet.' (ID26)

As a result, the Planning Group established a Cabinet Scheduling based upon the Planning System that provided opportunities for temporal prioritisation – and thus some influence on departmental policy-making (ID09, ID26). In a sense, the Planning Group tried to 'make the best out of' the pre-existing Planning System', i.e. to avoid the unwritten rule of non-invention between the Chancellery and the federal ministries, and 'tried to beat it with its own weapons – bureaucratically' (ID26; see also König 1989: 49). As such, the new Cabinet Scheduling was a 'soft variant' of the government work programme prepared by the Planning Division during the early 1970s – and circumvented departmental resistance. Here, the Planning Group also benefitted from the general governing style of the new Chancellor, as a Planning Group member remembers:

'I have often experienced a very impatient Helmut Kohl. Our job was to recognise whether the temporal prioritisation of the ministries is appropriate, meaning in the interest of the Chancellor and in the interest of the government. And depending on our assessment, we, the mirror section, or the political leadership in the Chancellery imposed constraints on the ministry.' (ID09)

More importantly, the new Cabinet Scheduling provided the Head of the Planning Group with a distinct privilege: He participated in the meetings of Administrative State Secretaries preparing cabinet (ID14, ID26). This inclusion in *the* decision-making arena in the German federal executive provided him access to the most senior civil servants. In turn, the Administrative State Secretaries engaged in bargains with the Head of the Planning Group, e.g. to support their departmental initiatives in the committee or lobby for it in the

political leadership of the Chancellery (ID14, ID26; König 1985b: 136, 1991: 78; Metzler 2005b: 370).

In practice, the Cabinet Scheduling was oriented towards a distinct cycle, reasoning that politicians require a time horizon that is feasible and less abstract:

'The first Cabinet Planning started after the Christmas break until the summer break. The second cycle was from the summer until the winter break and after these initial two, we took shorter periods from Christmas to Easter. No longer, not a whole year, that is far too abstract for politicians. Instead, they know what they want to accomplish until Easter, (...) or before they go on vacation' (ID26).

The Cabinet Scheduling fulfilled an internal evaluation function and allowed the Planning Group to check on ministries and their temporal planning. More importantly, it allowed identifying priorities and posteriorities, as a member stresses:

'Every third month we received the datasheets from the ministries (...) and then we decided what is politically important and what is routine. (...) If there was something important (...) then we looked whether its timing is okay or whether we had to give an input in order to stretch it a bit. The real art of politics is to see whether you must force it or whether a project needs a more lengthy discussion. And to have the political sense of what is urgent, what needs some pressure and what needs more time to discuss.' (ID09)

Also due to its rather impatient key client, the Planning Group tried most often to push departmental schedules, as a group member recalls:

'We as generalists, as planners, said to our counterparts in the ministries: "Is this timetable really appropriate? Is it not necessary to do a little bit more, shouldn't it not go a bit faster?" That was the mildest stage of escalation. The next stage of escalation was when we talked to the mirror section (...) and asked "Could you talk with the responsible person in the ministry, does it really need that long, couldn't it be pushed a little?" (...) Then we might be persuaded, but it may also happen that we concluded, "No, the political appraisal of priorities in the ministry is not corresponding to the way how the Chancellor or the cabinet could have asked for." – and then you have to uplift it to the political level.' (ID09)

In practice, many issues were dealt with at the first stage of escalation, i.e. the Planning Group interacted with the planning delegates in the federal ministries in order to find out why a departmental proposal was not on time. Occasionally, they also interacted directly with the responsible line division in the ministry (ID09; König 1985b: 135). Most often, though, the Planning Group discussed the temporal status of departmental initiatives with the responsible mirror section in the Chancellery (König 1985b: 135, 1991b: 77-8) – but this varied across mirror sections:

'If the Minister is not from the Chancellor's party and you know that the official in the mirror section is rather loyal to his parent ministry, it might be more effective if you inform the ChefBK – who can then make his own decisions. (...) You have always informal ways, you just have to have the information, you have to know it and actually you have to know it better. You may not denigrate people or something. (...) You need better information and better arguments, then you can afford to play it informally.' (ID26)

Broadly speaking, the Planning Group was particularly interested in those departmental policy proposals that were politically important and/or included in the coalition agreement as well as mentioned in government declarations (ID26; König 1985b: 136; see below). As a result, the aggregate level of issues handled by the Planning Group was usually comparatively higher than in other line divisions in the Chancellery (König

1985b: 135). The new Cabinet Scheduling provided also opportunities to obstruct departmental policy-making:

'There are at least 50% crazy ideas, (...) and since you have the information and you know the whole background, you have also the option to say "I have constitutional concerns". You don't say "concerns", because then you will be considered as a worrier, these are also the ordinary officials who have concerns. You refer to "constitutional concerns", that's how you get everybody awake immediately – and you get it definitely postponed because everybody wants to check constitutional concerns. And then you prevented it – at least for now.' (ID26)

In practice, this delaying tactic by the Planning Group worked very well, but could be employed only occasionally (ID26). As a response, several federal ministries started to formulate more vague time schedules for their departmental policy proposals, as one official recalls:

'We had to fill in more information on the scheduling of our cabinet proposals. Of course we could do that (...) but we just pretended that the Minister was unsure about the best timing – and that was it. (...) But sometimes you got asked from the mirror section, and then you couldn't cover it up so easily because these officials are our interface to the Chancellery – and they know who to ask to get a second information.' (ID22).

Despite these possibilities to annul delaying tactics by the federal ministries by pushing them to comply with the formal Cabinet Scheduling or applying delaying tactics itself, the Planning Group members perceived their own role not as political. Instead, the interviewed experts emphasised that 'planners must serve the politicians' and they 'did not make policy, but acted as the politicians' support' (ID26, similar: ID14). Yet, they did recognise their role as 'rule-makers' – and its implications:

'You just have to be a "process artist" under the given organisational conditions, on which you do not have such a big influence, but you can influence the process. (...) Time is also politics. But that of course must be handled with tact. You have to avoid the impression that there is an official who turns the screws. That would be fatal.' (ID26)

4.1.2 The Planning Group and governmental evaluation

The Planning Group included also a new established section responsible for the 'evaluation of government programmes' (Derlien 1990a: 40), following up a rather academic discussion on the evaluation of government policies (Derlien 1985: 11; see Lange 1983; Hellstern 1984). In practice, the Planning Group aimed to build and manage a network of external research institutes and consultancies engaged in policy evaluation (König 1985b: 137). Moreover, it held close contacts with the Federal Audit Office, discussing its evaluative approach (König 1985b: 137). The major objective was to increase the Chancellery's information on the effects of government policy programmes – particularly in those policy issues cutting across policy areas and departmental portfolios (König 1985b: 137). Yet, the effects of these attempts of increasing the knowledge about and application of evaluation techniques across central government were rather modest – although the Planning Group aimed to avoid the frictions with the federal ministries that their predecessors had experienced by actively involving the ministries, as a group member argues:

'I invited all ministries that had something to do with evaluation. I was really facing a wave of antipathy. Some ministries were more open, e.g. the Ministry for International Development, evaluation had a very high status there, also the Ministry for Transport began to realise that they needed evaluation. (...) But there was also a ministry (...) which said "It's impossible to evaluate our activities ". Well, I've tried to persuade them, saying that it is more about exchanging views and methods – but we failed.' (ID26)

Put differently, the Planning Group failed to adjust the dominant worldviews in federal ministries with regard to evaluation. However, occasionally it surveyed evaluation activities in the various federal ministries (König 1986; Derlien 1999: 40) but again with no further implications, acknowledging the powerful position of federal ministries: 'if they want to resist, you cannot force them to do it' (ID14).

When major parts of the Planning Group were transferred in 1986 to the Division for Administrative Affairs and had to be incorporated into an existing group already responsible for two other tasks, i.e. the coordination of the federal and the *Länder* level as well as the liaison for cabinet and parliament, the evaluation activities were terminated.

4.2 The Division for Political Analyses as 'personal early warning system'¹⁹

The Division for Political Analyses was mostly providing press and media advice for the Chancellor. Its functions were assigned to different sections, as the division head explains:

'There were several sections in my division. One section focused on speechwriting for the Chancellor and reported directly to the Chancellor. (...) Then there was a special section for documentation, for processing all the material that was obtained daily, for example press-clippings and things like that.' (Ackermann, quoted by Rosumek 2007: 184)

In practice, the division was almost divided into two parts (ID14), one was designated to provide press and media advice, including the speechwriters enjoying the exclusive access to the Chancellor noted above, the other was supporting the press work, e.g. conducting documentation and analysing opinion polls. For this study's research interest, two advisory activities of the Division for Political Analyses are of particular interest: (1) the press and media advice to the Chancellor and (2) the preparation of policy briefs and *Chefsachen*.

4.2.1 The Division 5 as 'traditional spin doctors'²⁰

The Division for Political Analyses fulfilled its role in press and media advice to the Chancellor in three ways, i.e. (1) with the role of its head as the Chancellor's spokesman, and with the drafting of (2) Chancellor speeches and (3) government declarations.

(1) The head of the Division 5 played a crucial role as the personal press spokesman of the Chancellor. Every morning, Ackermann attended the small situation meeting, together with the ChefBK, the Parliamentary State Secretaries in the Chancellery, the division head responsible for foreign policy, the Chancellor's personal assistant, the government's spokesman, a division head from the Federal Press Office, and the key speech writer

¹⁹ (Korte 1998a: 25-6, 2000a: 855).

²⁰ (Rosumek 2007: 182).

(Ackermann 1994: 185; Korte 1998a: 28).²¹ Often, Ackermann started with an overview on the morning press (Ackermann, quoted by Rosumek 2007: 185; see also Korte 2003: 35).²²

In general, he was widely recognised as one of the best informed officials in government, as Kohl stated on various occasions: 'In Germany there are two people addicted to dpa²³ news, Hans Dietrich Genscher and Eduard Ackermann' (quoted by Die Zeit, 34/1994: 60; Tenscher 2003b: FN 185). As such, Ackermann acted primarily as a gatekeeper and transmitter of the Chancellor's message to the journalists in Bonn, as he explains:

'Journalists often approached me; the main instrument was my phone. I've had a hundred calls on peak days. Partly, it was about simple questions, but often there were very specific questions by journalists who wanted to know why the Chancellor had taken a decision and not done otherwise.' (Ackermann, quoted by Rosumek 2007: 195)

Thus, he was acting as a moderator, selecting also those journalists who were receiving the governmental message or additional information first – and thus designing the rules for government communication. In fact, Ackermann was widely perceived as the Chancellor's substitute, especially for journalists from those newspapers and magazines to which the Chancellor rejected any direct contact (Mertes 2003: 65-6; Rosumek 2007: 166-7). The Division 5 could regulate the exclusive access to the Chancellor and to information about his decision-making, as a Chancellery official explains:

'They were the ones that made background discussions for the Chancellor. And if you later read about "government sources reported" or "the close circle of the Chancellor has the following ideas", they were transported by them (...) that was the task of these colleagues.' (ID09)

However, others characterised the division head as a 'servant rather than an actor [who] heart only those details that he was supposed to' (Korte 1998a: 27) and thus downplay how much information on the rationale for distinct decisions he really received from the Chancellor. Nevertheless, Ackermann was widely perceived as the Chancellor's 'spy' on 'who in Bonn wanted to intrigue against Kohl' (Korte 1998a: 27; Rosumek 2007: 158-9). Here, the government communication activities were not only used for partisan considerations but also for a distinct type of 'political feasibility check', i.e. the head of the Division for Political Analyses was checking the journalistic information about potential departmental or societal resistance on certain issues (ID14).

The press and media advice offered by the head of the Division for Political Analyses was mostly supported by those division members acting as speechwriters as well as the section responsible for documentation and preparing the press-clippings etc. (ID14). Yet, the major work was done by Ackermann himself. In turn, these activities required regular contacts with the other line divisions in the Chancellery, albeit mostly managed at the level of division heads. In fact, the other division heads in the Chancellery used the direct access of Ackermann to the Chancellor in order to submit important policy briefs to the latter,

²¹ This morning meeting had been initiated already under Chancellor Kiesinger and was attended by different individuals under the various Chancellors – but mostly displayed his closest advisory circle (Murswieck 2008: 211).

²² To enable the meeting, the traditional Monday morning meetings of Administrative State Secretaries to prepare cabinet were postponed for half an hour (DER SPIEGEL, 47/1982: 21).

²³ dpa is the abbreviation for *Deutsche Presseagentur*, a leading German newswire agency.

especially during the first years of Kohl in office when they struggled with the problematic working style of the ChefBK noted above (DER SPIEGEL, 40/1983: 24).

In contrast, these press and media advice activities were only rarely linked to the federal ministries; occasionally Ackermann consulted press spokesmen from the federal ministries if necessary, obtaining his wide network of contacts that involved also other departmental officials, but it was not a crucial precondition to fulfil his tasks (ID14).

(2) The Division for Political Analyses was responsible for writing the Chancellor's speeches. The different speechwriters had different areas of responsibility,²⁴ although most speeches, especially the most important ones, were discussed among the group (Ludewig, quoted by Knoll 2004: 335, FN 406; Korte 1998a: 29-30). Next to the speechwriting, also other division members contributed to this function, e.g. by gathering the press-clippings and, more importantly, monitoring the findings of opinion polls (Fuchs/Pfetsch 1996; Pfetsch 1999: 21). Yet, the speechwriters were not only drafting the substantial content of the speech, they were also involved in organising and preparing the trip to the event where the Chancellor would hold his speech. As a result, they were widely perceived as an extended part of the Chancellor's private office and acted during these trips with the Chancellor as his 'discussion sparring partners' (Eisel, quoted by Korte 1998a: 43). In turn, these regular occasions deepened the understanding of the speechwriters for the Chancellor's objectives and political motives – and strengthened the close access to their client (Ludewig, quoted by Knoll 2004: 335, FN 407).²⁵

Depending on the issue and the timeframe, also other divisions in the Chancellery or the federal ministries were included by the Division 5 for the drafting of a Chancellor's speech, but not by submitting certain paragraphs but rather providing the background information on distinct issues or aspects of the speech's theme (ID26; Mertes 2003: 72). Particularly the Planning Group criticised the speechwriters in the Division for Political Analyses for their lacking interest in the information on departmental policy initiatives that they gathered in the Planning System, expressed by one member in the symbolic question: 'what does the speechwriter know about these? What is he going to tell?' (ID26). Put differently: The Planning Group members were convinced that the Chancellor's speeches would have benefitted in terms of substance and impact if they would have been based more strongly upon existing information on the status quo with regard to a particular issue as well as the current departmental policy plans. As a response, members of the Division for Political Analyses claimed that speechwriting as such entails always a certain amount of political planning and was thus not depending on the rather technocratic information collected in the Planning System from the federal ministries (ID14).

After a scandal on a Newsweek interview of Kohl in the autumn of 1986, the speechwriters became also responsible to revise all interviews with the Chancellor – although this is traditionally one of the key tasks of the BPA (Mertes 2003: 71; see also

²⁴ One of the speechwriters responsible for economic issues was later promoted as section head in the Chancellery responsible for 'Medium- and Long-Term Economic Models, Analyses, Projections, and Special Issues', benefitting from his direct access to the Chancellor (Knoll 2004: 335, FN 410, 411).

²⁵ Occasionally, the Division for Political Analyses prepared also 'substitute speeches', i.e. speeches held by cabinet ministers or members of the CDU party management committee that were supposed to be 'test balloons' for substantial positioning on contested issues (Korte 1998b: 399).

Morcinek 2006).²⁶ In cases where the division was not taking the lead on an interview, it was nevertheless responsible for the final 'quality check' (Mertes 2003: 70). As a result, frictions with the Federal Press and Information Office increased. Although Ackermann was well aware that he needed the BPA in order to obtain certain information and was therefore interested in cooperative contacts (Ackermann 1994: 193), the activities of the Division for Political Analyses clearly resulted in conflicts (Korte 1998a: 43, 2000: 8). Also the Chancellor contributed to these frictions by criticising regularly the government's spokesman at the BPA (DER SPIEGEL, 40/1983; Mertes 2007: FN 4). Eventually, though, the Division 5 could rely upon the full support of the Chancellor and also the aforementioned situation meetings guaranteed that the BPA could not actively side-line the press and media advisers in the Chancellery's division (ID14).

(3) A specific category of Chancellor's speeches were government declarations. The first government declaration of Helmut Kohl was mainly prepared without the Division for Political Analyses because it was not fully operative yet (Ackermann 1994: 178; Korte 1998a: 83-4). Although officially the new ChefBK Schreckenberger was responsible for drafting it, the Chancellery's division head responsible for foreign policy (with his experience as former speechwriter of Kohl as Prime Minister of Rhineland-Palatinate) became head of an informal working group preparing it, involving also several experts from the CDU parliamentary party (Ackermann 1994: 186-7; Korte 1998a: 83). In addition, also other sections at the Chancellery and the Planning Group and its head became involved (Schreckenberger 1994: 331; König 1985b: 135, 1989: 49-51). However, since a new general election was set as soon as possible, this first government declaration required only the indication of very broad policy guidelines under a Conservative government (Ackermann 1994: 186-7). The final version, though, was later discussed with selected journalists, including also the head of the Division 5 (Ackermann 1994: 189).

Later, government declarations were comparatively more strongly shaped by the speechwriters in the Division for Political Analyses, building upon the submissions of the federal ministries on upcoming departmental policy proposals and/or substantial information on a certain aspect of the declaration (Korte 1998a: 86, 2002a; Stuwe 2005). Often, the Chancellor also asked other close aides for their opinion on the drafts, but cleared them in advance with the speechwriters (Korte 1998a: 86).

Yet, although these regular speeches and less frequent government declarations provided the Division 5 with some powers to frame government policies, i.e. to set a framework which is communicated publicly and binds also future policies of federal ministries, they were more interested in the ideological or rather partisan nature of these advisory products and the 'Chancellor's message' in order to shape his public appearance. Accordingly, the division did not use its crucial position in mainly autonomously deciding about the communication of the Chancellor's agenda to the general public (Fuchs/Pfetsch 1996; Pfetsch 1999: 21) and was also not interested in formulating an overarching narrative on how to govern. Two policy areas can be regarded as exceptions and entailed

²⁶ In this interview, Helmut Kohl was quoted with the sentence 'He [Mikhail Gorbachev, JF] is a modern communist leader who knows something about public relations. Goebbels was an expert in public relations, too.' (quoted by the Los Angeles Times, 03 November 1986)

some deliberate framing, namely Intra-German policy and the European integration. Whereas the former outplayed the existing Ministry for Intra-German Relations (see Korte 1998a), the latter was a cross-cutting issue, although the Foreign Office engaged in regular conflicts with the Chancellery about formal competencies (see Gros 1998) – and thus a rather suitable area for framing future government policies that may depart from departmental philosophies.

4.2.2 The Division 5 avoiding 'the loop'? Policy briefs and Chefsachen

In general, the members of the Division for Political Analyses claimed that speechwriting and drafting government declarations was inherently linked with political planning and substantial policy advice (Mertes 2003: 71-2):

'Therefore, planning and speech writing are linked and work only together because speeches are an instrument of political leadership, i.e. to identify long-term policy direction, and it is reasonable that those writing speeches are also those developing the ideas.' (ID14)

As such, they perceived their roles also as policy planners, e.g. expressed also in their successful attempts to get into a regular exchange with members of the Policy Unit in Number Ten (ID14).²⁷ This exchange was also accompanied by some 'mutual learning', but more strongly with regard to the partisan advice than with regard to the role of policy advice in shaping the institutional underpinnings to govern – partly because the German counterparts in the Division 5 recognised that the 'British system is more centralised and our ministries are more powerful' (ID14). However, other Chancellery officials doubted that such a clear link between media advice and policy advice existed and instead stressed that 'of course at least 80% of a speech are pieces coming from the ministries', and that speechwriters 'make only the icing' (ID09).

Nevertheless, the Division for Political Analyses also engaged in more direct policy advice – although its key advisory product was less oriented towards commenting departmental policy proposals in order to intervene in government policy-making. Instead, it thought of itself more as crucial element of the 'brainstorming box' (Korte 2000a: 847):

'You have to become proactive and not simply reactive in order to solve current political problems, but consider what comes next, what should we worry about, so that certain developments do not catch us on the wrong foot.' (ID14)

In practice, these think-tank functions resulted in the preparation of policy briefs (*Eckpunktepapiere*), which outlined the policy problem and illustrated policy options in a rather basic manner. Mostly, the preparation of such self-conducted policy briefs required up to six months; the final product contained a longer part on the status quo and a shorter part with policy recommendations (ID14). Broadly speaking, it depended on the time horizon of the addressed issue whether the policy briefs were requested by the ChefBK or the Chancellor or whether the Division 5 initiated the preparation itself: For long-term issues, often the latter took the initiative, also reasoning that 'politicians tend to forget that life goes on after the next general election' (ID09) whereas short-term issues were often

²⁷ In fact, these exchanges were officially supported by the Conservative *Konrad-Adenauer-Foundation* organising joint meetings in London or in Bonn (ID14).

directly requested by the political leadership (ID09, ID14). The Division for Political Analyses favoured long-term policy advice, reasoning that

'politicians are re-elected because they convince people to have a perspective, "he still has something up its sleeve", at least an idea of where to go – therefore we had always to think a few years ahead. People don't choose you as a politician out of gratitude, because you've made such great policies. They choose you because you will deliver in the future. That's why we had to think about issues well ahead.' (ID14)

On average, 80% of these briefs addressed long-term issues and the rest focused on short-term policy issues (ID14) – resembling that the Division 5 was less used for ironing out short-term conflicts in cabinet and between the Chancellery and the federal ministries (ID09, ID14).

Most policy briefs on long-term issues originated from brainstorming, although this was often related to the preparations of a speech. Often the external members on fixed-term contacts brought up new ideas, also because they were participating regularly in conferences and other events and thus got inspiration from outside (ID14). Likewise, the regular analyses of the polls and invited external experts contributed to the issue selection (ID14; Sturm/Pehle 2007: 67). Also the timing played a role, especially after the first half of Kohl's second legislative term in office was over:

'In the middle of the legislative period you are running out of issues. You have ticked off the big issues in the coalition agreement (...) and then the question arises: "What to do next?" And then we had a small window of opportunity for an impulse.' (ID14)

Although most briefs were prepared by several division members, mostly one of them had the lead responsibility. Besides, the division also commissioned external reports on certain issues before preparing a policy brief, facilitated by the fact that one of its sections was formally responsible for the Chancellery's budget for such service contracts (Knoll 2004: 392, FN 14). Next to the discussions on particular briefs within the division and with invited experts (ID09, ID14), the division members discussed certain aspects of its policy briefs also with other officials in the Chancellery, most notably the mirror sections; occasionally they got also the initial idea to draft the brief from them:

'We were not offside of the events in our writing and thinking and we didn't brood among ourselves, decoupled of what happens in the outside world. In fact, it was very important for us to get the feedback from our colleagues mirroring the federal ministries.' (ID14)

Often, the mirror sections also corrected certain assumptions or recommendations made in these briefs by the Division for Political Analyses, e.g. saying: 'Kids, don't run into this direction, this is impossible because of European regulations' (ID14).

Next to the substantial preparation of the policy brief, i.e. the problem definition and suggestions for potential solutions, the briefs also contained some considerations with regard to political feasibility:

'If the basic idea had got accepted, then the next step is: How to implement and enforce this? Which actors should be included in the party, which in the government? Should we deal with this issue during this legislative period or is it a matter for the next? If the next, to which extent can we make this an issue of a party manifesto?' (ID14)

In contrast, short-term policy briefs dealt often with the Chancellor's personal policy priorities (*Chefsachen*) that are officially announced, as the later head of the Division 5 explains:

'The Chancellor's own policy initiatives are developed within the "policy planning". These [officials, JF] conduct mainly political idea management, linked with the formulation of 'visions' – which give the policy announcements an aura of historical grandeur.' (Mertes 2003: 69)

Also previous Chancellors had seized certain issues to the Chancellery – and announced this political accountability to the general public. However, Kohl was the first German Chancellor explicitly referring to them as *Chefsachen*, some authors claim that he invented 'the mythology of a "Chefsache"', assigning to these decisions an 'undeniable and powerful final validity' (Schmidt 1998: 613). In a sense, the public announcement of a *Chefsache* was the opposite of his deliberately reduced involvement in inter-ministerial decision-making: 'Kohl did not try to coordinate overall policymaking, preferring to focus exclusively on issues of great political importance' (Harlen 2002: 358). Among those issues selected by Kohl as a *Chefsache* during his first two terms in office were Intra-German policy issues, EU issues, and defence policy issues (DIE ZEIT, 39/1984; Korte 1998a; Fleischer 2007).

The Division for Political Analyses was mainly responsible for gathering the relevant information on the policy problem of the *Chefsache* (ID14), particularly using its expertise in press and public relations that was often required to 'create the typical Kohl-dressing and pour it on top' (ID09), i.e. they received the substantial information from other divisions in the Chancellery and then aimed towards 'sharpening the message and putting this issue into the general context of his chancellorship' (ID14). As such, the Division 5 was less oriented towards the political feasibility aspect, also neglecting to a certain extent the crucial role of federal ministries in the area covered by the *Chefsache* (ID26). These advisory tasks were often observed suspiciously by those sections at the Chancellery mirroring the responsible federal ministries – but resulted never in direct conflicts because 'they knew that we had the Chancellor's full support' (ID14).

4.3 The advisory system providing partisan advice

The Planning Group and the Division for Political Analyses provided also partisan advice. The basic reason for accomplishing also this task was the Chancellor's dual role as head of government and as CDU party leader. In fact, most duties arising from his position as CDU party leader were conducted in the Chancellery, summarised by himself as: 'the party (...) happened in the Chancellery' (Kohl, quoted by Knoll 2004: 368, FN 700; see Korte 2000b: 7; Harlen 2002: 357). More generally, the CDU, the CDU parliamentary party and the Chancellery build a triangle – with the latter often outweighing the former two (Gros 1998).²⁸ Corresponding to this triangular system, the head of Division 5 participated in the

²⁸ In turn, though, the Chancellor used regularly the party bodies and especially the coalition committee to solve conflicts between cabinet ministers or, more generally, influence government policy-making (Berry 1989: 346; Clemens 1994: 34; Korte 2000b: 7).

regular meetings of the CDU federal executive board (Gros 1988: FN 18)²⁹ and division members hold close contacts to the CDU headquarters (ID14, ID26).

In more detail, the Division for Political Analyses supported the Chancellor in the negotiations of the coalition agreement (ID26, König 1985b: 135, 1999: 49; Schmidtke 2001: 105):

'The contributions do not only come from the federal ministries. You get about 1,000 relevant requirements by societal actors, from the Catholic Bishops' Conference to the trade unions, environmentalists to what I know, 1,000 letters that really you cannot just throw in the trash. In addition, you get thousands of querulous demands. Then you have the party platforms, and even special requests that come from the parties.' (ID26)

Also the Planning Group contributed to the preparation of coalition negotiations, albeit these contributions were often collected by the organisational leadership, i.e. the Chancellor's private office, instead of conducting a previous coordination between the briefs and notes submitted by the Division 5 and the Planning Group. Partly, interviewed experts argued that the perspectives of both entities were slightly different and thus needed no stronger harmonisation, i.e. the Division for Political Analyses was more strongly involved in injecting insights from the polls and thinking about the communication of policy issues, also to give comments on whether an issue should be included in the – publicly visible – coalition agreement altogether. In contrast, the Planning Group provided more accounts of previous government policies in a certain policy area of the coalition negotiations, particularly also on departmental initiatives scheduled in the Planning System that had not been accomplished in the former legislative period (ID26). However, since the time period under scrutiny ends with the general election in 1987, more systematic accounts are not assessable, although it is very likely that both entities accomplished their partisan advisory role in the coalition negotiations afterwards similarly to the one negotiation process after the general election in 1983.

In addition, both entities also provided regular partisan advice for the preparation of meetings of the coalition committee – which became particularly relevant under Kohl's chancellorship because he used this arena to solve inter-ministerial conflicts, not only those across ministries led by ministers from the different coalition parties but also those across ministries led by ministers of the same party (albeit in cases of CDU ministers, Kohl also transferred the problem-solving to the CDU federal executive board, see Gros 1998). Whereas the heads of the two advisory arrangements under scrutiny were well aware about the crucial role of these meetings – and the influence that their preparation was bringing (ID09, ID14, ID26), the section officials were sometimes uneasy about these advisory activities. As one member of the Planning Group recalls an episode about the preparation of a coalition committee meeting:

I experienced a young official asking me: "Why am I actually preparing a paper for a coalition committee meeting – this is a completely party political circle?" And then I said: "Of course, you are not allowed to make a SPD or CDU paper for a coalition committee meeting – that is the duty of the parties. But if you are asked to prepare a paper

²⁹ In 1985, Kohl took the new ChefBK Schäuble to a meeting of the CDU federal executive board – a novelty, but nobody rejected his attendance and hence he participated always in these meetings, linking the parliamentary party more closely with the Chancellery (Gros 1998: 66-7).

from the government's point of view to a politically relevant topic, and the parties address that in their coalition meeting, it's completely legitimate.' (ID14)

In sum, the partisan advisory activities provided both advisory arrangements in the Chancellery with some influence on government policy-making because of the crucial role of various intra- and inter-party bodies for inter-ministerial coordination. Yet, their partisan advice was accompanied by many other individual advisers, close aides of the Chancellor, and, more importantly, did not explicitly focus on the impact of these bodies on the federal ministries. Instead, both advisory arrangements limited their role to an *ex ante* preparation rather than an *ex post* monitoring of federal ministries.

4.4 Concluding remarks

The two advisory arrangements at the centre of the German government during the first two terms of Chancellor Kohl differed considerably with regard to their influence on government policy-making. The Planning Group had lost the initial relevance of its organisational predecessor during the early 1970s and was rather limited in shaping the institutional underpinnings to govern. In contrast and as stressed by the Chancellor in his memoirs introducing this case study, the Division 5 focused on media advice and almost avoided to use it for influencing the institutional underpinnings to govern in central government, albeit it had some influence with its other advisory activities.

First, the Planning Group aimed to shape the *regulative* underpinnings to govern by expanding the Planning System with a Cabinet Scheduling, e.g. for advancing or delaying departmental policy proposals. This extension affected the formal rules at cabinet level, but had also effects on inter- and intra-departmental processes for preparing ministerial submissions. More importantly, the Planning Group did not establish completely new rules. Instead, it added the advanced Cabinet Scheduling on the basis of the pre-existing rules for interactions between the centre and the ministries, but involving also the mirror sections for engaging in such delaying or speeding up.

The Division 5 and especially the division head as the Chancellor's official spokesman succeeded in establishing new rules for governmental communication. Yet, these activities were mostly related to the interaction of the Chancellery with the media and neglected its role in inter-ministerial coordination. Those media activities targeting the pre-existing rules in central government were mostly confined to the role of the Federal and Press Office and to a lower extent to the press offices in federal ministries. However, also its additional engagements in preparing policy briefs and *Chefsachen* can be regarded as very weak attempts to address the regulative underpinnings of govern in selected policy areas, supporting the chancellor principle in sectoral decision-making.

Second, the Planning Group and its newly introduced Cabinet Scheduling had some implications on the *normative* pillars of government policy-making. By redefining planning as a technocratic management function accompanied by a reliable scheduling, the Planning Group tried to increase the temporal congruence of departmental policies and to establish a new planning standard that acknowledged the relevance of timing. Yet, this new emphasis on appropriate timing and sequencing of government policies was only rarely followed by the federal ministries. In fact, mostly the Planning Group itself had to deal

with potential temporal inconsistencies. Its additional engagement in governmental evaluation expressed a normative ambition to establish evaluation standards, albeit these were successfully rejected by the federal ministries.

The Division for Political Analyses concentrated on setting new professional standards in governmental communication. However, it neglected the behavioural norms in central government, except those applied on the BPA and the press officials in the federal ministries. Also its activities in policy briefs and especially in *Chefsachen* carried only very rarely attempts to shape the policy norms in government policy-making in particular policy areas, but similar to the Planning Division under Chancellor Brandt mostly the mirror sections at the Chancellery engaged directly with the ministries in order to prescribe such appropriate policies.

Lastly, the Planning Group aimed rarely towards influencing the *cognitive* underpinnings to govern – and its two major strategies were successfully opposed by the federal ministries. On the one hand, it aimed to establish a new worldview among officials that acknowledged the relevance of timing and sequencing of departmental policy initiatives. On the other hand, it had sought to establish a new understanding for the relevance of evaluation in central government. Whereas the former presumably failed also due to the Planning Group's failure to convince the federal ministries about the necessity of more time-related consciousness in government policy-making, the latter was arguably rejected because the Planning Group's status within central government was weak and thus federal ministries did not comply with their propagated worldview on policy evaluation. Put differently: From the federal ministries' perspective, a support or cooperation with the Planning Group in introducing governmental evaluation at federal level was neither necessary nor desirable. In turn, the Planning Group nearly neglected to disseminate distinct policy paradigms for prescribing policy choices in government policy-making.

Likewise, the policy briefs and *Chefsachen* of the Division for Political Analyses included very rarely cognitive maps for executive decision-making and they framed selected policy issues only occasionally. In other words: Although the Division for Political Analyses had opportunities to conduct cognitive strategies, e.g. by exploiting the speechwriting as well as the policy briefs, its key orientation towards the media reduced its interests to shape the basic cognitive underpinnings to govern and its policy briefs were often rather weakly related to policy paradigms in selected policy areas.

To conclude, the two advisory arrangements at the Chancellery under the Kohl government engaged partly in maintaining the Planning System and continued with the preparation of policy briefs and government declarations, complemented by *Chefsachen* as the Chancellor's personal prioritised policy issues. Both entities had rather moderate ambitions to change the institutional status quo, and if so, they addressed more often the policy-specific institutional underpinnings to govern, i.e. targeting the formal rules of executive decision-making by incorporating formal means of interventions by the centre. More importantly, these activities disseminated sometimes appropriate means to accomplish certain policy objectives and provided frames for selected government policies. Yet, following previous practices, these activities were built upon submissions from and collaboration with the federal ministries, again transmitted through the mirror sections, and

thus the former's opportunities to disseminate new policy-specific norms and paradigms that would counteract existing departmental norms and philosophies were very limited.

*'I think it is reasonable and quite naturally
that the Chancellery thinks beyond the day.
At the end, however, I will make the decisions.'
(Schröder, quoted by SZ, 24 December 2002: 5)*

Chapter G Policy advice under the Schröder government, 1998-2005

When Chancellor Gerhard Schröder came into office in 1998, the advisory system at the centre of the German government witnessed more radical changes. Under the new Social-Democratic Chancellor, it was completely overhauled, abolishing the pre-existing Division for Political Analyses and establishing instead various staffs at the organisational leadership level, which were quasi-merged with the still existing Planning Group in the line structure into a new Planning Division in 1999. Likewise, the new Finance Minister Oskar Lafontaine reorganised the Ministry of Finance considerably, also strengthening the policy advisory role of the pre-existing Division for 'General Affairs of Fiscal Policy, Fiscal Aspects of Selected Policy Areas' (*Grundsatzfragen der Finanzpolitik, finanzpolitische Fragen einzelner Bereiche*, henceforth: Division for General Affairs).¹ The next subchapter describes the key developments prior the general election in 1998 that resulted in the rearrangement of the advisory system at the centre of government as scrutinised in the second subchapter, differentiating between the rearrangements that occurred after the general election in 1998 and the subsequent general election in 2002. The third subchapter scrutinises the organisational structure of the various advisory arrangements. The final subchapter analyses their major activities and attempts to affect the institutional underpinnings of government policy-making.

1 Prologue: Advisory capacities for pursuing the 'Neue Mitte'

After the general election in January 1987, the Planning Group remained in its functional orientation and structure. In contrast, the Division for Political Analyses was somewhat streamlined and expanded by uplifting the section for public relations into a group, incorporating also the sections for speechwriting and press relations (Knoll 2004: 303). In addition, the division's formal denomination was changed into 'Division for Societal and Political Analyses, Communication and Public Affairs' (Hoffmann 2003: 534), emphasising its functional key orientation towards public relations. Partly as a response to the growing media activities of the division, more members with an external background were recruited, including Norbert J. Prill, a former researcher at the *Konrad-Adenauer-Foundation* who became soon the Chancellor's key speechwriter (DER SPIEGEL, 25/1987: 24). In 1991, the division's capacities were slightly extended again by appointing an official deputy head, the journalist Andreas Fritzenkötter (Ackermann 1994: 191-2; Hamburger Abendblatt, 06/07 November 1999: 13). In 1994, the Chancellor created a new Staff for Press Relations directly subordinated to him and led by Fritzenkötter (ID14). Initially, the Staff was supposed to coordinate all media relations of the federal government (DER SPIEGEL, 25/1994: 20, 22) but in practice it turned out to be less powerful and

¹ Throughout the case study, this division is also referred to as 'Division I' or 'Division I', applying the common usage by the interviewed experts, or as 'BMF Division'.

focused on the Chancellor's own media activities as well as his political interests in media regulation (ID14).

However, the basic functional division of tasks between the Planning Group and the Division for Political Analyses maintained: Whereas the former focused on administering the Planning System and updating the datasheets for collecting information on departmental policy proposals, the latter managed all press relations. In addition, the Division for Political Analyses expanded its policy advisory function by initiating a series of external reports on 'mega-issues' (ID14), written by academic experts and edited by the Chancellery in a series, starting with a report on the youth (Bertram 1987) and post-modern culture (Koslowski 1987), later also addressing issues such as family sociology (Kaufmann 1990), but also more remote themes such as the role of diet and sport for public health (Hauer 1989) as well as issues such as the view on Germany in the French literature (Bernisch 1992).² Moreover, the Division for Political Analyses became rather influential during the events after the German re-unification in November 1989, adding advice to the pre-existing Working Staff Intra-German Policy (*Arbeitsstab Deutschlandpolitik*) and e.g. drafting a roadmap for the formal re-unification (*10-Punkte-Plan*; ID14; Korte 1998a). By and large, the advisory arrangements at the Chancellery did not change their reactive role vis-à-vis the federal ministries, contributing to the scholarly conclusion that '[a]t no time has the Chancellery been able (or indeed attempted) to exert an independent political influence' (Müller-Rommel 1994a: 126).

During the run-up to the general election in 1998, a few senior SPD party members discussed the advisory system at the centre of the German government, more precisely the capacities servicing a German Chancellor (ID13, ID17). Reasoning that the party's shift towards the 'Neue Mitte' had to be accompanied by a new style of governing, they argued that a potential SPD Chancellor would require a personal staff about approx. 60 members inside the Chancellery, acting as a 'mini White House' (Murswieck 2003: 129-30). Partly, the rationale to establish such an additional advisory arrangement within the Chancellery was motivated by their strong interest to learn from alleged successful other heads of government and their governing style, most notably the British PM (ID13, ID17). However, no blueprint was formulated in terms of organisation or role. Likewise, the Chancellery's internal organisation was not heavily discussed before the general election (FAZ, 29 September 1998: 6).

In contrast to the Chancellery, the Ministry of Finance was a heavily debated issue during the electoral campaign in 1998, albeit not from an organisational point of view but rather in terms of functional responsibilities. The shadow Finance Minister and SPD party leader Oskar Lafontaine requested formal responsibilities from various federal ministries, most prominently in EU affairs (Die Zeit 42/1998, 43/1998). Yet, the advisory capacities inside the Ministry of Finance were not discussed. The Division for General Affairs had been initially created as a Macro-Economic Group in December 1950. It acted as an internal think tank and was transformed into a line division when the first Grand Coalition

² A particular influential report was issued by Prof. Dr. Dieter Oberndörfer (1990) on the protection of the rain forest, thus flanking the Chancellor's initiatives in environmental policy-making (ID14).

came into office in 1966.³ Under subsequent Finance Ministers, it maintained its role as think tank, although it also accumulated several formal responsibilities over time, including e.g. for industrial federal assets in 1989, which became particularly relevant after the German re-unification (ID22). Moreover, several ministers located their speechwriters in the Division for General Affairs (ID20). However, the division's key function was to provide policy alternatives to the departmental leadership, injecting new ideas into the ministry's policies (*Die Zeit*, 39/1998). Thus, the division enjoyed close access to the organisational top-level but was in many other respects an ordinary line division. More importantly, it was never formally responsible for any budgetary issues; this was the domain of the Budget Division. When the Bonn-Berlin move forced an assessment of this structural separation of think tank functions vis-à-vis the federal ministries as part of the budget preparation, a merger was considered but not implemented, as a BMF official recalls:

'The coordination between the I and the II⁴ was always difficult (...). Discussions [about merging both divisions, JF] arose the last time with the move of the ministries, when also a report was produced assessing the organisation of the ministry. (...) But it was clearly decided that the I is performing a different function than the II.' (ID32)

Eventually, the divisional structure remained – and the Division for General Affairs moved to Berlin because its advisory activities would be required close to the Minister (ID20). Similar to the Chancellery, however, no plans were made by the Social Democrats how to organise the ministry and especially its advisory arrangements during the run-up to the general election in 1998 – with the exception to install a completely revamped and strengthened line division for EU affairs (ID20, ID22).

2 The rearrangement of the advisory system at the centre

The advisory system at the centre of the newly elected Red-Green⁵ government was arranged after the general election in 1998, but experienced several changes throughout the first year of the new government in office as well as after the subsequent general election in 2002 when the governmental actors had gained experience and adjusted it towards their particular requirements. Accordingly, this subchapter is divided into two parts, illustrating the major changes in 1998 and subsequent dynamics as well as the adjustments after the general election in 2002.

2.1 The first term in office: Strengthening the centre

When after the landslide victory in the general election in 1998 the first Red-Green coalition in Germany took office, the Chancellery was changed radically. Its political top-level comprised a duumvirate,⁶ including a ChefBK ranked as a cabinet minister and a

³ At first, the denomination of the division was the Division VII for 'Fiscal and Macro-Economic Issues, Relations to the *Länder* and Municipalities, Fiscal Reform'.

⁴ The Budget Division is enumerated in the task allocation plans and organisational charts as Division II (see also FN 1 above).

⁵ According to the traditional colours of German parties, this notion describes a coalition between the Social Democratic Party and the Green Party.

⁶ Although Schreckenberger served also as StS simultaneously to Schäuble as ChefBK, their distribution of competencies was different: The former was officially responsible for the intelligence services and other issues such as media policy.

subordinated Administrative State Secretary. Bodo Hombach was appointed as new ChefBK, formerly cabinet minister in North Rhine-Westphalia⁷ and manager of several successful SPD Land electoral campaigns.⁸ He was well-known for his contribution to the SPD's programmatic orientation towards the *Neue Mitte*, which he had propagated in a book (Hombach 1998) containing an epilogue by Gerhard Schröder (Geyer et al. 2005: 66). The book signalled already the key policy direction of the new government and responded to developments in other Social Democratic parties in Western Europe, most notably of 'New Labour' in Britain. However, although Hombach was often portrayed as one of Schröder's close advisers, other observers stress that at least prior to the general election campaign in 1998 Schröder disliked his 'harmonious' and talkative approach, expressed with one reply to him saying 'Conservatives are better in serenading' (quoted by Anda/Kleine 1998: 78).⁹

In contrast to Hombach, the new StS in the Chancellery, Frank-Walter Steinmeier, the former Head of Schröder's State Chancellery in Lower Saxony, had a long administrative experience, also in handling a government headquarters. As the Administrative State Secretary at the Chancellery he was chairing the weekly meeting of Administrative State Secretaries preparing cabinet (Helms 2001a: 1503-4). The distribution of their roles was famously summarised by the Chancellor in 1998 saying: 'From the 50 good ideas that Bodo has each day, it is your task, Frank, to carry out five' (Schröder, quoted by Stern, 17 January 2006: 51).

The creation of a duumvirate at the Chancellery's top-level followed at least two motives. On the one hand, Hombach had a keen and persuasive interest in the position as ChefBK – and was deeply convinced that a revamped and strengthened Chancellery is necessary in order to accomplish the new government's policy agenda. The additional recruitment of Steinmeier as StS was also an attempt to outweigh Hombach's lacking executive experience (ID10, ID18). On the other hand, the duumvirate added the ChefBK as minister to cabinet, increasing the possibilities to limit the new Finance Minister and SPD party leader Lafontaine, i.e. it created a 'power-political centre against the super-Finance Minister' (Wirtschaftswoche, 48/1998: 19; Die Zeit, 43/1998; Egle/Henkes 2003: 75). This new role of the Chancellery was also favoured by the division head responsible for economic and fiscal policy and thus mirroring the Ministry of Finance:

'Unlike in recent years, we want that the Chancellery thinks ahead more strongly, and not only think. Previously, the Chancellery often responded to initiatives from the ministries. In the future, I want a stronger link between the ideas of individual ministries and the ideas of the Chancellor.' (Gretschmann, quoted by Die Welt, 16 November 1998: 8)

These new ambitions were also reflected in radical changes of the advisory system by the new ChefBK Hombach in order to support the Chancellery in its new role (ID01, ID08). Yet, Hombach was not referring to the still existing Planning Group managing the governmental planning. In fact, this line group remained. Instead, he focused on the pre-

⁷ In fact, he had been in this position only for a few months.

⁸ Hombach was famous in the SPD for his work as campaign manager for several general elections in North Rhine-Westphalia with Johannes Rau as front-runner. He was also involved in the SPD campaign for the general election in 1998 which was primarily managed by Matthias Machnig, then head of the private office of the SPD's General Secretary Franz Müntefering.

⁹ The German expression reveals his irony better: 'Sülzen können die Konservativen besser'.

existing Division for Political Analyses: The division was abolished and several responsibilities for press and media relations transferred to the Federal Press Office and the newly created position of the Federal Commissioner for Culture and the Media at the Chancellery (Mertes 2003: 69).¹⁰ The abolition decision had mainly two reasons: First, the officials obtaining positions in the former division were perceived as hostile to the new government and hence not perceived as suitable to advise the new Chancellor. Due to the rotary principle, 'it was impossible to organise the rotation of a whole division into another ministry; a full termination was the easiest way out' (ID01). Second, the new ChefBK was highly interested to seize advisory capacities to the organisational top-level at the Chancellery – and away from his internal rival Steinmeier (Mertes 2000: 71-2). Accordingly, he created two staffs at his disposal, one Working Staff ChefBK and an Office ChefBK.

Yet, the advisory system was a regular concern of some of its members and also discussed with the ChefBK. Ultimately, the decision was taken to create a new full-fledged Planning Division in the Chancellery's line structure. On the one hand, a new division was thought to host more members than the existing staffs (ID10), also to counteract the policy advisory capacities in the SPD party headquarters more properly (FAZ, 26 July 1999: 14). The new ChefBK was convinced that 'the Chancellery has to have its own ideas, disregard what the party thinks' (ID01), i.e.

'some Social Democrats were still in "opposition mode", they were used to discuss things to death – and this is something you cannot do once in government. There are so many decisions to make (...), a centre of government cannot discuss all these issues with the party, and also a party cannot solve all the problems that come up when you have to run an office' (ID10).

On the other hand, a division would allow its head to 'talk with the other division heads on par' (ID08). Simultaneously, a new division was supposed to provide a more 'traditional appearance' vis-à-vis the federal ministries, also reducing the critics about the Chancellery following the 'chaos-theory approach' (ID08, ID10; see chap. G.4.1.2 below).

In July 1999, Hombach stumbled over a political affair concerning private real estate business and was removed (DER SPIEGEL, 26/1999b: 24). Afterwards, the duumvirate was abolished and Steinmeier succeeded him as new ChefBK, albeit he maintained his rank as Administrative State Secretary.¹¹ As such, the pre-existing Office ChefBK was now affiliated to him, filled with his former private office members (Der Tagesspiegel, 04 June 2000: 2; Knoll 2004: 399). The previous Office ChefBK members were mostly transferred to the new Planning Division. Likewise, the virtual Working Staff ChefBK was transferred into the new Planning Division (ID08). The duumvirate had not only caused regular conflicts at the top-level, it had also increased Steinmeier's scepticism against Hombach's close aides, including his candidate as head of the new Planning Division (ID05, ID08).

¹⁰ One of the former speechwriters under Chancellor Kohl was transferred to the Division for Administrative Affairs as part of a new Group for Cultural Issues, widely perceived as 'forced labour camp' (DER SPIEGEL, 13/1999: 17).

¹¹ He was accompanied by Hans Martin Bury as State Minister responsible inter alia for federal-state relations and EU affairs; Bury was also supported by the Planning Division (ID05).

In September 1999 the new Division 5 for 'Political Analysis and General Affairs' came into official existence, informally, though, practitioners and observers coined it the 'Planning Division' (e.g. ID01, ID05, ID08, ID18).¹² Its remit was clearly oriented towards the seemingly successful Policy Unit in Number Ten (ID05, ID08):

'The aim was a new [...] division 5. It should be structured like the Policy Unit. A staff of advisers that is explicitly responsible to create medium-term policy visions, including speech-writing.' (senior Chancellery official, quoted by Marx 2008: 227)

In addition, however, the new Planning Division amalgamated also the pre-existing Planning Group with its formal responsibilities in governmental planning as well as the section for liaison with the churches that had been created under the previous Chancellor.

Similar to the Chancellery, also the Ministry of Finance underwent several changes in order to establish it as a 'second power centre next to the Chancellery' (Geyer et al. 2005: 78). Mostly, these changes resulted from the transfer of formal responsibilities in EU affairs from the Ministry for Economic Affairs and the Foreign Ministry,¹³ including e.g. the lead for preparing the Economic and Financial Affairs Council (ECOFIN) and the EU Monetary Committee as well as the formulation of the Annual Economics Report and liaison of the German Council of Economic Experts (*Sachverständigenrat zur Begutachtung der ökonomischen Entwicklung*) as well as the Economic Council (*Konjunkturrat*, BKOrgErl [1998]; Bulmer and Burch 2000: 277; Hoffmann 2003: 101; Statistisches Bundesamt 2003). The transfer of EU responsibilities resulted in a substantial shift of the centre of EU economic and fiscal policy coordination towards the Ministry of Finance (Beichelt 2007: 424). The additional growth of macro-economic expertise in the Ministry of Finance was generally approved by the Chancellor because he was more interested in micro-economic policy issues where he could put 'his personal skills as a mediator (...) to best effect' (Dyson 2001: 136).

At the Finance Ministry's organisational top-level, two personal aides of Lafontaine were appointed as Administrative State Secretaries, Heiner Flassbeck, former division head at the *German Institute for Economic Research* (DIW), and Claus Noé, a previous StS in Hamburg and influential columnist, both were well-known supporters of a demand-oriented economic and financial policy (Lafontaine 1999: 114). Next to their personal offices, Flassbeck was additionally supported by a newly created Working Staff on EU Economic and Monetary Affairs, chaired by the subdivision head in the Division for International Fiscal and Monetary Policy.¹⁴

Initially, it was discussed to transfer the whole Division for General Affairs at the Ministry for Economic Affairs to the Ministry of Finance. However, its division head Klaus-Werner Schatz was a well-known advocate of a supply-oriented economic and fiscal policy and thus opposite to the new StS Heiner Flassbeck. Consequently, he was sent to

¹² Accordingly, this case study will also use henceforth its formal title.

¹³ As a further result, the Ministry for Economic Affairs was asked to avoid any confrontation with the Ministry of Finance (FAZ, 28 October 1998: 19).

¹⁴ The new Chancellor terminated the tradition to appoint the StS in the Ministry of Finance responsible for international fiscal and monetary policy as his Sherpa for the World Economic Summits. Instead, he appointed the Head of the Division for Economic and Financial Policy in the Chancellery. The creation of the Working Staff can be regarded as a functional equivalent – to strengthen the EU affairs resources.

early retirement and only selected sections from the division were transferred into the Ministry of Finance (FAZ, 28 October 1998: 19). In turn, the BMF Division was expanded by creating a third subdivision and rearranging the two pre-existing subdivisions. Likewise, its official denomination was broadened into the Division for 'General Affairs of Fiscal and Economic Policy' (*Grundsatzfragen der Finanz- und Wirtschaftspolitik*).

Although the new Finance Minister had a clear and strong interest to formulate a Keynesian fiscal and economic policy at EU level and thus the corresponding newly established Division E for EU affairs enjoyed his strong support, the Division for General Affairs benefited from the fact that StS Noé, to which it was formally subordinated, was also one of the lead actors in ECOFIN, together with his French counterpart, Dominique Strauss-Kahn (ID22, ID27).

When on 10 March 1999 the Chancellor declared in cabinet that he rejects economy-hostile policies and the largest tabloid reported the next day that the Chancellor had criticised Lafontaine and threatened cabinet with his resignation, Lafontaine resigned as Finance Minister and SPD party leader. Many observers concluded that this event was a culmination of previous 'press-mobbing' by ChefBK Hombach against the Finance Minister (DER SPIEGEL, 40/1999; FAZ, 13 March 1999: 3; Lafontaine 1999: 129; Korte 2003: 37; Müller/Walter 2004: 171; Geyer et al. 2005: 78).

After Lafontaine's resignation the ministry's key remit was oriented towards budget consolidation, also expressed by the new Finance Minister Hans Eichel, former Prime Minister of Hesse who had conducted a strong consolidation programme (Zohlhörer 2003: 405). The two Administrative State Secretaries were replaced. Although their status as political civil servants required no official reason, the new Finance Minister was famously quoted by saying 'One of them had infuriated the entire ministry, the other the rest of the world' (quoted by DER SPIEGEL, 26/1999c: 34). The new officeholders were Caio Koch-Weser, formerly Managing Director at the World Bank, and Heribert Zitzelsberger, previously Head of the Tax Division at the Bayer AG and close aide of Eichel, both well-known supporters of the new minister's consolidation programme (File 1999: 140-1; Lafontaine 1999: 114). Yet, the Division for General Affairs remained in its basic structure and key responsibilities, although especially those sections which had been recently transferred were rather uncertain about their future role, given the fact that the advocate of a stronger macro-economic orientation of the Finance Ministry had left office (ID12, ID21).

2.2 The second term in office: Rearranging the centre

After the general election in 2002, the Planning Division in the Chancellery was abolished and the formal tasks in governmental planning transferred back into a line group, other advisory functions were reassigned to the Office ChefBK. On the one hand, this reorganisation reflected Steinmeier's understanding that strategic planning needed to be linked more strongly with operative processes – and a smaller amount of resources for such issues would increase the Chancellery's line divisions' efforts to include strategic aspects into their daily work (ID07, ID18). More importantly, the ChefBK was dissatisfied with

the previous advisory activities of the Planning Division, especially their non-existing links within the Chancellery (DER SPIEGEL, 17/2003: 48), as a Chancellery official put it:

'If you're working on your own the whole time (...) doing some fancy stuff, like travelling to Britain and preparing meetings for the Chancellor and other heads of state, (...) you may think you are important. But if you never go down to the nitty-gritty of government policy (...) actually driving the process from the centre – then you are not really important. (...) The fact that nobody fought for their survival speaks for itself.' (ID17)

On the other hand, a termination of the Planning Division provided formal positions to create a new Division for EU Affairs, which was strongly requested by the Chancellor (ID07, ID18; DER SPIEGEL, 16/2004: 34; Sturm/Pehle 2005: 47, 61). Put differently: The reorganisation of the advisory system was already discussed between the ChefBK and his close advisers, but the general election in 2002 provided the 'right timing' (ID19). The subsequent reorganisation restored the status quo in 1998, except that the organisational top-level comprised only one staff servicing the ChefBK (DER SPIEGEL, 16/2003: 45, 17/2003: 48).¹⁵ To maintain the small size of this new Office ChefBK and ensure its direct access to the client (ID18), the Parliament and cabinet liaison was transferred with the responsibilities in governmental planning to the Planning Group with the former personal assistant of the ChefBK as new group head (Knoll 2004: 396).¹⁶ As replacement, two new sections for political planning and the 'dialogue with sciences' were created. Yet, similar to the Planning Division after 1998, two of the sections head positions in the Office ChefBK, namely for press relations and political planning, were not filled until 2004. Then, the new personal assistant to the ChefBK was promoted as simultaneous head of the political planning section whereas the section head for press relations remained empty until 2005.

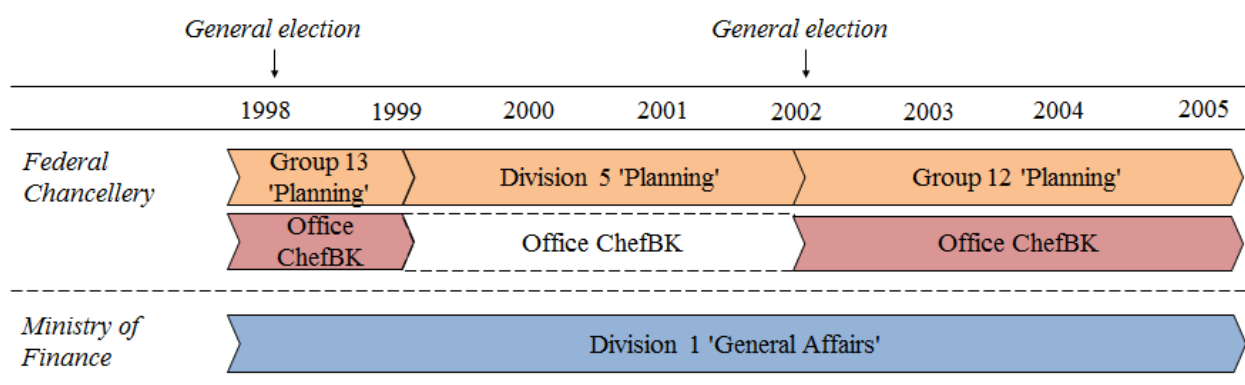
In contrast to these changes of the advisory system in the Chancellery, the Division for General Affairs in the Ministry of Finance underwent less radical changes after the general election in 2002. The responsibilities for economic forecasting were returned to the newly created Ministry for Economic Affairs and Labour and the pre-existing sections re-arranged into two subdivisions, accompanied by a new official denomination as Division for 'General Affairs of Fiscal Policy, Fiscal Aspects of Selected Policy Areas, Economic Promotion' (*Grundsatzfragen der Finanzpolitik, finanzpolitische Fragen einzelner Bereiche, Wirtschaftsförderung*).

In sum, the advisory system at the centre of the Schröder government changed frequently (see Figure G.1): Whereas at the Chancellery initially an Office ChefBK and a parallel Planning Group existed, a new Planning Division merged most of their tasks from 1999 onwards. After the general election in 2002, the division was abolished and its functions transferred back to a Planning Group and to the Office ChefBK at the top-level. In the Ministry of Finance, an expanded Division for General Affairs serviced the two alternating Finance Ministers in the Red-Green government, incorporating previous responsibilities from the Ministry for Economic Affairs.

¹⁵ The section for liaison with churches and religious communities was transferred to Division 3.

¹⁶ The official group's denomination comprised two other functions, the Federal-*Länder* coordination and the liaison with cabinet and parliament; this study refers to it as 'Planning Group' to facilitate the reading.

Figure G.1 The advisory system at the centre of German government, 1998-2005



Note: The figure displays not the full official denomination of all advisory arrangements in order to facilitate the reading.

Source: Own illustration.

3 The organisation of policy advice at the centre

The organisation of the advisory system at the centre of the Schröder government included various advisory arrangements at the Chancellery, i.e. the Office ChefBK at the organisational top-level and the parallel Planning Group in the line structure as well as their quasi-merger, the Planning Division, which was later abolished in favour of an Office ChefBK with a reactivated role in government policy-making. In contrast, the advisory arrangement in the Finance Ministry, the Division for General Affairs, was rather stable over the last time period under scrutiny. This subchapter analyses the organisational structures of the advisory arrangements separately, according to their parent organisation, and shows their similarities and varying differences with the traditional organisation principles in the Chancellery and the federal bureaucracy regarding their (1) durability, (2) internal affiliation, (3) size, (4) fragmentation, and (5) expertness.

3.1 The Chancellery: The unsteady organisation of policy advice

In general, the Chancellery hosted an alternate number of advisory arrangements with a maximum of three parallel entities during the first year of the new Schröder government. To consolidate the empirical analysis, they are presented together, albeit in a chronological order, discussing each of the five aforementioned organisational attributes.

(1) The Office ChefBK was created with an infinite ex ante durability (ID01, ID03). However, it did not fully survive the first term of the Schröder government and was partly merged with the Planning Group into a Planning Division in 1999 – which, again, existed only until the next general election and was afterwards abolished; partly transferring its tasks back to a Planning Group as well as to the rearranged Office ChefBK at the organisational top-level.

(2) The Office ChefBK at the Chancellery's top-level was directly subordinated to the ChefBK.¹⁷ Simultaneously, the Planning Group remained in its line affiliation to the Division for Administrative Affairs. As a consequence, the Office ChefBK was located

¹⁷ As presented in more detail in chap. D.2.1 above, the Chancellery hosted other staffs before.

very close to the office rooms of the ChefBK, sharing a mutual antechamber (ID08, ID24) whereas the Planning Group remained in its offices in the division's building at the Chancellery. When in 1999 the Planning Division was established, it was likewise affiliated as a line division and thus directly subordinated to the ChefBK but enjoyed less close contact to him, partly caused by the general rejection of the new officeholder to create the division in the first place and the conflicting understandings about their role and mandate (ID01, ID05). The creation of the Planning Division in 1999 coincided with the Bonn-Berlin-move of the federal government, but it was located as all other line divisions in the interim building of the Chancellery in Berlin and thus not in particular close proximity to the political leadership. After 2002, the reactivated Office ChefBK resided in closest physical proximity to the ChefBK, facilitating its regular access to the ChefBK in the new Chancellery building in Berlin (DER SPIEGEL, 38/2005: 25). In turn, the Planning Group was located on the same floor as the other groups of its parent division.

(3) The size of the advisory arrangements under the Schröder government differed considerably from the other entities in the Chancellery. Taken together, the Office ChefBK with its approx. six positions and the Planning Group continuing with its four officials had a much smaller size than the pre-existing Division for Political Analyses (DER SPIEGEL, 13/1999: 17). When the Planning Division was created in 1999, those positions were transferred into the new division, totalling to a size of approx. twelve members, which was thus much smaller than the other line divisions in the Chancellery (see Figure G.2 below). After 2002, the Planning Group gained a rather similar size to its organisational status quo ante in 1999, i.e. approx. five members, whereas the the Office ChefBK grew up to 15 members, although more than a third was allocated in the 'crisis management centre' (*Lagezentrum*), including also army and police officers.

(4) The fragmentation of the advisory arrangements at the Chancellery under the Schröder government was rather similar to other entities in the Chancellery's organisational structure. The horizontal and vertical fragmentation of the Planning Group remained, by and large, as under the previous government, i.e. the single group head led meanwhile four sections at the secondary authority level, resulting in a medium horizontal fragmentation. In turn, the vertical fragmentation of the Planning Group remained with three formal authority levels, i.e. the group head, the subordinated section heads as well as section officials. When the Planning Group was reactivated in 2002, its horizontal fragmentation increased considerably because the responsible group head was now responsible for six subordinated sections at the secondary authority level: Three sections were responsible for governmental planning and advisory tasks, directly transferred from the abolished Planning Division, the other three sections included next to the federal-*Länder* coordination and the liaison for cabinet and Parliament also a section for sport. Yet, its vertical fragmentation remained with the three authority levels noted above.

In contrast, the leadership structure of the Office ChefBK consisted of one head and five section heads at the second authority level. As a result, it was medium fragmented, although the formal branches were not as clearly demarcated as for the other advisory arrangements under scrutiny. Broadly speaking, one could differentiate five areas with very different responsibilities, including the personal assistant to the ChefBK, a press section, a section for 'project development', and the documentation section transferred from

the former Division for Political Analyses, as well as the comparatively largest section acting as crisis management centre. In turn, the vertical fragmentation of the Office ChefBK was rather modest and comprised three formal authority levels, i.e. the staff head, the staff section heads, and the section officials.

The leadership structure of the Planning Division differed considerably from its preceding and succeeding advisory arrangements in the line structure of the Chancellery but also compared to the other line divisions. The new Planning Division was the only line division without group heads as intermediaries between the line sections and the division head, comprising instead six section heads. As a result, the division was highly fragmented in horizontal terms. This fragmentation was not heavily discussed, the final setting of functional branches emerged from a mix of deliberate decisions and some coincidences, also their formal denominations came mostly 'out of the blue' (ID08, ID03, ID19). Two sections were transferred from the Office ChefBK and partly renamed, i.e. the sections for 'political problem-solving' and documentation, another section was transferred from the virtual Working Staff ChefBK and became responsible for 'opinion polls and trend analyses'. In addition, two sections were transferred from the Division for Administrative Affairs, i.e. a section for speechwriting and the section for liaison with the churches from the previous Planning Group. The last section was responsible for managing the Planning System. In turn, the vertical fragmentation of the Planning Division was rather unusual for a line division in the Chancellery because no group heads were recruited; it comprised only three authority levels, i.e. the division head, the section heads and the section officials.

(5) Similar to the previous advisory system in place during the mid-1980s, the various elements of the advisory system under the Schröder government differed in terms of expertness amongst each other but also compared to the other organised entities in the Chancellery. The head of the Planning Group, Volker Busse, stayed in office until it was transferred into the new Planning Division (see Table G.1). He was a typical career official in the Chancellery and had almost 30 years of working experience in the office, mostly in the Division for Administrative Affairs. After 2002, when the Planning Group was reinstalled, it was headed by the former personal assistant to the ChefBK. The Office ChefBK was initially headed by a close aide of the ChefBK Hombach (ID01). After the general election in 2002, when it was reactivated as an advisory arrangement, it was headed by one of its former section heads who was promoted into the new position; previously he had been responsible for press relations.

When the new Planning Division was created in 1999 by abolishing the Planning Group and downsizing the Office ChefBK to a private office, neither of the two heads in office were promoted as new division head. Instead, ChefBK Hombach had asked – after considering several candidates – Wolfgang Nowak to take over the position (ID01, ID08). Nowak had obtained considerable executive experience as former StS in Saxony, but he lacked a sufficient network of contacts in Berlin and the SPD, also expressed by his nickname as 'little Glotz' pointing to the fact that his only known SPD ally was Peter Glotz, a former SPD secretary general (*Die Zeit*, 36/1999: 26-7). Besides, many party members criticised him due to his policy positions in his former position as StS in the Saxon Ministry for Education where he had argued in favour of private universities and student fees and thus against one of the basic values in SPD school policy at that time (ID01).

Nevertheless, Schröder admitted his unorthodox character and thus Steinmeier did not object and Nowak was appointed as new division head in September 1999.

Table G.1 The leadership structure of advisory arrangements in the Chancellery, 1998-2005

tenure in office	name	previous position/s	subsequent position
<i>Office ChefBK (1998-1999 and 2002-2005)</i>			
10/1998-09/1999	MD Simons	n/a	BKAmt, Head of Group 12 (Federal-Länder coordination)
10/1999-09/2002	Dr. Ewold Seeba	BKAmt, Head of <i>Office StS</i>	BKAmt, Head of Division 1 (Administrative affairs)
10/2002-10/2005	Stephan Steinlein	BKAmt, <i>Office ChefBK</i> , Head of Press Section	AA, Head of Minister's private office
<i>Planning Group (1998-1999 and 2002-2005)</i>			
03/1991-11/2002	Dr. Volker Busse	BKAmt, Head of Group 33 (Law, Government organisation)	BKAmt, Head of Group 11 (Human resources, Administration)
10/2002-10/2005	Dr. Manfred Kühne	BKAmt, Personal assistant of the ChefBK	BMF, Head of Subdivision I C (Fiscal issues of policy areas)
<i>Planning Division (1999-2002)</i>			
09/1999-09/2002	Wolfgang Nowak	Land Saxony, Administrative State Secretary at the Ministry for Culture (1990-1994)	CEO of the <i>Alfred-Herrhausen-Gesellschaft</i>
09/1999-04/2000	Dr. Jürgen Aretz	BKAmt, Head of Group 16 (Cultural affairs), Head of Working Staff ChefBK <i>Neue Länder</i> (1992-1998)	Land Thuringia, Administrative State Secretary at the Ministry of Science, Research and Culture
04/2001-09/2002	Henry Cordes	Prime Minister's Office in North Rhine-Westphalia, Head of the Staff for Europe and International Relations	BMWA, Head of the Leadership and Planning Division

Legend

Division/Group/Staff head Deputy division head

Note: Group heads are displayed under the division head in office at time of their appointment.

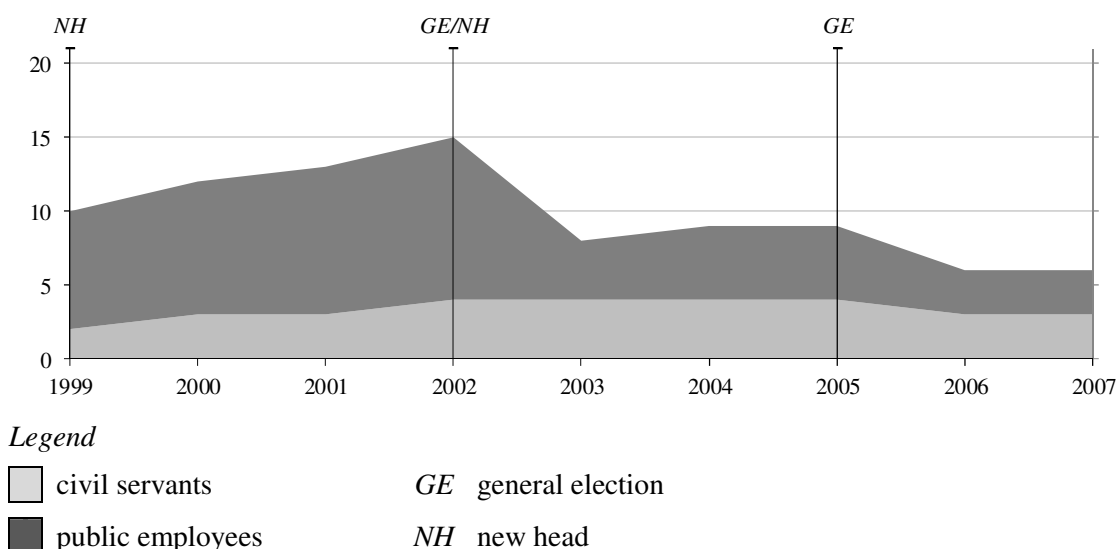
Source: Own illustration; data compiled from archived task allocation plans and organisational charts (BAK); PA-ID02.

From the beginning, a deputy division head was appointed, a formal position that had been originally introduced in the Chancellery in 1996 for the Division responsible for the Intelligence Services to increase the 'four-eyes-principle' (ID09). The Planning Division was equipped with a similar post because the new ChefBK Steinmeier mistrusted the new

division head – and thus recruited Dr. Jürgen Aretz, formerly head of the Working Staff ChefBK *Neue Länder* in the Chancellery. Yet, the full internal controlling device came only into being in 2001 when he was replaced by Henry Cordes, a senior official from the Prime Minister's Office of North Rhine-Westphalia and well-known to Steinmeier (ID10, ID19).

The expertness of the members of the various advisory arrangements differed as well. The early Planning Group members remained as under the previous Conservative government, i.e. they had entered the Planning Division some years ago and thus were not trained as lawyers but had already a lot of their bureaucratic career attained inside this advisory arrangement and thus can be regarded as less 'highflying' (ID03, ID04). In contrast, most members of the early Office ChefBK were completely new at the Chancellery, except those policy officers in the situation room section. All others were mostly Hombach's personal aides from the election campaign, who then started to build up the staff by themselves, although all recruitments were ultimately approved by the ChefBK (ID01, ID08). These decisions were rather erratic, one criterion was that the members 'were known to somebody we trusted' (ID01). Thus, it was not about a particular set of expertise or of a mix between Chancellery and departmental officials on the one hand and outsiders on the other. Yet, the involved actors had a rather clear understanding that they wanted to avoid new members who were trained as lawyers. Eventually, most Office ChefBK members were recruited from outside the federal executive (ID08). In the words of a member: 'You don't need the pale bureaucratic soul, you need officials who are smart, communicative, and who you can send to very different events without making a fool of themselves' (ID19). The newly established Planning Division in 1999 incorporated several of these members, resulting in a rather different educational background compared to the previous Division for Political Analysis as well as other line divisions (see Figure G.2).

Figure G.2 The size and composition of the Planning Division (1999-2002) and the Planning Group (2002-2007)



Note: The Planning Group was abolished in 2007.

Source: Own illustration, information compiled from archived task allocation plans and organisational charts (BAK); BMF 1998, 2000; PA-ID02.

Similar to its predecessors, the members of the Planning Division were SPD members and/or supporters. Dissimilar to its predecessor, the professional background of members was more diverse than under the previous government with its focus on journalistic experience. Yet, since half of the sections were transferred from the Office ChefBK and from the Division for General Affairs in the Chancellery, the room to manoeuvre in terms of an additional recruitment according to deliberate criteria was rather limited.

The tenure and turnover of members of the German advisory arrangements at the Chancellery are analysed in more detail only for the two line affiliated arrangements due to data constraints. In comparison, the tenure of the group head in the Planning Group was as short as the existence of the group under the new government, although the officeholder had acted as group head already since 1995 (see Table G.2). After 2002, the tenure of group heads of the Planning Group increased to approx. two years. Similarly, the section heads in the Planning Group between 1998 and 1999 stayed approx. 9 months whereas the section heads after 2002 had an average tenure of more than four and a half years. Again, it is beyond the scope of this study to compare these patterns with subsequent developments, but the figure for the tenure during the two years of the group's existence under Chancellor Merkel suggests that the latter pattern was continued, no changes occurred during these years at section head level. Similar to the first head of the Planning Group, the head of the Planning Division stayed until the division was abolished after approx. two and a half years, whereas the two deputy heads stayed shorter, approx. one and a half year. In addition, the section heads stayed longer than their superiors, approx. two and a half year and thus almost during the entire existence of the division.

Table G.2 *The tenure of Planning Division and Planning Group members (in months), 1998-2009*

	Schröder I (1998-2002)	Schröder II (2002-2005)	Merkel I (2005-2009)	mean	
Planning Division	division head	37.8*	---	---	37.8
	deputy division heads	18.0*	---	---	18.0
	section heads	28.9*	---	---	28.9
	<i>mean</i>	28.2*			28.2
Planning Group	group heads	4.1 [†]	28.8	26.4 [‡]	19.8
	section heads	9.4 [†]	55.2	0.0 [‡]	21.5
	<i>mean</i>	6.7 [†]	42.0	13.2 [‡]	20.6

Legend

* Numbers refer to the years 1999 to 2002.

[†] Numbers refer to the years 1998 and 1999.

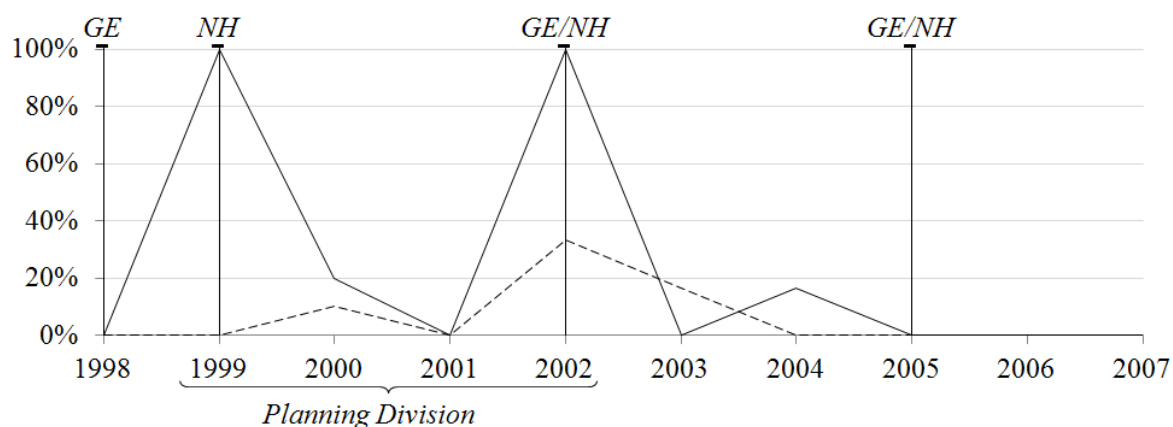
[‡] Numbers refer to the years 2005 to 2007.

Note: Numbers display all first appointments. If members have been working previously in the Planning Group, the measure takes the beginning of the legislative term as starting date.

Source: Own illustration, information compiled from archived task allocation plans and organisational charts (BAK); PA-ID02.

The turnover of staff was rather similar in the Planning Group and the Planning Division between 1998 and 2005. Due to the heavy transfer of responsibilities and personnel from the former to the latter and back again in 2002, the general fluctuation was comparatively high in the respective creation and termination year, but rather low in-between: During the first year, no members of the Planning Group left, also the Planning Division recruited rarely new members and, in turn, barely any member left the division. In 2002, the Planning Group was re-established, albeit all three newly recruited members had been previous Planning Division members. Various other Planning Division members were transferred to other federal ministries or left the bureaucracy, e.g. to private companies (ID05, see chap. G.4.1.2 below). Again, the turnover of the Planning Group during Schröder's second term in office was very low; afterwards no further changes of its composition occurred, although a new group head was recruited (see Figure G.3).

Figure G.3 The turnover of Planning Group and Planning Division members, 1998-2007



Legend

- influx (related to total size) *GE* general election
- exit (related to total size) *NH* new head

Note: The Planning Group was abolished in 2007.

Source: Own illustration, information compiled from archived task allocation plans and organisational charts (BAK).

The modus operandi of the various advisory arrangements in the Chancellery under the Schröder government differed considerably. The Office ChefBK enjoyed direct access to the ChefBK Hombach; they were close aides and accustomed to an informal working style close to their client (ID08). However, this exclusive access changed rapidly after Hombach's resignation when they became line officials in the Planning Division, as one member recalls:

'There are also a lot of others around the Chancellor. We were Hombach-guys and not Schröder-guys – which became quite obvious when Hombach left. That is so. Then the access changes. Then you cannot speak directly with the ChefBK anymore and you have to turn to your division head.' (ID08)

Moreover, they were soon criticised for their unorthodox working methods, first and foremost that they did not comply with formal signature procedures – and submitted their papers directly to the ChefBK without co-signatures of the StS at the Chancellery (ID08). Partly, this was caused by their lacking knowledge of bureaucratic procedures – down to

such things as how to do the filing system (ID01). Partly, they seemingly tried to circumvent resistance by the StS to their proposals to the Chancellor. In turn, their closest contacts in the Chancellery were other newly recruited senior officials well-known to the ChefBK Hombach, most notably the head of the Division for Economic and Fiscal Policy who was acting as the Sherpa of the Chancellor for the World Economic Summits and as such in regular contact with the ChefBK (ID08). When the Planning Division was created in 1999, the working style changed, also complying more strongly with the bureaucratic procedures applied by the rest of the Chancellery. Yet, some privileges maintained, e.g. the division head Nowak enjoyed a rather direct contact to the Chancellor (ID05). In addition, the division head was invited *ad personam* to participate in cabinet meetings at the side table (ID24).

After the general election in 2002, the *modus operandi* of the advisory arrangements changed again. The closest advisers of the ChefBK Steinmeier held regular meetings, including the Head of the Office ChefBK, the Chancellor's personal assistant as well as selected division heads, advisers from the SPD headquarters, the key speechwriter, and occasionally also other invited actors (ID18). These regular *jour fixe* provided an arena to discuss upcoming policy proposals, but also medium-term issues that should receive more advisory attention (ID07, ID18). The Head of the Office ChefBK reported from these meetings directly to the small staff team, discussing issues in brainstorming meetings. In addition, he had regular meetings with the ChefBK and/or the Chancellor (ID18, ID29). In contrast, the Planning Group in the line division operated fully under bureaucratic terms and did not meet as a group – except for division retreats (ID02, ID04; see below).

3.2 The Ministry of Finance: The organisation of a Division for General Affairs

In contrast to the various advisory arrangements in the Chancellery, the Division for General Affairs in the Ministry of Finance was organised in all its aspects as an ordinary line division in a German ministry, albeit with very few exceptions.

(1) Generally, the division existed with an infinite *ex ante* durability and survived not only the Schröder government, but also the subsequent governing coalitions, although it was rearranged in 2002 after the general election in order to transfer back functions that had been added to the division after the general election in 1998 (see chap. G.2.2 above).

(2) Following previous practice, the BMF Division was affiliated as a line division and thus subordinated to one of the three Administrative State Secretaries at the departmental top-level. From the perspective of several interviewed experts, it was particularly relevant to which Administrative State Secretary the division is officially affiliated – because the officeholder acts as arbiter between the Division for General Affairs and other line divisions subordinated to him and, more importantly, interacts with the other two Administrative State Secretaries in cases of inter-divisional conflicts across their 'jurisdictions' (ID20, ID28). Despite the widely perceived unwritten rule that the StS responsible for the Budget Division is never simultaneously responsible for the Division for General Affairs, the final decision was made by the new political officeholders after the general election in 1998 and the Division for General Affairs was eventually subordinated to StS Claus Noé, who was also responsible for the Division for Administrative Affairs and

the Tax Division. Hence, the BMF Division was subordinated to one of the two newly recruited StS, also because the remaining StS was indeed responsible for the Budget Division, but in the perception of division officials to the one with the less interesting portfolio from the new minister's perspective (ID20, ID30).

(3) Due to the task and personnel transfers in the aftermath of the general election in 1998, the Division 1 comprised approx. 90 higher civil servants, of which approx. 23 acted as section or subdivision heads. After the general election in 2002, it was downsized to approx. 70 higher civil servants with approx. 18 section and subdivision heads.¹⁸ Reflecting its rather similar organisation to other line divisions in the Ministry of Finance, the Division for General Affairs comprised civil servants and public employees and thus did not contract any other external members for a finite timespan (see Figure G.4 below).

(4) The fragmentation of the Division 1 was very similar to other divisions in the Ministry of Finance. As a result of the aforementioned task transfer and return in 1998 and 2002 respectively, the leadership structure in the BMF Division underwent some changes. Initially, it consisted of a division head and three subdivision heads, which each led between six to eight sections. After 2002, this structure was changed into two subdivision heads at the secondary authority level with eight and seven line sections each. In more detail, the first subdivision I A was mainly responsible for the general issues of fiscal policies, during the first time period also for macro-economic general issues; whereas the subdivision I B was commonly characterised as the 'budget yard' (*Haushaltsvorhof*, ID12, ID20) conducting mainly the 'fiscal monitoring of important parts of the federal budget' (ID20). During the first legislative term of the Schröder government, a third subdivision I C comprised various functions from the Ministry of Economic Affairs such as analyses and modelling of the economic growth and the economic cycle as well as tax estimation (BMF-HA 49/98). When the expansion of the division was revised in 2002, the first subdivision remained in its formal structure, its responsibilities for macro-economic general affairs were returned but it also received one section on economic growth modelling. The second subdivision was equipped with two sections from the previous third subdivision, empowering to a certain extent the fiscal monitoring again, in line with the minister's agenda (BMF-HA 02/03). In turn, the vertical fragmentation of the Division for General Affairs was similar to other line divisions, comprising four formal authority levels, i.e. the division head, the subdivision heads, the section heads as well as section officials.

(5) The expertness of the Division 1 was in many respects rather similar to other line divisions in the Ministry of Finance, but reveals also some differences. To begin with, the Division 1 was initially headed by Hans-Günter Süsser, who had been transferred as previous subdivision head at the Division for General Affairs in the Ministry for Economic Affairs, but died in early summer 1999 (Filc 1999: 160; see Table G.3). His successor was Harald Engelmann, a former subdivision head in the Ministry of Finance who stayed until spring 2003. He was replaced by Albert Peters, also a former subdivision head in the BMF Division.

¹⁸ The numbers of civil servants in the other three civil service classes peaked at 70 during Schröder's first legislative term and were downsized to approx. 45 during his second term.

Table G.3 The leadership structure of the BMF's Division 1, 1998-2005

tenure in office	person	previous position	subsequent position
10/1998-06/1999	Hans-Günther Süsser	BMWi, Head of Subdivision I B (Macro-economic analyses and forecasts)	death
10/1999-03/2003	Harald Engelmann	BMF, Head of Subdivision V A (Fiscal relations to the Länder and municipalities, public law)	n/a
01/1995-08/2002	Dr. Walther Otremba (Subdivision I A, later I C)	BMF, Head of Section I A 4 (General fiscal issues, speechwriting)	Director of the Federal Agency for Postal Services and Telecommunications
12/1995-10/2001	Joachim Krüger (Subdivision I C)	BMF, Head of Section I B 4 (Fiscal issues of transport policy)	n/a
10/1998-09/2002	Dr. Willi Koll (Subdivision I B)	BMWi, Head of Section I A 2 (International economic policy and development)	BMWi, Head of Subdivision I B (European and international economic policy)
11/2001-03/2003	Dr. Albert Peters (Subdivision I A)	BMF, Head of Subdivision IV A (General tax issues)	BMF, Head of Division I (General affairs)
10/2002-12/2004	Dr. Uwe Plachetka (Subdivision I B)	n/a	retirement
04/2003-09/2009	Dr. Albert Peters	BMF, Head of Subdivision I A (General fiscal issues)	BMF, Head of Division IV (Tax policy)
04/2003-01/2010	Dr. Christian Kastrop (Subdivision I A)	BMF, Head of Section I A 1 (General fiscal issues)	BMF, Head of Subdivision VII C (International fiscal and monetary policies)
01/2005-09/2005	Joachim Schwarzer (Subdivision I B)	BMF, Head of Division II (Budget) (10/1998-02/2000); CEO of TELES AG	Director of the BKK Herford Minden Ravensberg (health insurance fund)

Legend

Division head

Subdivision head

Note: Group heads are displayed under the division head in office at time of their appointment.

Source: Own illustration; data compiled from task allocation plans and organisational charts (BAK).

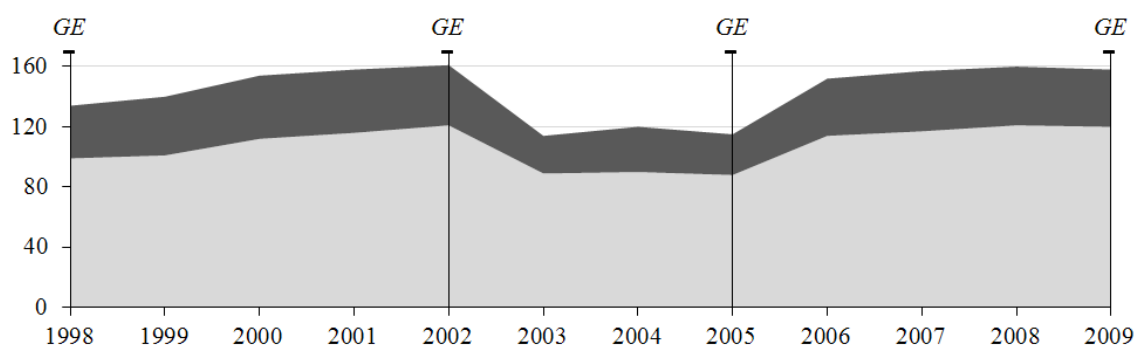
Half of the six subdivision heads appointed during the years under scrutiny had been former section heads from the Division for General Affairs; the other three included a subdivision head from the Ministry for Economic Affairs whose formal responsibilities and resources had been transferred to the Ministry of Finance after the general election in 1998, a subdivision head from a different line division in the Ministry of Finance, and a

former division head in the Ministry of Finance who had had left the ministry for a position in the private sector for some time.

This recruitment policy for the leadership structure reveals that the head of the Division for General Affairs was a position for 'administrative careerists', i.e. for ministry officials climbing up the bureaucratic career ladder.¹⁹ In turn, only rarely outsiders entered this division's leadership, and if so they were not pure outsiders to the machinery of government. The comparatively more frequent changes of subdivision heads are related to the various internal reorganisations of the division under the Schröder government.

Most officials in the BMF division were either recruited as the first step in their bureaucratic career or transferred from other line divisions in the ministry (see Figure G.4). The new recruits provided the division with knowledge about the newest developments in the scientific discipline, especially in macro-economics. In turn, a career entry at the Division 1 was supposed to offer these new officials an overview on the ministry due to the cross-cutting issues that are managed in this division (ID33). In turn, almost all members of the division are economists – in stark contrast to most of the rest of the ministry.

Figure G.4 The size and composition of the BMF Division, 1998-2009



Legend

- civil servants
- public employees
- GE* general election

Source: Own illustration, information compiled from archived task allocation plans (BAK); BMF 1998, 2000.

Another of the very few rather exceptionally organisational attributes of the Division for General Affairs was the existence of 'double heads' (*Doppelbänder*), linking the Division 1 with the organisational top-level: Traditionally, the minister's speechwriters were hosted in the Division 1 but had simultaneously a formal affiliation at the organisational top-level. Although this dual responsibility provided a closer access to their clients (ID20), this traditional arrangement was terminated several months after the general election in 1998 and thus could not be exploited by the division afterwards. Nevertheless, a

¹⁹ This stepping stone effect can be especially examined for previous officeholders, which made subsequently careers, including e.g. Manfred Schüler (in office 12/1969-13/1972) and Mandred Lahnstein (05/1974-05/1977), both became later ChefBK, or Horst Köhler (02/1987-04/1989) who became Federal President (BMF 1989a: 198).

considerable number of officials in the leadership staff at the Finance Ministry's top-level were former officials in the Division 1 (ID10, ID27).

Similarly, the staff turnover in the Division 1 shows a rather unusual pattern compared to other line sections within the ministry as well as across ministries (see Table G.4): During Schröder's first legislative term, the various division heads stayed on average less than two years, whereas the one division head recruited during the second term stayed until the general election in 2009. Similarly, the subdivision heads during Schröder's first legislative term spent on average three years in the division, whereas their successors appointed after 2002 stayed approx. five years. At the level of section heads, the tenure in office shows more variety, during the first legislative term of Chancellor Schröder these officials stayed approx. two and a half years, during his second term they left the division a little earlier, on average after less than two years. These tenure patterns can be partly explained with the various reorganisations of the division in 1998 and particularly in 2002. Although the subsequent developments are beyond the scope of this case study, they show an even longer stay of section heads whereas none of the subdivision heads or the division head left office.

Table G.4 Tenure of BMF's Division 1 members (in months), 1998-2009

	Schröder I (1998-2002)	Schröder II (2002-2005)	Merkel I (2005-2009)	mean
division head	22.8	79.2	0.0	34.0
subdivision heads	35.7	62.4	0.0	32.7
section heads	29.1	22.7	39.8	30.5
mean	29.2	54.7	39.8	32.4

Note: Numbers display all new appointments. Section heads were counted as new appointment if their area of responsibility changed (but not if only the section's enumeration changed).

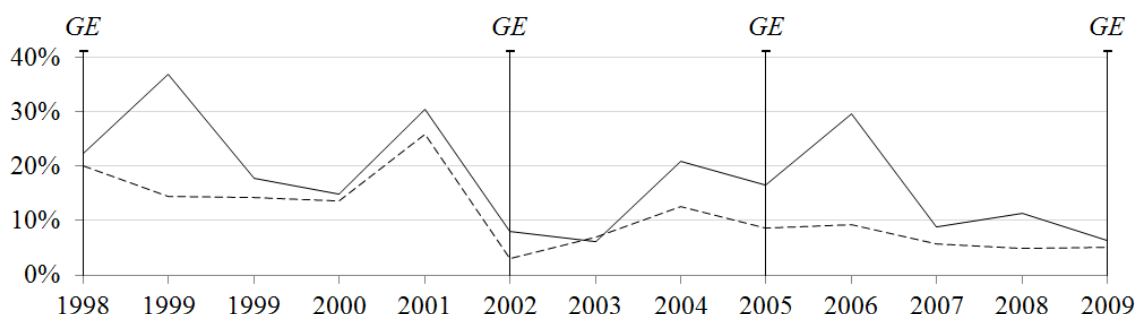
Source: Own illustration, information compiled from archived task allocation plans and organisational charts (BAK).

Closely related to the tenure, the turnover pattern of division members changed over time (see Figure G.5). More generally, it never exceeded 35% of all division members, thus ensuring the maintenance of the division's organisational memory. Besides, all leaving members were replaced with newly recruited members; except for the period after the general election in 1998 when a third subdivision was created again, which was repeated after the general election in 2005.

Corresponding to its general organisational characteristics, the modus operandi of the Division for General Affairs in the Ministry of Finance was rather similar to other line divisions, following bureaucratic conventions in terms of formal processing of files and briefs as well as the general distribution of work between sections (ID20, ID30). Hence, if requests emerge to work across sections, section heads respond 'as usual', as a senior official stresses:

'I have to guess which section official has some time to work on an issue, they [section heads, JF] won't tell me voluntarily, of course, that official X has little to do right now and could get involved in a project. They sit down saying "When the boss wants something, he will come." He will certainly do that, but if they would tell me before who is available, it would be better.' (ID20)

Figure G.5 The turnover of BMF Division's members, 1998-2009



Legend

— influx (related to total size) GE general election
 -- exit (related to total size)

Note: The Planning Group was abolished in 2007.

Source: Own illustration, information compiled from archived task allocation plans and organisational charts (BAK).

However, the interviewed division members stressed that they perceive their own working mode as more cross-cutting than in other divisions (ID21, ID20, ID28). Also, the division is well-known in the ministry for its good working climate (ID21, ID22), also confirmed by the annual staff survey (BMF 2005a: 4-5).

3.3 Summary: The organisation of policy advice at the centre

The organisation of policy advice at the centre of the Schröder government was comparatively more complex and changed throughout the last time period under scrutiny, albeit only for those advisory arrangements in the Chancellery. All advisory arrangements had an infinite ex ante durability, but the Office ChefBK and the parallel Planning Group in the Chancellery survived only a year before its quasi-merger, together with the virtual Working Staff ChefBK, into a Planning Division, which again did not survive the next general election in 2002. In contrast, the pre-existing BMF Division was not only maintained by the Schröder government but exists until today. The Office ChefBK was affiliated as staff whereas the Planning Group, the Planning Division, and the BMF Division were established as line entities, following previous practice.

Under the Schröder government, the size of the advisory arrangements differed considerably, whereas the various entities in the Chancellery were rather small, in any case smaller than their formal equivalents, the BMF Division was comparatively large, albeit also congruent to the organisational principles in the Ministry of Finance. Moreover, and in contrast to previous practices, the advisory arrangements in the Chancellery did not expand their formal size with contracted staff. In general, the horizontal and vertical fragmentation of the various advisory arrangements complied with the structuring principles in the federal

bureaucracy, although those at the Chancellery included a comparatively larger number of deputies than the BMF Division, resulting in a larger span of control. Nevertheless, all advisory arrangements represented the respective number of authority levels, except the Planning Division which lacked a group level and thus had a lower vertical fragmentation than other line divisions.

Similar to the other time periods under scrutiny, the expertness of the units can be regarded as most different to the 'bureaucratic norm', albeit clear differences existed between the advisory arrangements in the Chancellery and the BMF Division: Whereas in the Chancellery the heads of the early Office ChefBK and the Planning Division were recruited from outside, the Planning Group and the late Office ChefBK were headed by Chancellery officials, who in the latter case has nevertheless been recruited once as an outsider. In contrast, the heads of the BMF Division were all departmental officials. Similarly, the Office ChefBK and the Planning Division in the Chancellery also contained members from outside, contributing to a mix of backgrounds, whereas the Planning Group was mainly populated with departmental officials. In terms of tenure and turnover, this study is confined to the level of members ranked as section heads and above of advisory arrangements in the line structure, revealing that the tenure of members of the Planning Group and the Planning Division was initially shorter than the tenure of members of the BMF Division, but these expanded during Schröder's second term. In turn, the staff turnover in the former two line entities in the Chancellery was more rapid than the staff turnover in the BMF Division.

4 (Too) diverse agents in institutional politics at the centre of German government

The advisory system at the centre of the Schröder government comprised three different advisory arrangements, namely the Office ChefBK at the Chancellery's top-level, the Planning Group, later transformed into a Planning Division which was revised in 2002, and the Division for General Affairs in the Ministry of Finance. All advisory arrangements had rather different mandates. The mandate of the first Office ChefBK was less formalised, except for those duties arising from its role as personal office of the ChefBK. In contrast, the Planning Group and the Planning Division had a more formalised mandate with responsibilities in governmental planning. Yet, the other advisory activities of the Planning Division were less formalised and rather unclear to other Chancellery officials and the federal ministries (ID10, ID18, ID19). In comparison, the Division for General Affairs had the most strongly formalised mandate with various lead and co-signing responsibilities. The contacts between the advisory arrangements at the Chancellery and the BMF Division were rather sporadic, although the latter collaborated with the late Office ChefBK on various occasions after the general election in 2002.

4.1 The advisory arrangements at the Chancellery 'against a cumbersome machinery of government'²⁰

After a few months in office, critics arose among federal ministries and the parliamentary parties that the centre of the new government would not fulfil its coordination role (DER SPIEGEL, 05/1999, 09/1999). Partly, these critics referred to the typical 'teething troubles' for a new government coming into office after 16 years in opposition, not 'knowing how to handle the apparatus' (ID09, ID11, ID18). Partly, though, these coordination problems resulted from the dynamics at the organisational top-level in the Chancellery with the duumvirate sending overlapping and also conflicting signals into the machinery of government (ID09, ID18). These had also effects on the advisory system. When the duumvirate was terminated in 1999, it was streamlined, albeit the new Planning Division existed only until 2002 and was partly replaced by the Office ChefBK. The advisory activities of the various advisory arrangements in the Chancellery under the Schröder government are analysed chronologically, acknowledging the frequent reorganisations and accompanying changes of formal responsibilities and advisory activities, although therefore the Office ChefBK is analysed in two separate sections.

Accordingly, this subchapter examines (1) the activities of the early Office ChefBK, attempting to introduce new rules for inter-ministerial coordination, formulating the 'Schröder-Blair-Paper', and supporting the management of *Chefsachen* for the ChefBK, followed by (2) the major activities of the Planning Division from 1999 to 2002, including the proliferation of 'Progressive Governance', and (3) the key advisory activities of the late Office ChefBK after the general election 2002, including its contributions to the Agenda 2010. In addition to these distinct roles, (4) the management of the Planning System was conducted by various advisory arrangements throughout the two legislative terms.

4.1.1 The early Office ChefBK:

A cabinet manual, the Schröder-Blair-Paper and Chefsachen

In general, the early Office ChefBK at the organisational leadership that existed for less than a year after the general election in 1998 was not strongly 'in the loop' of decision-making within in the Chancellery or across central government. Its advisory activities included (1) the preparation of a cabinet paper on government coordination, (2) the preparation and formulation of the 'Schröder-Blair-Paper', and (3) the support of the ChefBK in public *Chefsachen*.

(1) As a response to the critics on the lacking coordination at the centre, but also because the first cabinet meetings had been regarded as rather chaotic (ID09, ID34), the Office ChefBK and the private office of the Administrative State Secretary drafted a joint paper on 'coordination' (Gros 2000: 91-2; Murswieck 2003: 128), explicitly listing also the initial shortcomings on the side of cabinet ministers and ministries, accompanied by several proposals on 'how to streamline the coordination between the Chancellery and the ministries' (ID01). In fact, the paper addressed not only the role of the Chancellery within the executive; it included also executive-legislative interactions and particularly the behaviour of the SPD parliamentary party in the Bundestag, as a staff member stresses:

²⁰ (ID18).

'It was an attempt to respond to the growing discomfort, not only within government but especially within the parliamentary party. Of course, we included also some ideas on how to force cabinet ministers to clear their policies more actively with the Chancellery before they get something out. (...) But some of the proposals were also a re-installation of things that had been done also under other federal governments, e.g. the coalition committee – of which Schröder first hoped to avoid it.' (ID01)

As such, the coordination paper was meant to clear the lines of responsibilities, but also to strengthen the Chancellery's powers in order to smooth the day-to-day running of the government – and avoid further counteracting interventions by ministries and the SPD parliamentary party (ID01, ID08). Therefore, the paper was also cleared with Lafontaine, the SPD party chairman (ID01, ID08; DER SPIEGEL, 09/1999: 23). However, it was not cleared with the federal ministries, as a staff member explains:

'We couldn't involve the federal ministries and we didn't want to involve them. This paper was clearly our vision of how to govern and not theirs. If we would have submitted it directly to them, we would have earned a wave of critics. We didn't want this. Also, we worked together with the other staff; that was already enough quibbling around.' (ID08)

Broadly speaking, the paper was an attempt to downplay the initially chaotic appearance of the Chancellery as well as to shift the blame to cabinet ministers and federal ministries as well as MdBs, suspecting the cabinet ministers to allege the Chancellery for weak coordination as a 'central relief function for departmental responsibilities and personal misconduct' (DER SPIEGEL, 09/1999: 23), as a staff member reckons:

'Of course it was a little bit of "We or them". We wanted to show that the coordination looks so bad because the ministries and Parliament behaved inappropriately. (...) These people really thought "Now that we are in office, we'll do whatever we always wanted to do". And they didn't realise that they had to learn first how to run a government, also how to behave as a cabinet minister. (...) What happens if you enter your office and encounters the sheer amount of people coming with requests to you?' (ID01)

In an earlier version, the paper also included a list of wrong-doings of ministers, which clearly aimed to work as an illustration – but also as a warning (ID01). Eventually, though, the list was deleted in the final version that was distributed to all cabinet members in mid-February 1999 – which was leaked to the press (SZ, 26 February 1999: 1; FAZ, 03 March 1999: 1; DER SPIEGEL, 09/1999). It included several requirements (ibid.):

- Every ministry should provide information for a work plan covering the legislative period in order to expand the Planning System (see chap. G.4.1.4 below).
- All opposition activities will be included into a new early warning system, prepared by the Chancellery in conjunction with the SPD parliamentary party, in order to formulate offence and defence strategies.
- All cabinet ministers should notify all projects before public announcement; in case of disobedience the cabinet will decide about sanctions.
- New cabinet committees on cross-cutting issues will be created, e.g. on nuclear energy policy or the Alliance for Jobs.
- The chief whips will participate in cabinet meetings; in turn, cabinet ministers are encouraged to attend meetings of the parliamentary party and of parliamentary committees.
- Every four weeks, a large coalition committee will meet, in between a smaller weekly coalition meeting will be held

Accordingly, the coordination paper addressed a wide-range of different coordination means. Several announcements were implemented immediately, e.g. the creation or rather re-installation of bodies such as cabinet committees or the coalition committee. In contrast, the notification of upcoming departmental policy projects before public announcement was not set into practice (ID08). Also the BPA was of less help in terms of harmonising the external communication of the federal government, mainly because 'ministries insisted on communicating their own policies, also as expression of the departmental principle' (ID24).

Likewise, the attempt to formulate a common understanding of the cabinet principle and re-emphasise the necessity of inter-ministerial coordination failed. The only impact of the paper was a slight change in the cabinet meetings, i.e. the reports of the ministers on their policy initiatives were included from now on as distinct item on the meetings' agenda – and these time slots were not only used to present the substance of a proposal but also the degree of consensus (*Abstimmungsgrad*) in order to identify potential conflicts (ID10). Other Chancellery officials regarded this effect of the paper as an additional indication for the uncoordinated organisational top-level and the seemingly different role expectations:

'I mean, it is traditionally the job of the ChefBK to see such problems between ministers coming and intervene before the item is on the cabinet agenda. The fact that from now on the ministers were asked to present this to the whole cabinet was, in my opinion, a clear sign that Hombach was not really working as a bureaucratic "fixer".' (ID10)

Moreover, the paper could not accomplish its major objectives, i.e. the blame shifting towards the federal ministries and the parliamentary party was rather unsuccessful. The critics on the coordination role of the Chancellery only decreased a few months later when the duumvirate was abolished and Steinmeier took over as new ChefBK, initiating a new role of the Chancellery that concentrated on supporting cabinet, clearing inter-ministerial conflicts and running the machinery of government (ID08, ID10; Steinmeier 2001).

(2) One of the key advisory products of the Office ChefBK during the first months in office was the 'Schröder-Blair-Paper', which was presented by the two politicians a few days before the general election to the European Parliament in early June 1999. The key audience of this paper were not the federal ministries; instead it was partisan policy advice, oriented towards 'pushing the federal government and distinct parts of the SPD into a particular policy direction' (ID03).

Broadly speaking, the paper emerged accidentally and has not been previously discussed within the staff or with the ChefBK, although it can be regarded as an unintended side-effect of the intensifying exchange between the new ChefBK and his office with their functional counterparts in Britain, i.e. the Chief of Staff in Number Ten and the Minister without Portfolio Peter Mandelson as well as the Policy Unit (ID08). As a staff member recalls, the 'birth' of the Schröder-Blair-Paper was related to the organisation of one of their meetings in late November 1998:

'The whole thing started because of a misunderstanding. We organised a meeting with the Brits, (...) and Roger Liddle [Policy Unit member, JF], who prepared the British part, said to me "We need an agenda". And I thought he meant a schedule (*Tagesordnung*). And then Roger returned my draft agenda and requested a text to each item, because for the Brits an agenda is apparently not a schedule, but rather a kind of a policy paper.' (ID01)

The first preparation of the paper for the meeting with the British counterparts was rather vague, at the end of the meeting the two political actors Hombach and Mandelson decided that the advisory arrangements in the respective government headquarters should follow up that work and draft a policy paper that could be issued by the two heads of government as a 'manifesto for Social Democratic parties in Europe' (ID08). In addition, they agreed on a certain time schedule, including further meetings as well as other flanking events for presenting the paper to the public – and the parties (ID01).

In practice, the Office ChefBK followed up that meeting by outlining the general ideas of the paper more broadly (ID08; see also Mertes 2003: 69). It discussed the progress of the text with the ChefBK but particularly with its British counterparts, i.e. the Policy Unit (ID01, ID08). In contrast, the text was not discussed with the party – also because the Office ChefBK feared that 'it would be talked to death' (ID08). The paper was supposed to cause a 'cultural revolution' (ID08) within the German SPD, but also to outreach towards other centre-left parties in Europe. Its core objective was to formulate the meaning of the 'Third Way' for modern governments of centre-left parties, as initially introduced by Anthony Giddens and already taken up by the British Labour government (see chap. J.4.3 below). Yet, in contrast to their British counterparts, the German application of the Third Way was first and foremost oriented towards the SPD and not further used as a basis for formulating a narrative on government policy-making. Hence, potential consequences were only regarded in terms of the SPD, as a staff member recalls:

I was standing right next to Schröder and said "Gerhard, this is going to be a paper". And he asked, "A paper? Do you think this is a good idea?" And I replied "Well, with the things we will put in it, you can certainly scare *Sozen* [Social Democrats, JF]!'" And then he said, "Okay, then finish it – but don't talk about it!" (ID01)

Eventually, the paper addressed a wide range of political issues attacking the SPD's ideological stance, illustrating a new role of the state vis-à-vis society as well as the private sector. The key pledges of the electoral campaign were also addressed, including social and unemployment policy, tax policy, and public infrastructure. More importantly, it covered policy areas that have been traditionally linked to the Conservatives, e.g. macro-economic policy and especially budget policy and public expenditure (ID08, ID10).

The paper explicitly announced three procedural means to follow up these new objectives of Social Democrats in power: First, it announced the organisation of regular meetings of ministers from such centre-left governments, supported and accompanied by frequent contacts among their closest advisers. Second, it stated that the discussions will also be followed up by the leaders of these centre-left governments in other countries in order to strengthen the 'political benchmarking in Europe' (Schröder/Blair 1999: 25). Lastly, it prioritised the creation of a network of experts (see chap. J.4.1.2 below).

Eventually, the paper was presented to the public before the general election to the European Parliament, headed as 'The Way Forward for Europe's Social Democrats' (Schröder/Blair 1999).²¹ The immediate reactions within the SPD can be summarised as 'total rejection', as a staff member put it:

²¹ Although the paper referred to several EU issues, it had no EU-related ambitions or underlying objectives in this regard (ID08).

'They didn't see this coming. They were suspicious about the close ties with the Brits anyway. And they particularly disagreed with the seemingly "neo-liberal" touch of the whole paper and that it was a sort of manifesto – without any previous party debate about it. (...) They felt like being blindsided – and they were right.' (ID03)

Severe critics within the SPD addressed especially its ideological connotation and the new definition of the role of the state. More importantly, the process was criticised, i.e. that the paper with such an important ideological turnaround for the party had been prepared without consulting the party beforehand. Also Social Democratic parties from other countries, especially the French socialists, criticised the attempt by the German and the British head of government to dictate a certain vision onto all Social Democrats in Europe (ID05; see also Schröter 2004).

However, and as noted above, the paper was not further developed into a manifesto for a new style of governing, as a staff member recalls:

'We were proud of the paper (...) maybe we were also naïve. But we really thought that Schröder can do the same as Blair did in Britain. (...) But we also never saw it as a way to hijack the work of the federal ministries. (...) during the writing, we had been more worried about party reactions than how to use it afterwards with the ministries.' (ID08)

Nevertheless, the Schröder-Blair-Paper initiated a stronger engagement of the German government in the emerging network of centre-left governments (see chap. J.4.1.2 below).

(3) One of the crucial *Chefsachen* prepared by the early Office ChefBK during its existence was the compensation for forced labourers under the Nazi regime (ID01, ID05, ID08). The issue had been included in the coalition agreement as well as in Schröder's government declaration mostly because of the highly featured class-action lawsuit in the U.S. against the Deutsche Bank and the Dresdner Bank, followed by a series of other lawsuits against other German companies (ID01).²²

In practice, the Office ChefBK supported the ChefBK in his attempts to negotiate a compensation scheme with the Jewish Claim Conference and other key associations of former forced labourers and their descendants (ID08; see also Spiliotis 2003). It gathered expertise and information, also from external experts such as historians, lawyers etc. on aspects of the issues like the various legal and political definitions of the term 'forced labour', the number of victims etc. (ID01). In addition, it exchanged views with the pre-existing foundations for compensation in Central and Eastern Europe (ID01). Moreover, the Office ChefBK prepared and occasionally participated in the meetings of the ChefBK with involved German companies (ID01, ID08).

Especially the Division for Foreign Policy in the Chancellery as well as the Foreign Office were very unsatisfied with this 'open approach' of the ChefBK and his office, as a Chancellery official reveals, it was

'such a delicate issue, such an important project, also for the U.S.-Americans, but also for the Eastern Europeans. (...) And then Hombach travels there and brings huge press

²² The issue had been already addressed in a resolution of the European Parliament on compensation for former forced labourers of the German industry in early 1986, calling the German federal government to act. In 1987, the Bundestag organised a hearing, two years later the Greens suggested the foundation idea in a bill. But only in 1996, with a decision by the Federal Constitutional Court, the debate on actionable claims became reactivated – and the lawsuits supported its prioritisation on the agenda.

coverage. (...) This was clearly a diplomatic issue – but the mission was not conducted in a diplomatic way. But this was typical Hombach – a Jack-of-all-trades".²³ (ID10)

Yet, when Hombach left the Chancellery in July 1999, the Chancellor appointed the former FDP party chairman Otto Graf Lambsdorff as the new Commissioner for the foundation initiative of German companies (*Stiftungsinitiative deutscher Unternehmen: Erinnerung, Verantwortung und Zukunft*, Jansen/Saathoff 2007). As a consequence, the Office ChefBK, which was reorganised in the new Planning Division, was not required anymore to follow up the next steps in establishing the foundation (ID01). In turn, the issue was delegated to the Foreign Office and the division head for foreign affairs at the Chancellery provided additional advice and support (ID10; DER SPIEGEL, 26/1999a: 31).

4.1.2 The Planning Division as 'think tank':²³ Progressive Governance and policy briefs

When the Planning Division came into official existence, its political backing, i.e. ChefBK Hombach, had disappeared. In turn, the new division head was widely perceived as a Hombach follower – and as less appropriate to service the new ChefBK Steinmeier, requesting less a think tank with strong outreach but low internal relevance (ID05, ID18). Also the line divisions in the Chancellery were convinced that they had already taken up successfully the key responsibilities themselves, as a senior official put it:

'Nobody really wanted to work with the division, because no one could recognise how this division could add value for their daily work. The projects that we should make were clear, we had the coalition agreement. Also the communication was clear.' (ID10)

Nevertheless, the new Planning Division followed the mandate that had been pre-defined by the former ChefBK, especially acknowledging the activities of their British counterparts (ID05):

'Mandelson explained their approach as "acting as wheel-hub with the ministries as its spokes". The metaphor was: "We are the centre, you are the spokes – and together we run the government." And we wanted to establish the same in Germany.' (ID08)

As such, the division acted primarily as a think tank, monitoring societal trends and preparing new policy initiatives on issues that had either not been handled by the federal ministries or had been treated inappropriately from the division's point of view (ID03, ID08). Here, the Planning Division also aimed to collect information on best practices in other countries that could be adapted and applied, in the words of a division member: 'A Planning Division that is limited towards Germany is useless' (ID05).

To comply with this motto, the Planning Division gathered initially expertise from previous Planning Divisions at the Chancellery by inviting previous heads and members in order to refine its mandate (ID01, ID05, ID19). Likewise, the division head met with planning entities in the private sector, such as DaimlerChrysler, BASF, Siemens, Aventis, or the Deutsche Telekom to compare their functions and working methods with the requests on a Planning Division in the Chancellery (ID01, ID05, ID08). However, the final mandate was not further discussed with the ChefBK or the Chancellor; instead it was mainly set by the division head; described by a division member as:

²³ (Nowak 2004: 21).

'To think ahead, to think what cannot be thought in the Chancellery's routine (...) and also what parties cannot do anymore (...), to span the boundaries to other parts of society, to transmit the major trends into the Chancellery, to provide the Chancellor with policy proposals that he can then pick up for his policy.' (ID05)

In practice, the key advisory products of the Planning Division during the years of its existence comprised (1) the preparation of the Chancellor's participation in the summits of centre-left governments announced in the Schröder-Blair-Paper, (2) the 'executive education' of the Chancellor, and (3) the preparation of policy briefs on selected key issues for the ChefBK. The following paragraphs analyse these key advisory activities, neglecting the more administrative work conducted by the rather remote section responsible for the liaison with churches and religious communities, which was as unconnected to the policy advice function as under previous governments (ID01, ID03 ID05, ID08).

(1) The initial key activity of the Planning Division was to prepare and support the Chancellor's participation in the network of centre-left governments under the heading of 'Progressive Governance' (ID01, ID05; Hasel/Hönigsberger 2007: 84-5). In fact, the summits of heads of state announced in the Schröder-Blair-Paper had already begun without the German chancellor in September 1998 with a meeting of various senior politicians, e.g. the U.S. President Clinton, the British PM Tony Blair, and the Italian PM Romano Prodi, discussing at the New York University issues such as civil society, the new economy, and democracy in the globalisation era (*Die Zeit*, 39/1998: 5). The basic format was to provide an arena for senior politicians to discuss in working groups with external experts, including most prominent academic supporters of the Third Way such as Anthony Giddens.²⁴ In the following conference in Washington in April 1999 more senior politicians joined the format, e.g. the Brazilian president Fernando Cardoso, the French PM Lionel Jospin, and the Italian president Massimo D'Alema. In addition, the summits were formalised, a larger number of advisers prepared the different working groups and the discussions of the senior politicians with the external experts.

The Schröder-Blair-Paper committed the Chancellor to attend these summits and the Planning Division convinced him to host one of the summits to be held in 2000 (ID01, ID05; Hasel/Hönigsberger 2007: 84-5). Broadly speaking, the emerging Progressive Governance Network had two levels. On the one hand, it included heads of various centre-left governments, meeting in high-level 'Progressive Governance Summits', exchanging and discussing policy objectives and alternatives for various areas from a new ideological stance (ID01). As such, the summits provided also opportunities for gaining legitimacy for rather radical shifts in domestic policies; as a Planning Division member put it:

'While each partner had his own goals in these summits, the previous Planning Division at the Chancellery (...) aimed to break the existing path dependencies in the reform debate – just putting irritation into the system and the taboo-laden debates. In the context of comparing reforms across different countries, e.g. in terms of immigration policy, it was possible in some aspects to replace the logic of "That's impossible for us!" with the logic "That works for us too!".' (Bucksteeg 2008: 81)

²⁴ The British PM also issued a programmatic newspaper article on the Third Way to the conference, repeating a previous Fabian pamphlet (*Washington Post*, 27 September 1998: C07; see Blair 1998b).

On the other hand, the network was administered and strengthened by the advisory arrangements servicing these senior politicians. In fact, the summits were organised like other meetings of heads of government, i.e. their responsible advisers met prior to the summit in order to decide about the agenda, the general organisation and other issues. In case of the Progressive Governance Summits, however, these advisory activities were also explicitly staged, e.g. by adopting a common term from the World Economic Summits and appointing for each senior politician a distinct Sherpa (ID01, ID05, ID08; *Die Zeit*, 48/2000: 3). These Sherpas were accompanied by a team of close advisers, between two and six per country, very often not the ministerial bureaucracy but the advisory arrangements servicing the head of government (ID05). They conducted the preparatory meetings, acted as key liaison officers to other Sherpas and their teams, participated in all meetings during the summits, and prepared their final outputs. In addition, they selected the invited experts and organised their affiliation to the working groups. In Germany, the Head of the Planning Division became the Sherpa and met often with his counterparts in Britain, Sweden, but also the U.S. (ID01).²⁵

To further support the Chancellor in this network, the Planning Division and its British counterpart set up an 'Anglo-German Working Group' under the chairmanship of Peter Mandelson and Bodo Hombach, which was supposed to prepare the summits but also other activities, and soon included other advisory arrangements from France, Sweden, and Denmark (*Die Zeit* 23/2000: 3; *Der Tagesspiegel* 04 June 2000: 2; Bucksteeg 2008: 81). An additional support to foster these networks was the *Policy Network*, a British think tank comprising external experts but also senior figures from Whitehall.²⁶

The Berlin summit was explicitly held under the heading of 'Modern Governance' instead of 'Progressive Governance' in order to allow an easier understanding among the German ministerial bureaucracy and the general public (ID01, ID05). The Planning Division had learned from the critics after the previous summit in Florence – stressing unclear objectives and too many 'spontaneous' contributions – that the Berlin summit would benefit from a final communiqué (ID01, ID05). Accordingly, the Sherpas and their advisory teams met frequently to negotiate the communiqué; likewise the German external experts that had been invited to join the German delegation to Schröder's first visit to the Florence summit were invited to the Chancellery together with other experts to inspire the text (ID01). Broadly speaking, the strategy was to formulate a manifesto that would get approval by the participating senior politicians, but could also frame the policy debate in Germany, as a Planning Division member stressed:

"Modern Governance" dealt with the public staging of reform capacity in order to set opponents of reforms offside, thus introducing a constraint logic ("When others are doing that, we need to keep up"), but it was also about policy learning.' (Bucksteeg 2008: 81)

Eventually, the Planning Division managed to prepare a 450-page compendium incorporating reform proposals for seven policy areas (Schröder et al. 2002). However, in contrast to the previous two Progressive Governance Summits in Washington and Florence

²⁵ HC Deb 08 December 1998 vol 322 c143W.

²⁶ The *Policy Network* acted also as the secretariat of the *Progressive Governance Network*, comprising many external experts as well as officials in order to prepare and conduct the Progressive Governance summits (see e.g. Jann 2003: 112).

the final communiqué did not entail the narrative of the 'Third Way' (ID01, ID05). Moreover, it was basically prepared in close conjunction with the other Sherpas and their teams as well as external experts. As such, it did not involve other parts of the Chancellery or the federal ministries. In fact, the preparation of this summit, as well as the engagement to prepare the Chancellor, provided the Planning Division with a privilege from which they highly benefitted, as a division member recalls: 'We didn't have to comply with lead responsibility or co-signing, we could submit our papers directly to the Chancellor – without having to send them to the ChefBK first' (ID01).

Yet, the Planning Division did not exploit this opportunity of release from the sceptical²⁷ ChefBK to apply the already pre-formulated narrative of Progressive Governance on government policy-making, i.e. to take these 'lecture[s] in modern governance' (Der Tagesspiegel, 22 February 2002: 5) for 'lecturing' the federal ministries in order to shape government policy-making in general. Instead, it was rather proud that the summit's communiqué was so impressively long (Bucksteeg 2008: 81). In turn, though, the communiqué was way too long to serve as a convincing narrative and 'easy formula' of how to govern and why to change the pre-existing governing practices (ID10). Besides, the division head rejected a stronger framing of government policy-making and advocated instead pragmatism: 'don't trust visions, solve problems!' (Nowak, quoted by Die Zeit 48/2000: 3, Der Tagesspiegel, 18 September 2002: 26). As a division members admits today:

'We lost our chance. If you have a vision – and Modern Governance was a rather powerful vision back then – you can push towards this direction, and then you can influence the federal ministries. We should have included the mirror sections more strongly, also using them to push the ministries to come up with policies that would fit into that.' (ID08)

As such, the impact on government policy-making of this summit series and the network of advisory arrangements was rather modest. Due to the missing link between these advisory activities and the Chancellery as well as the federal ministries, no major departmental policy was strongly influenced by this agenda (ID10, ID19). One exception was the administrative reform programme of the federal government, which was entitled as 'Modern state – modern administration' under the lead responsibility of the Ministry of Interior (ID05, ID19; BMI 1999).

Eventually, the summit series was interrupted when the terrorist attacks of 9/11 obstructed the scheduled third meeting (Der Tagesspiegel, 22 February 2002: 5). Later on, it continued – albeit without the German Chancellor (ID05). After the general election in 2002, the ChefBK persuaded the Chancellor to concentrate on other issues than these summits – especially since the networks of academics, think tank experts, and officials from advisory arrangements could be also exploited without participating at 'these ridiculous alibi meetings' (ID08).

(2) Following its own perception to be a think tank, the Planning Division aimed also to strengthen its role as 'Executive Education Division' (*Fortbildungsabteilung*, ID05). The basic idea was to link the Chancellor more directly with major trends in society and inspire

²⁷ The obvious discomfort of the ChefBK with hosting the summit was also visible to the division members when 'Steinmeier's shadow came to us and wanted to take a leave for the two conference days. Obviously, so that he has nothing to do with a presumably failing conference' (ID05).

new policy ideas for the medium term (ID24).²⁸ Mostly, this function was prepared by the section responsible for societal analyses, drawing upon collected material and then discussing with the division head as well as other division members potential topics for a closer assessment to prepare a meeting of the Chancellor with leading external experts.

In practice, though, it was rather difficult to organise these meetings, especially due to the Chancellor's time constraints. The meetings were attended by the Chancellor, invited external experts, Planning Division members, and occasionally other key actors such as the head of the Chancellor's private office, and ranged from education policy to philosophical issues (ID05, ID24). Yet, the relevance of these 'private lessons for Schröder' (ID01) are rather difficult to assess, partly also because their very nature was to provide the Chancellor with an alternative view on very broad issues of interest that were not always linked to the policy agenda and thus rather remote. Nevertheless, these meetings were occasionally followed up by policy briefs on new policy ideas (ID05).

(3) The policy briefs prepared by the Planning Division were most often submissions to the Chancellor, especially on medium-term policy issues (ID05). These policy briefs were prepared more or less autonomously, i.e. the Planning Division did not involve other divisions in the Chancellery or the federal ministries, reasoning that 'external actors were more intriguing; we saw the internals every day' (ID05). Likewise, it was initially thought to underline some policy briefs with data from opinion polls – but the Federal Press and Information Office successfully intervened at the ChefBK level and thus the Planning Division was limited in this regard (ID05).

Yet, the policy briefs often disagreed with the conventions inside the Chancellery, for which division members blamed the other line divisions: 'They did not want to have a bad conscience; they wanted to have an affirmative conscience' (ID05). In addition, also the ChefBK appeared to be less interested in these briefs – for which division members blamed their working style, i.e. their close proximity to external actors, including private companies or scientific experts 'who were not SPD members' (ID05). In contrast, other Chancellery officials argued that they did not reject the Planning Division as such – but that their work was just too loosely linked to their day-to-day work in inter-ministerial policy-making (ID10, ID18).

When in 2001 a new deputy head was appointed, strongly supported by the ChefBK, the division's initial remit in 'blue skies' thinking diminished and instead it engaged more in contributing to the Chancellery's task of supporting inter-ministerial coordination (ID19). Next to the technical support regarding the governmental planning (see chap. G.4.1.4 below), also the policy briefs changed. Partly, this shift was also caused by the legislative rhythm, i.e. the Chancellor and the ChefBK were turned into 'campaigning mode with the next general election ahead' (ID07, ID13).

Broadly speaking, the ChefBK was using the new policy briefs more often, also referring explicitly to them when chairing the meeting of Administrative State Secretaries preparing cabinet (ID19). The general rationale to provide policy briefs was mostly a

²⁸ Another example for this approach was to go to the movies with the Chancellor, especially 'blockbusters with heroine characters like the new X-Men movie' in order to assess 'the underlying values and expectations about authority in society' (ID05).

request by the ChefBK, many of these issues were related to a party-political rationale, including inter-ministerial conflicts that resembled party-political competition in government, such as the immigration bill, policy issues that were perceived problematic for the SPD governments at federal and *Länder* level, e.g. the OECD Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) on Germany, or policy issues that were regarded as relevant for the upcoming general election such as family policy.

The practical activities of the Planning Division varied, including e.g. a personal briefing of the Minister as in immigration policy (ID19), also relying upon additional expertise gathered through the Progressive Governance Network (Bucksteeg 2008: 81):

'We briefed Schily [the Minister of Interior, JF] so that he is ahead of the Greens. We used our knowledge from the benchmarking (...). We also pointed out what others were doing, (...) what Blair was doing on immigration. The Planning Staff at the BMI hated us – all of them.' (ID05)

Other activities involved more direct interactions with the federal ministries, e.g. the PISA assessment, also commissioning external public relation agencies to outline a communication strategy as in the example of family policy reforms (ID10):

'We talked with the ministry, what we could do and what the ministry could do content-wise, and that we would make the overarching thing in the end. The BPA should make the communication with them but, let's say, we did a little bit of flanking.' (ID19)

Consequently, the Planning Division was more often addressing policy areas handled by other line divisions in the Chancellery (ID19, ID18). As a response, the Planning Division was more engaged in cooperative contacts with these mirror sections, as one member explains:

'You had to make sure that you have a good contact to the other ALs and also to the section heads in the other divisions (...). You have no chance to succeed in case of a conflict with them and to enforce anything against them – because they have different types of knowledge transfer and knowledge generation, they have their networks, it's all about cooperation. And therefore you cannot uplift the conflict [to the ChefBK, JF] very often, because you know that in 99% of the cases you will lose.' (ID19)

However, in cases of dispute, the divisions prepared occasionally also briefs with 'twin heading' (*Doppelkopf*), presenting the policy problem from both divisions' views, followed by the different votes (ID10). Mostly, such briefs were prepared for issues handled by the Division for Domestic Policy and the Division for Economic and Fiscal Policy (ID10, ID19). Taking the basic organisational structure of the Chancellery into account, the Planning Division had thus primarily conflicts with those divisions mirroring the majority of federal ministries. Yet, even if the ChefBK agreed with the Planning Division's view, it was clear to its members that he 'could not always call the division heads off because they are very powerful' and he 'depends on their support in his role' (ID07).

In general, however, the rather weak direct contacts between the Planning Division and the federal ministries did not change radically during the last year of its existence, with some exceptions already noted above. On the one hand, some senior members of the Planning Division were well connected to senior civil servants in the federal ministries and thus used their contacts to 'discuss their policy initiatives and maybe give some thoughts' (ID19). Similarly, the division head organised regular meetings with his counterparts in the

ministries, but these were also rather suspicious to share ideas, especially if they serviced a Minister from the Green Party (ID05, ID19). On the other hand, though, the Planning Division almost avoided too close contacts with the federal ministries – reasoning that

'the Chancellery under Steinmeier was an administrative machine, an apparatus that administered the government business. Our task was to be the grit in the machine and not the oil. (...) And regarding any hierarchical intervention into the federal ministries: This is only possible from the very top – and then it really splatters.' (ID19)

In sum, the low interest on shaping government policy-making at departmental level complied with the initial self-perception as a think tank that would need more contacts outside than inside central government. Although the division turned towards short-term policy briefs during its last year of existence, its contacts to the federal bureaucracy remained weak – as the ambitions to influence the institutional underpinnings to govern.

4.1.3 The late Office ChefBK: Agenda 2010 and policy briefs

During Schröder's second term, the Office ChefBK had a very different structure and mandate than its predecessor during the first months of the Red-Green government. In general, it followed the ChefBK's understanding of the Chancellery as hub of inter-ministerial coordination, albeit including also the initiation of government policies (ID07, ID18; Glaab 2007: 317). As such, it responded to the experiences with the Planning Division, as a staff member recalls:

'The Planning Division was too far away from the real decision-making processes. Its contributions didn't fit very well into what was developed elsewhere in the Chancellery and where the political leadership was. The new approach was to be more proactive and also more relevant to the ChefBK, answering his short-term demands.' (ID07)

Correspondingly, the advisory activities of the late Office ChefBK continued to some extent the think tank functions of the late Planning Division while keeping the coordination function and thus also the federal ministries stronger into account, as a staff member put it:

'What are the social processes that we have to react to? How can we organise this with a relatively cumbersome machinery of government? How can we optimise the information input for the Chancellery?' (ID18)

In practice, the Office ChefBK was engaged in (1) contributing to the 'Agenda 2010', (2) preparing policy briefs to the ChefBK and the Chancellor, (3) educating the ChefBK, and (4) improving the planning function of the Chancellery.

(1) To act as a 'projection screen' for the general 'desire of the political leadership, especially of Steinmeier, to have a big picture, a political narrative that connects government policies' (ID24), the Office ChefBK was strongly involved in preparing the Agenda 2010 as a set of reform proposals that was presented in a government declaration in spring 2003. The events leading to this government declaration began after the coalition negotiations in 2002, mostly because the coalition agreement was widely perceived as a failure (ID03, ID08, ID18). First, the ChefBK's advisory circle, including the head of the Office ChefBK, the government's spokesman, and the head of the Chancellor's private office, 'agreed upon what they really wanted' (ID18; see to the circle also: DER SPIEGEL, 27/2000; Korte 2003: 35; Helms 2005: 81). One key result of the meeting was to ask the Office ChefBK to draft a paper with a policy agenda for the second legislative term, with a

special emphasis on economic and labour market policy, disregard how and which policies had been incorporated into the coalition agreement (ID03, ID18), as a staff member recalls:

'My first task was to write a paper on what should actually happen in economic policy. Also the general election had been strongly about "Where does Germany stand?" And it was clear that the paper should have a broader remit, (...) it should be a strategy paper, which could also serve as a blueprint for other reform areas.' (ID07)

To prepare the paper, the new Office ChefBK contacted various experts from the trade unions, business associations, industry, and academics, summing their recommendations up together with its own considerations into a broader collection of potential policy areas for reforms (ID18; Korte 2007: 174-6). In addition, it discussed with its counterparts in other countries their experiences, especially with regard to labour market and health reforms (ID03, ID18).²⁹ Besides, the Office ChefBK also interacted with the federal ministries, albeit mostly to gather information and less to discuss preliminary ideas or versions of the paper (ID18). Inside the Chancellery, one section head from the division for economic and fiscal policy contributed to the paper (DER SPIEGEL, 44/2004: 49). In contrast, other officials in the Chancellery were rather avoided, as a staff member explains:

'It had to be prepared by a small circle, if you want secrecy (...). You cannot expect from the mirror sections at the Chancellery that they don't have any conscience vis-à-vis their parent ministry (...). And it was also clear that we were working against the things that had somehow found their way into the coalition agreement. It is inappropriate, also from a role model perspective, to hawk around as the ChefBK's team with the motto "Yes, we have a coalition agreement, but we do not intend to implement it" – especially when the signatures had literally been made yesterday.' (ID18)

Already during the writing, and especially in the regular meetings of the Head of the Office ChefBK with the other close aides of the Chancellor, the remit of the paper broadened (ID07, ID18). However, it became also apparent that the paper's content turned seemingly against the SPD parliamentary party (ID18; Korte 2007: 174-5). Yet, the ChefBK encouraged his office to continue the work – and 'keep it hidden' (ID07).

Therefore, also the federal ministries were not informed about the progress of the paper, although they did provide information necessary to back up its proposals (ID18). The Office ChefBK was particularly interested 'not to press forward in communicative terms like Hombach would have done' (ID03). Instead, the close circle of advisers around Steinmeier and the Chancellor decided to leak the paper to the press – as a way to inform the federal ministries as well as the parliamentary party 'and await their reactions' (ID03, ID14). More importantly, they expected that the largest opposition party (CDU/CSU) may follow the Chancellery's policy positions and thus a deliberate leaking may increase the pressure on various cabinet members (ID14, ID18; DER SPIEGEL, 11/2003: 23; FOCUS.S. 01/2003). In addition, though, some members were also convinced that the British example of 'politics by announcement' was reasonable:

²⁹ Here, the Office ChefBK used also the Progressive Governance Network, especially the Chancellor's key speechwriter hold very close contacts to the *Policy Network* (ID07). In addition, the Office ChefBK benefitted from the coincidence that the nephew of the Chief of Staff in the Prime Minister's Office was at that time seconded to the British embassy in Berlin and thus met with them regularly (ID18).

'In a media age, where voters are suspicious and reluctant against anything radical and new, which is particularly the case in Germany, it is sometimes necessary to present something more radical.' (ID18)

Following these considerations, they leaked the 'strategy paper' just before Christmas 2002 to a newspaper (Der Tagesspiegel, 20 December 2002: 1; FAZ, 04 January 2003, 5; DER SPIEGEL, 01/2003; Mertes 2003: 69, 71).³⁰ The response was immense, in the words of a staff member 'all were terribly shocked and screamed' and the staff 'had a somewhat difficult time over the Christmas holidays – but we recovered' (ID18).³¹ The Chancellor clarified his position:

'This preliminary conceptual sketch has been prepared in the Chancellery. It serves as a basis for discussion at a planning session, which is held under the direction of the Chief of Staff at the Chancellery in January. (...) I cannot see a paradigm shift.' (Schröder, quoted by SZ, 24 December 2002: 5)

The statement reveals two important aspects: On the one hand, the Chancellor and his advisors could claim that the paper had a preliminary character. On the other hand, though, the clear hint that a follow-up meeting is already scheduled signalled that the Chancellor intended to draw upon the ideas outlined in the paper. In practice, the meeting in January 2003 collected the major critics, but the Office ChefBK was already preparing the government declaration to announce the reform programme – disregard these objections:

'We had to listen to them, of course, but it was also clear from the beginning that this programme would raise critics. And you cannot always convince everybody. Sometimes, you just have to do it. And that was Schröder's attitude with the Agenda 2010.' (ID03)

The advisory circle of the ChefBK discussed extensively the government declaration that would communicate the new reform agenda to Parliament and the general public (ID07, ID19). It was clear to these actors that

'already the term "Agenda 2010" worked as a narrative back then. It was way into the future, at the end of a potential third Social-Democratic term, (...) and of course mentioning a year was at the same time like a general goal: Until then, these reforms should achieve their outcomes.' (ID07)

The division of labour was that the Office ChefBK provided the 'hardware' and the speechwriters the 'software' (ID18). The final version of the government declaration covered various policy issues such as unemployment benefits and social assistance, economic recovery, the health system, municipal finances, capital taxation, pensions, but announced also a freeze on diets for cabinet ministers and Parliamentary State Secretaries (Schröder 2003). Despite the key speechwriter's insisting that the speech should also include more explanation, 'others decided against these warnings' (ID03; Korte 2007: 176-7):

'Earlier versions of the agenda-speech had also explanatory statements in it. All of them were deleted by the Chancellor saying: "It is not about that. Given the general uncertainty I want to tell the people what I'm going to do – and therefore also what I will not do. This is the function of this speech."' (ID18)

³⁰ The final version had about 23 pages and was entitled 'Towards More Economic Growth, Employment and Equality' (PA-ID18).

³¹ Also the close contacts to the Head of the Federal President's Private Office were used and thus a 'reform message' implanted into the Federal President's traditional Christmas speech (ID07; Der Tagesspiegel, 24 December 2002: 5).

This communicative strategy failed in many respects and the speech was criticised heavily (see for many: DER SPIEGEL, 12/2003),³² as a staff member concludes:

'We failed to develop and communicate a vision – which is the overall goal, why did we want an Agenda 2010? This has also been repeatedly requested. Yet, it is more difficult if you have to continue a certain narrative than if you tell an entirely new story.' (ID07)

Next to the immediate response to send the Chancellor on a 'meet-and-greet-tour' (ID17), i.e. he participated in regional conferences to explain his reform programme, the Office ChefBK was led a 'Working Group Agenda Implementation', its head met once a week with all section heads mirroring federal ministries with formal responsibilities for the issues covered by the agenda and discussed time schedules, implementation gaps, and 'where to intervene' (ID18; Korte 2007: 176-7). Afterwards, the section heads 'pushed their ministries to follow the agenda – and if problems arose they knew that the ChefBK would support them' (ID18). The general line of argument was always to refer to the Agenda 2010 as the key initiative of the second legislative term and that the Chancellor's government declaration is an expression of the chancellor principle, also stressing that resistance was inappropriate – and might be sanctioned (ID07, ID18). In turn, the Office ChefBK was regularly preparing briefs for the ChefBK in his role as final arbiter:

'Everyone knows there are about 20 to 30 decisions to make during the entire legislative term, where you have to bring others on board or where you have to overrule others. And then it is good to have the ChefBK as "Waagschleifer" saying: "You're right" or "I have a solution to which both of you can agree." And this was extremely important in the aftermath of the Chancellor's agenda-speech.' (ID10)

In addition, the Office ChefBK prepared briefs for the Mediation Committee that was scheduled for December 2003 to decide about several issues in the reform programme requiring the approval of the upper chamber. These briefs were more strategic than substantial, i.e. 'what does our opposite want, what do we want, (...) and what are the real tough nuts' (ID07). As such, they also entailed a strong partisan dimension, which was not problematised by the actors but rather seen as a usual aspect that has to be considered (ID07, ID18).

In sum, the Agenda 2010 was an important government declaration and set of reform proposals during Chancellor Schröder's second term in office. Although the Office ChefBK had considerable substantial influence on its policy direction, it failed to use the reform agenda and particularly the government declaration to fill the 'nice buzzword "Agenda 2010" with substance' that would afterwards 'guide and push federal ministries into the right direction' (ID07; Korte 2007: 175-6). Yet, it collaborated strongly with the mirror sections at the Chancellery and highlighted regularly sanction options if federal ministries opposed these policy lines, which provided a somewhat moderate influence on the institutional underpinnings to govern, centralising at least those inter-ministerial policy processes that were directly related to policy issues on the Agenda 2010.

(2) After the general election in 2002, the late Office ChefBK engaged more strongly into policy briefs to the ChefBK, which were regularly also forwarded to the Chancellor (ID07, ID18, ID34). These briefs commented not only on current departmental policies but

³² Some opponents in the SPD even announced to organise an intra-party referendum on the Agenda 2010 (Patzelt 2004: 279).

also aimed to seize the policy initiation function in emerging policy issues to the realm of the Chancellery – which could be regarded as hidden *Chefsachen*. Admittedly the distinction between 'ordinary' policy briefs and these preparations of priority projects is rather blurry, but as noted above these activities entailed more direct interactions with federal ministries to prepare the subsequent execution of their policy recommendations.

In general, these advisory activities of the late Office ChefBK were mostly requested by the ChefBK or the Chancellor or emerged in discussions of the small circle of close aides to the ChefBK noted above as well as in debates within the staff – without any clear rule as to which issue would emerge in which way (ID18). In contrast to the previous practice under ChefBK Hombach, most of these issues were prepared in conjunction with the line officials in the Chancellery:

'We had all the information that the house had to offer. Everything that was produced in the Chancellery went over our desks. We thus had a very broad spectrum. And we also had the opportunity to request something from the house at any time.' (ID18)

For larger briefs, the Office ChefBK also asked other line officials from the Chancellery to join their preparations. In the words of a staff member, this approach followed 'our philosophy to work as closely as possible with the Office, (...) it doesn't help if you monopolise your arcane knowledge' (ID07). Whereas all interviewed experts stressed that this cooperation was successful, some noted that the responsible division heads were less supportive because they expected to be asked first whether their staff may join the team (ID07, ID34). As a response, the Office ChefBK organised additional meetings, inviting the respective division head and discussing with him the status quo of the brief in order 'make him feel better – and notified' (ID07). The issues addressed in such briefs on particular priorities of the ChefBK and/or the Chancellor during the time period of analysis varied and were exemplified by interviewed experts with the parental benefit (*Elterngeld*), the 'Job Summit', and innovation policy (ID18, ID24). These examples illustrate the role of the Office ChefBK in policy briefs on hidden *Chefsachen*.

The idea for a parental benefit emerged out of a strategic brainstorming on suitable issues to turn to after the Agenda 2010:

'After the Agenda was finished in 2003, we have been thinking about what we want to do next for the year 2004. (...) It was clear that we need also the other flip of the Agenda-coin, which was our *chiffre*, to come more upfront. That is family policy, parental benefit, research, education.' (ID18)

In practice, the ChefBK gave his office a rather large autonomy on how to handle the issue and in which directions they should think (ID18). At first, the Office ChefBK did not contact the responsible mirror section for further information because they feared that the idea might be 'torpedoed at once' (ID07, ID34). Instead, they hired an external consultancy firm, which was known to them from other collaborations, and thus outsourced some of the rather cumbersome information gathering tasks:

'One should try to let others do the work for you, and they just have the capacities for such horizon scanning. This is also hard work to be done (...), and they obtain external knowledge, also about the newest trends. It is thus an opportunity for you to connect yourself with the latest fashions. You must not follow them – but you must know them.' (ID18)

After this collection of expertise, the Office ChefBK turned towards the details, inviting also officials from other federal ministries, most notably the Ministry of Finance, in order to discuss the financial implications of their pre-formulated policy alternatives (ID07). The basic objective was to prepare a very detailed policy brief (ID07). As such, it included not only an assessment of the status quo and policy alternatives, but also rather technocratic aspects such as calculating different financial models and projections of demographic change (ID18). When the broader lines were fixed, also the mirror section in the Chancellery was informed in order 'to ease the initial pain in the ministry, not so much the minister's but rather the officials' (ID07). Afterwards, the ChefBK was involved, made some small remarks and discussed it at length with the responsible Minister for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth – who then delegated it to the responsible officials in her ministry – which had to follow up the proposals (ID18, ID34).

For the Job Summit, the Office ChefBK involved the federal ministries much earlier than for the parental benefit, although it had likewise emerged as a 'sequel agenda' (ID07) after the Agenda 2010 (ID18). From the beginning, the Office ChefBK involved various mirror sections at the Chancellery, especially those responsible for labour market policy and for tax policy in order to understand the most pressing issues to deal with:

"That was almost a perfect process: From November 2004 onwards, we sat together with the people in the Chancellery, not knowing what would happen in 2005 [the general election, JF], and discussed what is important in terms of unemployment and social insurance (...) we also asked them "Where do you see need for action? For example, the SME policy that we had initiated in the Agenda seems not to work in practice? Can you explain why?" (ID07)

The resulting brief was developed further and condensed towards the two issues of economic growth and employment. More importantly, the Office ChefBK aimed to involve the largest opposition party, mostly to get their approval in the upper chamber that was necessary for several bills in their proposed list of policy projects (ID19). Instead of staging the set of policy proposals directly in the Bundesrat, 'maybe also with the final stop of the Mediation Committee' (ID17), the Office ChefBK reasoned that a 'marketable event' with the Chancellor and the CDU and CSU party leader would provide an appropriate arena to force the CDU/CSU into political cooperation (ID07, ID14). However, to make sure that the Chancellor is still perceived as the key actor in this process, this Job Summit was held on a day after which the Chancellor had given a government declaration that also referred to these policy issues (ID07, ID14). The government declaration was prepared by the Office ChefBK and deliberately hidden from the SPD parliamentary party; also the responsible ministries were not strongly involved (ID18). When the Job Summit was eventually held in mid-March 2005, the Office ChefBK was 'quite pleased with the results of the negotiations (...) 80-90% of our proposals were approved, an unbelievable quota' (ID18). Yet, on the very same day Heide Simonis lost the parliamentary election as Prime Minister in Schleswig-Holstein – and thus all media attention turned elsewhere, i.e. 'the positive signal was gone' (ID18, ID14, ID34).

The final example of innovation policy was widely regarded by the interviewed experts as a failure. Also following up the Agenda 2010, the Office ChefBK had sought to initiate more government policies addressing innovation policy, also improving the presentation of

government's achievements in that policy area (ID18). In general, the Office ChefBK aimed to address in its policy brief the question of 'how can we strengthen our strengths, the innovative areas where Germany performs already very well' (ID07). Although they were well aware that innovation policy is a cross-cutting issue, they also reckoned that it would be strongly linked to education policy, a policy area that was regarded as very difficult to address at federal level due to the division of formal responsibilities between the federal and the *Länder* level (ID07, ID34).

However, the mirror section and the responsible Ministry for Education and Research almost immediately recognised the activities of the Office ChefBK – and as already predicted by the Office ChefBK they became very suspicious, reasoning that the Chancellery may take over important policy issues from their own agenda (ID18). Also the SPD parliamentary party raised critics that innovation policy focussing on strengths, especially in education policy, would implicitly require a thorough consideration of the notion of elites (ID03). Eventually, the Office ChefBK had to broaden the number of actors involved in the process and 'lost control over the debate' across central government but also in the Social Democratic party and the general public – and had to concentrate on 'trying to circumvent the worst' (ID07). Nevertheless, these debates resulted in various policy decisions, including the nowadays prominent 'Excellence Initiative' to promote cutting-edge research in German universities and research institutions (e.g. Hartmann 2006).

In sum, these examples of policy briefs by the Office ChefBK on issues of particular importance implied to a varying extent a strengthened role of Chancellery as initiator of new policies, also partisan aspects were crucial and prescribed the relevant actor constellations that had to be managed. Besides, policy briefs emphasised the relevance of the Chancellery as the arbiter of federal ministries, but also with its explicit aim to influence departmental policy-making:

'The basic idea was that the Chancellery – or we – were the speedboats and the federal ministries were the fleet. We wanted to give general directions and to watch out for upcoming challenges and inform the federal ministries what is going to be important in the short- and medium-term – and therefore also on which issues they should prepare.' (ID07)

(3) A particular section inside the late Office ChefBK was created to manage the 'dialogue with the sciences' in order to continue the 'executive education' format of the previous Planning Division with the Chancellor and to make this task inside the Chancellery 'more visible' (ID19, ID24). The basic task of this section was to organise exchange with external experts, not necessarily scientists, and to organise internal workshops for the Office ChefBK and the ChefBK on selected issues.

Following previous practice, these workshops were explicitly announced as an arena for intellectual exchange (ID24). Similar to the meetings of the Chancellor organised by the Planning Division before, the section invited experts on a wide range of issues, including education, the transatlantic relations, or macro-economics. The workshops were not necessarily related to any operative business on the agenda or upcoming issues in the political debate. Instead, they were supposed to be the 'intellectual free space beyond daily politics' (ID24). They were conducted after a similar scheme for each workshop; either the section head presented the issue or the invited external experts (ID18, ID34). The

participants ranged from professors to experts from public affairs agencies or the like (ID19). The Office ChefBK acted in this respect as

'the "court jesters" – always thinking across traditional boundaries and beyond the normal scheme. However, this meant also that we were sometimes perceived as wackos, no one really listened to us – even when we had something important to say.' (ID24)

To reduce this impression among the Chancellery officials and some 'typical bureaucratic jealousy about the freedom to work like this' (ID24), the section of the Office ChefBK organised also workshops for Chancellery officials on selected issues. The basic rationale behind these workshops was that 'new ideas are not necessarily born in apparatuses' (ID18). Yet, these advisory services of the Office ChefBK were less used to shape the institutional underpinnings to govern.

(4) The late Office ChefBK engaged also in strengthening the planning capabilities of the Chancellery as a whole. Mainly drawing upon the coincidence that the former head of the Office ChefBK had been promoted as head of the Division for Administrative Affairs, they jointly drafted a new procedure to increase the cross-cutting orientation of Chancellery officials in the line divisions (ID18). Partly, it was inspired by the division head's contacts to the Policy Unit in Britain (ID24). Yet, the Office ChefBK members were well aware that

'they were also very good salesmen and that not everything they promoted could be easily implemented in the German system. (...) The strong departmental principle limits a ChefBK and the Chancellery in general. However, we thought about our structures – and how to improve them. (...) Also following the basic philosophy: "The Chancellery itself must act as the Planning Staff of the government; therefore also the divisions inside the Chancellery must do more planning".' (ID18)

Also involving external experts from think tanks and 'strategic heads' from the SPD party headquarters (ID13, ID17), the Office ChefBK and the aforementioned division head reflected upon the existing procedures in the Chancellery and compared them to best practices elsewhere, most notably in Britain (ID13, ID17, ID18). Eventually, a new formal procedure was introduced under the heading of 'divisions' dialogue' (Seeba et al. 2004). This new procedure requested that each Chancellery section should reflect upon its objectives and 'the policy priorities in which they want to take a proactive role' (ID18), collected on separate retreats (ID10). Once a year, all division heads met with the Office ChefBK, the ChefBK, and the head of the Chancellor's private office, discussing the proposals from the divisions and deciding what should be prioritised for the upcoming year (ID18). The basic rationale behind this procedure was to shape the mind-sets of Chancellery officials:

'It's definitely a cultural element, which makes it clear to the officials that you expect more from them than the pure administration of the things that you had put on their table. (...) And it is different from telling the AL what to do. You want to reach the officials below.' (ID18)

Yet, the results were modest. The Division for Administrative Affairs suggested improving the exhibitions in the Chancellery's building; the other line divisions presented often major policy issues already on their policy agenda, e.g. the Division for Foreign Affairs suggested the permanent seat of Germany in the UN Security Council as their priority for the next year (ID18, ID24). Accordingly, the renewed 'planning consciousness'

among Chancellery officials was not strengthened very much although the Office ChefBK members also stressed that 'it is impossible to know whether such initiatives have an impact' because they address 'their understandings of their role' – which may become 'more visible in real decision-making much later' (ID07).

4.1.4 Governmental planning under the Schröder government

Throughout the last time period under scrutiny, the pre-existing governmental planning was continued by the Planning Group and the Planning Division; after the general election in 2002 also the Office ChefBK got involved in some planning activities. The Planning Group during the first months of the new government continued its previous work (ID03, ID04). Most new Chancellery officials experienced a disappointment when they encountered governmental planning, as one of them stresses:

'There is a legislative term planning (...). Everyone who gets new into the Chancellery finds that extraordinary cool, you know, getting a proper folder with all the political plans. After a few months in the office, he says to himself: "Please, what is that? Nobody is complying to it anyways, we do what we want!"' (ID10)

In 1999, the new ChefBK Steinmeier requested an update of the Planning System, also in technological terms, partly benefitting from the Bonn-Berlin move providing additional budgets for the technical infrastructure of the federal government (ID03). Thus, the previous paper datasheets were replaced with a system based on electronic submissions (Bröchler 1999: 273; Grewening/Walter 1999; Finkler 2008). However, the general mechanism was still in place, i.e. the federal ministries sent data sheets with their departmental policy initiatives to the Chancellery where all of them were gathered in different lists (ID02, ID04, ID08). More importantly, the new ChefBK required from the new Planning Division next to the changes in the technical processing also substantial changes that would enable more intervention:

'So they could see at a glance which ministry performed well, which performed badly and which was not so bad. We wanted to make this available to all ministries. But Steinmeier demanded only three copies – that was his instrument to dominate the ministries. (...) That he could say in a meeting "Well, something is missing in your account, you lack that, and you over there are still not far enough."' (ID05)

In addition, this overview allowed more precise scheduling of cabinets as previously, also because the clandestine programme provided only the ChefBK with the necessary information (ID03, ID04). The ChefBK could then suggest certain cabinet meetings under a particular heading in his role as chairman of the weekly meetings of Administrative State Secretaries preparing cabinet, thus prioritising some departmental policy initiatives while neglecting others (ID04, ID10, ID19). In addition, the ChefBK also included insights from policy briefs on the timing and communication of these policy proposals (ID19; see below). This advanced scheduling was also more strongly linked with the Chancellor's communication strategies; as the division head explains:

'We have an event planning that we submit, by showing the Chancellor, which issues are pending in the coming weeks and months for a decision, and how these decisions, for example, may conflict with other events or how far decisions have progressed, so where something is brooding (...). or why on this particular day, because a football match is scheduled (...), maybe no press statement should be sent out.' (Nowak 2002: n.p.)

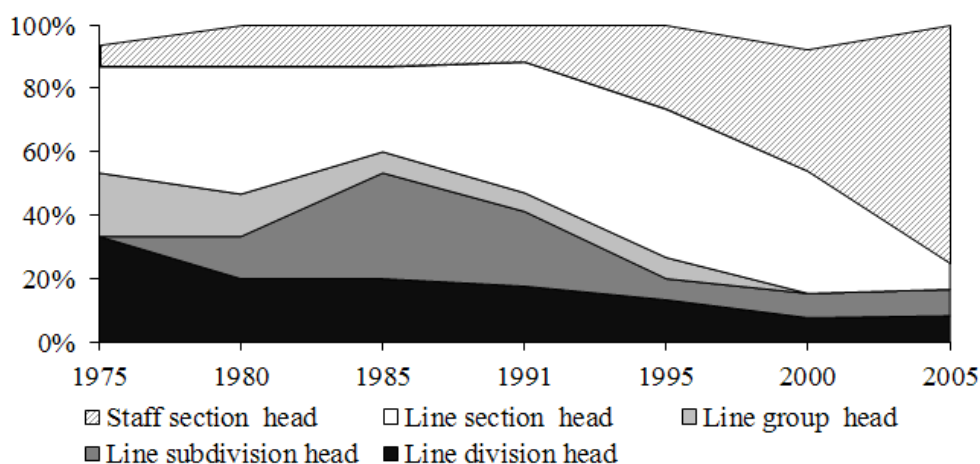
After the general election in 2002, the planning tasks were formally transferred back into the Planning Group in the Division for Administrative Affairs, also because

'the ChefBK said clearly "I don't need this, this is done in the ministries. This is not going to happen in this office. The ministries submit their proposals to the office, the specialists in the line divisions check them and then we'll see".' (ID08)

Nevertheless, the Office ChefBK and the Planning Group worked more closely on governmental planning, partly because of the positive experiences of the ChefBK with the advanced Cabinet Scheduling (ID03, ID04, ID07). They held regular meetings to discuss the results from the Planning System and the advanced Cabinet Scheduling, especially with regard to the timing and composition of cabinet meetings (ID03, ID04, ID07, ID19).

In addition, the various advisory arrangements in the Chancellery held regular meetings with the departmental planning delegates, albeit they had clearly lost the strong status of their predecessors, also illustrated by the majority of planning delegates being ranked as section heads (see Figure G.6).

Figure G.6 The official ranks of planning delegates in federal ministries, 1975-2005



Source: Own illustration; data compiled from archived task allocation plans and organisational charts (BAK).

Although their location in the leadership staffs offered direct access to ministers, they were primarily responsible for other tasks than filling in the datasheets for the Planning System (ID07, ID20). Yet, the regular meetings of planning delegates provided also one advantage, as a member of the Planning Group stressed:

'We also used these meetings to inform about the upcoming priorities within the next three to six months. And the best thing: You could say that the Chancellery had informed all federal ministries.' (ID19)

More importantly, the Planning Group and the Office ChefBK used the Planning System and the advanced Cabinet Scheduling to prioritise departmental policy proposals, mostly three or four projects per ministry (ID04) – without communicating this agenda to the planning delegates or the federal ministries, as one staff member explains:

'We received the departmental projects and then held a meeting to decide about our internal priorities, including the timing and the scheduling of departmental policy projects – mirrored with the priorities of the Chancellor (...). The ministries are pretty

autonomous, that was a problem from the Chancellery's viewpoint. Accordingly, we didn't inform the mirror sections or the ministries, especially not with regard to timing' (ID19).

As follow-up to these overviews, the Office ChefBK then prepared additional briefs on how to communicate these policy priorities, 'what is our message? Where is an event where this initiative could be presented? What are the political competitors doing?' (ID19). These briefs were also used by the ChefBK in his meetings with Administrative State Secretaries preparing cabinet.

However, some federal ministries refused to provide more information than necessary, fearing that their Minister would lose an important strategic advantage prior the cabinet meeting 'if the ChefBK is already fully informed and can take it off the agenda for any reason' (ID10) – but at the expense of sanctions to such non-compliant behaviour. In turn, though, the advanced Cabinet Scheduling reinstated some constraints on the federal ministries that had been rather absent during the former legislative period (ID04). Yet, no further sanctions were available to force the federal ministries to more compliance:

'According to the GGO, the ministry shall notify the Chancellery in a reasonable time, which is open to interpretation, what is "reasonable" and what is "to notify"? (...) We have a new planning software that's easier, but only if the ministry wants it. You cannot force the ministries, we have the departmental principle. (...) And as always: If you ask too much from the ministries, they become very reluctant.' (ID03)

4.2 The Division for General Affairs as the guardian of *Ordnungspolitik*³³

The Division for General Affairs aimed to achieve a role as the ministry's 'think tank' (ID20, ID21), emphasising the division's expertise function (Filc 1999: 155, 171) but also an 'ideology function' (ID10). Although most of its advisory activities were requested by the political leadership, the change of the Finance Minister in 1999 did not affect the division's primary tasks in policy advice (ID20, ID21, ID33).

The two basic branches within the division differ (see chap. G.3.2 above). Whereas the first subdivision and also parts of the interim third subdivision contributed to the division's advisory role upon request but provided also proactive policy advice, the second subdivision was mainly engaged in fiscal monitoring of policy areas with high public expenditure. Nevertheless, both parts are analysed together, distinguishing the division's advisory activities in (1) the preparation of policy briefs upon request, also contributing to intra-ministerial decision-making, (2) the formulation of self-contained policy briefs, and the contributions to (3) governmental reporting.

4.2.1 The Division for General Affairs as service provider: Policy briefs upon request

The political leadership requested different policy advice from the BMF Division. On the one hand, the division got involved in the daily business of ex ante preparation of the Minister and the Parliamentary State Secretaries for cabinet or Parliament. It was also closely related to its regular assessments of cabinet proposals from other ministries as part of its formal co-signing responsibilities. In addition, the division was frequently asked to conduct the ex post processing of press coverage. On the other hand, the BMF Division

³³ The academic and public debate applies the term 'regulatory policy' not only to fiscal and economic policy. This study refers to 'regulative' for the adjective to this German noun (*ordnungspolitisch*).

also prepared conceptual work for policy ideas initiated by the top-level or commented on policy briefs of other divisions inside the ministry.

The division was strongly involved in preparing the Minister or the Parliamentary State Secretaries for their roles in parliamentary committees (ID28). Mostly, the division was directly asked to contribute a background assessment of those issues of interest for the MPs and link it with other policy announcements made by the ministry and further information (ID21, IUK33). These policy briefs were usually prepared by the section responsible for the policy issue, albeit particularly the 'head sections' (*Kopfreferate*)³⁴ were more often involved than other sections (ID20, ID30). Similar requests arose regularly with regard to cabinet – mainly because departmental proposals required the Finance Ministry's 'consent' (*im Einvernehmen*, ID35). These requests were often troubling for the division members because of their low predictability, as one of them explains:

'It is difficult to predict when a ministry will have developed a proposal to cabinet maturity [*Kabinettsreife*, JF] and thus our work depends on the cabinet meetings' agenda. Often, we have to prepare on very short notice. Although text elements may already exist, it still requires much work, and it has to be prepared very quickly, often we receive these templates for cabinet Friday afternoon – with the request to produce something until Monday afternoon.' (ID33)

Only rarely did the respective ministry inform the BMF Division in advance about an upcoming departmental policy proposal – and mostly only due to personal networks (ID32, ID35). The Planning System was also not a support for foreseeing these cabinet proposals (ID12, ID30). On certain policy areas, though, the BMF Division could predict that they would receive a request, especially when they were included in the coalition agreement or a government declaration. In practice, the responsible section prepared these mostly macro-economic assessments, also in conjunction with other sections within the division. Also due to the regular time pressure, the sections did not engage in further interactions with other divisions inside the ministry, but also because the highly specialised internal organisation of the ministry assigned the Division for General Affairs to macro-economic expertise, which was thus not available in other divisions (ID12, ID20, ID21, ID35).

The final policy briefs had usually 'information character' (ID30), i.e. the division contributed its expertise but not necessarily further policy ideas. In fact, these advisory activities were regarded as 'rather passive, it was about waiting until something comes from above – and then hurry up to provide the requested information as quick and concise as possible' (ID28). Nevertheless, some division members perceived these *ex ante* preparations of Parliament and cabinet as an opportunity for 'setting the trails' (ID27):

'We could highlight something in the cabinet proposal or we could emphasise something for the Minister to say in Parliament – and we could suggest leaving other things out. Not active hiding, but just not mentioning. And I think that our opinion was appreciated. Why else should they ask us again?' (ID27)

In a similar manner, the Division for General Affairs processed the regular requests to comment on media coverage, e.g. 'when the State Secretary had read something in the

³⁴ The term head sections is traditionally used for the first section of a subdivision with regard to enumeration, in the case of the BMF Division, these were the section I A 1, I B 1, and I C 1. Their denomination also often includes 'general issues' or 'general affairs'.

newspapers and then wanted an opinion, with a rigour assessment underlying it' (ID28). Sometimes, section officials also prepared policy briefs in advance, expecting an apparent request out of their observation of the media debate (ID30). In times of electoral campaigning, these assessments also included the cross-checking of major arguments and concepts from the opposition parties' electoral campaigns, as one division member put it: 'We did Kirchhof for weeks; this was also requested by the leadership' (ID28).³⁵

Various division members criticised that they had been requested to conduct this 'post-processing' of press and campaign developments – because they regarded it as a 'clear task of the leadership staff' (ID34). In contrast, others perceived these tasks as time- and resource consuming but also as 'worthy' because they turned the division into a service provider for the political leadership, in the words of one division member: 'They were lucky to have us to explain the Minister how this number got into the media and what it meant' (ID21) – which could be useful at other occasions when the division needed the leadership staff's support (ID27). Moreover, these activities were perceived as support for the division's reputation in the ministry – as being 'ready to respond' (*sprechfähig*) rather quickly (ID27).

In addition, the Division for General Affairs prepared policy briefs on particular issues that were asked for by the political leadership, i.e. 'the political top-level decided something and we made then a concept for it' (ID28). Yet, in many cases, only the general issue was provided, resulting in rather vague requests (ID21, ID30, ID33). Partly, this ambiguity was related to the party-political considerations that were not made explicit by the political actors, i.e.

'the wishes of the top-level are strongly aligned with the political agenda, which is for the ministerial bureaucracy, even after intense press study, not predictable in the same form as for the Minister and the State Secretary who get these issues in their political circles first hand – and then often with a level of detail that you just do not expect.' (ID34)

Yet, the BMF Division did not exploit these ambiguities of their political masters. Instead, interviewed experts regularly complained about problems to predict what information the Minister already had, how much information the policy brief should include, and, most importantly, which policy direction he prefers – 'to provide the precise policy advice that he had asked for' (ID21, ID28). Partly, though, this uncertainty was caused by the very nature of the request: The political top-level 'wanted to dig into a particular direction, but had no further ideas' (ID29, ID28). In turn, though, division officials were convinced to have invested 'too much work' into finding out these preferences – and tried to estimate the appropriate policy content by ensuring its congruence with the ministry's previous policy in that area (ID20, ID21, ID28). More importantly, the final products were regularly rejected:

'It happened frequently that the briefs did not meet the expectations. Then you get the feedback and must repair it or try to take these critics into account next time.' (ID34)

The final type of policy briefs resulted from the responsibilities of the BMF Division in co-signing or commenting on other divisions' briefs. Similar to other federal ministries,

³⁵ Prof. Dr. Paul Kirchhof is a German law professor who was the 'shadow finance minister' of the CDU chancellor candidate Angela Merkel in 2005. His proposal for a tax reform dominated the press coverage during the electoral campaign for several weeks (see Wilke/Reinermann 2006; Brandes 2009).

these intra-ministerial processes were mainly oriented towards producing a single decision basis for the departmental leadership; as a former Administrative State Secretary explained:³⁶

'Heiner Flassbeck once said to my ideas (...) that I should submit my comments in writing. He told me that his personal assistant had reminded him that different viewpoints are dealt in the ministry by formal orders, not by substantial policy briefs.' (Filc 1999: 29)

Put differently: conflicts between two divisions occurred regularly but were not submitted to the minister, i.e. 'most briefs are completely cleaned up from any conflict issues' (ID34, ID31, ID33).³⁷ Occasionally, the other line divisions in the ministry tried to avoid an inclusion of the BMF Division, as a division member recalls:

'The AL had asked us to get involved (...) I called the responsible section head in the other division and he told me that he has no considerations yet, but I could send him our material (...) Hence, we send something (...) we heard nothing. I asked him what had happened with our proposal, he responded that the status of the discussions is confidential (...) we still waited (...) and suddenly the draft was at the top – without our recommendations.' (ID27)

Similar examples were reported from other interviewed experts – which were usually solved by using their informal contacts in the responsible ministry, which often informed the Division for General Affairs in cases of conflict with the other line division in the BMF (ID33, ID35). By and large, though, the Division for General Affairs could rarely convince other line divisions to change their views and follow the division's considerations. Various examples portrayed by the interviewed experts can be summarised as 'clash' between the basic interest of the BMF Division in *Ordnungspolitik* and the other line divisions' key foci, e.g. the Budget Division's focus on public expenditure or the Division for Privatisation's interest in the effects of the market – instead of the regulatory assumptions of a policy proposal (ID31, ID35). The strong ideological view of the BMF Division was often criticised by the other line divisions:

'They are sometimes illusionists. We have to deal with strong interests here, we have to find a practical policy solution that is feasible and reasonable. And then they come along and say: "Well, but in regulatory terms, it might be the wrong direction." How should that be of any help?' (ID25)

In sum, the various policy briefs upon request ranged from notes preparing the Minister in Parliament and cabinet to commenting on press coverage and assessing other ministries' cabinet proposals as well as policy initiatives from other line divisions inside the ministry. Although the BMF Division had sought to act as a think tank, it was mostly limited to provide its economic expertise, also in a rather technocratic manner, and could rarely convince others to adopt its views. In turn, this internal advisory role was not explicitly oriented towards influencing government policy-making processes, albeit its status as the 'cross-checking device' for cabinet proposals did motivate some ministries to consult them prior their cabinet submissions – albeit rather as an information for upcoming

³⁶ In fact, Filc was in office from December 1998 until June 1999 and returned to academia afterwards.

³⁷ A famous exception to this rule, which gained considerable media attention, was the policy brief by the Division 1 about the German budget deficit in 2002, which did not comply with the Maastricht Treaty's criteria. The responsible section head advised the Finance Minister on two options how to deal with it – and the Finance Minister choose the less visible one, presumably because of the coinciding electoral campaign to the general election in September 2002 (DER SPIEGEL, 08/2003).

internal conflicts with other line divisions in the Finance Ministry than as an opportunity to exchange policy ideas that could eventually alter departmental policy proposals.

4.2.2 The Division for General Affairs as 'trend scout':³⁸ Self-contained policy briefs

The proactive advisory activities of the Division for General Affairs were rather limited, partly because of the work and time pressure by the policy briefs upon request (ID20, ID34). Also, various division members noticed the relevance of the political leadership, i.e. Finance Minister Eichel was widely perceived as more interested in such proactive initiatives (ID27). Therefore, self-contained briefs were prepared either 'for the cupboard, to have it ready when the time comes' (ID21) or as an initiative for immediate action:

'The operative business is, well, that is the pressure, (...) the leadership wants something. But sometimes we think that the Minister should know something or that the Minister should start an argument with someone and fight for it. In that respect, we enjoy a degree of freedom which is relatively rare.' (ID31)

The majority of self-contained briefs, however, were prepared for a later use (ID10, ID21). The division prepared policy briefs complying with previous requests of the departmental leadership and anticipating their policy stance on upcoming issues (ID30). Many of these policy briefs addressed also the formal jurisdictions of other line divisions inside the ministry. In general, the BMF Division tried to avoid preliminary contacts with them, although many division members held informal contacts to those divisions most relevant to their own area of responsibility (ID27, ID35). However, they often faced the reluctance of other divisions to support their initiatives:

'As a conceptual division you always have the problem in this house that you face in almost all issues the fractions of naysayers from the other divisions with very good counter-arguments, saying "Why are you digging this, how do we look with this, we will never cope with these changes, this is politically naïve etc." Those are always the same arguments in different variants.' (ID20)

An appropriate strategy to avoid resistances at all levels was for to engage in EU policy-making. One of the key examples under the Finance Minister Eichel was the issue of 'quality of public finances'. A division member summarises the process as follows:

'We made "quality of public finances" an issue in the economic policy committee in Brussels. And we issued a report on that. (...) Kastrop [subdivision head in the BMF Division, JF] took also the lead in the [German] delegation to the committee. (...) And one of his first actions was to present the report's conclusions. And the people really went for it. They said that it was an issue that needs attention. And then happened what always happens: We established a working group on this issue and Kastrop chaired this group.' (ID21).

The positive feedback at EU level also facilitated the division's activities at home, i.e. it received approval by the responsible Administrative State Secretary, and facilitated the work of the aforementioned EU working group, gathering officials from different sections working together (ID20, ID21). The working group enabled the BMF Division also to use the debates on the quality of public finances at EU level for its role inside the Finance Ministry but also across central government, i.e.

³⁸ (ID20).

'to outplay others, to contribute and formulate requests in Brussels in order to influence the German debate on fiscal rules, (...) also to strengthen the role of the I (...). This was a very successful strategy, I would say. Over several years, we build up the issue and it will also be one of the key themes for the German EU presidency [in 2007, JF]' (ID20).

In sum, the rather limited occasions for self-contained policy briefs by the BMF Division offered some influence on intra-departmental policy-making. Yet, these policy briefs were not linked with ambitions to shape government policy-making. Nevertheless, their successful attempts to frame the domestic debate by injecting policy ideas at EU level can be regarded as influential for domestic decision-making on adjacent policy issues – which eventually involved also other federal ministries.

4.2.3 The Division for General Affairs without budget leverages

The BMF Division did not obtain any formal or informal capabilities related to the budgetary procedure; instead these means are located at the Budget Division. In turn, the relationships between both divisions were crucial for its potential outreach across central government, as a division member opines:

'The II has the big advantage that they interact directly with the other ministries. And we always have the impression that the II has a head start (...). These colleagues from the II are better informed than me; they know exactly how to "spike" the ministries.' (ID29)

Yet, under the Schröder government, the two divisions were more often in conflict than not. These conflicts were caused by the different roles of both divisions. Due to their budgetary focus, the Budget Division perceived every other line division, including the Division for General Affairs, as a 'spending division' – and thus as 'their natural enemy' (ID20, ID23). This budgetary focus became also visible in its responses to proposals from the Division for General Affairs, i.e. regularly their briefs were returned with rather fundamental changes stressing the key preferences of the Budget Division, i.e. reducing them to budgetary aspects and neglecting their regulatory arguments (ID29). In addition, both divisions had a very different understanding of influencing government policy-making, as a division member explains:

'They get crazy about their small successes. You know, when they succeeded in squeezing 100 million out of one of the budget title managers, which is completely irrelevant. They think differently, influence is something completely different than how I would define influence, they want to have their budget, they want to dupe some ministries etc.' (ID20)

Put differently: The different definitions of influence decreased the likelihood that the Division for General Affairs could convince the Budget Division to collaborate, although some division members observed that

'The II did recognise that they had a strong role during budget preparation, but loose regularly when the budget comes to Parliament (...) and then much is watered down. The Budget Division had also an interest to develop solutions that are more long-term.' (ID32)

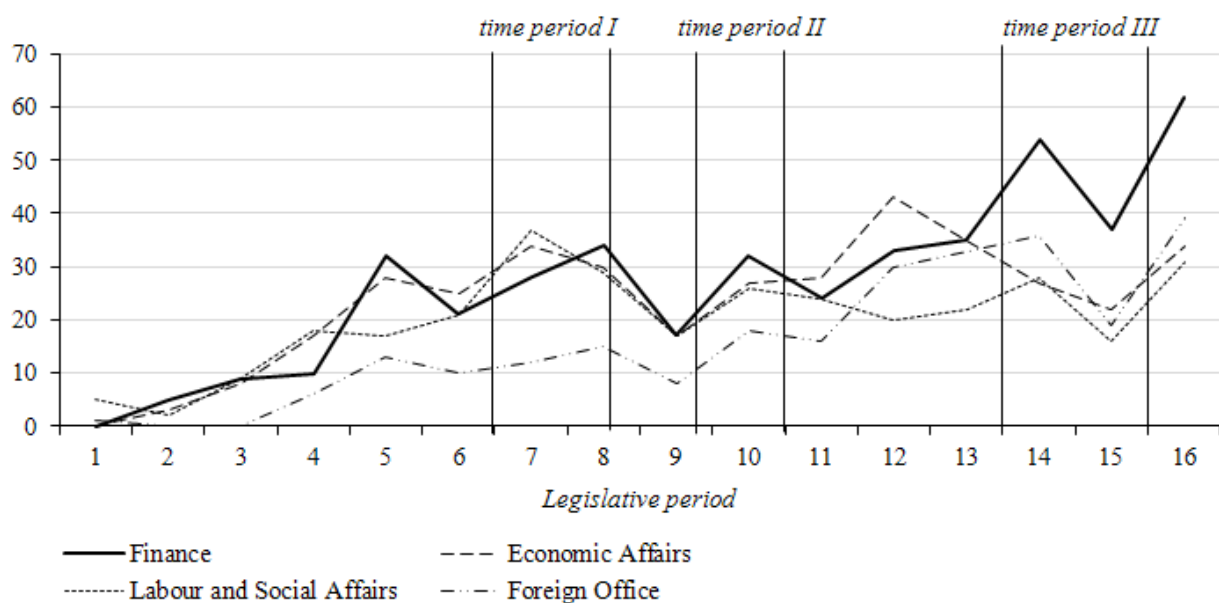
Another crucial obstacle for a closer cooperation was the timeframe of the budgetary procedure (ID36), i.e. the Budget Division operated under a rather short-term time horizon whereas much of the self-initiatives from the Division for General Affairs addressed rather medium- and long-term issues. In turn, division members also feared that a stronger attuning of their conceptual work with the Budget Division would limit the conceptual work too strongly due to the powers of the budgetary cycle (ID20, ID29).

As a result, the Division for General Affairs was neither able nor successful in changing the mind-sets of officials in the Budget Division, although some informal contacts were rather close (ID21, ID23). However, in the majority of cases the Budget Division either blocked the initiative from the Division for General Affairs or returned it as described above, translating its regulatory arguments into budgetary ones. More importantly from this study's research perspective, these contested relations limited the capabilities of the Division for General Affairs to use the budgetary procedure and its accompanying negotiations between the Ministry of Finance and the spending ministries for shaping government policy-making.

4.2.4 The Division for General Affairs and governmental reporting

The Division for General Affairs is responsible for most governmental reports led by the Finance Ministry (ID28, ID32; see Figure G.7). Yet, many division officials perceived their contributions to these governmental reports as time- and staff-consuming without much impact.³⁹

Figure G.7 The governmental reporting system (selected federal ministries), 1949-2009



Note: The figure shows the four federal ministries with the highest total number of reports from 1949 to 2009, including reports by federal agencies in their departmental jurisdiction.

Source: Own illustration, information compiled from Schindler 2000: 1268-9, Feldkamp 2005: 338, and the Parliamentary Archive of the German Bundestag.

On the one hand, many reports, especially those issued annually, are formulated in an incremental manner, with little room to manoeuvre. On the other hand, the reports are often handled in other federal ministries by officials who are also not interested in producing something innovative and new:

³⁹ However, the fact that the Minister for Economic Affairs issued his 'own' Economic Report as a response to the transfer of the lead responsibility for the mandatory Annual Economic Report to the Finance Ministry in 1998 may serve as an indication that some reports are indeed relevant in central government (see also BT-Drs. 14/2207 [2000]: 1-2).

'they were really only interested in whether the report contained anything embarrassing or problematic for them. And who could blame them. We did very often the same when we were co-signing reports.' (ID33)

More generally, the BMF Division rarely used these governmental reports as an opportunity to shape government policy-making and regarded them instead as a 'considerable burden' (ID21, ID27; Derlien 1975: 44):

'There is, for example, the Annual Economic Report, taking two months of one official, only engaged in coordinating the text versions with the other ministries. Then there is the Subsidy Report. This is a huge thing. This report must be matched with many papers. It absorbs a civil servant and a desk officer for a month. Therefore, one comes to think: "What do you get from these reports?"' (ID21).

Besides, the BMF division had almost no influence on the issues addressed in these reports. Yet, it did initiate a new report in the aftermath of the Agenda 2010. The basic idea was to discuss the quality of public finances from a sustainable perspective, taking salient policy issues such as demographic change into account (ID20; DER SPIEGEL, 38/2004). Implicitly, the 'Sustainability Report' (*Tragfähigkeitsbericht*) was thought to shape the expert debate on sustainable finances but also government policies in various areas addressing sustainability issues (ID20, ID21, ID30). Explicitly, the report was issued as a BMF report and not a governmental report in order to avoid the formal requirements of inter-ministerial coordination (ID21). In practice, the *Ifo Institute, Centre for Economic Studies* was commissioned to perform the calculations, also due to the division's limited personnel capacities (ID28; DER SPIEGEL, 38/2004). Likewise, the division involved the Working Council Public Finance (*Arbeitskreis Finanzwissenschaft*), a standing expert council at the Finance Ministry composed of younger economists, in order to access their expertise, especially on the academic debate (ID28). The report of the *Ifo Institute* was submitted to other federal ministries in order 'to raise awareness for the issue' (ID21).

Initially, the political leadership in the Finance Ministry was rather reluctant to follow up the idea (ID28). Later, though, it was perceived as a very successful report with implications in several policy areas, as a division member argues:

'I would not claim that Mr. Müntefering [the Minister for Labour, JF] had the idea to increase the retirement age because we have written the Sustainability Report. But it was perhaps a small contribution towards ensuring that the issue was pushed forward in the political arena.' (ID21)

When the Sustainability Report was published in June 2005, it also included an explicit reference to the Agenda 2010 – one of the very few links between the advisory arrangements in the Chancellery and the Division for General Affairs:

'The Federal Government has therefore initiated some forward-looking reforms – called Agenda 2010 – that significantly enhance the sustainability of public finances. The Ministry of Finance's aim in publishing this first Report on the Sustainability of Public Finances is to provide objective information on the effects of demographic change on fiscal policy and to point out areas where timely countermeasures can be taken.' (BMF 2005b: 4)

More importantly, this report can be regarded as a prime example for the division accomplishing its ideology function, i.e. the report provided a 'projection space' that served as a broader frame for policy-making in various areas. In a sense, it offered the division a formal opportunity to interact with federal ministries and either convince them to adjust

their previous views and adopt a thinking more oriented towards its own basic notion of *Ordnungspolitik* or 'to be convinced when the report is issued' (ID33).⁴⁰

4.3 Concluding remarks

The advisory system at the centre of the Schröder government incorporated a number of advisory arrangements at the Chancellery, including the Office ChefBK, the Planning Group, later partly merged into the Planning Division, which was split again into the Office ChefBK and the Planning Group after 2002. As Chancellor Schröder stressed later in a newspaper interview introducing this case study, their advisory activities mostly aimed to support their client at the Chancellery. In contrast, the BMF Division conducted mostly advisory activities aiming to influence intra-ministerial processes.

First, the early Office ChefBK aimed to shape the *regulative* underpinnings to govern by installing new rules for cabinet in favour of a strengthened centre in government policy-making. In contrast, the later introduced advanced Cabinet Scheduling as expansion of the Planning System can be regarded as a new mean that was rather invisible to the federal ministries and aimed to shape the regulative underpinnings of inter-ministerial decision-making indirectly in favour of the ChefBK, albeit with moderate success. The engagement of the late Office ChefBK in policy briefs provided some opportunities to express a centralisation of government policy-making, even though they were not publicly announced as a priority of the Chancellor. Similarly, the contributions by the Office ChefBK to government declarations and especially the Agenda 2010 aimed towards reemphasising the chancellor principle in cabinet and forced ministries to correspond to the announced policy shifts. The policy briefs by the BMF Division aimed less towards the regulative underpinnings to govern. Likewise, the governmental reporting was less relevant for the formal rules of the executive game, albeit the BMF Division initiated also a Sustainability Report in order to gain formal responsibilities in a newly emerging cross-cutting policy area. Here, also the organisational attributes played a role: Whereas the Office ChefBK benefitted from its staff affiliation to the ChefBK acting traditionally as key arbiter of inter-ministerial conflicts and, in turn, ensuring that federal ministries regarded harmonious interactions with his office as beneficial, the line division in the BMF lacked a persuasive legitimacy vis-à-vis the federal ministries to shape the regulative underpinnings to govern, especially given its separation to the budgetary function that would have provided some sanctioning potential.

Second, the different advisory arrangements under the Schröder government aimed towards influencing the *normative* underpinnings to govern. The early Office ChefBK and its activities supporting *Chefsachen* sought to shape the pre-existing norms at cabinet and departmental level. But these advisory activities were rather selective, which may be partly related to the rather small organisational capabilities of the Office ChefBK, depending upon additional capacities e.g. of the mirror sections at the Chancellery for enforcement. Besides, the selection of an issue as *Chefsache* depends on various aspects and thus the internalisation of a centralising norm could be achieved only over a longer period of time –

⁴⁰ The coalition agreement issued after the general election in 2009 stipulated that such a Sustainability Report should be prepared again, led by the Ministry of Finance (CDU/CSU/SPD 2005: 68).

but the case study shows that federal ministries rarely accepted such a takeover of their responsibilities and instead used these occasions to dominate the prescription of legitimate policy means. In contrast, the activities of the late Office ChefBK in policy briefs were used more deliberately as opportunities to strengthen the basic norms about the involvement of the Chancellery in government policy-making, although they continued to focus more on policy norms and relied again strongly upon the mirror sections at the Chancellery to disseminate them. Yet, the late Office ChefBK also formalised contacts with external experts as an additional new professional standard of preparing policy briefs inside the Chancellery – which was also clearly communicated to other Chancellery officials. The policy briefs by the BMF Division were mostly oriented towards intra-departmental policy-making, aiming to inject norms of the economic profession into these processes. Besides, the governmental reporting was rarely used by the BMF Division to prescribe the legitimate means in the policy issues that they covered, although its self-initiated Sustainability Report can be regarded as an attempt to provide such policy-specific norms. In addition, the BMF Division did aim to promote standards of the economic profession in intra-ministerial decision-making.

Lastly, the advisory arrangements aimed to influence the *cognitive* underpinnings to govern. The contributions to public *Chefsachen* by the early Office ChefBK framed government policy-making in general by emphasising the crucial role of the centre in such processes but focused more on disseminating frames for selected policy areas – although the very engagement of the Office ChefBK in these issues may signal and imply coordination failures in inter-ministerial policy-making. Also the Schröder-Blair-Paper as well as the Agenda 2010 provided opportunities to reasonate about policy paradigms in distinct areas, albeit only the latter was regarded as a manifesto for future government policies. As such, it prescribed policy frames rather than a general narrative on how to govern and why to proceed in this manner. Likewise, the engagement in policy briefs on hidden *Chefsachen* by the late Office ChefBK was used to frame selected policy issues but not to disseminate a narrative on how to govern – although, as with publicly announced *Chefsachen*, the activities of the late Office ChefBK signalled the centre's dissatisfaction with ministerial policy-making on these issues. The BMF Division and its policy briefs offered some policy framing, but focused on policy-making processes inside the Finance Ministry – and have been often successfully rejected by other divisions.

To conclude, the advisory arrangements at the Chancellery and the Ministry of Finance were rather diverse in terms of advisory activities and their underlying institutional strategies. At the Chancellery, the Planning System was reactivated to a moderate extent, but the advisory arrangements put more emphasis on their policy briefs, preparations of government declarations, and public as well as hidden *Chefsachen*. In fact, particularly the late Office ChefBK employed these advisory activities as carriers for its growing yet moderate institutional strategies. Although these activities provided some opportunities to change the basic regulative underpinnings to govern, they were applied rather selectively, focussing more on policy-specific formal rules of the executive game for promoting interventions from the centre. More importantly, these activities served as carriers for policy-specific normative and cognitive strategies, prescribing the legitimate means to achieve certain policy objectives as well as framing distinct policy areas. However, similar

as under their predecessors, these activities were mostly prepared in conjunction with the federal ministries, transmitted through the mirror sections, and thus provided the latter with opportunities to circumvent new policy norms or paradigms that would counteract their own departmental norms and philosophies. Moreover, although the continuation of these carriers may have had the potential to spill-over to the basic norms of appropriate behaviour in central government over time, the advisory arrangements at the Chancellery failed to address these basic normative rules of the executive game due to departmental resistance. The advisory arrangements at the Chancellery neglected also to formulate and disseminate a new basic cognitive narrative to govern.

Part III Policy Advice at the centre of British governments

'What I wanted to have was a piece of machinery (...) which would keep a continuous watch on the strategy of the Government and be able to tell the Government when they were departing from that strategy in any respect and analyse the reasons. This it [the CPRS] did; and I believe it did it very successfully.'
(Heath, quoted by HC 535ii [1977]: Q1875)

Chapter H Policy advice under PM Heath, 1970-1974

Under PM Edward Heath, the Central Policy Review Staff in the Cabinet Office acted as *the* advisory arrangement at the centre of British government. Its structure was rather unique and it fulfilled an innovative mandate to support governmental strategy and ensure that cabinet follows its strategic priorities. The next subchapter describes the major developments prior the general election of 1970, leading to the creation of the CPRS, which is examined in the second subchapter. The third subchapter scrutinises the organisational structure of the CPRS. The final subchapter analyses the CPRS's major activities seeking to influence the institutional underpinnings of government policy-making.

1 Prologue: Businessmen into central government

Already in the mid-1960s the Conservative Party devoted considerable attention to the machinery of government as a device for carrying out its 'Quiet Revolution' – reasoning that government, like private business, required modern management (Davis 2007: 83-7). In April 1967, a 'Public Sector Research Unit' (PSRU) was established in the Conservative Party's Research Department in order to analyse the efficiency of the current central government organisation and how to 'reduce the state' (Lee 1974: 175; Theakston 1996: 79; Davis 2007: 87-9).¹ The PSRU acknowledged that strong departmental interests countervailed politics from the centre and suggested a stronger support for the British PM – similar to his counterparts e.g. in Germany or France (Baston/Seldon 1996: 73; Kavanagh/Seldon 1999: 74; Howell 2000: 344). The PSRU favoured a 'central capability' in order to 'assist in strategy formulation and raise eyes beyond the inevitable pressures for the short-term business' and emphasised the 'need for a system of formal programme analysis, possibly run by the "central capability"' (Pollitt 1980: 86; DSMS 1973: 23; Garrett 1980: 58). However, the team disagreed on the mandate of such a central capability, whereas some claimed a focus on efficiency and programme analysis and the government's analytical powers, others aimed to enhance the direct support of the PM (Davis 2007: 93-4). As one of the PSRU members put it:

'Frankly some of us wanted it to be a staff for No. 10, for the Prime Minister, (...) and less a general body to serve all the cabinet. We thought that No. 10 was under-equipped to deal with all the great Departments of State' (Howell, quoted by Hennessy 1986: 77).

In 1968, an additional 'businessmen's team' was set up by the Conservative Party in order to advice how principles of corporate planning could improve British central government (Gray/Jenkins 1982: 432; Pollitt 1984: 85; Theakston 1996: 80). During the

¹ Under the chairmanship of the Conservative MP Ernest Marples who was seen as a successful example for a businessman in politics (Davis 2007: 86-7; Hennessy 1989: 211).

eighteen months prior the general election in 1970, this group of young Conservatives and secondees from business consulting firms, chaired by a former senior civil servant, analysed the British central government and recommended inter alia to create a Prime Minister's Department with pooled responsibilities for planning and strategy (Lee 1974: 175; Blackstone/Plowden 1988: 8). Analogous to planning units in the private sector, the group suggested to delegate 'think tank functions' to such a 'new Prime Minister's Department' (Lee 1974: 175). Under instruction of the Leader of the Opposition Edward Heath, both groups' proposals were brought together in an action plan that soon gained mystification across Whitehall as the 'Black Book' (Lee 1974: 174; Pollitt 1984: 86; Theakston 1996: 80-1; Saint-Martin 2000: 90). In addition, other senior party figures advised Heath on machinery of government issues and recommended e.g. a merger of the existing PMO with the Cabinet Office and the recently created Civil Service Department (CSD) into a Prime Minister's Department that should also include a central planning staff (Theakston 1996: 80; Blackstone/Plowden 1988: 8). In sum, various actors advised the Leader of the Opposition to change the centre of British government and the resources at the PM's disposal, strongly orientated towards integrating more business thinking into Whitehall (Pollitt 1984: 85-6; Hennessy 1989: 211).

Moreover, also Edward Heath had recognised the contrast between his time as a cabinet minister when he found himself "'bogged down" in administrative detail', and his time in Opposition when he was able 'to think widely and strategically' (Ashworth 1982: 3):

I had so often seen situations develop between Departments in which a large amount of time and energy was wasted by Ministers, right up to cabinet level, because the matter hadn't been properly dealt with earlier on. In addition, there were some things which Departments themselves were always loath to tackle which ought to be dealt with. (...) This [the creation of a central capability unit, JF] was not an attempt to take power out of the hands of Departments; it was a very successful attempt to prevent unnecessary squabbling between Departments, either at official level or at ministerial level' (Heath, quoted by Hennessy/Coates 1991: 11).

As a consequence, Heath was well aware that a government once in power becomes absorbed in immediate problems – and required a device to provide long-term strategic advice (Brady/Catterall 1997: 522; Bulmer 1988: 34). Coincidentally to these plans, the civil service suggested to create a new analytical capability to support cabinet as a whole – partly as a response to the increasing coordination requests in Whitehall (Hecló/Wildavsky 1974: 267; Lee 1974: 163, 176; Theakston 2004). Since 1968, William Armstrong, Head of the Civil Service and Permanent Secretary to the Treasury, discussed with Cabinet Secretary Burke Trend the creation of a long-term planning unit in the Cabinet Office that would support Ministers and interdepartmental groups; this idea was also briefly discussed with PM Harold Wilson in 1969 (James 1986: 423-4; Pollitt 1980: 87).² Following convention, the opposition met senior civil servants before the general election in 1970 – and the concept of a central capability was agreed on all sides (Hennessy 1989: 211).

² NA, PRO, PREM 13/3241, Cabinet Secretary Burke Trend to the PM, 'Machinery of Government: the Central Departments', 10 June 1970.

2 The creation of the Central Policy Review Staff

After his electoral success in 1970, the new PM Edward Heath asked the Head of the Civil Service and senior officials from the Civil Service Department to review central government organisation over the summer of 1970 (Hennessy 1989: 221). The issue of a central capability, though, felt to the Cabinet Secretary (Clifford 2000; Campbell/Wilson 1995: 201). The civil service was keen to show that it had considered the Conservatives' agenda already, as a Conservative adviser recalled later:

'The Cabinet Secretary, Burke Trend, and the head of the civil service, William Armstrong, had talks with me. They said: "This is all very interesting, your views. We watched them develop while you were in the opposition. We agree with you. We have been thinking along the same lines. In fact, we have all sorts of plans setting up essentially the same things." -- I became very suspicious' (quoted by Campbell 1983: 214).

Hence, the Cabinet Secretary 'ceased to have any time to keep the momentum moving' (Baston/Seldon 1996: 69) and foiled with suspicious cabinet ministers the original plans of creating a unit supporting the PM only. Instead, they turned it into a new unit servicing the cabinet as a whole (Rose 1980: 31; Blackstone/Plowden 1988: 62; Clifford 2000).

Both, the general review of the central government organisation and the previous considerations about a central capability were incorporated into a governmental White Paper on 'The Reorganisation of Central Government' (Cmnd. 4506 [1970]) that was mainly drafted by the Cabinet Secretary and one of his support staffers in the Cabinet Office³ as well as the Head of the Civil Service and his 'successor-but-one'⁴ (Sunday Times, 25 March 1973: 284; Blackstone/Plowden 1988: 37; Hennessy 1994b: 209). It was released in October 1970 and announced structural and procedural changes in British central government, including the introduction of a 'Programme Analysis and Review' (cf. Gray/Jenkins 1982) and the creation of two giant departments, the Department of Trade and Industry and the Department for the Environment (see Radcliffe 1991; Hennessy 1994b: 208). Moreover, it stressed that British governments tend to lack

'a clear definition of strategic purpose and under the pressure of the day to day problems immediately before them, governments are always at some risk of losing sight of the need to consider the totality of their current policies in relation to their longer term objectives (...). The Government (...) therefore propose to begin by establishing a small multi-disciplinary central policy review staff in the Cabinet Office' (Cmnd. 4506 [1970]: 13).

The mandate of this Central Policy Review Staff was presented officially to cabinet in February 1971:

1. To examine and analyse selected major policy issues referred to the C.P.R.S. by the ministerial Committee on the Central Capability.
2. To help Ministers develop a collective strategy to achieve their major objectives.
3. To assess the compatibility of government action, proposed action or non-action with this strategy.
4. To identify and to brief the cabinet and ministerial Committees on those selected policy issues about which decisions are necessary to achieve the Government's major objectives.
5. To help to select PAR programmes and to analyse the results⁵

³ John Mayne, a seconded official from the Ministry of Defence.

⁴ Ian Bancroft, who became later Cabinet Secretary and Head of the Civil Service.

⁵ NA, PRO, CAB 184/142, Note by the PM, CP(71)37, '(C.P.R.S.) – Terms of Reference', 14 February 1971.

Although the CPRS was created in the Cabinet Office and its advisory role referred to cabinet as a whole, the PM was accountable for it (Blackstone/Plowden 1988: 53-4; Baston/Seldon 1996: 67; Lee et al. 1998: 96). With its mandate, the CPRS was acceptable to both the Conservative advisers and the civil service: It provided an embodiment of corporate planning on which the external advisers had laid such stress and at the same time was oriented towards cabinet as a whole. In turn, the civil service was convinced that this mandate required the CPRS to correspond with its bureaucratic advice, as the PPS to the PM expressed in his note to the first CPRS director:

'You will know that the Prime Minister does not like receiving conflicting advice from a variety of courses: he takes the view that differences of interpretation and view should be resolved to the greatest possible extent before papers are put to him.'⁶

To circumvent countervailing activities by the CPRS, the Cabinet Secretary expressed also his concern to forward departmental papers send to the Cabinet Office to the CPRS. Likewise, the PPS to the PM argued that the CPRS director's request for these papers

'covers virtually the whole range of Government business, and we could not undertake to copy to the CPRS all the papers we receive on these subjects. In so far as papers are circulated for discussion by cabinet and Cabinet Committees, (...) the CPRS get copies of all of these'.⁷

In addition, the Cabinet Secretary requested that the CPRS papers are not circulated to all cabinet members, but this attempt to limit the CPRS's room to manoeuvre failed.⁸ However, he succeeded in avoiding that the CPRS could work on foreign and defence policy issues that he assumed to be ill-suited for outsiders (Hennessy et al. 1985: 26-7). Likewise, he successfully rejected the initial name of the new capability unit selected by PM Heath who wanted to call it the 'Think Tank' in order to demonstrate its major objectives. In contrast, the Cabinet Secretary found the 'U.S.-style term (...) too slick' (Kingdom 1991: 324) for the British civil service. Afterwards, the Cabinet Secretary justified his intervention:

'I remember scratching my head and sucking my pencil and thinking "What on earth are we going to call this thing?" (...). And then it seemed to me that if you took the words which we finally did adopt, they came as near as I could come to being accurate about it. It was central; it was concerned with policy; and it was concerned with reviewing policy centrally and it consisted of a staff, not a political unit.' (Trend, quoted by Hennessy et al. 1985: 7-8)

However, when the 'Central Policy Review Staff' came into official existence in February 1971,⁹ it was soon called the 'Think Tank' in Whitehall (Plowden 1976: 182). Several practitioners argued that this nickname was misleading and it should have been

'best considered as a hybrid organisation mid-way, as it were, between a think-tank *sensu stricto* and the kind of "brains thrust" or informal *ad hoc* group of "wise persons" that rulers have traditionally gathered around them' (emphasis original, Ashworth 1982: 2).

⁶ NA, PRO, CAB 184/144, PPS to the PM Robert Armstrong to the CPRS Director Victor Rothschild, 30 September 1972.

⁷ See FN 6.

⁸ NA, PRO, CAB 184/142, Cabinet Secretary Burke Trend to the PM, 'Work of the CPRS', MCA(71)1, 02 March 1971.

⁹ NA, PRO, CAB 184/142, Note by the PM, CP(71), 'cabinet: The Policy Review Staff (C.P.R.S.)', 03 February 1971.

3 The organisation of the CPRS

The organisation of the CPRS was in many respects unique to the traditional organisational principles within the Cabinet Office and Whitehall. The organisational structure is illustrated along five formal attributes, i.e. its (1) durability, (2) internal affiliation, (3) size, (4) fragmentation, and (5) expertness.

(1) The White Paper stressed no particular durability for the CPRS; neither did it limit its durability to PM Heath's tenure in office (Cmnd. 4506 [1970]). Nevertheless, the following general election in 1974 caused considerable unease among CPRS members whether the unit would continue its work after a government turnover (New Society, 01 March 1973, 474-5).¹⁰ The incoming Labour government in 1974 was suspicious of the CPRS as a 'Tory Trojan horse' (Blackstone/Plowden 1988: 210), but ultimately the new PM Wilson retained the CPRS – although he expressed his clear resentments with a personal minute to the CPRS director finishing with 'You and I, therefore, must work harder, especially you, as I have felt no evidence of your considerable weight since I took office' (Wilson, quoted by Rothschild 1984: 80). In contrast to many expectations, though, PM Thatcher kept the CPRS after the general election in 1979 – but ultimately abolished it in 1983.

(2) The CPRS was formally created as part of the Cabinet Office and thus subordinated as a line unit to the Cabinet Secretary. Despite this internal affiliation in the Cabinet Office, though, the PM was politically accountable and, in turn, the CPRS had regular and close access to the PM. Partly this status was reflected in its writing paper showing two lines as dispatcher: An upper line stating 'CPRS' and a lower line stating 'Cabinet Office'. After the general election in 1974, it was more strongly subordinated to the Cabinet Secretary, also symbolised with changing the order of the two lines on its writing paper (Blackstone/Plowden 1988: 63). The CPRS was accommodated in the attic rooms on the fourth floor of the Cabinet Office to support its physical proximity to both the PM and the Cabinet Secretary (Plowden 1981: 65; Blackstone/Plowden 1988: 213).

(3) PM Heath agreed with the first CPRS director that the new entity should be a rather small unit (Ashworth 1982: 4), as a CPRS member recalls:¹¹

'[T]he criterion of our day was how many people you could get seated round the table of the Director of the CPRS, (...) and it worked out at about 20. That does give a group of people who can discuss things, as I say, much earlier on, in the round, they can exchange views from a number of different points of view and can try to form some kind of collective view which is relevant to the views of the government as a whole' (Plowden, quoted by HC 756-ii [2006]: Q187).

As a result, the CPRS fluctuated between 15 and 18 members – with no firm trend towards further growth (Pollitt 1974: 377; Plowden 1981: 61; Ashworth 1982: 4; Campbell 1988: 263; see also Figure H.1 below). In addition, between twelve and 16 officials supported the CPRS.¹²

¹⁰ NA, PRO, CAB 150/61, CPRS director Victor Rothschild to Cabinet Secretary John Hunt, 11 March 1974.

¹¹ HC Deb 05 November 1970 vol 805 cc1261-2.

¹² NA, PRO, CAB 150/61, PM answering a supplementary question of MP Marcus Lipton, 10 December 1971.

(4) The fragmentation of the CPRS was very different to other entities in the Cabinet Office, albeit it also experienced some changes over time. The initial leadership structure comprised one director, who was ranked as Permanent Secretary in the Cabinet Office and thus technically subordinated to the Cabinet Secretary (Johnson/Steel 1972: 62), and two deputy directors ranked as deputy secretaries, responsible for overseeing the projects of the CPRS but not acting as distinct authority and command level. Instead all CPRS members communicated directly with the CPRS director and vice versa (IUK10; Blackstone/Plowden 1988: 31). After 1974, it became practice to recruit only one deputy director, except for the last two years of the CPRS's existence when a second deputy director acted as leader of a permanent 'specialised team' that was rather insulated from the rest of the CPRS (Blackstone/Plowden 1988: 32).

Internally, the CPRS was structured along flexible teams for distinct projects with varying composition over time. Although CPRS members were neither assigned to particular policy issues or policy areas nor to particular departments,¹³

'a few CPRS officials [were] known as 'Mister Short-Run' and others as 'Mister Long-Run', giving them special responsibility to keep from being entirely immersed in the lesser matters' (Pollitt 1974: 377).

Put together, the horizontal fragmentation was very low under PM Heath; the project-based internal organisation resulted in a very flat hierarchy. Similarly, the vertical fragmentation was comparatively lower than in other Whitehall entities, distinguishing two formal authority levels, i.e. the CPRS director and its members.

(5) The expertness of the CPRS can be regarded as the organisational feature that differed most from the rest of the Cabinet Office and Whitehall. Already for the CRPS director, the PM demanded a scientist in order to 'inject scientific thoughts' (James 1986: 424; see Table H.1):

'[The PM] did not think it would be appropriate to give the Central Capability to a political director: it should be a man with a gift for clear thinking and with qualities that would provide firm and active leadership and command the respect of those with whom the Central Capability would have to deal.'¹⁴

In contrast, the Cabinet Secretary strongly advocated a civil servant as director of the new entity.¹⁵ After discussions about different candidates, and the refuse of a Conservative sympathiser,¹⁶ Victor Rothschild was appointed as first CPRS director in October 1970, two weeks after the White Paper had been issued (Hennessy et al. 1985: 10).¹⁷ Rothschild was a former biologist, MI5 agent, chairman of the Agricultural Research Council, and had just retired as a director of scientific research at Shell (Rothschild 1977; Reeve 1994). His

¹³ HC Deb 07 December 1972 vol 847 c501W; HC Deb 12 June 1973 vol 857 cc1197-8; HC Deb 08 November 1973 vol 863 cc1165-6.

¹⁴ NA, PRO, CAB 184/182, Note of a meeting at 10 Downing Street, 'The Central Capability', 04 September 1970.

¹⁵ NA, PRO, CAB 184/182, Note of a meeting at 10 Downing Street, 'The Central Capability', 04 September 1970.

¹⁶ NA, PRO, CAB 184/182, Cabinet Secretary William Armstrong to the PM, 'The Central Capability', 17/09/1970; Head of PM's Private Office Robert Armstrong to the PM, 'Central Capability and Reorganisation', 18/09/1970; Note of a meeting at 10 Downing Street 05/10/1970; Letter of Prof. Hugh Ford to the PM, 12/10/1970.

¹⁷ HC Deb 29 October 1970 vol 805 c200W.

recruitment was rather surprising because he was a reported supporter of the Labour Party and personally unknown to the PM (Johnson/Steel 1972: FN 22). The two deputy heads were recruited by the new director, one from the OECD, but with previous working experience at the Treasury, the other from the Department of Trade and Industry (Smith/Stanyer 1971: 406).¹⁸

Table H.1 The leadership structure of the CPRS, 1971-1983

tenure	name	previous position	subsequent position
02/1971-09/1974	Victor Rothschild	Shell, Director of Research	N.M. Rothschild & Sons Ltd.
02/1971-06/1978	Richard Ross	OECD, Researcher	Vice-President of the European Investment Bank
04/1971-08/1972	Peter Carey	Department of Trade and Industry, line official	Morgan Grenfell & Co. Ltd., Chairman
09/1972-03/1974	John Burgh	Department of Employment, line official	British Council, Director General
10/1974-03/1980	Kenneth Berrill	HM Treasury, Chief Economist	Securities and Investment Board Ltd., Chairman
07/1978-05/1981	Gordon Downey	HM Treasury, line official	National Audit Office, Comptroller and Auditor General
04/1980-03/1982	Robin Ibbs	ICI (chemicals company), Director of Corporate Planning	ICI (chemicals company), Director; Head of PM's Efficiency Unit
06/1981-11/1982	Alan Bailey	HM Treasury, line official	Permanent Secretary, Department of Transport
06/1981-07/1983	David Green	ICI (chemicals company), Manager	n/a
04/1982-05/1983	John Sparrow	Morgan Grenfell & Co. Ltd., Manager	Morgan Grenfell & Co. Ltd., Director
01/1983-11/1982	John Caines	Department of Trade and Industry, line official	Overseas Development Administration, Permanent Secretary

Legend

Director Deputy Director

Note: Deputy directors are displayed under the CPRS director in office at time of their appointment.

Source: Own illustration; data compiled from Rothschild 1977; HC Deb 30 July 1982 vol 28 cc837-8W; HC 92 [1986]: Annex 2; Hennessy et al. 1985: Appendix C; Blackstone/Plowden 1988: 29-30, 57, Appendix 4.

¹⁸ NA, PRO, CAB 184/142, PPS to the PM Robert Armstrong, 'Note for the Record', 01 March 1971.

When Rothschild notified the PM in July 1974 that he plans to leave the CPRS in autumn 1974,¹⁹ the senior civil servants were more successful in influencing the recruitment of his successor and eventually Kenneth Berrill, a previous Chief Economist at the Treasury, became the second CPRS director.²⁰ The appointment of the Cabinet Secretary's candidate reflected also the new PM Wilson's perception of the CPRS as part of the civil service (Blackstone/Plowden 1988: 31). He was succeeded in April 1980 by Robin Ibbs who was recruited from a private chemicals company and thus corresponded to the new PM Thatcher's demand for more individuals with a private sector background in Whitehall. In April 1982, John Sparrow, a merchant banker from the City, who had advised PM Thatcher on financial policy for several years, was appointed as last CPRS director (Campbell 1983: 65). In comparison, three of the four CPRS directors had a private sector background, only one of them was a previous civil servant. In contrast, almost all deputy directors were departmental secondees from Whitehall.²¹

The expertness of the CPRS at the member level was strongly influenced by the first CPRS director who had – against Whitehall conventions – the authority to recruit the members of the new entity by himself (Plowden 1981: 64, 1991: 229).²² Under Rothschild, the CPRS was a highly attractive 'place to be' with a considerable 'amount of glamour' (IUK10, IUK22) – especially after its coverage in a Sunday newspaper (Sunday Times, 25 March 1973). Later, it became more difficult to recruit talented members – also because succeeding CPRS directors had less strong networks (Hennessy 1989: 228).

The professional background of the CPRS members included a mix of departmental secondees and members from the private and voluntary sector as well as from academia (see Figure H.1). Those CPRS members with a civil service background were mostly high flyers, nominated for secondment by their departments and finally approved by the CPRS director (Plowden 1981: 64; Sparrow, quoted by Richards 1997: 171). This characterisation can also be seen in their subsequent careers. Although the availability of reliable data limits a comprehensive study of all CPRS members, studies on British Permanent Secretaries show that the percentage of PermSecs with CPRS experience increased over time (Theakston 1996: 37). At the end of their stay, departmental secondees returned to their parent departments, resulting in a less competitive and collaborative working atmosphere (Ashworth 1982: 4, James 1986: 424). Most departmental secondees came from the Treasury, the Ministry of Defence, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, and the Department for Health and Social Services. Although one may interpret this as a deliberate strategy to include particular Whitehall departments, it rather reflects the major policy areas of the CPRS's work (IUK10; see below). Besides, the many secondments from the Treasury facilitated CPRS's contacts with this crucial department and the Ministry of Defence was considered as highly experienced in planning and strategy (IUK10). The possible danger that seconded officials could act as 'spies' was heavily rejected by the first CPRS director:

¹⁹ NA, PRO, CAB 150/61, Cabinet Office Note by J Moss, ON(74)49, 'Head of the Central Policy Review Staff, 23 July 1974.

²⁰ see FN 19.

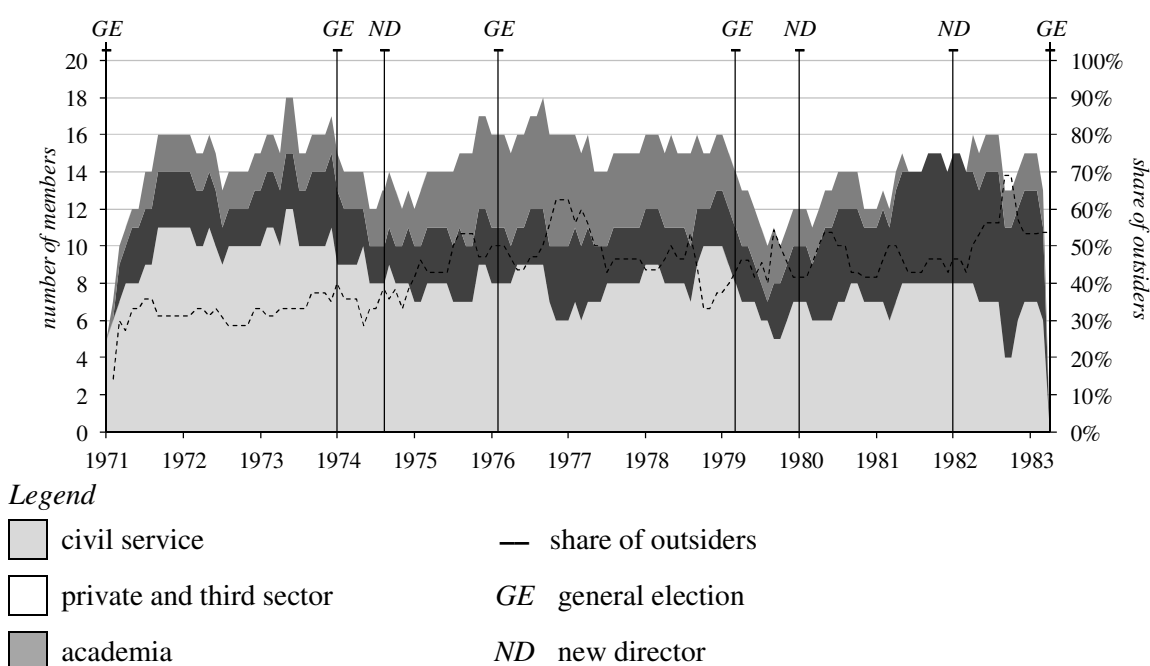
²¹ The single exception was deputy head during the early 1980s, but he led a specialised team and thus was not involved in other working areas of CPRS.

²² HC Deb 05 November 1970 vol 805 cc1261-2.

'Burke [the Cabinet Secretary, JF] injected into the Tank Dick Ross, the distinguished economist, and two young, top-class civil servants (...). It never passed through our minds, though, that any of these had been planted in the Tank for more Byzantine or Smiley-esque reasons. Had that been the case, some of us knew a bit about turning people round, and round.' (Rothschild 1984: 81)

The CPRS members from the private sector came mostly from oil companies and banks, those from the third sector mostly from think tanks (Blackstone/Plowden 1988: 29). The strong recruitment of outsiders was also thought to ensure that the CPRS is staffed with highly qualified staff – and in the unlikely case that the departments send inadequate candidates the CPRS would be able to perform its functions in a high qualitative manner (Plowden 1976: 183; Pollitt 1980: 88).

Figure H.1 The size and composition of the CPRS, 1971-1983



Source: Own illustration, information compiled from Hennessy et al. 1985: Appendix C; Blackstone/Plowden 1988: Appendix 4.

The last group of CPRS members with an academic background was mostly recruited from 'Oxbridge' universities and the LSE. Among them, economists dominated, but at different times also sociologists, political scientists, and a biologist worked in the CPRS (Bulmer 1988: 34). Whereas departmental secondees kept their permanent civil service status, CPRS members recruited from outside were hired as 'temporary civil servants' in order to underline that they 'would loyally and zealously advise and serve whatever Ministers might be set over them' (Blackstone/Plowden 1988: 31, IUK10). Although some external members had an open political affiliation (Bulmer 1988: 35), CPRS members were generally selected because of their professional expertise rather than their partisan sympathy (IUK01) – also to reduce the consciousness of Whitehall officials (Blackstone/Plowden 1988: 215, Plowden 1991: 229):

[T]he political views of members of the CPRS are less important than many politicians imagine. Those of the first CPRS were largely unknown, if only because its members were too

busy and committed to their work to express them. It was known, however, that one member was a Conservative, whereas another was Labour. Others had seen too much of Whitehall and Westminster to be anything but neutral and neutered. Their personal idiosyncrasies were irrelevant to the work in hand' (Rothschild, quoted by Hennessy et al. 1985: 107).

Moreover, this mix of in- and outsiders changed over time, particularly after general elections with a government turnover. Hence, members from the private sector were more prominent under PM Heath and PM Thatcher, whereas academics had the highest proportion under PM Callaghan.

All CPRS members had university qualifications, also post-graduate degrees, mostly in economics or business management, 'and away from the social sciences which were arguably under represented' (Pollitt 1974: 376-7). As a result, the educational background of CPRS members was less heterogeneous, but different disciplinary backgrounds resulted only very rarely in serious frictions or misunderstandings (Blackstone/Plowden 1988: 207). More importantly, it enabled the CPRS to act as 'generalists willing to tackle an extraordinarily wide range of policy issues' (Bulmer 1988: 34; Blackstone 2007).

Under PM Heath, the tenure across CPRS members varied (see Table H.2). On average, departmental officials were seconded for approx. two and a half years, members from the private sector left already after approx. two years, and members from academia had the longest tenure of on average more than three years. Although subsequent legislative terms are beyond the scope of this case study, the average tenure of outsiders from the private sector was apparently much longer under PM Heath than afterwards.

Table H.2 The tenure of CPRS members (in months), 1970-1983

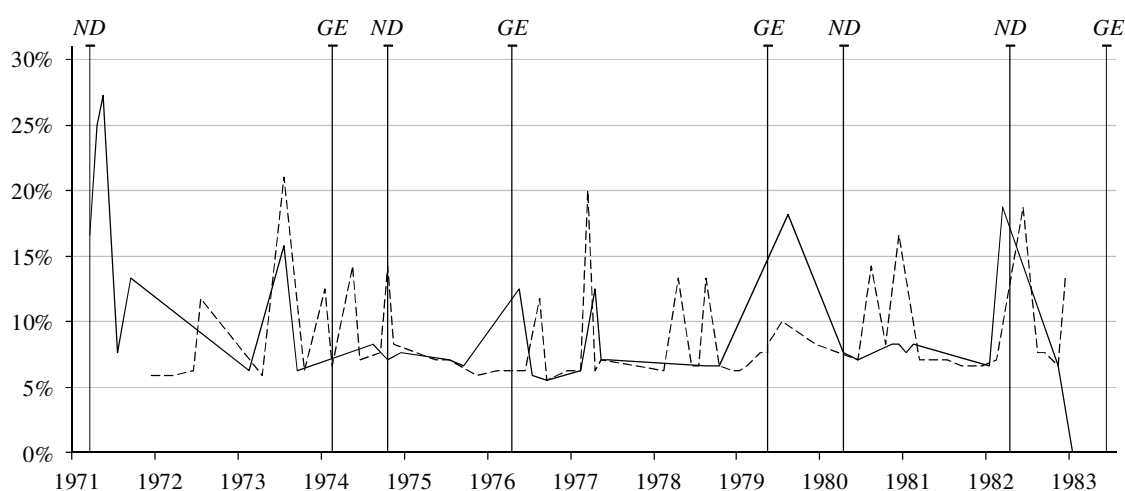
	PM Heath (1970-74)	PM Wilson II (1974-76)	PM Callaghan (1976-79)	PM Thatcher I (1979-83)	mean
civil service	29.9	26.1	24.4	18.4	24.7
outsiders	26.8	8.5	20.7	18.4	18.6
academia	37.9	30.4	31.7	13.0	28.3
<i>mean</i>	<i>31.5</i>	<i>21.7</i>	<i>25.6</i>	<i>16.6</i>	<i>23.8</i>

Note: Numbers display all first appointments of CPRS members.

Source: Own illustration, information compiled from Hennessy et al. 1985: Appendix C; Blackstone/Plowden 1988: Appendix B.

Moreover, a closer analysis of the turnover of CPRS members shows that new recruitments did not compensate for leaving CPRS members (see Figure H.2). Instead, most recruiting decisions were made according to functional needs – but also to keep the mix of experienced CPRS members and new arrivals (IUK01). Compared to the turnover under subsequent PMs, the members of the CPRS under PM Heath stayed rather long. Furthermore, most CPRS members employed during this period did not replace leaving members – which reflects the initial stage of a new organisation growing in size, but also the general interest of line departments to second officials into the new unit (IUK01).

Figure H.2 The turnover of CPRS members, 1971-1983

*Legend*

— influx (related to total size) *GE* general election
 -- exit (related to total size) *ND* new director

Note: Only months with turnover are included, all others are ignored.

Source: Own illustration, data compiled from Hennessy et al. 1985: Appendix C; Blackstone/Plowden 1988: Appendix 4.

The modus operandi of the CPRS was widely perceived as very unusual for the Whitehall bureaucracy (The Times, 21 January 1972: 19). The CPRS director and his deputies enjoyed unrestricted access to any cabinet committee they wished to attend – although there is no evidence on how often this privilege was used (Pollitt 1974: 380; Campbell 1983: 65; James 1986: 429; Bulmer 1988: 35; Theakston 1996: 95). Besides, the CPRS director attended the 'future business meeting' every Friday morning, chaired by the Cabinet Secretary with all deputy secretaries (Campbell 1983: 60). More importantly, he met the Cabinet Secretary every Monday morning for a 'prayer meeting' in order to discuss the forthcoming week's cabinet business (Hennessy 1989: 226). Subsequently, the whole CPRS team met to a 'no-holds-barred' brainstorming session to discuss the agenda (Pollitt 1974: 377; Hennessy et al. 1985: 16; James 1986: 425). These meetings became soon famous and provoked jealousy in Whitehall; eventually they were also held in Whitehall departments and initiated a tradition in the British civil service (Pollitt 1974: 377; James 1986: 425). Yet, the CPRS was not generally perceived as an innovative idea broker by Whitehall officials, its portrayal in a Sunday colour newspaper (Sunday Times, 25 March 1973) provoked 'hackles all over Whitehall' (Plowden 1981: 80) because Whitehall civil servants were not accustomed to talk with the press about their work or their relations with colleagues. In contrast, the CPRS perceived its media coverage as highly important, especially in its first years (Hennessy et al. 1985: 11), as the director stressed in a circular:

'While everyone is, I think, agreed that it is useful for the public to have a correct impression of what the CPRS does (though not in detail) and what its constitutional position is, it is difficult to guarantee that this correct impression will be put across by the journalists' (Rothschild, quoted by Blackstone/Plowden 1988: 70).

Due to the internal project organisation, CPRS members worked unsupervised and rather autonomous, which troubled some departmental secondees (Blackstone/Plowden 1988: 31). Moreover, they complained that a flexible composition and changing teams limited their possibilities to predict the preferences of cabinet ministers in comparison to officials servicing in Whitehall departments (Pollitt 1974: 384). Yet, these organisational principles were not attuned to inject more 'Whitehall' into the CPRS (IUK01). In addition, all outgoing correspondence and draft memoranda were circulated in the 'float' that automatically crossed the desks of all CPRS members – enabling them 'to comment on others' briefs when they are able to add a dimension to the issue that has been overlooked or not adequately stated' (Campbell 1983: 65). As a consequence of its organisation and working style, the CPRS developed a strong *esprit du corps* (IUK01).

In sum, the organisation of the CPRS under PM Heath can be regarded as unconventional compared to the organisation principles in Whitehall. Similar to most bureaucratic entities, it was created with an infinite *ex ante* durability and survived PM Heath's legislative term but also subsequent PMs until it was abolished by PM Thatcher in 1983. It was formally affiliated to and located in the Cabinet Office, but unlike other parts of the Cabinet Office it reported directly to the PM. Whereas its size was medium, its horizontal fragmentation was comparatively lower than other bureaucratic entities, i.e. the director had a large span of control because his deputies did not act as heads of distinct formal branches. In turn, its vertical fragmentation was also lower than other Whitehall entities. Particularly the expertness of the CPRS can be regarded as non-conforming to bureaucratic convention: The director was recruited from the private sector and the members comprised departmental secondees and outsiders from various backgrounds. The average tenure and slow turnover secured the CPRS's organisational memory and supported together with its unconventional *modus operandi* a strong *esprit du corps* among CPRS members to act in a rather unique advisory arrangement.

4 The CPRS as agent in institutional politics: 'Grit in the machine'²³

The White Paper announcing the establishment of the CPRS provided a rather vague catalogue of CPRS's functions, as the first CPRS director revealed:

I had no idea what it was intended to be or do in spite of the characteristically sonorous prose in which its future activities were described in the inevitable White Paper. Nor did anyone else seem to have much idea, such phrases as "long-term strategy", "trans-departmental problems", "not the rate of exchange", or "not the Office of the White House" being bandied round' (Rothschild 1984: 81).

As a consequence, he conducted a 'milk-round of cabinet ministers' (Hennessy et al. 1985: 13) in order to explore what they thought the CPRS should work upon (IUK01; Blackstone/Plowden 1988: 58).²⁴ Likewise, he invited the newly recruited CPRS members to come up with ideas about the CPRS's tasks (Lee 1974: 177; Hennessy et al. 1985: 15). After six months, the CPRS's *raison d'être* was fixed: To support government strategy and offer 'forward thinking' to the cabinet (The Times, 02 July 1983: 18; Hennessy et al.

²³ (Campbell 1983: 63).

²⁴ NA, PRO, CAB 184/142, Cabinet Secretary Burke Trend to the PM, 'Central Policy Review Staff', 25 November 1970.

1985: 14; Kavanagh/Seldon 1999: 25; IUK01, IUK22). As such, it was clearly supposed to depart from the bureaucratic advice provided by Whitehall departments.

Corresponding to its vague initial mandate, a debate arose about its position in central government. Although the White Paper clearly referred to the cabinet as its client, several cabinet ministers as well as the civil service feared that the CPRS may act as an embryonic Prime Minister's Department – or at least as a first step towards establishing one. The impression of the CPRS working primarily for the PM was triggered by the PM's strong support for the new unit and his advisers' conceptual work during opposition, but also by the CPRS director's direct access to the PM, who enjoyed also a very rare privilege:

[W]hereas minutes from the mightiest departmental Ministers reach the Prime Minister's desk with comments and even a recommended response attached by the cabinet secretariat, Lord Rothschild's letters could be – and often were – "for your eyes only" (Bruce-Gardyne 1974: 136).

Particularly Treasury officials were 'scared stiff' (Heclo/Wildavsky 1974: 309) that the CPRS could strengthen the PM because the Chancellor of the Exchequer was generally perceived as weak (Hennessy 2000c: 352). However, the first CPRS director always insisted to work for the cabinet as a whole:

'We are not the Prime Minister's Men, we are the cabinet's men, but you tend to have more discussion with the chairman of a committee than you do with its individual members. So although I would be very sad if I did not have access to the Prime Minister – when he's not too busy – it is rather on that relationship than on a personal advisory basis' (Rothschild, quoted by Sunday Times, 25 March 1973: 49).

Also CPRS members recognised the unit's 'kind of informal delegated authority on behalf of some single chief executive' but were likewise well aware that their 'activities must be broadly acceptable to members of the cabinet' (Plowden 1974: 25-6). Its formal affiliation to the Cabinet Office supported this understanding of the cabinet as major client (Lee 1974: 175; Pollitt 1980: 88; Rose 1980: 31). As a consequence, CPRS's activities were primarily oriented towards cabinet and its committees, i.e. it (1) created and managed an 'early warning system', (2) educated cabinet ministers in governmental strategy, (3) prepared 'collective briefs' and (4) reports for cabinet and its committees, and (5) participated in the newly introduced programme analysis and review scheme.

4.1 The CPRS as 'would-be cabinet gadfly':²⁵ The Early Warning System

One of the first issues that the CPRS was assigned to work upon was the creation and management of an 'Early Warning System' (EWS). In the CPRS director's words, the EWS was supposed to address

[e]vents or developments within a department's responsibility which, if they occurred, could either affect the collective strategy of the Government or be a source of major embarrassment to the Government and which would require urgent collective decisions at cabinet level. (...) The object must, I think, be to achieve the maximum effect with minimum labour.²⁶

²⁵ (Rose 1980: 31).

²⁶ NA, PRO, PREM 15/927, CPRS Director Rothschild to the PM, 'Review of government strategy by CPRS: Meetings of ministers to discuss strategy in economic and foreign affairs; part 3', 18 July 1972.

This forecasting of future problems for cabinet focused on issues coming up 'in six months or one year's time' in order to enable the formulation of a collective opinion (IUK01). As such, the EWS served a twofold purpose: cabinet members received advance notice of future political developments and the CPRS got informed on what it might be working on in the near future. The first early warning system exercise was run in August 1971 by a team of three CPRS members, followed by a second exercise in February 1972, and a last one in July 1972. In general,

'Ministers didn't like revealing to their colleagues or to cabinet as a whole those issues that might be a problem in the future. They said "This is not a problem (...) we don't want to talk about it now because we hope it won't happen." They were extremely reluctant to share such issues around the table.' (IUK01)

Thus, most departments submitted to the EWS information on future policies that were *controllable* for the government. In contrast, they were rather reluctant to predict upcoming problems they may not be capable of. Particularly the Treasury and the Department of Education and Science under Secretary of State Margaret Thatcher rejected to participate in the EWS exercise (Davis 2007: 121-2). The Treasury feared that the EWS memoranda might be too sensitive to be circulated to all cabinet members and argued that a leaked EWS memorandum may provoke exactly those dynamics that the whole exercise tries to prevent, e.g. on the financial markets (IUK10). Thus, the first EWS report lacked relevant economic data. The report was divided into various sections covering public expenditure, foreign affairs and defence, prices, industrial relations, pay claims, industrial policy, the machinery of government, home affairs, and other items.²⁷ Its covering note stated that

'[t]he problem has, of course, been to devise a net which will catch only fish of the right size. The CPRS does not expect, at this first attempt, to have got the size of the mesh exactly right. It will no doubt need altering in the light of experience' (quoted by Davis 2007: 121).

However, the CPRS members agreed that the first early warning schedule had, in retrospect, been unsuccessful because it lacked detailed economic data, contained too much speculation on too many topics that may never cause a problem, and provided little or no advice on future action – and was thus less useful to encourage ministers to think ahead (Blackstone/Plowden 1988: 40; Davis 2007: 122-3). The Treasury, though, was still resolute in declining the provision of sensitive information, unless an explicit instruction would be given by the PM *and* the Chancellor of the Exchequer. In November 1971, the two responsible CPRS members negotiated with the PermSec to the Treasury – resulting in the compromise that future draft EWS memoranda would be given to the Treasury for vetting *before* they were distributed to all other departments (Davis 2007: 123). Although the second and third EWS report were more focused, their impact was as limited as the first EWS because they lacked any guidance on action to be taken – as Douglas Hurd, then the PM's Political Secretary, commented: 'Early warning systems are no good if the doctrine is you don't take any action' (quoted by Davis 2007: 123; James 1986: 428). Ultimately, the CPRS terminated this activity after three rounds in autumn 1972 (Blackstone/Plowden 1988: 41).

²⁷ As such, the EWS memorandum somewhat neglected the Cabinet Secretary's concern that the CPRS should avoid foreign and defence policy.

4.2 The CPRS teaching 'the art of running Britain'²⁸

The CPRS organised twice a year a meeting, usually at Chequers, to present an assessment of the cabinet's overall progress and inform about contradictions in government strategy (The Times, 08 October 1971: 2; Pollitt 1974: 379; Plowden 1981: 65). The general aim of these 'headmaster's reports' (Rothschild 1977: 117) was to support cabinet ministers

'to influence the agenda, to elicit what is on their minds and to structure the issues for discussion and, more problematically, to infer what ought to be on their minds and persuade them that they should discuss it' (Blackstone/Plowden 1988: 195)

All strategy meetings were divided into three parts: economic policy, labour market policy, and social policy.²⁹ Occasionally, also other issues were addressed, except defence and foreign affairs issues because the CPRS lacked access to confidential information in these areas (Beloff 1977; Blackstone/Plowden 1988: 39; Davis 2007: 125). The CPRS prepared papers to these policy areas and presented charts in order to illustrate where current government policies were heading and where the CPRS thought the government actually wanted to be. The presentations were often held by younger CPRS members, followed by its director who 'inserted the flashies' (Hennessy 1989: 229; MacShane 2006: 121).³⁰ The meetings included different participants:

'We had a meeting of the cabinet for the day, we had a meeting of the second level, the Ministers of State, and we had a meeting of the Parliamentary Secretaries. I presided all three of them when possible – certainly two of them. And Victor Rothschild and his people came and made their presentation. (...) You could see the different way in which they saw the problems and the solutions which were being put forward.' (Heath, quoted in Hennessy/Coates 1991: 12-3)

In neither case it was intended to take concrete decisions; on the contrary, the meetings were planned as occasions 'at which ministers could for once stand back and take stock' (Plowden 1974: 25; DSMS 1973: 26; Pollitt 1980: 91). The key follow-up of these meetings were papers on strategy that the CPRS submitted afterwards to cabinet (James 1986: 425). Particularly the PM showed a 'surprising willingness to be told unwelcome things' (Campbell 1983: 319):

'They didn't try to say, "This is what you ought to be doing". What they said was, "You put this in your manifesto and produced policies which you say are going to achieve those aims; very well, we will tell you where these policies have got in relation to your original aims."' (Heath, quoted by Hennessy/Coates 1991: 13)

As such, the strategy meetings at Chequers referred also to the accomplishment of the Conservative Party's manifesto although the CPRS generally insisted 'on a formal distinction between Tory strategy and post-manifesto Government strategy' (Sunday Times, 25 March 1973: 49).

The strategy meetings were followed up by ministers inside their departments. Simultaneously, they enabled the CPRS to frame future policy decisions (Plowden 1991: 230). Correspondingly, the first CPRS director regarded these strategy sessions as

²⁸ (The Times, 17 December 1971: 19).

²⁹ NA, PRO, CAB 129/161/17, Memorandum by the CPRS to cabinet, CP(72)17, 'cabinet: Government Strategy', 11 February 1972.

³⁰ To ensure ministers' attention during presentations, Rothschild also used tricks like including among economic indicators a slide of 'a nubile girl on a sun lounger in the South of France' (Reeve 1994: 376).

'by far the most important thing we're told to [do]' (Rothschild, quoted by *The Listener*, 28 December 1972: 880).

Several cabinet ministers felt uncomfortable with being lectured by the CPRS and especially that the CPRS told them in front of their cabinet colleagues that their departmental policies corresponded not with their own statements (Plowden 1974: 25; Blackstone/Plowden 1988: 214). After two years, cabinet ministers started to ignore to follow-up these strategic meetings (Isserlis 1984: 23-4; Campbell 1988: 263).

Likewise, the senior civil service rejected from the beginning that the CPRS should prepare such strategy meetings, e.g. the Head of the Civil Service argued that the government should not 'waste the time of the CPRS on this primarily political task'³¹ (see also Blackstone/Plowden 1988: 215; Davis 2007: 125). As such, strategy meetings organised by the CPRS were perceived by senior civil servants as

'heretical in that the only people at the centre normally licensed to discuss these matters are the Prime Minister and the principal official adviser, the Cabinet Secretary. Decisions and discussion of process and structure are reserved to them for the very practical reason that changes in these are powerful political tools, to be pragmatically as the Prime Minister wishes in manipulating his colleagues' (Blackstone/Plowden 1988: 198).

A public speech by the CPRS director in September 1973 stating that Britain was not realising how bad its future will become unless it is not changing its economic policy resulted in a severe row with the PM and he was officially rebuked by the Head of the Civil Service (Rothschild 1977: 89-96; Blackstone/Plowden 1988: 54). More importantly, the next scheduled strategy meeting was cancelled (MacShane 2006: 123). Partly, though, this reaction of the PM was instigated by senior civil servants resenting the CPRS director's influence and his neglect of Whitehall conventions (Plowden 1981: 79). Afterwards, no alternative strategy meeting was scheduled and when PM Wilson returned to office in March 1974 he stopped the strategy meetings altogether (Plowden 1981: 64; Shepherd 1983: 34). In retrospect, many observers agree that the speech marked the beginning of a general 'diminution in the Staff's status within Whitehall' (Pollitt 1984: 114; MacShane 2006: 12).

4.3 The CPRS providing a 'second opinion':³² Collective briefs

To affect also the immediate concerns of cabinet, the CPRS prepared 'collective briefs'. Traditionally, the Cabinet Secretariats provide briefs to prepare cabinet and its committees. However, these briefs lack a detailed illustration of the content of cabinet ministers' proposals that, in turn, were only accessed by cabinet ministers if they obtained 'pirated briefs' through their private offices (Pliatzky 1982: 101).³³ The collective briefs prepared by the CPRS filled this information gap (James 1986: 429). They outlined the issue for unconcerned cabinet ministers, highlighted side-effects and drawbacks that the sponsoring ministry might have played down, and related the proposal to the government's overall objectives (Plowden 1974: 25; James 1986: 425-6). As such, the CPRS's collective briefs

³¹ NA, PRO, PREM 15/421, Robert Armstrong to Peter Gregson, 'Prime Minister asked departments for notes on main issues of their departmental policies requiring decisions within next few months: comparison of government achievements with manifesto promises', 28 November 1970.

³² (DSMS 1973: 28).

³³ Occasionally, the cabinet secretariats draw on CPRS's expertise, particularly in scientific and technological matters, to prepare these traditional briefs (Ashworth 1982: 7).

'outshine[d] the others by presenting to Ministers appealing options that have been excluded from more conventional briefs' (Campbell 1983: 85; Plowden 1981: 66):

'The emphasis was placed on the need to brief each cabinet minister about matters which were *not* the concern of his or her department but on which the cabinet was expected to take decisions. The idea was that as the cabinet was collectively responsible for such decisions, it might be a good thing for cabinet ministers to know a little about the subjects on which agreement or disagreement was sought.' (emphasis original, Rothschild 1984: 82)

Very soon, collective briefs were regarded among CPRS members as 'the most interesting of the CPRS activities' because they provided 'scope for a large number of very different sorts of intervention in the daily business of Government' (Plowden 1973: 3). Most notably, the preparation of collective briefs required close interactions with Whitehall departments in order to obtain necessary information (Plowden 1981: 81; James 1986: 434; Blackstone/Plowden 1988: 65). At the CPRS, a 'project team' of approx. three members was set up to supervise the preparation of a collective brief and interact with the responsible Whitehall departments at the earliest possible stage.³⁴ The departmental secondees in the CPRS facilitated these relationships, but the sensitivity of their task, e.g. a collective brief criticising the cabinet minister's current viewpoint, somewhat limited harmonious interactions – albeit the CPRS was well aware how crucial cooperative relationships with Whitehall departments are:

'In the closed world of Whitehall, knowledge of the system, its conventions, and its language (in the most literal as well as figurative sense) are invaluable aids to understanding and operating effectively within it. Since allies cannot usually be sought outside the system, they must be found within it; it follows that the conciliatory approach is often more effective than the abrasive, the oblique than the frontal.' (Plowden 1981: 81)

The briefs were often written in 'pithy English' (Wilson 2006: 163) and comprised approx. half a page, filled with questions on the matter that might be asked to the responsible Minister by his colleagues (Rothschild 1984: 82; Plowden 1991: 231-2; Hennessy 1989: 222; 2000c: 340). Very often, these briefs were presented as follows:

'Here is the Department of X backtracking on what you Ministers agreed last year should be your policy in the energy field, or the education field. You will want to ask the Secretary of State for X why he is doing this and whether he should not do something that is more compatible with what we think, you think, the strategy is' (Plowden, HC 123-ii [2007]: Q184).

Occasionally, also the CPRS preferred to include 'some factual information omitted from the departmental papers circulated' and to 'raise criticisms about departmental papers' instead of presenting a separate collective brief (Blackstone/Plowden 1988: 46).

The PM benefitted most from collective briefs because he lacked any departmental support to assess the proposals of his cabinet colleagues and was likewise interested to gain information freed from departmental biases (Rose 1980: 31):

'This meant that when Ministers put in papers, CPRS could see them and could then take them, point out where they were irreconcilable and where they were reconcilable and for a judgment very often, particularly on statistical questions, as to which figures were justifiable. This, coming in the form of a neutral paper from CPRS, gave not only the

³⁴ NA, PRO, CAB 129/161/17, CPRS Deputy Director Peter Carey to the CPRS, 'Collective Briefing', 22 and 24 August 1972.

Ministers concerned directly with their papers but the rest of the cabinet the opportunity of seeing an analysis and an attempt at reconciliation over particular papers put in by members of the cabinet' (Heath, quoted by HC 535-ii [1977]: Q1875).

But the PM was also constrained in taking a case that was based upon a CPRS collective brief to cabinet – because then his authority would solely rest on the strength of the CPRS's judgement (Rose 1980: 31). In contrast to the PM, cabinet ministers showed mixed reactions to collective briefs. Some ministers with a strong interest in strategic and inter-departmental matters, especially those chairing cabinet committees or holding senior party offices, welcomed collective briefs and their additional information on departmental proposals (James 1986: 429). Most cabinet ministers, however, accepted collective briefs only as long as they were concerned with other cabinet ministers' policies (IUK01; Hennessy et al. 1985: 22). In turn, cabinet ministers employed a tactic to avoid collective briefs on their own portfolio, called by CPRS members 'the bounce':

'The advocate of a particular course of action will first delay his advocacy till the moment when, he claims, a decision must be taken at once and without reflection if disaster is to be avoided. He will secondly delay revealing the terms of his argument until so close to the moment of decision that his opponents have no time to develop a counter-case' (Blackstone/Plowden 1988: 44).

Thus, cabinet ministers sent their papers to the Cabinet Office for distribution right before the 48-hours deadline – which exacerbated the preparation of collective briefs (Blackstone/Plowden 1988: 44). One response of the CPRS to counter such tactics was to 'side-step the formal process altogether' (ibid.: 45) and advise the chairmen or some members of cabinet committees bilaterally – at the expense that the CPRS's contribution was less visible and it was not servicing cabinet as a whole (Blackstone/Plowden 1988: 45). However, even if cabinet ministers welcomed collective briefs, they were more likely to accept advice avoiding political difficulties, i.e. 'ministers preferred to be advised to take the soft option' (James 1986: 429). In turn, the CPRS was in a constant dilemma whether it should be

'concerned primarily to score points for the CPRS in a kind of inter-ministerial quiz game or genuinely to improve the quality of final decisions. (...) [The former] may be best done by not trying too hard to influence departments' dispositions in the earlier stages, but holding our fire till they have got themselves into an impossibly exposed position, and then opening up with our most powerful weapons e.g. a minute to the Prime Minister or a scathing intervention at a ministerial committee, raising difficult questions. (...) If we want to get a better decision, without necessarily ourselves getting the maximum credit for our contribution, we want to ask our difficult questions in time for officials and Ministers either to produce answers or to adjust their proposals without losing face.'³⁵

The Cabinet Office was particularly annoyed by the collective briefs: It perceived its role as 'to oil the wheels of government', smoothing away conflicts between executive actors and processing decisions as painlessly as possible – whereas in contrast the collective briefs tended to question, challenge, and raise conflicts (IUK10; Campbell 1983: 63; James 1986: 434). Accordingly, the Cabinet Secretary complained that

³⁵ NA, PRO, CAB 129/161/17, CPRS member William Plowden to CPRS Deputy Director Peter Carey, 'Injecting the CPRS viewpoint', 18 April 1972.

[t]he CPRS had been a protagonist at cabinet and at Cabinet Committees and this has inevitably weakened it. (...) When the CPRS became a protagonist it tended to become the fifth wheel of the coach and did not help the Prime Minister to resolve the conflict.³⁶

Yet, the CPRS director replied that he is 'not convinced that the CPRS should refrain from being a protagonist, that is to say express opinions and make recommendations'.³⁷ In addition, the Cabinet Secretary was in permanent caution that the CPRS focused its collective briefs on long-term issues and avoided to get 'involved in some short-term issues or "fire-fighting"'.³⁸ However, the CPRS director ensured that several CPRS briefs addressed also short-term issues, reasoning that

[t]he short term work has, apart from any other considerations, an important role in maintaining the morale, enthusiasm and interest of the members of the CPRS. They do not want, as some Permanent Secretaries have proposed, to be wholly engaged in long term work (as remote from Whitehall as possible) (...). They don't want to be a dustbin in which hopeless issues are deposited. They want to be part of the hurly-burly of Whitehall, to participate in the solution of immediate problems and, in fact, to be wanted now' (Rothschild, quoted by Hennessy et al. 1985: 105-6).

The Treasury perceived the CPRS and its collective briefs as a device for the PM to counteract the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Dell 1996: 376-7; Davis 2007). Accordingly, the Treasury was worried about the CPRS's remit to provide advice to the cabinet:

'The Treasury, which has always seen itself and still sees itself as a central department, didn't like another central department; [the CPRS, JF] was a challenge to its authority' (Wass, quoted by HC 535-ii [1977]: Q12)

Particularly in macroeconomics, the CPRS 'jogged the Treasury's elbow on a number of occasions' (Pliatzky 1982: 107) and its collective briefs advocated policy directions before they became accepted in the Treasury:

'The CPRS had concentrated on tactics rather than strategy and this had caused friction with the Treasury (...). There was trouble between the CPRS and the Chancellor, which had produced an unconstructive reaction on both sides, because the CPRS interfered with the special responsibilities of the Chancellor, and hence called those responsibilities into question.'³⁹

Especially the Treasury officials tried to counteract the CPRS in inter-departmental meetings in order to diminish its influence (IUK01):

'A favourite trick of Treasury officials was to fix one with a baleful glare and ask, "Has the CPRS a view?" If you said "No" you sounded feeble. If "Yes, what was it, and how did it leave options open?"' (CPRS member, quoted by Blackwell/Plowden 1988: 47)

However, the CPRS's macroeconomic activities were not always at odds with the Treasury (Radcliffe 1991: 165): The Chancellor of the Exchequer welcomed the CPRS's reminders to cabinet of the dangers of rising inflation (James 1986: 436). Moreover, the CPRS avoided issues regarding the overall budget as key remit of the Treasury and engaged only on allocation issues when it was confident that its suggestions are firmly based in policy (DSMS 1973: 29).

³⁶ NA, PRO, CAB 184/142, Notes of Meeting of Permanent Secretaries to discuss CPRS, 15 May 1972.

³⁷ See FN 36.

³⁸ NA, PRO, CAB 184/142, Cabinet Secretary Burke Trend to PPS to the PM Robert Armstrong, 26 February 1971.

³⁹ See FN 36.

In general, the CPRS's collective briefs were often balancing on 'a tight-rope between keeping the goodwill of departments and challenging conventional departmental wisdom' (DSMS 1973: 29; James 1986: 436; Willetts 1987; Radcliffe 1991: 164). On the one hand, departmental officials perceived the general benefit of the CPRS 'to improve policy, not score points off officials' (James 1986: 436). Some departmental officials found collective briefs also 'a convenient way to further their views to ministers, and even came to welcome CPRS intervention at cabinet level' (Rothschild, quoted by *The Times*, 02 July 1983: 8). Moreover, these briefs provided them with immediate support in their day-to-day inter-departmental conflicts, particularly to defend policies and programmes against Treasury's cheeseparing (James 1986: 436). On the other hand, civil servants could also react 'allergic' to briefs on issues concerning their own department (Ashworth 1982: 7). Most often, they complained that the brief was either unoriginal or unacceptably radical, or impracticable in terms of cost, political support, etc. (Blackstone/Plowden 1988: 195). As a departmental official opined:

[CPRS director Rothschild, JF] was absolutely fearless and not tied down by orthodoxy. His great virtue was the way he would upset Ted Heath by telling him the truth. (...) When they [the CPRS, JF] turned their attention to prisons it was not very good. It seemed to us that their paper rehearsed the problems, which were only too familiar to us, without being very helpful.' (Home Office official, quoted by Hennessy et al. 1985: 23)

Besides, departmental officials disliked collective briefs because they increased their own workload: Previously, departmental officials could insert in the papers preparing their Minister for a cabinet or cabinet committee meeting a note such as 'This item is of no interest to you' (observed by Rothschild 1984: 82). With the introduction of collective briefs, cabinet ministers were better informed on other departments' proposals – and their demands to get such information from their own departmental officials increased (IUK10).

Some CPRS collective briefs also influenced departmental teams preparing White Papers. These departmental officials acknowledged the CPRS's view because they expected the final draft to be sent to cabinet – where the CPRS would assess it via a collective brief (IUK01). When departments rejected an inclusion of the CPRS, and the CPRS thought this policy is of particular importance to cabinet as a whole, i.e. when it was

'unhappy about the way in which the department's thinking is developing, it [could] report back informally to the Prime Minister or it [could] report to other Ministers. (...) This is just to alert them to things that might be wrong in the final product. And then of course you can intervene in the final product, you can brief the Prime Minister that this White Paper must be redrafted' (IUK01).

Nevertheless, the CPRS turned often to the planning or research units in Whitehall departments, assuming that these units are well trained and have a good overview on their departments, partly also because these were often responsible to advice ministers and justify policies which, in turn, strengthened their perception of the CPRS as an ally in conflicts with other departments, especially the Treasury (Blackstone/Plowden 1988: 65). Moreover, these units were often staffed with social scientists and economists who could 'see when a policy went wrong and could say "This doesn't make sense" – and thus were more similar to the CPRS's own perspective' (IUK10).

Although it is difficult to assess the impact of collective briefs, many observers and scholars agree that they could have rather wide-ranging implications for departmental policies (IUK01, IUK10), as the then Cabinet Secretary argues:

'I can certainly recall (...) many cases where a department was pushing a particular solution and where the CPRS brief was largely instrumental in a different solution coming out.' (Hunt, quoted by Hennessy et al. 1985: 89)

To the contrary, though, the CPRS prepared collective briefings only for a very small proportion of issues discussed in cabinet and its committees, about 50 a year (Pollitt 1980: 92; Plowden 1981: 66-7). Thus, the influence of these collective briefs was limited, although single policy issues may have been strongly influenced (IUK01, IUK22).

4.4 The CPRS as 'in-house Royal Commission':⁴⁰ Studies and reports

To fulfil its role as government's think tank, the CPRS also prepared own studies and reports (Plowden 1981: 67; Blackstone/Plowden 1988: 203; Flinders 2002: 59). These reports addressed particularly inter-departmental issues with long-term implications that were perceived as particularly relevant for cabinet as a whole (Pollitt 1974: 378, 1977: 378). In practice, though, the CPRS reports were also concerned with several short-term issues (James 1986: 426). In general, the CPRS aimed to provide reports 'which, where necessary, challenged traditional views of Whitehall departments' (Richards/Smith 2006: 330). Several reports also served as a blaming and shaming for those departments responsible for the issue (Radcliffe 1991: 164; see below).⁴¹

Initially, it was envisaged that cabinet ministers would put together and steer these inquiries via a 'Ministerial Committee on the Central Capability' that supervised also the newly introduced Programme Analysis and Review (Blackstone/Plowden 1988: 41; see below). However, the committee soon expired due to sporadic ministerial interest and thus ministerial meetings referred only occasionally issues to the CPRS for investigation – and if cabinet ministers asked the CPRS to prepare a report, its remit was very often outside their own responsibilities (Plowden 1976: 183, 1981: 72; James 1986: 429; Blackstone/Plowden 1988: 4, 196; Gay 2000: 29).

Inevitably, the selection of issues for CPRS reports generated tensions, particularly with the civil service. When the first CPRS director asked in his first meeting with the PM for an example for a CPRS report, his answer – Concorde – was exactly the same issue that the Cabinet Secretary had told him beforehand as an example for what the CPRS would not be expected to study (Rothschild 1984: 75). Eventually, the Cabinet Secretary's preference for a lower profile unit was overruled by the PM (Hennessy et al. 1985; James 1986: 434). Occasionally, senior civil servants succeeded in rejecting particular ideas for CPRS reports, e.g. the Head of the Civil Service vetoed successfully a study on departmental policy planning units because he regarded machinery of government issues as his own turf (Hennessy et al. 1985: 31; Blackstone/Plowden 1988: 51, 198). Ultimately, the CPRS reports addressed issues raised by the PM or cabinet ministers and examined

⁴⁰ (DSMS 1973: 27).

⁴¹ Although this naming and shaming unfolded within cabinet, i.e. during Heath's premiership, none of these reports was published.

only rarely policy issues that it had identified by itself (Hennessy et al. 1985: 28; Blackstone/Plowden 1988: 38).

A closer analysis of the CPRS reports issued during the first twelve months of its existence shows that six out of the 31 conducted reports were prepared for the PM, three for single cabinet members and five for the cabinet as a whole. In turn, nearly half of all reports were submitted to cabinet committees. Besides, 20 reports included recommendations for further action, of which almost a half (eleven) have been endorsed and the other half (eight) had been rejected.⁴² During the Heath government, the CPRS produced reports on e.g. the Concorde, the UK computer industry, London as a financial centre in Europe, energy policy, and a first draft of a report on race relations (Plowden 1976: 183; Blackstone/Plowden 1988: App. 3). The comparatively small number of reports under PM Heath was also caused by CPRS's resources that allowed no more than three policy areas to study at once (Ashworth 1982: 6; Blackstone/Plowden 1988: 207; Campbell 1988: 263). In turn, CPRS members working in studies on highly classified policy issues felt often cut off from their colleagues and argued that these reports weakened the unit's organisational spirit (Blackstone/Plowden 1988: 197). Most reports were prepared by a project team of two to three CPRS members and 'one or two outside consultants on a full or part-time basis' (DSMS 1973: 27). Similarly to collective briefs, these report teams collaborated closely with Whitehall departments in order to access the departments' 'near monopoly of so many available facts' (Blackstone/Plowden 1988: 196). Again, the seconded officials facilitated these interactions and ensured that the CPRS was abreast of policy developments in Whitehall departments (James 1986: 434). The departmental officials refused rarely the exchange of information but provided often only a minimum of assistance (*ibid.*) – and used these interactions for redirecting the CPRS:

'In the CPRS there was constant pressure from senior officials (...) either not to look at a particular subject at all or to trim the views that it had expressed on it because they would be inconvenient and contrary to departmental policy' (Plowden, quoted by HC 123-ii [2007]: Q192).

However, if the CPRS feared that it had been given wrong or inadequate information, it cross-checked its information either with the Cabinet Office or 'could usually find a dissident thinker somewhere in the relevant department willing to point out weaknesses in the "departmental line"' (James 1986: 434). Moreover, most departmental officials

'were far happier with the CPRS acting as an additional fire-fighter than trying to raise fundamental questions - the answers to which were likely to leave Ministers dissatisfied' (Blackstone/Plowden 1988: 201).

As such, the CPRS aimed for cooperative relationships with the civil service but was regularly in latent conflicts with their bureaucratic advice – particularly for those policy issues that had been identified by the CPRS itself as important to the cabinet as a whole. Very often, these issues cut across portfolios and thus the CPRS referred to several Whitehall departments simultaneously.

⁴² NA, PRO, CAB 129/161/18, Memorandum of the CPRS to cabinet, CP(72)16, 'Central Policy Review Staff: Review of First Year and Proposals for 1972', 11/02/1972.

Besides, the CPRS draw also upon a network of external actors to compensate its limited capacities for reports (Plowden 1974: 25; Pollitt 1974: 379, 381; Rothschild 1980: 82; Plowden 1981: 69).⁴³ Many participated without payment, because they were flattered by a request of the first CPRS director or they were interested to contribute their opinion (IUK10, IUK21). In addition, the CPRS commissioned external advice to complement its own reports (Campbell 1983: 65). Between 1970 and 1976 the total cost of such expertise amounted £ 253.000,⁴⁴ two additional studies and one survey from professional consultants during these years cost £ 336.960.⁴⁵ Over time, though, the amount of external advice decreased (Blackstone/Plowden 1988: 36). In addition, the CPRS hold contacts with the *Conservative Research Department* in order to get their understanding on political priorities and the way how ministers were thinking – or to get strategic information such as the timing of the next general election (IUK01, IUK10; see also Beichman 1974).

When the first CPRS report was submitted to the PM by the Cabinet Secretary having rewritten it, which also revealed the latter's concern about his own decreasing influence (MacShane 2006: 120-1), the PM responded by requesting the original document without comments. After that, a new convention was established to circulate all CPRS papers and the civil service was forbidden to amend them unless asked to do so.

During the first time period under scrutiny, all CPRS reports had a common format and were bound in distinctive red covers to made them distinguishable from departmental documents (Blackstone/Plowden 1988: 49). Besides, the first CPRS director required that each report should conclude with precise recommendations for action and should not be written in the 'mellifluous' style of civil service reports, but in a rather direct, sometimes 'brutal' style – even though this may 'be interpreted by Whitehall officials as rude' (Rothschild 1977: 115-6). In addition, the CPRS reports were very often underpinned by statistics – creating 'a level playing field for anything to do with numbers' and bringing 'clarity of information – and brevity' (Davis 2007: 129). Although all reports were confidential,⁴⁶ sporadically rumours got round that the CPRS was working on a particular issue, and once or twice this was officially confirmed (Pollitt 1974: 377; Hennessy et al. 1985: 21). Only few reports were published, depending on the issue (Blackstone/Plowden 1988: 73).⁴⁷ The information that a report was not going to be published facilitated very often the working relationships between the CPRS and departmental officials (IUK01). But also CPRS members were not always keen to publish their reports – either because they were unsatisfied with its assessments or because they feared losing the concerned cabinet ministers' support in the future. Besides, very often Whitehall departments wanted to prevent publication, first among them the Treasury which was

'always anxious that nothing should be said in public which might either arouse misplaced expectations of some new and costly government initiative, or which might suggest, however dispassionately, that the answer to some problem might be to allocate more resources trying to solve it' (Blackstone/Plowden 1988: 73).

⁴³ NA, PRO, CAB 184/998, Letter of CPRS member William Plowden to Prof. Peter Hall, 23 June 1971.

⁴⁴ HC Deb 22 January 1976 vol 903 cc523-5W.

⁴⁵ HC Deb 14 December 1978 vol 960 c303W; HC Deb 30 January 1979 vol 961 cc398-9W.

⁴⁶ HC Deb 01 April 1971 vol 814 cc1668-9.

⁴⁷ The first CPRS report was published in July 1974 and addressed energy conservation (Smith/Stanyer 1975: 246).

Similar to collective briefs, most cabinet ministers favoured CPRS reports on issues that did not address their own portfolio (Hennessy et al. 1985: 22):

'The implicit argument often ran, "My department knows a lot about X. The CPRS, at least at the outset, knew little about X. Therefore, my department should have done the study of X." The basic flaw in this line of reasoning was that the department in question all too often had seen no case for making such a study and had had no intention of doing so' (Blackstone/Plowden 1988: 200).

Occasionally, cabinet ministers commissioned CPRS reports because they mistrusted the advice of their own departmental officials (Blackstone/Plowden 1988). Likewise, they sponsored CPRS reports for presentational or political reasons – with the advantage of allowing the CPRS to avoid assignments that were unsuited to its resources and expertise, or that might damage the CPRS's standing because the conclusions might antagonise powerful Ministers or influential Whitehall interests (James 1986: 426).

In general, it is often argued that CPRS reports had rather little effects, either because they were politically uncontroversial and thus regarded by cabinet ministers as dull, or in case they were provocative, they 'were smothered by departments' (James 1986: 428-9; Brady/Catterall 1997: 522). Other reports lacked cabinet ministers' approval of their results (Plowden 1976: 184; Kavanagh/Seldon 1999: 98), although they were, in contrast to collective briefs, 'much more likely to be returned to later' (Blackstone/Plowden 1988: 203; Hennessy et al. 1985: 97):

'There was a CPRS report on race relations, which they were very reluctant to pick up, they did not want to be confronted with this issue on the cabinet table, which illustrates again the general point that there is no point in leading a horse to water if it will not drink what you offer it' (Plowden, quoted by HC 123-ii [2007]: Q180).

Likewise, occasional suggestions by CPRS reports that a particular policy might be more effective if changes were made in departmental organisations were commented with 'That is a matter for the Permanent Secretary to decide' (Blackstone/Plowden 1988: 198). In turn, even if CPRS reports were officially accepted, it did neither have the mandate nor the resources to monitor the implementation of its recommendations (Pollitt 1974: 381).

4.5 The CPRS assessing Whitehall departments: The PAR scheme

According to the White Paper, the CPRS should also contribute to the newly established Programme Analysis and Review (Cmnd. 4506 [1970]; Garrett 1980: 100). The key rationale for involving the CPRS was their attributed know-how in conducting a 'more rational analysis of new policies and the operation of existing policies' (Blackstone/Plowden 1988: 218). Although the civil service initially supported the idea that the CPRS should be responsible for PAR, also recognising cabinet ministers being affirmative to the new monitoring device, the CPRS director was very reluctant to take over this responsibility due to the manpower required for such a system (Pollitt 1980: 87). Simultaneously, the Treasury successfully rejected that the CPRS would perform this task alone, arguing that the new review system's cohesion would rely on a network of actors – which the Treasury had traditionally at hand (Gray/Jenkins 1982: 435; Campbell 1983: 213-4). As a consequence, PAR became not a very important CPRS activity under PM Heath (Plowden 1981: 67; Gray/Jenkins 1982: 436-7).

The Treasury gained the formal lead for PAR schemes, it also became responsible to lead the corresponding new 'Programme Analysis and Review Committee' (PARC, *The Times*, 31 January 1972: 19; Gray/Jenkins 1982: 435). The cabinet committee comprised next to Treasury officials and one CPRS deputy director an under-secretary from the Civil Service Department as well as representatives from planning units in the other departments (Stappert 1975: 179; Gray/Jenkins 1982: 436). As a consequence, the CPRS deputy director had a higher formal authority than most departmental members ranked as under-secretaries (Stappert 1975: 123). Yet, apart from clarifying one or two sensitive issues such as the confidentiality of PAR reports and deciding which information will be disclosed to the incoming Labour administration of 1974, PARC was a rather passive body (Gray/Jenkins 1982: 436).

In practice, the CPRS had little influence on the topic selection for PAR schemes; instead these were most often decided between the departments and the Treasury (DSMS 1973: 30; Lee 1974: 180). However, the CPRS occasionally succeeded to initiate reviews of activities that cut across departments – although 'subjects of inter-departmental concern never fared well in the PAR operation' (Gray/Jenkins 1982: 439; Isserlis 1984: 23). The PAR procedure involved a detailed analysis and review of departmental activities and examination whether their objectives were soundly based (Lee 1974: 179-80). It was mainly conducted by a steering group including departmental officials, which conducted the review, Treasury officials, CPRS members, and officials from related departments, sometimes also outsiders (Gray/Jenkins 1982: 440-1). Within the CPRS, members were engaged in the steering group of a review if it was conducted for a department on which they had knowledge and contacts. The CPRS members perceived their role in keeping the departments' attention on their objectives, especially those fundamental to the whole activity (IUK10). However, although PAR provided the CPRS with access to departmental information for key policy areas, it also turned it away in many respects from its cross-cutting mandate because these reviews referred to one department (Pollitt 1974: 378-9).

At the close of a PAR, a final report was agreed upon by the steering group that would be formally submitted by the department to the cabinet committee. The CPRS would normally attach its own short note as to where the results of the analysis fitted in with the general direction of government policy (Gray/Jenkins 1982: 436). But unless the department or its cabinet minister found the results useful in supporting its plans, the PAR report as well as the CPRS note would, as often as not, 'lie lost at the bottom of cabinet committee agendas' (Gray/Jenkins 1982: 442; Garrett 1980: 100). Indeed these CPRS notes to PAR contrasted sharply with its collective briefs and reports because they lacked firm recommendations for further courses of action (Plowden 1981: 74).

Although the departments had initially supported the CPRS's engagement in PAR, they soon criticised the CPRS's 'insistence on asking the why and wherefore questions cut into and against the consensus of the organisational community' (Gray/Jenkins 1982: 436-7). Accordingly, departmental officials occasionally allied with the Treasury against the 'CPRS's "stratospheric" thinking' (Gray/Jenkins 1982: 441). In turn, though, the Treasury also benefitted from the CPRS's focus on policies:

'The Treasury, as a matter of course, could not interfere in matters of departmental policy that had no financial implications. Thus they could not get a foothold into many issues such as those in education or health. The CPRS, however, could, and here it was undoubtedly of use since the Treasury could employ it to get a foot in. We hated this since until then we had been autonomous in matters that were not financial' (departmental official, quoted by Gray/Jenkins 1982: 441).

However, when the tensions between the Treasury and the CPRS increased, departments gained more leeway to organise PAR in their own way (Gray/Jenkins 1982: 445; see Plowden 1981). As a consequence, they started to identify reviews they wished to undertake anyway and then called it a PAR to satisfy the cabinet committee (DSMS 1973: 31). Moreover, some 'institutional jealousy' (*ibid.*) arose because departments did the bulk of PAR work and the CPRS – together with the Treasury – dominated the cabinet committee. Both the Treasury and the CPRS became soon frustrated with the PAR scheme; after 1973, the exercise was conducted less frequently and disillusion spread that PAR had failed to support collective cabinet (Gray/Jenkins 1982: 442).

4.6 Concluding remarks

The influence of the CPRS on government policy-making under PM Heath was widely perceived as comparatively high, summarised by the PM in his statement before Parliament introducing this case study. In practice, the CPRS conducted various advisory activities as carriers of institutional strategies to influence the institutional underpinnings to govern.

First, the CPRS exerted influence on the *regulative* underpinnings to govern e.g. via its collective briefs and reports for cabinet and cabinet committees. Particularly the collective briefs can be regarded as very influential on the pre-existing rules at cabinet level because they provided some 'grit to prevent things from going too smoothly' (Campbell 1983: 63; James 1986: 434). They adjusted the rules for submissions to cabinet and its committees: Whereas previously such submissions had been prepared by the Cabinet Office, the collective briefs included additional assessments, allowing all cabinet ministers to expand the sources for their judgements and thus addressing collectivism in cabinet, albeit in practice the PM benefitted most. Moreover, collective briefs addressed the way how Whitehall officials prepared their departmental submissions to cabinet and cabinet committees, knowing that the CPRS may provide an alternative brief. More importantly, the CPRS involved departmental officials in the preparation of their briefs and thus adjusted the formal rules of the executive game at departmental level. In a similar manner, the reports by the CPRS aimed to shift the policy-specific distribution of authority in policy initiation at cabinet level. Moreover, also individual ministers commissioned reports in order to question other cabinet members' policy initiatives. This role of the CPRS was supported by its unique status in Whitehall: The PM's visible support encouraged cabinet members and departmental officials to acknowledge the CPRS as a force to be reckoned with (James 1986: 434) and its expertness strengthened the notion of an 'alternative view' submitted by an entity that comprises a mix of members from inside and outside the machinery of government. In a similar but less radical manner, the PAR scheme can be regarded as an attempt to shape the regulative underpinnings at departmental level, established as a new formal mean to monitor departmental activities – justified by a

strengthening of collective cabinet. Yet, departmental resistance resulted in less frequent applications of the PAR scheme after a few years.

Second, the CPRS addressed the *normative* conventions of government policy-making primarily at cabinet level. The EWS and the strategy meetings at Chequers aimed to provide a 'normative compass' redirecting the normative expectations among cabinet members on medium- and long-term government policy. Ultimately, though, the CPRS failed to persuade cabinet members to conduct the EWS or the strategy meetings as preferable alternatives on *how* to decide in cabinet. Also the strong rejections by the senior civil service, with the explicit argument that these strategy meetings neglect Whitehall conventions, can be regarded as an indication for their ambitions to address the pre-existing norms. Again, the CPRS's organisational capabilities have been relevant: Over time, it lost its 'liability of newness' and, in turn, it became more difficult to convince cabinet members that the EWS and strategy meetings are indispensable (Campbell/Wilson 1995: 199). In a similar manner, the collective briefs adjusted the previous normative expectations of cabinet members about how to reach decisions in cabinet: Unlike before, cabinet decisions were not solely based upon departmental briefs or briefs prepared by the Cabinet Office but also by CPRS's collective briefs. As a consequence, the dominant norm among cabinet members to focus on their own department's interests shifted towards more interest for policy issues outside their jurisdictions – although particularly those cabinet ministers adopted the new norm who either chaired cabinet committees or hold senior party offices and thus had inherently cross-cutting policy interests. Yet, collective briefs also provided policy norms, prescribing appropriate policy alternatives to those policy options presented by permanent officials to cabinet ministers. The CPRS reports and the PAR scheme targeted especially the normative underpinnings to govern at departmental level, proliferating norms and standards for policy-making in Whitehall, albeit the reports were rather limited during the first time period under scrutiny, and excluded machinery of government issues, whereas the PAR scheme was ultimately reduced as noted above. In turn, the number of reports also limited their influence on policy norms, but they entailed such prescriptions of legitimate policy options to achieve 'strategic' objectives.

Lastly, the CPRS addressed the *cognitive* foundations of government policy-making at cabinet and departmental level, e.g. the EWS aimed to strengthen a collectivist and future-oriented worldview among cabinet ministers but addressed also pre-existing departmental wisdoms on selected policy issues. Likewise, the strategy meetings aimed to introduce strategic thinking as an essential part of cabinet work and provided also opportunities to frame certain policy issues, although the follow-up at departmental level was mostly done by departmental ministers – and declined over time. Hence, the CPRS failed to convince cabinet ministers *why* such activities would be relevant for cabinet decision-making. Here, the organisational structure of the CPRS also played a role: Next to their declining liability of newness noted above, also the non-inclusion of political appointees facilitated cabinet's rejection of the CPRS's role in guiding its strategy work – arguing that such considerations have to be in tune with partisan objectives. In contrast, the collective briefs were more successful in changing 'conventional departmental wisdom' (DSMS 1973: 30), albeit often related to distinct policy issues rather than to the basic worldviews on the formulation of government policies in general. Similarly, CPRS reports revealed 'antidotes to [the]

orthodoxy' (Hennessy 1989: 652) of the Whitehall bureaucracy by framing government policy, including the definition of the problem, the exclusion of distinct aspects, and the presentation of policy alternatives. Although the CPRS under PM Heath completed only a small number of reports, also delayed reactions to these cognitive activities have been observed – supported by the fact that most of these reports were not published and handled as confidential documents.

To conclude, the CPRS under PM Heath engaged in various advisory activities as carriers of its institutional strategies that addressed the basic institutional underpinnings to govern, initiating new rules to force collectivism in cabinet, strengthening a collectivist norm as well as a stronger collectivist worldview. Especially its targeting of the normative and cognitive underpinnings was not unnoticed by cabinet members and departmental officials; albeit their initially supportive responses turned over time into moderate rejection, the EWS and the strategy meetings were abolished after the first time period under scrutiny. In addition, albeit to a lesser extent, the CPRS targeted also the institutional underpinnings to govern at departmental level, i.e. it triggered new rules for preparing departmental submissions to cabinet and cabinet committees, advocated new professional norms with regard to the inclusion of evidence into departmental policy-making as well as more policy-specific norms of legitimate and appropriate policy means, and, most importantly, advocated new departmental worldviews in selected policy areas. Again, the varying open criticism by senior civil servants and the more hidden departmental resistance referred mostly to the attempts of the CPRS to shape pre-existing Whitehall conventions and worldviews.

'Yes, the Policy Unit is extremely good and I find it much more useful than the Central Policy Review Staff (...). The Policy Unit is just along the corridor. They can come in quickly. We run a very informal kind of set-up and Heaven knows we see a great deal of one another.'
(Thatcher, quoted by *The Times*, 25 October 1988: 40)

Chapter I Policy advice under PM Thatcher, 1979-1987

When PM Margaret Thatcher came into power in 1979, the advisory system at the centre of British government had developed into a dual structure with the CPRS in the Cabinet Office and the Policy Unit in the Prime Minister's Office. During her first two terms in office, the Policy Unit gained increasing influence while the CPRS was abolished after the first term in 1983. As a consequence, the role of these two advisory arrangements in government policy-making turned from indicating policy priorities to cabinet and shaping departmental wisdom in selected policy areas towards a more rigid influence on the departmental level of government policy-making. The next subchapter describes the key developments prior the general election in 1979 that resulted in the rearrangement of the advisory system at the centre of British government when PM Thatcher came into office, which is examined together with the major changes after the general election in 1983 in the second subchapter. The third subchapter scrutinises the organisational structure of the CPRS and the Policy Unit. The final subchapter analyses their major activities seeking to influence the institutional underpinnings of government policy-making, emphasising particularly the Policy Unit.

1 Prologue: The emergence of a dual advisory system at the centre

When PM Wilson had re-entered office in 1974, he created a Policy Unit in the Prime Minister's Office as organisational host for several special advisers at his disposal (Clarke 1975: 72; Donoghue 1987, 1996: 115; Kandiah 1996; Kavanagh/Seldon 1999: 119; Gay 2000: 30; Lowe 2005: 499). An official press release stated its mandate as to 'assist in the development of the whole range of policies, contained in the Government's programme, especially those arising in the short and medium term' (quoted by Jordan 2002: 99). However, its concrete responsibilities were rather vague as one of its first members recalls:

'It sounded great to say we were the Prime Minister's special advisers, but to be honest, none of us had a clue exactly what we should be doing' (Piachaud, quoted by Kavanagh/Seldon 1999: 122).

Eventually, the new unit was very soon regarded as 'a politicised version' of the CPRS, introducing 'a systematic policy analysis organism separate from the regular civil service machine working solely for the Prime Minister' (Cline 2008: 153). As such, the Policy Unit was mainly concerned with short-term policy issues and thus functionally different from the CPRS (Weller 1983a: 77; Donoghue 1987: 31). However, the CPRS director urged the new head of the Policy Unit to clarify the roles and relationship of both entities (Hennessy et al. 1985: 39). After discussions with the Cabinet Secretary, the Policy Unit was eventually assigned with short-term and partisan issues whereas the CPRS was

designated to maintain its rather neutral and long-term remit.¹ As a result, both units acted rather parallel and conflicts about whether an issue should be dealt with by the CPRS or the Policy Unit emerged very rarely (Blackstone/Plowden 1988: 66).

The members of the early Policy Unit did not engage in contacts with cabinet ministers or civil servants (Campbell 1983: 69). Instead, they interacted mostly with departmental special advisers (Kavanagh/Seldon 1999: 24, 120),² as its first head recalled:

'I always wanted to work closely with departments, maybe because I lectured on the subject at the LSE, and so forth, but I thought you had to deliver the machine. There was a lot of machismo pleasure in outsiders fighting, and this kind of thing, but in the end it is results, you have to deliver the machine' (Donoughue, quoted by HC 123-ii [2007]: Q193).

In turn, departmental officials hardly recognised the Policy Unit during its first years of existence (IUK36). The next PM Callaghan, who came into office in 1976, considered the retention of the Policy Unit but ultimately it remained (Kavanagh/Seldon 1999: 133). Afterwards, the remit of the Policy Unit changed, complying with the new client's request 'to find out what was going on in departments, rather than imposing his views' (Marsh et al. 2001: 118). Accordingly, Policy Unit members engaged in direct contacts with departmental officials and aimed to get involved in intra- and inter-departmental policy-making at the earliest stage. However, given the unit's focus on pressing issues of the PM's concern, these contacts focused only on particular Whitehall departments. In short, the advisory system at the centre of the mid-1970s comprised a rather clandestine Policy Unit working exclusively for the PM on short-term and partisan issues and the CPRS continuing as the government's think tank (Donoughue 1987: 31).

This pre-existing dual advisory system was discussed extensively by members of the *Conservative Research Department* prior the general election in 1979, particularly the Policy Unit was criticised as an organisational innovation of Labour Prime Ministers. Whereas some Conservative advisers argued that this unit was mainly set up by PM Wilson to reduce his conflicts with the Labour Party, which would not apply to Mrs Thatcher, and thus rejected its continuation, others favoured a small staff at the direct disposal of the PM – with a possible extension into a full-fledged Prime Ministerial Department (Kavanagh/Seldon 1999: 147). However, the Leader of the Opposition Margaret Thatcher was rather reluctant to keep an advisory arrangement at her disposal. Likewise, she ignored several attempts by her advisers to formulate a clear strategy with regard to the advisory system at the centre, among them the rather famous 'Stepping Stones' report on economic recovery that had been prepared by John Hoskyns³ and Norman Strauss (Kandiah 1996: 120; Hoskyns 2000: 30-40).⁴ The report concluded that politicians and civil servants are 'too preoccupied with the short term, too busy with small

¹ Thus, a formal concordat was agreed between the Cabinet Secretary and the Policy Unit in 1974 (Kavanagh/Seldon 1999: 121).

² In contrast, the head of the unit attended cabinet committees at will (Campbell 1983: 69; Donoughue at HC 123-ii [2007]: Q193).

³ The pivotal position of Hoskyns was also reflected in his right to attend shadow cabinet meetings (Greenaway 1984: 70).

⁴ Moreover, the Stepping Stones report addressed also trade union reforms. Thatcher seized the opportunity to push this issue forward following the 'Winter of Discontent' in 1978/1979 (Hay 1996).

matters ever to see the need (...) for collaborative reflection about large ones' (Harrison 1994: 216). However, Thatcher was 'not very impressed' with the report's view that 'we could never succeed unless we fitted all our policies into a single strategy in which we worked out in advance the order in which actions had to be taken' (Thatcher 1995: 420). Similarly, Alfred Sherman, a member of the Conservative think tank *Centre of Policy Studies* (CPS), was unsuccessful in persuading Thatcher to consider his idea of 'a reverse army of advisers' in late 1978 (Hoskyns 2000: 78). Also Hoskyns argued in a second paper on the 'effectiveness in government' in early 1979 that the huge reform programme ahead of a new Conservative government would need to refrain some past policies – a task 'which was probably beyond the capacities of the Whitehall-Westminster system' (Hoskyns 2000: 89). Eventually, though, all debates by Conservative advisers during opposition did not lead to a decision in favour of a distinct advisory system at the centre (Peters/Savoie 1994; Hoskyns 2000: 78, 90).

In contrast to these debates, the CPRS was not heavily discussed by Conservative advisers. It had been expanded in 1976 by incorporating the Cabinet Office unit responsible for science and technology, including the 'Chief Scientist' (Plowden 1981: 68). But the functional mandate of the CPRS remained, although it had terminated EWS exercises, the strategy meetings, and the collective briefs, and turned to focus mainly on its self-contained reports. Between 1974 and 1979, three CPRS reports were officially published and extensively discussed. One of them, 'A Joint Framework for Social Policies', became very famous in British central government because it stressed the need for new ways of developing a collective ministerial view (on social policy) and the improvement of cross-cutting coordination and the analysis of cross-cutting (social) problems. As such, it was much later considered as one of the earliest attempts to promote cross-cutting thinking in Whitehall. However, by and large, the CPRS lost its importance since its creation under PM Heath. In turn, though, it became accepted by Whitehall officials and was increasingly perceived as a civil service unit.

In sum, the mid 1970s witnessed the emergence of a dual advisory system at the centre of British government. Particularly the debate over an advisory arrangement servicing the PM prior the general election in 1979 echoed to some extent the debates of Conservative advisers in the late 1960s – but the new Leader of the Opposition was reluctant to discuss this issue and e.g. prepare a similar Black Book (Kavanagh/Seldon 1999: 154). Interestingly, though, these advisers linked the general rationale for a rearrangement of the advisory system to the presumably radical policies that a new Conservative PM would formulate – under the assumption that the Whitehall machinery may obstruct them.

2 The rearrangement of the advisory system at the centre

When PM Thatcher won the general election in 1979, both the CPRS and the Policy Unit survived. In addition, the new PM reduced the number of special advisers to one adviser per cabinet minister in order to limit a further proliferation of these new actors in government – and to use the downsizing in numbers for the 'manpower savings' in central government that were at the heart of the Conservatives' agenda (Stephenson 1980: 28-34; Greenaway 1984: 70; Jones 1987: 58, 61; Hennessy 1989: 635). The CPRS's survival came

as a surprise to some observers and several practitioners claim that civil servants close to the new PM as well as the new head of the Policy Unit had persuaded Thatcher to keep the Think Tank (Hennessy 1989: 636). However, the CPRS's mandate was narrowed down to a very limited range of issues and it became less concerned with cabinet as a whole and more with supporting the PM (James 1986: 433, 437; Hennessy 1989: 637; Campbell 1983: 67, 74; Kavanagh/Seldon 1999: 25). Yet, this substantial redirection of the CPRS was not requested by the new cabinet members. In contrast to its establishment in 1970 when cabinet members as major clients affected considerably its mandate by answering the milk-round of its first director, the narrowing of its mandate in 1979 was mainly decided by the PM. In addition, the CPRS was primarily asked to focus on the feasibility of government policies, i.e. to identify constraints rather than to develop and disseminate new ideas:

'The PM wanted the CPRS to help her translate her political and policy objectives into practice, and to tell her how far we could go or not, what the constraints are' (CPRS member, quoted by Campbell 1998: 121).

The CPRS's functional diminution was also a way to respond to the new PM's expectation that many CPRS's ideas had 'Whitehall-wide origins' (Radcliffe 1991: 164) and thus aimed to exclude the policy initiating role of the CPRS altogether by redirecting the Tank towards preparing reports only (Benn 1980: 71; James 1986: 437; Hennessy 1989: 637). In turn, also senior civil servants questioned openly the CPRS's expertise and its relevance for cabinet:

'I do not believe a small central staff by itself can be expected to identify new areas of workable policy which have somehow escaped the attention of the expert department. Nor can it really evaluate the implications of alternative courses: that too is best left to the specialists.' (Wass 1984: 37)

In contrast, no mandate was formulated for the Policy Unit and instead the new PM asked its first head to write the unit's terms of reference, which she approved completely:

1. The Task

The new government faces a formidable array of social, industrial and economic problems. Finding solutions to these problems is notoriously difficult, as every government has found (...). The Prime Minister therefore wants to use the Policy Unit to help government to work on a more strategic way, so that its central objectives are not lost sight of. The Unit's main job is to take all this complexity, uncertainty, ambiguity, etc, and present it with structure and clarity, so that Ministers can see precisely where and when their political judgement and departmental expertise need to be applied.

2. The Policy Unit

The main functions of the Policy Unit are as follows:

- (a) To develop and maintain a clear and complete picture of the government's central strategy, to assist the Prime Minister and cabinet in decision-making.
- (b) To maintain close links with the key Ministers and departments involved, to ensure that the central strategy correctly reflects those department's programmes, and vice versa' (Hoskyns 2000: 104).

Following Hoskyns' considerations during opposition, the Policy Unit concentrated on policies for 'stabilising the economy' as key objective of the new government's first term (Steel/Stanyer 1980: 289; Kavanagh/Seldon 1999: 155; Hoskyns 2000: 99). The unit was clearly designated to countervail a perceived unwilling civil service (Lee et al. 1998: 117).

3 The organisation of policy advice at the centre under PM Thatcher

The organisation of the two advisory arrangements under scrutiny differed. Since the CPRS's organisation has been illustrated already (see chap. H.3 above), this subchapter highlights only the changes under PM Thatcher that occurred during its last years of existence and focuses mainly on the key structural attributes of the Policy Unit between 1979 and 1987.

3.1 The CPRS as a trembling organisation

The CPRS members had discussed intensively whether the Think Tank may survive a government turnover after the general election in 1979, but its retention supported their impression that it may exist longer than the first prime ministerial term of the new PM (Kavanagh/Seldon 1999: 133). However, the CPRS was abolished after the general election in 1983 (König 1985b: 134; Seldon 1990: 107; Pryce 1997: 174).

During PM Thatcher's first term, the CPRS remained affiliated to the Cabinet Office, with a size between ten and 16 members. The internal fragmentation changed, as said above, because in 1982 a second deputy head was appointed as leader of a specialised project team on nationalised industries that worked rather separately from the rest of the CPRS (Blackstone/Plowden 1988: 32). As such, the deputy director became a formal second authoritative level and the vertical fragmentation increased. Yet, the horizontal project-based organisation remained and thus the CPRS director was making all authoritative decisions (except for the specialised project team noted above).

In terms of expertness, the four years after 1979 witnessed considerable dynamics (see Table H.1 above). Three different CPRS directors came into office, Kenneth Berrill, a former Chief Economist at HM Treasury who had been appointed by PM Wilson in 1974 was succeeded in April 1980 by Robin Ibbs, a manager from a private chemicals company. Two years later, John Sparrow, a merchant banker from the City, was appointed as last CPRS director. This rapid turnover of directors reveals the PM's preference for individuals with a private sector background, but also her general unease with the Think Tank (Kavanagh/Seldon 1999: 167). Moreover, the two appointments under PM Thatcher were well-known to be politically sympathetic to the government (James 1986: 433).

Its composition turned stronger towards members with private sector experience, approximately half of all CPRS members who were recruited after 1979 came from the private sector (see Figure H.1 above). In addition, more CPRS members were open partisan sympathisers or members (Plowden 1991: 229). Internal conflicts emerged between members from the civil service and outsiders:

'I don't like to walk into peoples' offices without notice. So I sort of dribble my fingers along the wall or put my head around the doorframe before entering someone's room. I did this recently to a very new recruit from the civil service. (...) About an hour later, he came to my room and just burst open the door and sat down and quite airily said "You know of course about the etiquette about knocking on doors? (...) You never knock on doors in the civil service. It implies that the occupant is doing something he shouldn't."' (CPRS member, quoted by Campbell 1983: 66)

Compared to previous governments, CPRS members stayed shorter in the unit, also because of the unit's abolition in 1983; on average, members with a private sector

background and civil servants served 1.5 years, the one academic member stayed 13 months (see Table H.2 above). Besides, several members left the unit after the general election in 1979 and were not replaced (see Figure H.2 above). However, the modus operandi of the CPRS remained, but another weekly meeting with the head of the Policy Unit was added in order to discuss the PM's upcoming programme (Donoughue, quoted by HC 123-ii [2007]: Q184). In short, the CPRS's organisation did not change radically with the advent of the new PM but witnessed changes at the top as well as a higher turnover of staff that was more often recruited from the private sector.

3.2 The organisation of the Policy Unit

The Policy Unit under PM Thatcher underwent various changes of its organisational structure, albeit keeping its rather unusual structure compared to the Whitehall bureaucracy with regard to its (1) durability, (2) internal affiliation, (3) size, (4) fragmentation, and (5) expertness.

(1) Although the new PM Thatcher was initially rather uneasy about a specific advisory staff at her disposal, the Policy Unit survived the early weeks after the general election in 1979 – and its durability continues until today, albeit with changes in its composition and official title. Corresponding to this maintenance reluctance under the new PM Thatcher, the unit's offices were relocated to a more remote part of the Number Ten complex further away from the PM, albeit they were removed much closer to the PM after 1983 (Stephenson 1980: 6; Lee et al. 1998: 124).

(2) The Policy Unit was officially an entity in the Prime Minister's Office, but directly subordinated to the PM. As such, it followed previous practice and enjoyed a very close and regular access to the PM.

(3) According to the requests of the PM that were shared by the first head (see below), the Policy Unit was initially composed of three members (Hoskyns 2000: 99; Blick 2004: 187; see Figure I.1 below):⁵ 'We were extremely sharply focused and we did not really need six people to help the Prime Minister screw it up, if two people could prevent her doing so' (Hoskyns 2000: 120). In addition, this small size of the Policy Unit also underlined the substantial focus of the unit during PM Thatcher's first term in office on economic recovery policies, i.e. the unit was supposed to be

'a small team of outsiders working inside the PMO with the objective to guide and coordinate the work of Ministers, so that the central objective of economic recovery, with its many interlocking components, was never lost sight of' (Hoskyns 2000: 89).

Although the Head of the Policy Unit tried to convince the PM to appoint a fourth member in late 1980, the Cabinet Secretary persuaded the PM that she 'really had to practice the general rule of de-manning in Whitehall as regards the Policy Unit itself' (Hoskyns, quoted by Kandiah 1996: 122).⁶ Yet, the small Policy Unit drew also other members of the PMO staff into its operations (Burch 1983: 407).

After the general election in 1983, the size of the Policy Unit increased (Müller-Rommel 1993: 134; Lee et al. 1998: 118; Kavanagh/Seldon 1999: 159; see also Figure I.1).

⁵ HC Deb 27 July 1979 vol 971 c515W.

⁶ When in 1982 a new head of the unit was appointed, this fourth member was recruited.

On the one hand, the abolition of the CPRS provided legitimacy to increase its resources; two CPRS members were also immediately transferred to the Policy Unit (The Times 02 July 1983: 2; Hennessy 1989: 652; Lee et al. 1998: 118; Kavanagh/Seldon 1999: 192). On the other hand, the new head of the Policy Unit requested more personnel in order to fulfil the expanded mandate. One year later, the Policy Unit had already ten members; this size was also the maximum during the following years. A small secretarial staff supported the Policy Unit, one secretary between 1979 and 1984, three secretaries afterwards.⁷

(4) The fragmentation of the Policy Unit was rather unusual compared to the Whitehall bureaucracy. In horizontal terms, the Policy Unit operated as a collegial team, also because of the initially very small size of the unit (IUK01). After the general election in 1983, the increasing number of Policy Unit members shadowed each a cluster of policy areas, except foreign affairs, Ireland, and the security services which were supposed to be too sensitive to be handled by special advisers (Weller 1987: 150; Hennessy 1989: 653; Burnham/Jones 1993: 314; Pryce 1997: 177; Lee et al. 1998: 116-7; see Table I.1). This may be regarded as a beginning horizontal fragmentation, albeit several overlapping responsibilities still existed and no formal branches emerged. The portfolios were also not directly shadowing distinct Whitehall departments and included also issues such as the 'party manifesto' or speeches. More importantly, the areas were distributed among the staff according to its general background, also acknowledging their expertise from previous positions.

Table I.1 The key responsibilities of Policy Unit members, 1979-1987

name	Policy Unit responsibilities	previous position
1979-1982 John Hoskyns *	Economic strategy; civil service	IBM
-1982 Andrew Duguid	n/a	PPS, Dept. for Trade and Industry
-1983 Douglas Hague	n/a	Kirkby Manufacturing Co.
-1981 Norman Strauss	n/a	Unilever International
1982-1983 Ferdinand Mount *	Party manifesto; social policy; schools	Conservative Central Office
-1986 Chris Monckton	Housing; Parliamentary affairs	Centre for Policy Studies
-1984 Peter Shipley	n/a	Conservative Research Department
1983-1985 John Redwood*	Jobs; Privatisation; nationalised industries	N. M. Rothschild & Sons Ltd.
-1986 David Hobson	Accountancy; Scottish/Welsh affairs;	Coopers & Lybrand
-1986 Oliver Letwin	Education; science; employment; local government	SpAd to the Secretary of State for Education
1983-1986 Nicholas Owen	Defence; Agriculture; Civil service	Department of Trade and Industry
-1984 David Pascall	Energy; Environment; Defence procurement	British Petroleum Company, plc
-1984 Robert Young	Heavy industries	Vickers Lid.
1984-1988 Hartley Booth	Home policy; Law and order; Pollution	Creasey, Son & Wickenden
-1986 Peter Warry	deregulation; pay; trade and industry	Aerospace Engineering, plc
-1986 David Willetts	health and social security; Treasury affairs	HM Treasury

⁷ HC Deb 19 June 1984 vol 62 cc99-100W.

Table I.1 The key responsibilities of Policy Unit members, 1979-1987 (continued)

name	key responsibilities	previous position
-1988 John Wybrew	energy; transport; FMI	Shell Ltd.
1985-1990 Brian Griffiths*	broadcasting; education; economy	City University Business School
1986-1987 Norman Blackwell	employment; EEC; agriculture; trade	McKinsey & Company Inc.
-1990 George Guise	industry (research & development)	Consolidated Goldfields, plc
-1988 Peter Stredder	local government; DOE	HM Treasury
-1990 Nicholas True	n/a	SpAd to the Secretary of State for Health
1987-1988 John O'Sullivan	speeches	Journalist at <i>The Times</i>

Legend

* Head of Policy Unit

Note: The table shows all Policy Unit members appointed during the first two prime ministerial terms of PM Thatcher and their tenure in office.

Source: Own illustration, data compiled from *The Times* 08 March 1984: 14, 06 November 1984: 4; Jones 1985: 93; HC 92 [1986]: Annex 2; HC Deb 24 July 1987 vol 120 cc543-4W; Willetts 1987: 446; Lee et al. 1998: 103, 105-12.

(5) The expertness of the Policy Unit reflected differences to the rest of the PMO and the Whitehall bureaucracy. Initially, the new PM wanted to appoint two equal heads to the Policy Unit. For one position, she requested Alan Ridley, a former economic adviser to the shadow cabinet and assistant director of the *Conservative Research Department* who had set up her political office at the Prime Minister's Office (Ranelagh 1991: 217; Kavanagh/Seldon 1999: 148-9). For the other position, she wanted to appoint John Hoskyns who had advised her during the run-up to the general election (Greenaway 1984: 70). Four days after polling day, however, it became clear that the new Chancellor of the Exchequer requested Ridley as his special adviser in the Treasury (Ranelagh 1991: 217-8; Kavanagh/Seldon 1999: 148-9, 154). As a consequence, John Hoskyns was appointed as first and only head of the Policy Unit. As former adviser during opposition, he knew many cabinet members as well as other key figures quite well (Kandiah 1996: 124), although they were less accessible to him than he first expected, for which he blamed departmental officials and special advisers surrounding them (Hoskyns 2000: 100). After two and a half years, in late 1981, he informed the PM that he wanted to leave and although she tried to retain him and offered an expanded Policy Unit according to his requests, Hoskyns resigned (Kavanagh/Seldon 1999: 157; see Table I.2).⁸

In May 1982, Ferdinand Mount succeeded as head of the Policy Unit, a former journalist and researcher at the *Conservative Research Department* (*The Times*, 02 August 1982, 3; Kavanagh/Seldon 1999: 158). His appointment was also interpreted as the PM's reaction to increasing concerns about the presentation and communication of government policy (Jones 1985: 92). But Mount became increasingly bored with the job and suggested after a year in office that John Redwood should succeed him; Redwood had served as a

⁸ The fact that one month after Hoskyns's departure also the CPRS Director Ibbs left his office was reported to be coincidental (*The Times* 20 March 1982: 2).

member of the Policy Unit and was well known to the PM, also because he was a previous member of the 'Nationalised Industries Study Group' in the *Centre for Policy Studies* (Harris 1996: 59; Bakvis 1997: 98-9; Lee et al. 1998: 118; Kavanagh/Seldon 1999: 193).⁹ In January 1984, Redwood was appointed as new head (Harris 1996: 59; Stone 2000: 52). In October 1985, he was succeeded by Brian Griffiths, a former Director of the Bank of England. In sum, the selection of heads for the Policy Unit during the first two prime ministerial terms of PM Thatcher was mainly decided by the PM, occasionally heads proposed their own successors. All heads of the Policy Unit were chosen because of their expertise in distinct policy issues prioritised by the PM or their expert skills, e.g. in media relations (Lee et al. 1998: 118).

Table I.2 The leadership structure of the Policy Unit, 1979-1987

tenure	head	previous positions	subsequent positions
05/1979-05/1982	John Hoskyns	John Hoskyns & Co. Ltd (computer firm), CEO; adviser to the Shadow PM	SpAd to the Secretary of State for Transport (part-time); International Computers Ltd, Director
05/1982-12/1983	Ferdinand Mount	Conservative Research Department; Political Columnist at <i>The Spectator</i> , and <i>The Standard</i>	Journalist at <i>Daily Mail</i> ; Political Editor at the <i>Spectator</i>
01/1984-10/1985	John Redwood	Adviser, Treasury and Civil Service Select Committee; Rothschild & Sons Ltd, Manager and Director	Conservative MP; Minister at the Department of Industry
10/1985-11/1990	Brian Griffiths	Bank of England, Director; Dean at The City University Business School	Member of the House of Lords; Director at Times Newspapers; Chairman of the <i>Centre for Policy Studies</i>

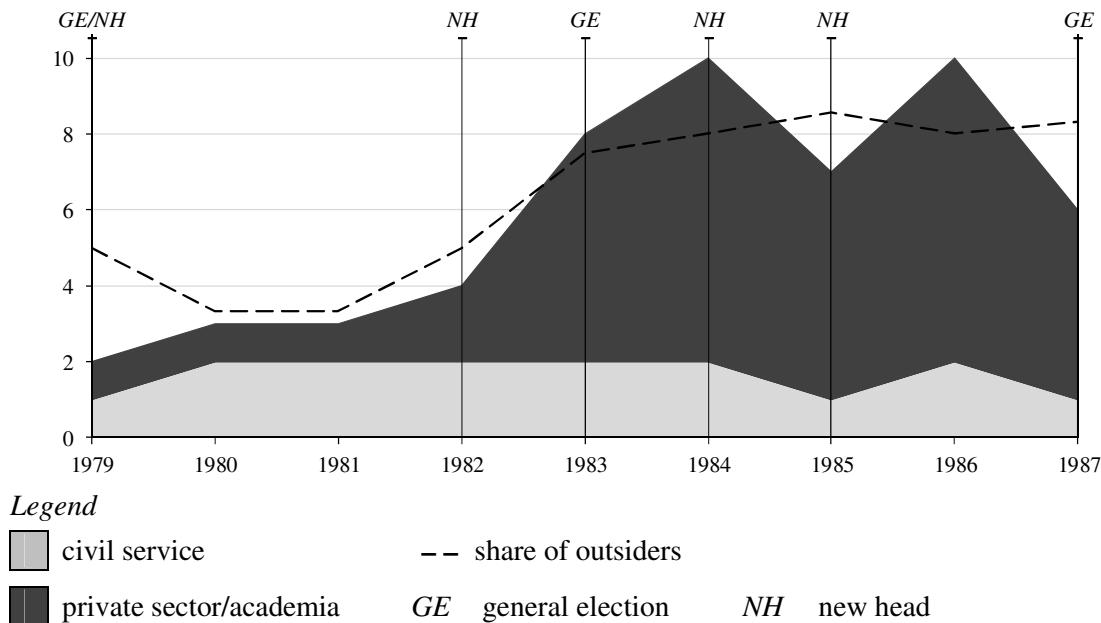
Source: Own illustration; information compiled from HC 92 [1986]: Annex 2; Lee et al. 1998: 105; Who's Who 2010.

The most striking organisational difference of PM Thatcher's Policy Unit compared to its predecessor was the expertness at the member level because these included special advisers *and* civil servants – particularly surprising given the PM's well-known strong conviction that British civil servants lacked a commitment to pursue the policies of her government (Lee et al. 1998: 115; Gay 2000: 30; Barzelay/Füchtner 2003: 11; Blick 2004: 187). Various observers argue that the Cabinet Secretary persuaded her to 'bureaucratise' the Policy Unit and temper 'the enthusiasm of outsiders with experience of insiders' (Kavanagh/Seldon 1999: 155; Lee et al. 1998: 115). However, the PM also favoured civil servants in the Policy Unit because they could provide assistance to the special advisers in formulating proposals in a manner that was likely to receive support in cabinet (IUK09). A

⁹ The CPS had been set by Thatcher and two other senior figures from the Conservative Party in June 1974 (Harris 1996: 52).

longitudinal analysis of the Policy Unit's composition under PM Thatcher reveals further dynamics (see Figure I.1).

Figure I.1 The size and composition of the Policy Unit, 1979-1987



Source: Own illustration, information compiled from Lee et al. 1998: 107-14; HC Deb 24 July 1987 vol 120 cc543-4W; CSYB 1979-1997.

In general, the Policy Unit comprised members recruited from the civil service or the private sector. Whereas members from the civil service remained permanent civil servants, members from the private sector were mostly recruited as special advisers under temporary civil servants terms. The Policy Unit members with a civil service background were departmental secondees nominated by their departments with the final approval by the head of the Policy Unit (Lee et al. 1998: 103). In total, eleven departmental secondees were recruited between 1979 and 1987, among them, five were seconded from the Department of Trade and Industry and four from the Treasury. This pattern of departmental secondment reflected the prioritised policy areas of the Policy Unit (IUK08, IUK09). Yet, the departmental secondees also faced difficulties when returning to their parent departments – because they were perceived as closely linked to the PM and too political to be readily re-assimilated into the bureaucracy (Aucoin 1995: 55; Campbell/Wilson 1995: 295; Saint-Martin 2000: 97).

The Policy Unit members from the private sector were mainly recruited from accountancies or consultancies. Many of them had previously worked at the *Conservative Research Department* or the Conservative think tank *CPS* (Lee et al. 1998: 103). These members sometimes struggled with the secrecy provisions in central government:

'Outsiders when they come to No. 10 are not secretive by nature, especially academics or journalists, or people who've operated in politics. The natural thing for them to do is tell other people what they're doing and discuss it. But you find that that's not the way things are done here. If you tell one of your colleagues something you shouldn't have, then you're much less likely to be told something by one of the established civil servants next time' (PU member, quoted by Campbell/Wilson 1995: 202-3).

Particularly at the end of Thatcher's first term in office, the professional occupations of these outsiders changed and more journalists were recruited to the Policy Unit (The Times, 02 August 1982: 3). In turn, this new composition facilitated the unit's contacts with the press and supported its framing of certain policy ideas. More importantly, these direct contacts to the media could be well used to increase the policy pressure on individual cabinet ministers but also the Conservative Party in general to adopt policy shifts according to the PM's substantial orientation (IUK05).

The mix of Whitehall insiders and outsiders changed over time and after the general election 1983, the ratio of outsiders to insiders increased rapidly up to more than 70%.¹⁰ The proportion of outsiders was explained by its first head with their capabilities 'to influence both methods and morale' (Hoskyns 1984: 10):

'Policy problem-solving is a growth industry, and the civil service, as government's own Direct Labour Organisation, has a monopoly. Because the service is not driven by an urgent need for results, it will not actively seek fresh minds and new experience from outside. (...) it would rather do without, because outside advice may devalue a department's accumulated expertise. It might even, by spectacular success, embarrass officials who are already tired of being blamed for every mistake.' (Hoskyns 1983: 143)

With regard to the educational background, all Policy Unit members had university qualifications, also post-graduate degrees (Lee et al. 1998: 107-14). Almost half of its members were trained as economists and only few were 'hard-edged policy analysts' (Williams 1983: 22). As such, their educational backgrounds were different from those of the mandarins (Kavanagh/Richards 2003: 182). The general rationale was to recruit high-flyers, especially after 1983 when the members were assigned to different portfolios:

'We must be of a stature intellectually and of an expertise that we can take on a departmental representative in a particular area. Our social policy person has to be as good as a senior person in the Department of Health and Social Security; our economist has to be as good, if so happens that he is better, as any senior person in the Treasury' (PU member, quoted by Campbell/Wilson 1995: 203).

In addition, the length of service differed across the occupational backgrounds of Policy Unit members: Whereas departmental secondees stayed during Thatcher's first term on average for three years, they left already after two years during her second term. Contrary, members with a private sector background left the unit earlier during the first term and stayed longer during the second term (see Table I.3).

Table I.3 The tenure of Policy Unit members under PM Thatcher (in months)

	PM Thatcher I (1979-83)	PM Thatcher II (1983-87)	PM Thatcher III (1987-90)	<i>mean</i>
civil service	36.0	24.0	36.0	32.0
outsiders	27.4	36.0	20.0	27.8
<i>mean</i>	31.7	30.0	28.0	29.9

Note: Numbers display all first appointments of Policy Unit members.

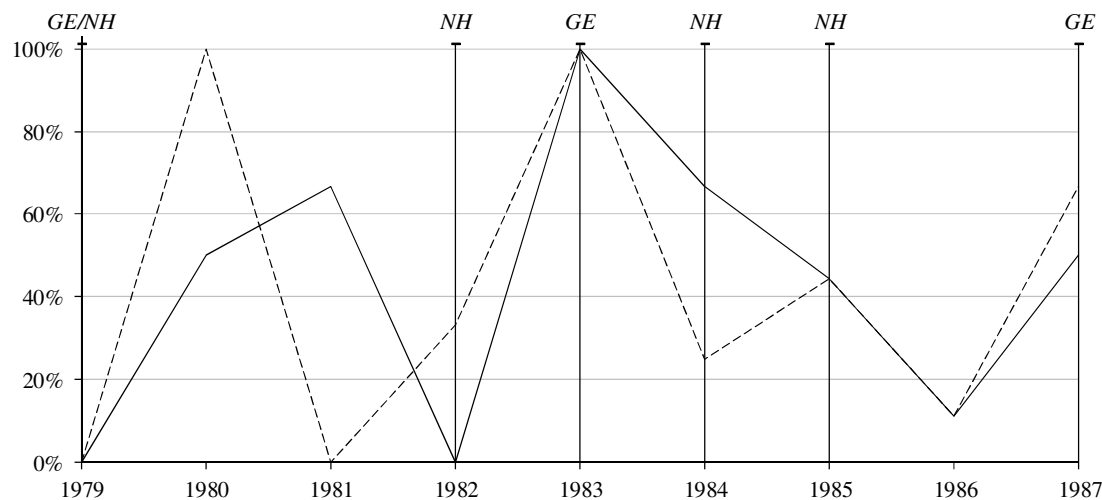
Source: Own illustration, information compiled from CSYB 1979-1997; Lee et al. 1998: 107-14.

¹⁰ Later when PM Major came into power, this ratio decreased slightly.

This tenure patterns also reflect the increasing unease among special advisers and departmental secondees alike to be working in the Policy Unit with its explicit mandate to support the PM and provide policy advice, also in competition with the departmental advice (IUK01, IUK19).

A closer analysis of the turnover of staff shows that newly recruited Policy Unit members often compensated the exit of previous members (see Figure I.2). Several times, more than half of the unit was replaced – with apparent negative effects on the organisational knowledge of the unit, which, however, was sometimes also intended, especially at the end of PM Thatcher's second term, i.e. the Policy Unit engaged more into partisan advice and required an apparent higher expertise in such issues and especially more contacts to the Conservatives headquarters (IUK08).

Figure I.2 The turnover of Policy Unit members, 1979-1987



Legend

— influx (related to total size) *GE* general election
 - - exit (related to total size) *NH* new head

Source: Own illustration, information compiled from CSYB 1979-1997.

The modus operandi of the Policy Unit changed between 1979 and 1987 (Kavanagh/Seldon 1999: 193). During the first years, the head of the Policy Unit was the key contact for the PM and attended cabinet committee meetings at the invitation of the PM and could speak there if called upon, especially for issues such as nationalised industries and reforming the civil service (Greenaway 1984: 70-1). Inside the Policy Unit, he acted

'as a quality controller. Important pieces of work are, if time permits, shown to him so he can ensure [they are] up to the Unit's normal standards of clarity and vigour. But each member of the Unit establishes their own character with the Prime Minister and the department in the areas they cover, work goes in under their signature, not that of the head of the Unit' (Willettts 1987: 447).

After the general election in 1983, each cabinet committee was attended by one Policy Unit member to grasp their discussions (Lee et al. 1998: 120; Kavanagh/Seldon 1999: 192). As such, the Policy Unit members developed close personal contacts to cabinet

ministers – enjoying a privilege which was not given to most senior civil servants (Campbell 1983: 69). In addition, the second head of the Policy Unit established several new practices, including his regular meetings with the PM on Friday mornings (Hennessy 1989: 654; Lee et al. 1998: 116, 118; Kavanagh/Seldon 1999: 159). Inside the unit, also new meeting formats were initiated, e.g. all unit members met each Monday and Thursday morning to review the PM's diary, discuss business coming up, and to allocate tasks (Willettts 1987: 447; Hennessy 1989: 226; Lee et al. 1998: 116). This general trend was also related to the growing size of the unit, requesting some formats for group discussions. Besides, each member was encouraged to spend one day a week outside Whitehall, e.g. to stay in touch with his previous employer, but also to visit factories, hospitals, schools etc. in order to ensure that they 'do not lose touch with valuable outside experience' (Willettts 1987: 448; Lee et al. 1998: 122).

In sum, the organisation of the CPRS and the Policy Unit during the second time period under scrutiny differed in terms of congruence with the structuring principles in Whitehall. On the one hand, the CPRS had existed already several years and its basic organisational features had thus been mostly incorporated into the organisational principles of the Cabinet Office. On the other hand, the Policy Unit had likewise existed since 1974, but gained a particular different organisational structure under its new client adding to its unconventional organisation in comparison to the rest of Whitehall. Both were created with an infinite *ex ante* durability, although the CPRS survived only the first legislative term of PM Thatcher whereas the Policy Unit was expanded in 1983 and survived also subsequent PMs. Both remained in their previous affiliation as a staff, the CPRS in the Cabinet Office and the Policy Unit in the Prime Minister's Office, but the former reported more often through the formal lines, i.e. the Cabinet Secretary, whereas the latter was directly reporting to the PM. Under PM Thatcher, the CPRS maintained its medium size whereas the Policy Unit was initially very small and expanded up to ten members only after the general election in 1983. Both units were characterised by a very low fragmentation, linking the head directly with its members, although the CPRS was equipped in 1982 with a second deputy head leading a distinct branch. Similar to the first time period under scrutiny, the expertness of both units can be regarded as non-conforming to bureaucratic convention: The two CPRS directors recruited under PM Thatcher came from the private sector; similarly the first three heads of the Policy Unit during her premiership were recruited from the private sector and only the fourth head came from the civil service. The CPRS remained its mix of in- and outsiders, resembling also PM Heath's first term with a dominance of outsiders, whereas the Policy Unit was composed of special advisers and departmental secondees. Yet, the percentage of members from outside central government increased considerably over time. The tenure of CPRS members had decreased and was lower than the tenure of Policy Unit members; in contrast, the turnover of CPRS members maintained and was slower than the turnover in the Policy Unit. As a consequence, the CPRS could easier keep its organisational memory, whereas the Policy Unit was more regularly filled with capacities for innovation.

4 The CPRS and the Policy Unit as agents in institutional politics

Under PM Thatcher, the CPRS addressed mainly long-term issues whereas the Policy Unit dealt mostly with short-term issues – which strengthened the latter's influence due to the narrower time horizons of politicians (Burch 1983: 407, 1988: 39; Jones 1985: 91; Kemp 1986: 60; Kavanagh/Seldon 1999: 25, 155). The two advisory arrangements operated rather separately and cooperated only occasionally, mostly when the CPRS needed partisan perceptions, e.g. how to present controversial policy recommendations or what to expect as a relevant policy in the next electoral campaign, or when the Policy Unit required CPRS capacities, e.g. its expertise gathered from Whitehall departments (Blackstone/Plowden 1988: 67). Despite their separate roles and different time horizons,

[b]oth shared a common interest in keeping abreast of thinking and planning in departments and in ensuring that *sectional interests did not hijack government policy*; both saw themselves as having the clearer view of ministerial priorities and sensitivities that did departmental (that is, career) civil servants, and as being more likely to work enthusiastically to reflect these in practice. They shared a *common disdain for those departments*, and the officials in them (...) and a common suspicion that Ministers in charge of such departments might "go native" and themselves come to reflect exactly the same influences.' (emphasis JF, Plowden 1991: 234)

In practice, however, their activities to avoid 'departmental hijacking' of government's priorities differed: Whereas the CPRS was mainly limited to issue reports on selected policy issues, the Policy Unit provided policy advice to the PM on a range of policy issues, during PM Thatcher's first term focussing on economic policy but afterwards expanding its issue horizon significantly – resulting in a stronger competition with the bureaucratic advice offered by Whitehall departments.

4.1 The CPRS as 'Ministry of Bright Ideas':¹¹ Reports and studies

Already at the first meeting between the CPRS director and the new PM, Thatcher stressed that her government had a 'clear philosophical direction' and thus needed no Think Tank in central government (Hennessy 1989: 635-6; Young 1989; Kavanagh/Seldon 1999: 167). This nowadays classic remark reveals two important aspects: On the one hand, the new PM rejected the major remit of the CPRS in providing policy direction, fulfilling a traditional think tank role by providing new ideas. On the other hand, she differed considerably from her Conservative predecessor Edward Heath in questioning that government would benefit from such a 'strategy dog, barking whenever government walks into the wrong direction' (IUK10). Yet, in contrast to its establishment in 1970 when cabinet members could affect the mandate of the CPRS, the narrowing of its mandate in 1979 was mainly decided by the PM.

In practice, the decline of the CPRS's mandate had already begun under previous PMs with the termination of several advisory activities (Hennessy 1989: 636). Now, the CPRS was mostly confined to the preparation of reports and studies (Blackstone/Plowden 1988: 215; Jackson 1988: 248).¹² Moreover, the new PM stopped the circulation of CPRS reports

¹¹ (Thatcher 1993: 277).

¹² HC Deb 09 November 1979 vol 973 cc361-2W.

to all cabinet ministers (Willetts 1987: 445), thus turning it into her personal 'supplementary intelligence unit' (Isserlis 1984: 23):

'The PM wanted the CPRS to help her translate her political and policy objectives into practice, and to tell her how far we could go or not, what the constraints are' (CPRS member, quoted by Campbell 1998: 121).

More importantly, the CPRS was deliberately limited in selecting the issues for its reports and studies. Officially, the PM was concerned that the CPRS would have 'gone native' and thus reinstated the cabinet committee overseeing its work, chaired by the Chancellor of the Exchequer and including the Secretary of State for Industry, the Secretary of State for the Environment as well as the CPRS director and the head of the Policy Unit (Hennessy 1989: 637).¹³ Already the composition of this steering committee revealed the diminished importance of the CPRS for government policy-making: The committee included only three cabinet ministers but also e.g. the head of the Policy Unit. In contrast to its predecessor under PM Heath, the new committee affected the issue selection of the CPRS significantly and commissioned it to concentrate on economic and industrial policy issues, supporting the PM as 'potential ally in her fight to bring Whitehall to toe under her brand of economics' (Campbell 1983: 64-5). In turn, the CPRS could influence cabinet ministers only with its industrial research, outside this narrow scope the cabinet was concerned only rarely with the CPRS or even refused to discuss its reports (James 1986: 433). Whereas the PM and cabinet were satisfied with this limited role of the CPRS, its members criticised this narrowed focus and its resulting fragmentation:

'The CPRS progressively stopped being a single multi-disciplinary team and became a collection of teams communicating and linked with each other mainly through top management.' (CPRS member, quoted by Blackstone/Plowden 1988: 199)

In more detail, the PM commissioned the CPRS in March 1981 to review the relations between government and nationalised industries. The CPRS report recommended inter alia a 'business group' of industrialists to monitor state industries, chaired by an experienced business figure. The report and its recommendations stipulated a 'battle royal' (Hennessy 1989: 644) in Whitehall between the CPRS and senior officials as well as some cabinet ministers, rejecting successfully its implementation. However, the report did initiate some changes at cabinet level, e.g. the creation of a new cabinet committee on nationalised industries – although the PM almost immediately reduced its status by opening its first session with the words 'Oh, no. Not the boring nationalised industries again' (The Economist, 1982).¹⁴ Shortly afterwards, the CPRS contributed to the Family Policy Group, drafting the Conservative Party manifesto to promote self-reliance and family life. But papers were passed to the press, and the exercise was again widely criticised for being an attack on the welfare state (James 1986: 433). Also other CPRS advice was leaked; the political embarrassment for the PM peaked when *The Economist* reported about a CPRS study of long-term public expenditure in September 1982, just in time to dominate the party conference season (IUK01; Hennessy 1989: 648-9; see also The Times, 02 June 1983: 4). The report addressed spending implications of a variety of economic scenarios

¹³ It was briefed by a subcommittee chaired by the CPRS director (Stephenson 1980: 93; Blackstone/Plowden 1988: 196; Hennessy 1989: 637).

¹⁴ Besides, this report also initiated the creation of new monitoring offices such as the 'Monopolies and Mergers Commission' and the 'Treasury Public Enterprise Analysis Unit' (Hennessy 1989: 644).

and appeared as recommending the dismantling of the welfare state by criticising the National Health Service (NHS), which is traditionally one of the 'issues non grata' in British politics (IUK39; Willetts 1987: 445). Again, cabinet rejected the study and senior cabinet ministers complained that this type of research ought to be carried out by the *Conservative Research Department* and not the CPRS (Hennessy 1989: 649). Eventually, the leaks antagonised other actors already sceptical of the CPRS (Campbell 1988: 263) – although practitioners were convinced that these leaks were not initiated by the CPRS but the civil service (IUK22; *The Times* 02 June 1983: 4; James 1986: 438; Jones 1987: 57):

'I note that journalists fail to understand that the leak is only rivalled as a Whitehall weapon by the accusation of leaking. If one can successfully create the impression that another organization or person is leaky then its sources of information may dry up and it can be easier to cut out of decision-taking' (Willetts 1987: 454)

Partly, the civil service had turned more critical to the CPRS because of the more radical recommendations in its reports that appeared from their perspective almost 'more Thatcherite than cabinet' (Hennessy 1989: 636):

'Half Whitehall took up arms against its proposals for privatization and for tightening the Treasury's grip on nationalized industries, and its survey of possible drastic reductions in public spending caused incredulous outrage: one Minister recalled being briefed against it by some 18 officials before the cabinet meeting at which it was discussed.' (James 1986: 437)

When in 1982 the Falkland crisis emerged, the CPRS lost further relevance because the PM and the cabinet focused on this short-term crisis – and the CPRS's reports could not provide any support in managing the crisis. As a CPRS member argued:

'[The] bitter experience in the CPRS (...) convinced me that most politicians – understandably enough – will not read regular, routine reports, still less reports about the future. They do not have time. What they want is reports on today's crisis – today's, not tomorrow's, and crisis, not routine.' (Plowden 1985: 401)

Due to its limited focus on reports and studies, which often gained considerable criticism even if they were formulated to please the new Conservative PM, the CPRS felt out of the 'policy loop' (Kavanagh/Seldon 1999: 18-9), as David Howell, one of the key advocates of creating the CPRS and meanwhile Secretary of State for Energy opined:

'The CPRS (...) had been asked to do strange one-off affairs and its reports had been leaked and bandied about in Parliament and any roles it was originally supposed to have, as a systematic, regular bringing together of reports of programme analysis through Whitehall to present an overall strategic picture to the Prime Minister in the cabinet, had long since disappeared. It had become a sort of one-off adventure.' (Howell, quoted by Hennessy 1986: 77)

Next to these shortcomings, the PM was also dissatisfied with the CPRS's capacities to ensure that Whitehall departments were in line with her sense of general strategic direction (Jones 1985: 89; Hennessy 1989: 650-1; Savoie 1994: 203). In fact, the CPRS's orientation towards distinct policy issues in the realm of economic and industrial policy had also reduced the contacts between the CPRS and the permanent bureaucracy, most notably the Treasury and the Department for Trade and Industry. The future-oriented and think-tank like advice in these reports was based upon contributions on information from the civil service, but had no further implications for the formulation of future policies – especially

since cabinet and its committees rejected the reports' recommendations regularly. Or as the PM commented on the CPRS's reports: 'Guffy stuff, like Ph.D. theses. We could do that kind of thing ourselves' (Thatcher, quoted by Blackstone/Plowden 1988: 185).

In short, PM Thatcher's later characterisation of the CPRS as 'Ministry of Bright Ideas' (1993: 277) summarises the two major critics that the CPRS faced during her first term in office: On the one hand, the CPRS was accused to have become almost a ministry in itself, too accustomed to Whitehall thinking and lacking a radical approach. On the other hand, its policy recommendations were seen as less feasible and could not satisfy the PM's needs. When PM Thatcher recognised the comparatively more helpful contribution of departmental special advisers to the formulation of the Conservative manifesto prior the general election in 1983, she became ultimately convinced that these could act as an adequate replacement of the CPRS (Burch 1983: 407; Jones 1987: 57; Hennessy 1989: 650; Thatcher 1995: 570; Lee et al. 1998: 122; Gay 2000: 29). After the general election in 1983, the PM abolished the CPRS:

'The CPRS had originally been set up by Ted Heath as a source of long-term policy advice for the Government, at a time when there were fewer private think-tanks, fewer special advisers in government and a widespread belief that great questions of the day could be resolved by specialised technical analysis. But a government with a firm philosophical direction was inevitably a less comfortable environment for a body with a technocratic outlook. And the Think Tank's detached speculations, when leaked to the press and attributed to Ministers, had the capacity to embarrass. The world had changed, and the CPRS could not change with it. For these and other reasons, I believe that my later decision to abolish the CPRS was right and probably inevitable. And I have to say I never missed it.' (Thatcher 1993: 30)

To sum up, the role of the CPRS in government policy-making under PM Thatcher was clearly diminished. Even though its core activity, the preparation of policy reports, was initially linked to strategic considerations, especially considering the limits and boundaries of radical policy ideas, these very recommendations caused severe criticism among cabinet members, perceiving this type of policy advice as too partisan for an element of the machinery of government and even dangerous to their policy agenda, as exemplified with leaked report findings before the party conference in 1982. Likewise, the civil service criticised the CPRS openly, feeling almost 'betrayed' by the Think Tank.

4.2 The Policy Unit as 'institutional David in a valley of Goliaths'¹⁵

The Policy Unit followed its mandate under previous PMs and offered policy advice to the PM, albeit it focused during Thatcher's first term mainly on economic and industrial policy (Smith/Stanyer 1980: 389; Campbell 1983: 70), as its first head during these years put it:

'In the first two-and-a-half years the most important thing is to help impose your election-winning policies on an often unwilling system. After that you need to work out policies on which to win the next election' (Hoskyns, quoted by *The Times* 04 May 1982: 8).

Hoskyns was convinced that the Conservative government's radical policy agenda would be 'constantly frustrated by the inadequacy of the civil service' (Gamble 1988: 234) and accordingly oriented the Policy Unit towards a competitive position to the Whitehall

¹⁵ (Campbell 1983: 69).

machinery, aiming to "de-privilege" the civil service'.¹⁶ Likewise, the new PM as key client of the Policy Unit was well-known for her 'irreverent' attitudes towards the civil service and requested from the Policy Unit an alternative view to the bureaucratic advice provided by Whitehall departments (Fry 1984: 325; Burch 1983: 410). In turn, the Policy Unit's initial activities avoided interactions with Whitehall officials – while shaping several pre-existing departmental wisdoms, especially in economic policy (IUK21).

After the general election in 1983 and the abolition of the CPRS, the Policy Unit's remit was significantly broadened, it started to mirror Whitehall departments and therefore leapt 'onto the radar scopes of officials' (Campbell 1998: 121; Lee et al. 1998: 117; see Sturm 1989: 179). More importantly, Policy Unit members engaged in direct interactions with departmental officials to influence departmental policy-making at an earlier stage. Overall, the activities of the Policy Unit during the second time period of analysis included (1) to comment and discuss departmental policy proposals and (2) to prepare reports, especially after the CPRS was abolished in 1983.

4.2.1 The Policy Unit getting 'in the loop':¹⁷ Policy briefs

Following previous practice, the Policy Unit's key task was to analyse and comment on departmental papers in order to prepare the PM for cabinet and cabinet committees (Lee et al. 1998: 119-120). These short papers or 'policy briefs' comprised about two to three pages and set the departmental policy proposal in a strategic context and made points for the PM to consider. The policy briefs presented what Whitehall departments had discussed, which options they had considered, which they had chosen – and which policy alternatives had not survived (Kandiah 1996: 117). As such, policy briefs were 'not afraid of putting forward what might initially appear to be politically far-fetched' (Willets 1987: 452) and tested departmental proposals 'to destruction' (Redwood, quoted by Harrison 1994: 208). In turn, they 'enable[d] the Prime Minister chairing the cabinet as a generalist to deal with departmental ministers on more equal terms' (Lee et al. 1998: 119). The first head of the Policy Unit concluded that the PM relied upon the Policy Unit because she

'may find that (...) she is being perhaps misled a little bit – probably quite sincerely misled – by people in a department with [a] much larger staff who have great mastery of all the detail and will say to No. 10 (...) "We really don't believe this is the right way to do it." So (...) she's got to have some people there who've got the time to do that sort of thinking and say "We don't agree."' (quoted by Hennessy 1989: 639)

In practice, the Policy Unit received all departmental papers sent to the PM as a copy, except those concerning appointments, foreign affairs or security issues (Willets 1987: 447). Although they addressed mostly matters of current concern and thus were often produced under considerable time pressure with deadlines from an hour to a few days, all policy briefs were expected to include solid and practical policy conclusions (Willets 1987: 449). Corresponding to its focus on economic policy during PM Thatcher's first term, the policy briefs during these years addressed primarily the implications of departmental policies for economic policy (Burch 1983: 407; Greenaway 1984: 71):

¹⁶ The phrase was written by the Hoskyns in an annex to a cabinet committee paper on strategy and priorities and was leaked to the press (HC Deb 26 November 1979 vol 974 c449W).

¹⁷ (Campbell 1998: 121).

[M]any of the ideas (...) came either directly from, or through conversations with, Norman Strauss, who worked with me in Downing Street on secondment from Unilever. He had concluded, long before I did – and rightly, in my view – that the cure for the British disease must start with government itself' (Hoskyns 1984: 3).

Similar to the early CPRS, the Policy Unit had initially rather difficult relationships with other units in the Prime Minister's Office. Particularly the Private Office with its 'immediate proximity to the Prime Minister and the insiders' grasp of the Whitehall network' (Campbell 1983: 70) tried to circumvent the delivery of Policy Unit's papers to the PM (Campbell 1983: 120-1; Willetts 1987: 447; Hennessy 1989: 639). Later, though, the new PPS to the PM Robin Butler ensured that the Policy Unit became the PM's papers on a routine basis (Campbell/Wilson 1995: 213; Kavanagh/Seldon 1999: 159). Besides, the Private Office members had realised that the Policy Unit could also remove pressure from them with its political advocacy for some departmental policy proposals and rejection of others – which, in turn, preserved the role of the Private Office as neutral broker (Campbell/Wilson 1995: 202). However, similar contested relationships arose again at the end of PM Thatcher's second term when the Policy Unit was actively side-lined by the Private Office as a response to the new head's abrasive style against permanent officials in Number Ten (Kavanagh/Seldon 1999: 193-4). The closest and most cooperative contacts established the Policy Unit with the individual special advisers in the Prime Minister's Office, most notably the PM's economic adviser Alan Walters (Burch 1983: 407).¹⁸ In addition, the Policy Unit held close relations with the special advisers at the Treasury – also because one of them had been initially discussed as co-head of the Policy Unit (IUK10). The cohesion of viewpoints between Policy Unit members, the PM's economic special adviser and the special advisers at the Treasury increased the centre's considerable control over economic policy (Burch 1983: 411; Kavanagh/Seldon 1999: 155).

Occasionally, the PM referred directly to policy briefs in cabinet and cabinet committees, thus tacitly criticising the Cabinet Office briefs that were considered to be unsuitable to provide 'candid and unorthodox advice' (Savoie 1994: 203; Lee et al. 1998: 119). As a response, the Cabinet Office and the Policy Unit had a 'friendly rivalry' (Lee et al. 1998: 119), also because the former was accused by the latter to follow its own hidden policy agenda – disregard of the official neutrality rule for permanent officials, as one of the unit's members put it (Greenaway 1984: 71):

'Sometimes, even inside the Cabinet Office, strong policy views developed. And, their staff would try to do a policy unit type job. And, sometimes, they became disingenuous. I remember one occasion, one senior Cabinet Office official (...) writing an anti-Treasury brief to the PM and then going to the Treasury Minister after a meeting where Treasury was defeated and saying "I'm terribly sorry that you lost, we did all we could"' (quoted by Campbell/Wilson 1995: 198).

¹⁸ After nearly one year in power, some Conservative MPs pressured the PM to alter her economic policy. As a reaction, Thatcher appointed in October 1980 Alan Walters, a Professor of Economics at Johns Hopkins University, as her 'economic adviser' (Campbell 1983: 51; Harris 1996: 54; Jones 1987: 59; Lee et al. 1998: 124-5). In 1989, Walters and the Chancellor of the Exchequer Nigel Lawson disagreed about the Exchange Rate Mechanism and the latter demanded the former's dismissal. Thatcher's refusal to this request is widely perceived as the prelude to Lawson's resignation – which heralded also the PM's own downfall (Kingdom 1991: 336; Smith 1994; Lee et al. 1998: 100; Kavanagh/Seldon 1999: 195).

Also later attempts of Hoskyns to influence departmental policy-making in a rather top-down approach by attending the weekly committee preparing cabinet under the chairmanship of the Cabinet Secretary resulted in frequent rows with the latter (IUK02). Eventually, though, these rivalling relationships neither jeopardised the impact of the Policy Unit on government's economic policy-making nor endangered the Cabinet Office's traditional role as honest broker of departmental interests. Instead, they were seen as a rather typical side-effect of 'line and staff people working for the same course' (IUK26).

The cabinet ministers were well aware about the crucial role of the Policy Unit – especially those acting in policy areas relevant to the government's economic policy agenda. During Thatcher's first term, though, they perceived the Policy Unit mainly as a small number of policy advisers servicing the PM – the functional equivalent to their own departmental special advisers. Moreover, the Policy Unit aimed to establish close contacts with the ministers' private offices and departmental special advisers (Campbell 1983: 69; James 1993: 501; Willetts 1987: 448). Accordingly, Policy Unit members attended the regular meetings of all departmental special advisers (Kavanagh/Seldon 1999: 186-7). By these contacts, the Policy Unit received early warnings of department policy proposals; in turn, departmental advisers could inform their ministers about the PM's thinking and likely reactions to their policy proposals (Campbell/Wilson 1995: 214).

However, the initially rather smooth interactions between the Policy Unit and cabinet members became occasionally less harmonious – when the Policy Unit briefed the PM for one of her bilateral meetings with a particular cabinet minister, which was also attended by the Policy Unit and the minister's special advisers (Willetts 1987: 448; Burch 1988: 39; Wilson 2006: 164; Lee et al. 1998: 120):

'The pattern varies but is often along these lines. Mrs Thatcher will ask a particular cabinet colleague to prepare a paper on a particular issue just for her, not for the cabinet or a cabinet committee. (...) The Minister is summoned to No. 10 with his back-up team. He sits across the table from Mrs Thatcher and her team, which can be a mixture of people from the Downing Street Private Office, the Policy Unit and the Cabinet Office, with one or two personal advisers and sometimes a Treasury Minister. She then, in the words of one insider, proceeds to "act as judge and jury in her own case".' (Hennessy 1986: 102-3)

Although these meetings addressed specifically ministers heading departments that were perceived as problematic, because their policy proposals did not comply with the PM's requests or the Minister had made individual mistakes, they provided an opportunity for the Policy Unit to broaden its 'advisory horizon' beyond the focus on economic policy-making. Partly, these bilateral meetings were used by the Policy Unit to follow-up its own policy briefs, i.e. checking departmental submissions after a policy brief on previous drafts that had been very critical and highlighting to the PM the shortcomings of the new draft and departmental incapacities in implementing the policy conclusions of the Policy Unit. The first head of the Policy Unit under PM Thatcher summarised these activities as

'the unending task of clarifying, again and again, as precisely as possible and with small shifts of perception and insight, what it was that the Government was trying to accomplish in its critical first term, and then checking whether the necessary actions looked likely to work' (Hoskyns 2000: 127).

As a consequence, the civil service assumed that the rather hidden unit at the Prime Minister's Office is 'whispering campaigns against Ministers who had fallen out of favour'

(Smith 1995: 117). Partly, these characterisations were supported by lacking direct contacts between departmental officials and the Policy Unit.

Nevertheless, civil servants were well aware of how to counteract policy briefs – by sending their policy proposals as late as possible to Number Ten:

'Of course, if a department sends in a paper late in the day needing an urgent decision, there will be little time to prepare a properly considered appraisal. (...) But members of the unit must be prepared to stay late and to brief at short notice, so that departments don't believe they can escape Policy Unit scrutiny simply by sending a paper in after 6 p.m. with a reply needed the following morning.' (Willets 1987: 447-8)

These resentments of the civil service towards the early Policy Unit can be well illustrated with a story told by Andrew Duguid, the departmental secondee in the Policy Unit between 1979 and 1982, to the first head of the Policy Unit Hoskyns:

'He said "you know, after I had been working in the Unit for about six months, I had to go over to one of the big departments of state to find something out, talk to one or two people for you". So he arrived and said "I have just come over from the Policy Unit, John Hoskyns wondered whether you could let me have some information on such and such". (...) the two quite senior officials sat in the room, looked out of the window, and one said to the other "Andrew, this fellow Hoskyns, do we tell him what we tell everybody else, or do we tell him the truth?" And there was a pause, and Andrew said "I think it would be a good idea if you told him the truth."' (Hoskyns, quoted by Kandiah 1996: 123)

Put differently: The Policy Unit was recognised as an influential actor with direct impact on the PM's view – but could be easily counteracted by providing false information. Partly, though, departmental resistance was also related to the area of economic policy, i.e. the Policy Unit experienced difficulties in pushing through radical economic reforms against a Whitehall bureaucracy 'enmeshed in the "post-War consensus" and wedded to interventionist (...) policies that Thatcher was determined to reverse' (Talbot 2005: 8).

Besides, and although Hoskyns tried to circumvent it due to the limited resources of the unit, the Policy Unit became increasingly involved in partisan issues – eventually increasing the partisan perspective in its advisory products, most notably its policy briefs (Lee 1974: 176; Pryce 1997: 123; Kavanagh/Seldon 1999: 123, 159).¹⁹ In practice, the Policy Unit provided this partisan advice e.g. in speechwriting – which aimed 'to marshal the case' for particular governmental policies 'by moulding the public opinion – to which the Conservative party must later respond' (Harrison 1994: 218). Accordingly, it sought to equip the government to

'display to the public their long-term vision, not just in terms of values, but in terms of strategic change. (...) If this means that big problems must be publicly debated, Ministers should not make the mistake of trying to "keep it simple". Let the uncertainties and complexities speak for themselves. People know the world is a complicated place. If the thinking is good enough, the words and the understanding will follow' (Hoskyns 1984: 9).

In addition, its role in briefing the PM for Prime Minister's Questions in Parliament required regular communication with the Conservative Party headquarters. More

¹⁹ Although Hoskyns was not a 'party political animal', he also advised Thatcher on personnel policy regarding her cabinet and the party and issued e.g. a note that she should behave better towards her cabinet ministers (Kavanagh/Seldon 1999: 156).

importantly, though, this activity meant a complete check of all recent departmental policy activities, with a special emphasis to those which would be criticised by the Opposition:

'whereas Mr Attlee, and I think probably Mr Macmillan and Mr Heath, were quite content to say, "You must ask the Foreign Secretary or the Chancellor of the Exchequer" or whoever "that question", Mrs Thatcher certainly prided herself on being able to field all the questions and know all about them. (...) It made her briefing for Parliamentary Questions a much more elaborate process but she was simply reluctant to appear unwilling to answer questions on any subject which came up at all.' (Armstrong, quoted by HL 30 [2010]: Q111)

Here, the Policy Unit used its contacts to the party, but also its network of private office officials and departmental special advisers across Whitehall. The partisan activities of the Policy Unit increased over time, particularly after the general election in 1983. The PM requested the Policy Unit to collaborate with various actors more regularly, most notably the *Conservative Research Department* and the party headquarters (Burch 1983: 407). The Policy Unit was also heavily involved in drafting the Conservative manifesto for the general election in 1987 – which may indicate the expanded remit and influence of the unit at departmental level, providing it with an overview over departmental activities and thus upcoming issues on the policy agenda for the next legislative term (IUK22). However, when the Falklands crisis arose, foreign affairs became *the* government's priority and much of the Policy Unit's work diminished in relevance (Willetts 1987: 446; Hennessy 1989: 652-3; Lee et al. 1998: 117, 119).

After the general election in 1983, the Policy Unit broadened its remit and mirrored Whitehall departments with the general aim to get an earlier account of departmental policies. As a consequence, Policy Unit members spent 'more and more time attempting to keep the existing policy on the rails and less and less time working on new ones' (The Times 04 May 1982: 8). Also other changes in the Whitehall machinery had arguably supported this new role:

'[T]he Prime Minister's need was quite different now, that she had her own hand-picked permanent secretaries in charge of the key departments, that the manifesto needed to be enacted not rewritten (...) – giving practical advice of *how to do* what needs to be done' (emphasis original, Hoskyns, quoted by The Times 08 March 1984: 14).

Following its broader remit, all Policy Unit members attended the cabinet committees corresponding to their mirrored portfolio in order to gather information and to observe the discussions between cabinet ministers (Lee et al. 1998: 120; Kavanagh/Seldon 1999: 192). Despite their participation, cabinet ministers were well aware that the viewpoints of the Policy Unit were not necessarily solid, as the Chancellor of the Exchequer noted:

'Griffiths [Head of the Policy Unit, JF] was always a very difficult man to engage. He would always agree with what one had said to him, but then he would go to Margaret, the Prime Minister, who he was working for, and then he would say something totally different so you never quite knew where you were with Griffiths' (Lawson, quoted by Ribbins/Sherratt 2004: 727).

In more detail, the Policy Unit maintained its interest in economic policy but became also engaged in other key policy areas relevant to the PM such as educational reform (Jones 1985: 93; Campbell 1998: 110; Lee et al. 1998: 121; Wilson 2006: 165). The basic rationale was to shape departmental thinking about certain policies, but also to improve the

PM's decision-making capability. The then Chancellor of the Exchequer summarised this role later as

'some back up. Prime Ministers always feel that they need their own people as back up. (...) the Prime Minister feels that she too needs somebody and [the Policy Unit] was more in that capacity of providing her with that important official back-up; providing papers for her and giving comments on the papers that she received' (Lawson, quoted by Ribbins/Sherratt 2004: 727).

As a consequence, the bilateral meetings between the PM and cabinet ministers became more likely for those cabinet members leading departments that had previously not been a priority of the Policy Unit. Now, the Policy Unit briefed the PM not only about the latest departmental policy proposals and the unit's critical viewpoint on them, but also on further issues about media coverage, public appearance of the Minister – and interacting effects of the respective department's policy with other government policies (IUK22).

In addition, policy briefs were increasingly used by the PM to side-line departmental responsibilities (Willetts 1987: 448) – using the Policy Unit as a 'boomerang':

'[T]he Policy Unit supplies the Prime Minister with a radically new policy consistent with her principles and instincts. She announces this policy in a glare of publicity, thereby establishing a political *fait accompli*. The debate having thus been finessed and forestalled, the relevant Department is left with the job of trying to make the innovation work. As the policy is commonly only in outline form and has not been subject to the filter of critical scrutiny, this task has been known to present some difficulties.' (emphasis original, Rosenhead 1992: 297-8)

Eventually, Whitehall departments became well aware of the Policy Unit's expanded role in briefing the PM – and close ties with the unit became "'indispensable" to serving their Ministers' (Campbell 1998: 121). Put differently: The contacts between the Policy Unit and Whitehall departments increased also because the latter assumed the Policy Unit as more relevant for succeeding with their policy proposals in cabinet (Ribbins/Sherratt 2004: 726). In practice, departmental officials would notify the Policy Unit in advance about key departmental policy proposals and asking for a preliminary assessment (IUK22). But also the Policy Unit benefited from its stronger relationships with departments:

'To get into the virtuous circle it is important to have good relations with knowledgeable, conscientious, and intellectually honest Whitehall officials. They will deal with the unit once it is clear that the unit exists to help carry the business of government forward, not just to throw a spanner in the works, nor to write fanciful briefs of the "Wouldn't it be nice if the weather were better" variety. Over the past few years the Policy Unit has successfully got into this virtuous circle without in any way surrendering its prime loyalty to the Prime Minister' (Willetts 1987: 454).

As a result, the Policy Unit became more and more a 'control device over the operation of departments' (Richards/Smith 2006: 331; Willetts 1987: 447). Interestingly, this enhanced formal role in the formative process of government policy-making was still strongly linked towards the very initial part of that process, i.e. the Policy Unit provided also increasingly policy ideas leading to 'original and innovative public policy initiatives' (Ward 1993: 302). In turn, the impact of the Policy Unit on government policy-making was not straightforward visible, instead the unit members perceived their influence as

'very difficult (...) to judge, because frequently when you thought you had succeeded in doing something, you might only have been pushing on a door that was already opening. It

may have been that you were simply coinciding with advice coming from elsewhere. And, on the other side of the coin, if the Whitehall machine is headed firmly in one direction it is very difficult to stop' (Graham, quoted by Kandiah 1992: 113-4).

4.2.2 The Policy Unit as 'powerhouse of ideas':²⁰ Think pieces

The crucial role of the Policy Unit in providing policy ideas was further expressed in its second key advisory product. Already during PM Thatcher's first term, the Policy Unit devoted some of its resources in preparing 'think pieces' on long-term issues, reasoning in the words of Hoskyns that the 'government is a creature without a brain' (1984: 7). In practice, these think pieces had approx. 20 pages and were submitted to the PM, addressing issues that were important but may not have received appropriate attention yet (Lee et al. 1998: 121). The Policy Unit selected the topic of its think pieces by itself, often inspired by discussions in cabinet or cabinet committees (IUK22). During the early years, these pieces addressed particularly the new general principles for economic policy-making (Fry 1984: 355):

'the Policy Unit should not be a sort of in-house consultancy waiting to be told what to do, waiting for jobs and problems to crop up. What it should be doing is thinking ahead and saying to her [PM Thatcher, JF] and her colleagues "These are the important issues which have to be thought about in roughly the following sequence (...) There are other things which people may be trying to make you spend a lot of time [on] (...) but which are not actually central in strategic sense"' (Hoskyns, quoted by Hennessy 1989: 638).

The general objective of think pieces was to provide 'thinking-through advice, rather than hard-nosed technocratic analysis, with a political slant' (Bulmer 1988: 35). Occasionally, these think pieces also followed up policy briefs, especially on alternative options that had not been considered by Whitehall departments (Kandiah 1992: 113-4). As such, the think pieces were supposed to 'challenge the existing policy positions of departments' (Richards/Smith 2006: 330; Ribbins/Sherratt 2004: 726):

'[They] gave Thatcher a "non-Whitehall" perspective on departmental advice and (...) had the capacity to be a "creative" think tank, which presumably a Whitehall-based CPRS did not have' (Savoie 1994: 203).

However, the think pieces had also practical implications: In order to follow-up those pieces addressing economic policy, the PM established a new cabinet committee on future economic policy, its meetings were prepared by the Policy Unit and Treasury officials (Burch 1983: 411). The PM was persuaded by the Policy Unit to establish such a committee with the argument that the electorate had already decided upon a radical policy direction and thus the government was charged with carrying it through – which was a matter of administration rather than cabinet discussions (Burch 1983: 411).

Next to the central theme of economic recovery, Hoskyns had also a keen interest in civil service reform and reshaping Whitehall in the long term, recognising that

'the essential feature of a bureaucratic monopoly is that it does not have to do what it does not want to do. It will not reform itself and, so far, politicians (...) have not been able to do it for them. The result of all this has been, I suggest, a sort of leadership vacuum. At the national level, a deeply pessimistic civil service looks for political leadership (...) to a tiny handful of exhausted ministers. Those same ministers look in vain to their officials to provide policy options which, to be any use, would have to be too "politically controversial" for the officials to think of' (Hoskyns 1983: 143).

²⁰ PMO official, quoted by Campbell (1998: 118).

As a consequence, Hoskyns identified a lack of strategy in Whitehall – and concluded a necessity in 'shifting the political frame of reference' (1984: 4):

[T]he much used word "strategy" is not understood as the step-by-step removal of constraints (administrative, political, economic) so as to make an insoluble problem soluble. There is a confusion between winning today's battles, which is one thing, and making tomorrow's battles winnable, which is quite another' (Hoskyns 1984: 8).

In other words, Hoskyns was well aware that a framing of government policy-making would support the new government and criticised the 'We've seen it all before syndrome':

'At meetings to discuss difficult problems – sometimes even on things as crucial as the Budget, sometimes on legislation – there would be (...) people round the table who were saying "You know, we've tried all these things before" or "You know, they tried that in 1973 and it didn't work" (...). There is never the feeling, which I've experienced a lot in business, of excitement, of brainstorming – producing half-baked ideas out of which people suddenly begin to see that maybe we've got something here' (Hoskyns, quoted by Hennessy 1989: 641).

To inject a new thinking across Whitehall on strategy, the Policy Unit stressed in its reports frequently the relevance of more strategic considerations (IUK01, IUK22). Moreover, it held seminars to canvass new ideas (Kavanagh/Seldon 1999: 159). These seminars included senior civil servants of various departments and aimed towards the professional norms of bureaucratic work, recognising a lack of strategic orientation:

'Although young civil servants are sent on management-flavoured courses at Sunningdale, the Civil Service does not seem to have made any front-end investment in policy-making method for real life, top level use in Whitehall. There is no "*policy on policy-making*" (emphasis JF, Hoskyns 1984: 9).

During PM Thatcher's first term, the small size of the Policy Unit limited its capacities to prepare longer reports (Blackstone/Plowden 1988: 67). Similarly, the PM preferred short, precise, and practical proposals (Lee et al. 1998: 119):

'In those early days, the No.10 Policy Unit went into purdah for several months working out how to get from where we were to where we wanted to be. Stern faced, you stalked the corridors of No.10 warning against the superficial solutions and the easy compromises. If I asked for a joke for a speech, I got back twenty pages of strategic analysis.' (Thatcher [1987])²¹

To compensate the limitation of its own resources and expand the scientific basis of its advice, the Policy Unit affiliated external advisers, most notably academics (The Times 13 October 1981: 10; Murswieck 1994: 113). In addition, the Policy Unit developed close contacts to Conservative think tanks in order to get further ideas for topics that could be relevant for the PM (Harris 1996: 58-9; Bakvis 1997: 98).

After the general election in 1983, the Policy Unit prepared think pieces on a wider range of government policies (Harrison 1994: 217; Lee et al. 1998: 118). In turn, its framing activities were somewhat reoriented towards the timing, tactics and details of policy initiatives (Kavanagh/Seldon 1999: 159). Hence, whereas during PM Thatcher's first term the framing activities of the Policy Unit addressed primarily a new paradigm of economic policy-making, the enlarged Policy Unit during Thatcher's second term broadened its issue

²¹ Speech to the *Institute of Directors*, 24 February 1987.

horizon and framing activities towards a wider range of policy issues (IUK26; Lee et al. 1998: 121).

As a side effect of the Policy Unit's expanding role as 'grand suggestions box'²² for new policy ideas, it increased its contacts to actors outside government (Lee et al. 1998: 118). Thus, Policy Unit members were encouraged to pick up ideas from the outside world; they stayed in touch with their former employers and made visits to get direct experiences. In addition, they gathered ideas from right-wing academics and researchers and kept more contacts to 'new-right' think tanks such as the *Centre of Policy Studies*, the *Adam Smith Institute* or the *Institute for Economic Affairs* (Willettts 1987: 452; Gaffney 1991: 5; Harrison 1994: 217; Seldon 1994: 154; Harris 1996: 58-9; Bakvis 1997: 98; Lee et al. 1998: 122). As a consequence, the Policy Unit became a broker for a range of think tanks to get access to the government. In addition, the Policy Unit dropped its initial strategy to avoid contacts to the media and instead made considerable efforts to liaison with it, also facilitated by an increasing recruitment of journalists and speechwriters to the unit (Kavanagh/Seldon 1999: 156).

4.3 Concluding remarks

The two advisory arrangements at the centre of the British government during the first two terms of PM Thatcher differed considerably with regard to their influence on government policy-making. The CPRS lost several of its previous responsibilities and was thus very limited to shape the institutional underpinnings to govern. Put differently: The CPRS's role as an innovative central capability and 'grit in the machine' was worn smooth (Willettts 1987: 445; Isserlis 1984: 28-9). More importantly, the CPRS had been slowly assimilated into Whitehall over time – which was perceived by its members as a very good chance 'to lead the machine itself into adapting to the new orthodoxy' (Hennessy 1989: 637) but dissatisfied the PM and led ultimately to its abolition. In contrast, the Policy Unit focused initially on economic policy but experienced a 'gradual accretion of power' (Campbell 1998: 120) over time that affected its advisory activities and targeting of the institutional underpinnings to govern. As stressed by the PM in a newspaper interview introducing this case study, the Policy Unit gained comparatively more influence on government policy-making than the CPRS and increased its activities to shape the institutional underpinnings to govern at cabinet and departmental level.

First, the Policy Unit aimed to influence the *regulative* underpinnings to govern e.g. with its policy briefs, altering the pre-existing rules on decision-making in cabinet and cabinet committees. Similar to the CPRS's collective briefs during the early 1970s, the policy briefs by the Policy Unit changed the rules for submission of cabinet papers by forcing Whitehall departments to prevent a negative assessment of their proposals. Yet, departmental officials also aimed to resist these attempts by either delaying the submissions of their departmental policy proposals or by providing insufficient information to the Policy Unit. In addition, the policy briefs contributed to a practice of 'creeping bilateralism' (Hennessy 1994a: 443) between the PM and cabinet ministers, creating a new arena for preparing and, in fact, making cabinet decisions. Moreover, these bilaterals can be regarded as a rather successful

²² (Willettts 1987: 452).

mean to introduce new policy-specific rules of the executive game, applied on ministers responsible for a particular policy issue. Put differently: The cabinet ministers had to accept and participate in bilaterals as new means to prepare cabinet decisions on policy issues in their remit. Hence, both advisory activities stressed a new centralisation rule in cabinet. Here, the Policy Unit benefited from its direct affiliation to the PM that supported an expedient role and enabled its members to defeat competitors, e.g. the Cabinet Secretariats or the Private Office inside Number Ten. To the contrary, though, the size of the unit limited its remit towards focussing on issues of particular concern to the PM.

Second, the Policy Unit aimed to change the *normative* underpinnings to govern at cabinet level via its policy briefs and support of bilaterals, promoting a centralisation norm in cabinet that challenged the pre-existing collectivism norm (Campbell/Wilson 1995: 202). However, during Thatcher's first term these activities were substantially limited to economic policy-making and thus addressed rather policy-specific rules of the executive game involving a few cabinet members. After 1983, though, the Policy Unit expanded its briefing to other policy issues and its preparing of bilaterals with various cabinet members in order to strengthen the centralisation in cabinet as a basic norm of appropriate government policy-making. By and large, cabinet members accepted this new norm and the crucial role of the Policy Unit. Besides, the Policy Unit addressed the lacking strategic orientation in Whitehall via seminars teaching more strategy-oriented behaviour, but most dominantly by injecting strategic considerations as early as possible. Particularly under Thatcher's second term, the Policy Unit members mirroring Whitehall departments got engaged into departmental policy-making earlier than before – allowing them to disseminate a new general norm on interactions between the centre and the departments but also establishing new policy-specific norms at departmental level, prescribing the legitimate means in various policy areas. Also the adjusted internal organisation supported a stronger normative strategy, i.e. the recruitment of members with professional expertise in the policy areas that they mirrored increased the unit's knowledge about previous departmental norms and potential ambiguities that could be exploited to disseminate new legitimate means. More generally, the explicit orientation of the PM's Policy Unit towards standards in the private sector was perceived as clearly opposite to the bureaucratic norms, but was eventually included to some extent into the civil service (Savoie 2008: 84).

Lastly, the CPRS concentrated mainly on shaping the *cognitive* underpinnings to govern via its think pieces and reports that challenged pre-existing cognitive worldviews among governmental actors. Yet, these advisory activities were widely neglected by cabinet ministers and departmental officials alike. The Policy Unit focused initially on the policy-specific taken-for-granted worldviews with regard to 'stabilising the economy'. Together with other key actors, most notably the PM's special adviser on economic policy as well as the special advisers at the Treasury, it was able to virtually dictate the outlines of macroeconomic policy for several years (Hall 1993: 287). In turn, this powerful frame was clearly installed in a top-down fashion without interactions with the permanent civil service. Over time, the Policy Unit engaged also more strongly to shape the basic cognitive conventions of collectivism in cabinet with its policy briefs and support of bilaterals, making cabinet members well aware that their departmental proposals should be in line with the Policy Unit's policy viewpoints in order to get its support and subsequently the

PM's approval, thus emphasising a 'more centralised world' in cabinet. Later, though, the Policy Unit realised that direct interactions with line officials can be as influential as the rather autarkic formulation of a policy frame and top-down application of such cognitive convictions in bilaterals with cabinet ministers. Accordingly, it turned not only towards a wider range of issues but started also to discuss departmental proposals more proactively with officials in order to frame distinct policy issues and thus influence policy-specific cognitive conventions but also to shape the basic cognitive rules of the executive game eventually by disseminating a worldview on how to govern – with a more powerful centre.

To conclude, the CPRS was mainly marginalised under PM Thatcher and therefore its limited advisory activities can rarely be identified as carriers for institutional strategies addressing the institutional underpinnings to govern. In contrast, the Policy Unit addressed particularly the institutional underpinnings at cabinet level; it initiated new rules, aimed to strengthen a centralisation norm as well as a cognitive paradigm in economic policy. Over time, it expanded its activities and addressed likewise the more basic institutional underpinnings to govern while engaging into more direct interactions with Whitehall departments, formalising the crucial role of the centre in departmental policy-making, prescribing the more interventionist role of the centre as appropriate and disseminating an underlying cognitive worldview allowing such interventions.

'[T]he import of special advisers is not a breach in the walls of propriety; it is a perfectly sensible way of enlarging the scope of advice and making government move [sic]. As I discovered early on, the problem with the traditional Civil Service was not obstruction, but inertia.'
(Blair 2010: 19)

Chapter J Policy advice under PM Blair, 1997-2005

Under PM Tony Blair, a plethora of advisory arrangements emerged at the centre of British government, servicing various clients with less distinguishable formal mandates. In the Prime Minister's Office, the pre-existing Policy Unit remained, but was expanded in terms of functions and resources. In the Cabinet Office, a 'Performance and Innovation Unit' (PIU) was created in 1999, echoing in several respects the CPRS of the early 1970s. After two years, a more clandestine 'Forward Strategy Unit' (FSU) was established as 'sister unit' of the PIU, servicing the PM only. In 2002, both units were merged as 'PM's Strategy Unit' in the Cabinet Office, maintaining major functions of its two predecessors, i.e. working as a think tank in government, albeit with a clear priority for policy issues of key importance to the PM. In the Treasury, the Chancellor of the Exchequer Gordon Brown set up a Council of Economic Advisers (CEA) in order to accommodate more special advisers at his disposal. Moreover, a 'Productivity and Reform Team' was established as departmental think tank to advise on policy issues of particular importance to the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The next subchapter describes the key developments prior the general election in 1997. Afterwards, the new advisory system at the centre of government after the general election in 1997 is examined, together with its rearrangement at the beginning of PM Blair's second term in 2001. The third subchapter scrutinises the organisational structure of the various advisory arrangements. The final subchapter analyses their major activities and attempts to affect the institutional underpinnings of government policy-making.

1 Prologue: A perceived lack of advisory capacities at the centre

Already in the late 1980s, a debate arose about how to reform the advisory system at the centre of British government, driven forward by a parliamentary committee (TCSC 1986) and the 'Re-Skilling Government Group' which was led by a former head of the Policy Unit (Lipsey 1987; RIPA 1987). However, the general features of the advisory system at the centre of government remained (Kavanagh/Seldon 1999: 213; Lee et al. 1998: 122-4). When PM John Major came into office in 1990, he increased the partisan remit of the Policy Unit, because of the imminence of the upcoming general election in 1992 and the discipline a party manifesto imposed on cabinet ministers and their departments (Kavanagh/Seldon 1999: 219-23; Lee et al. 1998: 124). After the general election in 1992, the Policy Unit was more drawn into day-to-day matters and crisis management (Lee et al. 1998: 116; Kavanagh/Seldon 1999: 221; Richards/Smith 2006: 330). However, the declining authority of the PM in cabinet undermined also the Policy Unit's influence in Whitehall over time (Kavanagh/Seldon 1999: 221).

Simultaneously, Labour Party advisers studied the centre of British government, similar to the Conservative advisers prior the general elections in 1970 and 1979

(Mandelson/Liddle 1996, Mandelson 2010: 194-5, 199-200, 215; Halpern/Wood 1996). They identified a 'need to make more specialist advice available to the Prime Minister' and a Prime Minister's Office equipped with 'the means of formulating and driving forward strategy for the government as a whole' (Mandelson/Liddle 1996: 240). In addition, they recommended that the Cabinet Office should engage more actively in government policy-making – supporting the PM:

'A more proactive approach will be particularly important if a Blair-led government wants to create areas of cross-departmental administration which are not covered by existing Whitehall structures. (...) The Cabinet Office should be more akin to a department of the Prime Minister and cabinet, charged with actively carrying forward the cross-departmental policies agreed by the cabinet, with the cabinet secretary acting more in future like a policy-making permanent secretary than (...) a business manager and minute-taker' (Mandelson/Liddle 1996: 242).

Besides, they suggested expanding the functional and organisational remit of both the Policy Unit and the Cabinet Office to conduct a more centralised approach in government policy-making:

'The plan, as I heard it described before the election with great clarity, was for a stronger No. 10 which, through an enhanced Downing Street Policy Unit working closely with a more proactive Cabinet Office acting as 'a Whitehall whip', would drive the machine as a whole especially on these key pledges (...) that lay at the heart of Labour's appeal to the electorate' (Hennessy 1998b: 13).

Yet, compared to the plans of the Conservative advisers in the 1960s, the Labour opposition plans were rather vague and lacked detailed blueprints (Hennessy 2000c: 337, 2005: 7). In fact, senior party figures were contested about how to organise advice at the centre: Whereas the former party leader Kinnock suggested a unit modelled after the CPRS, servicing cabinet as a whole; party leader Blair's personal aides favoured a beefed-up Policy Unit servicing the PM (Theakston 1998: 19; Mandelson 2010: 199).

The most pivotal event for Treasury's internal organisation during the early 1990s was the publication of the 'Fundamental Review of HM Treasury's Running Costs' (HMT 1994), commonly known as 'Southgate Report' which reviewed the internal structures and processes of HMT (HMT 1994; Pollitt 1997: 19). The report recommended a reduction of 25% of senior management staff as well as a stronger delegation of activities in the civil service management area to the Office of the Public Service in the Cabinet Office. As a result, the Treasury significantly streamlined its organisation and henceforth was rather oriented towards the 'hard stuff' of civil service management, i.e. numbers and costs, and relinquished most of its activities regarding the 'soft stuff' such as management concepts, terms and conditions of service etc. (Hutton 1997: 85; Parry et al. 1997; Pollitt 1997: 22).

Similar to these debates about the advisory system servicing the PM and/or cabinet, also the Shadow Chancellor Gordon Brown discussed his vision about the Treasury's role under a Labour government (Brown 1995; see also Burns 1998; Keegan 2003: 7; Mandelson 2010: 200-1). The Treasury officials supported this upcoming shift towards a Treasury acting as 'both a ministry of finance and a ministry for long-term economic and social renewal' that is 'a successful engine for new ideas' (Brown, quoted by *The Guardian* online, 15 May 1996; Rentoul 2001: 536), exemplified e.g. by a conversation of the PermSec of the Department of Social Security with the PermSec in the Treasury in 1996:

'I used to bang on about the importance of social policy as opposed to economic policy and said it was very much underestimated and its costs were much greater (...). Sir Terence Burns said to me towards the end, "Of course, macro-economic policy is very boring at the moment because everybody agrees on it, there is nothing really to do, and micro-economic policy we have handed over to other people, so I think we are getting very interested in social policy"' (Cartridge, quoted by HC 73-ii [2000]: Q457).

However, no explicit plans were formulated on how to organise policy advice to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, although Brown was very fond of the Council of Economic Advisers in the U.S. and had discussed the creation of a similar body as host for more special advisers in the Treasury with his advisers during opposition (IUK09).

2 The rearrangements of the advisory system at the centre

Under PM Blair, the advisory system at the centre of British government was rearranged frequently and it is reasonable to examine its key characteristics after the general election in 1997 when the new Labour government came into power as well as after the next general election in 2001 when the governmental actors had experienced one legislative term with it – and were apparently motivated to reorganise it.

2.1 The first term in office: Strengthening the centre

The first changes of the advisory system addressed special advisers. The *Civil Service Order in Council* was amended to allow for 'up to three situations in the Prime Minister's Office with executive powers'¹ (Rentoul 2001: 536; O'Toole 2006: 73). This radical abolition of traditional convention – whereby special advisers are explicitly forbidden to hold executive powers – was actually proposed by the Cabinet Secretary:

'I was responsible for the Order in Council that enabled up to three special advisers from Number 10 to give instructions to civil servants, and I recommended Mr Blair to do that because in fact that was what was happening in the case of Alastair Campbell and Jonathan Powell, so I thought we had better be legal. But it was so easily done, it was done the first weekend by an Order in Council and it rather shook me to realise how easily the fundamental structure of our civil service could be changed, and once that Rubicon was crossed you could never go back.' (Butler, quoted by HL 30-i [2009]: Q130)

Pursuant to that power, PM Blair appointed two special advisers, Jonathan Powell as Chief of Staff in the PMO,² and Alastair Campbell as Director of Communications and Strategy (Winstone 2003: FN 27). Particularly the former alarmed Whitehall because the Chief of Staff at Number Ten is traditionally ranked as PPS to the PM – and as such a key preserve of the civil service (IUK01, IUK10; Theakston 1998).

Only several months after that decision, the Policy Unit was formally rearranged (Burch/Rhodes 2006: 273). The unit's mandate was linked more strongly to departmental policy-making, ensuring that the PM's major policy concerns are congruent with the concerns of his new cabinet colleagues (Burch/Holliday 1999: 34-5).

¹ Article 3(3) Civil Service (Amendment) Order in Council [1997].

² This position was also appointed under PM Thatcher, but the office holder's powers under PM Blair were larger – also because he had defined his office's remit after studying previous PMOs (Powell 2010: 86).

When Cabinet Secretary Butler retired at the end of 1997, the PM turned his attention to the Cabinet Office, with the explicit aim 'to enforce its power over Whitehall departments' (Rentoul 2001: 538-9), as a senior official from the Prime Minister's Office explains:

'You come to Number Ten and you are the Prime Minister and you want to reach something in government and you think "What do I got?" (...) He used to ask (...) Cabinet Office officials "Whose side are you on?" And of course they would legitimately say "We are not on anybody's side, we are on the side of getting a coordinated government position and bringing together the departments to enable (...) a collective piece of advice to go to Ministers (...)." And he would say "Well, where am I? Where are my troops? (...) Who is working for me?"' (IUK26)

Under the new Cabinet Secretary Richard Wilson, the Cabinet Office experienced a more radical reorganisation. Wilson set this task himself, with the PM's agreement, and reviewed the organisation and role of the Cabinet Office (Kavanagh/Seldon 1999: 269). This self-assignment was also an attempt to avoid external reviewers with potentially even more radical reorganisation ideas (IUK22). The 'Wilson report' on the reorganisation of the Cabinet Office was prepared under close monitoring of the Prime Minister's Office, particularly the Chief of Staff, the PPS to the PM, and the head of the Policy Unit (IUK25). The PM approved the review informally, but it was presented to the public only in July 1998, also because an upcoming cabinet reshuffle was perceived as a good opportunity to implement the changes recommended in the report (Kavanagh/Seldon 1999: 269). Officially, the PM outlined the report's conclusions in a written statement to Parliament:

'[The report] found that cross-departmental issues of policy and service delivery are often not handled well. He diagnosed a weakness in looking ahead to future opportunities and threats, and in reviewing the outcome of government policies and the achievement of government objectives. (...) there was scope to improve the performance of the centre of government in promulgating best practice and innovation in government' (PM Blair [1998])³

The cabinet ministers and senior officials agreed with these conclusions and the subsequent organisational changes in the Cabinet Office, which addressed mostly its civil service management branch (Burch/Holliday 1999: 7, 39, Flinders 2002: 60). More importantly, a 'Performance and Innovation Unit' was created in the Cabinet Office's Economics and Domestic Secretariat with a direct reporting line to the PM through the Cabinet Secretary (Kavanagh/Seldon 1999: 19).⁴ This formal affiliation was sought to reduce critics that the new unit would service the PM rather than being a shared resource for the cabinet as a whole. Officially, the mandate of the new unit was summarised by the PM as follows:

'It will complement the Treasury's role in monitoring departmental programmes and will have two principal functions. First, it will focus on selected issues that cross departmental boundaries and propose policy innovations to improve the delivery of the government objectives. Second, (...), it will select aspects of government policy that require review, with an emphasis on the better co-ordination and practical delivery of policy and services which involve more than one public sector body' (PM Blair [1998])⁵

³ HC Deb 28 July 1998 vol 317 cc133W.

⁴ See FN3.

⁵ See FN3.

Referring to traditional Cabinet Office functions, the new unit was assigned to sort out the 'issues that fell between the responsibilities of the big departments' (Halpern 2010: 266). As such, it was designated 'to reach those problems that neither his [PM's, JF] Policy Unit nor the Cabinet Secretariat handle to his satisfaction' (Hennessy 2000a: 391-2).

Similar to the Prime Minister's Office and the Cabinet Office, also the remit of the Treasury was aligned under its new Chancellor of the Exchequer Brown, towards

'a "Department for the Domestic Front", using its combined muscle of control of the purse strings and guardian of Public Service Agreements – targets that departments had to sign up to in return for money – to shape large swathes of policy. As the cash flowed, so did the Treasury's influence. In particular, it wrapped its tentacles around departments responsible for policies that Brown had a strong interest in: welfare reform, social policy, child poverty, international development and microeconomic strategy.' (Lodge/Dolphin 2009: n.p.)

As such, the new Treasury in a Labour government employed the new budgetary procedure, initiated already under PM Major, that included a biannual budget cycle of 'Comprehensive Spending Reviews' (CSR), linked to 'Public Service Agreements' (PSA) negotiated between the Treasury and spending departments (Burch/Holliday 2004: 6; see also Southgate et al. 1994; Parry et al. 1997: 399; Fawcett/Rhodes 2007: 98).⁶ In turn, the traditional *reactive* role 'in the sense that the Treasury can stop departments attempting to develop certain policies' (Smith 2003: 78) was developed into a more *proactive* one that was 'not simply concerned with controlling spending' (CO 1999: n.p.). Particularly the PSAs developed into a strong controlling device for the Treasury to direct resources, but also policy output via detailed performance criteria for service delivery (Lee/Woodward 2002: 50). The PSAs allowed the Treasury to expand its intervention in departmental affairs – and to demand an unprecedented amount of data from them (Hennessy 2000b: 389). As a consequence, the advisory resources at the Treasury were supposed to be realigned to enhance its own evidence-based policy-making (Parry/Deakin 2003: 107):

'With the macroeconomic framework now firmly established, more resources can be directed towards examining microeconomic issues. *Evidence-based microeconomic and distributional analysis is essential to underpin the Treasury's output* – from Budget tax measures through developments in competition policy and analysis of poverty issues to work on reform of the legal aid system and deciding transport priorities' (emphasis JF, HMT memorandum to HC 73-ii [2000]).

Accordingly, the Chancellor of the Exchequer restructured the advisory arrangements at his disposal. A new Council of Economic Advisers was created at the departmental leadership level, succeeding the previous 'Panel of Independent Forecasters' and staffed with special advisers. In practice, it allowed circumventing the conventional maximum number of special advisers in the Treasury. The Council's official mandate was to bring 'specialist advice to work alongside Treasury teams on the Government's key policy priorities' (HMT-PR 99/97) and 'advise the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the design and implementation of policies for the achievement of the government's economic objectives'.⁷

⁶ In December 1998, the new PSAs between the Treasury and Whitehall departments were addressed for the first time in a White Paper on 'Public Service for the Future: Modernisation, Reform, Accountability' (Cm 4181 [1998]). In July 2000, service delivery agreements were introduced in the Spending Review in order to explain how the government aimed to deliver its PSA targets.

⁷ HC Deb 10 March 1998 vol 308 c102W.

Thus, although the Chancellor of the Exchequer was conventionally restricted to set up a policy unit of his own, the CEA served as a 'group around him [that] seem[ed] to act very much as if' (Lipsey 2000: 46-7).

In 1998, the Director-General of the Treasury's Directorate for Finance Regulation and Industry was seconded as departmental expert to one of the PIU teams (see chap. J.4.2.1 below) – and picked up the idea to install an internal think tank in the Treasury. Officially, the subsequent creation of the 'Productivity Team' (henceforth also: HMT Team) was also partly an 'organisational expression' of the Chancellor of the Exchequer's commitment to narrow the productivity gap between the UK and its major industrial competitors (Thain/Christie 2007: 17).⁸ Accordingly, the new Productivity Team was set up in the newly created Public Service and Growth Directorate, reflecting the expanded remit of the Treasury in micro-economics and public services (Keegan 2003: 134; Lodge/Dolphin 2009; MacPherson 2009: 11).⁹ As the then Permanent Secretary to the Treasury explained, it was channelled through the individual special advisers to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, requesting a distinct reorganisation inside the newly established directorate:

'I think the productivity team responded to their particular wish to increase the Treasury's activity in this area. It is difficult to know whether they came to us and said, "Please set up this team." For example, one of the other teams we have created is European taxation. (...) Sometimes they may suggest it. Sometimes we may suggest it interpreting the priorities that we are under.' (Turnbull, quoted by HC 73-I[2000]: Q58)

In practice, though, the team was supposed to act as a think tank in order to strengthen Treasury's capacities, particularly in shaping departmental policies of key importance to the Chancellor of the Exchequer's 'drive to improve the productivity performance of the economy' (Turnbull, quoted by HC 73-ii [2000]: Q57-8; Cm 4218 [1999]: 2).

In sum, the Prime Minister's Office and the Cabinet Office were both rearranged after the general election in 1997. However, over time this restructured advisory system witnessed dysfunctional effects and thus various rearrangements occurred, particularly after the general election in 2001. Similarly, the Chancellor of the Exchequer set up new organisational devices for policy advice – which, however, appeared to serve more appropriately and thus were rather stable during Blair's first two terms in office.

2.2 The second term in office: Consolidating (at) the centre

After several crises in late 2000, such as the nearly close-down of the oil and petrol distribution system or the Foot and Mouth Disease, the PM focused more on winning a second legislative term – also reasoning that despite changes in the machinery of government, a wide range of implementation problems remained (Rentoul 2001: 539; Richards/Smith 2003: 18, 2006: 333; Hennessy 2002a: 20). As a response, the PM and his advisers wanted to become 'more progressive and radical' (Taylor 2001: 5) during a second term in office and to focus more strongly on service delivery. After winning the general election in 2001, the PM announced that he aimed at

⁸ This commitment was set out in the 1998-99 pre-Budget report.

⁹ Other teams addressing particular policy areas were rather temporary, e.g. the 'Work Incentives, Poverty and Distributional Analysis Team' on improving work incentives, the 'EU and International Tax Team' to meet the day-to-day workload on EU and international tax policy, and the 'Banking Review Team' to support a review into the services provided by the UK banking sector (Cm 4218 [1999]: 2).

'refocusing the Civil Service on (...) their task (...) which is less to do with *detailed day-to-day policy advice* and more to do with project management and delivery' (emphasis JF, Blair, quoted by Hennessy 2002a: 22).

Hence, Whitehall's traditional prerogative of policy advice was publicly replaced by the PM with policy implementation and service delivery. In turn, the policy advice function was even more delegated to the PM's advisers, accompanied by a systemic restructuring of the advisory system in order to improve its capacities for directing and monitoring departments – which was conducted during Blair's post-electoral reshuffle in June 2001.

First, the Private Office was attached to the Policy Unit, which was renamed as Policy Directorate, in order to increase its knowledge about the 'internal Whitehall politics and the strategies and tactics needed to succeed' (Levitt/Solusbury 2005: 36; see PM Blair [2001];¹⁰ Hennessy 2002a: 22, 2002b: 42; Heffernan 2003: 263; Burch/Holliday 2004: 8, 10; Lowe 2005: 503; Burch/Rhodes 2006: 272-3; Fawcett/Rhodes 2007: 82).¹¹ Yet, the merger was not a full-fledged formal organisational fusion. Instead, the two previous entities remained rather autark, also signified by a dual leadership by the PPS to the PM acting as head for the private secretaries and a Head of Policy leading the special advisers (see below). Similarly, the official listings in the CSYB excluded the private secretaries to signify their attachment rather than a classic merger. However, the enlargement of the Policy Unit expanded its role in government policy-making – in competition with the capacities at the Chancellor of the Exchequer's disposal:

'the Policy Unit got large (...) in response to an ever more aggressive and imperial Treasury, sort of wading in all over Whitehall deciding that it was going to do this, that and the other via its budgetary processes (...). The reaction in Number Ten (...) was to say "We need some of our own intellectual firepower, some of our own capacity to launch initiatives."' (IUK26)

However, the expanded Policy Directorate made the formulation of a 'single No. 10 viewpoint in [the] advice to the PM and (...) dealings with departments' increasingly difficult (Jones 2005: 960). Three years later, when a new PPS to the PM was appointed, the Private Office was informally separated again from the Policy Directorate to enable both entities to concentrate on their own competencies (IUK26; Powell 2010: 97).

In addition, the PM announced the creation of a 'Forward Strategy Unit' (FSU) in the Cabinet Office as 'a sister unit to the PIU' (Halpern 2010: 269) to provide strategic analysis and policy thinking for the PM (IUK13, IUK14; Burch/Holliday 2004: 8).¹² The idea to create such a unit dated back to the end of 2000 when the Policy Unit presented a study on crime¹³ to the PM, commissioned by John Birt as unpaid special adviser. Back then, Birt and the Policy Unit member working on the report persuaded the PM that a new unit at the

¹⁰ HC 15 October 2001 vol 372 cc819W.

¹¹ After the attachment of the Private Office, a senior official from the Prime Minister's Office talked to all Permanent Secretaries in Whitehall asking for recommendations to improve government policy-making – and all replied that they didn't like that 'too many things coming out, too random' and requested 'more order, more discipline, more predictability and a centre which knew what it wanted and knew what mattered to it' (IUK26).

¹² HC Deb 11 July 2001 vol 371 cc573-5W; HC Deb 19 November 2001 vol 375 cc103-4W; HC Deb 14 January 2002 vol 378 cc85-6W.

¹³ The study was later incorporated into governmental a White Paper (Cm 5074 [2001]).

PM's direct disposal is necessary to provide more of such larger studies on key policy areas 'for his eyes only' (IUK13, IUK14). The rationale behind was that the Policy Unit was too occupied with day-to-day management of short-term issues to provide long-term strategic thinking on PM's policy priorities whereas the PIU in the Cabinet Office was ill-suited for such radical analyses because of its working style, including the publication of most of its work (IUK13, IUK14; see below). However, the creation of the Forward Strategy Unit caused 'a battle about who should control the new unit, where it should sit, and how it should operate' (Halpern 2010: 269). Eventually, the PM decided to establish the new unit in the Cabinet Office, although it reported directly to him,¹⁴ with the official remit to

'do blue skies policy thinking for the Prime Minister and undertake strategy projects at request. It will be made up of a small number of experienced figures, drawn mainly from outside the Civil Service' (PMO Press release 22 June 2001).

Particularly the close relations between the Forward Strategy Unit and John Birt gained considerable attention in Parliament. Although the PM repeatedly claimed that no direct link existed, several former members of the unit confirmed that the creation of the FSU was mainly motivated by creating a vehicle for incorporating John Birt in the centre of government (IUK13, IUK14). When in the aftermath of 9/11 security concerns restricted a further expansion of the FSU in the PMO complex and its clandestine role was increasingly criticised, the PM announced in June 2002 that the unit will be merged with the Performance and Innovation Unit into a new 'Prime Minister's Strategy Unit' (PMSU),¹⁵ together with parts of the *Centre for Management and Policy Studies*.¹⁶ The official title of the new unit signalled its twofold role: It was not concerned with governmental performance and innovation anymore, but rather with comprehensive strategic analyses – addressing key policy areas of particular importance to the PM (IUK14; Turnbull, quoted by HC 1049-i [2001]: Q97). Although several former CPRS members were consulted when the Strategy Unit was set up (IUK01, IUK15, IUK27; Hennessy, quoted by HL 30 [2010]: Q7), its mandate was eventually oriented towards creating an additional support unit for the PM and his advisers in Number Ten rather than a think tank servicing cabinet as a whole (IUK08, IUK27).

In contrast to the Prime Minister's Office and the Cabinet Office, advisory arrangements in the Treasury underwent no structural or functional changes during the second term of PM Blair in office, except the renaming of the Productivity Team into the 'Productivity and Structural Reform Team' (Fawcett/Rhodes 2007: 95).

In sum, the advisory system at the centre of British government changed considerably during PM Blair's first two terms, albeit the advisory arrangements servicing the PM underwent more radical changes than those servicing the Chancellor of the Exchequer (IUK16; Lee/Woodward 2002: 52; see Figure J.1). During his first term, an expanded Policy Unit and a new PIU in the Cabinet Office reported directly to the PM (IUK08, IUK26; Hennessy 2000c: 392-3, 2002b: 42; Page/Jenkins 2005: 8). Similarly, the

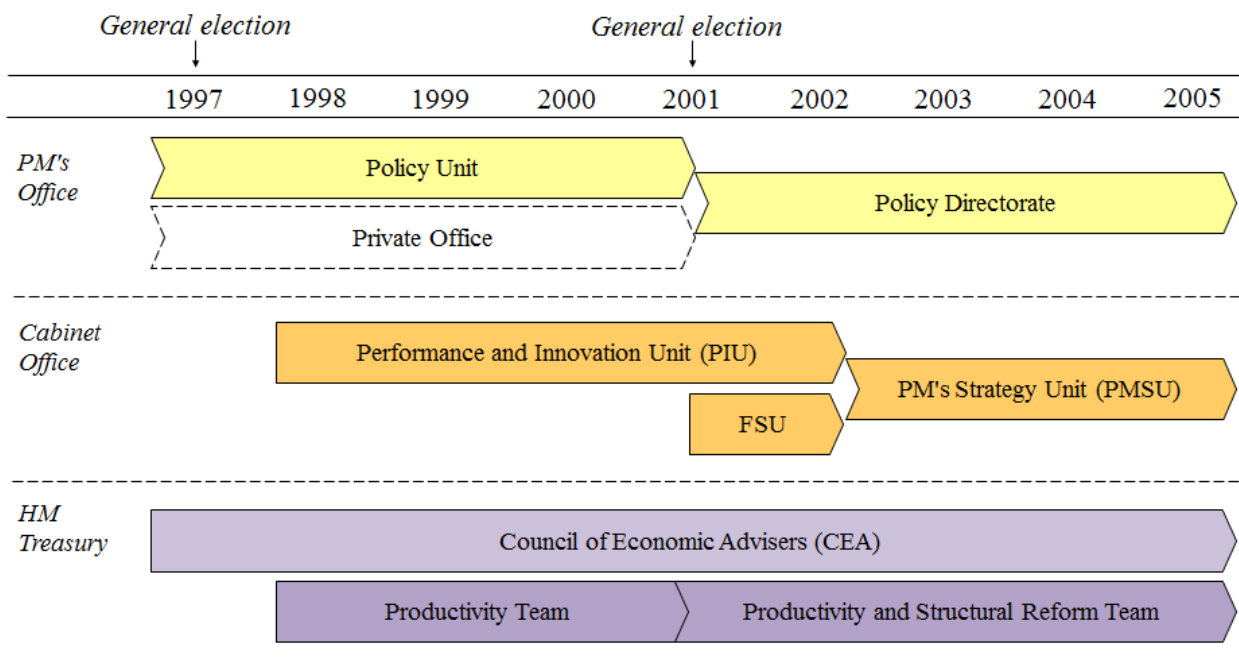
¹⁴ HC Deb 14 January 2002 vol 378 cc85-6W.

¹⁵ This case study refers to 'PM's Strategy Unit' and 'Strategy Unit' synonymously.

¹⁶ The Centre for Management and Policy Studies (CMPS) was created in the Cabinet Office in 1998 to complement the PIU, responsible for policy making skills of the civil service (Lewis 2000: 209; Bullock et al. 2001; Amann 2004: 17). Its Policy Studies Directorate was transferred to the PMSU whereas its other former parts were reorganized under the new 'Office of the Government Chief Social Researcher'.

Chancellor of the Exchequer increased his advisory resources by setting up the Council of Economic Advisers and a Productivity Team. After the general election in 2001, mainly advisory arrangements servicing the PM were reorganised, the Private Office was attached to the Policy Unit and the FSU was established as sister unit to the PIU in the Cabinet Office. In 2002, the latter two units were merged into the PM's Strategy Unit.¹⁷

Figure J.1 The advisory system at the centre of British government, 1997-2005



Note: The figure displays not the full official denomination of all advisory arrangements in order to facilitate the reading.

Source: Own illustration.

3 The organisation of policy advice at the centre under PM Blair

The organisation of the advisory system under the first two legislative terms of PM Blair differed. Whereas the Policy Unit in the Prime Minister's Office underwent an expansion and renaming as Policy Directorate, the various units in the Cabinet Office were filled with civil servants but organised quite differently than other entities in the Cabinet Office. Lastly, the two advisory arrangements in the Treasury were also organised differently than the Whitehall bureaucracy, whereas the Council of Economic Advisers echoed the organisation of the Policy Unit, the Productivity Team was organised more similar to other units in the Treasury. In the following, the analysis of the organisation of these advisory arrangements at the centre of British government is structured according to their formal affiliation to the Prime Minister's Office, the Cabinet Office, and the Treasury, differentiating their five organisational attributes.

¹⁷ To simplify matters, the Policy Unit as well as the Productivity Team will be referred to by their initial names when the Labour government came into office throughout this study, partly neglecting their renaming as Policy Directorate and Productivity and Structural Reform Team respectively.

3.1 The Prime Minister's Office: From the Policy Unit to the Policy Directorate

The Policy Unit under PM Blair underwent various changes of its organisational structure, although in general it maintained the rather unusual structure compared to the Whitehall bureaucracy with regard to its (1) durability, (2) internal affiliation, (3) size, (4) fragmentation, and (5) expertness.

(1) In general, the Policy Unit under PM Blair continued to exist and its durability was not limited *ex ante*. In addition, it survived the complete last time period under analysis, albeit the Private Office was attached to it in 2001 in order to increase the mutual awareness for bureaucratic and policy advisory concerns respectively. Yet, in contrast to the mergers of German advisory arrangements and the units in the Cabinet Office, this attachment was never fully conducted and informally revised in 2004. In fact, all interviewed experts agreed that this merger was rather a temporary addition of some staff members from the civil service that remained rather autark than a truly merger as happened in the Cabinet Office (IUK07, IUK08, IUK25).

(2) The Policy Unit remained in its previous affiliation as staff in the Prime Minister's Office, which is directly subordinated to the new PM. In contrast to PM Thatcher's first years in office, the first member and later head of the Policy Unit moved to an office very close to the new PM's office whereas the rest of the unit was located elsewhere in the Downing Street complex – officially to enhance cooperation among the units in the Prime Minister's Office (Burch/Holliday 1999: 35; Rentoul 2001: 537).

(3) In contrast to previous arrangements, Blair increased the size of the Policy Unit up to 14 members (Clifford 2000: 37; see Figure J.2 below). This number was mostly determined by the number of advisers that the PM had during opposition – because they were all expected to accompany him into office and get positions close to the PM (IUK16). During Blair's first term in office, the Policy Unit was supported by four private secretaries.¹⁸ Following convention, the composition of the Policy Unit was decided by the head of the unit, with some suggestions from the PM. When the Private Office was attached to the Policy Unit in 2001, the number of civil servants increased up to ten (IUK26), but these private secretaries received their orders from the PPS to the PM and reported in their day-to-day work not to the Head of Policy, but to Brian Hackland, a departmental secondee.¹⁹ The number of special advisers appointed in the new Policy Directorate increased up to 19 in 2005.²⁰

(4) The fragmentation of the Policy Unit was rather unusual compared to other units in the Prime Minister's Office and across Whitehall, but underwent especially in horizontal terms various changes. Initially, all members were subordinated to one head, albeit assigned with particular areas of responsibility, mirroring a Whitehall department or a broader policy area (Fawcett/Rhodes 2007: 81; see Table J.1). As such, the priority policy areas for the PM were managed by more than one Policy Unit member, including also the head of the unit (IUK25, IUK26, IUK36). Many members of the first Policy Unit mirrored

¹⁸ HC Deb 12 February 1998 vol 306 c326W.

¹⁹ PMO organisational chart as of February 2000 (HC 262-iii [2002a]).

²⁰ HC Deb 25 March 2003 vol 402 cc125-7W.

departments or policy areas where they had gained some expertise in their previous position. Several members of the early Policy Unit struggled with their portfolios:

'In Number Ten you can only cover things in a very broad brush. (...) One of the problems that some (...) had is that they tried to micro-manage the area for which they were responsible. And this is just not possible.' (IUK36)

Table J.1 The key responsibilities and previous position of Policy Unit members, 1997-2001

tenure	name	Policy Unit responsibilities	previous position
1997-2001	David Miliband*	Speeches; Education; 'Blair's message'	Head of Policy for Leader of the Opposition
-2001	Robert Hill	Local government; Health; Social services	Press officer for the Labour Party Leader
-2001	Peter Hyman	Communication; Speeches; Health	Press officer for the Labour Party; BBC producer; Journalist for <i>Sky News</i>
-2001	Roger Liddle	Europe; Defence	Director at Prima Europe PR consultancy
-2001	Liz Lloyd	Agriculture; Home affairs; Environment	Researcher for the Labour Party Leader
-2001	Pat McFadden	Constitutional issues; esp. Scotland and Northern Ireland; Trade unions	Policy Adviser to the Leader of the Opposition
-2001	Geoff Mulgan	Social exclusion; Family; Welfare; Inequality; Urban policy; Voluntary sector	Director and Co-Founder of DEMOS
-2009	Geoffrey Norris	Trade and Industry; Employment; Transport; Food Safety; Regional and Planning	Researcher for the Leader of the Labour Party
-2001	James Purnell	Culture; Media; Sport; Knowledge economy; 'Modernising Government'	Head of Corporate Planning at BBC
-1997	John Reese	n/a	Policy Unit member (under PM Major)
-2003	Derek Scott	Economy (including EMU)	Director at Barclays de Zoete Wedd
1998-2005	Andrew Adonis*	Education; Cross-cutting 'opportunity issues'; Freedom of information	political columnist and editor at <i>The Observer</i>
-1999	David Soskice	Education; Training	Visiting Professor, LSE
-2000	Sharon White	Welfare; Social security	Foreign and Commonwealth Office
1999-1999	Ed Richards	Strategy development; Media; E-government	BBC Head of Strategy
2000-2001	James Gallagher	n/a	Head of a Secretariat at the Cabinet Office
-2002	Brian Hackland	Transport; Environment	PS to the Minister for Local Government, Housing and Urban Regeneration
-2005	Carey Oppenheim	Welfare issues; Child policy; The elderly; Women	Research Director at the Institute of Public Policy Research

Legend

* Head of the Policy Unit or Head of Policy (operational head)

Source: Own illustration, data compiled from CSYB 1997-2001; HC Deb 30 October 1997 vol 299 c860W, HC Deb 11 November 1999 vol 337 cc826-8W, HC Deb 14 December 1999 vol 341 c112W; The New Statesman, 24 July 1998: 26; Kavanagh/Seldon 1999: 263-4; HC 293 [2001]: Annex 1; Who's Who 2010.

When in 2001 the Private Office was attached to the Policy Unit, which was renamed as Policy Directorate, the leadership structure changed and the PPS to the PM was appointed as the new formal head of the Policy Directorate, which was necessary because it now comprised also private secretaries requiring a civil servant to assign formal

executive orders (IUK16, IUK25). The alternative, to expand the *Civil Service Order in Council* for another position in the Prime Minister's Office with executive powers was rejected because of the experiences with this change in 1997 (IUK25; see chap. D.2.2.2). In addition, though a 'Head of Policy' was appointed as sort of deputy head, especially responsible for the members of the Policy Directorate acting as special advisers and providing policy advice. Simultaneously, the areas of responsibilities for the Policy Directorate members changed significantly and became more focused (Burch/Holliday 2004: 13). Put together, the horizontal fragmentation increased over time, assigning to the Head of Policy authority powers as a deputy head for the branch that was responsible for policy advice, also distinguishing it from the second branch responsible for administrative support. When a new PPS to the PM was appointed in early 2004, the private secretaries were informally more strongly separated from the members with advisory functions (IUK26). One reason was that the larger Policy Directorate also caused increasing competition within the unit, especially between junior members who were 'desperate to attract the attention of the PM, the PPS to the PM, and the Head of the Policy Directorate' (IUK26). In turn, the vertical fragmentation was rather low, including the head of the Policy Unit, the Head of Policy (during the years as Policy Directorate) and the unit members.

(5) The expertness of the Policy Unit remained like its organisational predecessor and thus differed from other Whitehall structures. Similar to previous arrangements, the leadership of the Policy Unit comprised one head (see Table J.2). After unsuccessful attempts to lure Bob Ayling, chief executive of British Airways, or Rachel Lomax, Deputy Chief Economic Advisor in the Treasury (Mandelson 2010: 223), the Policy Unit was temporarily led by David Miliband who had served as Blair's Head of Policy during opposition (Bakvis 1997: 99; Rentoul 2001: 537). Ultimately, he also became the formal head of the Policy Unit in May 1998 (Clifford 2000: 37). Other close aides, especially Alastair Campbell, dubbed Miliband as 'Brains' – a nerdy puppet from a TV show, describing his intelligent but nerdy behaviour (DER SPIEGEL, 38/2008: 135).

When the Private Office was attached to the Policy Unit as new Policy Directorate in 2001, the PM appointed his PPS Jeremy Heywood as formal head of the new unit (Burch/Holliday 2004: 13). Heywood was widely perceived as an 'outstanding civil servant for whom the word "Stakhanovite" might have been invented' (Powell 2010: 97). Simultaneously, a new Head of Policy was appointed by the PM as head of the special advisers in the enlarged Policy Directorate, this post was filled with Andrew Adonis, a former member of the Policy Unit and expert in education policy. In September 2003, Geoff Mulgan, then director of the Strategy Unit in the Cabinet Office, was appointed as his successor;²¹ but he kept his occupation in the Cabinet Office, officially 'to ensure close links between day to day policy and longer term strategy' (Mulgan 2004: 24). This joint directorship brought the Policy Directorate and the Strategy Unit closer to each other (Burch/Holliday 2004: 12), but also increased the 'bit of a mess' of the various formal positions filled by the same people (IUK26). Moreover, Mulgan was perceived by Policy Unit members as a 'brainy long-term thinker but not that close to the PM, (...) not "one of

²¹ In turn, Adonis became 'Senior Policy Adviser on Education, Public Services and Constitutional Reform' (Burch/Holliday 2004: 13).

us" (IUK02). Only one year later, Mulgan left the civil service and Matthew Taylor, former director of the Labour think tank *Institute for Public Policy Research*, was recruited as Head of Policy, now under the official title of 'Chief Adviser on Political Strategy'. Taylor remained in this position also after the general election in 2005.

Table J.2 The leadership structure of the Policy Unit and Policy Directorate, 1998-2005

tenure	name	previous position	subsequent position(s)
05/1998-05/2001	David Miliband	Head of Policy to the Leader of the Opposition	Minister for Schools at the Department for Education and Skills
05/2001-12/2003	Jeremy Heywood	HM Treasury, Head of Securities and Markets Policy; PPS to the PM [<i>concurrently</i>]	Morgan Stanley, Managing Director UK [<i>seconded</i>]
05/2001-09/2003	Andrew Adonis	member of the Policy Unit	member of the Policy Directorate; Secretary of State for Education
09/2003-09/2004	Geoff Mulgan	Director of the Strategy Unit [<i>concurrently</i>]	Director of the <i>Institute of Community Studies</i>
01/2004-06/2005	Ivan Rogers	HM Treasury, Director of Budget and Tax Policy; PPS to the PM [<i>concurrently</i>]	Citigroup, Director
09/2004-06/2007	Matthew Taylor	Director of the <i>Institute for Public Policy Research</i>	Chief Executive of the <i>Royal Society for the encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce</i>

Legend

Head of Policy Unit, from 05/2001: Head of Policy Directorate

Head of Policy, from 09/2004: Chief Adviser on Political Strategy

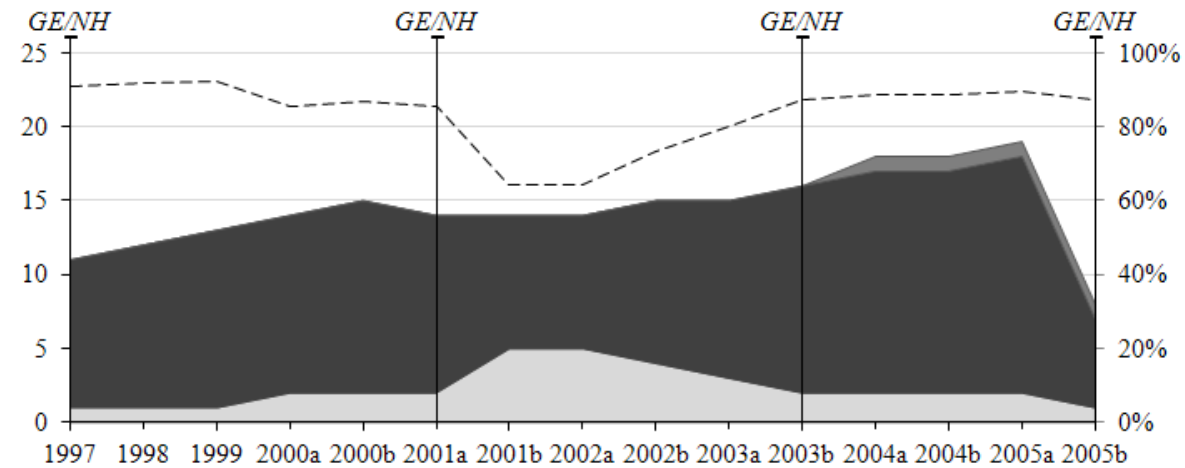
Source: Own illustration; data compiled from CSYB 1997-2007; Who's Who 2010 and interviews by the author.

In 1997, the candidates for membership in the Policy Unit had been discussed between the new PM and Miliband already before the general election, others proposed themselves, e.g. Andrew Adonis wrote in 1996 to the then Leader of the Opposition that as a PM he should appoint himself as Education Secretary – Blair refused, but appointed him for the Policy Unit (The Guardian, 28 October 2005: 16).²² He became a very influential member of the Policy Unit, reflected also by the fact that Whitehall clerks dubbed him 'Muscles' (ibid.; see below). Some members were also selected by other aides, e.g. Peter Mandelson persuaded the PM to hire several members of the unit (IUK02). Thus, in contrast to its predecessors, most Policy Unit members were well-known to Blair and most already knew each other (IUK22, IUK26; Kavanagh/Seldon 1999: 262).




²² In 2008, Adonis became PUSS for Schools and Learners in the Department for Education and Skills; in October 2008 he was reshuffled as Minister of State to the Department for Transport.

In practice, the majority of Policy Unit members was appointed as special advisers and only very few were civil servants seconded from departments (Kavanagh/Seldon 1999: 262-4; Gay 2000: 34; Burch/Holliday 1999: 35; Lipsey 2000: 46; see Figure J.2). This recruitment under special adviser terms was necessary because of their policy advice functions but had apparent positive effects on their salaries (Fawcett/Gay 2005: 54).

Figure J.2 The size and composition of the Policy Unit, 1997-2005



Legend

 civil service	-- share of outsiders
 private and third sector	GE general election
 academia	NH new head

Note: The CSYB provides data on an annual basis, between 2000 and 2005 it was published biannually. The official listings in the CSYB exclude members of the Private Office who were attached to the Policy Directorate after 2001.

Source: Own illustration, information compiled from CSYB 1997-2005; HC Deb 12 November 2001 vol 374 c547W.

The Policy Unit was composed by three generations: Next to very young members in their late twenties, a larger group was in their late thirties, plus a few senior members (IUK02). This pattern reflected the head's interest to recruit members who 'carry weight with Ministers and are experts in their fields' (Powell 2010: 96), but also that the Labour Party had been out of power for many years and thus several advisers had already come into a considerable age (IUK02). Likewise, the educational background of Policy Unit members was more diverse than in previous units, also reflecting the lower class background of some Labour Party members (IUK02). However, not every special adviser in the Policy Unit was member of the Labour Party; three were former senior members of the Social Democratic Party – to broaden the unit's party-political profile (IUK36; James 1999: 215).

Over time, the occupational background of Policy Unit members changed. During Blair's first term in office, most Policy Unit members were outsiders recruited from the Labour Party or Labour think tanks such as the *Institute for Public Policy Research* or *DEMOS*, whereas during his second term more journalists and senior managers from

business consultancies were recruited. Besides, seven of the members newly recruited after the general election in 2001 were previously special advisers in Whitehall departments, particularly from those departments responsible for PM's key pledges such as health, education, and home affairs. Likewise, civil servants were often seconded from these departments. In addition, some members were transferred from the new units in the Cabinet Office (IUK26).

Moreover, the length of service differed considerably across the occupational background of members, but even more across prime ministerial terms (see Table J.3). In contrast to previous arrangements, the members without Whitehall experience stayed comparatively longer than departmental secondees.

Table J.3 The tenure of Policy Unit/Directorate members under PM Blair (in months)

	PM Blair I (1997-2001)	PM Blair II (2001-05)	PM Blair III (2005-07)	mean
civil service	19.5	23.0	0.0	19.5
outsiders	68.8	29.6	22.0	29.6
academia	12.0	18.0	0.0	12.0
<i>mean</i>	33.4	23.5	7.3	23.5

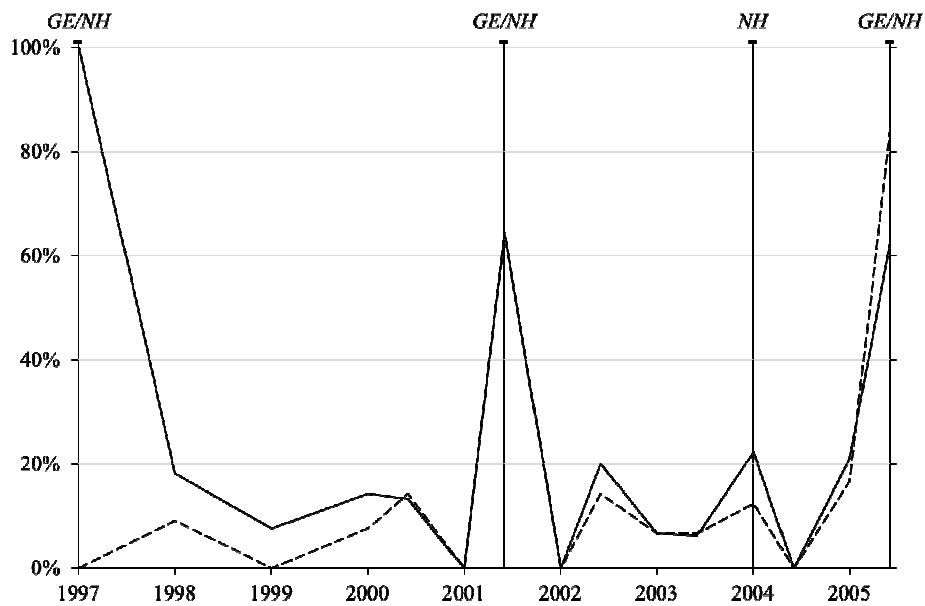
Note: Numbers display all first appointments of Policy Unit members.

Source: Own illustration, information compiled from CSYB 1997-2009.

As a consequence, the first team of the Policy Unit under PM Blair remained in office nearly unchanged until the general election in 2001. Afterwards, outsiders left the unit as early as departmental secondees. Besides, during the whole third time period under scrutiny, only two members of the Policy Unit were recruited from university – and both stayed shorter than departmental secondees and outsiders.

A closer analysis of the turnover of Policy Unit members reveals that newly recruited members often compensated the exit of previous members (see Figure J.3). Also general elections and changes in the leadership structure had effects on the unit's turnover: More than half of the unit was replaced after the general election in 2001 when Miliband left as head of the Policy Unit. In contrast, no significant changes took place when Mulgan succeeded Adonis as Head of Policy in 2003 – which may also illustrate his limited influence on the Policy Directorate as simultaneous director of the Strategy Unit at the Cabinet Office. After the general election in 2005, the unit was almost completely exchanged.

Figure J.3 The turnover of Policy Unit members, 1997-2005



Legend

— influx (related to total size) *GE* general election
 -- exit (related to total size) *NH* new head

Source: Own illustration, information compiled from CSYB 1997-2005.

The modus operandi of the Policy Unit retained many features of its predecessors. The Policy Unit met once or twice a week to discuss the work programme as well as the PM's diary and requirements (Becker 2000: 878). In addition, several members of the Policy Unit attended the daily morning meeting as 'regular spot-check to confirm that strategy and presentation are keeping in step and, in particular, that immediate presentational issues are handled within the wider strategic context' (CO 1997c: n.p.). At the meeting, special advisers from Whitehall departments attended, most notably the Foreign Office, the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions, the Treasury, as well as the Leader of the House's office, the Chief Whip's office, the Cabinet Office and from the Labour Party (*ibid.*).²³ More importantly, the Policy Unit members enjoyed frequent and close access to the PM:

'Sometimes those people have to go in and say to the Prime Minister "I'm sorry, you got this wrong, that is not where we should be going, these people have thought it through and I'm telling you they have a strategy and we should run with it and you should trust them." And we didn't have enough of that. That is a brave person to do that to the Prime Minister even if you are working with the Prime Minister on a daily basis' (IUK26).

Occasionally, the Policy Unit organised 'Policy Unit Away Days'. These meetings were a sort of round-table discussions where the whole Policy Unit would meet with the PM, each member presented long-term trends in his portfolio, key issues facing it as well as possible initiatives (IUK02; Kavanagh/Seldon 1999: 264; Becker 2000: 878). Next to the PM, also the Chief of Staff, the PPS to the PM, the Head of the Strategic Communication Unit and Peter Mandelson participated (Kavanagh/Seldon 1999: 264).

²³ See also Campbell 1998, quoted by HC 770 [1998]: Q463.

3.2 The Cabinet Office: The Performance and Innovation Unit and the Forward Strategy Unit merged into the PM's Strategy Unit

The various units in the Cabinet Office resembled to a varying extent other units in their parent organisation, including their (1) durability, (2) internal affiliation, (3) size, (4) fragmentation, and (5) expertness.

(1) When the new Performance and Innovation Unit was officially created, the candidate as first director prepared a strategy paper recommending that it should only exist for a maximum of six years but the *ex ante* durability of the PIU was eventually not formally determined (IUK02, IUK15). It survived for three years under the new PM until it was merged with the Forward Strategy Unit in 2002 as the PM's Strategy Unit. The FSU had been also created in 2001 without any *ex ante* limiting of its durability and thus survived one year under its new client until the merger. In contrast, the PM's Strategy Unit existed during all the years of the Labour government and was abolished in 2010 when the new Conservative PM David Cameron took office.

(2) The Performance and Innovation Unit was formally established as unit in the Economic and Domestic Secretariat in the Cabinet Office, albeit its director communicated with the PM directly (IUK02, IUK15).²⁴ The decision about this formal affiliation was preceded by serious frictions between the PMO and the Treasury about reporting and accountability lines (IUK15, IUK27). Partly, the final decision in favour of the Cabinet Office aimed to avoid media criticism that the Prime Minister's Office would grow inappropriately (IUK27). Partly, though, an affiliation to the Cabinet Office pleased Treasury and other departments' concerns that the unit might be an additional device of the PM because the Cabinet Office is generally designated to service cabinet as a whole (IUK27).

These Treasury concerns were also reflected in the unit's location: The PermSec to the Treasury made sure that the office of the first director of the PIU was in the Cabinet Office building's wing next to the Treasury building – only separated by a corridor (IUK15). In 2000, several units of the Cabinet Office, including the PIU, moved to Admiralty Arch²⁵ and thus away from the Treasury building but in walking distance to Number Ten. In contrast, the Forward Strategy Unit was created as unit of the Cabinet Office with a direct reporting line to the PM. Yet, it was located inside the Downing Street complex (IUK13).²⁶ When in 2002 both units were merged as Strategy Unit, the new unit remained a formal part of the Cabinet Office but reported from now on to the PM via the Cabinet Secretary. Besides, all offices were relocated at Admiralty Arch – officially also to meet security concerns after 9/11 obstructing previous FSU members to stay in Number Ten (IUK08).

(3) When the PIU was created, the Cabinet Secretary favoured a small unit, but the PM and his advisers succeeded with their view by increasing the PIU's workload tremendously so that more members had to be recruited (IUK15). As a consequence of these conflicts between the Cabinet Secretary and the PM, the overall size of the unit varied significantly

²⁴ HC Deb 14 January 2002 vol 378 cc85-6W.

²⁵ HC Deb 28 July 1998 vol 317 cc134W.

²⁶ HC Deb 11 July 2001 vol 371 cc573-5W.

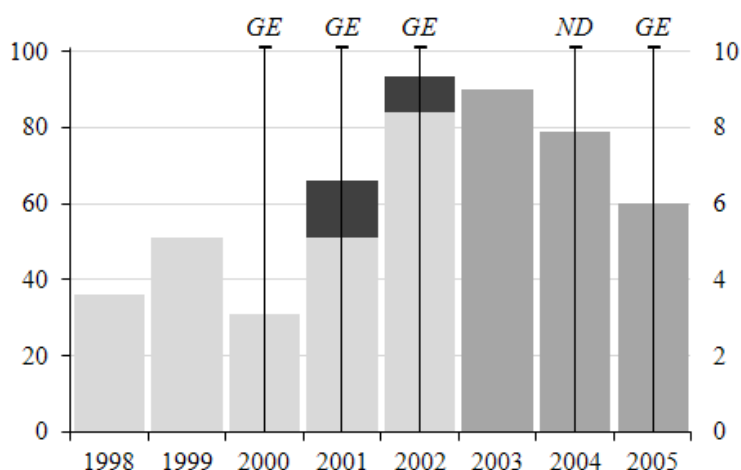
over the years. Initially, a group of four to five people started the new unit, but soon it grew up to nearly 40 members (IUK25, IUK27; see Figure J.4).

More precise staffing details are lacking, partly the information in the public domain is also contradictory, e.g. the Strategy Unit expanded according to official files up to 90 members in early 2003 – although its first director referred to 'roughly 80-120 staff in the PMSU at any one time' (Mulgan 2004: 26, 2006d: 152), other authors count even 140 members (Levitt/Solesbury 2005: 31; see also Aldridge, quoted by HC 123-I [2007]: Q136). The comparatively large size of the new unit was subject of some internal debate:




'There was discussion about (...) What's the right size to be a catalyst for change in the system, not being too big that (...) you become a standing army before you can blink sort of thing.' (IUK27)

This fluctuating size of the different units in the Cabinet Office can also be explained by the project-based character of their work (Burch/Holliday 2004: 14). Yet, the declining size after 2003 was also caused by declining demands by the PM (IUK07, IUK08, IUK24).

Figure J.4 The size of advisory arrangements in the Cabinet Office, 1998-2005



Legend

	Performance and Innovation Unit	<i>GE</i>	general election
	Forward Strategy Unit	<i>ND</i>	new director
	PM's Strategy Unit		

Source: Own illustration, information compiled from HC Deb 13 December 1999 vol 341 c59W; HC Deb 02 November 2000 vol 355 c554W; HC Deb 05 March 2001 vol 364 cc75-6W; HC Deb 19 November 2001 vol 375 cc103-4W; HC Deb 30 January 2002 vol 379 c314W; HC Deb 19 March 2002 vol 382 c294W; HC Deb 19 March 2003 vol 401 cc763-4W; HC Deb 10 March 2004 vol 418 cc1516-7W.

(4) The fragmentation of the three units in the Cabinet Office differed. More generally, the leadership structure of all three units included a formal director, but after the general election in 2001, the PIU director in office was appointed simultaneously as formal director of the FSU, thus blurring the formal demarcations of both units already at the very top. Likewise, the secondary level comprised for the PIU a deputy director, whereas the FSU had two deputy directors, amounting to three deputies for the dual director after 2001. When the Strategy Unit was established in 2002, the number of deputy directors increased.

The internal structure of the PIU was rather fluid, the members worked together on reports and studies in temporary project teams (IUK15, IUK08). Likewise, the FSU was mainly organised along its reports. When both units were merged, a central team was created to support the leadership in terms of human resources, budget, communication and information resources (Rousselot/Hérault 2006: 7). Moreover, the Strategy Unit partly departed from a purely project-based organisation by setting up semi-permanent teams shadowing departments and policy areas of the PM's concern such as home affairs, education, health, and public service improvement (Greer 2005; Halpern 2010: 273). These shadowing teams incorporated sometimes project teams on related issues. As a result, the organisational chart of the Strategy Unit distinguished five clusters along which semi-permanent and project teams were organised: public service reform, home affairs, economy and infrastructure, welfare reform, and social justice and communities (Fawcett/Gay 2010: 64). However, the structure was still regarded as rather fluid, as one Strategy Unit member put it: 'what tends to happen here is that as a need for a job arises people start doing the job and then alter the structure around them' (IUK08).

The directorship of the units in the Cabinet Office shows a rather 'self-referential' selection, i.e. the four directors recruited during the last time period under scrutiny had all previous experience in the Cabinet Office and/or the units (see Table J.4).

Table J.4 The leadership structure of the units in the Cabinet Office, 1998-2005

	tenure	name	previous position	subsequent position
PIU	07/1998-08/2000	Sumantra Chakrabarti	Director of the Economics and Domestic Secretariat at the Cabinet Office (simultaneously)	Director of the Economics and Domestic Secretariat at the Cabinet Office (simultaneously)
	07/1998-06/2002	Jamie Rentoul	Department of Health	Head of Strategy at the Healthcare Commission
	09/2000-06/2002	Geoff Mulgan	Policy Unit member	Director of FSU (simultaneously)
FSU	06/2001-06/2002	Geoff Mulgan	Director of PIU (simultaneously)	Director of the Strategy Unit
	06/2001-06/2002	Sarah Graham	n/a	Deputy Director of the PMSU
	06/2001-06/2002	Catriona Laing	Department for International Development	Deputy Director of the PMSU
PMSU	06/2002-09/2004	Geoff Mulgan	Director of PIU and FSU	Director of the <i>Institute of Community Studies</i>
	06/2002- 12/2002	Sarah Graham	Deputy Director at FSU	free-lance business strategy consultant
	06/2002- 05/2005	Catriona Laing	Deputy Director at FSU	Division Head, Department for International Development
	01/2003-05/2005	Patricia Greer	PMSU member	Strategic Director for Surrey County Council
	11/2004-07/2009	Stephen Aldridge	Chief Economist at the PMSU	Director, Dept. for Communities and Local Government

Legend

Director Deputy Director

Source: Own illustration, data compiled from CSYB 1999-2005; Cabinet Office 1999a; HC Deb 14 January 2002 vol 378 cc85-6W; PMSU 2002a, 2003b, 2004b, 2005; DOD 2009.

The Cabinet Secretary approached Sumantra Chakrabarti as first director of the PIU as 'someone who was acceptable for both Number Ten and the Treasury' (IUK15, IUK02), because he had previously run the first public expenditure review in the Treasury. After fifteen months, Chakrabarti was promoted as Head of the Economic and Domestic Secretariat and remained simultaneously PIU director for another six months. In 2000, Geoff Mulgan took over as PIU director, a former Policy Unit member who turned from a special adviser into a civil servant (Parsons 2002: 51; Mulgan 2009: 11). Prior to his Policy Unit work, he had co-founded the think tank *DEMOS* and advised Gordon Brown (Bale 1996: 30-1).

When the Forward Strategy Unit was created in 2001, it was originally thought to be headed by John Birt, former Director-General of the BBC and unpaid special adviser to the PM. Dubbed as 'Dalek of Downing Street',²⁷ his proximity to the PM caused severe critics in Whitehall. Eventually, the PM recruited Geoff Mulgan as simultaneous director of the new unit in order to avoid further criticism about the role of special advisers and John Birt in particular (IUK13). However, John Birt was appointed as unpaid 'PM strategy adviser' for three years in October 2001.²⁸ As such, he obtained a highly influential and leading position within the Forward Strategy Unit, but was not acting as its formal head.

When both units merged in 2002, Mulgan became also the first director of the Strategy Unit. In 2003, he became also responsible for the operations of the Policy Directorate as Head of Policy. As a consequence, the number of deputy directors in the Strategy Unit increased from four to six (IUK08). This leadership structure aimed also to mix external and internal backgrounds and thus most deputy directors were career civil servants (Levitt/Solesbury 2005: 33). When Mulgan left the Strategy Unit in summer 2004, the directorship was vacant for nearly a year after the next general election in May 2005, also because other appointments were perceived as priority, including a new Cabinet Secretary (IUK08). Eventually, the Strategy Unit's Chief Economist, Stephen Aldridge, was appointed as 'acting head' in the end of 2004. Simultaneously, the number of deputy directors decreased again.

The composition of the PIU, the FSU and the Strategy Unit cannot be examined in more detail due to data constraints, i.e. lacking official member lists or the like. Formally, all members in the PIU and later the Strategy Unit were either recruited as temporary civil servants or seconded as permanent officials from Whitehall departments. The former were often employed with contracts of maximum two years with one possible extension (IUK27). Many members with an external background were recruited at an early stage in their career so that their 'civil service rates are not that far away from what [they] could earn in the private sector' (IUK08). However, the units served also as a host for people working only part-time or just one day per week – also 'to accommodate a wider range of members who were not keen to be regarded as Labour supporters' (IUK03). Next to their

²⁷ The Daleks are a fictional race of extra-terrestrial mutants in the popular British TV series 'Doctor Who'. John Birt was called a 'croak-voiced Dalek' for the first time by the playwright Dennis Potter in August 1993 when he was Director-General of the BBC (The Guardian, 28 June 1999: 4).

²⁸ Letter from the PPS to the PM Jeremy Heywood to John Birt relating to his appointment as the PM's Strategy Adviser, Annex: Way of Working: General Conditions for all Review Teams and Independent Advisers, 05 October 2001.

professional experience and skills, a key criterion in recruitment was to select members with a 'critical attitude towards Whitehall', i.e. the unit was supposed to comprise 'staff that hasn't been cracked by the system' (IUK27). Accordingly, nearly half of the members of the PIU and later the Strategy Unit were recruited by open competition from outside central government such as businesses, consultancies, the voluntary sector or think tanks (IUK08). As a consequence, these units comprised both 'members more generalist in their skill-set (...) and people who are specialists' (IUK27). Moreover, also other governments seconded officials to the PIU and later the Strategy Unit (IUK15). Such recruitment patterns were supposed to strengthen the *esprit du corps*, as one director recalls:

'If you are establishing a unit, you have to establish your identity and it has to be different in some way from what was going on before – otherwise, why you are doing this? So we had to say: "We are different in some way from the former anything else."' (IUK15)

In turn for obtaining young and bright candidates from outside the civil service, a high turnover of staff was accepted – and a 'data manager' and a 'knowledge manager' appointed in order to keep the organisational memory (IUK08). The outsiders were also assumed as highly relevant for applying distinct working methods, as its first head ennobled:

'PIU project teams are a mix of secondees from outside Whitehall, from the private and voluntary sectors, from local government, from academia, as well as Whitehall secondees. I think the importance of external expertise needs to be mentioned and stressed because we have gained a lot in terms of project management from having so many secondees' (Chakrabarti, quoted by HC 32-v [2000]: Q584-5).

In contrast to the PIU, the recruitment of the approx. 15 members of the Forward Strategy Unit was discussed with the PM who received a list with candidates (IUK08). Yet, the more clandestine FSU was 'a name rather than reality' because the staff for the Forward Strategy Unit 'came mainly from the Performance and Innovation Unit' (IUK08, IUK14, IUK27; CSYB 2002: 47). As such, also the FSU was composed with a mix of insiders and outsiders, comprising departmental secondees as well as members from consultancies and think tanks, some got their salary topped up by their previous employers (IUK13). In addition, the unit included also a number of unpaid advisers who were usually appointed for one year in the first instance.²⁹ Besides, the PM appointed a 'Forward Strategy Advisory Panel' of four unpaid advisers on a part-time basis, these were rather prominent outside figures to oversee major FSU projects and to guide and provide a critical, and typically private sector perspective on their analyses (Halpern 2010: 270; see Table J.5).

All four unpaid FSU advisers were senior figures from business and industry – but did not necessarily return to their private sector occupation afterwards: Arnab Banerji was recruited from the City and went later to the Policy Directorate;³⁰ Nick Lovegrove was a former unpaid adviser to Gordon Brown on productivity and competitiveness and director at a large private business consultancy who went back to his private sector occupation after the FSU was merged with the PIU, but stayed in touch with the new Strategy Unit and acted occasionally as unpaid adviser (IUK13, IUK14). Also Penny Hughes returned to their various private sector engagements after the FSU was merged in 2002. Adair Turner,

²⁹ Letter from the PPS to the PM Jeremy Heywood to John Birt relating to his appointment as the PM's Strategy Adviser, Annex: Way of Working: General Conditions for all Review Teams and Independent Advisers, 05 October 2001.

³⁰ See the list of members of the Policy Directorate in HC Deb 22 July 2004 vol 424 cc464-5W.

who was also recruited from the City but had a long experience as former McKinsey partner, did return to the private sector but took also the chairmanship of the Labour's 'Low Pay Commission' in 2002.

Table J.5 The key responsibilities and previous position of unpaid advisers to the Forward Strategy Unit, 2001-2002

tenure	name	responsibilities	previous position/s
10/2001-06/2002	Arnab Banerji	investment management, policy decision-making and asset allocation	Chief Investment Officer at Foreign & Colonial Management Ltd; Chief of Staff at Citibank
10/2001-06/2002	Nick Lovegrove	DCMS, effects of technology on broadcasting	Director at McKinsey; co-leader of <i>Global Media, and Entertainment Practice</i>
10/2001-06/2002	Penny Hughes	n/a	President of Coca Cola UK; Non-Executive Director of Vodaphone, and SEB
10/2001-06/2002	Adair Turner	the 'supply side' of the NHS	Vice-Chairman of Merrill Lynch; Director-General of the CBI

Source: Own illustration; information compiled from HC Deb 25 October 2001 vol 373 cc313-4W; HL Deb 03 December 2001 vol 629 cc91-3WA; HC Deb 25 March 2002 vol 382 c618W; Who's Who.

When the two units were merged into the Strategy Unit in 2002, the mixed composition of insiders and outsiders largely remained:

'[A]bout half [of the Strategy Unit members, JF] come from outside government. They come from a very wide range of backgrounds including: Government departments; businesses ranging from Ford and Glaxo to KPMG and McKinsey; other parts of the public sector, such as the Financial Services Authority and the Welsh Development Agency; voluntary sector bodies, such as the Kids Club Network and Age Concern; universities such as Newcastle, Warwick, Harvard and LSE; think-tanks such as the Institute of Economic Affairs and the Institute of Public Policy Research; and from other governments around the world, including Germany, the United States, Canada, Australia and France. The aim has been to ensure a more creative balance between insiders who know how government works and outsiders who can bring fresh perspectives' (Mulgan 2004: 26).

The composition of the Strategy Unit changed over time by recruiting more junior members than in its two predeceasing units (IUK04; MacDougall 2006: 66). The turnover of the PIU, the FSU, and the Strategy Unit was quite high, but no unit was ever completely exchanged – also because of their comparatively larger size (IUK08). In turn, these recruitment patterns were accompanied by intensive networks of 'unit alumni' that were regularly contacted for distinct issues (Boaz/Solesbury 2007: 135).

The modus operandi of the units in the Cabinet Office differed slightly: All units worked along their project teams on certain projects or reviews, but the Forward Strategy Unit was more often reviewing its interim conclusions with external actors and experts, either in the unit's advisory panel or from elsewhere (IUK13). Occasionally, also the PM engaged in discussions about preliminary results – next to the final debate after the report had been submitted to him and his advisers (*ibid.*). In contrast, the PIU and the Strategy

Unit presented their output not only to the PM but also to the general public; albeit this strategy to avoid 'the unhealthy mix of secrecy and amateurism that characterised so much policymaking in the 1970s and 1980s' was also criticised by the PM – not only because it was supposed to be first and foremost an advisory product for the PM, but also because 'getting the external challenge to it' was perceived as less useful to redirect certain conclusions (Mulgan 2005b: 11, IUK27). In addition, the presentation to the PM was mainly conducted by the director of the unit – in contrast to the close interactions between the PM and members from the more clandestine Forward Strategy Unit located in Number Ten (IUK13). However, all three units shared a common working orientation to act like 'the McKinseys of government' (Saggar 2007: 14), adopting working methods from business consultancies.

3.3 The Treasury: The Council of Economic Advisers and the Productivity Team

When the Council of Economic Advisers was created in August 1997, it was initially made up of two special advisers, Chris Wales, recruited from a business consultancy, and Paul Gregg, previously a reader in Economics at Oxford University. Both had advised the Shadow Chancellor of the Exchequer during opposition (see Table J.6).

Table J.6 The key responsibilities and previous positions of the Council of Economic Advisers, 1997-2005

tenure	name	responsibilities	previous position/s
08/1997-07/2005	Chris Wales	Tax issues	Tax Partner at Arthur Andersen
-06/2007	Paul Gregg	Welfare to work; Labour market	Senior Research Associate at the LSE and Reader in Economics at the University of Bristol
02/1999-06/2007	Shriti Vadera	Business and city issues; Productivity; Public enterprises; Better Regulation Executive	Executive Director, Warburg Dillon Read
05/2000-12/2003	Maeve Sherlock	Child poverty; Welfare reform	Director of the <i>National Council for One Parent Families</i>
07/2001-06/2007	Stewart Wood	Europe; Local government; Education	Politics Tutor at Oxford University
02/2004-05/2005	Ed Miliband	n/a	Journalist; SpAd to the Chief Secretary in the Treasury
-06/2007	Michael Jacobs	n/a	Secretary General of the <i>Fabian Society</i>

Source: Own illustration, information compiled from HMT departmental reports 1997-2005; HMT-PR 99/97, HMT-PR 30/99, HMT-PR 65/00, HMT-PR 02/04, HMT-PR 61/04; The Guardian Online, 16 April 2002.

One year later, Shriti Vadera was recruited from an investment bank, another year later Maeve Sherlock joined the Council, she was previously working for a think tank in social policy. After the general election in 2001, Stewart Wood, an academic and co-organiser of the online think tank *Nexus* joined the council. In 2003, Maeve Sherlock left, she was

replaced in 2004 by Ed Miliband, former special adviser to the Chief Secretary at the Treasury and Chief Economic Adviser to the Chancellor, who had returned from his sabbatical at Harvard University and became the new head of the council. In addition, Michael Jacobs was recruited, contributing his think tank experience as previous Secretary General of the *Fabian Society*. As such, all recruitments for the CEA were driven by previous expertise and personal contacts to the Chancellor of the Exchequer and his other individual special advisers.

In contrast, the Productivity Team was led by a career civil servant: John Kingman, head of Communications and Strategy in the Treasury (see Table J.7). After several weeks, Samantha Beckett was appointed as head, a permanent civil servant from the Treasury and former speechwriter to the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Table J.7 The leadership structure of the Productivity Team, 1998-2005

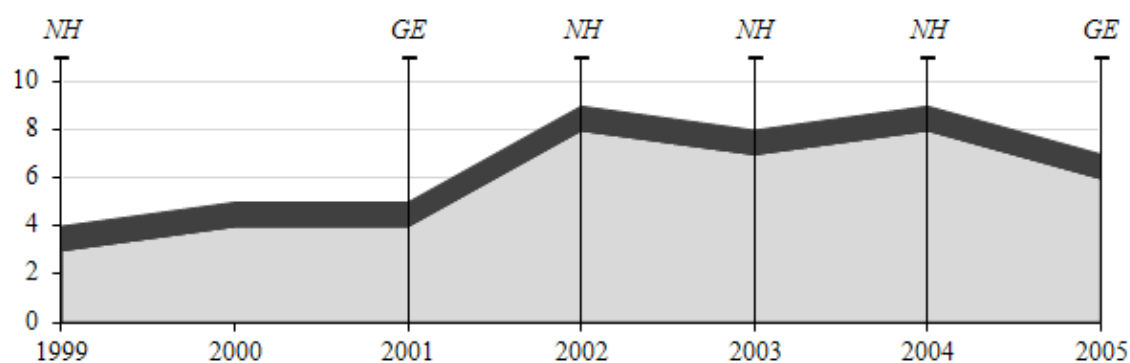
tenure	name	previous position(s)	subsequent position
12/1998-01/1999	John Kingman	HM Treasury, Head of Communications and Strategy	HM Treasury, Head of Communications and Strategy
01/1999-07/2000	Samantha Beckett	Secretary to the <i>Diana Princess of Wales Memorial Committee</i> ; speechwriter of the CoE	HM Treasury, Competition and Economic Regulation Team
07/2000-12/2002	John Kingman	HM Treasury, Head of Communications and Strategy	HM Treasury, Head of the Enterprise & Growth Unit
01/2003-09/2004	Jitinder Kohli	HM Treasury, Productivity Team member	Director of the Better Regulation Executive
09/2004-05/2006	Christopher Martin	HM Treasury, Productivity Team member; HM Treasury, Assistant Secretary	HM Treasury, Press Secretary to the Chancellor of the Exchequer and Head of Communications

Source: Own illustration, information compiled from CSYB 1999-2006; HMT-PR 11/99.

After she moved to the Treasury's Competition and Regulation Team in summer 2000, John Kingman took over as head of the team again, also to coordinate the Treasury's contributions to the Labour manifesto and to support the election campaign on key policies (IUK30, IUK31). When John Kingman became head of the 'Enterprise and Growth Unit' in 2003, Jitinder Kohli, a Productivity Team member, was appointed as new head of the renamed 'Productivity and Structural Reform Team'.

The Productivity Team started in late 1998 with three members; a Treasury press notice reveals that the increase of members after the general election in 2001 was accompanied by recruiting more outsiders in order 'to enhance further its ability to pursue policy projects taking forward the Government's productivity and structural reform agenda' (HMT-PR 81/00; see Figure J.5). Most team members were civil servants from the Treasury. In addition, Nick Crafts, a leading economic historian, advised the Productivity Team one day a week (The Guardian Online, 16 April 2002).

Figure J.5 The size and composition of the Productivity Team, 1999-2005



Legend

	civil service	<i>GE</i>	general election
	senior civil service	<i>NH</i>	new head

Note: The CSYB provides data on an annual basis, between 2000 and 2005 it was published biannually.

Source: Own illustration, information compiled from CSYB 1997-2005.

Lastly, the length of service differed across ranks and prime ministerial terms (see Table J.8). The senior civil service members stayed initially much longer than the civil servants ranked below, i.e. they had an average tenure of one and a half year whereas their bureaucratic subordinates stayed less than a year. After the general election in 2001, both groups harmonised in terms of tenure with approx. less than a year on average. As a consequence, the Productivity Team had frequent changes, i.e. members transferred to other parts of the Treasury or other Whitehall departments, also 'to spread this working expertise within the department' and 'increase our networks' (IUK30).

Table J.8 The tenure of Productivity Team members under PM Blair (in months)

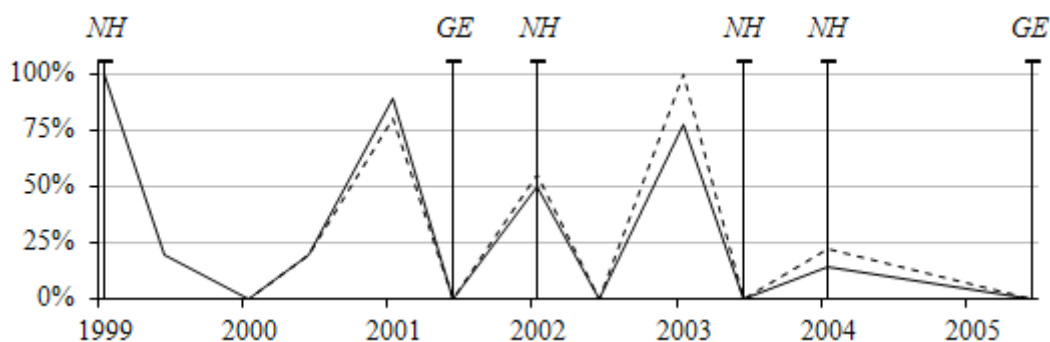
	PM Blair I (1999-2001)	PM Blair II (2001-05)	PM Blair III (2005-07)	<i>mean</i>
senior civil service	18.0	12.0	6.0	12.0
outsiders	11.6	10.8	6.0	9.5
<i>mean</i>	14.8	11.4	6.0	10.7

Note: Numbers display all first appointments of Productivity Team members. The Productivity Team came into operation in late 1998.

Source: Own illustration, information compiled from CSYB 1997-2007.

A closer analysis of the turnover of personnel shows that similar to the Policy Unit new Productivity Team members compensated often leaving members (see Figure J.6). Almost complete turnovers occurred when the team was announced a new head.

Figure J.6 The turnover of Productivity Team members, 1999-2005



Legend

— influx (related to total size) *GE* general election
 -- exit (related to total size) *NH* new head

Source: Own illustration, information compiled from CSYB 1997-2005.

Each team member was responsible for distinct policy issues, ranging from traditional Treasury issues such as tax policy or fiscal investment policy to policy areas for which other Whitehall departments were formally responsible, such as education and skills, regional policy, transport policy, or health policy (see Table J.9). Moreover, several members of the Productivity Team were responsible for distinct 'policy reviews' conducted under the heading of an external high-profile figure (see below).

The modus operandi of the two advisory arrangements in the Treasury differed. The Council of Economic Advisers worked on an individual basis and its members met regularly at meetings with the Chancellor of the Exchequer or his personal special advisers. They were supported by private secretaries but prepared their advisory work mostly individually, drawing upon their networks to the private sector, most notably the City, but also to other actors outside government such as economic forecast institutes and, most importantly, think tanks (IUK30).

The Productivity and Reform Team operated under a 'matrix management', each staff member working on one or two issues simultaneously in teams with different members (IUK38). Although it was incorporated into the bureaucratic processes within the Treasury, 'there was no concern for process' (IUK38), i.e. the Team members operated differently than the other line officials in the Treasury. As such, they had comparatively more contacts to external actors such as think tanks (see below).

Besides, the Team had more frequent and intense contacts with the departmental leadership, most notably with the individual special advisers of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. More importantly, and similar to the units in the Cabinet Office, the team members were keen to work alongside professional standards from business consultancies (IUK38). As a result, the internal modus operandi combined Whitehall practices with newly established working techniques applied from the private sector.

Table J.9 The key responsibilities of Productivity Team members, 1999-2005

tenure	name	key responsibilities
1999-2001	Mike Emmerich	Corporate venturing; Tax measures
-2001	Dermot Finch	Urban policy; Education and skills
-2001	William Price	Economic advice; International price differentials
-2001	Philip Oppenheimer	Corporate Governance; Commercial property
2001-2002	Piers Bisson	Roberts Review of Scientists and Engineers in UK
-2002	Daniel Gordon	Structural Issues
-2002	Jitinder Kohli	Competition policy; Works permit and immigration policy
-2002	Christopher Martin	Policy analysis of regional policy; Communications policy
-2002	Jonathan Mills	Skills and radio spectrum projects
-2003	Daniel Oppenheimer	Myners Review of Institutional Investment; Sandler Review of Retail Savings
-2003	Andrew Paulson	Aviation; Management education
-2003	Simon Ridley	Skills and planning system projects
2002-2003	Simon Brindle	Transport policy
-2003	Tony Foot	Cities project; Commercial property issues; Pre-Budget Report/Budget chapter
-2003	Julie Fry	Head of Structural Issues Branch
-2003	Sarah Mulley	Workforce skills; Migration
2003-2003	Jo-Anne Daniels	Barker Review of Housing Supply
-2004	Ceri Gott	Structural issues
-2003	Katherine Green	Skills
-2003	Jean Innes	Transport; Planning; Road haulage; Health capital estates
-2003	Lewis Neal	Cities project; Commercial property issues; Pre-Budget Report/Budget chapter
-2003	Kevin Williamson	Construction; Manufacturing
2004-2006	Catherine Adams	Migration; Intellectual property rights
-2006	Christopher Gorst	Investment and productivity
-2006	Oli Jones	Migration; Intellectual property rights
-2006	Ella Joseph	Leitch Review of Skills [extra unit in 2005? Lt. Dept Report]
-2006	Daniel Micklethwaite	Enterprise in deprived areas
-2004	Rebecca Sudworth	Economics of productivity
-2006	Anthony Zacharzewski	Hampton Review of Regulation
2005-2006	Melody Guy	Economics of productivity

Source: Own illustration, information compiled from CSYB 1999-2006.

3.4 Summary: The organisation of policy advice at the centre

The organisation of policy advice at the centre of British government under PM Blair was rather complex and changed several times during the last time period under scrutiny, albeit more radically for those advisory arrangements servicing the PM than those at the disposal of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. All advisory arrangements were created with an infinite ex ante durability. Whereas the advisory arrangements in the Prime Minister's Office and the Treasury remained, the units in the Cabinet Office survived three years

(PIU) and one year (FSU) before they were merged into the PM's Strategy Unit in 2002. The Policy Unit and the Council of Economic Advisers were created as staffs in the PMO and the Treasury respectively, also expressed in offices close to their clients. In contrast, the various units in the Cabinet Office were officially established as entities of the Cabinet Office with a direct reporting line to the Cabinet Secretary, albeit they reported to the PM informally, the FSU had been even located inside the Downing Street complex. Similarly, the Productivity Team was created as a line entity but enjoyed direct reporting lines to the Chancellor of the Exchequer and his individual special advisers.

Under PM Blair, the size of the pre-existing Policy Unit was doubled and increased again after the Private Office was attached to it, albeit it was clearly less equipped than the units in the Cabinet Office, albeit the latter underwent several radical changes in size during the years under scrutiny. More importantly, they increased their actual size by seconding departmental officials on a project-basis. To the contrary, the Council of Economic Advisers and the Treasury's Productivity Team were both very small entities. The fragmentation of the advisory arrangements differed considerably. On the one hand, all entities servicing the PM had at least one deputy head, such as the Head of Policy in the Policy Directorate or the deputy heads in the units of the Cabinet Office. Yet, these served not as authoritative heads of discrete, identifiable functional areas and instead directed a fluid number of members. Unlike these, the two advisory arrangements in the Treasury had no secondary authority level and their respective head was directly interacting with the members. As a result, the vertical fragmentation of the various advisory arrangements servicing the PM was small but still higher than those servicing the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Similar to the other time periods under scrutiny, the expertness of the units can be regarded as non-conforming to bureaucratic convention: Whereas some heads were recruited from the Whitehall bureaucracy, e.g. the first head of the PIU or the Productivity Team, others, especially those under special adviser terms, can be regarded as outsiders. In addition, the advisory arrangements servicing the PM were, by and large, characterised by a stronger mix of in- and outsiders whereas the advisory arrangements in the Treasury differed in that regard, i.e. the Council of Economic Advisers was completely filled with outsiders whereas the Productivity Team was mostly filled with Treasury officials. In terms of tenure and turnover, the empirical data is somewhat limited but it is reasonable to conclude that the tenure of members of the Policy Unit and the Council of Economic Advisers was rather long whereas the members of the units in the Cabinet Office and the Productivity Team in the Treasury stayed comparatively shorter. In turn, the turnover of the former two small staffs servicing the PM and the Chancellor of the Exchequer respectively was slower than the turnover of the units in the Cabinet Office and the Productivity Team. As a consequence, smaller advisory arrangements could maintain their organisational memory, whereas larger units were more regularly filled with new members.

4 (Too) many agents in institutional politics at the bipolar centre of British government

The advisory system at the centre of the British government during PM Blair's first two terms in office comprised six advisory arrangements servicing cabinet, the PM, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The Policy Unit in Number Ten was echoed by the newly established Council of Economic Advisers in the Treasury; similarly the three units in the Cabinet Office had a rather similar mandate as the Productivity Team in the Treasury (IUK30, IUK37). In practice, the advisory arrangements servicing cabinet and the PM collaborated regularly. Likewise, the units in the Treasury worked often together. Yet, both sets of advisory arrangements ran concurrently, i.e. '[t]hey were not coordinated, nor could they be' (Fawcett/Rhodes 2007: 97).

More importantly, the different advisory arrangements employed rather similar means to influence government policy-making during the PM's first two terms in office: The Policy Unit provided policy advice on (1) short-term issues of the PM's concern and engaged more strongly than its predecessors in directing Whitehall departments. The various units in the Cabinet Office (2) acted mainly as think tanks, working upon cross-cutting policy issues, often in collaboration with departments. (3) One of the key collaborative activities of the Policy Unit and the units in the Cabinet Office was the formulation and dissemination of 'joined-up government' (JUG) as new 'governing philosophy' (Mulgan 2005b: 12), framing how Whitehall departments should interact in executive decision-making and why this new style of executive government was necessary. The two advisory arrangements in the Treasury conducted similar activities by (4) providing policy advice on short-term issues, commenting on policies of spending departments and suggesting policy alternatives, as well as preparing independent reviews on key policies with budgetary and policy impact.

4.1 The Policy Unit acting as 'Tony's narks in Whitehall'³¹

Already in one of the first cabinet meetings, the new PM stressed the importance of the Policy Unit in government policy-making by asking his cabinet colleagues to involve the unit as early as possible in their 'policy thinking' – implying that 'they would lose standing with him if they did not' (Kavanagh/Seldon 1999: 263). During PM Blair's first term, the Policy Unit concentrated its activities mainly on the cabinet level (IUK02; Burch/Holliday 1999: 41; Kavanagh/Seldon 1999: 263; Rhodes 2009); also caused by the fact that the PM as its key client

'didn't totally trust the team of Ministers that he had in order to do the kind of things he wanted. (...) In the early stage of the government, the Policy Unit played a critical role (...). When Alan Milburn and Charles Clarke came into office [in October 1999 and June 2001 respectively, JF], the doctrine of central control was loosened a little bit.' (IUK 36)

During PM Blair's second term, the mandate of the Policy Directorate expanded and it became also responsible for various administrative tasks such as keeping the PM's diary and preparing his correspondence (IUK03, IUK16).³² Simultaneously, it engaged in

³¹ (Kavanagh/Seldon 1999: 263).

³² To simplify matters, Policy Unit and Policy Directorate are used interchangeably in this case study, except if direct quotes from the literature or interviewees refer to one of them.

mirroring, monitoring and influencing Whitehall departments, i.e. playing its 'progress-chasing role' (IUK02) in government policy-making in order to assure that Whitehall departments formulate 'policy in line with Number 10's wishes' (Smith 2003: 68; Richards 2008a: 110).³³ To ensure departmental compliance and reinforce the PM's requests, the Policy Unit (1) prepared policy briefs commenting on departmental proposals, but engaged also in (2) shaping departmental policy proposals before they reached cabinet.³⁴

4.1.1 The Policy Unit 'preparing ammunition for the PM':³⁵ Policy briefs

Following established practice, the Policy Unit prepared policy briefs for the PM to 'vet and comment' (James 1999: 213) departmental policy proposals for cabinet and its committees, although the latter were of less importance to the PM during his first prime ministerial term (Hennessy 2005: 12). In addition, the policy briefs prepared the bilateral meetings between the PM and cabinet ministers.

The policy briefs were submitted to the PM and comprised a few pages commenting on 'how this proposal would fit into the Prime Minister's agenda and how it could be improved to fit better' (IUK02). The issues for Policy Unit briefs were selected by the PM or the Policy Unit, as a member explains: 'If there was an issue that had to be looked at in a very close way (...) then it would go to the Policy Unit' (IUK15).³⁶

Initially, the civil servants in the Private Office and the Cabinet Office tried to circumvent policy briefs (Kavanagh/Richards 1999: 262-3), the former because they neglected the informal working style of the Policy Unit and 'found this difficult as they liked to know everything and do things with greater formality' (Hyman 2005: 74). As the then Chief of Staff revealed:

'It led to an unseemly competition on Friday nights to get the last note on some vexed subject into the Prime Minister's red box. The head of the Policy Unit and the political secretary, both political appointees, would try to add memos on top of the policy papers, and the PPS and the Cabinet Secretary, both civil servants, would stay late to ensure they could have the last word on top of that of the political part of the office.' (Powell 2010: 86)

However, these conflicts with the Private Office were reduced by attaching it to the Policy Unit in 2001, enhancing the understanding of Policy Unit members for Whitehall's procedures and conventions (IUK38). As a side effect, it also increased the functional politicisation of the permanent officials in Number Ten, i.e. the 'process people' in the Private Office were injected with 'more policy vision' (IUK26):

'We needed people who understood the Prime Minister's political priorities. But we also needed people who could go through the day-to-day grind of Whitehall paperwork and who would take notes at meetings, give the Prime Minister advice on issues which were not politically sensitive but just needed to be decided. We could not have the special advisers to do all that bureaucratic work.' (IUK16)

³³ As before, the Policy Unit covered all policy areas, except foreign and security policy (James 1999: 213).

³⁴ See also James (1999: 215) distinguishing a 'reactive and proactive work' of the Policy Unit servicing various British PMs over the past decades.

³⁵ (IUK02).

³⁶ However, since the cabinet committee system was initially not used as intensively as under previous prime ministers and often bilaterals were used instead (see below), the cabinet committee meetings were of less relevance for the Policy Unit than under previous PMs.

As a result, the policy briefs changed, included more bureaucratic concerns and, in turn, became more easily operable by the permanent officials in the Prime Minister's Office (IUK02, IUK13, IUK16).

During PM Blair's first term, the preparation of Policy Unit briefs depended mainly upon contacts with cabinet ministers and departmental special advisers (Burch/Holliday 1999: 41; Kavanagh/Seldon 1999: 263). Especially the latter became a valuable network, since they knew ministers' concerns as well as departmental officials' viewpoints. Therefore, the head of the Policy Unit chaired weekly lunch meetings with departmental special advisers in order to present policy issues, but also to inform about the current debate in Parliament or other issues such as the newest polling results (Kavanagh/Seldon 1999: 264-5; Hazell, quoted by HC 238 [2000]: Q213).

The initial focus of the Policy Unit on influencing government policy-making at the cabinet level had also effects on the responses of departmental officials to its briefs. On the one hand, the civil service was accustomed to these briefs from previous governments and thus aware that they should not be ignored:

'During the first years (...), the Policy Unit commented on our policies by speaking to the special adviser and explaining what they didn't like (...). For example, in a meeting he [the departmental special adviser, JF] would say "Look, we were heading in that direction, but the Prime Minister would like to go into that direction, let's consider this". (...) And next time the proposal was more like what Number Ten wanted. We knew it was impossible to disagree every time.' (IUK38)

On the other hand, departmental officials had only very rarely direct contacts with the Policy Unit and thus experienced difficulties to address the issues in a satisfactory manner, as a unit member explains:

'In the first term it did not really matter whether or not the advisers had a strong relationship with the departments, because they did not spend so much time there. (...) But certainly in the second term, it became very very important. (...) I spent as much time in the department having meetings, discussions, (...) as I did in Number Ten' (IUK02).

As a consequence, many departmental officials got the impression that 'it is almost impossible to satisfy the Policy Unit – unless you do exactly what they think is best – but this is often difficult' (IUK22). Hence, departmental officials often perceived the policy briefs as inappropriate – because the Policy Unit had assumed certain facts that were either unknown to departmental officials or were weighted by them very differently (IUK03). Besides, especially during the early years of the new government, Policy Unit briefs raised also ministers' expectations about possible policy shifts – increasing the workload of departmental officials (IUK03, IUK16).

Although the policy briefs served as an important tool to comment and re-direct Whitehall departments, Policy Unit members were often dissatisfied, assuming that they were 'too passive, because you sit there and wait for departmental ideas – which never come, at least not in the way you want them' (IUK02). Besides, policy briefs were perceived as unsuitable because 'the top-level in Whitehall could not always ensure that the proposals contained the issues we've had agreed upon' (IUK25). Put differently: In various cases ministers and departmental special advisers were alleged as unable to run the machinery properly (IUK36). In turn, the Policy Unit became more and more aware that

the 'responsible department was doing the spadework' (James 1999: 216) – and that departmental officials are crucial to align departmental policies towards the PM's agenda.

In addition, policy briefs prepared bilaterals between the PM and cabinet members – which had been promoted by Blair's advisers already during opposition, reasoning how efficient they are to push the machinery of government into a certain policy direction (Rentoul 2001: 544; Richards/Smith 2003: 11, Smith 2005: 5; Hennessy 2005: 10-1):

'I have regular bilateral stock-takes with Ministers. The Departments, of course, are charged with policy, but the reality is for any modern Prime Minister you also want to know what is happening in your own government, to be trying to drive forward the agenda of change on which you were elected.' (Blair, quoted by HC 1095 [2002]: Q4)

Similar to the judge-and-jury meetings under PM Thatcher, the bilaterals involved the PM and the cabinet minister, accompanied by Policy Unit members as well as departmental special advisers and officials respectively – whereby the latter perceived the atmosphere as rather hostile (IUK25). The key objective for the PM in these meetings was to redirect departmental policies and influence future departmental policy proposals (IUK02). In contrast, the key objective for the cabinet minister was to defend his departmental policies (Hennessy 2005: 11).

The major critics raised by the PM in bilaterals, and prepared by the Policy Unit, addressed three elements (IUK04): First, the PM criticised the content of departmental proposals, either because the policy was perceived as inappropriate, as politically not ambitious enough, or as noncompliant with the government's agenda. Second, the PM raised critics against the inner workings of departments, including e.g. the perceived weak position of a Minister in his department. Lastly, the PM raised concerns about the public presentation of departmental policies, e.g. about the minister's media coverage and communication of the government's message (IUK14).

Broadly speaking, the stock-takings served as a functional equivalent to cabinet committees by providing an arena for pre-cooking cabinet decisions while weakening the ministers' position (Hennessy 2005: 10): If the minister's opinion differed from the PM's opinion, it was more difficult to win the argument than in cabinet committees where other ministers may support the case (IUK02, IUK04). Instead, in bilaterals the Minister could only rely upon his departmental special advisers and officials. In turn, the volatile composition of bilaterals, i.e. the fact that each Minister got his own 'trial', hindered the development of alliances.

The bilaterals had several effects on government policy-making. First, they shaped departmental policy proposals directly because the Minister received explicit demands that could not be ignored (IUK03). Second, the Policy Unit favoured such bilateral meetings as a support for ministers, as its Head of Policy argued:

'My sense was that Secretaries of State would view those stock takes with a certain amount of trepidation because they know that they'd be put under pressure, but they would find them useful, partly because if you're running a department yourself you are not absolutely certain that what civil servants are saying to you is true, (...) sometimes you would even see Secretaries of State in those meetings, the Prime Minister would ask a couple of pointed questions and they would see their civil servants having difficulty

answering the question and that would give them some clues as to things they needed to prioritise when they went back to their department.' (Taylor, quoted by BBC 2007: 8)

Lastly, Whitehall officials became aware of the PM's agenda, especially when they attended these meetings. Yet, among those departmental officials not participating in the stock-takings, uncertainty grew about the content of policy decisions, also because no minutes were taken during these meetings. In turn, a response to the raised concerns was rather difficult because it was not always clear afterwards which policy direction had been agreed upon – and whether the Minister had fully agreed with the PM or whether he wanted to proceed with his policy as before, at least partly. Put differently: Bilaterals issued 'instructions' on Whitehall departments that came not 'in a way they understand' (Wilson, quoted by Hennessy 2005: 11). However, the Policy Unit was not troubled by these potential incongruences in the departmental follow-up of bilaterals; instead it was rather perceived as postponing the unit's interventions:

'It was not our concern to control how ministers dealt with the conclusion drawn between them and the PM. But often their failure to follow up these conclusions became visible (...), for example in our meetings with their departmental officials about a White Paper. (...) And then we would act.' (IUK36)

4.1.2 The Policy Unit as 'policy steer emanating from Number 10'³⁷

Over time, the Policy Unit increased its efforts to ensure departmental compliance with the PM's agenda *before* departments submitted their policy proposals to cabinet. It engaged in direct interactions with Whitehall departments, using its status as the PM's 'eyes and ears' (James 1999: 213) and emphasising that its support is a key prerequisite to get the PM's approval. In practice, the Policy Unit conducted mainly two advisory activities in that respect: (1) it intervened in departmental preparations of Green and White Papers and (2) drafted of PM's speeches as strategic announcements of policy shifts.

(1) The Policy Unit identified the Green Papers of importance to the PM by focussing on key pledges of the electoral campaign, as a Policy Unit member explains:

'There is no definitive way how it must be done. (...) One is that the department would decide that it had to legislate or had to change policy and then they would check with us, check on the PM's behalf and then they would initiate a draft of a Green Paper which we than look at – and very often we would change it. (...) The other possibility is that the PM decides that the policy should go in a particular direction, he would meet the Minister and (...) they would decide between them, the Minister would then commission the work from within the department and this would then end in a similar process.' (IUK02)

Similarly, the Policy Unit cleared all important White Papers before publication (Kavanagh/Seldon 1999: 265), i.e. those addressing key pledges or which had been prepared by cabinet ministers perceived as weak:

'the Policy Unit was terrifically important. It was illustrated in the very first year. The draft White Papers from John Prescott on Transport and a draft White Paper by Margaret Beckett for fairness at work – these were both entirely rewritten by the Policy Unit, to the chagrin of the two, pretty powerful, senior secretaries of state. When they objected, they were told "These carry the imprimatur of the Prime Minister."' (Kavanagh, quoted by HL 30 [2010]: Q55)

³⁷ (Smith 2005: 5).

To influence Green Papers and White Papers, the Policy Unit approached the departmental officials responsible for these documents as early as possible, often informed by departmental special advisers or by other advisory units working closely with the departments such as the new Performance and Innovation Unit in the Cabinet Office (see chap. J.4.2 below). Most often, the Policy Unit pre-cooked the drafts in meetings with departmental officials, and let them clear it with their political superiors afterwards:

'In the weeks up in the production of one of these papers, you would have a lot of meetings in the department and once they would have agreed it with their Minister, they would send it to you and ask for comments. Often it was rubbish and then there is a difficult process of changing and amendments to language.' (IUK02)

In a sense, the Policy Unit applied this strategy of early intervention because it recognised the difficulties 'to push a policy uphill if there may be resistance outside Number Ten' (Kavanagh/Seldon 1999: 306). However, many observers criticised the Policy Unit's lacking knowledge of Whitehall and their obvious ignorance to bureaucratic conventions in these interventions:

'The PM has never run a department. That shows through and in the people around him. They have no real sense of how departments think through and the brokerages they have to operate and implement. He and the Policy Unit always want instant action' (a close observer of Blair's inner circle, quoted by Hennessy 2002d: 21).

The departmental officials responded to the 'early invasions' of the Policy Unit differently. Especially in the early years of the new government many were convinced that the Policy Unit's approval to a departmental proposal is necessary to accomplish the PM's requests (Campbell 1998: 121), as one Policy Unit member explains:

'I as a special adviser could not instruct the civil servant to behave in a certain way. Obviously I could influence them and tell them if they didn't do what I said (...) there would be some consequence. But you couldn't formally instruct them' (IUK02).

Hence, departmental officials were well aware about these consequences, i.e. that their proposals are very likely to get criticised and eventually disapproved by the PM (IUK03, IUK16, IUK26). They welcomed direct contacts with Policy Unit members as opportunities to discuss policy proposals before submitting them to their minister, rarely repudiating the recommendations of the Policy Unit (IUK26). Besides, departmental officials were convinced that the Policy Unit had a crucial influence on the PM's agenda and therefore tried to use the Policy Unit to adjust it, as a Policy Unit member states:

'It was clear that you also need Policy Unit people who are trusted by the department to be the kind of people who – if the department has a very strong argument – are prepared to go in and tell the Prime Minister that he is wrong.' (IUK26)

Next to this mediation between departments and the PM, the Policy Unit acted occasionally as a 'court of appeal between departments and ministers in conflict' (Butler 2000: 155). Here, the occasional disagreements over policies between departmental officials and their ministers encouraged the former to 'ask the Policy Unit for helping us to persuade the minister' (IUK16). Other departmental officials criticised the Policy Unit's rigorous attitude:

'As shock troops they are going actually to the system, saying "Look, I'm sorry that is not good enough, we got to be over there, this is where we got to go in the next two years, please get on and do it!"' (IUK26)

The conflicts between the Policy Unit and Whitehall departments increased over time, mainly referring to three aspects. First, Policy Unit members were dissatisfied with the policy content of departmental proposals, i.e. they criticised the civil service for lacking 'alternative policy options – because they never thought about their policies in a broader context' (IUK02, IUK13). Second, Policy Unit members criticised how Whitehall departments formulated their departmental policy proposals, e.g. they complained that departmental officials would often need too much time to gather the information (IUK02, IUK04). Lastly, another critique was about the limited capabilities in Whitehall departments to gather the necessary information, i.e. their underdeveloped and insufficient contacts to external actors (IUK13). Yet, departmental officials occasionally referred to the fact that the new units in the Cabinet Office were responsible for gathering expertise on cross-cutting issues and thus provided this kind of knowledge – and that the departments worked already closely with them (IUK15, IUK34). As a consequence, Whitehall officials were divided in their assessments of the Policy Unit and its role in government policy-making

'The Prime Minister (...) can use people to give him ideas at the centre – as long as the ideas are then shared with the departments and discussed with them and properly processed. (...) I was never against the unit in principle' (IUK22).

Also cabinet ministers recognised the increasing role of the Policy Unit in the inner workings of their departments and criticised this role, some demanded from their civil servants not to talk to Policy Unit members or only after previous clearance with the Minister (IUK22). Some cabinet ministers expressed their critical attitude towards the Policy Unit also publicly, e.g. the Deputy PM and Secretary of State for the Environment, Transport and the Regions, John Prescott, criticised the unit members' overemphasis of their close access to the PM: 'They used to ring up and say "Number Ten here", and I would say, "No you're not, you're just Joe Bloggs. Tony's Number Ten." Then I'd hang up.' (Prescott 2008: 256).³⁸

Over time, though, the influential status of the Policy Unit declined, corresponding to the declining authority of the PM in cabinet and thus also other cabinet ministers joined the critical stance against too much involvement of the Policy Unit into policy development within Whitehall departments. Partly, the attachment of the Private Office was an attempt to regain its status across Whitehall – because the latter performs a crucial bottleneck function in Number Ten and Whitehall departments traditionally trust the private secretaries in the Private Office on important matters (IUK16, IUK26).

(2) Another key instrument to influence departmental policy prior their submission to the cabinet level was the drafting of PM's speeches or rather a 'politics by announcement' (Savoie 2008: 151). In general, the Policy Unit prepared the PM's speeches by analysing departmental activities, identifying shortcomings, and suggesting alternative policy options. As such, PM speeches were not government announcements prepared in cooperation with departments to herald future governmental action; instead they were

³⁸ Eventually, the conflicts between Prescott and the Policy Unit member responsible for environment and transport policy were solved by assigning the member to a different policy remit (Dorey 2005: 84).

drafted with an explicit ignorance of departmental interests – in order to direct the departmental policy agenda, as a senior official from the Cabinet Office explains:

'Sometimes the political advisers in 10 Downing Street would give the Prime Minister an idea and the Prime Minister would announce it in a speech (...) and the Minister in charge of the department and even the officials in the department would have never heard about it before.' (IUK22)

Put differently: When the PM delivered a 'speech to unveil a new policy, he let the government decision-making process pick up the pieces as best it can' (Savoie 2008: 151). These means were portrayed as the 'Cafetiere Theory of Government' (The Economist, 1999: 47), whereby a new government, especially after 18 years in opposition, had to pressurise the machinery of government at cabinet and departmental level to push its agenda through. Many ministers picked up the ideas voluntarily and were interested in 'seeing the Prime Minister's initiative comes to a successful conclusion' (ibid.). Accordingly, they urged their departments to follow the lines that had been set out in the speech (IUK16). Some cabinet ministers tried to avoid a PM's speech addressing their portfolio by consulting the Policy Unit before they launched their own departmental key initiatives in order to get the latter integrated into the speech rather than to listen to announcements they had not worked upon (Burch/Holliday 1999: 36). However, various cabinet ministers also ignored speeches concerning their realm, especially those with considerable influence in cabinet (IUK03, IUK12, IUK36).

For departmental officials, PM's speeches on issues in their portfolio often resulted in meetings with the Policy Unit afterwards in order 'to sort out the details' (IUK26). Here, it became obvious that the Policy Unit had not assessed the capabilities of Whitehall departments to follow the announcements in advance (IUK02, IUK16). Occasionally, therefore, departmental officials could 'persuade the Policy Unit that the announcement was made on very difficult assumptions and that this policy shift may be not as easy and quick as they may think' (IUK16). Most often, though, departmental officials were strongly constrained by the announcement and 'had to make sure that it really happens' (IUK16), also because not only their minister, but also key stakeholders and policy addressees expected compliance to the PM's requests. Next to this direct impact, PM speeches had also indirect effects on Whitehall departments:

'When the PM had just announced a new policy for another Whitehall department, other departments became grateful that it wasn't them – and at the same time (...) they became more aware what could happen if they did not cooperate.' (IUK13)

After the general election in 2001, the number of PM speeches were reduced, also because the newly created Delivery Unit in the Cabinet Office allowed the PM to conduct a 'blaming and shaming' of departmental policies in cabinet directly, i.e. he and his advisers could criticise cabinet ministers about their policy delivery and asked about their plans to improve it, thus getting a closer grip on future departmental policies than announcing them in a speech, with all the aforementioned possibilities of departments to shift or re-interpret these policy objectives (Ling 2002; Kelman 2006; Richards 2006; Barber 2007).

4.2 The 'policy unit[s] in the Cabinet Office'³⁹

The three units in the Cabinet Office during PM Blair's first two terms acted as 'prime ministerial think tanks' (Ward/Lowe 2007: 414; Halpern 2010: 269), with a clear remit to influence government policy-making by supporting

[s]trategic policy-making [as] a professional discipline in itself involving serious analysis of the current state of affairs, scanning future trends and seeking out developments elsewhere to generate options; and then thinking through rigorously the steps it would take to get from here to there. I find too often that civil servants have not put forward a proposal either because they thought it would not be acceptable politically or because it simply seemed too radical.' (Blair 2004)⁴⁰

As such, strategic policy-making across central government was supposed to be directed *by the centre* – which, in turn, was oriented towards the PM, disregard the units' official mandate to service cabinet. Despite tensions with the Treasury, the unit's members favoured this construct – because it increased their status across Whitehall and more advisory work for cabinet would have implied more short-term issues, reducing the resources for assessing departmental policies and formulating policy alternatives (IUK27). More importantly, an orientation towards cabinet as a whole would have presumably increased open debates in cabinet because it would have provided additional information to all cabinet members – which the PM wanted to avoid (IUK01).

In practice, the three units in the Cabinet Office performed their advisory role differently: The Performance and Innovation Unit and later the Strategy Unit (1) published policy reports, assessing cross-cutting policies and suggesting new policy options. In contrast, the Forward Strategy Unit (2) prepared secretive policy reviews for the PM only. In addition, the Strategy Unit (3) conducted a 'Strategic Audit' and initiated a departmental medium-term planning via five-year strategy plans.

4.2.1 *The Performance and Innovation Unit and the Strategy Unit:*

Reports and discussion papers

The tasks of the Performance and Innovation Unit were formulated by its first director during an 'ambassadorial tour' with senior officials, whereby particularly the Cabinet Secretary and the Treasury raised concerns about its close proximity to the PM (Chakrabarti, quoted by HC 32-V [2000]: Q584-5). Eventually, the unit was designated to conduct a twofold mandate: Improving the achievement of government's policy priorities, particularly cross-cutting issues, and reviewing departmental policies in terms of coordination and delivery (Gay 2000: 40; Richards 2008a: 111), as one member explains:

[The] original conception of the unit had two strands: One would be to look at the performance of government departments and trying to improve that performance. Another part, and this would be the innovation part, was particularly to look at *new ways of doing business in Whitehall*. And the most important part of that strand was cross-cutting work, work that went across departmental boundaries.' (emphasis JF, IUK15)

³⁹ (Page 2003: 657).

⁴⁰ Speech about 'Modernisation of the Civil Service', 24 February 2004.

This mandate created some tensions with the Treasury fearing competition. As a compromise, a 'steering board' was set up to decide about the unit's work programme.⁴¹ The steering board was chaired by the head of the Policy Unit, later by the Chief of Staff in Number Ten, and included a special adviser of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the head of the Treasury's Public Services Expenditure Directorate as well as Policy Unit members and Cabinet Office staff (IUK07, IUK15, IUK 27). As such, it did not involve Whitehall departments and reflected instead the new unit's informal key client, the PM (IUK08, IUK26; MacDougall 2006: 66). In practice, the board served

'as a short-circuit to deal with different interpretations of the PM's concerns on an issue and to ensure that work by the Unit meshed with other linked activities such as forthcoming legislation.' (emphasis JF, Halpern 2010: 272)

The key advisory products of the Performance and Innovation Unit and later the Strategy Unit were policy reports and discussion papers, although the former were perceived as more important – also because they often included implementation plans to be followed up by the departments. However, the units' members did not perceive their advisory work as political:

'As a unit of the civil service we don't give political advice, the political perspective comes from the Policy Unit in Number Ten. As a Strategy Unit we are not involved in giving advice on day-to-day issues, we're not here to give advice on crisis and crisis management, we're not here to respond to the headlines in today's newspapers. We have the time and the space to *focus on the important rather than the urgent*' (emphasis JF, IUK08).

When the PIU was established in 1999, the Policy Unit presented the PM a list of possible issues on which the new unit could work upon. From this list he selected five issues according to his political priorities (IUK15, IUK27). Later, the steering board met on a monthly basis to decide upon the unit's future work – strongly influenced by the Policy Unit and always approved by the PM (IUK07, IUK08; Kavanagh/Seldon 1999: 270; Greer 2005).⁴² In addition, cabinet ministers made direct recommendations, especially during PM Blair's second term nearly half of all reports were suggested by them (IUK27). Regularly, also senior officials in Number Ten influenced the work, as one of them recalls:

'I was often saying "Look, actually, you are quite right, that may well be the question and that certainly was the question as far as the Prime Minister was concerned six months ago. But the question for him *now* is here, so [if] you want to make this (...) interesting, you are going to have to do a bit more thinking about this and downplay that."' (emphasis JF, IUK26)

Between PIU's inception in 1999 and the general election in 2005, a total of 38 reports and 13 discussion papers have been published; roughly two thirds of the reports before the general election in 2001. Each policy report had an initiation document outlining its objectives, time schedule, and nature of output that was sent to the PM, but afterwards also to the responsible departments for their comments and then back to the PM so that he could finally approve it (IUK27). However, departmental comments were not very important, particularly in the early years the PM told the PIU if 'the department doesn't like the idea,

⁴¹ When the Performance and Innovation Unit was merged into the PM's Strategy Unit, the board became responsible was renamed as 'Commissioning Board' (Halpern 2010: 272).

⁴² To comply with formal procedures, however, the unit's director met beforehand with the Cabinet Secretary in order to inform him on his proposals for future issues (IUK15).

(...) "Never mind what they say, you should propose it anyway" (IUK15). The majority of these reports were prepared together with Whitehall departments, reasoning that

'in the British system, legislation is not always necessary to change government policies, some pieces of work were done for the PM, the majority was done jointly with the department – and sometimes this would be reflected in future legislation.' (IUK08)

The key function of the PIU's advisory output was to reduce departmentalist thinking across Whitehall – especially for policy issues cutting across portfolios (Levitt/Solesbury 2005: 36; Mulgan 2006d: 152), as one member expresses:

'the Prime Minister got more dissatisfied with what he was getting [from Whitehall departments, JF] – because all these people got a bit stuck in a particular mind-set because the departments had existed for a lot of time (...) he wanted us to get into it a little bit more.' (IUK27)

Accordingly, the PIU focused in its reports and discussion papers on 'wicked issues',⁴³ as Blair's advisers had stressed already during opposition:

'[A]nother important consideration (...) is the way in which the government approaches policy objectives that affect a range of departments and tackles the so-called "wicked" issues – persistent and intractable, mainly social, problems which reach across departmental boundaries.' (Mandelson/Liddle 1996: 245)

As such, the PIU and later the Strategy Unit 'made itself unthreatening to departments by being clear that it would only address cross-cutting issues rather than core issues belonging to individual departments' (Powell 2010: 178). In turn, some policy areas of PM's key concern were not addressed by reports, including e.g. the NHS or police reform (IUK27). In addition, machinery of government issues became a key theme (IUK27) – although they were less wicked in substantial terms but relevant because 'they shape departmental coordination' and thus 'affect all Whitehall departments' (IUK27). The reports and discussion papers offered evidence for certain policy alternatives, defined the policy problem, also excluding aspects (Fawcett/Rhodes 2007: 84), as a unit member stresses:

'We were trying to *shape the discourse* in terms of public policy, partly (...) to get people understand the complexity of some of it, partly (...) you then got a foundation for some of the policy discussion that follows – rather than people just discussing (...) without any facts or evidence.' (emphasis JF, IUK27)

The policy issues addressed in a report or a discussion paper were selected according to their relevance for the PM, but also to show that pre-existing decision-making structures are unsuitable for handling the issue properly, as its first director explained:

'The broad criteria for the selection of projects are, firstly, is the project likely to address a significant strategic issue to do with a market or Government failure, does it cross institutional boundaries and would other approaches, for example from a cabinet committee or an inter-departmental group, be able to handle this better than the PIU?' (Chakrabarti, quoted by HC 32-V [2000]: Q584-5).

In addition, especially the policy reports aimed to facilitate cabinet agreement and policy implementation (Mulgan 2003: 5). Each report was either presented 'to' the government, signalling that its conclusions had *not* been cleared with involved departments, or as reports 'by' the government, presenting a statement of government policy that had been cleared with

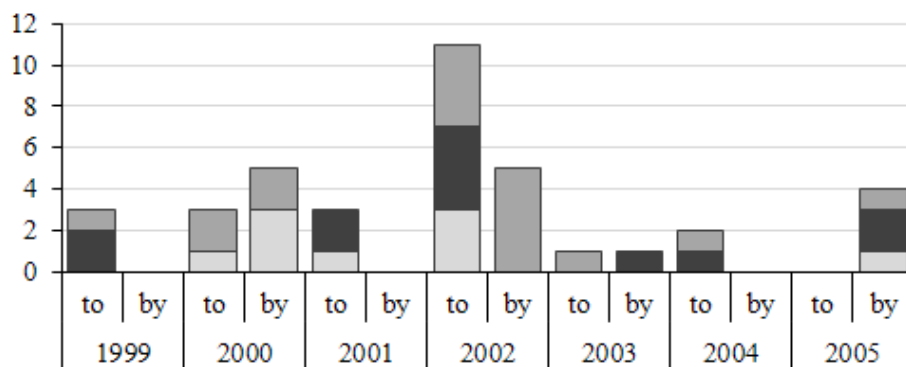
⁴³ The origins of the term are contested. According to Peter Hennessy, it was introduced by Michael Bichard, PermSec in the Department of Education and Employment (1998: 14).

all departments and will be implemented as outlined in the report. In turn, the latter type of reports also included implementation plans with lead responsibilities and timetables, disciplining cabinet ministers to follow (Saggar 2007: 14).⁴⁴ Occasionally, policy reports were presented *to* the government although the PIU wanted to prepare a government statement, mostly because conflicts in Whitehall had arose (Jordan 2001: 347). Although the unit was interested to achieve collective agreement (IUK08), exceptions were made:

'Because if we get an agreement to everything that would probably mean we get more boring stuff and the radical thinking would be shut out before it got to the public domain. (...) we wanted most of our stuff agreed, but not all of it.' (IUK27)

A longitudinal analysis of all published policy reports reveals that the ratio between reports *to* and *by* the government remained rather stable during the two prime ministerial terms under scrutiny, i.e. approx. two thirds of all reports were presented *to* the government (see Figure J.7). The number of policy reports presented *to* the government was more constant over time than the number of reports *by* the government, revealing that the unit's abilities to clear their recommendations with affected departments differed across issues and the affected departments (IUK08, IUK34).

Figure J.7 The status of published PIU/PMSU reports, 1999-2005



Legend

- machinery of government issues (N = 9)
- economic policy (N = 17)
- social policy (N = 12)

Source: Own illustration, information compiled from PIU and PMSU reports, 1999-2005.

Despite the general cross-cutting remit of all policy reports, one can relate them very broadly to social and economic policy as well as to machinery of government issues. Whereas social policy had been identified already by Blair's advisers during opposition as an almost classic area for wicked issues and machinery of government issues were perceived as wicked due to their relevance for central government as a whole, economic policy issues were mainly addressed because of the tensions between the PM and the Chancellor of the Exchequer, i.e. the PM requested advisory work on these issues for his own support, disregard the Treasury's participation in the steering board (IUK08).

When the unit was merged with the Forward Strategy Unit in 2002, the new Strategy Unit expanded its issue horizon, addressing also domestic policy priorities that were not

⁴⁴ HC Deb 14 June 2000 vol 351 c648W.

necessarily cross-cutting, e.g. home affairs, economy and infrastructure, welfare reform, social justice, child care, and energy (Mulgan 2005a: 183; Fawcett/Rhodes 2007: 83-4). In turn, it was less concerned with machinery of government issues. Later, the Strategy Unit turned even more towards short-term issues and thus adjusted its methods and approaches, e.g. prepared its policy reports in a shorter amount of time and, in turn, limited the ambitions with regard to policy recommendations (IUK08, IUK15).

Most reports were completed in one year; a report on 'Ethnic Minorities and the Labour Market' was finished only after two years (PMSU 2003a).⁴⁵ Few reports were presented after a shorter time period, particularly the first reports – because the unit was forced 'to show what [it] can' (IUK15). Yet, the average duration to prepare a report caused problems, as a senior civil servant in the PMO recalls:

'They spent ten months examining the British fish industry or something, Geoff [Mulgan, JF] sends up a minute of two to three pages saying "Here is a 200-page report on the British fishing industry and here are its key recommendations." I will always remember this wonderful moment, the Prime Minister turned to me and said "Did I ever asked for that?"' (IUK26)

This problem of asymmetrical attention spans between the unit and its key client increased over time, i.e. the reports published during the first prime ministerial term were, on average, completed earlier than those published during the second term. The units' members explained these longer time spans with the increasing scope of issues addressed by the reports as well as the necessity 'to work with the departments, and persuade them that it is also helpful for them' (IUK07, IUK27) – which took longer than before.

Several reports were later incorporated into Green or White Papers, e.g. a report on rural policy influenced strongly the Rural White Paper (Cm 4909 [2000]; see also HC 32-v [2000]), another report on energy policy shaped the Energy White Paper (Cm 5761 [2003]; see Thain 2002: 11; Hartley 2006; Ward/Lowe 2007: 415; Halpern 2010: 272). These and other policy issues were particularly suitable for uplifting them as a Green or White Paper because departments had suggested the initial reports – and were thus more cooperative (IUK08, IUK26). However, the unit's detail steering in terms of departmental follow-up of reports was often limited:

'[T]he officials in charge of something are given a report (by the Strategy Unit, for example) and told to write it up. In both cases where I came across legislation based on such reports, the teams involved pointed out that the general ideas were so vague that the report was not much of a guide to how policy should be developed.' (Page 2006: 7)

The units in the Cabinet Office were well aware how strong they were 'woven into bureaucratic processes' and, in turn, how much they depended upon departmental cooperation and thus 'tried to build consensus wherever possible' (Mulgan 2006a: 152):

'We do a lot to make sure that our work is relevant, timely and high quality – and therefore respected by departments in order to bring them along with us. We were very careful about trying to get departments (...) to agree with the analysis of problems before formulating policy. One way to get people on side is to get them to understand that there is a problem, agree with your analysis about the problem and its causes (...). Don't mention anything about policy changes or what you might do (...). Then, once everyone is agreed

⁴⁵ See also: Cabinet Office Memorandum, submitted to HC 82 [1998], 09 December 1998.

that there is a problem, then you can move them on to the next stage of (...) "This is what we now think we want to do about it." (IUK08).

To foster contacts with Whitehall departments, each report was prepared by a report team that was selected by the director; when the unit became larger each report got a team leader who then selected the rest of the team (IUK15).⁴⁶ These report teams included not only unit members, but also secondees from Whitehall departments concerned with the issue, external consultants as well as academics (Burch/Holliday 1999: 39; Fawcett/Gay 2005: 39). They were responsible for the whole report process, i.e. 'the same teams worked on analysis, policy design, securing cabinet agreement and preparing implementation plans' (Mulgan 2006d: 152). Most reports published until 2005 provide information about their team composition, including the team leader, the core team members as well as support staff (see Table J.10).⁴⁷

Table J.10 The team leadership of PIU/PMSU reports, 1999-2005

	PIU/PMSU	consultants	academics	departmental secondees	n/a
PM Blair I (1999-2001)	9.1%	18.2%	4.5%	31.8%	36.4%
PM Blair II (2001-2005)	40.0%	13.3%	6.7%	13.3%	26.7%
mean	24.6%	15.8%	5.6%	22.6%	31.6%

Note: The figure includes only those published reports providing reliable information on the leadership of the report team (N = 24).

Source: Own illustration, information compiled from PIU and PMSU reports, 1999-2005.

During the salad days of the new unit, many teams were led by departmental secondees or external consultants. In contrast, during Blair's second term very often Strategy Unit members acted as team leaders, reflecting the declining interest in departments to work with the Strategy Unit on particular issues. On average, teams included 12.5 members; a longitudinal analysis reveals no clear trend but several dynamics occurred (see Figure J.8).

First, the involvement of the PIU and later the Strategy Unit members differed across reports. Very broadly, every report team recruited at least one and at maximum half of its members from the unit, except for two reports on machinery of government issues in 2000 (PIU 2000a, 2000c) as well as e.g. an inter-departmental review on childcare (PMSU 2002b) that were almost completely prepared by unit members. Presumably, this decision to involve in these reports no departmental secondees was related to their theme, i.e. to avoid that departmental officials would advise on machinery of government issues.

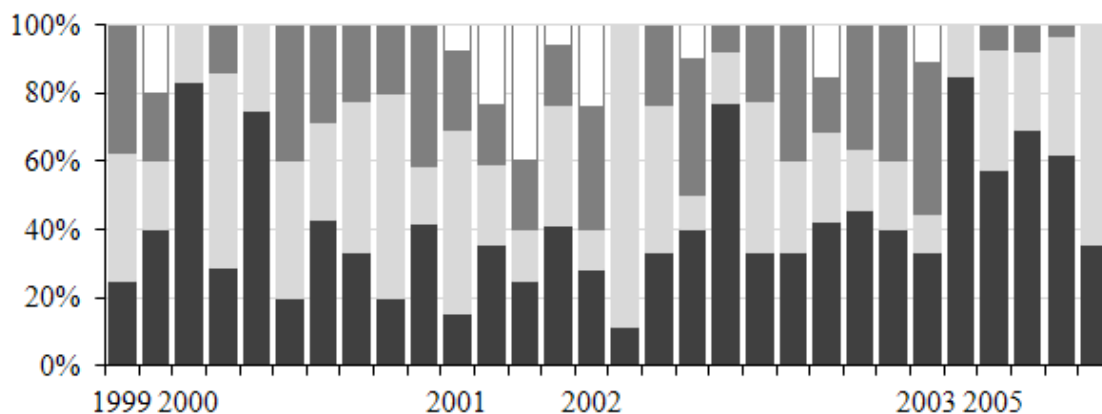
Second, departmental secondees in report teams provided 'front-line experience' and 'ensure[d] that the strategies (...) are deliverable' (Mulgan 2003: 5). The unit members thought that it 'was very important to have departments feel that they were the unit too' (IUK15). Thus, the inclusion of departmental secondees was perceived 'as crucial to

⁴⁶ Selected reports were commissioned by consultants (HC Deb 22 March 2004 vol 419 cc562-3W).

⁴⁷ Not all reports provided this distinction between core team and support staff. Moreover, the latter's definition varies across reports and thus has been included in the overall composition figures.

achieving strategies that are analytically based, creative but also realistic about the capacity of implementing' (Mulgan 2003: 5). All report teams included at least one departmental secondee; one report on central government's coping with risk published in 2002 was prepared almost entirely by departmental secondees (PMSU 2002c).

Figure J.8 The composition of PIU/PMSU report teams, 1999-2005



Legend

 PIU/PMSU members	 private sector secondees
 departmental secondees	 academic secondees

Note: The figure includes only those published reports providing reliable information on the composition of the report team (N = 30).

Source: Own illustration, information compiled from PIU and PMSU reports, 1999-2005; HC 123-i [2007]: Appendix 2.

Lastly, many report teams included external experts, e.g. from consultancies, industry, think tanks, or the third sector (IUK26).⁴⁸ The report with the highest participation of outsiders addressed 'Ethnic Minorities and the Labour Market' (PMSU 2003a). The strong involvement of outsiders in the preparation of policy reports was not only related to their policy expertise, but particularly to their management expertise:

'I think the importance of external expertise needs to be mentioned and stressed because we have gained a lot in terms of project management from having so many secondees.' (Chakrabarti, quoted by HC 32-V [2000]: Q585)

Very often, the team conducting the report was physically located in 'the department most likely to be responsible for acting on the conclusions, so that they felt ownership and up to speed with the work' (Halpern 2010: 272, IUK08, IUK15). In addition, the units organised regular lunchtime seminars for the units' staff and civil servants with external speakers on a range of strategic issues.⁴⁹

Many interviewed experts stressed that the biggest contribution of the policy reports was their 'analytical work and stakeholder engagement' (IUK15, IUK07, IUK28):

'Past governments drew mainly on ideology, instinct or political calculation to determine what to do. But now that there is far more evidence on what is likely to work in fields as

⁴⁸ Cabinet Office Memorandum, submitted to HC 82 [1998], 09 December 1998.

⁴⁹ HC Deb 3 Nov 2008 vol 482 c25W.

diverse as penal policy and macroeconomics, the craft of government has become a bit more like a science.' (Mulgan 2005b: 8)

Put differently: The reports and discussion papers aimed to reduce what departmental officials had taken for granted (IUK26). Some departmental officials welcomed these efforts – also in contrast to the Policy Unit's activities, as one unit member stresses:

'Our work was successful as long as you can form a good relationship with the department and say "What we are trying to do is to produce an effective solution on behalf of the whole government to the problems that we are all facing", the department will be very likely to be cooperative. If you are very open with them (...) and you make sure they knew what was going on and you didn't keep secrets from them, they would be cooperative – if you had a good discussion with them and not try to overrule them or (...) use your access to the Prime Minister (...)' (IUK22).

Regularly, though, departmental officials were 'difficult to persuade or to bring on side' (IUK08):

'You surely recognised that for almost anything you are going to do – there would be departmental resistance or the potential for it. Quite a lot of thinking was done how we organise the work to try to keep departments part of the process (...) without being able to veto or block the thinking.' (IUK27)

Accordingly, unit members experienced 'officials [who] were very unwelcoming; they thought this is their domain' (IUK14). This hostility among civil servants was not only apparent because the unit prepared a report about an issue in their departmental turf, it was also more generally addressing the unit's role in government as a unit member remembers:

'a lot of criticism [came] from line departments saying "You are doing this for the whole of government or for the Prime Minister? Is this for the collective or for the individual?" And it was impossible because the Prime Minister and his staff had very much the view that it was for them, whereas if I'd say this publicly or to the departments they would not cooperate.' (IUK15)

Partly, line officials resisted because they perceived the reports as 'a political blow' to the department, i.e. to signal incapacities of Whitehall departments to handle a particular policy issue (Smith 2003: 75-6):

'The departments that really lost out were those already seen as weak, (...) very defensive (...), uphold by vested interests, captured (...). What a PIU study showed was that someone else could do this work, frankly, but that they couldn't because a) they didn't have the incentives to think in that way and b) they were not attracting good enough people to do it' (IUK15)

As a consequence, particularly officials from regularly addressed Whitehall departments complained that these reports lacked innovatory policy solutions promised by the unit's own remit (IUK27, IUK28). These line officials were often supported by senior officials, i.e. 'some of the more obstreperous and difficult permanent secretaries would say "Look, I don't care what Strategy Unit says (...), I'm in charge"' (IUK26). However, the members of the PIU and later the Strategy Unit could rely upon the fact that civil servants 'knew who we worked for' (IUK08) – and that in case of resistance or active enmity the PM would act as final arbiter. However, the PM's backing differed:

'He would just tell the Secretary of State "I want your people to work with my Strategy Unit". And then they worked with us. Clearly that does depend on the Ministers, there are

clearly some Ministers like the Chancellor (...) where there is a lot of a challenge for the Prime Minister, of course, to say such a thing and order them to work with us.' (IUK08)

Moreover, especially Treasury officials were very suspicious about the new unit in the Cabinet Office. Although the Treasury had some influence on its agenda in the steering board, Treasury officials still mistrusted the unit and its position in the loop of government policy-making (IUK30). The PIU tried to convince Treasury officials that their role is just technical and clearly non-political (IUK08), mostly, however, they just referred to the classic 'blame game' in executive decision-making (Hood 2002):

'Treasury was threatened by us [the PIU, JF] because this capacity gives the Prime Minister more capacity than they like. So they had to be brought inside the tent somehow. It was a very, very difficult relationship. The way we tried to explain it to the Treasury was that it was sometimes not bad for them (...) to be able to say this is the PIU's idea – even though they really backed the idea.' (IUK15)

Although these report activities had clearly effects on government policy-making at departmental level they also affected the cabinet level. First, the policy reports enhanced the evidence for policy decisions taken by cabinet:

'As we do our work here, we engage from the outset and on an on-going basis with the Prime Minister and with other Ministers so that they are in a position to say "We agree with your analysis of the problem, we agree with what this means for government policy, we agree what the future strategy and changes in policy should be."' (IUK08)

Second, the reports informed cabinet members about decision-making processes in their departments and, in turn, provided opportunities for them to discipline their officials:

'They [cabinet ministers, JF] wanted us to do stuff because they didn't know how to get the right stuff out of their departments. (...) The Secretary of State of a department said "I'm not really happy what our policy is on X. Give me some alternatives and give me some proper analysis what is going on. I'm thinking there is not enough radical input going on. I'm thinking that we are far away of gingering up the policy debate."' (IUK27)

Accordingly, cabinet ministers asked the units in the Cabinet Office to prepare policy reports addressing inter alia their own portfolio because they anticipated that they would need the PM's approval eventually – and if 'his own unit had agreed with them, it became more likely to get the PM's approval' (IUK27). This growing interest of cabinet ministers on reports prepared by the Strategy Unit was also interpreted as an indicator that the unit became 'an accepted part of Whitehall' (Mulgan 2005a: 184). In turn, though, these dynamics increased critics by the PM and his advisers that the units in the Cabinet Office had 'gone native' and were loosening their critical perspective on Whitehall (IUK14). As a consequence, the PM requested fewer reports over time (IUK03, IUK15). In turn, the units had more capacities left to answer the requests of cabinet ministers (IUK27).

However, many cabinet ministers also rejected the reports, partly because they were more interested in short-term results for policy issues they had addressed in the steering board.⁵⁰ Partly, though, 'some ministers (...) refuse[d] us because it [was] refusing the Prime Minister technically. But in general, you don't want to be the Minister who said "no" to the Strategy Unit' (IUK07). As a general rule, cabinet ministers rejected particularly the units' work if it addressed their own turf:

⁵⁰ In contrast, junior ministers recognised the unit's work as important for their promotion if they acted as sponsor minister, and thus wanted to give the unit the time they needed (IUK15).

'Ministers were often complaining about the Strategy Unit and called up the PMO saying "Call the dogs off! (...) Can't you get these people under control? (...) Who asked for this? Is the Prime Minister really behind this or is this just the sort of teenage quibblers sitting in the Strategy Unit?'" (IUK26)

As such, they criticised particularly the units' 'procedural shaping' of executive decision-making, i.e. their influence in defining a policy problem and presenting solutions – outside the traditional cabinet arena. Most often, such refusals by cabinet ministers provoked conflicts with the PM who responded to them in bilaterals and very often 'convinced the Minister to support the report team' (IUK07). Although it is impossible to assess the frequency of such events, the interviewed experts agreed that only very few cabinet ministers could afford to get into regular conflicts with the PM over reports prepared by the units in the Cabinet Office (IUK03, IUK16, IUK26).

In contrast, particularly junior ministers supported the units' report activities and, in turn, relied upon their conclusions for their own intra-departmental role (IUK08). Partly, this was caused by the fact that the steering board appointed mostly junior ministers from a department without a direct interest in the policy issue as 'sponsoring minister' for each report (IUK13, IUK15). A sponsoring Minister acted as a sounding board and facilitator for conversations with ministers (Richards/Kavanagh 2000: 39). The post became soon popular:

'In the first two years (...) over half of the sponsor Ministers made it to cabinet after doing this. So it became very popular, people said "Oh, I'd really would like to do this" – because they saw that their colleagues were rising.' (IUK15)

The sponsoring Minister also chaired the report's 'steering group', comprising all relevant departments as well as external experts (IUK08, IUK13, IUK15). As an informal rule, one or two Policy Unit members also participated in these steering groups to 'make sure that the Policy Unit lead on the area and the department to whom this work might relate was on top of it' (IUK26, IUK27; Hennessy 1998b: 15; Burch/Holliday 2004: 14). For the same reason, many steering groups included a Treasury official (IUK26).

In addition, the units in the Cabinet Office strengthened also the role of the Policy Unit, i.e. the Policy Unit used the units 'to do the heavy-lifting' (IUK08):

'Advisers to the Prime Minister in the Policy Directorate would bit for our time because the resources in Number Ten to do analysis are basically nil, we became the analysis unit for the Prime Minister's advisers for domestic policy issues. (...) They would ask the department to work with us (...) sometimes it would need a Minister's approval.' (IUK07)

Yet, the Policy Unit members stressed that the work by the units in the Cabinet Office was not always useful (IUK15). Partly, this was caused by the different time horizons of the reports and the Policy Unit. Partly, it was caused by the fact that the PIU and later the Strategy Unit published most of their output, thus reducing the 'leverage of their advice for discussions in cabinet or between the PM and a Minister' (IUK08).

In contrast to other British advisory arrangements under scrutiny, the PIU and the Strategy Unit assessed their own influence with an 'impact tracker' illustrating changes resulting from those reports published with a timetable for implementation (PMSU 2004a). The tracker shows that various reports resulted in Green or White Papers and in legislation, e.g. the *Proceeds of Crime Act* [2002] or the *Adoption and Children Act* [2002] were stated as outcomes of PIU reports (PMSU 2004a: 21, 25).

In addition, the impact tracker shows several changes with regard to the machinery of government, especially from those reports addressing these issues, e.g. the creation of the Regional Co-ordination Unit in the Cabinet Office was noted as an outcome of the report on 'Reaching Out' noted above (PMSU 2004a: 17), but also policy-related reports were stated with an impact on the structure of government, e.g. the Office of the e-Envoy, which was responsible for making all government services available electronically by 2008, was stated as outcome of a report on e-government (PMSU 2004a: 27) or the appointment of a cabinet-level 'Champion for Older People' to coordinate the implementation of a report on 'Winning the Generation Game' (PMSU 2004a: 19).

The units in the Cabinet Office also aimed at 'helping departments [to] develop effective strategies and policies; and identifying and disseminating thinking on emerging issues and challenges' (Fawcett/Rhodes 2007: 83-4; PMSU 2004b; Greer 2005, 2006). To do so, the Strategy Unit supported the creation of strategy units in Whitehall departments 'to stimulate [departments, JF] into being more creative' (Powell 2010: 180):

'Generally, what the unit has done is increased capacity, the ability of the civil service to think long-term and to think difficult strategic issues. (...) The work it did (...) lifted the bar on the quality needed to do this work. (...) The unit developed lots of networks into departments and helped to create strategy units in departments.' (IUK15)

Partly, this dissemination of an organisational blueprint across Whitehall was supported by several PermSecs who wanted to increase their departmental analytical capabilities – also to be capable of counteractions towards the centre (IUK27). The departmental strategy units were often headed by directors who were previously Strategy Unit members (IUK07, IUK14; Mulgan 2006d: 150; MacDougall 2006: 65). In 2004, a 'Strategy Forum' was established for the directors of departmental strategy units as a

'community of strategy practitioners in government, which provides a safe space to share best practice, identify relevant Whitehall initiatives, and provide peer support and sharing of information, as well as make stronger links within and outside government' (PMSU website [2006], quoted by MacDougall 2006: 64).

Despite this close network, the Strategy Unit did not rely strongly on departmental strategy units (IUK08; Mulgan 2003: 5). Instead, the units coached departmental officials in order 'to strengthen Whitehall's strategic capabilities' (IUK27) by hosting 'Strategic Thinkers Seminars', dealing e.g. with 'Future Structures of Central Government'.⁵¹ In March 2002, the PMSU launched a 'Policy Hub' as platform for sharing experiences in strategy work across Whitehall (IUK07; PMSU 2004b). In 2003, it published a 'Strategy Survival Guide' to illustrate best practices on how to conduct strategic management (PMSU 2003d; Boaz/Solesbury 2007: 121).

4.2.2 The Forward Strategy Unit: Secretive policy reviews

The Forward Strategy Unit focused its advisory activities on key pledges of the Labour government as the 'critical future policy challenges' (Burch/Holliday 2004: 14), e.g. education, health, transport, or drugs (IUK08, IUK14). These policy issues were distinguishable from those addressed by the Performance and Innovation Unit because they

⁵¹ See for a summary: http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/strategy/downloads/su/future%20structures/fs_summary.pdf (accessed 22/12/2006).

were *not* cross-cutting – and, in turn, clearly associable with particular Whitehall departments (IUK27). Put differently: The FSU was designated to look 'square at big policy issues that overlapped directly with the big Departments' (Halpern 2010: 269; Burch/Holliday 2004: 14).

The key advisory product were policy reviews that 'broadly themed around a blueprint for what each of the major public services should look like in 2010, and how we could get there' (Halpern 2010: 270). Accordingly, the Forward Strategy Unit acted as

'a complimentary capacity for doing more private work, generally working bilaterally with departments rather than on cross-cutting issues, and reporting directly to the Prime Minister and Secretaries of State' (Blair, quoted by HC 1095 [2002]: Q4).⁵²

As such, the unit was partly echoing the report-oriented approach of the Performance and Innovation Unit and partly the stock-taking approach by the Policy Unit. Not surprisingly, the Forward Strategy Unit and the Policy Unit engaged in several turf wars, particularly between those Policy Unit members mirroring the portfolios addressed by the FSU's reviews, criticising that the FSU was duplicating their own work (IUK13). Yet, the FSU members countered by arguing that they were less involved in day-to-day decisions and more responsible for medium-term concerns and 'policy visions' (IUK15). However, the Policy Unit members were well aware that any decisions about a policy shift in the medium-term would influence more immediate decisions and thus were always suspicious when the FSU got into one of their issues (IUK02, IUK15).

The selection of issues addressed by the FSU was often done by the PM himself:

'The PM's view was "Thank you very much Department of Trade and Industry, you thought about it, you proved that you can't think about it because you hadn't come up with any solution at all – except the status quo. The status quo is clearly impossible (...) so we need a neutral body to look at this!"' (IUK15)

Other issues were suggested by the FSU, informed e.g. by its analyses for a different issue or its regular analyses of polls (IUK13). In contrast to its sister unit, the Forward Strategy Unit had initially no steering board to formulate further requests. The topics of policy reviews by the FSU were secretive, 'consistent with the long-standing principle that internal policy advice to ministers remains confidential',⁵³ but several examples have been discussed in Parliament or leaked to the media, including 'three forward looking reviews focussing on transport, health and education'.⁵⁴

In contrast to the transparent approach of the PIU, the Forward Strategy Unit submitted its analyses to the PM's eyes only (IUK13). Particularly this secrecy caused severe critics by PermSecs who 'were not too happy about [the FSU] parked on their front lawns' (Halpern 2010: 269). Eventually, they succeeded and each FSU project was officially led by a departmental secondee from the issue-relevant department, although the FSU members and the regularly invited outsiders in the review teams mainly succeeded in 'keep[ing] an eye on each of the reviews' (Halpern 2010: 270).

In practice, the FSU conducted its policy reviews in three stages:

⁵² Evidence presented by the Rt Hon Tony Blair MP, Prime Minister, on 16 July 2002

⁵³ HC Deb 22 Jan 2002 vol378 cc719-20W.

⁵⁴ HC 709-i [2005].

"The first stage was entirely diagnostic and contextual, absolutely getting to grips with the numbers, understanding the long-term trends on crime or really getting to grips with what the real capacity of the health system is or looking across the education system, comparing to other countries, looking into outcomes (...) getting at a deeper diagnostic level saying "Here is our problem". That was wholly apolitical, that was just diagnostic. (...) In the second stage you do a deeper diving to some areas, you realise from the first stage that you want to know more about certain aspects (...) plus proposals for policy, usually system-wide change or process-change or changes in the law, organisational reform (...). And the third phase was the implementation plan. Whatever would be agreed (...) in a conventional project plan "This is what we'll do to implement this." (IUK14)

In the first stage, the FSU gathered evidence about the selected policy from various sources, first and foremost from Whitehall departments (IUK12, IUK14). Yet, their contributions were often unsatisfactory, not because Whitehall officials gave 'wrong numbers or wrong data. The truth is, they find it very hard to give you any data' (IUK13):

'we send around a series of questions asking for numbers. Half of the responses came back without numbers, it was absolute goobledigook. (...) The other half (...) was lots of numbers buried in prose (...). You try to make sense of the numbers. And you can't. Why? (...) Because that's not how they [departments, JF] did their job (...). They didn't use them [numbers, JF] as part of managing their day-to-day business.' (IUK14)

As a consequence, the FSU gathered very often expertise from other countries, also working together with think tanks, business consultancies and academic experts to broaden the basis of information as well as its methods (IUK12, IUK14). To accomplish its policy reviews, the FSU consulted regularly external actors, either those on its advisory panel or other external advisers contributing to the unit on a short-term basis (IUK16). The terms of conditions for such external advisers were laid down in an annex of a letter from the PPS to the PM Heywood to John Birt, stressing that

- all those working on the reviews will need to be briefed on general security surrounding government and No. 10 as relevant, (...) and signing the Official Secrets Act;
- the advice offered to the Prime Minister and the relevant Secretaries of State will be confidential until/unless they decide otherwise;
- in addition, advisers and others working on the review programme should not speak about the content of their work publicly without agreement;
- advisors may not take related employment in the review area, for at least 12 months after completion of their work, without prior consultation with the Director of the FSU.⁵⁵

Accordingly, the PPS to the PM was well aware that the advice by external actors could culminate in a policy review of particular importance for government decision-making – otherwise he would not have stressed the fact that an issue-related employment after their contribution must be cleared with the FSU director a priori.

In the second stage, the FSU drafted policy recommendations based upon its findings in the comparative analysis of policy approaches in Britain and elsewhere. Again, external actors were welcomed as sounding board (IUK14), but also reform approaches already decided and implemented in other countries were studied in order to identify best practices (IUK14). More importantly, the FSU was not confined to propose distinct policy reforms,

⁵⁵ Letter from the PPS to the PM Jeremy Heywood to John Birt relating to his appointment as the PM's Strategy Adviser, Annex: Way of Working: General Conditions for all Review Teams and Independent Advisers, 05 October 2001.

thus focussing on the substantial aspects of the issue under scrutiny. Instead, it was also strongly concerned with the organisational prerequisites for their proposed policy shifts, following an 'advisory style' that John Birt had perfected, the unpaid adviser of PM Blair who had initiated the unit's creation and worked very closely with several review teams:

'his answers tended to focus more on new processes rather than new policies as such. We used to joke that the solution to every policy problem was not a new policy but an "organogram".' (Powell 2010: 179)

The last stage was not addressed in each review because policy implementation required a more strongly coordination of cabinet ministers – which was rather difficult given the conflicts in cabinet (IUK14).

Although the interviewed FSU members claim that their work was rather technocratic and diagnostic, they proposed often rather radical policy ideas conflicting with existing departmental policies – and their reviews were clearly oriented towards 'countries with the most radical approaches' (IUK13). Many reviews conducted by the Forward Strategy Unit came to rather uncomfortable conclusions from the viewpoint of Whitehall departments – and the longer the new Labour government was in power, the more uncomfortable these diagnoses became for ministers who 'could not pretend anymore that it didn't happen "at their watch"' (IUK14). Therefore, some cabinet ministers tried to avoid reviews in their area or to influence them directly by reporting regularly on the progress of their medium-term departmental policies to the FSU (IUK14).

The departmental officials tried to avoid FSU's detection of shortcomings – also because they referred not only to substantial dimensions of departmental policies, thus entering 'core departmental territory' (IUK27), but criticised also the limited capabilities to formulate evidence-based policies – and thus the capabilities of Whitehall officials in general. In turn, the activities of the Forward Strategy Unit even diminished expertise in certain departments – because the expertise gathered by the Forward Strategy Unit was perceived as better and not achievable from inside a Whitehall department (IUK15). More importantly, the FSU approach tacitly undermined the strategic work of departments:

'The constant critique that the Prime Minister gave of departments (...) [was] "They are not good at strategy. They don't have a strategy. They can't tell you where they go." (...) Of course the more you suck good strategy people to the centre, the more true it becomes because the danger is that (...) the Department of Health thinks "Well, you know, even if we do devise the right policy and we do have a forward thinking strategy, if those people in Number Ten and the Forward Strategy Unit don't buy it then we are dead before we start! So what is the point of thinking bold and radical thoughts and having an innovative strategy if these people are not with us?"' (IUK26)

When the FSU realised the importance of departments at least as sources of information, it changed its interactions with Whitehall, one of its members referred to it metaphorically as judo: Initially, the unit tried to persuade departments by showing its strength, i.e. the PM's backing; later the unit learned to use the strength of the departments – to win the argument by referring to their numbers and information (IUK13).

Besides, the unit was strongly inspired by business consultancies and presented its reviews in a 'management prose' that was less suitable to follow up for Whitehall departments. As an official put it: 'It's hardly rocket science, it's common sense, precisely

what you would expect from a management consultant' (The Independent, 28 June 2002: 12). In turn, departmental officials could somewhat ignore these reviews as not suitable for handling the policy issues in a way that is compliant with Whitehall conventions.

Despite its close proximity to the PM and its radical approach offering quite an impact on key policy issues, the FSU's secretive approach caused several problems limiting its actual influence on government policy-making. First, next to the Policy Unit also other units across central government stood in rivalry with the FSU, first and foremost the Treasury's Productivity Team, e.g. one FSU report on the long-term structure of the NHS was seen 'as a rival to the one on financing made for Gordon Brown by Derek Wanless' (The Independent, 28 June 2002: 12; see chap. J.4.4.2 below). The Forward Strategy Unit members had less problems with this rivalry and instead claimed that

'there were areas which the Prime Minister would have liked to proceed but which the Chancellor for his own reasons didn't want (...) and was able to block (...). You would produce the work and then would be meetings between the PM and the Chancellor.' (IUK14)

Accordingly, they were interested to prepare the review anyway, despite or actually because the Treasury had also an interest in the issue (IUK31). However, from a comparative viewpoint two reviews produced with an overlapping focus on a particular issue were clearly a duplication of advisory work – and not only likely to result in conflicts but also in more leeway for the concerned departments which recommendations to follow.

Second, due to the secrecy of its reviews the units advising the PM were not fully aware of its agenda, neither were the cabinet ministers and the Whitehall departments. Moreover, the secrecy and proximity to the PM resulted in the FSU being demanding and acting like a unit superior to Whitehall departments – 'which was nothing the officials liked very much' (IUK14).

Lastly, the status of the secretive FSU was perceived as a threat to the PIU in the Cabinet Office (IUK14). These tensions are well illustrated by a sketch played at a joint away day, picturing a conversation between a PIU and FSU member with the former asking the latter 'about all the interesting work they were doing and who they were working with, but all the FSU person could say was "I can't tell you"' (Halpern 2010: 270). The FSU's secrecy stood in stark contrast to the open access approach of the PIU publishing most of its work on the internet (IUK03, IUK15, IUK27). Likewise, the FSU's approach to work with senior external figures conflicted with the PIU's approach to work in teams together with departmental secondees (IUK13; Halpern 2010: 270).

4.2.3 The Strategy Unit: Strategic Audits and five-year plans

After 2002, the Strategy Unit continued some advisory tasks of the FSU and conducted a 'Strategic Audit' for the PM, completed in October 2003 (Mulgan/Potůček 2004: 46; Boaz/Solesbury 2006: 125). The term audit was deliberately chosen in order 'to make it sound suitably anodyne and bureaucratic' (Mulgan 2009: 192) and 'a little dull and less politically sensitive' (Halpern 2010: 272). In fact, the Strategic Audit aimed to

'take stock of how the country was doing and how well government was performing. The exercise involved a systematic comparison of Britain against other countries, assessments

of what was happening in each important area of policy, and anonymous interviews with almost all cabinet ministers and most of the permanent secretaries' (Mulgan 2005b: 5).

As such, the Strategic Audit echoed partly the official mandate of the Performance and Innovation Unit to review departmental performance, albeit with a strong focus on comparing departmental policy outputs in Britain with experiences and best practices across the EU and the OECD (IUK27). In practice, the Strategic Audit occupied nearly half of the Strategy Unit's staff, which 'worked with departments to consider future priorities and strategic choices across departmental boundaries (PMSU 2003c: 2; Richards/Smith 2002; Sulitzeanu-Kenan 2006; Halpern 2010: 272). The results of the audit were relayed back to cabinet and PermSecs, but also shaped the subsequent agenda of the Strategy Unit (Greer 2005; Halpern 2010: 273). As such, the Strategic Audit performed a similar function as the Early Warning System during the 1970s: It provided the government with a stock-taking of current government policies and informed the unit about its potential future agenda – enabling 'to spread PMSU's tentacles widely' (Saggar 2007: 16). Yet, the Strategic Audit was perceived by the PM and his advisers as too technocratic and although the first audit was replicated in February 2005 (PMSU 2005), the Strategy Unit used its results less than previously expected (IUK08).

More importantly, the Policy Unit asked the Strategy Unit in 2004 to support the formulation of five-year strategies in those Whitehall departments of importance to the PM, setting out 'the department's vision, its priorities and how these would be reached' (HC 123-i [2007]: 12; Fawcett/Rhodes 2007: 89). These five-year strategy plans aimed to provide an outlook of the legislative activity during Blair's third term in office (Mulgan 2006d: 152), but also to 'counteract the resource allocation process and the public expenditure process driven by the Treasury' (IUK26). As such, the five-year strategy plans provided the Policy Unit with its own instrument to plan departmental performance – not relying on Treasury's information – as a Policy Unit member opines:

'The PM said: "I don't want the Treasury anywhere near this, Treasury has their own bloody processes." (...) We wanted to have our own process and our own initiative with our own session documents which (...) produce a strategy for each of these departments. So this was resourced out of the Strategy Unit (...) but the Policy Unit people also heavily on it, saying "Let's produce serious medium- to long-term documents in each of the major public service departments about what is the direction, what is the destination."' (IUK26)

The five-year strategy plans therefore addressed the conflict between the PM and the Chancellor of the Exchequer but also a growing awareness of the former that the Delivery Unit and its work on policy implementation was a relevant entity but too selective, as its first head comments:

'Blair's focus was on the culmination of the five-year strategy process. Increasingly confident of delivery in the short term, he was now looking forward to irreversibly changing the public services so that, as he would put it, they could become self-sustaining, self-improving systems.' (Barber 2007: 216)

As a result, these plans were characterised by the Strategy Unit director as 'a decisive step towards a more serious approach to the business of government' (Mulgan 2005a: 6-7). In practice, the five-year strategy plans were mainly formulated between the Strategy Unit and officials from the respective Whitehall department, most often involving also departmental strategy units (IUK26).

However, departmental officials openly complained about these plans, arguing that the discussions during the Spending Review 2004 had already constrained the direction of departmental policies, also providing the apparent budget headings, whereas the five-year plans were completely different documents without any numbers to deliver some sort of strategy (IUK26). Put differently: The five-year strategy plans were perceived as an additional burden on departments without any policy implications – except that the PM and his advisers get a more precise understanding for the policy direction of the department. Moreover, these plans were also criticised by the permanent civil service as being too technocratic, i.e. that a planning exercise 'could never reflect reality' and is mostly 'a waste of time' (IUK07, IUK29).

The first five-year strategy plans were published in July 2004, presented by the Department of Education and Skills (Cm 6272 [2004]), the Home Office (Cm 6287 [2004]), and the Department of Health (DH 2005) – all three were important Whitehall departments in terms of New Labour's key pledges and preparing for the upcoming electoral campaign in the next year. The second round included the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS 2005), the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Cm 6411 [2004]), and the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI 2004). Yet, these plans had rather moderate implications on government policies because they partly duplicated the information gathered and presented in other procedures, most notably the Comprehensive Spending Review.

4.3 'Joined-up government' as 'linchpin of New Labour's Third Way'⁵⁶

Similar to PM Heath, Blair and his advisers had discussed already during opposition a new style of governing, outlined in a *Fabian Society* paper that was mainly written by two advisers, David Miliband and Geoff Mulgan (Rentoul 2001: 431; Blair 1998b). Following the academic debate over a 'Third Way', which discussed a new role of the state by overcoming ideological stances (Giddens 1998), they proclaimed that after the electoral success of the Labour Party in 1997 an 'active but limited government' would come into power, with 'pragmatism about the roles of the public and private sectors' (Mulgan 1999: 5). They concluded that the machinery of government was too fragmented, disjointed, and departmentalist to implement this Third Way – supported by strong resentments against a permanent bureaucracy that had served the Conservative Party for almost two decades (IUK02, IUK15). Therefore, the Third Way's key remit about the role of the state was expanded towards processes of policy-making in central government (Richards 2003: 53).

The ideological debate over the Third Way was mainly conducted within the Labour Party, supporting the ideological shift towards 'New Labour'. After PM Blair came into office, the Policy Unit organised seminars and joint policy pamphlets with other centre-left governments such as the 'Schröder-Blair Paper' (see chap. G.4.1.1 above). In addition, it supported the creation of *Nexus*, an on-line think tank initiating a series of debates on the Third Way between senior politicians and academics, together with directors of Labour think tanks such as the *IPPR* and the *Fabian Society*. The most prominent approach to discuss the Third Way's implications was a series of summits of heads of governments

⁵⁶ (Bastow/Martin 2003: 67).

from centre-left governments under the proverb of 'Progressive Governance' that was co-organised by the Policy Unit (ID31, see chap. G.4.1.2 above). These conferences were perceived as 'an exercise in ideological export' (Mulgan 2005a: 12), providing an arena to gather expertise, but also to acquire additional legitimacy for new ways of governing at domestic level. Accordingly, the Third Way served as 'an overarching narrative to pull together government priorities' (Miliband, quoted by Butler 2000: 153), i.e. as a frame prescribing how the new government wanted to govern and, more importantly, why it was interested to do so (Butler 2000: 153):

'New Labour's leaders realised that without a governing philosophy it would be hard to provide coherence to the flotilla of bodies that makes up a modern state. So New Labour has expended much effort seeking to articulate its governing philosophy.' (Mulgan 2005a: 12)

However, many observers claimed that the Third Way served rather as a 'convenient fog' (Toynbee/Walker 2001: 240):

'The Third Way was largely vacuous and bereft of detail. Such a flimsy approach could have small practical influence on the new government, serving little more than as a mantra to recite as convenient. While it could not be operationalised in any direct way, however, it could camouflage the inconsistencies as they emerged.' (Smith 2003: 580)

Also the Policy Unit realised that the Third Way was not satisfactorily linked with departmental day-to-day business (IUK02, IUK15). As a response, it started to outline elements of a new governing philosophy for the Whitehall bureaucracy operating under a 'government of the third way' (Mulgan 1999: 9). Reflecting the major objective to reduce the fragmented, departmentalist, and disjointed patterns of decision-making, it was coined 'joined-up government' (JUG; Mulgan 2005a: 12).⁵⁷

Prima facie, JUG required an improvement of decision-making across boundaries, e.g. Whitehall departments, but also the central and local level as well as the public, private, and voluntary sector (Page 2005: 147), as the PM stressed:

'We owe it to citizens to focus on what needs to be done, not on protecting our turf. More and more that will require working across boundaries. (...) Joint approaches are mushrooming around Whitehall. We must now learn which approach is suited to which problems of co-operation. (...) Departmental cultures can sustain standards and motivate those who deliver services. But we must keep sight of what we want to achieve – joined up policy making for joined up services.' (Blair 1998a: n.p.)

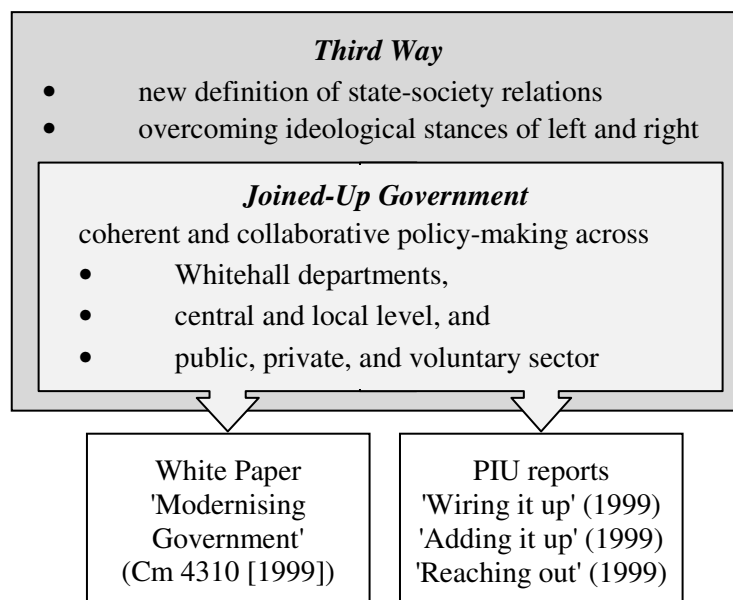
As such, JUG was deployed by the Policy Unit as 'an over-arching story about what had gone wrong and what needed to be done' (Mulgan 1996: 92), especially for departmental policy-making in Whitehall, as a Cabinet Office official states: 'They wanted what was called joined-up government, that was part of their belief how they wanted to make the government work' (IUK22). As such, the Policy Unit was mostly concerned with the policy-making process, also in contrast to its client, as the first head argues:

'Tony [Blair, JF] says he is interested in the endgame, not the process. But without influencing the process, the endgame is never satisfactory' (Miliband, quoted by Mandelson 2010: 228).

⁵⁷ Geoff Mulgan states that he invented JUG as a Policy Unit member drafting a PM speech in 1997 (Mulgan 1998), but also the PermSec in the Cabinet Office claims its invention – although he says in contrast 'that he regrets it' (Hennessy 2000c: 289; Mountfield, quoted by HL 30-ii [2009]: Q140).

In practice, the formulation and dissemination of JUG as new narrative for government policy-making was enabled by an 'organic connection' (IUK26) between the Policy Unit in Number Ten and the Performance and Innovation Unit in the Cabinet Office (Clark 2002: 108; see Figure J.9).

Figure J.9 The nesting⁵⁸ of narratives



Source: Own illustration.

As a first step, the Policy Unit advised the PM to let the Cabinet Office issue a White Paper on 'better government' that should become an equivalent 'executive manifesto' as PM Heath's White Paper in the 1970s (Barker 1998: 1). The first draft, which was prepared by a Minister without Portfolio, David Clark, was opposed by the PM and his advisers because it 'was not radical enough' (IUK02; Füchtner 2002: 62). When Jack Cunningham succeeded him in July 1998, a new draft was prepared, this time in closer cooperation with the Policy Unit – which ultimately gained the support and approval of the PM (Barker 1998: 1). Eventually, the White Paper was issued much later than announced, almost two years after the Labour government had come into office (Cm 4310 [1999]). The White Paper

'set out the Government's vision for improving the way in which policy is developed and public services are designed and delivered. In central Government it means the different parts of Government working more closely together and across departmental and institutional boundaries than they have in the past.' (Blair [1999])⁵⁹

It argued that previous government reforms had 'paid little attention to the policy process and the way this affects the ability of government to meet the needs of the people' (Williams 1999: 452). In contrast, this White Paper announced how departmental policy-making should be improved in the future and thus promoted a definition of 'good' policy-making (Wilson 2006: 153). It referred to JUG as 'a framework which government could

⁵⁸ Social psychologists discuss nested narratives (*Narrationsnester*) as the ability of individuals to connect events, emphasising the persuasive power of *consistent* narratives (see e.g. Mandler 1984).

⁵⁹ HC Deb 22 February 1999 vol 326 cc39-40W.

use to effectively coordinate its activity' (Fawcett/Gay 2005: 16; Horton 2006: 42). Correspondingly, it argued that

'[j]oining up is a mind-set and a culture. It is not a system or a structure. The concept of joining up recognises that no one has all the knowledge and resources, or controls all the levers to bring about sustainable solutions to complex issues' (CO 2000: 5)

Besides, the White Paper omitted any reference to the Treasury's role in promoting better policy-making, although its assessment of current problems was closely linked to conclusions from the Comprehensive Spending Review (Smith 2008: 147):

'It did not say anything about the Treasury; it was the most extraordinary thing. They were talking about bringing government up to date and modernising it and improving the ability of government on policy making, they did not really say what the role of the Treasury was and I rather wondered if they just had not worked it out' (Parry 2000, HC 73-II [2000]).

Although critics arose that the White Paper presented rather wordy sentiments and new Labour rhetoric than concrete reform steps, it addressed the most crucial areas to overcome departmentalism, namely 'policy-making', 'responsive public services', 'quality public services', 'information age government', and 'valuing public service'. These chapters of the White Paper were supposed to chart the programme's course and to inform an 'Action Plan'. The Action Plan was drafted by the Policy Unit and the Cabinet Office; it contained 62 milestones⁶⁰ and assigned various organisational units for their completion; from the 13 milestones for 'policy-making', two were assigned to the Treasury, two to the Performance and Innovation Unit and one to the Policy Unit. Moreover, a 'Modernising Government Project Board' was set up under the chairmanship of a Cabinet Office minister, comprising departmental officials, Policy Unit members, and external actors. Besides, a permanent Modernising Public Services Group and a Modernising Government Secretariat were created in the Cabinet Office to monitor the programme's progress (IUK08). This organisational dualism reflected the organisational cooperation noted above, partly it was reminiscence to the interests of the permanent civil service in its progress, as a peer review report in 2000 stressed:

'[The Cabinet Office's White Paper, JF] provided a framework which helped give coherence to numerous departmental and public service initiatives, many of which were already underway. (...) You have increased awareness about the need to bring policy development and service delivery closer together and to give them equal weight. (...) The White Paper and its elements are well known. Many departments have aligned their renewal efforts according to the five chapters' (CO 2000: 3).

Simultaneously, the Performance and Innovation Unit was commissioned by the PM to prepare a study on how departments could be encouraged to work together:

'How you should organise departments (...) has been debated since 'Modern Government' [the White Paper, JF] came into being. (...) The New Labour government with its strong focus on cross-cutting issues (...) became very interested in how to improve interactions between departments. The PIU report was a response to that and looked at how you could use different types of institutional arrangements' (IUK08).

The PIU titled its report 'Wiring it up: Whitehall's Management of Cross-cutting Policies and Services' and published it in January 2000 (PIU 2000c). In contrast to the White Paper, the PIU report was prepared by a report team comprising PIU members,

⁶⁰ See <http://archive.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/moderngov/action/intro.htm> (accessed 08/02/2007).

Policy Unit members, secondees from four departments, and external experts (PIU 2000c: 79-80). The two most important report team members were Sumantra Chakrabarti, then PIU director, and Geoff Mulgan, then a Policy Unit member (IUK15, IUK16). In addition, this report involved also the Treasury, ensuring that the final report could provide the link

'between the work that was done by the Treasury and the work that was done by the Cabinet Office (...) [as] an indication that these departments were working on the same lines in a way that had not been evident in things issued by the government last year.' (Parry 2000, quoted by HC 73-ii [2000]: Q118)

In addition, the PIU issued a report on 'Adding it up: Improving Analysis & Modelling in Central Government' also in January 2000 (PIU 2000a), addressing the analytical capacities in central government to define objectives and measure their progress (IUK15; Kavanagh 2007: 9).⁶¹ Likewise, a third PIU report on 'Reaching Out: The Role of Central Government at Regional and Local Level' (PIU 2000b) focused on relations between central and local level in order to spread the JUG narrative for the increasing number of policies where the central government interacted with the regions (see also Figure J.8). In all reports, the PIU aimed to outline what the JUG narrative was about, but it disseminated it also to other contexts, i.e. in preparing reports on other issues: '[W]e used the language of joined up government, how to get government better at dealing with the big cross cutting issues like the environment, or poverty, or competitiveness' (Mulgan, quoted by BBC 2007: 7).

Many cabinet ministers complied with the new philosophy promoted by the Policy Unit and the PIU in their policy proposals (IUK16, IUK19, IUK26; Jordan 2011: 3). Partly, this adoption of the new narrative at cabinet level was also facilitated by the cabinet members' lacking awareness of bureaucratic obstacles due to their lacking experience in executive offices (Mulgan 2005a: 13-4):

'The truth is that at that point most of its Ministers who didn't have a lot of experience of running things basically assumed that it was a fairly Rolls Royce machine and if only they'd pulled the levers hard enough they would get the results they wanted' (Mulgan, quoted by BBC 2007: 7).

However, the narrative was particularly influential at departmental level. On the one hand, the White Paper and particularly the first PIU report on cross-cutting policy-making became a new handbook for departmental officials guiding executive processes on how to govern – and implicitly on 'how to be governed'. The narrative was particularly influential directly after the White Paper and the first PIU report had been published: Many departmental policy proposals were drafted in compliance with the new language, departmental annual reports contained a chapter on their engagement in joined-up government, also press releases and brochures as well as Green and White Papers referred to joined-up government (Page/Jenkins 2005: 90; Jordan 2011: 3), outlining policy initiatives such as the 'joined-up police reform' by the Home Office (Bevir 2010: 227-49) but also how departmental structures are changed to comply with the JUG idea, e.g. fostering the collaboration between different agencies and other actors in their respective policy area. In practice, they strengthened the status of JUG as *the* governing philosophy outlining new rules for appropriate departmental policy-making.

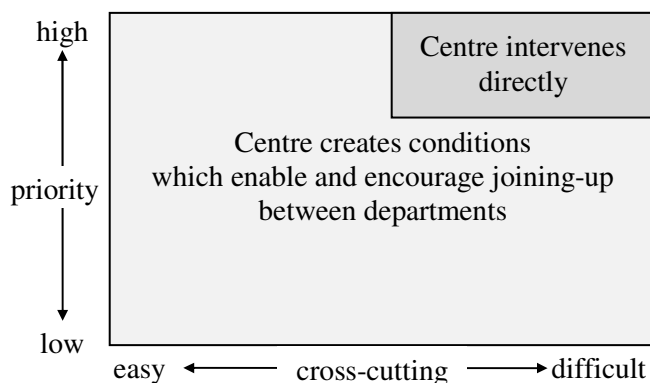
⁶¹ This report caused the creation of the Research and Development Group (Quinn 2002: 38).

On the other hand, the JUG narrative emphasised the crucial role of the centre to

'drive to more effective cross-cutting approaches wherever they are needed. The centre has a critical role to play in creating a strategic framework in which cross-cutting working can thrive, supporting departments and promoting crosscutting action' (PIU 2000c: 5).

This implication was also related to the general perception among the 'narrative formateurs' that only a 'strong ownership from the top [could] override vested interests' (Mulgan 2005a: 181). Accordingly, the first PIU report on policy-making across Whitehall stressed explicitly the relevance of the centre (see Figure J.10). Put differently: The JUG narrative disseminated not only how to govern and why to apply joined-up government, it also explicitly stressed the crucial role of the centre in these processes, covering all policy issues, also those with lower priority and less cross-cutting challenges – at least by providing appropriate conditions for departmental policy-making.

Figure J.10 'Where should the centre intervene to achieve cross-cutting working?'



Source: PIU 2000c: 19.

In turn, the JUG narrative extended the reach of the Policy Unit in departmental affairs – under the guise of ensuring a coordinated approach (Richards/Smith 2003: 11, 2004: 111). Likewise, it affected the role of the PIU in the Cabinet Office: Although this unit was mainly engaged in policy reports, its JUG activities resulted in a 'significant evolution' of its role – because this was 'clearly a priority for the PM and his advisers' (IUK08). However, its last report directly related to JUG was published after the general election in 2001, charting the progress and informing about major changes in the machinery of government.⁶² Afterwards, the new Strategy Unit was not strongly concerned with JUG anymore.

Yet, senior officials started to criticise that the JUG narrative resulted in the opposite of its semantic objectives: 'The idea that the PM gets integrated advice is nonsense. You could not see a more *unjoined* system' (emphasis original, quoted by Hennessy 2000c: 390). After a while, the milestones were not monitored anymore and the two organising bodies, the Modernising Public Services Group and the Modernising Government Secretariat in the Cabinet Office, terminated their work. Partly as a response to the unsatisfying results, the PM and the Policy Unit concentrated more strongly on policy

⁶² These included the creation of the Delivery Unit as well as the Office for Public Service Reform in the Cabinet Office to monitor reform results (CO/HMT 2001: 3-4).

delivery and implementation – and the PM established in 2001 the Delivery Unit in order to outline the new paradigm and disseminate it at cabinet and departmental level (Kelman 2006; Richards/Smith 2006; Barber 2007).

4.4 The advisory system at the Treasury enforcing 'constrained discretion'⁶³

When the new Chancellor of the Exchequer Gordon Brown came into office, he relied strongly upon his pre-existing advisory team during opposition, first and foremost one of his advisers, Ed Balls (Riddel/Maddon 2009: 40, 42). Despite the crucial role of Ed Balls and other individual special advisers, this study is especially interested in organisational arrangements and examines the role of two newly established advisory arrangements and their contribution to the Treasury's 'more proactive and strategic role in the development of policy in Whitehall' (Treasury official, quoted by Fawcett/Rhodes 2007: 96). During PM Blair's first two terms, these included the Council of Economic Advisers with its 'policy experts' (1) providing policy briefs and reports to support 'the coordination of long-term policy' (HMT-PR 99/97) and the Productivity Team, responsible for (2) briefing the Chancellor of the Exchequer and his advisers on key departments' policies as well as for the preparation and liaison of independent policy reviews.

4.4.1 The Council of Economic Advisers as 'policy unit'⁶⁴ in the Treasury

Similar to the Policy Unit in Number Ten, the Chancellor of the Exchequer made it very clear from the beginning that the newly created Council of Economic Advisers would have an influential role in Treasury policy-making. It was supposed to resemble to a certain extent the Council of Economic Advisers in the U.S., but with the implicit mandate to 'provide backing for the crucial issues in the budget which are linked to macro-economic policy-making' (IUK18, IUK30). In addition, the new council was thought to 'influence Whitehall, guiding the Treasury view on the most important policies' (IUK09). As a Treasury official put it:

'They were economic advisers in a very broad sense. But in practice they were all special advisers and they all reported directly to the Chancellor on the issues that were in their remit. So they were like a mini-version of the Number Ten Policy Directorate. And that was exactly their purpose, to mirror the structures that were in Number Ten, to give Gordon Brown an independent source of thinking and expertise.' (IUK38)

As such, the Council of Economic Advisers worked differently than their counterparts in other countries. It acted less as a collective body preparing and assessing the economic forecast and advising on fiscal and economic policies. Instead, it served as a group of additional special advisers working alongside Treasury officials with the explicit remit to shape Treasury policy-making and the executive process in Whitehall, i.e. to support the Treasury in acting as 'the epitome of centralising government' (Giddens 2007: 12; Thain 2001: 10; Fawcett/Rhodes 2007: 81).

In practice, the council members had different areas of responsibility and prepared shorter policy briefs as well as longer policy reports. Most issues addressed by the council were either selected by its members themselves or by the Chancellor of the Exchequer and

⁶³ (The Observer 14 March 2004: 5).

⁶⁴ (Leadbeater 2002: 27).

his special advisers; including inter alia tax reform, welfare to work and the New Deal, better regulation, Europe, particularly the proposed entry into the Euro, as well as devolution (see also Table J.6 above). The basic notion was always to provide sound advice to the Chancellor of the Exchequer as its key client, also criticising existing policy views inside the Treasury, as one of the council members stresses:

'I was an adviser and there is not much point in having an adviser who is not going to tell you what they think. My job is not to be sycophantic. I liked working for Gordon [Brown, JF] because he likes to be challenged. He likes to hear alternative views.' (Vadera, quoted by *The Guardian*, 26 July 2008: 33)

The policy briefs had a clear orientation towards economic policy, reasoning that economic policy provides considerable influence also on other policy issues such as social and industrial policy (Heffernan 2003: 366). Almost all issues were regarded as high-profile – and were often followed up by the Chancellor of the Exchequer chairing the Economic Cabinet Committee (Hennessy 2000c: 480). In turn, many policy briefs prepared by the responsible CEA member were orientated towards a particular decision at cabinet committee level (IUK09). Accordingly, council members were regularly engaged in direct interactions with cabinet members (IUK18).

To ensure the involvement of the council members in the Treasury's departmental policy process, the 'Internal Guidance on Making Submissions to Ministers' stressed that

'the relevant member of the Council of Economic Advisers should be actively consulted for their views on *contentious policy areas, major policy announcements, or issues of presentation* and should see all papers on these in draft *for their comments in advance of sending the submission to Ministers*. Submissions attaching draft publications for ministerial clearance should be cleared with the relevant Special Adviser or member of the Council of Economic Advisers in advance.' (emphasis JF, HMT 2000: 7)

Thus, the papers submitted to the Chancellor of the Exchequer were also filtered by CEA members, providing them formally a crucial position in the internal departmental policy-making process. This inclusion in the 'departmental loop' ensured also that the CEA members could include a sound assessment of existing departmental policies in their briefs, although no formal procedure existed on how the Council would interact with the Treasury's line bureaucracy (IUK18). Instead, the individual CEA members would contact the Treasury officials directly and required the relevant information (IUK30). The core of the briefs prepared by the Council of Economic Advisers to the Chancellor of the Exchequer included an assessment of the existing policy's advantages and disadvantages, especially with regard to macro-economic aspects, and the outline of policy alternatives, as a Treasury official said:

'They laid out the policy issue at hand, the previous and current policies to tackle the issue (...), the implications on the budget and the economy (...), the links to other policy issues (...). And then they included alternative policy options.' (IUK23)

Yet, the alternative policy options were often laid out rather broadly, often referring to best practices abroad, and providing 'a reasonable opinion why the Treasury should depart from these existing policy views' (IUK38; Wilks 2003: 8). In turn, though, their policy recommendations had to be followed up by the responsible line bureaucrats in the Treasury or other Whitehall departments if the cabinet committee decided to follow their route (IUK18, IUK30).

The increasing dominance of the council members in internal decision-making processes resulted also in a gradual freezing out of senior officials, first and foremost the PermSec (IUK09; Thain 2002: 18). In turn, Treasury officials felt unease with the emergence of this additional 'policy filter' and the apparent weakening of pre-existing rules for departmental procedures (IUK09; Theakston 1998: 18). In a sense, their critical opinion about the new Council of Economic Advisers and its role inside the Treasury reiterated their general downgrading morale after the decision to grant independence to the Bank of England, thus losing a major lever of macroeconomic policy, without any prior consultation (Richards 2008b: 118; see also e.g. Baker 1999, 2003; Rentoul 2001: 330-3, 540; Smith 2003: 74; McLean 2006: 19; Patel 2008; Richards 2008b: 117).⁶⁵

More importantly, the concentration of influence within the Council of Economic Advisers and simultaneous neglect of senior Treasury officials meant that line bureaucrats were less informed about the policy directions decided at the top (IUK23). The council members explained their lacking interactions with the line bureaucracy *inter alia* with incongruent temporal orientations:

'For me, the important thing has always been a focus on getting the job done, an outcome. I am, I am sure, challenging because of that. I think that people also seem to think there is always masses of time to get things done – you know, the machinery of government can sometimes work at a pace, and life is short.' (Vadera, quoted by *The Guardian*, 26 July 2008: 33).

Accordingly, the council members were convinced that the pre-existing bureaucratic processes inside the Treasury were unsuitable for providing policy advice to the Chancellor of the Exchequer and his special advisers – although their reference to temporal orientations covered also severe substantial conflicts with the Treasury's departmental viewpoints on certain issues. Partly, this clash of the Council of Economic Advisers with pre-existing policy legacies inside the Treasury was explained by the long period of the Labour Party in opposition – and the unpreparedness or also accused unwillingness of the permanent civil service 'to serve a Labour government and make the change happen' (IUK18).

An exception to the lacking interaction between the Council of Economic Advisers and the line organisation inside the Treasury was the Productivity Team. One of the crucial instruments proposed by various council members in their policy briefs was the execution of independent reviews that were then prepared and administratively supported by the Productivity Team (see below). Accordingly, council members had regular contacts with the HMT Team in order to sort out opportunities for new reviews or the conduction of current independent reviews (IUK09):

⁶⁵ In fact, the establishment of an independent Bank of England was already included in Lawson's resignation speech in 1989 but rejected by PM Thatcher (Thatcher 1993: 706). The transfer of the power to set interest rates to an independent Monetary Policy Committee of the Bank of England was announced by Gordon Brown four days after his arrival as Chancellor of the Exchequer. More importantly, this policy shift had not appeared in any pre-election discussions between Brown's team and Treasury officials, although the Treasury Permanent Secretary had guessed that the proposal would be made on the day of the election. Accordingly, he asked Treasury officials to work overnight on a paper, but Brown and his team arrived at the Treasury already with a draft letter to the Governor of the Bank outlining the plan (Riddell/Maddon 2009: 39).

'we discussed with him [member of the Council of Economic Advisers, JF] what ideas we wanted to look at next, we wanted to get his input, get an agreement on the content of certain studies.' (IUK31)

Likewise, the Council of Economic Advisers held contacts with the Policy Unit in Number Ten, although these interactions mostly reflected the general tensions between their key clients, i.e. the PM and Chancellor of the Exchequer (IUK30). Partly, these interactions were facilitated by the fact that during Blair's first term David Miliband acted as head of the Policy Unit and his younger brother Ed Miliband worked as special adviser in the Treasury (Lipsey 2000: 46; IUK09, IUK18).

At cabinet level, the Council of Economic Advisers became well-known due to its interactions with individual cabinet members. Soon, however, also line officials became aware of the new team of special advisers servicing the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Some council members became very visible across central government, especially Shriti Vadera was widely recognised as particularly powerful; the fact that she was dubbed as "Gordon Brown's representative on earth" (*The Guardian*, 26 July 2008: 33) reflected her crucial role. More importantly, the council members contributed to a centralisation of communication between the Treasury and Whitehall officials:

'There has been less comment on the extent of the role of special advisers at the Treasury, but one effect was that there was little or no point in departments' seeking to engage the Treasury on major issues at official level. The only effective channels of communication to the Chancellor lay through the special adviser network' (BGI 2010: 37).

Although the council members interacted mostly with cabinet members and their individual special advisers (IUK18, IUK21), their policy briefs to the Chancellor of the Exchequer influenced eventually also departmental policy-making:

'The Chancellor of the Exchequer in the Blair government, Gordon Brown, has not been limited, as his predecessors were, to approving or rejecting requests for money for, for example, welfare policy, but can use his much-expanded staff to develop his own ideas on what welfare policy should be, not merely what it would cost' (Wilson/Barker 2003: 352).

Put differently, the policy briefs prepared by the council supported the substantial influence of the Treasury on spending departments, partly departing from the budgetary process and more strongly related towards the policy direction of departmental proposals (IUK09, IUK21). Also on other occasions, most notably the annual budget round, interviewed experts assigning a certain influence to the Council of Economic Advisers, albeit

'not in the sense that they prepared some economic forecasting (...) but rather by outlining how the expenditure should be allocated in the most crucial areas. Often, they had also meetings with the relevant cabinet ministers (...). They were well-known to be Gordon Brown's representatives – and if a Minister couldn't come to terms with them, he could also not expect to convince Brown.' (IUK38)

These meetings between council members and cabinet ministers echoed to a considerable extent the bilaterals held between the PM and cabinet members – despite the fact that they were often a preparatory meeting for subsequent discussions between the departmental Minister and the Chancellor of the Exchequer himself (IUK18).⁶⁶

⁶⁶ Nevertheless, individual council members were regularly invited to such budget negotiations (IUK38).

Nevertheless, they had similar effects like the prime ministerial bilaterals: They bound departmental officials to fulfil the commitments negotiated during these meetings, often without clear information or knowledge about details. Partly, this approach was deliberately chosen, as a Treasury official explained:

'The council members didn't have the time to illustrate every detail of a policy idea. And this is also not their constitutional role. This is the responsibility of the civil service. (...) The politicians come up with policy ideas, they reach a compromise about an issue, let's say the welfare to work programme, and then they have to follow up this policy idea and fit it into their departmental work programme.' (IUK37)

The council members were particularly persuasive because their policy recommendations outlined in policy briefs or in these bilateral meetings would advise the Chancellor of the Exchequer and his special advisers, but would also guide further Treasury decision-making, most notably the budgetary procedure (IUK09, IUK21, IUK30). However, its members were basically preparing their policy briefs individually and, in turn, the council met only irregularly and prepared only very few advisory products collaboratively. Likewise, the council members had each their own network within the Treasury as well as across Whitehall and beyond, thus not using the council's formal organisational set-up very much.

To sum up, the role of the Council of Economic Advisers in government policy-making echoed to a considerable extent the role of the Policy Unit in Number Ten, combined with the functions of an internal think tank. The council members oriented their briefs strongly towards best practices from other countries. In turn, they widely neglected the bureaucratic processes inside the Treasury. Instead, they relied upon their position in the 'departmental loop' and reviewed the papers submitted to the Chancellor of the Exchequer if they were relevant to the policy areas they mirrored and added complementary policy advice to the bureaucratic advice provided by line officials. Simultaneously, it partly sidestepped the senior officials at the Treasury's top-level – with apparent negative effects on the crucial transmission function performed by such officials between their political masters and bureaucratic subordinates. Yet, its recommendations were also directly communicated to cabinet members, strongly prescribing subsequent debates on departmental budgets and thus future departmental policies.

4.4.2 The Productivity Team as departmental think tank

The Productivity Team serviced the Chancellor of the Exchequer and his special advisers as an internal think tank in order to conduct 'blue skies' thinking and 'keeping the Chancellor in touch with new and innovative policy ideas' (Smith 2003: 73; IUK30, IUK31). Besides, it had also the clear remit 'to reach out into Whitehall departments' (IUK38). In short: Its basic remit was oriented towards 'short-term activities to achieve long-term goals' (IUK38). In practice, the Team members as well as the spending teams were allowed to propose issues for the Productivity Team's work programme; the Team head asked therefore all other team leaders in the Treasury for proposals and prepared a consolidated list to be submitted to the political top-level, which finally approved their issue selection (IUK31, IUK38). In addition, its clients, most notably the Chancellor of the Exchequer or one of his individual special advisers, required regularly certain issues to be

handled by the Productivity Team (IUK38). The basic policy advisory products of the Productivity Team included presentations, reports, and, most importantly, the bureaucratic support and liaison for independent reviews.

The presentations were held to the Chancellor of the Exchequer or, more often, to his special advisers (IUK31, IUK37, IUK38). Many policy issues addressed in presentations were requested by the departmental top-level, most notably Ed Balls (IUK31). They were primarily prepared by those Productivity Team members responsible for the policy area, but mostly in conjunction with other members. If the issue was particularly relevant and/or politically salient, also the Team head was involved, especially for drafting the recommendations and checking their political feasibility. The recommendations were particularly oriented towards 'the Treasury's agenda', thus assessing the congruence with 'the Chancellor's opinions and those of his special advisers' (IUK31). Although these presentations provided some influence on internal departmental policy processes, the Team members neglected any political role:

'we had to follow central rules such as not being politically biased, which is very important in the British civil service at least. (...) In terms of how decisions are made, because we were giving advice to politicians, we would not be involved in the consequences of any action.' (IUK38)

Put differently: The Team members recognised the political nature of their advisory product, but neglected it and referred instead to a deliberate disconnection between the policy recommendations spelled out in their presentations and the final decisions taken by the political top-level in the Treasury.

Following the Team's general remit, many issues addressed in these presentations related to the 'productivity agenda':

'In theory, the Productivity Team was there to look at productivity issues. That was the kind of technocratic reason. In practice, because it was the only part of the Treasury that could do short-term projects, it was used as a team to do bits of thinking. A lot of the things we did had only a slight link to the productivity agenda. (...) Probably a half of our work was responding to political initiatives from the Chancellor of the Exchequer and his special advisers.' (IUK38)

Most presentations outlined their subject, including an assessment of the current policies, and recommended policy alternatives. Following the competencies of the team members, they applied a 'consultancy approach' (IUK37), analysing the weaknesses of existing policies and outlining alternative policy options. As part of this working style, the Productivity Team invented its own logo and put it on its slides as well as on all other documents – signalling itself as a brand inside the Treasury and across central government (IUK21, IUK38).

To prepare its presentations, the Productivity Team interacted with other Treasury teams. Usually, Treasury officials 'were keen to support' the HMT Team – because it 'got the attention of the politicians' (IUK38, IUK30). Moreover, these presentations were basically about spending departments' policies, and although they also referred to Treasury's pre-existing views in certain policy areas, it was clear to the other Treasury officials that mostly other departments' officials would be affected if the political level decided to act upon the Productivity Team's presentations (IUK37).

Besides, the Productivity Team prepared policy reports in order to elaborate its policy assessment in more detail. But the comparatively small size of the unit limited its capabilities to invest resources into such reports – compared with the reports prepared by the units in the Cabinet Office that were publicly available, as one member says:

'We did also some reports, but this was always a problem "How much time do we want to invest in that?" (...) Especially if Ed Balls or somebody else at the political level came up with other issues, we often came into trouble to complete the report. This changed when Ed Balls left the Treasury in 2004, then we had more time for reports.' (IUK37)

Hence, these reports were not as elaborated as the reports prepared by the units in the Cabinet Office – and also not at the heart of the Productivity Team's activities. In addition, they partly contradicted the HMT Team's belief that short-term activities are more relevant in order to achieve long-term change than medium-term activities such as policy reports (IUK37, IUK38). Partly, this conviction was confirmed by the Productivity Team's perceptions of the status of the units in the Cabinet Office:

'Those units in the Cabinet Office had no policy impact whatsoever. They produced reports for the public, involving too many people, (...) stakeholders. And then they presented their reports years after the initial problem had come up. And without Treasury's support, they could not do anything what they proposed in them. (...) you couldn't see the added-value in having such a report. (...) Our work was different; we wanted to drive change forward' (IUK37).

The most important function of the Productivity Team, also in terms of its influence within the Treasury and across central government, was its support and liaison for 'independent reviews'. Basically, these independent reviews had two objectives. On the one hand, an independent review allowed studying a certain policy issue in more detail, gathering evidence, and formulating policy recommendations that would have budgetary implications, as the then Permanent Secretary to the Treasury put it:

'The reviews have varied a lot in quality. Some are actually quite good. But a lot of them are HMV – His Master's Voice – and are really written to order. (...) And that has changed the relationship between the Treasury and colleagues, and changed the way the Treasury works, making it a policy department' (Turnbull, quoted by FT, 20 March 2007: 1).

Besides, independent reviews kept this evidence 'at arm's length', as only some recommendations needed to be taken into consideration. In addition, they presented a mechanism for legitimising policy change by giving them expert's authority; and for bringing 'critical voices within a framework which can more easily be managed by government' (Wells 2007: 27). As the Permanent Secretary to the Treasury stressed:

'Gordon also uses businessmen to run inquiries who have credibility with the relevant industry. It means you can do things that industry accepts because they understand the industry.' (O'Donnell, quoted by The Guardian Online, 15 April 2002).

On the other hand, though, these independent reviews put an immediate pressure on those Whitehall departments formally responsible for these issues because they were supposed to be followed up in the budget. Hence, the conclusions of independent reviews were directly expressed in the allocation of resources – and had thus a huge impact.

In a sense, this twofold objective of independent reviews was also an expression of the general conviction of the Chancellor of the Exchequer and his special advisers that the Treasury, in conjunction with independent experts, would have 'more bright ideas than the

spending departments' (IUK38), reasoning that 'if Treasury would have left the issue to the department, it would have taken forever' (IUK37). As a Productivity Team member put it:

'Instead of saying "Oh, I think the Department of Education should produce a paper on schools", Gordon Brown said "Just get Productivity Team to announce a review of schools, that will do it."' (IUK37)

Besides, independent reviews increased the Treasury's dual remit in being a finance ministry, increasing revenues and allocating expenditure, but also an economics ministry, shaping macro- and micro-economic policy, as the head of the Budget and Public Finance Directorate explained:

'In each case, the Treasury generally only had tax policy instruments directly at its disposal. Its effectiveness hinged on working with and through others, whether the Department for Trade and Industry (and its successors), the competition authorities, or the Department for Work and Pensions (and its predecessors). This new approach (...) was supplemented by a growing use of independent reviews to promote the Treasury's economic policy objectives: the reviews provided an opportunity to deepen the analytical evidence base of the area in question and build a consensus in favour of change.' (MacPherson 2009: 11)

In practice, the issue selection for these reviews was mostly done by the political level of the Treasury, again Ed Balls was a key figure deciding upon these issues. Also the Productivity Team could make recommendations and they were occasionally followed. As a result, the independent reviews addressed a wide range of policy issues, including policy areas with heavy public expenditure, such as the two Wanless Reviews on the NHS (HMT 2002, 2004e) or the Barker Review on the UK Housing Market (HMT 2004a; see Table J.11), to policy areas with less public expenditure, but strong relevance to the Treasury's portfolio such as the Cruickshank Review on Banking (HMT 2000b) or the Myners Review on Institutional Investments (HMT 2000a). This range of issues also reveals another underlying function of the independent reviews:

'Of course it was also about "getting to grips" with some pending issues that the Treasury needed to solve itself. But mostly these were also areas where the Chancellor wanted to adopt a different and more radical policy direction – and the stakeholders had to be convinced.' (IUK38)

More importantly, various independent reviews addressed machinery of government issues such as the Gershon Review of Civil Procurement in Central Government (HMT 1999b), the Baker Review on Public Sector Research Establishments (HMT 1999a), and the Sharman Review of Audit and Accountability for Central Government (HMT 2001). Also the second Gershon Review on Efficiency in Central Government (HMT 2004b) as well as the Lyons Review of Public Sector Relocation had particular implications for Whitehall (HMT 2004d). In fact, several independent reviews identified 'the same obstacles to joined-up government' as the Cabinet Office's White Paper on Modernising Government 'while calling for better coordination' (Fawcett/Rhodes 2007: 97).

Over time, the number of independent reviews commissioned by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in official conjunction with other cabinet members increased, also 'to ensure their compliance and involve them in the process so that they could not deny the conclusions' (IUK26). Besides, various independent reviews were formally commissioned by the Financial Secretary to the Treasury or the Chief Secretary to the Treasury, often for

issues of less political salience (IUK35; see Table J.11). Each independent review was formally entitled with the name of the independent expert leading it, signalling the independence of the review (IUK31). The selection of independent experts to lead an independent review was mostly oriented towards their profile and professional background as renowned expert in the area of the independent review (IUK35, IUK37). Although the type of independent review suggests that these experts had to be independent too, several had rather close contacts to the Treasury. From the 28 independent reviews commissioned during PM Blair's first two legislative terms, more than a half were appointed from the private sector, most often the City, British companies or consultancies (see Table J.11).

Table J.11 Independent reviews commissioned by the Treasury, 1997-2005

issued	independent reviewer	review title	commissioned by	published
11/1998	Don Cruickshank, former Director General of OFTEL	Cruickshank Review of Banking Services in the UK	CoE	03/2000
11/1998	Peter Gershon, main board director of GEC plc	Gershon Review of Civil Procurement in Central Government	Paymaster General and the Parliamentary Secretary to the CO	04/1999
12/1998*	John Baker	Baker Review: 'Realising the Economic Potential of Public Sector Research Establishments'	CoE and the Minister for Science (DTI)	08/1999
02/2000	Colin M. Sharman, Chairman of KPMG	Sharman Review of Audit and Accountability for Central Government	Chief Secretary to the Treasury	02/2001
04/2000	Paul Myners, chairman of Guardian Media Group plc	Myners Review of Institutional Investment	CoE	03/2001
03/2001	Gareth Roberts, President of Wolfson College, Oxford University	Roberts Review: 'SET for Success: The Supply of People with Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematical Skills'	CoE, Secretary of State for Trade & Industry and Secretary of State for Education and Skills	04/2002
04/2001	Derek Wanless, former Group Chief Executive of NatWest	Wanless Review: 'Securing Good Health for the Whole Population'	PM, CoE and the Secretary of State for Health	04/2002
07/2001	Ron Sandler, chairman of Computacenter plc and Kyte Group	Sandler Review of Medium and Long-term Retail Investment	CoE	07/2002
08/2001	George W. Penrose, member of the Privy Council	Penrose Inquiry into Equitable Life	CoE	03/2004
11/2002	Richard Lambert, former editor of <i>Financial Times</i>	Lambert Review of Business- University Collaboration	CoE	12/2003
11/2002	Justice Butterfield	Butterfield Review of Criminal Investigations and Prosecutions conducted by HM Customs and Excise	CoE and the Attorney General	07/2003
02/2003	David Miles, Professor of Finance at University of London	Miles Review of UK's Fixed Rate Mortgage Market	CoE	03/2004
02/2003	Christopher Allsopp, former member of the BoE's Monetary Policy Committee	Allsopp Review of Statistical Requirements for Monetary and Economic Policymaking	CoE, the Governor of the Bank of England, and the National Statistician	03/2004

Table J.11 Independent reviews commissioned by the Treasury, 1997-2005 (continued)

issued	independent reviewer	review title	commissioned by	published
04/2003	Kate Barker, external member of the BoE's Monetary Policy Committee	Barker Review of UK Housing Supply	CoE and the Deputy Prime Minister	03/2004
04/2003	Nicholas Goodison, former Chairman of the Art Fund	Goodison Review: 'Securing the Best for our Museums: Private Giving and Government Support'	Chief Secretary to the Treasury	01/2004
04/2003	Michael Lyons, Professor of Public Policy at Birmingham University	Lyons Review of Public Sector Relocation	CoE and the Deputy Prime Minister	03/2004
04/2003	Derek Wanless, former Group Chief Executive of NatWest	Wanless Update: 'Securing Good Health for the Whole Population'	PM, CoE and the Secretary of State for Health	02/2004
08/2003	Peter Gershon, Chief Executive of the Office of Government Commerce	Gershon Efficiency Review	PM and CoE	07/2004
11/2003	Teresa Graham, Deputy Chair of the Better Regulation Task Force	Graham Review of the Small Firms Loan Guarantee	CoE and the Secretary of State for Trade & Industry	10/2004
11/2003	Alan Wood, Chief Executive of Siemens plc	Wood Review of European Public Procurement	CoE and the Secretary of State for Trade & Industry	11/2004
03/2004 [†]	Paul Myners, Chairman of Guardian Media	Myners Review of the Governance of Life Mutuals	Financial Secretary to the Treasury	12/2004
04/2004	Philip Hampton, Chairman of J Sainsbury plc	Hampton Review of Regulatory Inspection and Enforcement	CoE	03/2005
05/2004 [‡]	Derek Morris, former Chairman of the Competition Commission	Morris Review of the Actuarial Profession	Financial Secretary to the Treasury	03/2005
07/2004	Michael Lyons, Professor of Public Policy at Birmingham University	Lyons Inquiry into Local Government	CoE and the Deputy Prime Minister	03/2007 [‡]
11/2004	Sandy Leitch, Chairman of the National Employment Panel	Leitch Review of Skills	CoE and the Secretary of State for Education and Skills	12/2006
11/2004	Martin Cave, Professor, Warwick Business School	Independent Audit of Spectrum Holdings	CoE	12/2005
04/2005	George Cox, Chairman of the Design Council	Cox Review of Creativity in Business	CoE	12/2005
04/2005	Rod Eddington, CEO of British Airways	Eddington Transport Study	CoE and the Secretary of State for Transport	12/2006

Legend

* following up DTI's Competitiveness White Paper (DTI 1998).

† following up Penrose's Inquiry into the Equitable Life (Penrose 2004).

‡ The review's mandate was extended in 09/2005.

Source: Own illustration, data compiled from www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/ (accessed 06/11/06 and 17/12/08).

Another five independent experts were appointed from academia, most often political scientists or economists. More importantly, seven independent experts had previous or

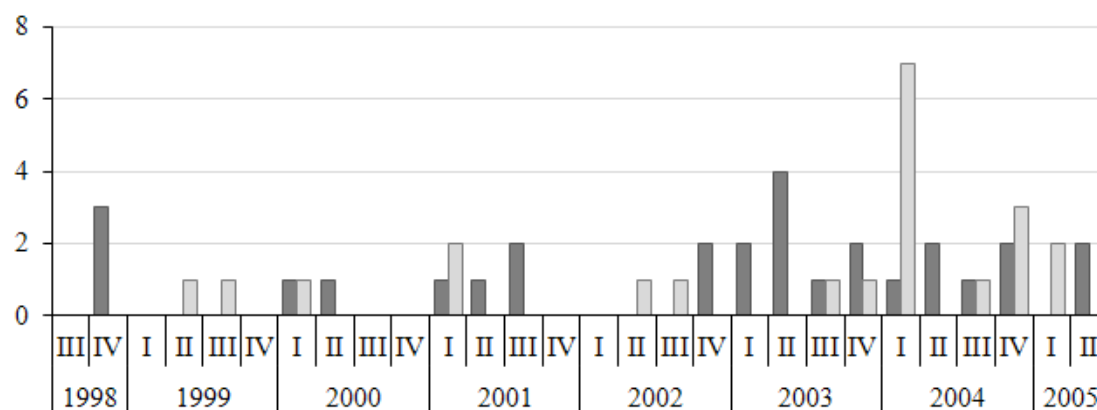
concurrent positions in areas close to the Treasury and were well-known to the political leadership, e.g. members of the Bank of England's Monetary Committee. Interestingly, two independent reviewers got later a position related to their reviews, i.e. Peter Gershon, who led the Gershon Review of Civil Procurement in Central Government (Gershon 1999) became first Chief Executive of the Office of Government Commerce, one of the review's key recommendations, and Paul Myners, who had led the Myners Review on Institutional Investment (Myners 2001), became in October 2008 the first 'Financial Services Secretary to the Treasury', a newly created ministerial position responsible for the financial activities in the City, also known as the 'City Minister'.⁶⁷

The timing of the announcement as well as the completion of independent reviews was deliberately chosen, as a Productivity Team member explains:

'There are basically two opportunities for the Treasury to take control of the news agenda. One of which is the time of the annual budget, which is usually in March. And the other one is the time of the Pre-Budget Report, which is in November. So, all of the reviews would be timetabled so that they would report on one of those two dates. (...) If you [the review, JF] are announced in the budget, you would do an interim report for the Pre-Budget Report and then present the final report on the following budget. Some reviews took three cycles, some only one, but most took two cycles.' (IUK38)

Accordingly, the announcements of independent reviews were equally distributed between the time of Pre-Budget Reports and Budget Reports. In contrast, the completion of independent reviews was in two thirds of all cases in spring, to be in sync with the budget and enabling the inclusion of recommendations as justifications for resource allocation decisions (IUK31, IUK38; see Figure J.11).

Figure J.11 The timing of independent reviews, 1998-2005



Legend

■ announcement of independent reviews □ publication of independent reviews

Source: Own illustration, data compiled from www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/ (accessed 06/11/06 and 17/12/08).

For the Productivity Team, this close relation to the budgetary procedure was reflected by several Team members being formally responsible for preparing chapters of the Pre-

⁶⁷ In May 2010, this position was replaced by a new Commercial Secretary to the Treasury.

Budget Report and the Budget Report related to independent reviews. The direct link with the budget became even more important in the new budgetary procedure because announcements about changing the allocation of resources were often also reflected in apparent changes in Public Service Agreements (IUK26).

More importantly, the announcement of a new independent review was not previously discussed with the Whitehall department responsible for that policy area. Instead, the Productivity Team would – together with the special advisers – search for an appropriate candidate to lead the independent review and the Chancellor of the Exchequer or one of the junior ministers at the Treasury would announce it:

'In the banking sector (...), we announced a review of the banking system under Don Cruickshank. And the way it happened was that we just rang Don and said "Do you want to lead a review for the Chancellor?", he went "Yeah", we wrote on one page what the review should do and we told the relevant departments that morning and announced it.' (IUK37)

However, not all independent experts were that uninterested in what their mandate would be and what they should do in leading such an independent review (IUK31). Nevertheless, most of them – also due to their 'external' backgrounds – had to rely upon the Productivity Team in supporting their review work, also and particularly with regard to complying with the 'bureaucratic principles in Whitehall' (IUK31).⁶⁸ In practice, the Productivity Team assigned a smaller number of team members to support and liaison with each independent review, between three to five members (IUK30, IUK32). As one Productivity Team member admitted:

'The sexy thing to do when you are in the Treasury as a range E was to do a review – because you got profile, you got a nice document, you got an external person, you got meetings with the Chancellor. Unless of standing teams on health and education who did the spending – that was just really boring.' (IUK 37)

The mandate of the independent review was often published in the Pre-Budget or Budget Report; therefore the terms of reference were easily identifiable for the review members, although they were often rather broad – and allowed more concrete description by the Productivity Team afterwards (IUK38). Besides, the Team members were often involved in outlining the independent review in the first place, thus formulating their own mandate to some extent. As with the other advisory products, independent reviews presented 'tailored advice' to the Chancellor of the Exchequer and his special advisers, thus

'the evidence analysed for the review must inevitably point to the conclusion, we collected evidence in the light of the conclusions that we wanted to draw – and that were politically feasible.' (IUK38)

The collection of evidence was organised quite differently across independent reviews, albeit less due to the different policy issues they addressed and more because the Team members involved in the review favoured different approaches, some preferred collecting data and information first, in order to base their assessments upon hard data, whereas others favoured personal interactions with the stakeholders (IUK30, IUK32, IUK38).

⁶⁸ Besides, it became more likely over time that the responsible department was informed beforehand, also because the number of independent reviews commissioned jointly had increased.

In conducting the reviews, the Team members held close contacts with other Treasury units responsible for the policy area, most notably the spending teams (IUK37). Also on other occasions, Productivity Team members were often invited to meetings relevant for their remit (IUK38). On the one hand, this voluntary inclusion of the Productivity Team in all kinds of departmental processes was caused by the fact that the Team 'had the eyes and ears of special advisers and ministers' (Treasury official, quoted by Alt et al. 2010: 1215). Thus, similar to the Policy Unit in Number Ten, the support of the Productivity Team increased the likelihood to get support for policy initiatives from the departmental political top-level. On the other hand, though, Treasury officials were also critical about the Team's role, especially because they 'were giving license to question and challenge the teams' areas of expertise' (IUK37).

More importantly, the independent review teams held regular contacts with the most relevant Whitehall departments for the respective review, mostly at the level of line officials. Not surprisingly, many Whitehall officials felt rather uncomfortable with a review conducted on their remit, greeting the Treasury 'with a caution and care bordering on white-knuckle nerves' (Fawcett/Rhodes 2007: 102). As one Productivity Team members stressed: It was 'a ginger group, (...) we annoyed and inspired Whitehall in equal measure.' (Finch, quoted by Baker 2008: 22). In fact, departmental officials feared the underlying critic in an independent review on their pre-existing departmental policies as well as the conclusions promoting policy shifts in which they were not involved. Particularly the direct inclusion of recommendations in the budget made independent reviews 'rather dangerous for departments – if their policy direction did not correspond to the Treasury's view' (IUK32). Since most independent reviews were explicitly selected because the Treasury's political top-level perceived their pre-existing policy direction as inappropriate, it was very likely if not intended that the independent review would come up with conclusions recommending policy changes.

Yet, various independent reviews included next to substantial aspects also the machinery of government. These effects can be exemplified with the Hampton Review of Regulatory Inspection and Enforcement (HMT 2004c), challenging the existing Regulatory Impact Unit that feared the review was 'trying to show how best to replace them' (IUK38) and eventually led to the creation of the Better Regulation Executive, led by Jitinder Kohli, a member of the Productivity Team (IUK32). Another key example with major effects was the Gershon Review on Efficiency (Gershon 2004), which presented proposals how Whitehall departments can cut costs, inter alia proposing a new system of programme management. Afterwards, each Whitehall department had to issue a 'Performance Partnership Agreement' with the Cabinet Office, the Treasury, and the Policy Unit, identifying the departmental strategy, targets and delivery plans in relation to key priority outcomes, including the requirements of the Gershon Review (Bovaird/Russell 2005: 318).

More generally, the independent reviews had an impact on government policy-making at cabinet and departmental level. At cabinet level, cabinet members were put under considerable pressure if such a review was announced in their area of responsibility. They were not only exposed to the public with a general underlying notion of criticism against their pre-existing departmental policies, which would require an independent review, but also limited with regard to their budgetary requests from the Treasury – letting the

Treasury spending team decide which resources would be necessary to make the recommendations of the independent review come into force.

At departmental level, the independent reviews were – as one Productivity Team member stressed it – rather 'unhealthy for the civil service', because they increased a perception among Whitehall officials that 'major policy changes are only possible with an independent review', neglecting the civil service's capacities to 'work on policy change themselves' (IUK38). In addition, independent reviews made partly the traditional 'two-way traffic' between politicians and civil servants obsolete because the independent expert acted as an additional actor involved in this crucial relationship, taking the policy initiation function away from civil servants while unburden politicians to be held accountable for proposing certain policy shifts.

Similar to other interactions between the Treasury and the Prime Minister's Office, also the Productivity Team had only very occasionally contacts with officials or special advisers in Number Ten. On the one hand, this clear avoidance of each other reflected the 'constant battle' between their two key clients, i.e. the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Prime Minister (IUK38). On the other hand, it expressed an unspoken agreement whereas 'an awful lot of Number Ten Policy Unit just agreed that the Treasury should do this and they would do something else. They just agreed to divide up the work' (IUK37). However, if the Productivity Team occasionally contacted Number Ten, it was mostly at the junior level because, as a Productivity Team member put it: 'The further up the organisation you got, the more paranoia there was about Number Ten finding out what was happening in the Treasury' (IUK38).

4.5 Concluding remarks

During PM Blair's first two legislative terms, two sets of advisory arrangements operated at the centre of government, one servicing mostly the PM, including the Policy Unit and later Policy Directorate at Number Ten as well as the Performance and Innovation Unit and the Forward Strategy Unit in the Cabinet Office, which were merged into the PM's Strategy Unit. The other set serviced the Chancellor of the Exchequer in the Treasury, comprising the Council of Economic Advisers, mirroring the Policy Unit, and the Productivity Team, providing similar policy advice as the units in the Cabinet Office. Both sets contributed to an 'institutional reform for political control' (Richards/Smith 2005), i.e. they exploited various advisory activities as carriers of institutional strategies to influence the institutional underpinnings to govern at cabinet and departmental level, also competing with each other. Yet, they shared a common goal as stressed by PM Blair in his biography introducing this case study, namely to reduce bureaucratic inertia in Whitehall – in favour of a stronger role of their respective clients in government policy-making.

First, the Policy Unit continued also under PM Blair to shape the *regulative* underpinnings to govern with its policy briefs, targeting pre-existing rules on decision-making in cabinet and cabinet committees. The policy briefs strengthened the centralisation rules for submission of departmental proposals to cabinet. In a similar manner, the Council of Economic Advisers prepared policy briefs to the Chancellor of the Exchequer as a mean to alter the pre-existing rules in cabinet in favour of its client. More strongly than under PM

Thatcher, the Policy Unit engaged in preparing the PM's bilaterals with cabinet ministers, expanding the scope of issues that was dealt with in this arena for preparing and making cabinet decisions. The increasing critics by cabinet members against these bilaterals may serve as an indication for their at least influence to alter the distribution of authority in cabinet. Due to the frequency of these activities, they influenced not only those policy-specific rules applied by executive actors engaged in the particular policy area at hand but also the more basic formal rules of the executive game in Britain. The Policy Unit benefited from its direct affiliation to the PM as well as its organisational legacy to maintain its expedient role in Whitehall. Also the comparatively larger (and increasing) size of the unit allowed broadening its remit across a range of issues of particular importance to the PM.

Although the Chancellor of the Exchequer did not host similar extra meetings, the budgetary procedure provided the same occasions as preparations for negotiations on departmental expenditure – and in contrast to the PM's bilaterals they were conducted by the members of his Council of Economic Advisers in order to prescribe cabinet decisions related to the next budget. As such, these bilaterals provided also opportunities to prescribe policy-specific rules of the executive game, involving ministers from spending departments. Here, the CEA benefitted from its internal affiliation and could rely upon information from the budgetary procedure by Treasury officials, although its smaller size limited the occasions at which it could held such bilaterals.

In addition, the Policy Unit's 'reverse tool' of *ex ante* interventions in departmental policy-making addressed the regulative underpinnings to govern at departmental level by engaging more strongly into the preparation of departmental policies before they entered the cabinet stage, inventing a new arena for policy deliberations between the centre of government and the line departments. In turn, the link to its briefing of the PM made it rather difficult for departmental officials to repudiate their requests. As such, these interventionist activities can be regarded as an attempt to formalise the role of the centre in departmental policy-making, but also to prescribe policy-specific regulative underpinnings to govern because these interventions were mostly focussing on Whitehall departments of particular relevance to the PM and his electoral pledges. This initial persuasion power of the Policy Unit was also supported by its affiliation in Number Ten and its composition signalling a close proximity to the PM. Again, the growing criticism across Whitehall against these interventionist activities may serve as an indicator for their impact on the pre-existing rules for government decision-making, but also diminished their application across all departments, i.e. several departments led by cabinet heavyweights could afford to resist the Policy Unit's demands.

In a different manner, the units in the Cabinet Office addressed the regulative underpinnings to govern, mostly at departmental level. The public reports by the PIU and the Strategy Unit prescribed a new arena adding to the pre-existing means in departmental policy-making. Particularly the reports *by* the government can be regarded as virtual temporary cabinet committees because their conclusions were directly implemented. In turn, those addressing machinery of government issues had immediate implications on formal structures and processes in Whitehall. Yet, despite the general cross-cutting scope of reports, the units' issue selection was limited to their clients' requests and thus allowed also to set up new policy-specific rules of the executive game by formalising the role of

these units in government policy-making involving various Whitehall departments responsible for these cross-cutting issues. The lower departmental resistance to these reporting activities can be related to the set-up of these reports, involving officials from affected departments. In addition, the public reports by the Cabinet Office units targeted also the regulative underpinnings to govern at cabinet level, albeit rather implicitly, e.g. assigning accountability to certain sponsoring ministers. In contrast, the secretive reviews by the Forward Strategy Unit were conducted as a new mean for the centre to review departmental activities in key policy areas and seizing policy formulation authority, defining the problem and suggesting policy alternatives that would be followed up by the PM in cabinet and its committees or bilaterals. The fact that these reviews were partly based upon information from Whitehall departments increased their potential to strengthen the centralising rules of the executive game. In turn, their secretive nature made it more difficult for departmental officials to resist against these activities. Similar to the published reports noted above, they also targeted particular Whitehall departments and thus can be regarded as likewise relevant for policy-specific rules of the executive game, incorporating the FSU into executive decision-making in distinct policy areas of particular relevance to the PM. Besides, the FSU benefitted from its affiliation at the Cabinet Office emphasising its role in servicing cabinet as a whole. The Strategic Audits and five-year strategy plans prepared by the Strategy Unit added a new mean to government policy-making, but have been less suited to force ministries to address identified shortcomings, also because much higher sanctions had been already incorporated into the budgetary procedure.

The independent reviews managed by the Productivity Team in the Treasury targeted the regulative underpinnings to govern at cabinet and departmental level by their very existence: These publicly announced surveillances were not only an additional formalised mean in government policy-making shifting policy formulation authority towards the Treasury, they incorporated also a strong regulative sanctioning because their results were included in Pre-Budget and Budget Reports, thus directly influencing the future allocation of public expenditure in their respective policy area. Due to this direct link to particular sectoral public expenditure, they can be likewise understood as attempts to shape the policy-specific formal rules of the executive game in selected policy areas, broadening the Treasury's influence in government policy-making well beyond its budgetary authority.

Second, the various advisory arrangements at the British centre under PM Blair aimed to shape the *normative* underpinnings to govern more explicitly than their predecessors, although their advisory activities differed. The Policy Unit tried to establish new norms regarding the interaction between the centre and Whitehall departments with its policy briefs, accompanied by *ex ante* interventions in Whitehall departments, and preparation of bilaterals. The general aim was to implant a new norm to government policy-making at cabinet and departmental level prescribing more hierarchical relations between the centre and the line departments as an appropriate way to govern. In addition, these activities disseminated certain policy-specific norms, describing appropriate means to accomplish distinct objectives. Initially, its close proximity to the PM supported these normative strategies because it predefined its status across central government. Hence, the Policy Unit's regular remark to other actors that 'Tony wants!' was a clear expression of its delegated authority deriving from its close proximity to the PM. This status was also

supported by its composition, i.e. most members during PM Blair's first term were well-known to the PM and could indeed emphasise to have a clear judgement about his preferences. Over time, though, especially its interventionist behaviour and the bilaterals were criticised by cabinet members and officials as inappropriate, reflecting the Policy Unit's limits in adjusting the norms in Whitehall.

The PIU and the Strategy Unit in the Cabinet Office cooperated with the permanent bureaucracy to prepare their public reports, but also sought to address the policy-specific normative rules of the executive game by constraining the available range of legitimate policy solutions in these policy issues. In addition, these reports demonstrated 'new ways of working to a wider Civil Service audience' (Amann 2004: 16), thus prescribing new standards in how to formulate government policies at both cabinet and departmental level. Those reports addressing machinery of government issues aimed explicitly to outline appropriate means of how to organise and coordinate executive decision-making. In turn, the permanent bureaucracy was less reluctant to follow up these policy frames – also because they had been involved in formulating the reports. The organisational structure of the units in the Cabinet Office provided an advantageous size for preparing various reports. Likewise, the mix of members from different occupational backgrounds facilitated the gathering of additional evidence and the understanding for Whitehall conventions.

Similarly, the policy briefs by the Council of Economic Advisers addressed the pre-existing norms in government policy-making with the general aim to shape the interactions between spending ministries and the Treasury. However, as said above, the small size of the council restricted these normative strategies. More importantly, the newly introduced budgetary procedure, which had strengthened the influential position of the Treasury already, increased the resistance of cabinet members and departmental officials against an additional steering impulse. The Productivity Team aimed with its independent reviews to add new standards of government policy-making. Next to this publicly visible favouring of including more external expertise in government policy-making, they also prescribed legitimate – and non-legitimate – means to address policy issues selected for review. Yet, the capabilities of the rather small Productivity Team to dominate the preparation of independent reviews can be regarded as medium. Again, the lower departmental resistance against these normative prescriptions of legitimate policies may be related to the strong sanctioning potential with their direct link to the budgetary procedure.

Moreover, all advisory arrangements proclaimed their own working mode as new standard to conduct policy-making in Whitehall, i.e. as 'McKinsey in government', and insisted on it as superior to the traditional bureaucratic procedures, emphasising the relevance of evidence and (external) knowledge. As such, they had sought to disseminate a new professional norm across Whitehall that stressed strategic policy-making as 'a professional discipline in itself' (Blair 2004),⁶⁹ heavily inspired by the consultancy sector.

Lastly, especially the Policy Unit as well as the PIU and the Strategy Unit in the Cabinet Office engaged in cognitive strategies in order to shape the prevailing cognitive worldview on 'how policy is formulated in Whitehall' – in favour of a more centralised worldview. In addition, the *ex ante* interventions by the Policy Unit in departmental policy-

⁶⁹ Speech about 'Modernisation of the Civil Service', 24 February 2004.

making provided opportunities to frame and prescribe departmental thinking about selected policy issues. Besides, the Policy Unit's engagement in organising a network of centre-left government leaders and, more importantly, their advisory arrangements under the label Progressive Governance provided an additional platform to frame distinct policy issues in domestic policy-making. Likewise, the public reports provided opportunities to frame distinct policy issues, to define the problem, discuss policy alternatives, and present policy solutions, sometimes also accompanied with prescriptions of policy implementation. Moreover, the public reports addressing machinery of government issues also covered the general worldview on the position of the centre in government policy-making. For these reports, the PIU benefitted also from its composition, i.e. as a unit in the Cabinet Office it was not equipped with special advisers and thus appeared less confrontational and more persuasive to Whitehall officials. The 'hegemony of "joined-up" governance' (Williams 2002: 106) as the new narrative for government policy-making was initially rather successful and incorporated into many departmental policies, exemplifying a spill-over of framing the executive decision-making process in general and departmental policies in particular. Yet, the JUG narrative eventually failed to be incorporated into departmental thinking as a taken-for-granted notion and when the PM turned more towards delivery and implementation issues, it was followed less frequently by Whitehall departments.

In a similar but less radical manner, the independent reviews managed by the Productivity Team aimed to construct a new narrative for the Chancellor of the Exchequer underlining his political agenda and reinterpreting productivity in the public sector as an overarching theme to influence also policy-specific cognitive convictions in distinct policy areas. In contrast to the JUG narrative, though, their cognitive agenda was insofar more successful as their recommendations were mostly directly incorporated into departmental policies – presumably because of their direct link to the budgetary procedure that provided a 'regulative yardstick' to enforce 'cognitive adaptation'.

To conclude, all units in the advisory system under PM Blair addressed the institutional underpinnings to govern at cabinet and departmental level; they installed new rules, aimed to strengthen the centralisation norm as well as a stronger centre-oriented worldview, somewhat smokescreened with the notion of joined-up government, which may imply more equal actors joining a common cause rather than a centre dominating government policy-making processes. In addition, various advisory activities addressed the more policy-specific rules of the executive game, formalising the role of the centre in distinct policy areas, prescribing legitimate means to achieve certain policy objectives, and framing government policies in a way that incorporates a stronger centre in government policy-making. However, various authors stress that the pluralisation of policy advice at the centre of government and the 'rivalry between growing Treasury control over domestic policy' and the 'attempts by Number 10 and the Cabinet Office to reassert political authority over the policy process' (Lee/Woodward 2002: 55) also limited the impact of these advisory activities because cabinet members and particularly departmental officials could try to outplay one against the other. Nevertheless, they did install a stronger hierarchical subordination of Whitehall departments under the PM and Number Ten as well as the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Treasury respectively (Richards/Smith 2003: 11-2, Smith 2003: 75-6, Richards 2008b: 110).

Part IV Synthesis and conclusion

'Comparative study (...) propels us to a level of conceptual and methodological self-consciousness and clarity rarely found in non-comparative studies of public administration. (...) The muddle of comparative administrative study may well be a hell, but one whose suggested motto is: "Abandon all hope ye who do not enter here!" (emphasis original, Aberbach/Rockman 1988: 437)

Chapter K Comparative synthesis

The preceding case studies demonstrate that German and British advisory arrangements achieved a different role in government policy-making across countries and time. This chapter compares and interprets the empirical key findings from a power-distributional perspective, linking structure and agency in order to understand their involvement in institutional politics. The actor-oriented perspective refers to the institutional work of German and British advisory arrangements, i.e. their ambitions to change the institutional status quo by pursuing institutional strategies while using their organisational capabilities. The structure-oriented perspective emphasises the characteristics of institutions, i.e. the ambiguity of institutional targets at enforcement level as well as the consequences imposed by the four distinguished context features on institutionalisation processes in executives.

The next subchapter compares the institutional work of German and British advisory arrangements and derives preliminary expectation hypotheses on the explanatory relevance of their organisational structure. The second subchapter interprets the empirical findings from the case studies and identifies the mechanisms of institutional politics involving German and British advisory arrangements, also assessing the four preformulated expectation hypotheses, and concludes by discussing how advisory arrangements influence government policy-making and why their role differs across countries and time.

1 The institutional work of German and British advisory arrangements

This subchapter illustrates the key findings from the case studies on the organisational structure and institutional strategies of advisory arrangements in a more parsimonious way. The next section compares the organisational structure of German and British advisory arrangements along the five selected structural attributes over time. The second section compares their institutional strategies, revealing the ambitions to change the institutional status quo in general and which institutional pillars in particular. The last section discusses why organisational structure may be relevant for such institutional strategies.

1.1 Between the ordinary and the unique: The organisation of policy advice at the centre of German and British governments

The case studies illustrate that the structural attributes of advisory arrangements are not free of choice. Although it is beyond this study to explore these organisational choices in more detail, the empirical analyses reveal that the organisation of German and British advisory arrangements has been decided by their clients, often in conjunction with heads, but is also influenced by other actors in their organisational field as well as their members.

More specifically, the next paragraphs synthesise and compare the case studies' findings on their (1) durability, (2) internal affiliation, (3) size, (4) fragmentation, and (5) expertness.

1.1.1 Live long and prosper? The durability of German and British advisory arrangements

This study assesses the durability of advisory arrangements as *ex ante* lifespan set by their client and as *ex tempore* lifespan as their survival after their inception. All advisory arrangements have been established with an infinite temporal mandate. In contrast, their *ex tempore* durability varies across countries and time. Consequently, the *ex tempore* durability of advisory arrangements, if any, should be relevant for institutional strategies.

The case studies show that *ex tempore* durability is related to the satisfaction of clients, albeit the electoral cycle seems to be also relevant because most terminations occurred after general elections (see Table K.1): (1) Some advisory arrangements are 'of universal use' and survived government turnovers, (2) others received clients' satisfaction and survived at least one of their clients' re-elections, most of them have been only abolished after their clients' departure, (3) two advisory arrangements survived only the first term of a new client, signifying his dissatisfaction, and (4) three advisory arrangements were abolished during a new client's first term in 'trial-end-error'.

Table K.1 The *ex tempore* permanence of German and British advisory arrangements

type	Germany	Britain
universal use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning Division/Division 5 (1969-1998, 1999-2002)* • Planning Group (1982-1999; 2002-2007)*[†] • Office ChefBK (1998- today)* • BMF Division (1998[1966]- today) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CPRS (1970-1983)* • Policy Unit/Directorate (1974-today) • Council of Economic Advisers (1997-today) • Productivity Team (1998-today)
satisfaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning Division/Division 5 (1969-1998)* • Planning Group (1982-1999)* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance and Innovation Unit (1998-2002) • Strategy Unit (2002-2010)[‡]
dissatisfaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning Division (1999-2002) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CPRS (1979-1983)*
trial-and-error	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning Group (1998-1999)* • early Office ChefBK (1998-1999)* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forward Strategy Unit (2001-2002)

Legend

* Advisory arrangement is assigned to more than one type.

[†] The Planning Group was terminated and partly transferred to a new Planning Staff in 2007.

[‡] The Strategy Unit was abolished when the new Conservative PM Cameron took office in 2010.

Note: The advisory arrangements of universal use are displayed with their overall durability, other timespans refer only to those time periods under scrutiny.

Source: Own illustration.

First, British clients created more advisory arrangements of universal use, albeit some advisory arrangements in this category witnessed temporary abolitions or downgrading, i.e. they survived government turnovers before they dissatisfied a new client or provoked a trial-and-error, including the Planning Group and the early Office ChefBK, which were partly merged during the first term of the new Schröder government in 1999, and the CPRS, which

was abolished by PM Thatcher after her first term in 1983. Second, two German and two British advisory arrangements acted to their clients' satisfaction, including the Planning Division and later Division 5 at the Chancellery until 1998 as well as the PIU and the Strategy Unit at the Cabinet Office under PM Blair. Third, one advisory arrangement in each country was abolished directly after a new clients' first term, i.e. the Planning Division after Schröder's first term and the CPRS after Thatcher's first term. Lastly, two German and one British advisory arrangement were abolished or severely reorganised during the client's first term, expressing trial-and-error, namely the Planning Group and early Office ChefBK under Chancellor Schröder in 1999 and the Forward Strategy Unit under PM Blair in 2002. Overall, though, British clients tend to be more satisfied with their advisory arrangements, especially if one takes the higher total number of advisory arrangements into account.

A diachronic comparison shows a general trend whereby the number of advisory arrangements of universal use increases over time. In addition, such a longitudinal perspective reveals country-specific trends: The German advisory arrangements created during the last time period witnessed the most abolitions and reorganisations caused by their client's dissatisfaction and trial-and-error. To the contrary, the more recently established British advisory arrangements tend to satisfy their clients more than their predecessors. Yet, this study's research design limits the comparability of the ex tempore durability of advisory arrangements created during the last time period under scrutiny with their predecessors because it neglects subsequent developments. Accordingly, these trends have to be taken with caution.

1.1.2 Clients' eyes and ears? The affiliation of German and British advisory arrangements

In both countries, advisory arrangements existed with formal affiliations as staff or line units (see Table K.2). However, all British advisory arrangements affiliated as line units enjoyed an *informal* staff affiliation and reported directly to the PM or the Chancellor of the Exchequer disregard their formal subordination. Although it is beyond this study to examine the effects of *informal* structures, the case studies reveal that this informal affiliation is in practice as relevant as the formal affiliation for their German counterparts.

Table K.2 The internal affiliation of German and British advisory arrangements

	staff affiliation	line affiliation
Germany	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Office ChefBK (TP III) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning Division/Division 5 (TP I-III) • Planning Group (TP II-III) • BMF Division (TP III)
Britain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy Unit/Directorate (TP II-III) • Council of Economic Advisers (TP III) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CPRS (TP I-II)* • Performance and Innovation Unit (TP III)* • Forward Strategy Unit (TP III)* • Strategy Unit (TP III)* • HMT Productivity Team (TP III)*

Legend

* Informal staff affiliation.

TP I = 1969/70-1974 TP II = 1979/82-1987 TP III = 1997/98-2005

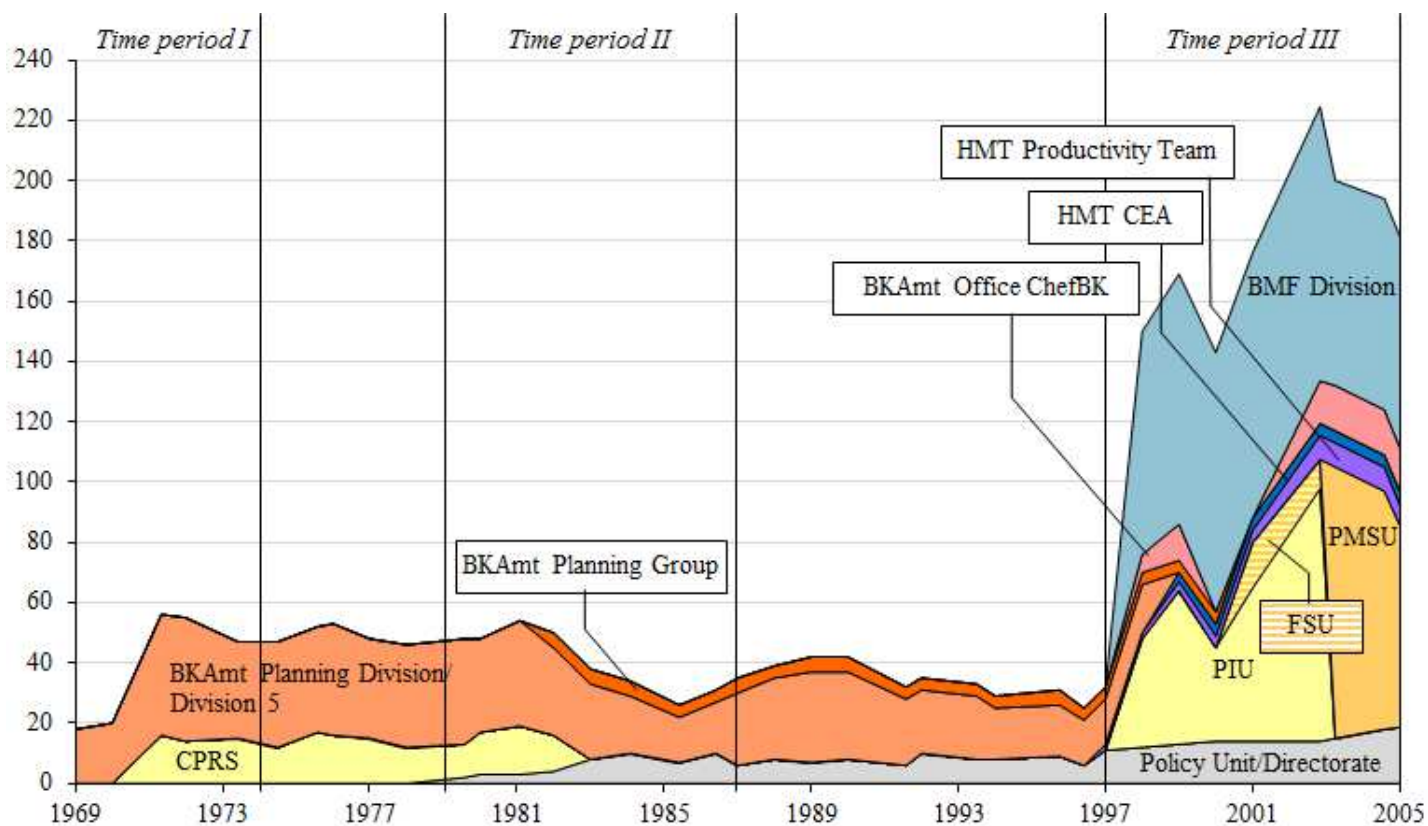
Source: Own illustration.

Moreover, a general trend could be observed with the newly established advisory arrangements during the last time period under scrutiny which were more often affiliated as staff units than their predecessors.

1.1.3 Too big to fail? The size of German and British advisory arrangements

In various cases, the official size of advisory arrangements has been expanded with additional personnel, either by contracted external staff as e.g. in the Planning Division and the Planning Group under the Brandt and Kohl governments or by unpaid advisers as in the Forward Strategy Unit. The empirical analyses reveal a large variety of size across advisory arrangements, countries, and time (see Figure K.1).

Figure K.1 The size of British and the German advisory arrangements, 1969-2005



Source: Own illustration, information compiled from the sources quoted in Figures E.1, F.1, G.2, H.1, I.1, J.2, J.4, and J.5 as well as Table J.6.

Across countries, the official size of advisory arrangements ranges in both countries from very small entities, e.g. the Planning Group or the Productivity Team had four members each, to very large entities such as the BMF Division and the Strategy Unit with approx. 90 members each. Within these general spans, the size distribution differs across the two countries: In comparison, most German advisory arrangements are larger, the Planning Division and its successors oscillated between initially more than 30 members and finally about 15 members. In turn, except the Performance and Innovation Unit and its succeeding Strategy Unit, all other British advisory arrangements are comparatively smaller with max. 20 members in the Policy Unit.

In addition, two longitudinal trends can be observed. On the one hand, most advisory arrangements experienced a growth after their inception or severe reorganisation, revealing the links between *ex tempore* durability and size. Several advisory arrangements reached a certain peak and maintained that size such as the Policy Unit, most others experienced dynamics over time with organisational growth and decline. On the other hand, the cross-country comparison suggests that those advisory arrangements servicing the cabinet and/or the head of government and those servicing the Finance Minister differ in terms of size: The government headquarters comprised during the first time period under scrutiny advisory arrangements of rather different size: The CPRS had only half of the members of the Planning Division. During the second time period under scrutiny, the size of such advisory arrangements became more similar, i.e. the two German advisory arrangements maintained the initial size of the division with together approx. 30 members whereas the two British advisory arrangements comprised together approx. 20 members. During the last time period under scrutiny, however, the British advisory arrangements in the PM's Office and the Cabinet Office increased radically in size, up to more than 100 staff members together, whereas the advisory arrangements at the Chancellery have been reduced to approx. 15 members in total. The opposite can be observed for advisory arrangements servicing the Finance Ministers, albeit they have been only studied for the last time period: Whereas the two British advisory arrangements had approx. ten members together, the BMF division had approx. 90 members at its peak.

1.1.4 Flat and flexible? The fragmentation of German and British advisory arrangements

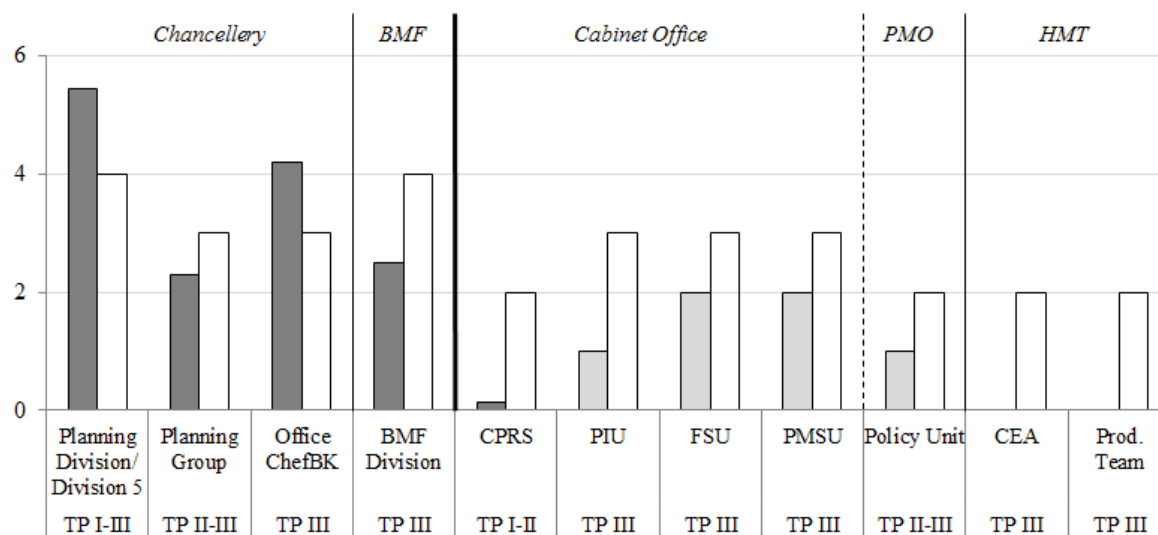
The comparative analysis reveals that the horizontal fragmentation of advisory arrangements varies more strongly across countries and time than their vertical fragmentation (see Figure K.2). Similar to affiliation, the case studies show that most deputies in British advisory arrangements act as *informal* deputies, i.e. they lack formal authority over a permanent group of members and instead supervise flexible teams with varying members. Again, it is beyond this study to examine these informal structures in more detail, but it seems reasonable to display this empirical information in order to differentiate them from those formal deputies at the secondary authority level that are regarded as measure for horizontal fragmentation in this study.

On average, the horizontal fragmentation of all advisory arrangements oscillates between approx. 5.4 formal deputy heads and no formal deputy heads at all or rather one informal deputy head. From a cross-country perspective, one may identify longitudinal trends: All German advisory arrangements comprised deputies at the second authority level with formal responsibilities for a number of fixed subordinated members that can be regarded as demarcated branches, ranging on average between 2.3 in the Planning Group and 5.4 deputies in the Planning Division. In contrast, all British advisory arrangements lack a formal secondary level of authority, except the CPRS during its last year of existence, thus allowing a close contact between the head and the members. During the last time period under scrutiny, all British advisory arrangements included informal deputies, except those in the Treasury.

Closely related, the vertical fragmentation as the number of formal authority levels differs more across countries than across time: All German advisory arrangements

oscillated between three and four formal authority levels, resulting in a steeper hierarchy than their British counterparts. In contrast, various British advisory arrangements had only two formal authority levels, i.e. their head and the members; those with deputies included also a third authority level.

Figure K.2 The fragmentation of German and British advisory arrangements



Legend

- formal horizontal fragmentation
- informal horizontal fragmentation
- vertical fragmentation

Note: Numbers are mean values of the legislative terms under scrutiny.

Source: Own illustration.

1.1.5 Cages of paradise birds?

The expertness of German and British advisory arrangements

This study assesses the expertness of advisory arrangements with three measures, the professional background of its heads and members, their tenure, and turnover. A comparative analysis reveals differences across countries and time, although the three indicators could not be assessed for all advisory arrangements due to data constraints.

Various advisory arrangements in both countries are composed of a mix of insiders and outsiders. The insiders are in most advisory arrangements departmental secondees returning to their parent ministries after a certain time period and thus allowing some 'cross-pollination' (Benoit 2006: 169) across central government, albeit particularly the German advisory arrangements recruited also members from their parent organisation. The outsiders in German advisory arrangements are mostly academics and their recruitment declined over time, i.e. the Planning Division during the early 1970s and the two advisory arrangements in the mid-1980s comprised several academics, whereas the various advisory arrangements under the Schröder government abstained from outsiders – similar to the BMF Division. In contrast, the background of outsiders in British advisory arrangements ranges from private sector companies, to management consultancies, think tanks, journalists, and

the voluntary sector. The Council of Economic Advisers comprised only outsiders, mostly from the City, whereas the Productivity Team consisted entirely of Treasury officials.

The tenure and turnover of staff varied across countries and time, but the comparative analysis excludes the Office ChefBK as well as the three units in the Cabinet Office under PM Blair and is confined to the tenure of members of German advisory arrangements ranked as section heads and above. Given the limited comparability of member types in both countries, i.e. the German data refers to official ranks whereas the British data provides information on professional backgrounds, it is reasonable to take the overall means into account, revealing two longitudinal trends across countries: On the one hand, members of German advisory arrangements have a comparatively longer tenure in office than their British counterparts. On the other hand, German advisory arrangements experience a less rapid and lower turnover of staff, except smaller advisory arrangements for which already a few exits may lead to a rather radical turnover. In contrast, British advisory arrangements have a more rapid and high turnover, especially after general elections but also if a new head takes office.

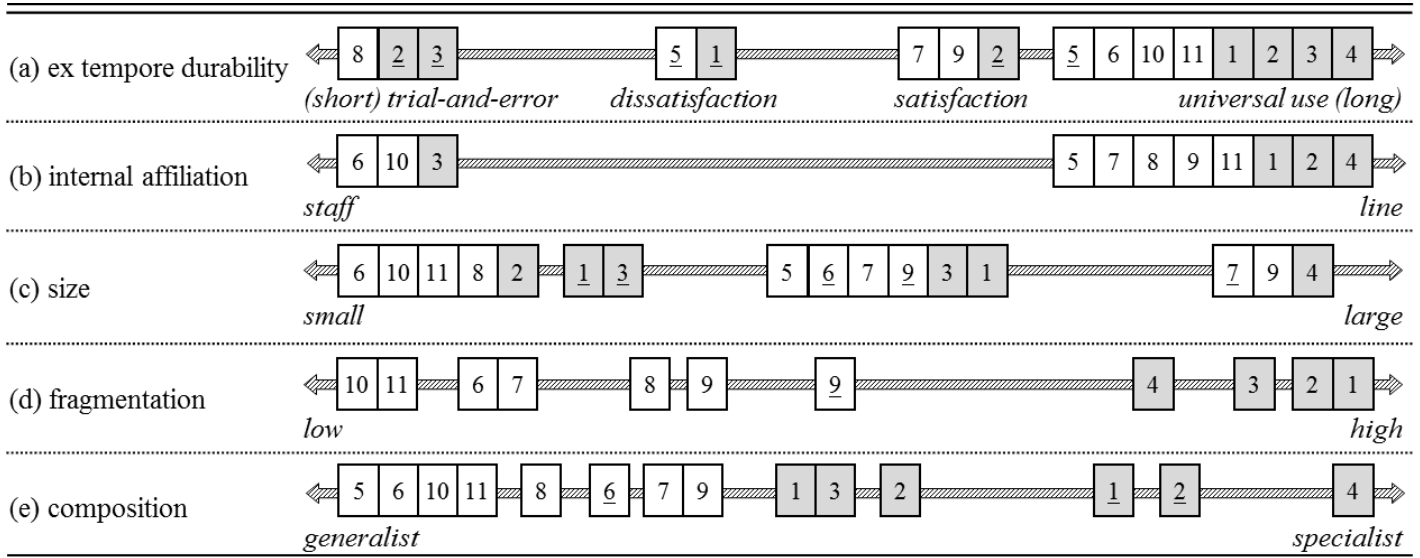
In sum, the professional background of the heads and members, their tenure in office and the turnover of staff result in an overall expertness of advisory arrangements that differs across countries and time: Whereas many German advisory arrangements can be characterised as more specialist, comprising less outsiders, having members with longer tenures in office and less frequent staff turnovers, many British advisory arrangements can be regarded as rather generalist, including a mix of in- and outsiders with a comparatively shorter tenure and regular turnover. Exceptions to these patterns exist, e.g. the Planning Division and Planning Group as well as the Strategy Unit obtained initially a rather generalist expertness and developed into a more specialist organisational entity over time. Yet, the opposite dynamic has not been observed.

1.1.6 Summary: The organisation of policy advice as 'deliberate misfit'

This study has not found conclusive evidence for a best practice in organising advisory arrangements at the centre of German and British governments (see Figure K.3). All advisory arrangements enjoy an unlimited ex ante durability whereas their ex tempore durability varies; in comparison British advisory arrangements satisfy their clients more often and thus survive longer than German advisory arrangements. The formal affiliation of advisory arrangements differs also across countries and time, revealing a general longitudinal trend towards staff affiliation, but the case studies also show that the formal affiliation matters less than the actual access to the client. The size of advisory arrangements ranges between very small and rather large entities; whereas the Policy Unit grew steadily, most other advisory arrangements witnessed a more dynamic organisational growth and decline. The fragmentation of advisory arrangements differs likewise across countries and time, German advisory arrangements are more fragmented than British advisory arrangements. Lastly, the expertness of advisory arrangements varies, although the measurement of this attribute is limited: Broadly speaking, German advisory arrangements are characterised by a stronger specialist orientation, whereas British advisory arrangements are more generalist.

This comparative synthesis leads to further conclusions. First, the overall structure of advisory arrangements varies more strongly across countries than across time. As the distribution of advisory arrangements along the five organisational attributes shows, German advisory arrangements survive less long, are more often affiliated as a line entity, have a larger size, a higher fragmentation, and a rather specialist expertness whereas British advisory arrangements survive longer, are more often organised as a staff, at least informally, have a smaller size, lower fragmentation, and a more generalist expertness.

Figure K.3 Organisational characteristics of German and British advisory arrangements



Legend

German advisory arrangements
 British advisory arrangements

- | | | |
|---|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1 Planning Division/Division 5 (TP I-III) | 5 CPRS (TP I-II) | 10 CEA (TP III) |
| 2 Planning Group (TP II-III) | 6 Policy Unit (TP II-III) | 11 Productivity Team (TP III) |
| 3 Office ChefBK (TP III) | 7 PIU (TP III) | |
| 4 BMF Division (TP III) | 8 FSU (TP III) | |
| | 9 Strategy Unit (TP III) | |

Note: Plain numbers reflect t_0 , underlined numbers t_1 (if changes occurred). The ex tempore durability refers to the four distinguished types arranged on the pre-formulated continuum.

Source: Own illustration.

Second, despite many advisory arrangements having a rather stable internal organisation, temporal dynamics along the five attributes occur. Those with a more dynamic organisation experience mostly changes with regard to their ex tempore durability, especially those of universal use that are later abolished, their size, witnessing growth and decline, and their expertness, turning mostly from a more generalist to a more specialist orientation.

Lastly, the empirical analysis shows that the five organisational attributes interact, e.g. the formal affiliation of advisory arrangements as staff or line unit influences their size and fragmentation, i.e. a unit affiliated as staff is more often smaller and characterised by lower fragmentation than a line entity. In addition, the size of advisory arrangements also interacts with their fragmentation and elements of their expertness, i.e. larger units are more fragmented and more likely to have a less radical turnover than smaller entities.

More importantly, the comparative analysis informs about the degree of the 'deliberate misfit' between the organisational structure of the advisory arrangement and the traditional ministerial bureaucracy, whereby German advisory arrangements differ less from the organisational principles of the federal bureaucracy than British advisory arrangements differ from those principles in Whitehall. Put differently: This study cannot answer the question of 'How to organise policy advice at the centre of governments?' with a best practice deriving from its empirical analyses. But the organisational structure of such executive actors tends to depart to a certain extent from the organisational principles of the respective ministerial bureaucracy.

1.2 The institutional strategies of German and British advisory arrangements

The case studies illustrate that German and British advisory arrangements conducted several advisory activities that can be regarded as carriers for their institutional strategies aiming to shape the institutional status quo. A comparison of these key advisory activities shows that some activities have been rather equivalent across and within countries over time, broadly summarised as briefing, monitoring, and planning activities (see Table K.3). In addition, one key advisory activity has been conducted in both countries but not continuously, i.e. the involvement of German and British advisory arrangements in drafting the Schröder-Blair-Paper and in the Progressive Governance Network. Lastly, the media advice by the Division 5 under Chancellor Kohl can be considered as non-equivalent in the sense that it has been conducted only in one country during one time period.

First, *briefing activities* include the CPRS's collective briefs informing cabinet as a whole and the policy briefs by the other German and British advisory arrangements supporting their individual clients. The briefing activities have been conducted by advisory arrangements but involved also the ministerial bureaucracy to a varying extent.

Second, *monitoring activities* comprise the German governmental reporting system handled by advisory arrangements at the Chancellery and the BMF Division as well as the former's attempts to initiate governmental evaluation under the Kohl government. In Britain, these activities comprise the PAR partly run by the CPRS, the secretive policy reviews by the FSU, the Strategic Audits by the Strategy Unit, and the independent reviews managed by the Productivity Team in the Treasury. Again, the participation of ministries differed, ranging from a dominance of officials in the German governmental reporting to mixed teams including departmental officials in the PAR and the Strategic Audits, a limited inclusion of Whitehall departments in the independent reviews of the Productivity Team, and one seconded official on each policy review of the FSU.

Lastly, the *planning activities* include the German Planning System that has been managed by several advisory arrangements at the Chancellery over time. In Britain, these include the EWS and the strategy meetings organised by the CPRS as well as the five-year strategy plans guided by the Strategy Unit. The German Planning System addressed upcoming departmental policies, accompanied by a medium- and long-term planning, similar to the strategy meetings and five-year strategy plans in Britain. In contrast, the EWS focused on future problems. Again, the incorporation of other actors differed: The German Planning System as well as the EWS and the strategy meetings have been internal

mechanisms, involving all ministries and ministers respectively, while the five-year strategy plans have been prepared by single Whitehall departments but were published.

Table K.3 Key advisory activities of German and British advisory arrangements

equivalence	1969/70-1974	1979/82-1987	1997/98-2005
across countries and time	<i>briefing</i>		
	• policy briefs (Planning Division)	• policy briefs (Division 5)	• policy briefs (Planning Division and late Office ChefBK) • policy briefs (BMF Division)
	• collective briefs (CPRS)	• policy briefs and think pieces (Policy Unit)	• policy briefs and ex ante interventions (Policy Unit) • policy briefs (CEA)
	<i>monitoring</i>		
	• governmental reporting (Planning Division)	• governmental evaluation (Planning Group)	• governmental reporting (BMF Division)
	• Programme Analysis and Review (CPRS)		• secretive policy reviews (FSU) • Strategic Audits (Strategy Unit) • independent reviews (HMT Team)
	<i>planning</i>		
• Planning System (Planning Division) • medium- and long-term plans (Planning Division)	• Planning System and Cabinet Scheduling (Planning Group)	• Planning System and advanced Cabinet Scheduling (Planning Group/Division)	
• EWS (CPRS) • strategy meetings (CPRS)		• five-year strategy plans (Strategy Unit)	
across time	• government declarations (Planning Division)	• government declarations (Planning Group)	• government declarations, incl. Agenda 2010 (late Office ChefBK)
		• <i>Chefsachen</i> (Division 5)	• <i>Chefsachen</i> (early Office ChefBK)
	• reports and studies (CPRS)	• reports and think pieces (CPRS and Policy Unit)	• reports and discussion papers (PIU/Strategy Unit) • presentations and reports (HMT Team)
		• bilaterals (Policy Unit)	• bilaterals (Policy Unit and CEA)
across countries			• Progressive Governance/ Schröder-Blair-Paper (Policy Unit and Office ChefBK, Planning Division)
non-equivalent		• press and media advice (Division 5)	

Note: Activities by German advisory arrangements are shaded grey.

Source: Own illustration.

In addition, advisory arrangements conducted several activities continuously that differed across the two countries. Yet, they can be related to the three types of activities noted above. In Germany, these include the contributions of advisory arrangements at the Chancellery to government declarations and *Chefsachen*, which both can be regarded as a special type of briefing, referring more directly to the subsequent execution of their policy recommendations by federal ministries. In Britain, these country-specific but continuous activities include the reports and think pieces prepared by units at the Cabinet Office and the Policy Unit. Although these reports, unlike in Germany, went beyond reviewing

Whitehall departments by assessing departmental policies and formulating policy alternatives, they had an explicit surveillance impetus and are thus regarded as monitoring activities. In addition, the Policy Unit and the Council of Economic Advisers supported bilaterals, which can be regarded as a specific form of briefing that incorporated also a direct participation in the clients' follow up.

The preparation of the Schröder-Blair-Paper and the subsequent contributions to the Progressive Governance Network cut across these activities, also because the German and British advisory arrangements conducted them differently: In Germany, they have been mostly handled as a briefing activity and gained not as much relevance as carriers for institutional strategies as in Britain, where these activities contributed to a wider attempt to influence the institutional underpinnings to govern, accompanying e.g. monitoring activities presenting reports in order to disseminate the joined-up government narrative.

In contrast, the media advice by the Division for Political Analyses during the 1980s can be regarded as most deviant, although one of its aspects, the speechwriting, has been also conducted by other German and British advisory arrangements. Yet, this overall management of the Chancellor's communication and public relations did not clearly target the institutional pillars of the central government organisation. Instead, they mostly addressed those at its boundaries with other organisational fields, most notably the media. Consequently, the following discussion focuses on the Division's other advisory activities, i.e. its policy briefs to the Chancellor and its contributions to *Chefsachen*.

As noted above, these advisory activities can be understood as carriers for institutional strategies addressing the basic and policy-specific regulative, normative and cognitive underpinnings to govern. Furthermore, they inform on the general ambitions of advisory arrangements to act as would-be change agents in preserving or changing the institutional status quo. The following paragraphs compare the key findings from the case studies along the three ideal-typed institutional strategies targeting particular institutional pillars, which illustrate that also rather equivalent advisory activities may carry very different objectives to change the institutional status quo in general and its pillars in particular.

1.2.1 Shaping the formal rules of the executive game in Germany and Britain

The German and British advisory arrangements conducted various advisory activities in order to change the formal rules of the executive game, prescribing the formally correct behaviour for executive actors, establishing means of surveillance, and enabling the sanctioning of non-compliance. Next to these basic rules of interactions between the centre and the ministries as well as between ministries themselves, they also aimed towards policy-specific rules of the executive game in selected policy areas.

First, the different ambitions of German and British advisory arrangements for changing the formal rules of the executive game are carried by their *briefing* activities. The policy briefs by the Planning Division of the early 1970s and its successors at the Chancellery as well as the BMF Division aimed mostly to shape policy-specific rules of government policy-making, strengthening the authority of their client at the expense of the traditional prerogative of cabinet ministers and their ministries to initiate and draft government policies in these selected policy areas. Only few addressed explicitly the basic

regulative underpinnings to govern, e.g. the cabinet manual co-drafted by the early Office ChefBK in order to clarify the rules for government policy-making under the first Red-Green government. Moreover, the influence on the policy-specific formal rules of the executive game did not spill-over towards the more basic regulative underpinnings to govern – and thus did not result in a centralisation of government policy-making in general. Besides, German advisory arrangements did not engage in direct interactions with federal ministries in order to pursue these regulative strategies. Instead, the mirror sections at the Chancellery gained most of the surveillance and sanctioning competencies, although advisory arrangements could respond to non-compliance in subsequent briefings.

Similarly, the preparation of government declarations carried ambitions to target rather policy-specific regulative underpinnings to govern by re-emphasising the policy formulation role of the Chancellor and his office in those policy areas covered by the government declarations. The government declaration Agenda 2010 can be regarded as particularly ambitious in shifting also the basic formal rules of the executive game because it entailed a comparatively radical policy agenda without prior consultation of responsible federal ministries. Likewise, the public announcements of *Chefsachen* served as carriers of regulative strategies addressing policy-specific formal rules, offering an opportunity to seize policy formulation authority to the Chancellor and his office in particular policy areas – and serving as blaming and shaming, i.e. the public 'accolade' of an issue as the Chancellor's priority referred often to alleged failures at ministerial level.

These briefing activities in Germany can be regarded as rather effective carriers for their policy-specific regulative strategies, because they have been compulsory in the sense that they have been prepared regardless whether cabinet ministers or federal ministries favoured a second assessment of their policy proposals or a new policy idea in their remit or whether they wanted to shift the policy formulation authority to the Chancellor and his office because the officeholder prioritised an issue. Yet, many of them were prepared in conjunction with the federal ministries, transmitted through the mirror sections, and thus could emphasise the participation of the centre in government policy-making but rarely centralised such processes altogether. In addition, only some policy briefs during the last time period under scrutiny addressed the basic formal rules of the executive game explicitly. The policy briefs by the BMF Division revealed lower ambitions to shape the formal rules of the executive game, also because they have been mostly oriented towards intra-ministerial policy-making.

In contrast, the British advisory arrangements had continuous ambitions to change the regulative underpinnings to govern via their briefing activities. Initially, the collective briefs of the CPRS aimed to reinstall collective rules at cabinet level, allowing if not requesting from cabinet ministers to get involved into policy issues outside their own responsibility area, facilitating mutual surveillance, and providing opportunities for blocking cabinet decisions. In contrast, the subsequent policy briefs by the Policy Unit pursued almost the opposite, i.e. they aimed to strengthen the authority of the PM in cabinet. Moreover, the Policy Unit expanded its remit towards the departmental level over time, engaging in ex ante interventions with their briefing activities, allowing a direct participation in departmental policy formulation, and increasing its potential to promote new regulative underpinnings to govern. In turn, the policy briefs entailed strong

sanctioning means for non-compliance, ranging from the PM's disapproval that would obstruct any policy initiative in cabinet towards bilaterals. During the last time period under scrutiny, also the Council of Economic Advisers engaged in policy briefs, focussing on the basic formal rules of the executive game at cabinet level, sharing the ambition of the Policy Unit to shift authority in this arena towards the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Likewise, the Policy Unit's support of PM's bilaterals increased considerably over time, reflecting its growing ambitions to target the regulative underpinnings to govern by establishing an alternative decision-making arena to cabinet, which served simultaneously as sanctioning mechanism for non-compliant behaviour of cabinet ministers. Since also cabinet colleagues as well as civil servants became aware of these bilaterals, they could severely weaken the invited minister's authority in cabinet as well as her ministry's authority in inter-ministerial interactions. As such, bilaterals served also as a new formal mean for policy-making in particular policy areas. In addition, also the Council of Economic Advisers engaged in such bilaterals on behalf of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, adding a second arena for government policy-making and for sanctioning non-compliant behaviour.

Broadly speaking, the briefing activities in Britain have been rather compulsory for cabinet members, i.e. the British advisory arrangements commented on departmental cabinet submissions disregard whether they favoured such a second opinion. Likewise, bilaterals with the PM were prepared without prior consultation and approval of the respective cabinet minister. In addition, they provided regular opportunities to pursue regulative strategies addressing the formal rules of the executive game. More importantly, they have been increasingly prepared in conjunction with Whitehall departments, allowing a direct dissemination of the new rules across central government.

Second, the different ambitions of German and British advisory arrangements for changing the formal rules of the executive game are also reflected in their *monitoring* activities. In Germany, the initial engagement of the Planning Division in setting up a governmental reporting system had sought to shape the regulative underpinnings to govern at ministerial level by introducing an obligatory exercise with certain formal rules. More importantly, governmental reports were regarded to support surveillance, not only for the centre but also among federal ministries. Yet, they provided fewer opportunities to shape the basic formal rules on policy formulation, except with the allocation of the report's lead responsibility prejudicing some formal policy initiation authority. Nevertheless, they did gain some influence on policy-specific formal rules of the executive game, exemplified with the BMF Division setting up a new report under the ministry's lead in order to seize the ministry's policy initiation role in an emerging cross-cutting policy area.

Similar to the early German experiences, the British PAR scheme introduced new basic formal rules of the executive game at departmental level by establishing an obligatory scheme with apparent formal requirements. Likewise, it served as surveillance mechanism and thus addressed implicitly also the pre-existing rules for interactions between the centre and Whitehall departments, strengthening the former's influence in departmental policies, although they have been prepared in conjunction with the Treasury. The renewed monitoring activities by British advisory arrangements under PM Blair

expressed a comparatively stronger ambition to shape the regulative underpinnings to govern by seizing policy formulation authority more strongly to the centre, e.g. towards the FSU via its secretive policy reviews, towards the Strategy Unit via its Strategic Audits or towards the Productivity Team via its independent reviews. Especially the latter can be regarded as an influential carrier for regulative strategies that also addressed policy-specific rules of the executive game, pushing departmental policy formulation towards the agenda of the Treasury, partly because of its strong sanctioning means in the budgetary procedure. Similarly, the increasing number of reports prepared by the units at the Cabinet Office under PM Blair targeted the formal rules for government policy-making at departmental level by offering an additional arena for inter-ministerial policy-making. Moreover, those reports with cabinet approval shifted also the decision-making authority over policy implementation towards the centre. Although these reports have been prepared for specific policy areas, their cross-cutting scope and frequency influenced also the basic formal rules of the executive game.

Lastly, the different ambitions of German and British advisory arrangements to conduct regulative strategies are also reflected in their very different *planning* activities. In Germany, the Planning System can be regarded as an important carrier for such ambitions to change the pre-existing rules of the executive game at cabinet and ministerial level. It offered ministries the formal opportunity or rather obligation to submit departmental policies earlier to the centre, altering pre-existing basic rules for the interactions between the centre and the ministries but also for inter-ministerial interactions, serving as a mutual surveillance mechanism. Besides, cabinet ministers were forced to discuss the resulting medium- and long-term plans determining subsequent departmental action. In addition, it required new formal structures and procedures within federal ministries, most notably the planning delegates. The Planning System provided also means to block departmental policies in cabinet if they departed from the 'cabinet roadmaps'. Yet, the Planning Division reduced its initial ambitions very soon; also its successors had rather moderate ambitions to shape the basic regulative underpinnings to govern via the Planning System, mostly by adding a Cabinet Scheduling to influence the timing and sequencing of policy proposals in cabinet and thus allowing some sanctioning by delaying non-compliant departmental proposals.

Somewhat similar to the German experiences, the CPRS engaged initially in planning activities as carriers for its ambitious regulative strategies, i.e. the EWS and the strategy meetings set up new formal rules for cabinet ministers in order to shift policy-making authority to the collective cabinet. Besides, these planning activities introduced new surveillance mechanisms but lacked strong sanctioning means. Afterwards, though, British advisory arrangements nearly neglected planning activities and their renewal with the introduction of five-year strategy plans by the Strategy Unit had a rather different focus, these have been conducted only selectively on those departments relevant for the PM's key pledges, thus addressing rather policy-specific formal rules of the executive game.

1.2.2 *Shaping the normative rules of the executive game in Germany and Britain*

The German and British advisory arrangements employed various advisory activities as carriers for their different ambitions to change the normative rules of the executive game, prescribing the basic appropriate behaviour in interactions between the centre and ministries as well as in inter-ministerial interactions, and advocating policy-specific norms, i.e. emphasising the appropriateness of distinct policies.

First, the *briefing* activities of German advisory arrangements carried rather moderate ambitions to shape the basic normative underpinnings to govern. Most often, these briefs concentrated on suggesting policy-specific norms, i.e. appropriate means to achieve certain policy objectives. Also government declarations and *Chefsachen* as a specific type of briefing activities were often confined to disseminate certain policy norms: Whereas *Chefsachen* have been more explicit in prescribing the legitimate means to cope with a distinct policy problem, governmental declarations have been less explicit, seemingly due to their general information function vis-à-vis several actors including federal ministries but also Parliament, the media, and the general public. More importantly, these briefing activities were mostly prepared in conjunction with the federal ministries, transmitted by the mirror sections, and thus prescribed rarely legitimate means that counteracted those preferred by the ministries. The policy briefs by the BMF Division were typically oriented towards intra-ministerial policy-making, focussing on the promotion of standards from the economic profession.

In Britain, the collective briefs by the CPRS served as carriers for normative strategies that supported more collectivism as the basic appropriate behaviour in cabinet. Later, the policy briefs by the Policy Unit advocated the opposite, i.e. more centralised government policy-making at cabinet and departmental level, accompanied by increasing interactions between the Policy Unit and Whitehall departments in order to disseminate this basic normative rule of the executive game. Besides, collective briefs and policy briefs prescribed policy-specific appropriate means in particular policy areas. In a similar vein, bilaterals enabled to shape policy-specific norms by exhibiting to the invited cabinet ministers which policy means are perceived as appropriate and desirable. They also provided a way to align the basic normative underpinnings to govern: They aimed towards strengthening centralisation in cabinet and became highly visible so that also cabinet members not participating in such meetings became aware of the norm in cabinet. Over time, this norm internalised not only among cabinet members but also departmental officials. Under PM Blair, these effects blurred to some extent when the CEA at the Treasury engaged in holding concurrent bilaterals with ministers of spending departments.

Second, the different ambitions of German and British advisory arrangements to change the normative underpinnings to govern are also reflected in their *monitoring* activities. In both countries, these activities relied upon pre-existing basic norms of appropriate behaviour towards requests from the centre. Yet, the ambitions to change the normative status quo differ. In Germany, the engagement of the Planning Division in governmental reporting and of the Planning Group under Chancellor Kohl in government evaluation has been rather technical, advocating professional standards. In addition, the governmental reports referred to the basic norms in government policy-making by

strengthening a particular surveillance in central government, prescribing how federal ministries should inform other executive actors, including the Chancellery. More importantly, they referred to policy norms, legitimising past and future policy initiatives in a particular area. Soon, though, they turned into a bureaucratic exercise with moderate impact on departmental policy norms. To the contrary, the attempts of the Planning Group in governmental evaluation have been immediately rejected by federal ministries.

The PAR scheme managed by the CPRS advocated initially also professional standards for the surveillance of departmental activities. Over time, though, the normative objectives of monitoring activities by British advisory arrangements changed. Especially the reports prepared by units at the Cabinet Office under PM Blair targeted the pre-existing normative underpinnings to govern by serving as blueprints for a new standard of how to govern, advocating evidence-based policy-making. Likewise, the independent reviews managed by the Productivity Team served as a normative best practice, promoting a stronger inclusion of external expertise in government. Moreover, several reports of the units at the Cabinet Office targeted the basic norms of government policy-making in Whitehall with reference to joined-up government, prescribing a stronger defect to the centre's requests as appropriate for such a new way to govern (see below). In addition, the public reports and independent reviews provided opportunities to challenge the policy norms in selected policy areas, defining legitimate means to achieve certain goals, which policy alternatives are preferred and desirable, and, if they received prior cabinet approval, how the policy should be implemented appropriately.

Lastly, the different ambitions of German and British advisory arrangements to engage in normative strategies are also reflected in their *planning* activities. The German Planning System aimed to advocate distinct planning standards, with the planning delegates as prototypes of a new profession. Already from the beginning, these professional norms were contested among cabinet ministers, exemplified by their rejection to formalise the mandate of the planning delegates. The increasing confrontation of planning delegates within their parent ministries caused a clear decline of these normative ambitions over time, albeit the technical standards remained a continuous concern of German advisory arrangements. The EWS and the strategy meetings by the CPRS aimed to replace a pre-existing norm of 'don't know – don't discuss' in cabinet but have been ultimately abandoned after strong rejections by cabinet ministers. Similar to the German Planning System, the Strategy Unit aimed to implant basic standards for more 'strategic' policy-making in Whitehall with its five-year strategy plans, supported e.g. by its Strategy Survival Guide, which has been followed up by departmental officials more willingly.

1.2.3 Shaping the cognitive rules of the executive game in Germany and Britain

The German and British advisory arrangements conducted various advisory activities to accomplish their ambitions to change the cognitive rules of the executive game, i.e. influencing the taken-for-granted worldviews of executive actors by disseminating a narrative on how to govern and why to proceed in that manner as well as framing specific government policies in order to direct the policy choices.

First, despite the preparation of *briefing* activities for clients' eyes only; they also carried cognitive institutional strategies. Only very few policy briefs by German advisory arrangements can be regarded as attempts to shape the basic cognitive worldviews at cabinet and ministerial level, especially those addressing machinery of government issues such as the cabinet manual co-drafted by the early Office ChefBK. Instead, most policy briefs have been used moderately to frame government policies. Likewise, the preparation of government declarations and *Chefsachen* addressed less the basic cognitive underpinnings to govern and prescribed more often policy frames, except that *Chefsachen* often seized the policy formulation to the centre with the publicly visible notion that inter-ministerial coordination had failed. Yet, the most prominent government declaration under scrutiny, the Agenda 2010, incorporated a rather weak *Leitbild* explaining how executive actors should operate from now on and why a new operation is necessary and desirable. As such, German advisory arrangements also rejected to follow up the example of their British counterparts to inject a stronger narrative into central government, which had been promoted in their joint preparation of the Schröder-Blair-Paper and the Progressive Governance Network. However, most of these briefing activities were prepared in conjunction with the federal ministries – and these were able to shape the policy frames in the majority of the government declarations and some *Chefsachen* with the information they submitted to the Chancellery in the first place, thus avoiding new policy paradigms that may counter their own departmental philosophies. The policy briefs by the BMF Division were even less ambitious in disseminating a cognitive worldview across central government or framing particular policies.

In Britain, the CPRS's collective briefs aimed more strongly to provide a narrative on collective policy-making in cabinet and simultaneously to frame collective policies. In contrast, the policy briefs by the Policy Unit emphasised centralisation as shared logic of action in cabinet and Whitehall. In addition, they framed particular policies – further strengthened by the Policy Unit and its *ex ante* interventions in departmental policy-making providing direct opportunities to persuade departmental officials to comply with these 'cognitive requests'. The policy briefs by the Council of Economic Advisers can be likewise regarded as attempts to shape the cognitive underpinnings to govern at cabinet level towards centralisation – although with the Chancellor of the Exchequer as centre. In addition, the increasing critics on bilaterals over time, arguing that these counteract the basic understanding of cabinet decision-making, show that they challenged the deeply entrenched common beliefs among cabinet ministers on how to govern in Britain.

Second, also the *monitoring* activities by German and British advisory arrangements reveal different ambitions to target the cognitive underpinnings to govern. Again, the German advisory arrangements used rarely their monitoring activities to shape the basic cognitive worldviews of cabinet ministers or ministerial officials or to frame distinct policy issues. Although the governmental reporting enabled the formulation and dissemination of policy paradigms, the Planning Division during the early 1970s was more concerned with advocating the reporting system in general. Likewise, the BMF Division did not use its formal participation in such reports to frame policy issues, albeit it initiated a new report in order to disseminate a new policy paradigm for an emerging cross-cutting policy issue. In contrast, the attempts by the Planning Group to establish a stronger evaluation conscience

among federal officials have been strongly rejected, partly because it questioned the basic cognitive conventions about whether policy impact is relevant and, more importantly, federal ministries' activities should be measured and compared.

In contrast, the CPRS used the PAR scheme to shape the cognitive rules of the executive game in the sense that it explicitly demanded more cross-cutting work in Whitehall. In turn, the reports of the CPRS have been used to prescribe policy paradigms but also address the basic worldviews of cabinet ministers and departmental officials towards more collectivism. The monitoring activities of subsequent advisory arrangements in Britain aimed to influence the cognitive underpinnings to govern but towards the opposite. The secretive policy reviews by the FSU and the Strategic Audits by the Strategy Unit offered a framing of policy issues but also disseminated the worldview that such monitoring is necessary – because departmental policies are not aligned to the policy agenda of the centre, thus strengthening the centralisation of government policy-making. Similarly, the public reports issued by the PIU and the Strategy Unit addressed departmental philosophies, often advocating best practices that should be adopted by the Whitehall bureaucracy. More importantly, these reports disseminated a new administrative doctrine under the heading of joined-up government to prescribe how to formulate policy-making in Whitehall and why to formulate it in a joined-up way. Next to a stronger cross-cutting orientation, the JUG narrative emphasised the crucial role of the centre and served as a 'rationalised myth', prescribing which structures and processes the ministerial bureaucracy should follow – and requiring a stronger influence of the centre in government policy-making. Yet, the case study also reveals that the JUG narrative worn smooth over time.

Lastly, also the planning activities by German and British advisory arrangements reveal the different ambitions to shape the cognitive rules of the executive game. The German Planning System was initially rather ambitious to implant a new basic cognitive worldview among cabinet ministers and ministerial officials, prescribing planning as a crucial precondition for active policy-making that leads to 'better' policies in terms of legitimacy, efficiency, and effectiveness. Yet, the initially growing planning conscience among cabinet ministers and officials clashed soon with their common understanding of the activities of federal officials and of the relationships between federal ministries and the Chancellery. As a result, the cognitive ambitions of the Planning Division declined soon and were not reemphasised by its successors. The EWS and the strategy meetings by the CPRS forced cabinet members to identify upcoming collective problems, but soon conflicted with their common beliefs about whether and how to discuss future problems in cabinet. When the Strategy Unit rejuvenated planning means by the five-year strategy plans of selected Whitehall departments, it focused on influencing departmental philosophies but addressed also implicitly the existing worldviews about how to govern by advocating such plans as necessary and desirable.

1.2.4 Summary: Institutional strategies of German and British advisory arrangements

The comparative synthesis shows that the German and British advisory arrangements had rather different ambitions to change the institutional status quo in general and its pillars in particular (see Table K.4). Across *carriers*, German advisory arrangements engaged initially strongly in planning activities in order to pursue institutional strategies but when these ambitions declined, they turned more towards briefing activities. In contrast, British advisory arrangements used at the beginning all three advisory activities but turned later more strongly towards briefing and especially towards monitoring activities in order to shape the institutional status quo. More specifically, each of the three distinguished advisory activities carried various institutional strategies, albeit with different intensity. Consequently, advisory activities and carriers are not biunique in the sense that a particular advisory activity has been used predominantly to pursue a distinct institutional strategy.

Across *targets*, the German and British advisory arrangements addressed initially the basic institutional underpinnings to govern. Very soon, though, the German advisory arrangements turned towards the policy-specific institutional underpinnings to govern, despite a small renaissance of stronger ambitions during Chancellor Schröder's second term. In contrast, the British advisory arrangements remained their ambitions to change the basic rules of the executive game, despite a temporary reduction of their ambitions during PM Thatcher's first term in office, but turned simultaneously towards policy-specific institutional underpinnings to govern in selected policy areas of particular relevance for the centre of government.

Besides, the German advisory arrangements at the Chancellery under the Schröder government reactivated some advisory activities as carriers for their limited ambitions, while the BMF Division was mostly confined to intra-ministerial processes. Therefore, both sets of advisory arrangements rarely competed with each other. In contrast, the two sets of advisory arrangements servicing the PM and the Chancellor of the Exchequer under PM Blair mirrored each other, including their ambitions to change the basic and policy-specific rules of the executive game. Consequently, their institutional strategies overlapped and signalled competing requests to cabinet members and departmental officials.

To conclude, German advisory arrangements had rather strong initial ambitions to act as would-be change agents in institutional politics that declined rapidly and regained to a moderate extent over time. They focused mostly on the formal rules of the executive game while their normative and cognitive strategies have been often more policy-specific. In contrast, the initially similar strong ambitions by British advisory arrangements remained and increased considerably later. They adapted all three distinguished institutional strategies continuously, aiming towards the basic rules, norms and cognitive worldviews in government policy-making. In addition, the British advisory arrangements targeted also policy-specific rules, norms and paradigms more intensively. Although the British pattern could be regarded as a 'dynamic targeting' that should expand their opportunities to influence the institutional status quo, it could likewise indicate dissatisfaction with the results and unintended consequences of previous institutional work.

Table K.4 The institutional strategies of German and British advisory arrangements

		1969/70-1974	1979/82-1987	1997/98-2005
<i>Germany</i>				
change agents		• Planning Division	• Planning Group • Division 5	• Planning Group • Planning Division • Office ChefBK • BMF Division
carriers	briefing activities	- → +	+	+
	monitoring activities	+	-	-
	planning activities	++ → +	+	+
institutional targets	basic rules	++ → +	-	- → +
	policy-specific rules	- → +	-	- → +
	basic norms/standards	++ → +	-	-
	policy-specific norms	+	-	- → +
	basic worldviews	++ → -	-	-
	policy-specific frames	- → +	-	- → +
overall ambitions		high → moderate	low	low → moderate
<i>Britain</i>				
change agents		• Central Policy Review Staff	• Central Policy Review Staff • Policy Unit	• Performance and Innovation Unit • Forward Strategy Unit • Strategy Unit • Policy Unit/Directorate • Council of Economic Advisers • Productivity Team
carriers	briefing activities	++	++	++
	monitoring activities	++	+	++
	planning activities	++	-	+
institutional targets	basic rules	++	+ → ++	++
	policy-specific rules	++	+ → ++	++
	basic norms/standards	++	+ → ++	++
	policy-specific norms	++	++	++
	basic worldviews	++	+ → ++	++
	policy-specific frames	++	++	++
overall ambitions		high	moderate → high	high

Legend

++ strong + moderate - weak

Source: Own illustration.

1.3 Conclusion: The institutional work of German and British advisory arrangements

The comparative synthesis reveals a variety of organisational structures and institutional strategies of German and British advisory arrangements. As the precedent analysis of organisational structures shows, advisory arrangements differ with regard to the five selected organisational attributes and, more broadly, their congruence to the organisational principles of the respective ministerial bureaucracy. The comparative analysis of institutional strategies informs that rather equivalent advisory activities have been used to carry different ambitions to maintain or change the institutional status quo and its three distinguished pillars. The next paragraphs discuss the links between organisational attributes and institutional strategies, concluding on the relevance of the organisational misfit for the ambitions of advisory arrangements to act as agents in institutional politics in order to shape the threefold institutional underpinning to govern.

First, those advisory arrangements regarded as pure types of universal use, i.e. the BMF Division as well as the Policy Unit, the Council of Economic Advisers, and the Productivity Team in Britain reveal a huge variety of advisory activities and underlying institutional strategies, ranging from the BMF Division with almost no ambitions to act as change agent towards the highly ambitious Policy Unit aiming to change all three ideal-typed rules of the executive game rather permanently. Likewise, advisory arrangements with the shortest *ex tempore* durability, i.e. the early Office ChefBK and the Forward Strategy Unit, engaged in different advisory activities for carrying their ambitions to change the institutional underpinnings to govern: Whereas the Office ChefBK was rarely oriented towards explicit institutional changes, the Forward Strategy Unit was strongly interested to change the institutional status quo. The two other distinguished types of *ex tempore* durability, which partly overlap with the aforementioned type of universal use, show also variety: The advisory arrangements that satisfied their clients, i.e. the Planning Division/Division 5 and the Planning Group as well as the PIU and the Strategy Unit, varied considerably in their advisory activities and their underlying institutional strategies in order to shape the rules of the executive game. Also those advisory arrangements prompting client's dissatisfaction, i.e. the Planning Division during Chancellor Schröder's first term as well as the CPRS under PM Thatcher, differed more in their advisory activities than their general motives to act as change agents in institutional politics: Although the German advisory arrangements have been mostly engaged in briefing and planning activities whereas the CPRS has been reduced to conduct monitoring, all three had rather limited ambitions to change the institutional status quo. Yet, the German advisory arrangements focused mainly on the formal rules of the executive game while the CPRS was more confined to framing selected government policies. Overall, the comparative synthesis shows that institutional strategies vary across and within the distinguished types of *ex tempore* durability and no clear hypothesis can be formulated on its relevance in institutional work.

Second, the formal affiliation of advisory arrangements as staff or line units differs mostly across countries. The German advisory arrangements with a formal staff affiliation enjoy a close proximity to their clients, which they could exploit for their organisational legitimacy, and employed slightly different institutional strategies than those affiliated as line entities. Most notably, the Office ChefBK engaged as a staff unit more strongly in

shaping the underpinnings to govern than other coexisting advisory arrangements organised as line entities under Chancellor Schröder. In contrast, British advisory arrangements have been often affiliated as *informal* staffs and the empirical analysis shows that their organisational legitimacy derived from this informal delegation of authority from their client. Their resulting status as 'eyes and ears' of their client can be related to their comprehensive targeting of the institutional status quo over time. Hence, this study hypothesises that would-be change agents affiliated as staff units are more likely to be interested to change the institutional status quo and its three pillars, albeit this organisational capability may also be achieved informally.

Third, the empirical analysis shows that the size of advisory arrangements determines their resources to conduct advisory activities as carriers for institutional strategies. The small advisory arrangements in this study, i.e. the late Office ChefBK during Schröder's second term as well as the Policy Unit, the FSU, and the two advisory arrangements in the Treasury, are e.g. less involved in monitoring than in briefing activities. In turn, medium- and large-sized advisory arrangements such as the Planning Division or the Strategy Unit conduct more often planning activities. Yet, the comparative synthesis above illustrates that even rather equivalent advisory activities may carry very different institutional strategies and thus one cannot identify a clear link between the size and the institutional strategies that could inform a corresponding hypothesis for further analysis.

Fourth, the empirical analysis shows that the fragmentation of advisory arrangements influences institutional strategies. The German advisory arrangements with a stronger horizontal and vertical fragmentation and thus a higher specialisation and authority configuration started with rather ambitious institutional strategies but reduced their initial attempts to act as change agents in institutional politics soon, often accompanied by a focus on the formal rules of the executive game, if any. In contrast, British advisory arrangements with a comparatively lower horizontal and vertical fragmentation and thus a lower specialisation and authority configuration acted as more ambitious would-be change agents to shape the institutional status quo, addressing all three institutional underpinnings to govern. Moreover, they adapt their institutional strategies more flexible over time. In comparison, one may hypothesise that lower fragmented advisory arrangements are more likely to become ambitious would-be change agents in institutional politics targeting all three distinguished institutional underpinnings to govern.

Lastly, advisory arrangements with a generalist expertness that are composed of in- and outsiders with a shorter tenure and regular turnover, i.e. the Planning Division under the Brandt government, the units at the Cabinet Office, and the Policy Unit, are more ambitious agents, also addressing all three institutional underpinnings to govern whereas advisory arrangements with a more specialist expertness, comprising civil servants with a longer tenure and slower turnover such as the Planning Group and the BMF Division, are less ambitious and also address less often all three distinguished rules of the executive game. Moreover, the empirical analysis illustrates that shifts from generalist to specialist occur over time, e.g. for the Planning Division, which correspond to a decline of ambitions to shape the institutional status quo. Yet, also advisory arrangements fully equipped with civil servants such as the Productivity Team engaged in rather ambitious institutional strategies, albeit its staff tenure was comparatively short whereas the turnover was

moderate. Accordingly, one may conclude that a scheme of ensuring regular new insiders without losing organisational memory can partly compensate the lacking of outsiders. Since this study assessed the expertness of advisory arrangements with three indicators, the preliminary hypothesis on the relevance of this organisational attribute is confined to the latter two indicators with rather clear effects across countries and time: Advisory arrangements with a shorter tenure but moderate staff turnover are more ambitious in institutional politics than advisory arrangements composed of members with long tenure and slow turnover.

In sum, not all selected organisational attributes of advisory arrangements reveal rather clear effects on their institutional strategies; those with most visible consequences include their (formal and informal) affiliation, fragmentation, and expertness (particularly tenure and staff turnover). In contrast, the *ex tempore* durability is seemingly less relevant, but this study's findings may also result from its differentiation of four types of *ex tempore* durability and, more importantly, its research design obstructing a further assessment of the subsequent empirical developments regarding the advisory arrangements created during the last time period under scrutiny. Likewise, the size of advisory arrangements seems to matter less for institutional strategies but it influences the type of advisory activities that advisory arrangements may use as carriers for their institutional strategies.

Moreover, the combination of these five attributes results in a distinct degree of misfit with the organisational principles of their ministerial bureaucracy. The organisational structure analysis revealed that German advisory arrangements depart rarely from these principles whereas their British counterparts are characterised by a stronger misfit. Linking this general result with the analysis of their institutional strategies above, this study hypothesises that advisory arrangements with a stronger misfit to the organisation principles of their respective ministerial bureaucracy are more ambitious to act as would-be change agents in shaping the institutional status quo than those advisory arrangements organised more similar to their respective ministerial bureaucracy. Admittedly, this is less surprising given the scholarly debate on institutionalisation in executives (see chap. B.1), stressing the relevance and effects of the specific congruence of subjects and objects in such processes. Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that this study confirms the argument: It is more likely that elements of the machinery of government shape the institutional underpinnings to govern if they depart from it in organisational terms to some extent.

2 Understanding policy advice and institutional politics in executives

This subchapter interprets the role of German and British advisory arrangements in government policy-making from a power-distributional perspective, linking the findings from the case studies on their agentic behaviour with the hypothesised implications of their institutional targets and their institutional context. The next two sections discuss these agency- and structure-oriented explanations to identify the mechanisms of institutional politics involving German and British advisory arrangements and assessing the preformulated expectation hypotheses on the explanatory relevance of the institutional context. The last section discusses the patterns and sequences of these mechanisms of institutional politics.

2.1 Institutional politics in Germany: Layering and drift

The empirical analysis reveals that the general ambitions of German advisory arrangements to act as change agents in institutional politics vary over time. The Planning Division under the Brandt government mobilised actively against the institutional status quo, questioning the pre-existing formal rules for interactions between the Chancellery and the federal ministries as well as across federal ministries, the basic norms of appropriate behaviour in these interactions, and the pre-existing common beliefs in cabinet and ministries about how to formulate government policies. Soon, though, the other actors in the organisational field defended the pre-existing institutional status quo: Cabinet ministers countered the new Planning System and its implicit subordination of federal ministries to the Chancellery e.g. by re-regulating their ministries' relations to the Chancellery. Similarly, they criticised the new norms for centralised government policy-making as too interventionist and inappropriate, and rejected the new planning standards, also visible in their refusal to agree upon a mandate for planning delegates. Besides, federal ministries opposed slightly to the new cognitive worldview in central government, e.g. by submitting all kinds of policy proposals to the new medium- and long-term plans, ignoring the new planning conscience.

As a response to these conflicts at cabinet and ministerial level, the Planning Division reduced its ambitions in institutional politics. Although its interests in strengthening the role of the centre remained, the rather explicit subordination of ministries to the Chancellery was almost annulled, e.g. the number of meetings of planning delegates was reduced, which, however, also abolished their role to inform the crucial weekly meeting of Administrative State Secretaries preparing cabinet. Likewise, the strong notion of the appropriateness of this subordination was obliterated. In addition, the Planning Division downplayed the cognitive notion that the Chancellery plays an expedient role in active policy-making – avoiding an open confrontation with taken-for-granted worldviews in cabinet and federal ministries about the distribution of authority in central government. Yet, the Planning Division reoriented its normative and cognitive strategies e.g. via its policy briefs and contributions to government declarations towards selected policy areas in order to influence policy-specific norms and departmental philosophies. In addition, it engaged in setting up a governmental reporting system to gain some steering potential by prescribing the institutional rules of this 'reporting game' in central government.

Under the Kohl government, the Planning Group and the Division 5 reduced their role in institutional politics further, i.e. they showed only little attempts to change the institutional status quo and if so, they aimed towards the formal distribution of authority in government policy-making, e.g. by introducing a Cabinet Scheduling as maintenance of the Planning System. Likewise, their policy briefs and contributions to *Chefsachen* entailed some ambitions to strengthen the role of the Chancellor and his office by adding new means to the existing instructions of the executive game. However, these attempts were rather selective and focused mostly on policy-specific institutional underpinnings to govern. More importantly, these instructions on legitimate policy means and frames for distinct policies were rarely free of choice for the advisory arrangements at the Chancellery – because they were mostly based upon information and submissions from the federal ministries, channelled through the mirror sections at the Chancellery. On the one hand,

they therefore corresponded with the basic norms of appropriate behaviour as well as with the cognitive worldviews about the interactions between the federal ministries and the centre – and thus did not disseminate new instructions to the actors in the organisational field with regard to the basic rules of the executive game. On the other hand, the federal ministries could use these interactions to avoid the formulation of new policy norms or policy frames that would contradict their own pre-existing norms and departmental philosophies. Hence, these weak attempts to change the institutional status quo witnessed rarely an open counter-mobilisation by other actors defending the institutional status quo. In contrast, the Planning Group's ambitions to promote evaluation standards, which would have strengthened the role of the Chancellery in central government by creating an additional lever for directing federal ministries, were explicitly rejected by the federal ministries – succeeding to protect the previous status quo of lacking evaluation standards and a cognitive worldview stressing the non-evaluability of ministerial policy-making.

The various advisory arrangements under the Schröder government increased their ambitions to change the institutional status quo moderately. Again, the key aim was to shift the authority distribution in central government in favour of their client and his office. With some exceptions, such as the formulation of a cabinet manual or the Agenda 2010, these change agents tried to avoid conflicts with pre-existing norms of appropriate behaviour regarding the interactions between the Chancellery and the federal ministries as well as with the cognitive worldview on how to govern. Consequently, their few activities ignoring these rules were often hidden from the ministries, e.g. the advanced Cabinet Scheduling. In addition, the early Office ChefBK and the Planning Division did not use the Schröder-Blair-Paper and subsequent joint activities with their British counterparts to disseminate a new narrative to govern, neither did the late Office ChefBK utilise the Agenda 2010 to propagate such a new cognitive worldview. Yet, the late Office ChefBK did use its policy briefs and support of hidden *Chefsachen* to prescribe policy-specific rules of the executive game in selected policy areas, albeit more oriented towards policy norms and frames rather than to formal rules. Again, though, these activities have been mostly accomplished in conjunction with the federal ministries, relying upon the mirror sections, and thus could rarely impose new normative or cognitive rules onto federal ministries without their prior consent.

The opposition against these rather modest changes of the institutional status quo was rather selective, most often other actors in the organisational field criticised *Chefsachen* and especially the Agenda 2010 for their presumably interventionist notion that sought to change the regulative underpinnings to govern in order to accumulate more authority for policy formulation at the Chancellery. Likewise those federal ministries confronted with new policy norms or new policy paradigms opposed if they have been not consulted before and thus had been neglected the opportunity to advocate their own normative policy frameworks and departmental philosophies.

In contrast, the BMF Division has been predominantly engaged in intra-ministerial processes and lacked a clear interest to shape the rules of the executive game in general. Yet, few occasions of outreaching across central government could be observed, most notably its engagement to create a new Sustainability Report. Although this attempt has to be regarded as rather solitary, it exemplifies the institutional politics by the BMF Division,

namely exploiting the reporting system as a pre-existing mean in order to move policy formulation authority to the Ministry of Finance that provides simultaneously opportunities to prescribe policy-specific norms and to frame an emerging cross-cutting area.

In sum, these agency-oriented dynamics over time can be summarised as initially rather high ambitions of the advisory arrangement at the Chancellery to change the institutional status quo, which declined soon towards very weak ambitions under the Kohl government and some regaining moderate ambitions under the Schröder government. The BMF Division shows very limited ambitions to act as change agent in institutional politics altogether. Moreover, the institutional strategies can be interpreted from a structure-oriented perspective by highlighting the characteristics of their institutional targets' ambiguity at enforcement level: Initially, the Planning Division at the Chancellery questioned rather openly the undisputed basic institutional underpinnings to govern. Soon, though, the Planning Division and its successors at the Chancellery turned to the more ambiguous policy-specific rules of the executive game, especially policy norms and cognitive conventions in selected policy areas. The BMF Division had very low ambitions to act as change agent and if so, it addressed rather the policy-specific institutional underpinnings to govern inside the Finance Ministry. Yet, its few outreaching activities across central government targeted the more ambiguous normative and cognitive underpinnings in selected policy areas or rather one particular cross-cutting area.

Following the power-distributional approach, also the German institutional configuration and its specific constraints on institutional politics affect these dynamics. First, the coalition governments in Germany limited the opportunities for advisory arrangements at the centre of government to pursue more radical changes of the institutional status quo. Even the rather visible attempts by the Planning Division under the Brandt government were restricted in the sense that their institutional strategies carried by the newly created Planning System were soon openly opposed by cabinet ministers, also refusing that an entity servicing a SPD Chancellor imposes new rules of the executive game for all cabinet ministers from both governing parties. In turn, the inclusion of the *Länder* governments into the system was regarded as a way to compensate party-political struggles over its further application at cabinet level, but also to counteract departmental resistance (see below). The subsequent dominant ambitions to shape policy-specific norms and cognitions at cabinet and ministerial level were also limited, i.e. any legitimate means or policy frames suggested by German advisory arrangements had to comply with the coalition's policy stances and thus restricted a more centralised prescription of such policy norms and paradigms following the Chancellor's policy priorities. In turn, German advisory arrangements were often oriented towards those policy issues either explicitly prioritised by the Chancellor or regarded as key projects or expressed in coalition agreements. In turn, these policy-specific institutional strategies could be applied only selectively. Besides, various German advisory arrangements engaged in partisan advice, most notably the Division 5 and its support of the Chancellor's role as CDU party leader, which was, however, less used to influence the normative and cognitive underpinnings to govern in selected policy areas. This pattern was echoed by the various advisory arrangements under Chancellor Schröder, linking their institutional strategies via policy briefs explicitly to partisan and coalition issues. Likewise the Schröder-Blair-Paper as well

as the Agenda 2010 and their underlying ambition to prescribe legitimate policy options and frame government policies have been repeatedly oriented towards the policy objectives of the coalition government, the latter being regarded as a correction of a failed coalition agreement.

Second, the triangle of constitutional principles structuring cabinet can be regarded as a strong constraint for more radical changes of the institutional status quo in Germany. The successful rejections of cabinet ministers and ministerial officials to change the institutional status quo throughout the decades have been often related to the strong departmental principle, assigning policy formulation authority to the ministries and simultaneously preventing them from an interventionist centre that may interfere in their departmental business – and change the institutional underpinnings to govern without their consent. In contrast to Britain, German ministries could therefore use these direct contacts to circumvent institutional changes or rather insist on the institutional status quo. Yet, also the regular exceptions to this dominant departmental principle, i.e. the government declarations as expressions of the chancellor principle, have been mostly prepared in conjunction with federal ministries – thus limiting the possibilities to change the basic rules of the executive game. In turn, the increase of *Chefsachen* as second type of exception to the dominant departmental principle allowed German advisory arrangements to shift the formal rules of the executive game to some extent – although very selectively and most notably if they were prepared without prior consultation of federal ministries or ignored ministerial objections. Yet, these exceptional opportunities to change the institutional status quo have been more often used to shape policy-specific normative and cognitive underpinnings to govern in selected policy areas. Moreover, the principles structuring cabinet also explain the differences of advisory arrangements at the Chancellery and the Ministry of Finance acting as would-be change agents in institutional politics: Whereas the advisory arrangements servicing the cabinet and the Chancellor at the Chancellery could rely upon the chancellor principle and the cabinet principle to achieve at least some influence and opportunities to change the institutional underpinnings to govern, the BMF Division had only very limited opportunities to get engaged in institutional politics targeting institutional elements at the level of the central government organisation – which would inevitably be constrained by other ministries referring to the departmental principle.

Third, the *Rechtsstaat* tradition of the German federal bureaucracy limited radical and frequent changes of the institutional status quo. In general, the *Rechtsstaat* tradition increased the relevance of formal rules of the executive game as potential targets in institutional politics, because actors in the organisational field strongly complied with them. In addition, the primacy of 'ministry drafts' as key products of the organisational field motivated German advisory arrangements much earlier than their British counterparts to engage into direct interactions with departmental officials in order to shape the institutional underpinnings to govern. Yet, the comparatively stable structures and procedures of a *Rechtsstaat* bureaucracy made any targeting of the basic rules of the executive game, which build upon this permanence, rather difficult. Especially the procedural rules prohibited an easy change of the norms of appropriate behaviour between federal ministries and the Chancellery as well as among federal ministries. Likewise, the

cognitive rules of the executive game have been difficult to change – and the Planning Division encountered these restrictions when its initially successful attempts to disseminate a new planning conscience were rejected in favour of the pre-existing worldview on how to govern. As a response to these restrictions, subsequent German advisory arrangements turned very often to policy norms and departmental philosophies in selected policy areas. Yet, these policy-specific normative and cognitive strategies have been often conducted in close cooperation with the federal ministries, transmitted through the mirror sections at the Chancellery, which provided federal ministries with opportunities to insist on their previous policy norms and departmental philosophies.

Lastly, the formal politicisation of the German ministerial bureaucracy constrained the potential changes of the institutional status quo. In general, the cadre of political civil servants in the federal bureaucracy did not act as strong competitors to the advisory arrangements in institutional politics. In fact, the early Planning Division incorporated many of these actors in their activities by encouraging ministers to appoint division heads as new planning delegates. From a power-distributional perspective, one may interpret this decision as a way to embrace potential enemies, but it is very reasonable to assume that they were mostly recruited due to their crucial role within ministerial hierarchies, acting as transmission belts between line officials and the political leadership. Over time, these networks have been untangled and the advisory arrangements under Chancellor Kohl were not strongly involved in interacting with these political appointees in federal ministries. The advisory arrangements at the Chancellery under the Schröder government did engage in some deliberate interactions with selected political civil servants again to support their adjustments of the formal rules of the executive game towards more policy formulation authority at the centre. Yet, these interactions were rather selective, mostly also limited to those political appointees from the Chancellor's party who could be used as a 'fire alarm' for some opposing tendencies within their ministries or as additional support to convince the respective ministry to follow the Chancellery's interests. The relevance of political appointees is more apparent for the BMF Division, which was occasionally hindered by Administrative State Secretaries at the ministry's top level to pursue its ambitions in shaping the institutional status quo – although a circumvention of their position by addressing the minister's private office was used to counteract these restrictions.

Moreover, the configurative understanding of the institutional context suggests that these explanatory features interact, especially the two governmental and the two administrative features respectively, – also in their consequences on institutional politics in the German federal executive. Hence, it can be argued that the party composition of German governments interacts with the principles structuring cabinet: The principles structuring cabinet, most notably the dominant departmental principle, enabled ministers to reject successfully radical changes of the institutional status quo, although they may have been also motivated on party-political grounds. Likewise, the the *Rechtsstaat* tradition interacts with the formal politicisation of the federal bureaucracy: The *Rechtsstaat* tradition equips all civil servants with rather strong counter-mobilisation potential against changes of the institutional status quo and thus political appointees did not have to justify their rejections on their political appointment. In turn, they often joined the criticism of their political masters and bureaucratic subordinates – and did rarely act as allies of German

advisory arrangements in their role as change agents in institutional politics, except for the planning delegates during the early 1970s, which, however, have been mostly recruited because of their position in ministries' hierarchies.

Combining these explanatory perspectives on agency and structure, this study concludes that advisory arrangements at the centre of German governments have been involved in a pattern of institutional politics that unfolded in initial displacement and turned into layering and simultaneous drift. The initial displacement mechanism can be observed for the attempts of the Planning Division under Chancellor Brandt to mobilise actively and visibly against the previous institutional status quo, aiming to replacing it with more centralised rules for the executive game. As such, these initially rather successful changes of the institutional status quo addressed the basic and clearly enforced institutional underpinnings to govern – despite the constraints imposed on such changes by the German institutional configuration. Besides, the attempts by the Planning Group under Chancellor Kohl to establish standards for governmental evaluation may be interpreted as displacement, i.e. they questioned the lacking professional norms and aimed to put forward new ones, although these efforts have been clearly rejected by the federal ministries. Also advisory arrangements at the Chancellery under the Schröder government aimed with their occasional preparation of *Chefsachen* or the Agenda 2010 to replace pre-existing rules of the executive game with new ones that centralised executive decision-making and can be interpreted as cases of displacement, although they have been temporary and rather selective. In sum, the German advisory arrangements have been involved in some displacement but these dynamics have been very constrained by the institutional context and were always rejected successfully by other actors in the organisational field.

The turn of the Planning Division under Chancellor Brandt towards a less radical mobilisation against the institutional status quo as well as subsequent activities of advisory arrangements at the Chancellery under the Kohl and Schröder governments can be interpreted as cases of layering, i.e. the advisory arrangements superimposed new institutional elements on top of pre-existing ones in order to avoid radical and visible institutional changes and to reduce the likelihood of counteractions by other actors. These dynamics occurred often for the formal rules of the executive game in order to strengthen the Chancellor and his office gradually over time. Yet, these new formal rules of the executive game did rarely grow faster in relevance than the pre-existing ones, except in those policy areas that have been regularly addressed by such institutional strategies, e.g. Intra-German policy or European integration. In turn, the basic normative and cognitive rules of the executive game have been less addressed by layering mechanisms, presumably because the German advisory arrangements reduced their ambitions to shape these underpinnings to govern already after the experiences of the Planning Division under Chancellor Brandt, which had shown how difficult these institutionalisation processes are – even if one layers the new norms and cognitive paradigms onto existing ones in order to mask stability on the surface. Accordingly, the increasing exploitation of *Chefsachen* and government declarations was rarely used to layer basic norms for appropriate responses of federal ministries towards attempts of the centre to seize policy initiatives onto the pre-existing norms in interactions between the centre and the federal ministries. In sum, German advisory arrangements have been regularly involved in layering, which was more

suitable to accomplish changes of the institutional status quo without strong counter-mobilisation of other actors in the organisational field.

Several attempts of German advisory arrangements to change the normative and cognitive underpinnings to govern can be interpreted as cases of drift. On the one hand, the Planning Division under Chancellor Brandt took the deliberate non-decision to adjust the normative and cognitive rules of the executive game that had been initially disseminated via the Planning System, which had become more ambiguous over time, and did not update them towards changing circumstances. Put differently: Instead of rewriting a new narrative that would replace the declining planning conscience or rather the increasing 'planning depression', it neglected the necessary adjustments – as did subsequent advisory arrangements. On the other hand, those attempts to change the normative and cognitive underpinnings to govern via drift were mostly confined to policy-specific norms and policy frames. These institutional strategies were often carried by briefing activities that were conducted together with federal ministries, providing federal ministries with strong opportunities to influence the direction of such normative and cognitive strategies. Hence, the German advisory arrangements at the Chancellery took regularly the more or less deliberate non-decision to follow departmental norms and cognitive paradigms in selected policy areas instead of updating these norms and taken-for-granted philosophies towards new priorities of the centre or towards changing circumstances in the particular policy field. Yet, these piecemeal attempts allowed advisory arrangements to shift certain policy-specific norms and philosophies gradually over time, without causing counter-actions from other actors in the organisational field. In sum, German advisory arrangements engaged in drift especially for policy-specific normative and cognitive underpinnings to govern.

To conclude, German advisory arrangements at the centre of government have been primarily involved in layering and acted as subversive change agents in institutional politics, corresponding to their moderate ambitions, their regulative targets characterised by low ambiguity at enforcement level, and their institutional context that limited more radical changes of the institutional status quo. Over time, German advisory arrangements addressed increasingly policy-specific norms and philosophies by drift, thus acting as symbionts and following their moderate ambitions by targeting more ambiguous elements of the institutional status quo – under the strong constraints from their institutional context that restricted more radical changes. Occasionally, German advisory arrangements tried to engage in displacement and acted as insurrectionaries, expressing their stronger ambitions to change the institutional status quo – but the constraints of their institutional context terminated most of these ambitions very quickly.

2.2 Institutional politics in Britain: Displacement and conversion

The empirical analysis demonstrates that British advisory arrangements had comparatively strong ambitions to act as change agents in institutional politics, despite the slight decrease during the 1980s. The CPRS under PM Heath mobilised actively against the institutional status quo, questioning the pre-existing formal rules for interactions at cabinet level, the basic norms of appropriate behaviour in these interactions, and the pre-existing common beliefs about how to formulate government policies in cabinet. In addition, the CPRS targeted the standards of formulating government policies at cabinet level and criticised the

pre-existing norms and cognitive frames in several policy areas. Initially, the other actors in the organisational field, most notably the cabinet members, accepted the changes of the institutional status quo. Over time, though, they rejected some changes, especially those strengthening the cognitive worldview on collective cabinet as e.g. visible with their successful refusal of the EWS and the strategy meetings as means to formulate collective strategies in cabinet. Besides, they opposed more strongly against policy-specific norms and policy paradigms disseminated by the CPRS e.g. in its collective briefs and reports, especially if their own portfolio was concerned and thus their previous legitimate policy means and portfolio's philosophies had come under attack. Likewise, the permanent civil service obstructed the proliferation of new standards in monitoring departmental activities carried by the PAR scheme, presumably because these contradicted the pre-existing professional norms in Whitehall.

Under PM Thatcher, the CPRS was very restricted to change the institutional status quo. The Prime Minister opposed openly against its previous role as change agent in institutional politics, also because its previous attempts aimed towards more collectivism in cabinet. Likewise, cabinet ministers criticised or neglected its policy-specific institutional strategies, e.g. they refused to discuss its reports at cabinet level. Hence, the cabinet members' neglect of policy norms and frames suggested by the CPRS corresponded with the PM's criticism. The CPRS's response, to align these policy-specific strategies more strongly towards partisan objectives, can be regarded as a compromise manoeuvre, substituting the aims of the Conservative Party with collectivism in cabinet. Eventually, these institutional strategies failed and the CPRS was abolished.

Instead, the PM turned more strongly to the Policy Unit, which initially showed rather less visible ambitions to change the institutional status quo and if so, mostly related towards policy-specific rules of the executive game in economic policy-making. Over time, though, the Policy Unit expanded its policy briefs and support of the PM's bilaterals, questioning the formal rules on collective cabinet in favour of more authority for the PM, criticising the pre-existing norms of collective behaviour in cabinet and setting new centralising norms to which cabinet members defected, disseminating a new cognitive worldview that emphasised how centralisation in government policy-making is conducted and why it is necessary and desirable. Yet, it continued with addressing the policy-specific norms and taken-for-granted paradigms in selected policy areas, covering a wider range of issues relevant to the PM.

The other actors in the organisational field rarely rejected these changes of the institutional status quo. One of the most visible criticisms by cabinet ministers referred to the emergence of bilaterals as an alternative arena to cabinet, but these refusals were rather selective because they were often put forward by cabinet ministers summoned to such meetings. Occasionally, departmental officials opposed against Policy Unit's institutional strategies, most notably against the policy-specific normative frameworks and cognitive paradigms addressing their portfolio, by sabotaging the information transfer to the Policy Unit. In turn, the Policy Unit often allied with departmental special advisers in order to outplay such counter-manoeuvres of the permanent civil service.

Under PM Blair, the number of advisory arrangements at the centre of British government increased considerably, pursuing their complementing but also competing ambitions in institutional politics. The three units at the Cabinet Office aimed to change the institutional status quo quite noticeably, officially to strengthen collective cabinet. In fact, however, they often supported the opposite, i.e. a stronger centralisation of government policy-making in cabinet and Whitehall. The Policy Unit at Number Ten expanded its previous ambitions as agent in institutional politics, especially with regard to the rules of the executive game at departmental level. Similarly, the two advisory arrangements at the Treasury acted as rather visible change agents in institutional politics, aiming to centralise government policy-making in favour of their client, i.e. the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

During this last time period under scrutiny, British advisory arrangements mobilised actively against the formal rules of the executive game: The units at the Cabinet Office and the Policy Unit introduced and supported various formal means such as public reports, secretive policy reviews, or policy briefs and bilaterals in order to increase centralisation in cabinet and Whitehall. Likewise, the advisory arrangements at the Treasury introduced new formal means to centralise government policy-making in favour of their client and parent organisation, e.g. with policy briefs and independent reviews. Similarly, both sets of advisory arrangements targeted the normative underpinnings to govern by stressing more centralised policy-making processes as appropriate and reasonable, i.e. the units at the Cabinet Office and Number Ten advocated a stronger role of the PM by promoting new standards under the heading of strategic or cross-cutting policy-making, whereas the advisory arrangements at the Treasury emphasised a stronger orientation towards the Chancellor of the Exchequer while requiring more inclusion of external evidence in government policy-making. Besides, the advisory arrangements aimed to change policy-specific norms, albeit they interacted with the permanent bureaucracy to a varying extent, thus allowing the latter to participate in the formulation of such new norms and legitimate policy means. As a result, the institutional strategies of both sets of advisory arrangements overlapped, promoting different new rules as well as new norms for appropriate behaviour in general and appropriate policy means in particular. In contrast, the cognitive strategies of the advisory arrangements differed: The units at the Cabinet Office and the Policy Unit were heavily involved in formulating and disseminating the joined-up government narrative as new cognitive worldview prescribing how to govern and why this governing philosophy trumps the pre-existing departmentalist worldviews in cabinet and Whitehall. More importantly, it incorporated a stronger role of the centre in government policy-making as necessary and desirable. In addition, they addressed also the cognitive worldviews in selected policy areas e.g. with their public reports and policy briefs, engaging very closely with the permanent civil service, which allowed the latter to some extent to participate in the reformulation of their own departmental philosophies. In contrast, the advisory arrangements at the Treasury focused on policy-specific cognitive underpinnings to govern, i.e. on taken-for-granted policy views in selected policy areas of particular importance to the Treasury, but had less direct contacts to Whitehall officials. Yet, also these overlapping cognitive strategies resulted in confusion among other actors in the organisational field about which worldview and policy paradigms should be taken-for-granted and followed.

Initially, cabinet ministers did not oppose to these changes of the institutional status quo, presumably because they participated in several means carrying these institutional changes, e.g. as sponsoring ministers in the public reports of the units at the Cabinet Office. Similarly, the new means promoting more cross-cutting work in Whitehall received at first no strong departmental resistance although they could be regarded as hazardous for departmental turfs. Again, Whitehall departments participated in the means carrying these institutional ambitions and thus had been apparently convinced to follow the direction of these 'co-formulated' changes of the formal, normative, and cognitive underpinnings to govern. However, the PM and the Chancellor of the Exchequer acted clearly as 'authority reserve' for those advisory arrangements at their disposal and thus reduced the likelihood of open rejection by cabinet ministers and Whitehall officials alike. Over time, though, criticism arose, rejecting the interventionist role of the centre, the accompanying new norms of appropriate behaviour in cabinet and Whitehall and, most importantly, the joined-up government paradigm, which was alleged as an empty rhetoric with an unorthodox shifting of policy-making authority towards the centre of government. Moreover, ministers and departmental officials criticised that the two sets of advisory arrangements servicing the PM and the Chancellor of the Exchequer disseminated different and repeatedly counteracting signals and institutional strategies.

In sum, these agency-oriented dynamics illustrate rather continuous high ambitions of British advisory arrangements to change the institutional status quo. Moreover, the institutional strategies can be interpreted from a structure-oriented perspective by highlighting the characteristics of their institutional targets' ambiguity at enforcement level: The British advisory arrangements targeted the undisputed basic regulative, normative, and cognitive underpinnings to govern. Whereas initially this mobilising against the institutional status quo was rather visible, it was less detectable under PM Thatcher's first term, but became again very noticeable under PM Blair. Simultaneously, all British advisory arrangements aimed to change the genuinely more ambiguous policy-specific rules of the executive game in selected policy areas. Yet, as a side effect from these frequent attempts to change the institutional status quo, some of the previously undisputed underpinnings to govern blurred over time, increasing the uncertainty among other actors of the organisational field about formally correct behaviour, appropriate interactions between ministries and with the centre as well as the cognitive worldview on how to govern in cabinet and Whitehall. These dynamics accelerated under the duumvirate of PM Blair and Chancellor of the Exchequer Brown when advisory arrangements at their disposal signalled often conflicting institutional requirements to the other actors in the organisational field.

Following the power-distributional approach, also the British institutional configuration and its specific constraints on institutional politics affect these dynamics. First, the single-party governments in Britain reduced the opportunities for cabinet members to reject changes of the institutional status quo on partisan grounds. In turn, their loyalty to the PM as party leader facilitated those changes that had been approved by the PM – thus strengthening the penetration power of advisory arrangements acting 'in his name', i.e. the CPRS and the subsequent units at the Cabinet Office as well as the Policy Unit at Number Ten. In addition, the single-party governments supported a stronger

involvement of advisory arrangements in the policy-specific norms and dominant departmental philosophies in selected policy areas: Whereas the CPRS tried to influence these institutional targets by referring to collective cabinet, later under PM Thatcher also with a very explicit reference to Conservative policy strategies, the Policy Unit in Number Ten could successfully persuade cabinet ministers to agree with such policy-specific changes because they followed the governing party's policy objectives, which have been expressed by the PM's approval and also obtained from its close contacts to Conservative and later to Labour think tanks. In addition, the Policy Unit as well as the units at the Cabinet Office under PM Blair could also overhaul taken-for-granted policy paradigms of cabinet ministers by relating them substantially to the general transformation of the Labour Party and its key ideological stances. More importantly, the JUG narrative as new cognitive worldview on how to govern has been explicitly nested within the Third Way narrative that originated in this transformation of the Labour Party. Put differently: The strong shift of key objectives of the governing party in various policy fields facilitated the Policy Unit's engagement under PM Blair in changing the policy-specific institutional underpinnings to govern. However, when the position of the PM as party leader weakened, as e.g. observed during the second term of PM Blair, the number of cabinet members increased who rejected changes of the institutional underpinnings to govern.

Second, the structuring principles in cabinet facilitated the frequent changes of the institutional status quo, although one may identify two different patterns that can be related to the nature of these principles oscillating between cabinet government and prime ministerial government. On the one hand, the cabinet government model clearly supported the changes of the institutional underpinnings to govern targeted by the CPRS, i.e. with reference to collective cabinet it was initially rather successful in changing the basic and policy-specific regulative, normative, and cognitive rules of the executive game. However, these changes have been also enabled by PM Heath and his visible support for the CPRS and a strengthened cabinet. His successors put more emphasis on the prime ministerial model. As a consequence, the institutional strategies of those advisory arrangements at the PM's disposal or at least enjoying his visible support, including the Policy Unit but also the three units at the Cabinet Office under PM Blair, were supported in their ambitions by the various royal prerogatives of the PM. Hence, cabinet ministers rarely rejected the institutional changes put forward by these advisory arrangements because they feared sanctions by the PM, ranging from bilaterals to dismissal. In turn, those few cabinet members who did obstruct the role of these advisory arrangements as change agents in institutional politics have been mostly senior cabinet members who could afford such an open refusal because the ultimate sanction of sacking was unavailable to the PM, e.g. the Deputy PM John Prescott under PM Blair. Likewise, the strong position of the PM in cabinet facilitated the attempts of advisory arrangements to shape the policy-specific rules of the executive game in selected policy areas, most notably those of key interest to the PM: Cabinet ministers leading these portfolios could not reject these efforts to prescribe the legitimate means in their policy field or this open questioning of taken-for-granted departmental viewpoints on an issue in their portfolio because they would have faced the sanctioning consequences by the PM noted above. Yet, the competition between the PM and the Chancellor of the Exchequer during the last time period under scrutiny also blurred

the categorical application of the prime ministerial model – with apparent effects on the opportunities of other actors in the organisational field to oppose to the changes of the institutional status quo: The more or less clearly associated 'Blairites' or 'Brownites' in cabinet could obstruct institutional changes pushed forward by advisory arrangements servicing the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the PM respectively – relying upon support by the pivotal actor to whom they were associated. In addition, the advisory arrangements at the Treasury clearly benefitted from the Treasury's crucial role in the budgetary procedure as back-up – and the incapacities of cabinet members to oppose to these sanctions, even if they gained prime ministerial support.

Third, the public interest tradition facilitated the changes of the institutional status quo attempted by British advisory arrangements, but also opened some opportunities for refusal by the permanent bureaucracy. In general, the more malleable structures and procedures of British central government motivated advisory arrangements to target all three pillars of the basic and policy-specific institutional status quo more equally than their German counterparts. In addition, though, the nature of Green and White Paper as key products in the organisational field, allowing conflicting standpoints and referring to various policy options, facilitated their interventions in departmental policy-making, which increased over time. Moreover, the lacking solidness of these bureaucratic procedures assigning policy formulation authority to line officials in Whitehall departments facilitated the normative and cognitive strategies related to particular policy fields, especially if advisory arrangements engaged in direct interactions with them. Yet, some criticism against their underlying changes of the institutional status quo arose, especially against the interventionist attitude of the Policy Unit in these interactions that eventually jeopardised the responsibilities of permanent officials in drafting departmental policies. Besides, departmental officials became particularly resistant if their political masters, i.e. their cabinet ministers, also opposed these changes.

Lastly, the neutrality of the British civil service mostly allowed more radical and frequent changes of the institutional status quo, but offered also some opportunities for refusal by permanent officials. In general, the British advisory arrangements did not face strong competitors at bureaucratic level due to the neutrality paradigm in Whitehall: Despite senior civil servants raising concerns, e.g. exemplified with a dispute with the Cabinet Secretary on the submission of cabinet papers to the CPRS or the conflicts between the Private Office and the Policy Unit in Number Ten under PM Blair, civil servants did not counteract the admittedly political role of British advisory arrangements visibly – because they were obliged to neutral conduct and thus could not compete on such political tasks. However, the permanent civil service did oppose against these political functions of advisory arrangements carrying institutional strategies if these were fully equipped with civil servants, e.g. the CPRS or the FSU, criticising that they did not comply with the neutrality paradigm. Yet, also departmental special advisers as functional equivalents to formal political appointees did not compete with British advisory arrangements; instead they most often collaborated with them – except their political clients prohibited such interactions.

Moreover, the configurative understanding of the institutional context suggests that these explanatory features interact, also in their consequences on institutional politics in

British central government. Hence, although the formal politicisation of the British civil service tends to provide less observable evidence for its influence on the mechanisms of institutional politics, it can be argued that this feature interacts with the principles structuring cabinet: The neutral civil servants in Britain complied with the demands of their political masters – and if cabinet ministers did not oppose to changes of the institutional status quo, they rarely countered these dynamics. Admittedly, this is a rather superficial argument that neglects the self-interest of bureaucrats in Westminster systems, but it illustrates potential interactions within the British institutional configuration.

Combining these explanatory perspectives on agency and structure, this study concludes that advisory arrangements at the centre of British governments have been involved in a pattern of institutional politics that can be described as continuous displacement and simultaneous conversion, interrupted by some layering. The displacement characterises the various attempts by the CPRS and the advisory arrangements under PM Blair to mobilise actively against the rather clearly enforced regulative, normative, and cognitive underpinnings to govern, replacing them with new rules of the executive game. Yet, the general underlying notion of these changes varied over time: Whereas the CPRS aimed towards restoring collectivism at cabinet level, thus reactivating rules of the executive game that have been allegedly weakened under previous governments, its successors under PM Blair aimed to replace this notion of collectivism with more centralised rules of the executive game at cabinet and departmental level, disregard of some entities' official mandate to support cabinet as a whole. Accordingly, these displacement dynamics targeted the regulative underpinnings to govern, i.e. formal requirements on government policy-making and especially the interactions between the centre and Whitehall, the normative rules for appropriate behaviour in these interactions, and – especially under PM Blair – the cognitive worldview in cabinet and Whitehall, prescribing how to govern and why to conduct these interactions in a way that assigns the centre of government a more powerful if not interventionist role. Moreover, these displacement dynamics unfolded in different pace: The CPRS under PM Heath as well as the expanded Policy Unit under PM Thatcher engaged in rather *gradual* displacement. In contrast, the units at the Cabinet Office and Number Ten under PM Blair engaged in more *rapid* displacement in order to make the machinery of government 'move' – into the centre's direction. In addition, this more rapid displacement required more frequent direct interactions with cabinet ministers and the permanent bureaucracy in order to promote the new rules of the executive game, including means of formally correct behaviour, new standards in decision-making, and JUG as new government philosophy framing direct interventions by the centre as orthodox.

Simultaneously, most British advisory arrangements engaged in conversion, especially when they targeted the more ambiguous policy-specific norms and cognitive paradigms in selected policy areas. These attempts built most often upon direct interactions with the permanent bureaucracy, enabling a redirection of existing normative frameworks of appropriate policies and departmental philosophies towards new ends. The conversion dynamics increased over time: Initially, the CPRS was rather reluctant to engage in direct interactions with Whitehall and thus conversion mechanisms were mostly confined to cabinet members, relying upon their capabilities to lead their departments towards new

normative and cognitive ends in their respective policy area. In contrast, the Policy Unit under PM Thatcher and most of the advisory arrangements servicing PM Blair engaged in rather close interactions with departmental officials, thus increasing their opportunities to influence these normative and cognitive rules of the executive game in selected policy areas. So, they contributed to a stronger role of the centre in departmental policy-making by gaining the interpretative authority (*Deutungshoheit*) in distinct policy areas of particular relevance to the PM. Likewise, the two advisory arrangements servicing the Chancellor of the Exchequer have been strongly engaged in changing policy-specific institutional underpinnings to govern in selected policy areas. Although neither the Council of Economic Advisers nor the Productivity Team engaged in frequent direct interactions with departmental officials, they gradually converted the pre-existing ambiguous normative frameworks and policy paradigms in cabinet, strengthening the Treasury as a 'second centre' to which cabinet ministers should defect.

Lastly, several dynamics in institutional politics involving British advisory arrangements can be interpreted as cases of layering, which occurred when they had an interest to avoid visible institutional changes but wanted to establish new rules of the executive game instead of exploiting existing ones, disregard the rather weak constraints of their institutional context that would offer more radical changes. The initial attempts of the two advisory arrangements under PM Thatcher can be interpreted as layering, i.e. the CPRS hid its ambitions as would-be change agent in response to the severe critics by its clients and other actors of the organisational field. It concentrated on layering new policy-specific normative frameworks and cognitive paradigms onto pre-existing ones in selected policy areas – but was mostly limited by the strong resistances of cabinet members. More importantly, the Policy Unit expressed its initially moderate ambitions to act as change agent in institutional politics by avoiding a strong counter-mobilisation of other actors in the organisational field. Hence, it changed the pre-existing rules of the executive game by superimposing new institutional elements on top of pre-existing ones via its policy briefs and supporting of PM's bilaterals as a new arena in government policy-making that was initially introduced as an 'add-on' to the existing repertoire of rules. Later, however, the Policy Unit expanded its remit and its ambitions increased to change the institutional status quo more radically and visibly (see above).

To conclude, British advisory arrangements at the centre of government are primarily involved in displacement and act as insurrectionaries in institutional politics, corresponding to their strong ambitions, their institutional targets' low ambiguity at enforcement level, and their institutional context facilitating radical changes of the institutional status quo. Simultaneously, though, British advisory arrangements engage regularly in conversion and act as opportunists, thus pursuing their strong ambitions but addressing more ambiguous institutional targets, most notably policy-specific normative and cognitive underpinnings to govern, while being only weakly constrained from their institutional context. Occasionally, British advisory arrangements are involved in layering and act as subversives, expressing their strong ambitions to change rather clearly enforced elements of the institutional status quo while avoiding highly visible institutional changes.

2.3 Conclusion: On patterns and sequences of institutional politics

The evidence from the case studies supports the claim that German and British advisory arrangements are involved in different mechanisms of institutional politics, which can be explained with their ambitions to act as change agents as well as with the closely related features of their institutional targets and the characteristics of their institutional environment.

First, the ambitions of advisory arrangements at the centre of German and British governments to shape the institutional status quo differed across countries and time. Whereas the engagement of German advisory arrangements to act as agents in institutional politics declined rapidly after the Brandt government, even though the late Office ChefBK under Chancellor Schröder regained some ambitions, the British advisory arrangements can be regarded as continuously more ambitious, albeit the advisory arrangements under PM Thatcher were less active than their predecessor under PM Heath and their most active successors under PM Blair. Moreover, a closer analysis of advisory arrangements across clients reveals that the advisory arrangements servicing the head of government and/or cabinet are comparatively stronger involved in institutional politics than those at the disposal of Finance Ministers, most notably because the BMF Division almost neglected such a role as change agent in institutional politics while the two British advisory arrangements at the Treasury tried to compete with the various advisory arrangements at the PM's disposal. Yet, it may require further empirical analysis to assess whether their successors engage in a similarly strong manner in institutional politics although their client competes less with the PM.

Second and closely related, advisory arrangements targeted different institutional underpinnings with apparent ambiguities at enforcement level over time: Initially, advisory arrangements in both countries addressed the rather undisputed and clearly enforced formal, normative, and cognitive rules of the executive game in general as well as the more ambiguous policy-specific institutional underpinnings to govern. Over time, though, the German advisory arrangements turned more strongly towards ambiguously enforced policy-specific institutional targets and decreased their institutional strategies towards the general rules of the executive game. In contrast, the British advisory arrangements maintained their comparatively more comprehensive targeting of the institutional status quo in general and in selected policy areas. These patterns show that targeting policy-specific institutional underpinnings to govern in selected policy areas may serve as *compensation*, thus reflecting a certain 'withdrawal' of advisory arrangements from the role as change agent addressing the basic institutional status quo as in the German case, or as *supplement* to other institutional strategies addressing the basic institutional underpinnings to govern as in the British case. Yet, both dynamics of compensation and supplement show that advisory arrangements pursuing institutional strategies to address the policy-specific institutional underpinnings to govern have a veritable interest to address central government as a whole, i.e. although their advisory activities carrying these policy-specific ambitions relate to distinct policy issues, they rarely concentrated on very few policy areas and instead targeted various policy areas simultaneously and after another.

Lastly, the institutional configuration of both countries influenced the mechanisms of institutional politics. The analysis of this study's first expectation hypothesis shows that the *party composition of governments* affects the likelihood of institutional change and thus the mechanisms of institutional politics in which advisory arrangements at the centre of government are involved as expected: The German coalition governments limit the mechanisms of institutional politics in which German advisory arrangements are engaged mostly to layering and drift, which have less radical results in terms of changing the institutional status quo. Likewise, the German coalition governments enable especially cabinet ministers to block institutional change and, in turn, restrict German advisory arrangements to get involved in layering and drift in order to avoid such counter-mobilisation by other actors in the organisational field. In contrast, the single-party governments in Britain enable British advisory arrangements to get engaged primarily in displacement and conversion as mechanisms of institutional politics that result in more radical and frequent changes of the institutional status quo. In turn, the British single-party governments limit the possibilities for cabinet members to block such institutionalisation processes and pursue counteractions, thus British advisory arrangements can afford to engage in more visible and profound displacement and conversion.

The analysis of this study's second expectation hypothesis reveals that the *principles structuring cabinet* influence institutional change and thus the mechanisms of institutional politics in which advisory arrangements are engaged as predicted, also because they can be regarded as the 'proto-stage' of the rules of the executive game at cabinet level and have repercussions on these rules at departmental level due to the role of cabinet members as simultaneous departmental ministers: The German constitutional triangle of principles structuring cabinet and especially the dominance of the departmental principle restrict the opportunities for German advisory arrangements to shape the institutional underpinnings to govern mostly by layering and drift in order to achieve less radical changes but also to avoid any counter-measures by cabinet ministers and departmental officials with profound opportunities to block such institutionalisation processes. In contrast, the royal prerogatives of the PM in Britain facilitate the engagement of British advisory arrangements in displacement and conversion with more radical results in terms of changing the institutional status quo, also because they limit considerably the opportunities for cabinet ministers and departmental officials to obstruct such institutionalisation processes.

The analysis of this study's third expectation hypothesis shows that the *administrative tradition* influences changes of the institutional status quo and the mechanisms of institutional politics involving advisory arrangements as expected, also because they may be regarded as the 'proto-stage' of the rules of the executive game at departmental level but with some ramifications for these rules at cabinet level, again caused by the dual role of cabinet ministers acting as political executives: The *Rechtsstaat* tradition in Germany restricts the mechanisms of institutional politics in which German advisory arrangements are engaged primarily to layering and drift, causing less radical changes of the institutional status quo and avoiding that especially departmental officials use their opportunities to block such institutionalisation processes. In contrast, the British public interest tradition allows British advisory arrangements to get engaged in displacement and conversion, which are characterised by more radical results regarding the institutional status quo. In

turn, the higher malleability of bureaucratic structures and procedures in the British public interest bureaucracy limits the opportunities especially for departmental officials to reject such institutionalisation processes openly.

Also the analysis of this study's last expectation hypothesis reveals that the *formal politicisation of the civil service* influences changes of the institutional status quo and the mechanisms of institutional politics involving advisory arrangements as predicted, albeit with less explanatory strength than the three other explanatory features discussed above: The high formal politicisation of the German civil service constrains German advisory arrangements to get involved in layering and drift as the mechanisms of institutional politics with less radical results in terms of changing the status quo and lower likelihood to cause formal political appointees to engage in counter-mobilisation against these institutionalisation processes. But if they ally with advisory arrangements, this context feature imposes actually less constraints and facilitates more radical changes of the institutional underpinnings to govern, as observed for the first time period under scrutiny when the Planning Division engaged in displacement, also relying on a network of political appointees that were formally associated as planning delegates to the Planning System. In contrast, the lacking cadre of political appointees in the British ministerial bureaucracy facilitate the involvement of British advisory arrangements in displacement and conversion as mechanisms of institutional politics resulting in more radical changes of the institutional status quo, also because it reduces considerably the likelihood of counter-mobilisation of other actors in the organisational field.

Moreover, the theoretical interpretation reveals that causal interactions occur between the *institutional configuration* and the type of change agents: The highly constraining German institutional context attracts more advisory arrangements acting as subversive or symbiont agents with rather limited ambitions to change the more or less ambiguous institutional status quo, while the comparatively less constraining British institutional context attracts more advisory arrangements acting as insurrectionaries or opportunists with rather strong ambitions to change the institutional underpinnings to govern in general and in selected policy areas. In turn, the causal interactions between the characteristics of *institutional targets* and the type of change agents are less straightforward. The empirical findings suggest that ambitious change agents, who seek to change the institutional status quo, address always the more basic and clearly enforced institutional underpinnings to govern. Yet, the contrary assumption cannot be confirmed straightforwardly, i.e. that the vaguely enforced policy-specific institutional underpinnings to govern are most often addressed by less ambitious change agents. Instead, and as noted above, these targets have been addressed by change agents as either compensation or supplement in order to accomplish their varying interests to change the institutional status quo.

In sum, the comparative interpretation of the results from the case studies reveals distinct patterns of mechanisms of institutional politics across countries and time that can be explained with agency- and structure-oriented features. More importantly, these patterns reflect particular combinations of mechanisms: Whereas German advisory arrangements accompanied their dominant layering and occasional displacement with increasing drift, British advisory conducted next to their dominant displacement and occasional layering always some conversion.

Hence, the comparative interpretation illustrates particular sequences of mechanisms of institutional politics. More generally, these sequences reemphasise the co-existence of the three distinguished institutional pillars: If advisory arrangements aim towards comprehensive institutional changes, they are very likely to address various pillars simultaneously – and thus institutional targets with different ambiguity at enforcement level. Along the fourfold matrix of mechanisms and change agents in institutional politics (see Figure B.4 above) these sequences can be regarded as 'movements' of advisory arrangements between the four cells. On the one hand, German and British advisory arrangements move across the first dimension referring to the constraints of their institutional configuration (in the matrix: vertical movements), revealing that they occasionally try to overcome these constraints, as in the case of the Planning Division under Chancellor Brandt or the very few attempts of the late Office ChefBK under Chancellor Schröder. Otherwise, they may move across this dimension because they restrict themselves more strongly in order to avoid counter-mobilisation of other actors in the organisational field, as in the case of the Policy Unit under PM Thatcher. On the other hand, the more dominant movements occur across the second explanatory dimension related to the enforcement ambiguity of their institutional targets (in the matrix: horizontal movements). Whereas the German advisory arrangements conducted a general move from the rather clearly enforced basic rules of the executive game to the more ambiguous policy-specific rules in selected policy areas over time, expressing their declining interest to act as change agent shaping the general underpinnings to govern, the British advisory arrangements engaged increasingly in mechanisms that targeted clearly and vaguely enforced rules of the executive game simultaneously, reflecting their continuous interest to shape the institutional status quo.

Some of these sequences become apparent due to the case study design, analysing two consecutive terms of the head of government (if applicable). Especially under PM Thatcher as well as under PM Blair and the Schröder government, these aforementioned shifts in institutional politics occurred after the new client's first term in office, revealing a kind of 'institutional politics learning' on behalf of advisory arrangements, also estimating the responses by other actors in the organisational field to their attempts to change the institutional status quo. By and large, those German and British advisory arrangements surviving their client's re-election (see chap. K.1.1.1 above) changed their ambitions after their client's first term: The late Office ChefBK expressed more ambitions to change the rules of the executive game than its predecessors during Chancellor Schröder's first term in office. Likewise, the Policy Unit under PM Thatcher expanded its remit and turned more visibly towards changing the rules of the executive game after the general election in 1983. In contrast, the advisory arrangements under PM Blair witnessed a certain decline of ambitions after the PM's re-election in 2001.

More generally, this result on the sequences of institutional politics shows that much institutional change in executives holds the seeds of its own change, as the layering-to-drift sequence by the Planning Division during the Brandt government and the layering-to-displacement sequence by the Policy Unit under PM Thatcher illustrate. Under rather stable institutional configurations that impose persistent consequences on such institutionalisation processes, these sequences reemphasise the relevance of agency in

institutional politics: If advisory arrangements are engaged in different mechanisms of institutional politics over time and the constraints by their respective institutional context remain, it is very reasonable to conclude that agency-related dynamics account for these sequences in institutional politics.

This study argues that next to agentic behaviour also organisational capabilities are relevant to explain the institutional work of advisory arrangements in institutional politics. Although the power-distributional approach lacks a conceptualisation of these components of agency, this study's empirical findings show that the organisational misfit of advisory arrangements to the organisation principles of their respective ministerial bureaucracy matters for their institutional work. Therefore, the patterns of mechanisms of institutional politics analysed above can also be related to this organisational misfit, reasoning that a distinct departure in its internal organisation from the organisation principles of their ministerial bureaucracy is a relevant precondition for their ambitions to change the institutional status quo as well as their selection and de-selection of institutional strategies targeting distinct institutional elements. In turn, one may conclude that institutional change in executives holds indeed the seeds of its own change – but requires also a steady probing for advantage by actors that are also organisationally equipped to work through the existing constraints in order to overcome them and accomplish institutional change.

'Our task is to make small pieces of scholarship beautiful through rigor, persistence, competence, elegance and grace, so as to avoid the plague of mediocrity that threatens often to overcome us.'
(March 2007: 18)

Chapter L Conclusion

This study relates to the current debate in comparative public administration research on the role of advisory arrangements in government policy-making. It has been argued that the influence of such executive actors on government policy-making is very difficult to measure, let alone to compare. Consequently, this study examines the *mechanisms* by which advisory arrangements achieve their alleged influential role in government policy-making and asks: How do advisory arrangements influence government policy-making? This research interest in the ways and means by which advisory arrangements assert their influential role in government policy-making implies that similarities and differences may exist and thus requires also an explanation on why these mechanisms may differ – and therefore why advisory arrangements may achieve a different role in government policy-making.

The short answer to this study's research question is that: Advisory arrangements engage as change agents in different mechanisms of institutional politics, shaping the pre-existing basic institutional underpinnings to govern as well as policy-specific rules of the executive game. These dynamics of institutional politics vary with regard to their effects on the institutional status quo – and its regulative, normative, and cognitive consequences on executive actors in government policy-making.

According to this study's theoretical argument, institutional politics can be understood as recursive institutionalisation processes between structure and agency. The structure-oriented explanation refers to the characteristics of institutional targets and the institutional context. This study's findings reveal that the ambiguity at the enforcement level of *institutional targets* contributes to an explanation for the mechanisms of institutional politics. Broadly speaking, the German and British advisory arrangements under scrutiny are rather similar in their institutional targeting, including the basic rules of the executive game, which can be regarded in both countries as rather undisputed and clearly enforced but became more ambiguous in Britain over time, and the policy-specific institutional underpinnings to govern, which are seemingly more vague in both countries and over time. Yet, the empirical results also show that advisory arrangements may change their institutional targeting over time, i.e. the German advisory arrangements turned from its initial emphasis on the basic institutional underpinnings to govern towards the more policy-specific rules of the executive game, which may be regarded as a withdrawal from their initial ambitions to change the undisputed institutional status quo. In contrast, the British advisory arrangements maintained their initial targeting of the basic institutional underpinnings to govern with an increasing parallel targeting of the policy-specific rules of the executive game.

Likewise, this study's findings demonstrate that the characteristics of the *institutional context* and the four selected features influence the mechanisms of institutional politics,

confirming the four preformulated expectation hypotheses: Whereas the German advisory arrangements operated in an institutional context with comparatively strong constraints for changes of the institutional status quo, thus limiting their room to manoeuvre and, equally relevant, providing opportunities for other actors in the organisational field to obstruct such changes, the British advisory arrangements acted in a much weaker institutional context, limiting the constraints for institutional change and the opportunities for other actors to circumvent such changes. Although this study's configurative understanding of the institutional context prohibits a further discussion on their distinct explanatory strength, the case studies confirm that they interact – also in their effects on institutional politics.

The agency-oriented explanation emphasises the relevance of *change agents' ambitions* to shape the institutional status quo and is closely related to their targeting of distinct pillars of the institutional underpinnings to govern that are characterised by different ambiguity at enforcement level (see above). This study's findings illustrate that such ambitions differ across countries and change over time: Although the advisory arrangements in both countries had initially equally strong ambitions to act as change agents in institutional politics, targeting the rather undisputed basic institutional underpinnings to govern as well as the arguably more ambiguous policy-specific rules of the executive game. Yet, these similarities declined rapidly, i.e. the German advisory arrangements reduced their ambitions considerably, despite some revivals during the second term of the Schröder government, and thus turned more towards the rather vague elements of the institutional status quo. In contrast, the British advisory arrangements increased their ambitions to change the clear and the ambiguous institutional underpinnings to govern continuously, except their temporary moderate ambitions during PM Thatcher's first term.

This study illustrates that these structure- and agency-oriented explanations interact; especially the characteristics of the institutional context are related to the ambitions of change agents, i.e. the German institutional context with its strong constraints on institutional change hosts mostly advisory arrangements acting as subversive or symbiotic change agents in order to achieve their rather limited ambitions in institutional politics, whereas the British institutional context with its weak constraints on institutional change hosts primarily advisory arrangements acting as insurrectionaries or opportunists in order to accomplish their rather strong ambitions in institutional politics.

Furthermore, these patterns of institutional politics reveal simultaneous and sequent mechanisms involving advisory arrangements: German advisory arrangements tried occasionally to overcome the constraints of their institutional context whereas British advisory arrangements restrict themselves sometimes in order to avoid visible changes and a subsequent counter-mobilisation of other actors in the organisational field. More often, though, these patterns of institutional politics are related to the distinct institutional targets of advisory arrangements acting as change agents: German advisory arrangements moved from addressing the rather clearly enforced basic rules of the executive game to the more ambiguous policy-specific rules in selected policy areas over time, while British advisory arrangements targeted the basic and the policy-specific rules of the executive game simultaneously. In turn, these patterns show that the mechanisms of institutional politics

resulting in distinct institutional changes prelude subsequent changes of the institutional status quo, especially if the former unfold less visible and 'under the surface'.

As a result, German advisory arrangements are predominantly engaged in institutional politics via layering and drift that result in less visible and less radical institutional changes, except for the initial attempts during the late 1960s and early 1970s aiming towards more radical and noticeable institutional changes that can be characterised as cases of temporary displacement. In contrast, British advisory arrangements are predominantly involved in institutional politics via displacement and conversion, leading to visible and more radical changes of the institutional status quo, despite some attempts in the late 1970s and early 1980s to accomplish less visible and moderate institutional changes that can be regarded as cases of temporary layering.

More importantly, these patterns of mechanisms of institutional politics involving German and British advisory arrangements shape their role in government policy-making: In comparison, German advisory arrangements act mostly as subversive and symbiotic change agents in institutional politics and thus could only rarely affect the institutional underpinnings to govern in order to enhance the role of the centre in government policy-making or their own role in such processes. In contrast, British advisory arrangements act primarily as insurrectionaries or opportunists in institutional politics and thus could influence the institutional status quo more radically, strengthening the role of the centre in government policy-making as well as their own powers in these processes.

To put it in one sentence that pithily encapsulates this study's major result: Advisory arrangements in executives influence government policy-making, but these powers do not only rest in providing policy advice to their client but also in their activities as change agents in institutional politics, shaping the basic institutional underpinnings to govern as well as the policy-specific rules of the executive game that affect the distribution of power in executive decision-making – including their own influence in these processes.

This study's findings have wider implications in *methodological* terms, related to the internal and external validity of its results, in *theoretical* terms, reflecting upon the explanatory strengths and weaknesses of its theoretical approach, and in *empirical* terms, drawing wider empirical conclusions and discussing relevant issues for further research.

In methodological terms, this study's recursive understanding of institutional politics endangers the internal validity of its results because this theoretical reasoning stresses that structure *and* agency matter, implying that causal influences may go both ways. Nevertheless, it is possible to establish how the characteristics of institutions and the characteristics of actors condition and influence the mechanisms of institutional politics. This was done by showing how variations of institutional targets and context features across countries and time relate to the mechanisms of institutional politics. Likewise, it could be shown how the types of change agents contributed to the mechanisms of institutional politics. Yet, the dynamic relationship *between* structure and agency remains a methodological challenge, although this study's results could demonstrate that structure and agency interrelate – albeit rather how characteristics of institutions relate to characteristics of agency than vice versa.

In addition, this study's case study design influences its external validity, i.e. the possibility to establish the domain to which its findings can be generalised. Although the case study method refers to analytical and not to statistical generalisation, this study's most similar systems design confines its results to a specific type of advisory arrangements in two selected countries. Yet, replicating this study on other types of advisory arrangements in these two countries, such as the leadership staffs servicing German Ministers or the 'non-organised' individual special advisers of British Ministers, may contribute to specifying the structure- and agency-oriented explanations of institutional politics involving advisory arrangements for a wider domain. As some small indication in this direction, the two case studies analysing German and British advisory arrangements during the last time period under scrutiny revealed interactions with these other advisory arrangements – which can be interpreted as change agents allying with or countering the scrutinised change agents in institutional politics. Moreover, one could presumably generalise this study's results to advisory arrangements in other parliamentary systems, albeit the potential variety of further explanatory features such as the country's socio-economic conditions or its EU membership may have intervening effects.

In theoretical terms, the power-distributional approach has been very suitable to study and explain gradual institutionalisation processes within central government organisations. Its combinatory perspective of structure- and agency-oriented explanations reflects the genuine recursivity of such processes in executives, which is often neglected in existing studies focussing either on structure or agency. Put differently: The institutional context does not suffice to explain institutional continuity and change in executives; neither do the institutional targets addressed in institutionalisation processes or the actors engaged in preserving or changing the institutional status quo. Only the combination of these explanatory perspectives provides a comprehensive description and explanation of such recursive and evidently reiterating institutionalisation processes. More specifically, the power-distributional approach provides not only sufficient explanatory power to understand the mechanisms by which institutional politics unfold, it also offers a more nuanced view on the role of advisory arrangements in government policy-making by uncovering the mechanisms of institutional politics in which they are involved – and which influence the power distribution in government policy-making in general and their own influential role in such processes in particular.

Yet, the power-distributional approach permits only the formulation of expectation hypotheses on the explanatory relevance of the institutional context whereas the ambiguity of institutional targets at enforcement level as well as the ambitions of would-be change agents (and their more or less compliant behaviour to their institutional context) are dynamic properties that cannot be predicted a priori. As a consequence, this approach entails a risk of bias in favour of structure-oriented explanations. Moreover, the resulting research strategy to assess the agency-oriented explanations for mechanisms of institutional politics empirically may also bias this study's results. On the one hand, as noted in this study's theoretical framework, the three distinguished pillars of institutional underpinnings to govern differ in terms of observability, which could result in an overestimation of regulative strategies because their targets are easier to detect for the researcher than normative or cognitive strategies. On the other hand, one may overestimate

clearly observable ambitions and institutional strategies – and mistakenly imply that actors have clear interests in pursuing these strategies, thus neglecting actors' own uncertainties about their interests and how to accomplish them.

This study also reveals three shortcomings of the power-distributional approach that require further theoretical work. First, the agency-oriented explanatory dimension emphasising the interests of would-be change agents to shape the institutional status quo distinguishes between strong and weak ambitions, but the latter is not synonymous to defending the institutional status quo, which may also entail to support or counteract institutional strategies of other actors in the organisational field. Accordingly, further theoretical work should conceptualise such ambitions of would-be change agents in more detail. Second, the agency-oriented explanatory dimension referring to compliant or defiant behaviour to an institutional context revealed some inconsistencies and was thus neglected in this study's theoretical framework. Hence, further theoretical work should specify these characteristics of agency more thoroughly, presumably also departing from the approach's attempt to provide two matching templates of four ideal-types of institutional change and change agents. Lastly, the power-distributional approach neglects the relevance of organisational capacities for agency in institutional politics. This study shows that the organisational structure of would-be change agents is relevant for their institutional work, even though its general conclusion simply states that an organisational misfit with those organising principles followed by other actors in their organisational field enhances their ambitions to change the institutional status quo. Further theoretical work should therefore conceptualise these organisational capabilities of would-be change agents.

In empirical terms, this study's explanatory weight is restricted (see above), but its rigour comparative analysis of the mechanisms of institutional politics involving advisory arrangements at the centre of German and British governments allows to draw some broader conclusions as well as to indicate issues for further research.

The notion of institutional politics provides a relevant perspective for studying organised policy advice in executives that moves beyond the broader claims in the literature about a de-monopolisation of the ministerial bureaucracy in providing policy advice to political executives. Accordingly, the current literature on policy advice in executives seemingly overestimates the relevance of the policy advice function as such, especially those scholars arguing that the proliferation of advisory arrangements already endangers the traditional policy advice monopoly of the permanent bureaucracy. Put differently: If these advisory arrangements provide complementary or competing policy advice to the bureaucratic advice but neglect to act as change agents in institutional politics, they may dominate the policy agenda of their political masters and also selected government policy-making processes but are very unlikely to seize the monopoly of policy advice in central government organisations altogether. In turn, if such advisory arrangements engage deliberately in institutional politics and succeed in shaping the rules of the executive game to favour their interests, they may shift the power distribution in central government organisations enduringly – with apparent effects on the locus of the monopoly of policy advice in executives.

Furthermore, this study also demonstrates that ambitious change agents involved in various mechanisms of institutional politics may generate frequent changes of the institutional underpinnings to govern – but with the unintended side effect that confusion increases among other actors in the organisational field about which institutional requirements are valid and have to be followed. In turn, the resulting departmental 'initiativitis' (Fitzpatrick, quoted by Williams 2002: 106) responding to these unstable, vague, or even conflicting institutional requirements is very unlikely to produce 'better policies' in terms of legitimacy, efficiency or effectiveness. More importantly, it is reasonable to assume that this 'self-fulfilling cycle of institutional change' and its accompanying uncertainty about the rules of the executive game among other actors in the organisational field, most notably civil servants, leads eventually to the decline of their sensitivity for requests from their political masters and a deterioration of their motivation to prepare departmental proposals that incorporate their ministers' preferences. Put differently: If advisory arrangements overstate their ambitions to change the rules of the executive game and succeed, they are very likely to demolish also the common enterprise in which their other field constituents in central government organisations are involved – and on which their powerful position rests upon.

In addition, this study's findings illustrate avenues for further research. Next to the almost classic claim that future research expanding this study's empirical remit is certainly warranted, e.g. analysing other advisory arrangements in these two countries (see above) or advisory arrangements in countries with a similar or rather different institutional context, the following paragraphs aim also to discuss a more general research agenda that derives from this study's understanding of the role of advisory arrangements in government policy-making as their engagement in institutional politics.

The power-distributional approach highlights the relevance of power and struggle in institutional politics and therefore further empirical research should study the responses or rather counter-activities of other actors in central government organisations towards these attempts of advisory arrangements to change the institutional status quo, most notably of rivalling advisory arrangements and permanent officials. The case study on the advisory system under PM Blair provides some insights into the negative side effects of competition between advisory arrangements servicing the two pivotal actors at the centre of government on the results and further effects of institutional politics.

In addition, one may apply the power-distributional approach and its explanatory interest in institutional politics also to scrutinise other institutionalisation processes involving ministerial bureaucracies, including the changes of state structures, e.g. the shifting of competencies between central and regional levels, machinery of government changes that are often discussed in the comparative debate on administrative reforms, or changes between and within single ministries e.g. following new portfolio allocations. Likewise, the rules of engagement for distinct executive actors could be assessed from a power-distributional perspective. This study provides ample evidence about the gradual institutionalisation of advisory arrangements as objects of such institutional politics, in which their clients but also other internal and external actors such as allying or rivalling advisory arrangements, the permanent bureaucracy, the Parliament or consultancies may act as would-be change agents to shape the 'emergence of a profession', regulating their

role in formal, normative, and cognitive terms. Moreover, such institutionalisation processes may motivate also countervailing institutionalisation processes addressing the rules of engagement for other actors in the organisational field, e.g. for civil servants if political executives aim to distinguish the professionalisation of permanent officials from the professionalisation of advisory arrangements (Bezes/Lodge 2007: 132-3). In addition, it is arguably very promising to conduct also further research on the institutionalisation of *procedures* in executives, e.g. studying changes in civil service regulations or the rules for inter-ministerial coordination that are very likely to unfold in gradual institutionalisation processes – but with severe implications on the powers of executive actors in the long run.

Lastly, this study's notion of policy-specific rules of the executive game indicates a relevant area for further research, acknowledging that institutionalisation processes in executives aim not only towards the power distribution in government policy-making but may likewise entail policy objectives. Accordingly, future studies could analyse 'sectoral institutional politics', incorporating also other actors outside central governments as would-be change agents, and compare these with institutional politics at the level of central government organisations, examining whether their mechanisms and change agents differ. More importantly, such research should study mutual repercussions between the struggle over the rules of the 'sectoral game' and of the executive game as well as their effects on the role of executive actors in government policy-making – thus following the increasing claim in comparative public administration research to 'bring policy back in'.

Appendix*Table App.1 Codes of expert interviews*

Code	Position	Parent Organisation	Interview date
IUK01	Civil Servant	Cabinet Office – CPRS	08 March 2007
IUK02	Special Adviser	PMO – Policy Directorate	13 March 2007
IUK03	Senior Civil Servant	Cabinet Office	14 March 2007
IUK04	Senior Civil Servant	Cabinet Office – PIU, FSU & PMSU	14 March 2007
IUK05	Academic Expert	Queen Mary University	15 March 2007
IUK06	Civil Servant	Cabinet Office – PMSU	15 March 2007
IUK07	Civil Servant	Cabinet Office – PMSU	16 April 2007
IUK08	Senior Civil Servant	Cabinet Office – PIU & PMSU	17 April 2007
IUK09	Special Adviser	HM Treasury	17 April 2007
IUK10	Civil Servant	Cabinet Office – CPRS	01 May 2007
IUK11	Expert	Houses of Parliament	02 May 2007
IUK12	Civil Servant	Cabinet Office	03 May 2007
IUK13	Civil Servant	Cabinet Office – FSU & PMSU	04 May 2007
IUK14	Civil Servant	Cabinet Office – FSU	12 June 2007
IUK15	Senior Civil Servant	Cabinet Office – PIU	13 June 2007
IUK16	Senior Civil Servant	PMO	13 June 2007
IUK17	Civil Servant	Cabinet Office – PMSU	14 June 2007
IUK18	Senior Civil Servant	HM Treasury	19 June 2007
IUK19	Academic Expert	LSE	21 June 2007
IUK20	Academic Expert	LSE	21 June 2007
IUK21	Special Adviser	HM Treasury	21 June 2007
IUK22	Senior Civil Servant	Cabinet Office	26 June 2007
IUK23	Special Adviser	HM Treasury	27 June 2007
IUK24	Special Adviser	Cabinet Office	27 June 2007
IUK25	Special Adviser	PMO – Policy Directorate	28 June 2007
IUK26	Senior Civil Servant	PMO	03 July 2007
IUK27	Senior Civil Servant	Cabinet Office – PIU & PMSU	10 October 2007
IUK28	Civil Servant	Cabinet Office – PIU	11 October 2007
IUK29	Civil Servant	Cabinet Office – PIU	11 October 2007
IUK30	Special Adviser	HM Treasury	12 October 2007
IUK31	Senior Civil Servant	Cabinet Office – PIU & HMT – Productivity Team	12 October 2007
IUK32	Independent reviewer	HM Treasury	30 October 2007
IUK33	Senior Civil Servant	Cabinet Office	12 November 2007
IUK34	Civil Servant	Cabinet Office – PMSU	14 November 2007
IUK35	Independent Reviewer	HM Treasury	15 November 2007
IUK36	Special Adviser	PMO – Policy Unit	12 December 2007

Table App.1 Codes of expert interviews (continued)

Code	Position	Parent Organisation	Interview date
IUK37	Civil Servant	HM Treasury – Productivity Team	13 December 2007
IUK38	Civil Servant	HM Treasury – Productivity Team	17 December 2007
IUK39	Academic Expert	Brunel University	12 December 2008
ID01	Civil Servant	BKAmt – Advisory Arrangement	24 August 2006
ID02	Civil Servant	BKAmt	15 September 2006
ID03	Civil Servant	BKAmt – Advisory Arrangement	18 October 2006
ID04	Civil Servant	BKAmt – Advisory Arrangement	18 October 2006
ID05	Senior Civil Servant	BKAmt – Advisory Arrangement	25 October 2006
ID06	Senior Civil Servant	BKAmt – Advisory Arrangement	26 October 2006
ID07	Civil Servant	BKAmt – Advisory Arrangement & BMF – Division 1	31 October 2006
ID08	Civil Servant	BKAmt – Advisory Arrangement	09 November 2006
ID09	Civil Servant	BKAmt – Advisory Arrangement	09 November 2006
ID10	Senior Civil Servant	BKAmt – Division for Social Policy, Education and Research, Transport, Consumer Protection, Agriculture	15 November 2006
ID11	Senior Civil Servant	BKAmt	20 November 2006
ID12	Senior Civil Servant	BKAmt – Advisory Arrangement & BMF – Division 1	27 November 2006
ID13	Expert	Think Tank	29 November 2006
ID14	Senior Civil Servant	BKAmt – Advisory Arrangement	30 November 2006
ID15	Civil Servant	BKAmt – Advisory Arrangement	30 November 2006
ID16	Civil Servant	BKAmt – Advisory Arrangement	05 December 2006
ID17	Civil Servant	BKAmt	06 December 2006
ID18	Civil Servant	BKAmt – Advisory Arrangement	27 December 2006
ID19	Civil Servant	BKAmt – Advisory Arrangement	27 December 2006
ID20	Senior Civil Servant	BMF – Division 1	01 December 2006
ID21	Civil Servant	BMF – Division 1	07 December 2006

Table App.1 Codes of expert interviews (continued)

Code	Position	Parent Organisation	Interview date
ID22	Civil Servant	BMF – Division 1	07/19 December 2006
ID23	Civil Servant	BMF – Division 1	11 January 2007
ID24	Civil Servant	BKAmt – Division for Administrative Affairs	25 January 2007
ID25	Civil Servant	BMF – Division for EU Affairs	01 February 2007
ID26	Senior Civil Servant	BKAmt – Advisory Arrangement	18 December 2007
ID27	Civil Servant	BMF – Division 1	21 March 2006
ID28	Civil Servant	BMF – Division 1	21 March 2006
ID29	Civil Servant	BMF – Division 1	20 April 2006
ID30	Senior Civil Servant	BMF – Division 1	26 April 2006
ID31	Civil Servant	BMF – Division 1	09 May 2006
ID32	Civil Servant	BMF – Division 1	09 May 2006
ID33	Civil Servant	BMF – Division 1	28 April 2006
ID34	Civil Servant	BKAmt – Division for Administrative Affairs & BMF – Division 1	12 May 2006
ID35	Civil Servant	BKAmt	15 May 2006
ID36	Civil Servant	BMF – Division for Administrative Affairs	12 June 2006

Note: The advisory arrangements in the Chancellery are not distinguished in more detail in order to maintain the anonymity of interviewed experts (given the small size of some advisory arrangements).

Source: Own illustration.

Table App.2 Hansard debates

Chamber	Date	Volume	Column	Author	Subject
HC Deb	29.10.1970	805	200W	PM Heath	Central Policy Review Staff
HC Deb	05.11.1970	805	1261-2	PM Heath	Central Policy Review Staff
HC Deb	01.04.1971	814	1668-9	PM Heath	Central Policy Review Staff
HC Deb	14.11.1972	846	207-8	PM Heath	Machinery of Government Committee
HC Deb	07.12.1972	847	501W	PM Heath	Official Secrets Act
HC Deb	12.06.1973	857	1197-8	PM Heath	Central Policy Review Staff
HC Deb	08.11.1973	863	1165-6	PM Heath	Central Policy Review Staff
HC Deb	27.11.1975	901	254-5W	PM Wilson	Central Policy Review Staff
HC Deb	22.01.1976	903	523-5W	PM Wilson	Central Policy Review Staff
HC Deb	29.01.1976	904	308W	PM Wilson	Special Advisers
HC Deb	14.12.1978	960	303W	PM Callaghan	Professional Consultants (Reports)
HC Deb	30.01.1979	961	398-9W	PM Callaghan	Professional Consultants (Reports)
HC Deb	27.07.1979	971	515W	PM Thatcher	Economic Advisers
HC Deb	09.11.1979	973	361-2W	Chief Secretary to the Treasury Biffen	Departmental Programme and Analysis Reviews
HC Deb	26.11.1979	974	449W	PM Thatcher	Cabinet Papers (press leaks)
HC Deb	30.07.1982	28	837-8W	PM Thatcher	Central Policy Review Staff
HC Deb	27.07.1983	46	458-9W	PM Thatcher	Rayner Scrutiny Team
HC Deb	19.06.1984	62	99-100W	PM Thatcher	Advisers (costs)
HC Deb	24.07.1987	120	534-5W	PM Thatcher	Policy Unit
HC Deb	25.04.1994	242	5-6W	PM Major	Departmental Advisers
HC Deb	28.02.1995	255	484-5	PM Major	Advisers (salaries)
HC Deb	30.10.1997	299	859-60	PM Blair	Unpaid Advisers
HC Deb	12.02.1998	306	326-7	PM Blair	Political Advisers; Civil Servants
HC Deb	10.03.1998	308	102W	Economic Secretary to the Treasury Liddell	Council of Economic Advisers
HC Deb	28.07.1998	317	132-43	PM Blair	Cabinet Office
HC Deb	22.02.1999	326	39-40W	PM Blair	Joined-up Government
HC Deb	11.11.1999	337	826-8W	PM Blair	Special Advisers
HC Deb	13.12.1999	341	59W	PM Blair	Performance and Innovation Unit
HC Deb	14.12.1999	341	11W-2W	PM Blair	Performance and Innovation Unit; Policy Unit
HC Deb	14.06.2000	351	648W	PM Blair	Performance and Innovation Unit
HC Deb	02.11.2000	355	554W	PM Blair	Performance and Innovation Unit

Table App.2 *Hansard debates (continued)*

Chamber	Date	Volume	Column	Author	Subject
HC Deb	05.03.2001	364	75W-6W	PM Blair	Performance and Innovation Unit; Policy and Strategy Units
HC Deb	11.07.2001	371	573W-5W	Deputy PM	Departmental Responsibilities
HC Deb	11.07.2001	371	575-6W	PM Blair	Performance and Innovation Unit
HC Deb	15.10.2001	372	819W	PM Blair	Civil Service
HC Deb	25.10.2001	373	313W-4W	PM Blair	Advisers
HC Deb	12.11.2001	374	546W-47W	PM Blair	Public Policy; Policy Co-ordination
HC Deb	19.11.2001	375	104W	PM Blair	Forward Strategy Unit
HL Deb	03.12.2001	629	WA91-3	Minister for the Cabinet Office Lord Macdonald of Tradeston	Special Advisers
HC Deb	06.12.2001	376	508W	PM Blair	Performance and Innovation Unit
HC Deb	14.01.2002	378	85W-6W	PM Blair	Government Units; Forward Strategy Unit
HC Deb	22.01.2002	378	719-20W	PM Blair	Lord Birt
HC Deb	30.01.2002	379	314	PM Blair	FSU, Lord Birt
HC Deb	19.03.2002	382	294W	PM Blair	Engineers
HC Deb	25.03.2002	382	618W	PM Blair	Unpaid Advisers
HC Deb	19.03.2003	401	763W-4W	Minister of State in the Cabinet Office Alexander	Policy Unit; Forward Strategy Unit
HC Deb	25.03.2003	402	125W	PM Blair	Downing Street Staff
HC Deb	10.03.2004	418	1515W-7W	Minister of State in the Cabinet Office Alexander	Secondments; Special Advisers; Strategy Unit
HC Deb	22.03.2004	419	562-3W	Minister of State in the Cabinet Office Alexander	Consultants
HC Deb	22.07.2004	424	466W-70W	PM Blair	Special Advisers
HC Deb	03.11.2008	482	25W	PU.S.S in the Cabinet Office Watson	Strategy Unit

Source: Own illustration.

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