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Coordination of Wicked Problems

Comparing inter-departmental coordination of demographic change policies in five German states

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Translations

English	German
Chair organization	Vorsitzende Organisation in einer interministeriellen Arbeitsgruppe
Clerk	Sachbearbeiter
Co-signature	Mitzeichnung
Commissioner	Beauftragter
Department	Ministerium
Division	Abteilung
Head of Division	Abteilungsleiter
Head of Section	Referatsleiter
Inter-departmental committee	Interministerielle Arbeitsgruppe
Joint rules of procedure of the departments	Gemeinsame Geschäftsordnung der Ministerien (GGO)
Legislative periode	Legislaturperiode
Municipal head associations	Kommunale Spitzenverbände
Official	Referent
Parliamentary group	Parlamentsfraktion
Prime Minister	Ministerpräsident
Policy statement	Regierungserklärung
Policy units	Grundsatzreferate
Rules of procedure of the government	Gemeinsame Geschäftsordnung der Landesregierung
Section	Referat
Staff unit	Stabstelle
State Parliament	Landtag
State Secretary	Staatssekretär
Top-priority issue	Chefsache

1. Introduction

Coordination is a perennial topic in public administration research. In recent years, there has been a renewed interest in coordination as a scholarly topic (Beuselinck 2008; Bouckaert, Peters, and Verhoest 2010; Dan 2015; Lie 2010; Peters 2015). Furthermore, consider recent research projects, such as COCOPS (2011-2014)[1], GOVCAP (2014-2018)[2] or COCAL (2016-2019)[3] that focus on coordination in the public sector.

The new academic interest in coordination is connected to a sparkling debate on *wicked problems* that gained renewed momentum during the last decade (Danken, Dribbisch, and Lange 2016). In a nutshell, the basic argument of this strand of literature is that wicked problems constitute a somewhat new challenge to public administrations, because they usually combine complexity, ambiguity, uncertainty and the lack of agreement on how to deal with them. These issues defy simple solutions and usually straddle the borders of single policy domains and the corresponding departmental responsibilities (Lægreid and Rykkja 2015; Lægreid et al. 2015). Put differently, wicked problems "rarely fall within the mandate and responsibility of a single organization. They are likely to be intractable for any single organization to manage, requiring coordinated action by a range of stakeholders" (L. E. D. Smith and Porter 2009: 313). Indeed, within the scientific public administration debate on wicked problems "inter-organizational collaboration and coordination" are among the most discussed and advocated approaches to tackle them (Danken, Dribbisch, and Lange 2016: 26). Put differently, understanding wicked problems is largely about understanding coordination.

1.1. German state governments and demographic change: two approaches to inter-organizational coordination

The empirical focus of this thesis is on coordination of demographic change policies on the German state level, i.e. demographic change serves as an example to study the coordination of wicked problems. In the German context, the state governments were aware of demographic problems as a cross-cutting challenge quite early, while the federal level is considered to be a laggard in this regard (Hüther and Naegele 2013). The state governments' answer to demands for "inter-organizational collaboration and coordination" as one approach to address wicked problems, was to establish inter-departmental committees (IDCs). IDCs are staffed with bureaucrats from all affected departments and are usually mandated by a government's cabinet to deliver an inter-departmental answer to a problem. During the last decade, each

[1] Coordinating for Cohesion in the Public Sector of the Future.
[2] Organizing for internal security and crisis management. Governance Capacity and Legitimacy.
[3] Coordination, capacity and legitimacy: Organizing for climate change, immigration and the police.

German state established an IDC that is ought to develop an inter-departmental answer to demographic change for the respective state.
In general, IDCs are described as "a central feature of the machinery of government partly because […] they deal with matters that spill over departmental boundaries, where departmental responsibilities, claims and interests overlap" (Painter and Carey 1979: 4).
IDCs provide an organizational setting for potential positive coordination, i.e. a joint approach to problem solving that pools and utilizes the expertise of many departments in a constructive manner from the very beginning. In this sense, IDCs "might be considered as a necessary condition for positive coordination" (Wegrich and Štimac 2014: 54). However, whether they actually achieve positive coordination is contested within the academic debate (see section 5.4.4). This motivates the first research question of this thesis.

Research question I: *Do IDCs achieve positive coordination?*

Why is the first research question relevant and what will its answer contribute to research? Interdepartmental committees and their role in horizontal coordination within the core executive triggered interest among scholars already more than fifty years ago (Painter and Carey 1979; Wheare 1955). In the case of Germany, empirical accounts date back to the late 1960s and 1970s with studies that are rather descriptive and present typologies of different form of committees (Prior 1968). However, we don't know much about their actual importance for the inter-departmental preparation of cross-cutting policies. Recently, there has been a renewed interest in inter-departmental committees and particular their role in the process of policy-making based on qualitative data. However, until now, few studies can be found that analyzes inter-departmental committees in a comparative way trying to identify whether they achieve positive coordination and what factors shape the coordination process and output of IDCs (but see: Hustedt and Danken 2017; Radtke, Hustedt, and Klinnert 2016). The first research questions addresses this gap. IDCs will be discussed in more detail in section 5.4.4.

Each IDC has a chair organization that is responsible for managing the interactions within the IDCs. The chair organization is important, because it organizes and structures the overall process of coordination in the IDC. Consequently, the chair of an IDC serves as the main boundary-spanner and therefore has remarkable influence by arranging meetings and the work schedule or by distributing internal roles (Williams 2002). Interestingly, in the German context we find *two organizational approaches*: while some states decided to put a line department (e.g. Department of Infrastructure) in charge of managing the IDC, others rely on the State Chancelleries, i.e. the center of government.

This situation allows for comparative research design that can address the role of the State Chancellery in inter-departmental coordination of cross-cutting policies. This is relevant, because "the role of the center is crucial when studying coordination within central government" (Bouckaert, Peters, and Verhoest 2010: 19). The academic debate on the center of government in the German politico-administrative system is essentially divided into two camps. One camp claims that the center can improve horizontal coordination and steer cross-

cutting policy-making more effectively, while the other camp points to limits to central coordination due to departmental autonomy (see 5.3.3.5). This debate motivates the second research question of this thesis.

Research question II: *Does the State Chancellery as chair organization achieve positive coordination in IDCs?*

What is the contribution of the second research question's answer? The center of government and its role in the German politic-administrative system has attracted academic attention already in the 1960s and 1970s (Hennis 1964; A. Katz 1975; K. König 1976b; Rückwardt 1978). The older contributions often focused on the State Chancelleries structure and tasks, i.e. were rather descriptive. After its initial phase, the debate on German centers of government became a niche topic (Bröchler 2011: 16f.). However, lately there has been a new interest in the Federal Chancellery and State Chancelleries from a variety of perspectives. These debates include research projects focusing on micro-political studies in the context of the Federal Chancellery (Rüb 2011), the organization of government from a perspective of institutional politics (Fleischer 2011a; 2012; Fleischer, Hustedt, and Döhler 2007; Jann et al. 2005) or strategic steering in the context of party government systems (Tils 2011a). Furthermore, the Bertelsmann-Foundation conducted a project on the optimization of central steering of reform processes (Kaiser 2007; Knill, Bauer, and Ziegler 2006; Sturm and Pehle 2007). Additionally, there is a emergent debate about strategic management in core executive organizations (Haubner et al. 2006; Proeller 2007; Schilling, Ruckh, and Rübcke 2009; Schulze-Cleven 2011). However, Bröchler identifies a research desiderate regarding the center's role during the inter-departmental coordination process (2011: 31). There are only few studies that explicitly analyze centers of government and their role in coordination of cross-cutting policies, although some single case studies have been published (Blätte 2011; Bornemann 2011; 2013; Jantz and Veit 2011). This gap in the academic debate will be addressed by the answer to the second research question.

1.2. The thesis in a nutshell

In this section, we will briefly introduce this thesis' general design. All elements will be further explained in individual chapters.

The dependent variable of this study is the chair organization of IDCs. The value of this variable is dichotomous: either an IDC is chaired by a Line department or by a State Chancellery. We are interested whether this variable has an effect on two dependent variables. First, we will analyze the *coordination process*, i.e. interaction among bureaucrats within the IDC. Second, the focus of this thesis will be on the *coordination output*, i.e. the demography strategies that are produced by the respective IDCs.

In terms of the methodological approach, this thesis applies a comparative case study design based on a most-similar-systems logic. The German federalism is quite suitable for such designs. Since the institutional framework largely is the same across all states, individual variables and their effect can be isolated and plausibly analyzed. To further control for potential intervening variables, we will limit our case selection to states located in East Germany, because the demographic situation is most problematic in the Eastern part of Germany, i.e. there is a equal problem pressure. Consequently, we will analyze five cases: *Thuringia*, *Saxony-Anhalt* (in both cases a line department is the chair organization of the IDC) and *Brandenburg*, *Mecklenburg-Vorpommern* and *Saxony* (all IDCs in these cases are chaired by the respective State Chancelleries).

There is no grand coordination theory that is ready to be applied to our case studies. Therefore, we need to tailor our own approach. Our assumption is that the individual chair organization has an effect on the coordination process and output of IDCs, although all cases are embedded in the same institutional setting, i.e. the German politico-administrative system. Therefore, we need an analytical approach than incorporates institutionalist and agency-based arguments. Therefore, this thesis will utilize Actor-Centered Institutionalism (ACI). Broadly speaking, ACI conceptualizes actors' behavior as influenced - but not fully determined - by institutions (Mayntz and Scharpf 1995). Since ACI is rather abstract we need to adapt it for the purpose of this thesis. Line departments and State Chancelleries will be modeled as distinct actors with different action orientations and capabilities to steer the coordination process. However, their action is embedded within the institutional context of governments, which we will conceptualize as being comprised of regulative (formal rules) and normative (social norms) elements.

1.3. Structure of the thesis

Following the introduction, in the 2. chapter we will briefly discuss the concept of wicked problems and argue that demographic change is an adequate example of this type of problems and requires coordination.
In the 3. chapter the concept of coordination will be discussed from a variety of perspectives. This includes why coordination is important, the various definitions of coordination and many different dimensions of the coordination concept. In addition, the concepts of positive and negative coordination will be discussed in more detail, as they serve as the ideal-typical coordination modes that will guide the empirical case studies.
In the 4. chapter the analytical framework of actor-centered institutionalism will be presented. This approach combines institutionalist and actor-based perspectives in research on policy-making and therefore offers an appropriate analytical framework to conduct comparative research on coordination.
However, as ACI is a rather abstract framework it needs to be adapted to fit the empirical focus of this thesis, i.e. inter-departmental coordination of cross-cutting policies in IDCs at the level of German state governments. This adaptation will take place in the 5. chapter. Here,

we will in detail discuss the institutional and political framework in which coordination at the German state level takes place. Furthermore, we will address State Chancelleries and line departments as distinct actors of coordination and lastly discuss inter-departmental committees as arenas in which these actors interact during the coordination process and negotiate the respective coordination output, i.e. demography strategies.

The 6. chapter reflects on the research design and methodological approach of this thesis. We will discuss merits and problems of comparative case study designs. We will argue that a most-similar systems design is suitable for this thesis. Furthermore, we will discuss expert interviews as a method to measure the coordination process in IDCs as well as qualitative content analysis as a method to measure their outputs.

In the 7. chapter the empirical results of the five case studies will be presented, after we operationalized the two dependent variables *coordination process* and *coordination output*. The case studies will have a similar structure to ensure comparability and allow for a structured-focuses comparison. After providing contextual information, the coordination process within the IDCs will be analyzed along the dimensions of the *role of the chair organization*, the way of *information processing* and the mode of *decision-making*. Then, the coordination output of the IDCs will be analyzed and presented. Here we will address whether the coordination outputs, i.e. demography strategies, *address interdependence*, set *specific goals*, include *implementation mechanisms* and feature a system of *monitoring & evaluation*.

Finally, in the 8. chapter we will comparatively discuss the case studies' results and draw conclusions for the first and second research question. Furthermore, avenues for further research will be briefly outlined.

2. Demographic change as a Wicked Problem

In the following section we will introduce the concept of wicked problems and show that demographic change is an adequate example to study this type of problems.

2.1. The concept of wicked problem

The concept of wicked problems has emerged as a critique on rational-technical approaches to social problems and planning. It has been argued that Western societies had become increasingly pluralistic "comprising thousands of minority groups, each joined around common interests, common value systems, and shared stylistic preferences that differ from those of other groups" (Rittel and Webber 1973: 167). Wicked problems refer to a class of problems "which are ill- formulated, where information is confusing, where there are many clients and decision makers with conflicting values" (Churchman 1967: B-141). Also scholars of public administration, public policy and public management got increasingly interested in the concept of wicked issues, mostly focusing on organizational aspects of wicked issues (Head and Alford 2013). In public administration research, the core definition of wicked problems clusters around three constitutional elements: *non-resolvability*, *involvement of multiple actors* and the *difficulty of problem definition* (Danken, Dribbisch, and Lange 2016). *Non-resolvability* refers to the chronic nature of wicked problems and the impossibility to find clear and easy solutions (Rittel and Webber 1973: 163). Hence, policy options tend to be better-or-worse alternative responses and policymakers often rather manage and contain these problems more or less well. Responses to wicked problems regularly create new problems to which actions need be adjusted. Consequently, solutions to wicked problems tend to "[…] run in ‚vicious circles'" (Fischer 1993: 172). *Involvement of multiple actors* refers to two distinct features of wicked problems. First, they are difficult to distinguish from other problems and require the involvement of many actors from different policy areas and jurisdictions. Since policy areas are usually organized within specialized governmental bodies, e.g. departments, wicked problems usually cross-organizational boundaries and require horizontal and vertical coordination. Second, the involvement of multiple-actors leads to conflict based on different values and the respective problem perceptions, means-end-relations and differences in objectives and preferred solutions. Finally, *difficulty of problem definition* relates to the fact that causes and effects of wicked problems are typically poorly understood, because knowledge and scientific authority tends to be limited and contested. In sum, the common denominator of the scholarly understanding of wicked problems is that "they are chronic public policy challenges that are value-laden and contested and that defy a full understanding and definition of their nature and implications" (Danken, Dribbisch, and Lange 2016: 28).

2.2. Demographic change – a Wicked Problem?

The core elements of wicked problems, i.e. *non-resolvability*, *involvement of multiple actors* and *difficulty of problem definition*, will now be contrasted with the academic debate on demographic change.

Non-resolvability

Within the academic debate, it is contested whether social policies can effect demographic processes (Kaufmann, Strohmeier, and Federkeil 1992). However, there is an increasing belief in the plasticity of demographic processes, i.e. that demographic change can be influenced to some extend by political action that aspires to adapt or mitigate (Mayer 1999). In any case, demographic change is a long-term policy problem. Both, the problem and approaches to tackle it can only be meaningfully observed over decades. Put differently, long time horizons of demographic developments cause a very contested evaluation of success of certain policies aiming at adaptation and mitigation of demographic change. Since there are no definitive evaluation criteria, the problem of demographic change can hardly be "solved", but needs to be addressed over and over again.

Involvement of multiple actors

Demographic change is change is a cross-cutting issue that has not yet developed into an own policy domain. Responsibilities for adaptation and mitigation policies are fragmented horizontally and across organizational boundaries (e.g. portfolios of departments), but also policy sectors (e.g. social policy, infrastructure planning, migration, education) and levels of government (demographic change challenges the national, subnational and local level). Accordingly, demographic change has been labeled as "hyper-complex" (Mayer 1999: 421) or as a meta policy domain that is comprised of a variety of policy domains (Wilkoszewski 2006). Involved actors frame the problem of demographic change and its solutions in accordance to their world-views and provide competing solutions that may contradict each other. An example of such a coordination problem would be a department that tries to set incentives to attract new citizens by offering schools and kindergartens (mitigation strategy) while in the same moment another departments cuts the public transport supply (adaptation strategy). Thus, authors argue, that functional strategies to tackle demographic change need to take care that demographic change is not lost in an "inter-departmental nirvana". This may come in more centralization of competences or by horizontal coordination, e.g. organized via IDCs (Hüther and Naegele 2013: 372).

Difficulty of problem definition

Demographic developments are hardly observable, and thus dependent on reliable prognoses, for example in the case of infrastructure planning trying to adjust to changing demands in the future caused by a shrinking population and its implications for demands of public transport systems. Although demographic factors, i.e. migration, birth rates and shrinkage of the population are well understood, there is no political consensus about causes and effects of demographic processes (Hüther and Naegele 2013).

In sum, we argue that demographic change is indeed a wicked problem that needs to be tackled from a variety of governmental departments, i.e. needs coordinated governmental action.

3. The concept of coordination

Coordination is an evergreen topic in public administration research. As Perri Six puts it: "coordination is everywhere - as a challenge, a problem, and as some kind of practice" (2005: 44). Usually, coordination is perceived as welcome and positively connoted, as illustrated by Wildavsky's famous quote: "Coordination is one of the golden words of our time. Offhand, I can think of no way the word is used that implies disapproval. But what does it mean?" (1979: 131). Unfortunately, what seems to be undoubtedly one of the most relevant topics of public administration research and practice lacks a common understanding and pivotal definition (Alexander 1995; Malone and Crowston 1994; Metcalfe 1994). Thus, the aim of this chapter is to provide clarification to the concept for the purpose of this thesis. The remainder of this chapter is as follows: First, we will discuss why coordination of governmental action is necessary in the public sector. Second, various definitions of coordination will be presented. Third, we will discuss the many dimensions of coordination and clarify this thesis' focus on coordination. Fourth, the three basic coordination mechanisms, i.e. hierarchies, markets and networks, will be presented. Finally, we will briefly discuss concepts that are very close to the coordination debate, but labeled differently due to disciplinary traditions.

3.1. Why coordination?

As soon as governments differentiated in several organizations providing different services or providing the same service in different ways, coordination became a problematic issue (Bouckaert, Peters, and Verhoest 2010: 13; Peters 2015). Consequently, coordination is discussed as one of the oldest problems the public sector has to face (Six 2005: 93). Policies, programs, and laws have always required many different organizations at the very least to take account of each other or to collaborate. According to Six "the idea must be rejected that there was once a simpler age, when policies could be enacted that would require a single agency to carry them out, acting alone" (2004: 104). Thus, coordination is said to be the "philosopher's stone" of governments to handle social complexities and design coherent public policies (Bouckaert, Peters, and Verhoest 2010: 13). Further, Peters argues that the capacity to govern is basically the capacity to coordinate and create coherence (2003: 29). The fundamental need for coordination can be found in the high specialization of public sector organizations. As a concept, specialization refers to "the definition of which task and relations can be grouped together and coordinated and which can be separated" (Bouckaert, Peters, and Verhoest 2010). Gulick (1937) argues that demand for coordination increases with specialization of an organization. In a similar vein, König argues that coordination is the complement of division of labor, i.e. specialization (K. König 2002d: 281). In this line of reasoning, specialization and coordination are two sides of the same coin - "the more

specialization in a public organization, the more pressure for increased coordination, or vice versa" (T. Christensen and Lægreid 2008: 101).
Horizontal specializations refers to the splitting of organizations at the same hierarchical level and vertical specializations means the differentiation of responsibility on hierarchical levels (Bouckaert, Peters, and Verhoest 2010: 26). Gulick (1937) distinguishes between four types of horizontal specialization: First, territorial specialization refers to an organizational structure mirroring the territorial division of a country or region. Second, client specialization means an organizational structure with departments for different types of clients, e.g. children or the elderly. Third, process specialization involves the organizational structure being specialized by reference to processes, e.g. by establishing a department for financial activities or planning. Fourth, purpose specialization refers to an organizational structure that is specialized by its purpose. For example, departments are often structured to fit a certain policy domain like health, agriculture, or fisheries (T. Christensen and Lægreid 2007; Egeberg 2003).
In the public sector context, specialization can be observed by the creation of new public sector organizations with limited objectives and specific tasks. Specialization provides a number of benefits, but also creates problems. For example, structuring an organization according to its purpose (sector) may lead to enhanced expertise regarding this purpose and gives public organizations and their employees clearer missions (Peters 2015: 5). However, "at the same time that specialization focuses expertise on a public problem or the needs of clients, it tends to segment (often artificially) those problems and those clients rather than presenting a more integrated conception of the causes and possible remedies for the difficulties" (Bouckaert, Peters, and Verhoest 2010: 27). In this regard, coordination is an attempt to ensure that "organizationally necessary and desirable specialization does not become dysfunctional" (Ellwein 1990: 167).

However, organizational specialization only becomes a problem and induces a need for coordination if the respective organizations are in some kind of functional relationship. Hence, Malone and Crowston argue that the debate on coordination is strongly connected to interdependence, because "if there is no interdependence, there is nothing to coordinate" (1994: 90). Lindblom defines interdependence as a situation in which "each decision-maker is in such a relation to other decision-makers that […] he interferes with or contributes to the goal achievement of each other decision-maker, either by direct impact or through a chain of effects that reach any given decision-maker only trough effects on others" (1965: 21f.). Similarly, Thompson (2008: 54ff.) distinguishes three types of interdependence: sequential interdependence (an organizational output is another organization's input); reciprocal interdependence (an organization's output is another organization's input and vice versa) and pooled interdependence (various organization contribute to a shared goal, but are dependent on other organizations' output).

In modern societies, interdependence between actors, programs and policy domains is omnipresent, underlining the omnipresent need for coordination. In their seminal work on policy making in the German politico-administrative-system, Mayntz and Scharpf described the need for coordination in a setting of high organizational specialization and

interdependence very concisely as follows: „In the real world problem interdependencies will not stop at the lines of jurisdictional demarcation within the bureaucracy […] But bureaucratic policy makers tend to limit their attention to problems and solutions for which they are immediately responsible, and if they disregard the existing interdependencies with other problem areas, they may focus on the symptoms rather than the effective causes of a problem and they may devise solutions that cannot be effective because they do not reach far enough. At the same time, however, these narrowly conceived policies may have very real side effects beyond their specified target areas which, again, tend to be disregarded by the selective perception of jurisdiction-bound policy-makers" (1975: 145).

In a nutshell, since real world complexities and problem interdependencies do mostly not match organizational boundaries, coordination between highly specialized actors in an interdependent relationship is seen to be a key precondition for functional governments and policy making (Alexander 1995: 68; Metcalfe 1994).

3.2. Definitions of coordination

Coordination is studied from various academic perspectives, such as organization theory, public management, public policy or public administration (Alexander 1995). This is generally perceived as the reason why it suffers from "conceptual elusiveness" (Andeweg 2003: 40) and lacks a clear definition (Ellwein 1991: 99; Mulford and Rogers 1982: 9). Consequently, the subject of coordination itself has been termed as "nebulous" (Hood 2005: 20).

Definitions seem to agree with regard to the purpose of coordination. Coordination is mostly discussed as aligning activities of different organizations towards a common tasks, to enhance coherence and to reduce redundancy, duplication and contradiction (Bakvis, Juillet, and Service 2004: 8; Beuselinck 2008: 17; Bouckaert, Peters, and Verhoest 2010: 16; Dan 2015: 40; R. H. Hall et al. 1977: 459; Mulford and Rogers 1982: 12).

However, despite a more or less common understanding regarding the aim of coordination, there is a vast variety of definitions (Table 1). Often, there is a focus on coordination as a process or an output. For example, Peters refers to coordination as an "end-state in which the policies and programs of government are characterized by minimal redundancy, incoherence and lacunae" (1998b: 296). Others offer a complementary perspective. For example, Malone and Crowston define coordination as "the act of managing interdependencies between activities performed to achieve a goal" (1994: 90). Hence, coordination is seen as an output (end-state) or a process. Similarly, Lodge and Koop address both, process and output. They define coordination as "the adjustment of actions and decisions among interdependent actors to achieve specified goals" (2014: 1313). In this thesis, we will follow the definition of Koop and Lodge and analyze coordination as a process and an output. Nevetherless, other

dimensions of coordination exist that we will discuss and specify for the purpose of this thesis in the following section.

Table 1 Definitions of coordination (Beuselinck 2008: 16; Dan 2015: 38ff.), own additions

Author	Definition
(Six et al. 2002: 33)	Coordination refers to the development of ideas about joint and holistic working, joint information systems, dialogue between agencies, processes of planning, making decisions
(Six 2004: 106)	the development of ideas about joint and holistic working, joint information systems, dialogue between agencies, processes of planning, and making decisions
(Alter and Hage 1993: 87)	The articulation of elements in a service delivery system so that comprehensiveness, accessibility and compatibility among elements are maximized
(Bakvis, Juillet, and Service 2004: 8)	the practice of aligning structures and activities to improve or facilitate the likelihood of achieving horizontal objectives, to reduce overlap and duplication, and, at a minimum, to ensure that horizontal objectives are not impeded by the actions of one or more units
(Bouckaert, Peters, and Verhoest 2010: 16)	the instruments and mechanisms that aim to enhance the voluntary or forced alignment of tasks and efforts of organizations within the public sector. These mechanisms are used in order to create a greater coherence, and to reduce redundancy, lacunae and contradictions within and between policies, implementation or management
(Lindblom 1965: 15)	A set of decisions is coordinated if adjustments have been made in it such that the adverse consequences of any one decision for other decisions in the set are to a degree and in some frequency avoided, reduced, counterbalanced, or outweighed
(R. H. Hall et al. 1977: 459)	the extent to which organizations attempt that their activities take into account those of other organizations
(Malone and Crowston 1994: 90)	Coordination is managing dependencies between activities
(Metcalfe 1994: 278)	In a broad sense, co-ordination means that the parts of a system work together more effectively, more smoothly or more harmoniously than if no co-ordination took place
(Mulford and Rogers 1982: 12)	the process whereby two or more organizations create and/or use existing decision rules that have been established to deal collectively with their task environment
(Peters 1998a: 5, 1998b: 296)	refer to the need to ensure that the various organizations — public and private — charged with delivering public policy work together and do not produce either redundancy or gaps in services.
	end-state in which the policies and programs of government are characterized by minimal redundancy, incoherence and lacunae
(Alexander 1995: 67, 271)	interorganizational coordination is the process of concerting the decisions and actions of several - sometimes many - organizations, for a purpose or undertaking that could not be accomplished by any one organization acting alone
	interorganizational coordination is a set of organizations' recognition and management of their interdependence, by creating or using IOC structures to decide on their actions together
(Hustedt and Tiessen 2006: 5)	coordination as a process of inter-organizational conflict-resolving, which becomes manifest in certain coordination techniques

(Painter and Carey 1979: 7)	As an ideal or an end, the coordination of policies can be seen as making them consistent so that they do not hinder or contradict each other, either as a present collections or as a set of future plans
(Scharpf 1994: 27f.)	[Coordination] is considered desirable whenever the level of aggregate welfare obtained through the unilateral choices of interdependent actors is lower than the level which could be obtained through choices that are jointly considered. In other words, the term is used here to describe forms of accommodation that are more demanding than the adjustment based on mutual anticipation which will produce Nash equilibrium solutions in non-cooperative games."

3.3. Dimensions of coordination

The complexity of the coordination concept can be illustrated by its many dimensions. Studies mostly focus on a particular dimension (Beuselinck 2008: 17f.; Peters 2015: 9ff.). In the following, the dimensions of coordination will be presented. In addition it will be explained to what extend they are taken into account for the purpose of this thesis.

Table 2 Dimensions of coordination (Beuselinck 2008: 17f.; Lie 2010: 51ff.; Peters 2015: 9ff.)

Dimension	**Range (from-to)**	
Organizational span	intra-organizational	inter-organizational
Governmental span	horizontal	vertical
Internal vs. external	external	internal
Policy cycle stage	policy making	policy implementation
Process vs. outcome	process	outcome
Degree of formality	informal	formal
Level of goal setting & ambition	negative	positive

Organizational span

Coordination can be analyzed from an intra- or inter-organizational perspective. The former was a prominent research subject during the 1960s and 1970s because the spread of complex organizations was a phenomenon at that time triggering interest among scholars (Beuselinck 2008: 18). It refers to coordination within single organizations. On the other hand, the inter-organizational perspective refers to coordination between organizations, e.g. the processes of co-signature between departments during policy making. Recently, the inter-organizational perspective has attracted renewed attention among scholars (Alexander 1995; Lægreid et al. 2014; O'Flynn 2014). In addition, reform initiatives such as joined-up government or whole-of government are said to be answers to NPM-triggered disaggregation of the public sector

and aim at improving inter-organizational coordination (Bouckaert, Peters, and Verhoest 2010).
The difference between intra- and inter-organizational coordination is a fundamental one: while intra-organizational coordination can rely on hierarchical decision-making by senior officials of the organization, inter-organizational coordination is much more demanding. If organizations are not aligned in a hierarchy, equals have to interact with each other and coordination is much more reliant on negotiation and bargaining (E. Müller 1995: 30f.).
The focus of this thesis is twofold: on the one hand, inter-organizational coordination between different departments in interdepartmental committees is under scrutiny. On the other, hand to some extend the case studies will also shed light on how activities of inter-departmental committees are prepared and reported within the respective departments. Thus, also intra-organizational coordination is to some extend studied, although the focus is on inter-departmental coordination.

Governmental span

A basic analytical distinction can be made between horizontal and vertical coordination (Peters 1998b; 2015: 11f.).
Horizontal coordination refers to coordination between organizations or units at the same hierarchical level, for example between departments, between divisions or between agencies "'where the units in question do not have hierarchical control over each other and where the aim is to generate outcomes that can't be achieved by units working in isolation" (Bakvis, Juillet, and Service 2004: 8). No actor can impose decisions on another actor by using command and control. Therefore, horizontal coordination will rather have a predominantly voluntary nature, if not enforced by a third party. However, some argue the center of government might force agencies or departments to cooperate (Bouckaert, Peters, and Verhoest 2010: 24). This will be further discussed in section 5.3.3.5.
As we discussed, the need for horizontal coordination is caused by horizontal specialization of organizations (Egeberg 2012: 161). On the other hand, vertical coordination refers to hierarchy and coordination between subordinate and high-level organizations. This could happen a) between levels of government, such as central governments trying to harmonize activities of local authorities or b) within on level of government, e.g. coordination between a department and a subordinated agency (Bouckaert, Peters, and Verhoest 2010: 24). Demand of vertical coordination is caused by vertical specialization, e.g. division of labor with regard to the same tasks on several levels of a hierarchy (Egeberg 2012: 163).
In this study, the focus will be predominantly on horizontal coordination on the State level at one particular governmental tier, i.e. horizontal coordination of demographic policies between State Chancelleries and Departments within interdepartmental committees.

Internal vs. external

Christensen and Lægreid (2008: 102) distinguish between internal and external coordination. Internal coordination refers to coordination in and between governmental actors within the central government whereas external coordination refers to interaction between the government and organizations outside of it, e.g. civil society, international organizations or local municipalities. Taking the governmental span (horizontal vs. vertical) into account, they

distinguish four forms of coordination: First, horizontal-internal coordination refers to "coordination between different departments, agencies or policy sectors", i.e. same-level coordination (T. Christensen and Lægreid 2008: 102). Second, vertical-internal coordination involves coordination between the 'parent department and subordinate agencies and bodies in the same sector' (T. Christensen and Lægreid 2008: 102). Third, the vertical-external perspective means coordination between the government and "(a) upwards to international organizations or, (b) downwards to local government" (T. Christensen and Lægreid 2008: 102). Fourth, horizontal-external coordination refers to coordination between the government and civil society organizations and private sector organizations, usually labeled as "governance" (Peters 2015: 16).
In this thesis, the focus will be on horizontal-internal coordination, i.e. coordination between different departments.

Table 3 Different forms of coordination (T. Christensen and Lægreid 2008: 102)

	Horizontal coordination	**Vertical coordination**
Internal coordination	between different departments, agencies or policy sectors	between parent department and subordinate agencies and bodies in the same sector
External coordination	with civil society organizations/private sector organizations	(a) upwards to international organizations or, (b) downwards to local government

Policy cycle stage

Coordination plays a role at different stages of the policy cycle. Therefore, it makes sense to analytically differentiate between the politics of coordination during policy making (drafting a program) and administrative coordination of implementation. The former is more focused on decision-making and substantial policy content, the latter rather refers to management-related aspects of coordination once a program needs to be implemented by street-level bureaucrats (Alexander 1995; Bouckaert, Peters, and Verhoest 2010: 20; Peters 2015: 13). In research, this distinction is also discussed from a prescriptive perspective as top-down vs. bottom-up approaches to coordination (Peters 1998a: 37; 1998b: 307). Top-down approaches rely on coherent policy design assuming that implementation will consequently run smoothly. On the other hand, bottom-up approaches assume that "intra-organizational coordination is inevitable for successful policy implementation" (Panday 2007: 248). Thus, it is recommended to strengthen local authorities and make the administrative implementation better coordinated (Bouckaert, Peters, and Verhoest 2010: 21).
In this thesis, the focus is more on the early stages of the policy cycle, i.e. inter-departmental processes of problem definition and policy making, and less on the actual implementation of the demography strategies.

Dynamic vs. static perspective

As already said, many scholars analyze coordination from an either distinct dynamic or static perspective - they understand coordination either to be analyzed as a process (Alter and Hage 1993; Metcalfe 1994; Mulford and Rogers 1982: 12), output (Peters 1998b) or link the both perspectives arguing that coordination processes influence coordination outputs (Lie 2010; 2011; Peters 2015: 10f.). The process-perspective is rather interested in the process of inter-organizational conflict resolution by certain coordination techniques (Alexander 1995: 67; 1995: 271), the output-perspective refers to "an end-state in which the policies and programs of government are characterized by minimal redundancy, incoherence and lacunae" (Peters 1998b: 296).

Both perspectives are intertwined - coordination processes and outputs are in close relationship. Hence, in this thesis we will focus on both, coordination as a process and an output. We will analyze processes of coordination within IDCs and the respective outputs of these processes, i.e. the demography strategies of German state governments.

Degree of formality

Coordination can be more or less formalized, understood as the absence or presence of formal rules and routines that guide and prescribe coordination (Chisholm 1989; Jennings and Ewalt 1998). One can roughly distinguishes between informal, semi-formal and formal coordination tools, i.e. means to achieve coordination. Informal tools refer to informal channels of communication (e.g. phone calls or ad-hoc exchange of information on a collegial basis), while formal tools refer to explicitly standardized formal organizational routines (Alexander 1991: 216; 1993: 334; 1998: 341).

In this thesis we will deal with both, formal and informal aspects of coordination. IDCs can be regarded as formal tools of coordination as they are mostly mandated by a formal cabinet decision. However, what actually happens within the IDCs and how informal factors may influence the coordination process and output is a very relevant aspect as well.

Level of goal setting & ambition: negative vs. positive coordination

This dimension refers to the ambition of a particular coordination initiative. A well known distinction can be made between positive and negative coordination, two ideal typical modes of coordination identified by Mayntz and Scharpf (1975) as a result of their study on interdepartmental coordination in the German federal bureaucracy.

What is positive and negative coordination all about? As Scharpf puts it very concisely: "Positive coordination is an attempt to maximize the overall effectiveness and efficiency of government policy by exploring and utilizing the joint strategy options of several departmental portfolios. […] Negative coordination, by contrast is associated with more limited aspirations. Its goal is to ensure that any new policy initiative designed by a specialized subunit within the departmental organization will not interfere with the established policies and the interests of other departmental units" (1994: 38f.). Negative coordination involves only the agreement of the actors that they will not harm each other's programs (Bouckaert, Peters, and Verhoest 2010: 20; Peters 2015: 10). Thus, they do not contribute to an overall improvement of the program or initiative, but rather seek a

compromise on the lowest common denominator and therefore achieve only modest policy results (Scharpf 1997).

How do these two ideal-types of coordination play out in actual policy making and where do they differ with regard to their ambition? According to Scharpf "procedurally, positive coordination is associated with multilateral negotiations in intra or interdepartmental task forces [i.e. IDCs] whose mandate includes consideration of all policy options of all participating units" (1994: 39f.). Hence, in case of policy issues that are cross-cutting in nature and do not fit neatly into organizational boundaries of single public organizations and where strong interdependencies between the respective organization's policy domains exist, positive coordination is said to be particularly necessary for effective tackling, which may be organized in IDCs. Problem interdependencies cause strong demand for information exchange and joint policy making to avoid unintended consequences and mutual negative interference. Put differently, "positive coordination […] allows addressing more complex policy issues by pooling the policy proposals of diverse units in order to develop a draft. […] Positive coordination can only realize its potential for developing welfare-maximizing proposals when there is an open exchange of ideas, following the mode of joint problem-solving and arguing rather than position-oriented bargaining" (Wegrich and Štimac 2014: 49). In short, positive coordination aspires that policies of departments reinforce each other by pooling expertise and, thus, increase overall effectiveness of policy making. Thus, positive coordination needs an ethos in the form of "What can I contribute to improve the policy draft at stake?".

Positive coordination, meaning the joint and simultaneous work on a problem by several sections, for example in inter-departmental committees or project groups, is quite rare and hard to achieve, because transaction costs, i.e. the costs of reaching a decision, increase dramatically (Mayntz and Scharpf 1975: 148; E. Müller 1986: 28; Scharpf 1973a: 86). Quite in contrast, negative coordination will normally be much more efficient and offers lower transaction-costs, because interactions between departments take the form of bilateral "clearance" negotiations (Scharpf 1994). Mayntz and Scharpf described the typical modus of negative coordination in the German bureaucracy as follows: "[Most] policy initiatives are restricted to the jurisdiction of one specialized section or division. Within this area, the initiating unit will analyze policy problems and propose policy solutions, very often without regard to their consequences for other areas. But other units, responsible for connected problem areas, will be consulted and they will examine the initiative strictly from the perspective of their own jurisdictions. If they have reason to expect infringements of their jurisdiction or negative repercussions upon areas under their responsibility, they will try to use consultation in order to eliminate these detrimental side effects of the initiative" (1975: 147). Departments affected by a policy initiative do not actively seek to contribute to the policy and pool expertise, but rather ask themselves: "Is there anything I have to object to protect the turf and interests of my department?". Clearance will often be reduced to formality when the initiating unit is able to anticipate objections and to adjust the design of its proposal accordingly before affected departments are consulted. Consequently, since negative coordination is quite efficient in terms of transaction costs, it is the common form of coordination in policy making within the German government (Scharpf 1973a: 87). Put

differently, negative coordination "despite high degrees of complex interdependence, is able to assure a workable level of effective policy coordination in the departmental organization" (Scharpf 1994: 40).

To be very sure, the concepts of positive and negative coordination are not about "good" or "bad" coordination, although the name might indicate this to some extent. In a nutshell, positive and negative coordination capture different ways of reaching decisions among interdependent actors. Certainly, positive coordination might have a higher potential for innovative solutions by pooling expertise, but this come with very high transaction costs and a high level of conflict. In contrast, negative coordination and its tendency to reach decisions on the lowest common denominator might be less innovative, but it nevertheless offers an efficient way of reaching decisions that are "good enough".

Table 4 Differences between positive and negative coordination (J. Schmid and Buhr 2013: 97), own additions

Criterion	**Negative coordination**	**Positive coordination**
Consideration of the problem	Separate	Connected
Search for solutions	By oneself	Together
Target solution	Best on its own	Best for everyone
Processing of the issue	One unit	Every area
Alternative decisions	Few	Many
Cost of coordination	Low	High
Level of innovation	Low	High
Occurrence	Frequent	Rare

This rather ideal-typical illustration of negative and positive coordination will be further operationalized for the analysis of coordination in IDCs in section 7.1 at the beginning of the empirical case studies.

As negative and positive coordination are analytical ideal-types, in reality they rather establish a continuum. For example, in addition to the dichotomous distinction of negative vs. positive coordination, Metcalfe's coordination scale provides a more detailed perspective on the ambition of coordination initiatives. This scale analytically divides nine possible states of coordination ranging from independent decision-making by departments up to coherent government strategies (Metcalfe 1994). Krax (2010: 21) added the respective necessary decision areas, ranging from particular Ministers to the whole cabinet in case of government strategies. Obviously, consensus is harder to achieve if more actors are involved. According to Metcalfe’s scale, the very establishment of an IDC already counts as Level 5, because

interdependence is acknowledged and the cabinet decided jointly to tackle the issue at stake in a cross-cutting way.

Table 5 Policy coordination scale (Krax 2010: 21; Metcalfe 1994: 281; Peters 1998a: 7)

	Level	Characteristics	Who decides?
1	Independent decision-making by departments	Each department retains autonomy within its own policy domain.	Minister
2	Communication to other departments (information exchange)	Departments keep each other up to date about what issues are arising and how they propose to act in their own areas. Reliable and accepted channels of regular communication must exist.	Minister
3	Consulting with other departments (feedback)	A two-way process. As well as informing other departments of what they are doing, individual departments consult other departments in the process of formulating their own policies, or position.	Minister
4	Avoiding divergences among departments	Ensuring that departments do not take divergent negotiating positions and that government speaks with one voice.	Minister
5	Search for agreement among departments (seeking consensus)	Beyond negative co-ordination to hide differences, departments work together, through, for example, joint committees and project teams, because they recognize their interdependence and their mutual interest in resolving policy differences.	Consensus of participating Ministers
6	Arbitration of policy differences (conciliation and mediation)	Where inter-organizational differences of views cannot be resolved by the horizontal coordination processes defined in levels 2 to 5, central machinery for arbitration is needed.	Consensus of participating Ministers
7	Setting limits on departmental action	A central organization of inter-organizational decision-making body may play a more active role by setting parameters on the discretion of individual organizations. These parameters define what organizations must not do, rather than prescribing what they should do.	Head of Government or Cabinet
8	Establishing central priorities	The center of government may play a more positive role by laying down main lines of policy and establishing priorities.	Head of Government or Cabinet
9	Government strategies & joint priorities (pure positive coordination")	Overall governmental strategy. This case is added for the sake of completeness, but is unlikely to be attainable in practice.	Cabinet

3.4. Coordination mechanisms

In the academic literature, three basic coordination mechanisms are discussed: hierarchy, markets and networks (Bouckaert, Peters, and Verhoest 2010: 35; Peters 2015: 46ff.; Powell 1991). Mechanisms refer to the "fundamental underlying processes involved when coordination initiatives take place" (Beuselinck 2008: 29). They serve as basic analytical perspectives with a high level of abstraction. Analytically, these different types of coordination mechanisms can be separated, but in reality, however, there is often a mixture of these mechanisms, causing many different forms.
Hierarchy, networks and markets are discussed from two perspectives. First, there is a debate from a governance perspective that focuses on the relation between state actors and the society. From this perspective, coordination mechanisms are seen as instruments to influence behavior of private or non-governmental actors, i.e. the external dimension of coordination (Dan 2015; Sarapuu and Lember 2015). Second, coordination mechanisms are studied from an internal perspective (Bouckaert, Peters, and Verhoest 2010). As this thesis is concerned with coordination between governmental departments, our focus is on the second perspective.

Hierarchy
Hierarchy is seen as the most familiar mechanism used to produce coordination between programs and organizations within the public sector (Bouckaert, Peters, and Verhoest 2010: 36). It is a central element for understanding the public sector and the coordination activities in government (Peters 2015: 51). Hierarchy is rooted in Weber's theory of bureaucracy, emphasizing division of labor and the role of rules, procedures, formal power and authority (Weber 1976: 59ff.). Coordination based on hierarchy basically means to deliberatively influence actors behavior "by biasing their decisions to produce action which they might otherwise not have taken" (Alexander 1995: 37).

A common distinction in the debate on hierarchy as a coordination mechanism is between internal bureaucratic hierarchical control and external political hierarchical control (Bouckaert, Peters, and Verhoest 2010: 37; T. Christensen et al. 2014: 6; Peters 2015: 47f.).
The first perspective focuses on coordination inside single bureaucratic organizations and emphasizes control by rules and regulations. Coordination takes place through an explicit chain of command and obedience that is enforced through a system of sanctions.
The second perspective takes the relationship between politicians and administrators into account. Here it is argued that ultimately responsibility and accountability for anything that happens inside bureaucracies is lodged with politicians. As a consequence, a hierarchical relationship between politicians and administrators is postulated. From this perspective, public sector organizations and their behavior should be controlled by political leaders, who can be held accountable vis-à-vis the public. Thus, making public organization work together becomes a matter of political leadership and the willingness and capacity of politicians to use their nominal power (Bouckaert, Peters, and Verhoest 2010: 37; Peters 2015: 50). Of course, politicians' actual capacity to control "their" bureaucratic organizations is often very limited for various reasons, e.g. information asymmetries (Peters 2015: 51).

Hierarchical coordination it is carried out in different forms (Bouckaert, Peters, and Verhoest 2010: 38f.):
First, coordination through hierarchy can come in form of *reallocating tasks or change in the division of labor* within government (e.g. shifting competences and task between departments) by splitting or merging organizations. For example, formally dispersed policy responsibilities regarding demographic change might be relocated into a single department aiming to reduce the need for inter-departmental coordination. Of course, this might lead to an increased need for intra-departmental coordination between divisions. Second, hierarchical coordination can be achieved by *establishing and changing lines of control*. This refers to the internal chain of command. For example, ministers may make use of their hierarchical power to align activities within their own department or decide upon conflict between divisions. Third, *planning and budgeting* may be used in a hierarchical way to coordinate governmental activities in a strategic management manner (Proeller and Siegel 2008). For example, one might think of organization-specific or even government-wide objectives that are measured by certain indicators. Finally, coordination through hierarchy may be achieved by *procedural mechanisms or routines* within government. This refers to standardization of similar or related processes across organizations. An example would be mandated information exchange, mandated consultations or co-signature of policy proposals by all affected departments before they are handed to the cabinet.

Markets

The second basic mechanism of coordination are markets (Peters 2015: 52ff.). Here, exchange between actors is seen as central in producing desired outcomes and coordination. Conceptually, markets function without formal linkages between the involved actors, because interactions are mainly mediated by prices, offer and demand and strategies of competitors. Hence, in markets "coordinated decisions are the systemic result of partisan mutual adjustment of each unit in the market to its perceived environment" (Alexander 1995: 57).
Like hierarchies, markets as coordination mechanisms are discussed from an external and internal perspective (Bouckaert, Peters, and Verhoest 2010: 41ff.). First, the external perspective refers to the establishment of markets to achieve certain policy goals. Here, the government is in the role of a market regulator, who has to regulate such things as market entry and exit, price formation, minimum standards for quality or safety. Empirical examples might be the privatization of telecommunications, public transport, postal services or energy industries.
Second, the internal perspective refers to markets or market-like instruments as means to coordinate the internal processes of public sector organizations (Peters 2015: 91). One might think of quasi-markets that are established to set incentives for certain behavior. Typically, the financial management and budgeting systems within governments can have a strong market orientation as a result of NPM reforms. One might think of performance-based financial management systems in which the organizational funding is linked to past performance according to certain indicators, or in which a organization's performance is compared to other organizations providing the same services (Bouckaert, Peters, and Verhoest 2010: 43).

Networks

The third basic mechanisms to achieve coordination through voluntary and more or less stable interactions and collaboration among mutually interdependent actors are networks (Kickert, Klijn, and Koppenjan 1997: 6; Klijn and Koppenjan 2000). Networks may be entirely composed of public sector organizations or may include actors from both the private and public sector (Peters 2015: 94). Networks are characterized by a multi-actor setting with relatively autonomous actors that face a certain problem and have relative stable horizontal relations in order to achieve a purpose through exchange of resources (Beuselinck 2008: 33). In contrast to coordination imposed vertically by authority or power, coordination in network-arrangements depends upon bargaining, negotiation and mutual cooperation among the participating organizations (Bouckaert, Peters, and Verhoest 2010: 44). Coordination through networks can come in many different formal forms and intensities that we will not discuss in detail in this thesis. One might think of simple things, such as formalized information exchange, joint decision-making bodies or elaborated joint organizations (Alexander 1995: 63; Alter and Hage 1993: 44ff.; Bouckaert, Peters, and Verhoest 2010: 46). But also informal network-like patterns can greatly enhance inter-organizational coordination (Chisholm 1989). The civil service itself, understood as a network of individual persons, has regularly been described as an informal network in its own right that can quickly bypass formal structures and rigid regulations and, thus, is able to "often solve problems of coordination with a simple phone call, or a quick chat" (Bouckaert, Peters, and Verhoest 2010: 47; Peters 2015: 94).

3.5. Concepts and debates related to coordination

In a meta-analysis of policy coordination literature in public administration research, Jale and Tosun (2013) point to several debates and concept that are concerned with coordination. We will briefly discuss the most important ones, namely: policy coherence, joined-up government, whole-of-government and policy integration.

Policy coherence

Coherence refers to the idea of creating more compatible policies across public organizations and policy domains. According to Peters, coherence is mostly discussed from an ex-ante perspective emphasizing policy design and less concerned with ex-post questions, e.g. implementation (2015: 4f.).

The concept of policy coherence is discussed in two streams of academic literature (Lang and Tosun 2013: 8): First, we can identify a policy coherence debate from a rather praxeological perspective that emerged and gained popularity in the late 1990s promoted by international organizations like the OECD, United Nations and European Union. The concept is especially discussed in the domain of development policies (European Commission 2005; OECD 1999b; 1999a; 2007). In 2002, the OECD requested to “enhance understanding of the development dimensions of member country policies and their impacts on developing countries. Analysis should consider trade-offs and potential synergies across such areas as trade, investment,

agriculture, health, education, the environment and development co-operation, to encourage greater policy coherence in support of the internationally agreed development goals" (OECD 2002). The OECD identified three building blocks of policy coherence: First, political commitment and leadership, second, the existence of policy coordination mechanisms (e.g. cabinet committees, central coordination units) that are able to mediate in conflicts and, third, monitoring and evaluation of policy coherence to ensure continued improvement (OECD 2009). In the European Union, in 1993 in the Treaty of Maastricht and again in 2007 policy coherence became an item on the agenda of improving development policies through better policy coherence (Carbone 2008).
The aforementioned praxeological discussion aiming at improving actual practice of coordination is accompanied by a debate that emerged out of the policy-subsystems and agenda-setting debate and can be deemed more explanatory. Here, the focus is on finding determinants of better policy coherence (Lang and Tosun 2013: 9f.). Policy coherence is defined "with respect to how the components and their interests relate" (May et al. 2005: 55). Further, policy coherence "implies that various policies go together because they share a set of ideas or objectives" (May, Sapotichne, and Workman 2006: 382).

Joined up government & whole of government

The idea of joined-up government originated in the United Kingdom under Tony Blair as a part of the modernization agenda that resulted from the Cabinet Office's Performance and Innovation Unit report "Wiring it up: Whitehall's Management of Cross Cutting Policies and Services" (Performance and Innovation Unit 2000), which evaluated existing coordination practices in Britain and developed guidelines for future action. It has been one of the main elements of the first Blair government and attracted quite some attention in academia and among practitioners (Ling 2002: 638). The agenda of joined-up government has been developed as a response to departmentalization and fragmentation of the British administration due to the New Public Management reforms by the conservative governments of Thatcher and Major (Ling 2002: 618). Hence, it is regarded as a Post-NPM reform approach (Wegrich 2011). The aim of NPM, broadly speaking, has been to increase specialization of the public sector and improve efficiency. Hence, those reforms emphasized elements such as rather autonomous executive agencies and establishment of single purpose organizations, performance management and privatization of formerly public organizations (T. Christensen and Lægreid 2007: 1059).
The pitfall of this "unbundling"-approach is a fragmentation of the public sector and increasing difficulties to manage interdepartmental coordination of policies and service delivery. Furthermore, political control over public sector organizations seams to decrease, which in turn raises problems of accountability (Wegrich 2011: 91).

Labor's main goals of the JUG agenda were: First, to eliminate contradictions and conflicts between polices; second, increase effectiveness of and efficiency of public server delivery by eliminating organizational redundancies, and third, to improve delivery of cross-cutting policies, i.e. policies than span organizational boundaries of departments (Bogdanor 2005; Performance and Innovation Unit 2000; Pollitt 2003; Six 2004). Benefits of this reform agenda were seen in the ability to address complex social problems in a comprehensive,

integrated way, to eliminate mutually undermining policies, make better use of resources, to create synergies by bringing together key stakeholders in a policy field and to provide citizens with seamless access to a set of related services (Bouckaert, Peters, and Verhoest 2010: 18).
JUG did not focus so much on formal organizational change of departments. Rather, "joined-up working aims to coordinate activities across organizational boundaries without removing the boundaries themselves" (Ling 2002: 616). Thus, it focuses "on the mechanisms used by two or more organizations to work together on a shared agenda while keeping their own organizational agenda and purpose" (Ling 2002: 625).
Key tools to achieve joined up governments were merged structures and budgets; joint teams (virtual or real); shared budgets; joint customer interface arrangements; shared objectives and policy indicators; consultation to enhance synergies and manage trade-offs and sharing information to increase mutual awareness (Ling 2002: 625; Performance and Innovation Unit 2000).

Whole of government can be regarded as the conceptual successor of joined-up-government and gained momentum in 2005 (T. Christensen and Lægreid 2007: 1059). It has been especially popular in countries that implemented NPM reforms to a large extend, i.e. Anglo-Saxon countries (Halligan 2007b; 2010). For example, the Australian Public Service Commission as well as the Management Advisory Committee published reports on the importance of whole-of government-thinking to tackle wicked problems and complex policies in general (Australian Public Service Commission 2007).

Policy integration

Policy integration gained increased popularity after the Brundtland Report in 1987. In the domain of environmental protection, the concept was adopted by the European Union in the late 1990 (Lenschow 2011; 2012: 3).

The basic idea of policy integration is to take goals of policies in other domains into account and to consequently increase effectiveness. A perfectly integrated policy would be one where "all significant consequences of policy decisions are recognized as decisions premises, where policy options are evaluated on the basis of their effects on some aggregate measure of utility, and where the different policy elements are consistent with each other" (Peters 2015: 4; Underdal 1980). Its purpose is "to hold the policy system together, to overcome its tendencies towards disorder, and to manage the numerous policy interconnections (Briassoulis 2004a: 13). Hence, coordination is perceived as highly necessary but at the same time difficult and often not achievable because of a multitude of involved actors with different perceptions and interests.

Lang and Tosun (2013) identified three strands of literature in the policy integration debate: The first strand consists of descriptive empirical studies, predominantly in the domain of European environmental protection and climate change (Lafferty and Hovden 2003). Other analyzed policy domains include for example food policies (Ugland and Veggeland 2006) or regional development (Schout and Jordan 2007). The second strand of literature within the debate on policy integration is rather prescriptive and normative. Here, policy integration is

regarded as a necessary condition for more effective policy making. Finally, the third strand is analytical and focuses on the bottlenecks holding back integration. Here, the focus is on power, strategies and policy preferences of involved actors (Lenschow 2012; Andrew Ross and Dovers 2008). The assessment of the actual outcome of policy integration measures seems to be a huge gap in the debate that is more concerned with the processes and normative principles of policy integration (Jordan and Lenschow 2010: 154).

3.6. Conclusion

We have extensively discussed the concept of coordination in government from a variety of perspectives and can now wrap up our approach for studying coordination. Coordination was described as fundamental to the public sector, because today's governments are inherently multi-organizational. At the same time the action of these specialized public sector organizations are interdependent. Hence, coordination becomes more and more important because "issues are becoming increasingly "cross-cutting", and do not fit the departmental boxes into which governments, and policy analysts, tend to place policies" (Peters 1998b: 296).

We discussed a variety of definitions and dimensions of coordination. In this thesis, we refer to coordination as "the adjustment of actions and decisions among interdependent actors to achieve specified goals" (Koop and Lodge 2014: 1313). This definition includes coordination as a process and coordination as an output.

We are predominantly going to deal with inter-departmental coordination that happens in inter-departmental committees. Hence, we are focusing on the internal-horizontal aspects of coordination between nominally equal governmental organizations. We will focus on both, coordination as a process (What happens in IDCs?) and coordination as an output (the product of IDCs, i.e. strategy papers). Both formal and informal parts of coordination will be covered in this thesis to adequately capture the coordination process. Our analysis will be guided by the ideal-typical distinction of negative and positive coordination. Based on these ideal-types we will derive an operationalization to measure coordination processes and outputs (see section 7.1).

4. Analytical framework - Actor-Centered Institutionalism

This chapter aims to introduce actor-centered institutionalism as a way to guide the empirical analysis by providing a research heuristic. We chose this approach, because it offers a possibility to combine institutionalist and actor-based arguments in analyzing coordination within government.

4.1. Introduction

For the last 30 years, the notion and importance of new institutionalism became well established in political science (Lowndes 1996; Peters 2012), leading to the famous claim that "we are all institutionalists now" (Pierson and Skocpol 2002: 706). Nowadays, new institutionalism is at least composed of four subsets - rational choice, historical, sociological and discursive (P. A. Hall and Taylor 1996; Nielsen 2001; V. A. Schmidt 2008). Each variant differs with regard to the definition of institutions, concept of actors and the idea of the respective interaction between actors and institutions.

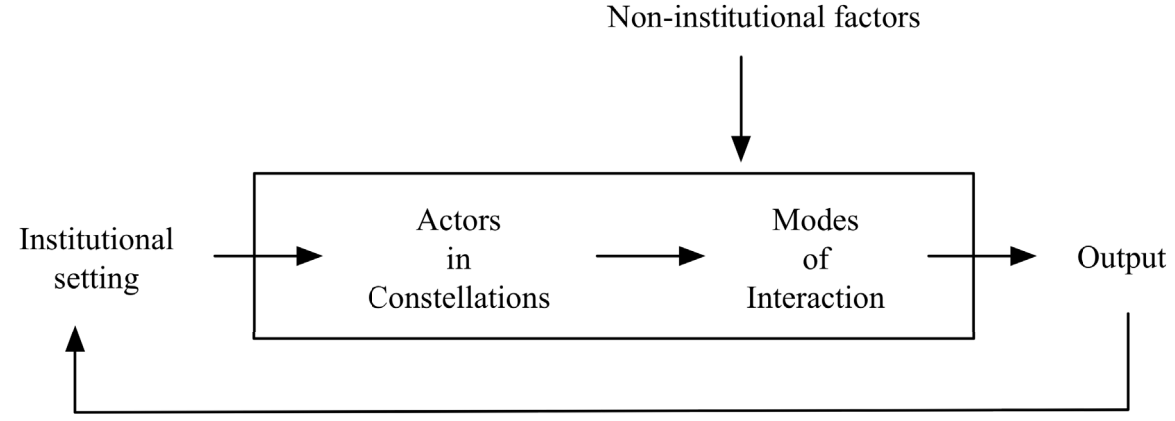
Even though ACI can be placed within the intellectual tradition of new institutionalism (Mayntz and Scharpf 1995), it does not represent a variant from the four aforementioned institutional approaches and does not even represent a theory. While theories are the more powerful the more they are able to substitute empirical data with theoretically derived assumptions, ACI rather suggests "a framework how to proceed with empirical studies" in interaction-oriented policy research (Scharpf 1997: 37) and can be understood as a heuristic approach leading the researcher's attentions to certain aspects of the empirical world. (Schimank 2004).

Mayntz and Scharpf see actor-centered institutionalism as an "tailored approach for the analysis of steering and self-organization" (1995: 39). They argue "the analysis of structures without reference to actors is as deficient as the analysis of behavior of actors without reference to structures" (1995: 46). Hence, actor-centered institutionalism enables an integration of institutional ("institutions matter") and agency-based ("actors matter") perspectives on policy processes and results. Scharpf prefers realism over parsimony and points out: "Policy, by definition, is intentional action by actors who are most interested in achieving specific outcomes. Thus, unlike in some types of sociological theory, we cannot assume that they will merely follow cultural norms or institutional rules. We also cannot assume, however, as is done in neoclassical economics or in the neorealist theory of international relations, that the goals pursued or the interests defended are invariant across actors and across time. Rather, we know that actors respond differently to external threats,

constrains, and opportunities because they may differ in their intrinsic perceptions and preferences but also because their perceptions and preferences are very much shaped by the specific institutional setting within which they interact" (1997: 37).
Put differently, ACI argues "social phenomena are to be explained as the outcome of interactions among intentional actors, but that these interactions are structured and the outcomes shaped, by the characteristics of the institutional settings within they occur" (Scharpf 1997: 1). They provide an analytical separation between actors' interaction dynamics and institutional factors when explaining policy processes and results. In a similar vein, Radaelli et al. put forward that "institutions do play a role within the policy process not outside it" and warn us to be aware of the pitfalls of institutional determinism in explaining public policy processes (2012: 547).
Taking the concept of institutions and actors into account without too strongly emphasizing one perspective over the other, the framework of ACI - once operationalized for the purpose of this thesis - enables a thorough analysis of coordination processes within and between core executive organizations and the respective outputs. ACI remains open enough to be tailored to fit the needs of various research questions, making a combination of different approaches possible as well as the focus on a particular part of the analysis (Petring 2007: 424).

In the following, the main components of actor-centered approach will be explained in detail - the institutional setting, actors with certain capabilities and orientations that act within the institutional frame work in a particular constellation and the different modes of their interaction that shape the respective output (see Figure 1).

Figure 1 Framework of Actor-Centered Institutionalism (Mayntz and Scharpf 1995: 45)



4.2. Institutional setting

Within actor-centered institutionalism the institutional setting does not have the status of a theoretically defined set of variables that could be systematized and operationalized. Rather, it is used "as a shorthand term to describe the most important influences on those factors that in fact drive our explanations - namely actors with their orientations and capabilities, actor

constellations, and modes of interactions" (Scharpf 1997: 39). The institutional setting "defines rules whose adherence can be expected from actors, constitute actors and actor constellations, distribute their resources, influences their orientations and shapes important aspects of a particular situation" (Mayntz and Scharpf 1995: 49). As already indicated in these definitions, ACI defines institutions very general as "systems of rules that structure the courses of actions that a set of actors may choose" (Scharpf 1997: 38). Put differently, institutions "include not only formal legal rules that are sanctioned by the court system and the machinery of the state but also social norms that actors will generally respect and whose violation will be sanctioned by loss of reputation, social disapproval, withdrawal of cooperation and rewards, or even ostracism" (Scharpf 1997: 38)

Rules and their influence on behavior are central within ACI, because they provide reliability of expectations between actors. However, ACI does not only refer to rules as formal regulations, but also to social norms (Scharpf 2000b: 77). Having Scott's famous three-pillar model of institutions in mind, it can be said that institutions in the view of ACI are comprised of regulative and normative element, but do not include cultural-cognitive aspects (1994; 2008: 47ff.). Hence, the definition of institutions within ACI is narrower than that of many sociological neo-institutionalists, who also emphasize these aspects of institutions, e.g. taken-for-granted world views or scripts (Zucker 1983).

Mayntz and Scharpf do not include cognitive elements in their concept of institutions, because this would take away any room for maneuver and choice from actors in an unrealistic, "crypto-deterministic" way (1995: 45). Similarly, the scholarly debate argues that the dominance of cultural-cognitive elements in institutionalist thinking may lead to a concept of overly socialized actors without any capacity to act (Barley and Tolbert 1997; Beckert 1999; S. Christensen et al. 1997; Fligstein 1997; 2001; Friedberg 1995; Oliver 1991; Powell and Dimaggio 1991; Tolbert and Zucker 1996; Walgenbach 2000; Walgenbach and Meyer 2008). Furthermore, Senge argues that cognitive elements of institutions must not be conceptualized as an equally important pillar of institutions, as done by Scott. Laws and social norms need to be cognitively processed by individuals in order to guide and influence their behavior. Hence cognitive elements are rather a kind of higher main category that include regulative and normative elements as sub-categories. (Senge 2006: 41; 2011: 87).

We shall now discuss the both elements - regulations and social norms - of the institutional setting in the reasoning of actor-centered institutionalism in more detail.

Regulative elements of institutions refer to formal rules and standards, that constrain and regulate behavior of actors (Scott 2008: 51). This line of reasoning is connected with ideas from institutional economics and rational choice institutionalism (Moe 1984; North 1990; Williamson 1975). Concepts like rule-setting, monitoring and sanctioning of non-compliance are central to this aspect of institutions. Regulative elements of institutions structure action by explicit rules and laws (Senge 2011: 85). Conformity by actors with institutional provisions is achieved by the actors' attempt to avoid sanctions or to acquire certain benefits that are connected to the compliance with the institutional rules (Scott 2008: 52; Senge 2011: 85). Formal rules will discourage actors to pursue policy goals that are clearly in conflict with existing regulations (Scharpf 2000a: 775). Moreover, institutions may constitute certain incentives for behavior by increasing benefits attributed to particular options (Scharpf 1997:

39). Thus, actors follow to some extend a cost-benefit-analysis, although actors in ACI are not conceptualized as purely rational, but limited by a bounded rationality (Simon 1997). Their behavior is to some extend guided by a logic of instrumentality or logic of consequence (T. Christensen et al. 2007: 22ff.; Scott 2008: 52).

The second understanding of institutions with the ACI framework refers to social norms that were especially emphasized by early sociologists (Hughes 1939; Parsons 1990; Selznick 1949). In this understanding, values and norms articulate expectations how things should be done and what is perceived as preferred. Put differently, norms refer to the legitimate means to pursue valued ends and values are seen as prescriptions about what is desirable (Scott 2008: 54f.). Thereby, social norms and values constitute more or less clear directions for action and standards that serve to evaluate behavior (Scott 2008: 54f.; Senge 2011: 85; Walgenbach and Meyer 2008: 58). Those normative standards contribute to stabilizing the relationship between the organization and its members by limiting possible courses of action. Compliance with social norms it not explained by a cost-benefit analysis, but with an obligation to fulfill particular expectations of peers and the respective appropriate behavior that is associated with a role within an organization, one's own identity or the membership in a particular organization and its institutionalized practices and expectations. Hence, normative elements of institutions guide behavior by a "logic of appropriateness" (T. Christensen et al. 2007: 40ff.; March and Olsen 2009).
This logic shapes what is seen as rightful, expected and legitimate by the institutionalized practices of a collectivity since "political institutions are collections of interrelated rules and routines that define appropriate actions in terms of relations between roles and situations" (March and Olsen 1989: 160; 2009). Put differently: the logic of appropriateness "means that a person acts in accordance with his or her experience of what has worked well in the past, or upon what feels fair, reasonable and acceptable in the environment the person works within" (T. Christensen et al. 2007: 3). Accordingly, actors' context plays an important factor in the logic of appropriateness.
By emphasizing the importance of internalized social norms, ACI remains quite critical towards the idea of an overly calculating actor postulated in rational-choice reasoning (Schimank 2004: 295).[4] March and Olsen illustrate the logic of appropriateness by three elementary questions that humans ask themselves to take reasoned action: "What kind of a situation is this? What kind of a person am I? What does a person such as I do in a situation such as this?" (2009: 4). The rule of appropriateness connects certain situations with particular actions and political action is seen as the "fulfillment of duties and obligations" (March and Olsen 1984: 741).

Of course, an analytical separation of elements of institutions remains always a little bit artificial because in reality institutional components are strongly influencing each other in various ways and analytical distinction is not always possible (Scott 2008: 135). For example, Edelman and Suchman describe organizations as cultural rule-followers and "the law as a

[4] Although it seems that the usefulness of rational-choice institutionalism is evaluated quite differently by Renate Mayntz and Fritz W. Scharpf. Scharpf puts much more emphasis on game-theoretical assumptions (Kaiser 2009: 327; Scharpf 1997; 2000b).

system of moral principles, scripted roles, and sacred symbols (1997: 479). In this view, regulative elements of institutions exert influence on actors not by sanctions, but rather trough their mere normative appeal as well as cognitively rooted de-facto reality that they represent. Similarly, Senge argues that there is hardly any law (regulative element) that functions effectively as an institution without a normative foundation (2011: 87). Hence, laws do not only function through their sanctions, but also because of their normative appeal or mere social acceptance.

As illustrated in Figure 1, Mayntz and Scharpf also include "non-institutional factors" in their model. In this thesis, we will regard this as the political context that might influence actor's behavior, but cannot be conceptualized as the institutional framework, i.e. formal rules and social norms. We're going to discuss the empirical non-institutional factors in section 5.2.

4.3. Actors, action orientations, capabilities, constellations

The focus of ACI is on policy processes that are understood as the institutionally embedded interactions among actors. Crucial in ACI is the notion of actors' orientations and capabilities that may affect the outcome (Scharpf 1997: 11). In the following, ACI's understanding of actors with their respective action orientations and capabilities will be explained.

What is an actor in the perspective of actor-centered institutionalism? What constitutes an actor in ACI is the ability of agency - the power over the actor's resources (Mayntz and Scharpf 1995: 49f.). As shown before, actors are not conceptualized as "hyper-rational" nor as overly socialized by the institutional framework. Rather, they are capable of strategic action in a bounded rational way. Put differently: they are conceptualized as a "cognitive homo sociologicus" (cited in Friedberg 1995: 202; Padioleau 1986). This labels an actor who is active in shaping own interests, ideas, resources and aims while at the same time being embedded - but not determined - within the institutional framework.

Acknowledging the "society of organizations" (Perrow 1991), ACI puts its emphasis on corporate actors. Corporate actors are formal organizations, composed of individuals. Disposition of resources is formally regulated in some way (e.g. hierarchical or majoritarian). Hence, individual members do not own resources of corporate actors. In general, ACI treats individual actors as delegates of theirs organizations and thus limits the analysis to the level of corporate actors for pragmatic reasons of limiting the costs of research as much as plausibly possible. However, Mayntz and Scharpf are well aware that the concept of corporate actors is not always fully adequate to explain certain outcomes. First, organizations are composed of internal coalitions with different interests, perceptions and resources and, second, individuals are not always fully controlled by their organizations and have quite a bit of leeway (1995: 50f.). In addition, they emphasize that especially in inter-organizational interactions, for example inter-departmental negotiations, the individual members can make a difference, because they might differ with regard to their hierarchical position and, thus,

capacity to take decisions for their organizations. Hence, in some cases, individual members of an organization have to be taken into account when explaining action of corporate actors (Mayntz and Scharpf 1995: 51).

Action orientations

As pointed out, the institutional setting strongly influences actor's behavior but does not determine it in a "crypto-deterministic"-way (Mayntz and Scharpf 1995: 45). Hence, institutions are not seen as omnipotent. Rather, they leave some room for maneuver and choice to the actors. Mayntz and Scharpf conceptualize the use of possible leeway as being shaped by action orientations (Mayntz and Scharpf 1995: 52ff.).

Action orientations refer to interpretations of situations, they prescribe what is perceived as relevant to actors and how they make sense of their environment. Action orientations point to the fact that different actors (or groups within corporate actors) may have different perspectives on a particular matter. As a result, interpretation of problems and solutions may differ because of different frames of reference. They are quite comparable to the concept of action logics. Those are understood as "the implicit relationship between means and ends" (Bacharach, Bamberger, and Sonnenstuhl 1996: 427) that "govern[s] behavior" (Bacharach and Mundell 1993: 427). Thus, logics of action represent a scheme of orientation for actors, according to which they define what is relevant and how they evaluate and make sense of situations i.e., logics of action allow for a 'rationalization of action' (Giddens 1993: 90).

To some extend, action orientations are influenced by the institutional setting, e.g. by the responsibility for a certain tasks or by the position within a particular actor constellation. At the same time, action orientations are shaped by properties of the respective actor. As mentioned earlier, ACI tries to bridge institutional and actor centered approaches. Action orientations are strongly connected to the affiliation of an individual actor to a specific organization. Put differently: "actors' strategies, or the ways in which they want to achieve their goals, are affected by their organizational and institutional affiliation" (Egeberg and Sætren 1999: 96). As we acknowledge that actors are composed of different hierarchical levels or internal coalitions, the assumption of only one dominant action orientation has to be seen as a mere ideal-typical reduction of real world complexity (Brunsson and Olsen 1998: 21). Therefore, we are open to the idea, that organizations incorporate different action orientations at the same time.

Mayntz and Scharpf distinguish between *cognitive, motivational* and *relational* action orientations (Mayntz and Scharpf 1995: 53ff.; Scharpf 2000b: 111).

The *cognitive* dimension refers to the actor's perception of the situations they are part of. This includes desirable choices for action and respective results expected by actors. Cognitive orientations of an actor also include what actions of others are expected (Schimank 2004: 295). Hence, if actors are ought to work together to tackle a policy problem, a commonly shared interpretation of the situations might be crucial. Since selective perceptions and diverging interpretations of the situation can be expected, this is, however, quite hard to achieve (Dearborn and Simon 1958).

Motivational action orientations relate to the actor specific criteria to choose to take certain action instead of possible alternatives. According to ACI, motivation for action can be

explained by three factors. First, social norms guide behavior by the aforementioned logic of appropriateness (March and Olsen 1989; Mayntz and Scharpf 1995: 56). Second, ACI assumes actor's to possess some abstract standard self-interests, e.g. autonomy, resources and the mere existence (Mayntz and Scharpf 1995: 55; Schimank 2004: 296). The concept of actor's interests needs further specification in an empirical context. Third, Mayntz and Scharpf assume preferences based on an actor's identity. They distinguish this from social norms and external expectations and rather refer to ideas of organizational culture or corporate identities (corporate actors) or socialization (individuals) (1995: 57).
Lastly, *relational* action orientations take actor's relationships to each other into account. Put differently: these action orientations ideal-typically describe how actors interact with each other. The following five ideal-typical relational action orientations are assumed to be most common and important to adequately analyze interactions (Mayntz and Scharpf 1995: 57f.; Scharpf 2000b: 148ff.):

- Hostility ("I win if others lose!"),
- competition ("I need to win more than others!"),
- egoistic-rational ("I only care for my win!"),
- cooperation ("All of us shall win!"), and
- altruism ("You shall win!).

Depending on the context, a particular relational action orientation might be considered appropriate and thus expected, although in real politics hostility and altruism might be extremely rare or limited by social norms and expectations of appropriate behavior. Furthermore, the dominance of a relational action orientation over others might not be stable over time. Hence, actor relationships are not entirely stable but might change according to the particular situation.

Capabilities

Broadly speaking, capabilities describes "all action resources that allow an actor to influence an outcome in certain respects and to a certain degree" (Scharpf 1997: 43). Action orientations can only be put into reality if actors are capable of actually taking action. Thus, ACI points to actor's capabilities: "even the most enlightened perceptions and preferences will fail to make a practical difference" (Scharpf 1997: 51). ACI does not offer a set of possibly important capabilities, but puts emphasis on those capabilities that are created or restricted by the institutional setting. Since Mayntz and Scharpf remain quite unspecific in their concept of capabilities, they have to be defined in relation to the specific empirical interest under study (Schimank 2004: 300).
To deepen our understanding of the rather broad idea of capabilities within the framework of ACI, we rely on the concept of power, as the "the basis of organized action" (Crozier and Friedberg 1993: 39ff.). Max Weber's definition of power is still one of the most influential today: "Within a social relationship, power means every chance (no matter whereon this chance is based) to carry through the own will (even against resistance)" (see the discussion

on the translation in Wallimann, Tatsis, and Zito 1977: 232f.; Weber 1980: 28).[5] This definition entails that power is a relational concept that takes relationships between actors into consideration. Hence, an actor is not powerful or powerless per se, but only with respect to other social actors in a specific social relationship (Pfeffer 2001: 304). Furthermore, power can have several sources. Various sources of power have been identified within single organizations (Crozier and Friedberg 1993: 49ff.; French and Raven 1959; Raven 2008). However, as this thesis predominantly deals with horizontal interdepartmental coordination, we need a concept of power that is applicable in a context of inter-organizational interaction. This strand of literature takes power relationships between groups, organizations, whole networks or system as the unit of analysis and thus fits our purpose of further specifying the idea of capabilities.

Huxham and Beech provide a useful typology of power sources in an inter-organizational setting, based on a rich scholarly debate in the field of inter-organizational research (2008: 563ff.). According to them, power sources are to be found on a macro and micro level. The sources are ‚macro' in two senses: first, they rather relate to corporate actors, like organizations and not to individuals. Second, the power relationship is assumed to be more ore less stable over time. On the macro level, power can be based on three aspects that we will discuss now.

First, acknowledging the resource-dependency approach (Pfeffer and Salancik 1978), a source of power can be seen in the imbalance of resources between the interacting organizations. Put differently, an organization possesses power if it has some sort of resource that another organization needs. Several things can be a resource; what matters is its scarcity and that others in the inter-organizational setting somehow depend on it. Thus, specific expertise (Crozier and Friedberg 1993: 51; French and Raven 1959: 163), essential skills or information (Crozier and Friedberg 1993: 52) can be understood as a power source.

Second, power can be based on mismatches in the importance of the collaborative relationship to the partners (Casciaro and Piskorski 2005). One might think of an example: If organization A is clearly accountable for the collaboration output and depends on other organizations to achieve it, the other involved organizations are in a rather good bargaining position. To avoid reputational damage, organization A might accept many conditions of the other organization to avoid a failure of the collaboration.

Third, power can be based on a certain structural position within the inter-organizational setting (Yan and Gray 1994). A clearly structural dominant position is rarely to be found in inter-organizational settings, as they usually do not involve formal elements of hierarchy (Chisholm 1989). However, also without the formal competence to give orders, a structurally dominant position can be achieved. Huxham and Beech point to three possible forms of structural power (2008: 564f.). First of all, most inter-organizational settings have some kind of lead organization that is in charge of facilitating the process. Thus, by setting the agenda and schedule of meetings, an organization can actively shape the output of the inter-organizational setting by using organizational rules (Crozier and Friedberg 1993: 53). The second form of structural power derives from the number of relationships an organizations is able to establish to "relevant segments of the organization's environment" (Crozier and

[5] Macht bedeutet jede Chance, innerhalb einer sozialen Beziehung den eigenen Willen auch gegen Widerstreben durchzusetzen, gleichviel worauf diese Chance beruht.

Friedberg 1993: 52). It is argued that organizations with direct relationships to many other organizations are in a strong position to influence the output of an inter-organizational setting. One might think of the ability to form alliances or coalitions due to contact to many organizations. Finally, discursive power is discussed as a form of structural power. Discursive power points to "sets of meanings that have become historically embedded in language. They are dominant which means that they are silently reproduced. […] Discourses 'discipline' and 'govern' and get institutionalized within individuals, and in all kind of practices and organizations" (Metze 2009: 244). Put differently, discursive power points to the fact that some organizations are perceived more important or legitimate and, hence, their arguments are valued higher than others.

Next to the three power sources that are to be found on the macro level, Huxham and Beech also point to inter-organizational power sources on the micro level. The micro-level focuses on the day-to-day enactment of power taking place between individuals (2008: 566ff.). Thus, they direct the researcher's attention to the role and necessary traits of network managers (Hibbert, Huxham, and Smith Ring 2008; Klijn 2008: 130ff.). For example, Williams discusses the need of "an acute awareness amongst the boundary spanners […] that they lack direct lines of authority over other partners, and the atmosphere of inter-organizational working needs to be set within decision-making models that are premised on consensus, equality and win-win solutions". Consequently, important skills of boundary spanners are influencing, bargaining, negotiation, mediation and brokering (2002: 117). Similarly, Fligstein points to "social skills" as "the ability to motivate cooperation in other actors by providing those actors with common meanings and identities in which actions can be undertaken and justified" (1997: 398; 2001; 2012). Others refer to the idea of "social capital" as a "conceptualization of power as persuasion or influence through social network relations" (Knorke and Chen 2008: 463). Both concepts focus on the individuals within the inter-organizational setting. Basically, it is argued that some traits of specific persons can make a difference for the inter-organizational system through a good reputation, trust or other forms of social ties. Ultimately, the basic argument is: "how actors are perceived matters" in inter-organizational settings (Carpenter and Krause 2012; Ingold and Leifeld 2014: 4).

Table 6 Sources of power in inter-organizational setting (Huxham and Beech 2008: 563), own additions

Power based on need imbalance	**Power based on importance imbalance**	**Power based on structural position**	**Power based on day-to-day activities**
skills, information, money	strategic centrality, uniqueness, sanctions	formal hierarchical position, network centrality, discursive power	social skills, social capital
	Macro-level		Micro-level

Finally, we need to acknowledge that not every relationship in inter-departmental coordination can be adequately described by the notion of power. Hence, it is important to

distinguish between power and authority (Pfeffer 2001: 305; Thurner and Stoiber 2002: 570). Power that is legitimized can be denoted as authority. Legitimacy in this reasoning can be seen as "a generalized perception or assumption that the actions of an entity are desirable, proper, or appropriate within some socially constructed systems of norms, values, beliefs, and definitions" (Suchman 1995: 574). According to Pfeffer, "in any social setting, there are certain beliefs and practices that come to be accepted within that setting […] The distribution of power can within a social setting also become legitimate over time, so that those within the setting expect and value a certain pattern of influence" (2001: 305). The difference between power and authority can be seen in its costs. While power requires enforcing something by using resources, the use of authority (as power that has become legitimated), is expected and valued by others. As power becomes institutionalized into authority, it becomes less dependent on the resources and determinants that may have produced it initially. At that stage, authority rather relies on the social acceptance and social approval and does not need to be justified over and over again (Pfeffer 2001: 306). Bouckaert, Peters and Verhoest briefly put the difference of power and authority as follows: In their view governmental "authority implies legitimacy and the ability to get things done without opposition […] If there is authority a government can govern simply by expressing its belief in the appropriateness of certain behavior" (Bouckaert, Peters, and Verhoest 2010: 37).

Actors in constellations

Hardly any actor in policy making is able to conduct unilateral action. Rather, often a plurality of actors is involved in policy processes (Mayntz and Scharpf 1995: 60; Scharpf 1997: 44). In actor-centered institutionalism, this fact is captured with the idea of actor constellations. Constellations are structured by the institutional setting, which allows some actors to join the policy process while others stay out (Mayntz and Scharpf 1995: 63; Scharpf 2000a: 775). Actor constellations describe how actors relate to each other in policy making. As Scharpf puts it: Actor constellations include "the players involved, their strategy options […] and the preferences of the players over these outcomes" (1997: 44). As actors in constellations might have different motivational orientations, i.e. preferences, constellations also point to potential conflict among actors. Analytically, however, it does not include information regarding the mode of interaction through which this conflict is resolved (Scharpf 2000b: 129). Metaphorically, actor constellations describe how the playing field is set up and who takes part, but does not describe the play itself (Evers 2004: 63). Actor constellations provide a static picture of the situation and describe what is known about the actors. This includes the amount of involved actors, their aforementioned orientations (i.e. cognitive, motivational and relational) as well as capabilities (legal, financial/human resources, social skills, etc.) or other factors that might be deemed important to understand the empirical case (Schimank 2004: 297). Hence, the idea of actor constellations enables research to account for policy variation without overly stressing the institutional setting (Radaelli, Dente, and Dossi 2012: 543). For example, an institutional setting might be rather similar across various cases, but leading to different outputs due to different actor constellations.

While Scharpf's version of ACI utilizes game-theoretical reasoning to abstractly illustrate possible effects of actor constellations (1997; 2000b), one does not necessarily have to follow

that line of argumentation. Since ACI can be treated as a mere heuristic to guide empirical research (Scharpf 1997: 37), ACI is flexible enough to be adopted to a wide range of empirical phenomena on the micro, meso- or macro-level (Petring 2007: 424).

4.4. Modes of interaction

While actor constellations point to potential conflict, the concept of modes of interaction describes what actually happens within the actor constellations to solve conflict. It is regarded as an important factor to explain results of policy processes (Mayntz and Scharpf 1995: 43; Scharpf 1997: 1; 2000a: 776). Mayntz and Scharpf refer to modi of interaction as "social coordination of action" known from the governance debate (1995: 61). These are (1) unilateral decision-making, (2) negotiations, (3) voting or (4) hierarchical decision-making (Mayntz and Scharpf 1995: 61; Scharpf 1997: 46f.; 2000a: 775; 2000b: 167-318; Schimank 2004: 298). The modes of interaction differ in their demands on the institutional capacity for conflict resolution. Hence, it is the institutional setting that enables certain modes of interaction. For example, unilateral action could occur in the absence of any institutional structure, successful negotiations depend on structures assuring the binding character of agreements, and decisions by majority vote or by hierarchical direction depend on much more specific and demanding institutional arrangements (Scharpf 1997: 46f.). As this thesis is interested in horizontal interdepartmental coordination, we will predominantly deal with negotiated agreements.

4.5. Conclusion

The approach of actor-centered institutionalism is an adequate tool for gaining a structured understanding of complex policy processes. It is no theory in itself; rather its aim is to provide a heuristic for empirical research and to direct the attention to certain aspects of empirical reality.
Neither a sole focus on institutions, understood as formal rules or social norms, nor a focus on actors is seen as appropriate to understand how policy processes and outputs are shaped. Hence, we argue that policy outputs can be seen as the result of interaction of actors shaped by the institutional context in which the actors and their interactions are embedded.

These aspects together shape policy processes and outputs: (1) the institutional setting, (2) the actors within this setting in a certain constellation and the (3) interactions among them. First, the institutional setting consists of formal rules and social norms. Hence, actors' behavior is partly shaped by a logic of instrumentality as well as a logic of appropriateness. The former refers to sanctions or incentives based on formal regulations, the latter refers to action as the expected and legitimate behavior in a certain situation. Second, actors are characterized by their action orientations and their capabilities, understood as all action resources that allow an

actor to influence the policy process in a desired way to a certain degree. Actor constellations provide a static picture of the situation and describe what is known about the actors. Third, the modi of interaction focus on how conflict within constellations is settled in various ways. Ideal-typically, Mayntz and Scharpf distinguish between unilateral or mutual adjustment, negotiated agreement, voting or hierarchical decision-making.

5. Adaptation of ACI for the empirical analysis of coordination of demography policies on German state level

After discussing ACI in more conceptual terms, in this chapter we will adapt the framework of ACI for the empirical focus of this thesis, i.e. inter-departmental coordination of cross-cutting policies in inter-departmental committees at the level of German states

This chapter is structured as follows: First, we are going to discuss regulative and normative elements of the institutional framework in which German states are embedded and that consequently shapes coordination in IDCs. Second, we will illustrate the non-institutional factors that shape governmental action in German state governments, which we will capture by the label political framework. Third, we will describe in detail the two types of actors that are relevant for this study - State Chancelleries and line departments. We will pay attention to their functions, structure, action orientations and capabilities to shape the coordination process. Fourth, we will discuss inter-departmental committees as administrative coordination bodies.

In the section on State Chancelleries as well as in the one on IDCs, we will discuss an optimistic and pessimistic perspective regarding their capacity to achieve positive coordination.

5.1. Institutional framework of central government coordination in German states

State governments are embedded in an institutional framework that constraints and enables behavior. As discussed in section 4.2, we will distinguish between regulative and normative elements of the institutional framework in which horizontal inter-departmental coordination in German states governments takes place.

5.1.1. Regulative elements - formal rules in state governments

In general, formal rules are an important factor to understand German administrative behavior, as German bureaucracies are seen as rooted within the *Rechtsstaat* tradition (Peters and Painter 2010; Pollitt and Bouckaert 2011). The *Rechtsstaat* tradition emphasizes the importance of regulations and procedures. Consequently, "it is not possible to understand how departments work, and how officials make decrees, without understanding the rules and formal provisions governing German administration" (Page 2012: 69).

In this thesis, regulative elements of the institutional framework are seen as threefold (Hustedt 2013b: 108ff.): First, we focus on the formal constitutional principles, i.e. Prime Minister principle, departmental principle and cabinet principle. Together, these three principles prescribe the general structure and operation of the government, outlining the "constitutional framework of executive action" (Mayntz 1980: 142). Second, we focus on the Joint Rules of Procedure of Departments that provide detailed regulations on the formally correct process of policy making and interdepartmental coordination among departments (*Gemeinsame Geschäftsordnung der Ministerien, GGO*). Third, we pay attention to the Rules of Procedure of the Government (*Geschäftsordnung der Regierung, GOReg*) that prescribes the relation and interaction between the head of government, the cabinet and the ministers in more detail.

5.1.1.1. Constitutional principles

In the scholarly debate, the three constitutional principles are extensively discussed as major factors for understanding German executive organizations on the federal and state level (Fleischer 2012: 80ff.; Hustedt 2013b: 108ff.; Niedobitek 2004; Rudzio 2015: 256ff.).
In general, the constitutional principles at state level largely follow a blueprint provided by the Federal Basic Law (Niedobitek 2004: 364ff.; Pestalozza 2014). Hence, the constitutional prescriptions of executive action and respective consequences for policy making in the state constitutions are said to be very similar (Kulik 2002: 31; Niedobitek 2004: 365). As a consequence, many institutional analyses that focus on the federal level can also be applied to the state level, although details in the constitutions differ (K. König 1975: 226). Put differently: all state governments largely face the same constitutional prerequisites. As a consequence, it is not necessary to analyze them for every single case study. Therefore, we introduce them only once and later on treat them as a part of the institutional framework that is present in every state government as well as in every case under scrutiny.

Each constitution entails a paragraph like this: "The Prime Minister determines and is responsible for the general policy guidelines. Within the limits set by these guidelines, each Minister conducts the affairs of his department independently and on his own responsibility" (Niedobitek 2004: 365ff.; Pestalozza 2014).[6] The first sentence describes the Prime Minister principle and the leadership function of the head of government, while the second refers to the departmental principle.

Prime Minister principle

The Prime Minister Principle (*Ministerpräsidentenprinzip*) provides certain formal prerogatives to the Prime Minister. First, nearly all Prime Minister have the right to appoint

[6] „Der Ministerpräsident bestimmt die Richtlinien der Politik und trägt dafür die Verantwortung. Innerhalb dieser Richtlinien leitet jeder Minister seinen Geschäftsbereich selbständig und unter eigener Verantwortung"; Art. 49 Abs. 1 BaWüVerf, Art, 47 Abs, 2, 51 Abs. 1 BayVerf, Art. 89 BrandbgVerf, Art, 42 Abs. 1 HambVerf, Art. 102 HessVerf, Art.46 MecklVorpVerf, Art. 37 NiedersVerf, Art. 55 NordrWestfVerf, Art, 104 RheinlPfVerf, Art, 91 SaarlVerf,Art. 63 SächsVerf, Art. 68 SachsAnhVerf, Art, 29 SchleswHolVerf, Art. 76 ThürVerf.

and dismiss ministers as members of the cabinet, although the state constitutions differ in some details.[7] However, the constitutions of the cases under scrutiny in this thesis all entail the same regulation: formally the Prime Minister appoints Ministers without need for approval by the parliament. The second prerogatives of the Prime Minister is to organize the executive branch, i.e. to establish and change number and jurisdiction of departments by organizational decrees. However, this is strongly limited by parliamentarian veto rights in some states[8] and the respective Minister's authority to autonomously organize their own area of competence as prescribed in the departmental principle as well as by political factors, e.g. coalition treaties that specify departmental portfolios (Derlien 1996b). Lastly, the Prime Minister has the constitutionally codified prerogative of setting the general policy guidelines (*Richtlinienkompetenz*). We are going to discuss implications of *Richtlinienkompetenz* for policy making and coordination later on in detail (see section 5.2.1). Again, in the empirical reality, the Prime Minister's prerogative to set policy guidelines is to some extend limited by political factors (e.g. coalition partners, internal party factions) that we are going to discuss later in this study.

Departmental principle

The second constitutional principle of executive action is the departmental principle (*Ressortprinzip*). This principles prescribes that all matters in the area of competence of a particular Minister are conducted independently and on his/her own responsibility. It emphasizes the accountability of departmental ministers for anything that happens in the name of their department (*Ministerverantwortlichkeit*).[9] As a consequence of the postulate of Minister accountability, the departmental principle also entails the Minister's power to decide about the internal organizational structure of their department (*Organisationsgewalt*)[10], limited only by the prescriptions on departmental structures in the Joint Rules of Procedure (see 5.1.1.2). The reasoning here is that only if ministers have encompassing power over

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7 In North Rhine-Westphalia, Schleswig-Holstein and all Eastern German states Thuringia, Saxony-Anhalt, Saxony, Mecklenburg-Vorpommern and Brandenburg the Prime Minister can appoint ministers on his own without any need of approval by the parliament. In Baden-Württemberg, Bavaria, Hamburg, Hesse, Rhineland-Palatinate, Saarland and Lower Saxony the Prime Minister may appoint ministers, but the parliament has the right of reserve approval and can issue a veto. In Berlin, the Governing Mayor of Berlin may only propose ministers to be elected by the Parliament. In Bremen, Ministers are formally appointed by the Parliament without a say of the Prime Minister (Niedobitek 2004: 360ff.; Schümer 2005: 24ff.).

8 In Brandenburg, Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, North Rhine-Westphalia, Saarland and Schleswig Holstein the parliament may not issue a veto against organizational decrees by the Prime Minister; however in Bavaria the parliament may issue a veto. In Berlin the parliaments formally decides proposals of the Governing mayor. In the remaining German states Baden-Württemberg, Bremen, Hamburg, Hesse, Lower Saxony, Rhineland-Palatinate, Saxony, Saxony-Anhalt and Thuringia the cabinet formally decides as a collegial body over the establishment of departments. However, scholarly work in the field of law agrees that this may rather be understood as fine-tuning within the limits of the Prime Minister's *Richtlinienkompetenz* (Niedobitek 2004: 363p.; Schümer 2005: 10ff.).

9 On the federal level, ministers are not individually responsible to the parliament, but only to the Chancellor (Koch 2005) On the state level, the picture is more diverse (Gebauer 2006: 137) In Bavaria and Rhineland-Palatinate parliament can dismiss individual ministers (Art. 51 Abs. 1 BayVerf; Art. 104 Abs. 1 S. 2 Rh-PfVerf.).

10 Art. 49 Abs. 1 BaWüVerf.; Art, 47 Abs, 2, 51 Abs. 1 BayVerf.; Art. 89 BrandbgVerf.; Art, 42 Abs. 1 HambVerf.; Art. 102 HessVerf.; Art.46 MecklVorpVerf.; Art. 37 NiedersVerf.; Art. 55 NordrWestfVerf.; Art, 104 RheinlPfVerf.; Art, 91 SaarlVerf.; Art. 63 SächsVerf.; Art. 68 SachsAnhVerf.; Art, 29 SchleswHolVerf.; Art. 76 ThürVerf.

"their" department, it is legitimate to make them accountable for anything that happens within their area of competence.
Furthermore, the departmental principle emphasizes the division of labor within the government according to the jurisdictions of departments. It "provides substantial autonomy to single ministers within their policy domains as well as in all questions of the management and organization of his/her department, from which substantial autonomy for single departments in relation to the other departments […] derives" (Hustedt and Tiessen 2006: 24). This means that within his sphere of jurisdiction, a Minister cannot be given specific orders, not even by the Prime Minister (Busse 1994; Schümer 2005: 67ff.). The departmental principle is seen as a key to understand German departmental bureaucracies, as it serves as the main frame of reference for bureaucrats (Döhler 2007; Mayntz and Scharpf 1975; Scharpf 1973a). As result of the departmental autonomy, the coordination of highly interdependent policy problems faces many coordination problems (K. König 2002e: 339). These are caused by a strong focus of bureaucrats on the well being and interests of the own department, often coined as departmentalism (Kavanagh and Richards 2001) or "departmental egoism [as] the negative flip-side of the departmental principle" (Fleischer, Hustedt and Döhler 2007: 18). Thus, already in the 1970s it had been discussed whether the *Ressortprinzip* is outdated (Kölble 1973). Consequences of departmentalism for the individual bureaucrat's behavior in horizontal coordination will be discussed in section 5.1.2.1 as part of the normative institutional framework.

Cabinet principle

Lastly, state constitutions prescribe the cabinet principle (*Kabinettprinzip*). We can illustrate it by using the constitution of Brandenburg as an example: "The Prime Minister chairs the government. The government decides with a majority vote. In case of a parity of votes, the Prime Minister's vote counts".[11] All proposals submitted to parliament by the government must pass through the cabinet. Limited by the Chancellor's right to formulate general policy guidelines and by the independent jurisdictions of the departmental ministers, the cabinet is legally expected to function as a collective decision-making body (Gebauer 2006: 132ff.).
Although it might seem that cabinets are the appropriate place to achieve inter-departmental coordination since they comprise all ministers as well as the head of government, this is rather not the case. Quite in contrast, the cabinet has been described as the weakest of the three constitutional principles (Elgie 1995: 85; Hustedt 2013b 111). The reasons for that are twofold: First and foremost, ministers rather identify with the policies and preferences of their departments than with the collegial body of the cabinet, because they "will be briefed on all other policy issues from a departmental point of view" (Mayntz and Scharpf 1975: 43). As a result, ministers "become wedded to their particular departments and tend to acquire a departmental perspective" (G. Smith 1991: 49) and eventually get "captured" (Andeweg 2000: 391).

[11] (1) Der Ministerpräsident führt den Vorsitz in der Landesregierung. Die Regierung faßt ihre Beschlüsse mit Stimmenmehrheit. Bei Stimmengleichheit entscheidet die Stimme des Ministerpräsidenten. Der Ministerpräsident leitet die Geschäfte nach einer von der Landesregierung beschlossenen Geschäftsordnung. (Art. 90 BrandbgVerf.).

The second reason why the cabinet is not a place of much discussion and (positive) coordination can simply be seen in the lack of capacity - the cabinet can be described as a "bottleneck" (Rudzio 2015: 261f.). The head of government and ministers can only pay selective attention to specific items on the political agenda and are rather overwhelmed by the sheer amount that has to be decided and coordinated (Groeben 1968: 405; K. König 2002b: 378).[12]

As a result, conflict between departments is settled much earlier in the political process. Thus, unlike the formal requirements as prescribed in the constitutions, mostly no voting takes place in cabinet meetings. Quite in contrast, it is rather a "place of harmony" (K. König 2002a: 186). Conflict is either settled at earlier stages of the policy making process through the lower ranks of the departmental bureaucracies, by informal bodies of conflict management, e.g. coalition committees comprising the senior figures of the coalition (see the section on coalition democracy 5.2.4), by bilateral informal talks between members of the government or - although rather uncommon - through cabinet committees staffed with ministers (Busse 1993; Mayntz 1980: 156; Rudzio 2015: 261f.).

In conclusion, the cabinet is an assembly of heads of departments which must formally ratify all policy proposals originating from the departments rather than an arena were decisions are actually made (Fleischer, Hustedt, and Döhler 2007: 12; Hustedt 2013b: 112; K. König 2002b: 378; Mayntz 1980: 143; Mayntz and Scharpf 1975: 43). Its function can be described as a "final political check" (Müller-Rommel 1997: 191) of decisions prepared elsewhere, i.e. most likely in the departments or coalition committees.

We can conclude that the constitutional principles combine elements of hierarchy (*Richtlinienkomptenz*), departmental autonomy (*Ressortprinzip*) and collective decision-making (*Kabinettprinzip*) (Andeweg 2000: 381). From a legal point of view, the three presented principles are constitutionally ought to be in permanent balance (Oldiges 1983: 19). However, in reality of all-day politics this is hardly the case. The assessment of the actual dominance of one principle over the others varies. On the one hand, the Prime Minister principle and Cabinet principle to some degree have centripetal power in horizontal coordination providing a chance for integration of governmental action. On the other hand, strong autonomous line departments as comprised in the department principle have centrifugal power making effective coordination less likely (Hustedt and Tiessen 2006: 25). Some deem the departmental principle to be dominant in the constitutional reality (Hesse and Ellwein 1997; Hustedt 2013a; 2013b; 2014b; Mayntz 1987; Thiébault 1993; Zerr 2006). It is argued that the departmental principle is so important for understanding the attitude and orientation of the German bureaucracy, because it structures the attention of bureaucrats according to the organizational boundaries of a department and thereby dominates the policy making process (Döhler 2007: 243; Hustedt 2013b: 108ff.; Mayntz 1980: 143; Mayntz and Scharpf 1975: 147ff.; Scharpf 1972: 178). Others perceive the Prime Minister principle to be dominant and emphasize the constitutionally strong position of the head of government, i.e.

[12] However, Zerr provides some anecdotal evidence of several cabinet meetings in Baden-Wurttemberg that dealt with very technical matters, because there were no strategic matters to discuss. The cabinet debated about the annual shooting quotas for ravens that became a topic of the cabinet, because the Department of Agriculture and Department of the Environment could not agree on a compromise (Zerr 2006: 201).

Prime Minister (Florack, Grunden, and Korte 2011; Klein 2015; Korte, Florack, and Grunden 2006), or position their analysis somewhere in between (Bornemann 2013: 339).

5.1.1.2. Joint rules of procedure of the departments (GGO)

Joint Rules of Procedure of the Departments (*Gemeinsame Geschäftsordnung der Ministerien, GGO*) exist for every state government as well as for the federal level. It is not a law, but an internal administrative regulation, i.e. it serves as a departmental rule-book but is not litigable (Bundesregierung 1977; Hustedt 2013b: 109). Thus, it cannot be changed by the parliament, but strictly belongs to the executive realm. Basically two aspects of departmental organization are prescribed in the Joint Rules of Procedure. First, the basic formal requirements for the structure of departments (see 5.3.2.2 for a detailed discussion) and, second, the formal requirements for coordination during the policy making process. We shall focus on the latter one. With regard to formal requirements of horizontal coordination in German departmental bureaucracies, we will focus on two particular aspects: the concepts of *Federführung* of the lead department and co-signature (*Mitzeichnung*).

Federführung is a central concept in German administrative procedures. It formally consists of two things. First, *Federführung* includes the formal responsibility for a particular draft and, second, it includes the duty to manage the process of intra- and inter-departmental consultation and co-signature, as set out in the Joint Rules of Procedure (Page 2012: 72). An organizational unit is main responsible for an issue and takes over *Federführung* "if the issue is predominantly within its responsibility as define[d] in the formal division of responsibilities or if it is determined to have this responsibility in a particular case" (Page 2012: 70f.). Put differently, *Federführung* is based on the "nature of an issue", i.e. the department with the broadest jurisdiction on the issue usually serves as lead department, or something else is collectively decided upon by the cabinet. Of course, the questions of *Federführung* can trigger conflicts. Most likely, issues that are commonly perceived as increasing reputation of a department will attract more than one department ("That has always been our turf!" whereas difficult topics will be avoided ("That's really none of our business!") (Busse 2010: 226). If more than one section in the same department or another departments' remit is affected by a draft or by an issue, co-signature becomes necessary. That is more or less the case for virtually any topic nowadays. Co-signature means that all other departments affected by the issue are consulted by the unit in charge of *Federführung* and have the possibility to make changes and amendments. Usually, before a governmental draft enters the cabinet for final decisions, all affected departments need to co-signature. By co-signing a draft an organization indicates the co-responsibility for the draft at stake with regard to the own area of competence. Usually within the process of co-signing the lead department has to change the original proposal according to the amendments of the co-signing units, resulting in a reduction "of the scope of policy proposals and the effectiveness of problem solutions" (Mayntz and Scharpf 1975: 147). This leads to a lowest common denominator in policy making. A phenomenon that we discussed as "negative coordination" in section 3.3. Although the process of *Mitzeichnung* leaves quite some leeway for the intensity and timing of

consultations, the interests of other units are constantly anticipated to avoid potential conflict leading to "more, rather than less consultation" (Mayntz and Scharpf 1975: 147). This bias towards broad consultation is even strengthened as conflict is ought to be settled at the lower ranks of hierarchy to make a draft ready for quick decision within the cabinet. For example, the Joint Rules of Procedure in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern prescribe "disagreement among departments […] is preferably ought the be settled immediately".[13] As we already discussed in section 5.1.1.1, settling conflict at early stages of the coordination process and on the lower ranks of hierarchy is crucial since the cabinet has only very limited capacities.

5.1.1.3. Rules of procedure of the government (GOReg)

The Rules of Procedure of the Government exist for every state government. They largely resemble the regulations that can be found on the federal level. The purpose of these Rules of Procedure is to further specify the government's course of business. As we try to set the institutional framework for the five case studies, we will not analyze the Rules of Procedure for every case under scrutiny in detail. Rather we will focus on those aspects that help to understand the formal requirements of horizontal coordination. With regard to this, the Rules of Procedure are rather alike in many ways. We will focus on three aspects: The Prime Minister's prerogative to issue policy guidelines; Modes of conflict settling and the role of the State Chancellery.

Setting policy guidelines

First, like the state constitutions, the Rules of Procedure define the Prime Minister's prerogative to set policy guidelines (*Richtlinienkompetenz*) that, in the case of Brandenburg, need to be "considered by the cabinet Minister".[14] In Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, the Minister's room for maneuver is limited to the frame provided by the Prime Minister's policy guidelines.[15] The Rules of Procedure of the other cases under scrutiny do not further prescribe ministers' obligation to follow the guidelines.

Early resolution of conflict required

Second, in all Rules of Procedures of the cases analyzed in this study, it is prescribed that conflict between departments is ought to be settled before an issue is send to the cabinet for final decision. For example, the Rules of Procedure in Brandenburg define that "issues of controversy between ministers are submitted to the government only if an attempt to compromise between the ministers has failed".[16] This illustrates the cabinet's function as a ratifying body that is not a place of much discussion as discussed in the section on the constitutional principles. Rather, it is expected that most conflict is settled on the lower ranks of the departmental hierarchy.

[13] §26 (1) Joint Rules of Procedure of the Departments Mecklenburg-Vorpommern.
[14] §1 Rules of Procedure of the Government of Brandenburg.
[15] §3 (1) Rules of Procedure of the Government of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern.
[16] §13 (2) Rules of Procedure of the Government of Brandenburg.

State Chancellery as the Prime Minister's office

Finally, the basic function of the State Chancellery is prescribed within the Rules of Procedure, which is true for all cases under scrutiny. The general function of the State Chancellery is prescribed as follows: "For management of his affairs and the affairs of the government, the Prime Minister makes use of the State Chancellery".[17] In Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, it is even prescribed that "despite the Minister's autonomy, the State Chancellery coordinates the activities of the departments".[18]

5.1.2. Normative elements - social norms in government

The normative elements of the institutional setting of interdepartmental coordination in German states governments refer to social norms that define appropriate behavior of bureaucrats engaged in coordination. These social norms correspond with two ideal-typical bureaucratic role orientations, as identified by Silberman: organizational and professional roles (1993: 10ff.). Similarly, Egeberg distinguishes between organizational structure and organizational demography as key variables to understand "the relationship between bureaucratic structure and actual decision behavior within government" (2012: 157). Also Mayntz ideal-typically distinguishes between two role types: "administrative generalists" that identify with the own organizations and its rules and norms, and "professional specialists", who rather orient themselves towards peers with the same educational background (1978: 178f.).

In a nutshell, the normative elements of the institutional framework are either shaped by organizational or professional norms. In general, organizational norms refer to appropriate behavior as prescribed by the organization that somebody is part of (Häußermann 1977: 91ff.). In Germany, this corresponds with strong orientation of bureaucrats towards their "own department" and towards the political leadership - often coined as departmentalism. In contrast, professional norms refer to the characteristics of the staff of an organization. Here it is assumed that a particular professional background or training leads to standards of behavior shared within the profession. Thus, loyalty is not only limited to the own organization, but also to external norms shared among people with a particular professional background (Mayntz 1978a: 178f.). In Germany, this role corresponds with the dominance of departmental staff trained in law - often coined as monopoly of jurists (*Juristenmonopol*). As these are ideal-types, in the practice of bureaucracy, both roles are intermingled and equally relevant. We will now discuss both orientations and their implications for horizontal interdepartmental coordination in more detail.

[17] §4 (1) Rules of Procedure of the Government of Brandenburg.
[18] §1 (2) Rules of Procedure of the Government of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern.

5.1.2.1. Organizational norms - departmentalism & conflict avoidance

In section 5.1.1.1, we discussed the constitutional departmental principle that grants considerable autonomy to individual departments. As a consequence, German bureaucrats' mindset is eminently shaped by departmentalism.
The term departmentalism is often attributed with "a mix of political, policy and governmental pathologies" (Kavanagh and Richards 2001: 1). Put differently, departmentalism coins the "tendency for departments to pursue particularistic goals in the policy process" (Painter and Carey 1979: 9). It refers to the fact that ministers and officials solely focus on their own department and its agenda, regardless of possible negative side-effects for other departments and their policy domains. Consequently, departmentalism also refers to a certain framing of a problems and the perception of adequate solutions, i.e. what constitutes good policy in the area of concern as well as distinct ways to achieve a certain goal (Egeberg and Sætren 1999: 96; Peters 2015: 36f.).

Departmentalism is often closely connected to the idea of turf and turf-battles. Turf is described as an "exclusive domain of activities and resources over which an agency has the right […] to exercise operational and/or policy responsibility" (Bardach 1996: 169). Following this definition it follows that turf can come in the form of a resource, e.g. budgets/clients, or responsibility for a certain activity, e.g. a policy domain. Within departmental bureaucracies, battles over organizational turf are considered to be a major obstacle to coordination (Beale 1995). There are two kinds of turf-battles in government: On the one hand, organizations strive to increase their turf by expanding their responsibilities, powers and budgets. On the other hand, turf battles are about protecting the organizational turf already occupied and the attempt to exclude others from one's turf (Bardach 1996: 177; Edward T Jennings and Krane 1994: 342).

In consequence, departmentalism and orientation on organizational turf result in "an administration that resemble[s] a loosely coupled cluster of 'sectoral islands' rather than a unified governmental body" (Verhoest and Bouckaert 2005: 101). Already Mayntz and Scharpf pointed to ministers' need to defend their departments' interests: "It is as managers of their departments and as promoters of department policies that they will eventually be judged successful or unsuccessful in professional and political opinion. As heads of departments they are able to utilize the services of a large and specialized policy-making bureaucracy, and they will be briefed on all other policy issues from a departmental point of view. As chief executives they must maintain the loyalty and motivation of the bureaucracies on which they depend by fighting vigorously for departmental policies and for departmental budgets" (1975: 43).

What are the causes of departmentalism? We will discuss two common arguments.

Career prospects of individual departmental bureaucrats
First departmentalism is related to individual career prospects of departmental bureaucrats. As a consequence of departmentalism on the political level, also public officials on the lower

ranks of the departmental hierarchy do not serve the government as a whole, but are very much focused on their own leadership since the Minister and the own department serves as the most relevant point of reference (Hustedt and Tiessen 2006: 25).
What follows from this is a norm for appropriate behavior of departmental bureaucrats, as put sharply by Edda Müller: "Good civil servants are primarily interested in their own task. They try to achieve the most for the policy domain within their own area of responsibility" (1995 25). This focus on the own task is not only to be explained by an identity that is shaped by organizational affiliation, but has also a lot to do with strategic career choices of departmental bureaucrats. In this sense, departments "are also incentive systems. Officials learn to evoke a particular role orientation or identity by experiencing the rewards and punishments of having done so in the past" (Egeberg and Sætren 1999: 95). According to Müller, focusing solely on the interest of the own department is highly beneficial for the individual bureaucrat since he mostly stays in the same department for his whole career. This is also true nowadays, as the typical civil service career is still build within one department only (Schröter 2004: 65). Hence, the departments' selection criteria for promotions become very important, because it is very important for individual career advancement. Mayntz argues that those bureaucrats are perceived as performant "whose draft or proposal successfully and in a timely manner convinces the own department's leadership, the cabinet, the respective parliamentary committee and finally the parliament" (1983: 475). In addition, Mayntz illustrates selection criteria of a successful departmental bureaucrat with two guiding principles: "Never engage in something that overstretches your capacity for work" and "Do not propose anything that will not resonate well on the higher ranks of the department and the parliament" (1978: 190). As pointed out by Mayntz and Scharpf, for career advancement of individual bureaucrats, "it is important […] to become identified with successful projects and […] not to become identified with failure" (1975: 75). To conclude, gaining and preserving a positive reputation within the organization and "getting things done" is crucial for individual career advancement and the bureaucrat will rather not jeopardize personal career chances. In conclusion, we follow Hustedt and Tiessen's argument, who hold that "the departmental principle and the typical career pattern set incentives for single bureaucrats to focus attention on his/her ‚own' Minister" (2006: 25).

Selective perception as a consequence of specialization and bounded rationality

The second cause of departmentalism can be found in the concept of "selective perception" (March and Simon 1958: 127ff.; Mayntz and Scharpf 1973; Simon 1997: 287). Conceptually, selective perception is based on the idea of bounded rationality, meaning that cognitive capacities of humans are limited; hence, use of information and attention to particular topics is constraint (March and Simon 1958). As a result of decision makers' restricted knowledge or cognitive capacity, they will act on the basis of simplified models of the world. Put differently, for a decision-maker it is simply impossible to review all goals and potential consequences of the various potential decision alternatives (T. Christensen et al. 2007: 10).
Selective perception is a consequence of specialization in the public sector that inevitably creates organizational boundaries, i.e. "cognitive and normative borders" (Hustedt and Tiessen 2006: 7). Organizational boundaries structure attention, limit information flows and shape contact patterns of bureaucrats' (Lægreid and Rykkja 2015; E. Müller 1995: 18ff.;

O'Flynn, Halligan, and Blackman 2010; Scharpf 1976). Simon shows that limited capacity of information processing and attention on own responsibilities leads to a selective perception of members of particular organizational units (Dearborn and Simon 1958; Simon 1997). As a result, only those parts of a social problem that fall under the jurisdiction of a particular organization or within the area of responsibility of an individual bureaucrat will be considered salient and important. Ultimately, policy drafts may contradict or ignore important aspects of other policy sectors leading to unintended consequences (Scharpf 1973a: 81). Furthermore, policy issues for which nobody is formally responsible will most likely not be tackled at all or not very effectively (Mayntz and Scharpf 1975: 145; E. Müller 1995: 18; Scharpf 1973b).

Consequences for horizontal coordination

What are the implications of departmentalism for horizontal coordination? First, all bureaucrats, regardless their position within the organizational hierarchy, are constantly expected to consider and protect their departments' interests to increase individual career chances. Put differently by Mayntz and Scharpf, "the norms and procedures governing the career of civil servants play a specially important role in influencing organizational behavior" (Mayntz and Scharpf 1975: 54). As a consequence, we can assume that there is a tacit mutual norm of non-interference into other department's turf (Müller-Rommel 1994: 158f.). The reasons for this rule are twofold: First, often there is lack of expertise and time to substantially assess other's departmental proposals and, second, there is an anticipated element of reciprocity involved. To secure one's own autonomy, one does not overly criticize proposals of colleagues and, in turn, expects the colleague to act likewise (Andeweg 2000: 378). Put differently, an individual bureaucrat's orientation on the own departmental interests is not considered "selfish" or even "rude" by colleagues. Rather, this is accepted as an inevitable part of the coordination game. This can also be captured by the notion of collegiality emphasizing a shared understanding of bureaucratic roles and expectations (Czerwick 2001: 185). As Cooper puts it: "It is neither friendship nor propinquity that obligates colleagues to each other as practitioners, but their shared responsibility for preserving and enhancing the practice of public administration" (Cooper 1987: 326). It is these mutually shared expectation of considerate behavior, which makes it very unlikely that interests and preferences of colleagues of other departments are totally ignored. Rather, colleagues are accepted as experts in their own area of competence and there is a shared understanding of the context in which they all operate. Hence, bureaucratic turf battles are perceived as legitimate rules of the game, leading to a social norm of mutual non-interference.

Second, as a consequences of selective perception, bureaucrats perceive problems, even though they may be in fact cross-cutting, only with regard to their own affiliation and worldview shaped by the organizational boundaries they are suited in (Egeberg and Sætren 1999; Tils 2003: 89). Thus, departmentalism as a consequence of rigid formal organization causes coordination problems because the organizational status quo manifests dominant norms among bureaucrats and selective perceptions of the policy problem and corresponding solutions proposed by the organizations. Improving coordination may actually require to pool resources or to lose the monopoly over a policy domain or jurisdiction. However, from a turf-battle perspective, coordinating with others becomes a threat to organizational autonomy and may rather be avoided (Peters 2015: 32; Wilson 1989: 182).

5.1.2.2. Professional norms - legalistic orientation in a Rechtsstaat culture

Germany is typically described as an nearly ideal-type of *Rechtsstaat* culture (Pollitt and Bouckaert 2011). Within this cultural cluster, "the state is a central integrating force within society, and its focal concerns are with the preparation, promulgation, and enforcement of laws" (Pollitt and Bouckaert 2011: 62). The *Rechtsstaat* culture within the bureaucracy emphasizes respect for the authority of the law, rule-following, correctness and legal control. This model is based on the Weberian ideal-typical bureaucracy emphasizing "hierarchy of positions, functional specialization, strict rules […] and a high degree of formalization" (Pollitt and Bouckaert 2011: 282). As a result, the *Rechtsstaat* tradition of Germany reflects legalism as the basic principle for activities of the government, including policy making, service delivery and coordination (Derlien 1991; Johnson 1978; K. König 1997). In accordance to the strong formal legal prerequisites of horizontal coordination in the German bureaucracy as prescribed in the Joint Rules of Procedure of Departments, the German administrative culture is characterized by a strong legalistic orientation, leading to "legal programming" of bureaucrats (Knill 1999: 124). As a result, "correct governing is understood as formally correct procedures alongside the hierarchically structured ladder (*Dienstweg*)" (Hustedt 2014a: 5). Hustedt argues that this legalistic orientation is caused and reproduced by the professional background of the administrative staff which is mainly trained in law (Hustedt 2013b: 114ff.). This is often coined by the term monopoly of jurists (*Juristenmonopol)*.[19] The same argument is also true for the state level. For example, in 2009, a considerable proportion (46%) of State Secretaries were jurists by training (Jann and Veit 2010: 11).[20]

Consequences for horizontal coordination

What follows from the *Rechtsstaat* culture and legalistic orientation for horizontal coordination? The legalistic orientation causes a strong awareness for formal responsibilities among bureaucrats further increasing departmentalism, selective perception and silo mentality. German bureaucrats watch each other very closely regarding the compliance with formal rules and thereby reinforce the regulative elements of the institutional framework, i.e. prerequisites codified in the state constitutions and Joint Rules of Procedure by peer pressure. Appropriate behavior, as structured by the bureaucrats' profession, is "manifested in a terminology of duties, procedures, and obligations" (Meyer and Hammerschmid 2006: 1003). Put differently, within the German bureaucracy, "form is not empty nonsense" (Page 2012: 68) but has meaning for bureaucrats and is valued highly.

5.1.3. Conclusion

We can now conclude our discussion of the institutional framework of German state governments with a very concise overview of the elements of the regulative and normative dimension of the institutional framework, its characteristics and the respective consequences for horizontal inter-departmental coordination.

[19] For an overview of the federal level see (Veit 2010: 308ff.).

[20] Interestingly, the proportion of top level bureaucrats trained in law is even higher than on the federal level.

The *institutional framework* in which interdepartmental coordination takes place is conceptualized as being comprised of regulative and normative elements. *Regulative* elements refer to formal rules that structure and prescribe the general structure and operation of state governments and consequently coordination. We identified the constitutional principles, the joint rules of procedure and the rules of the procedure of the government as the most important formal rules prescribing formal coordination. In those documents, departmental autonomy is emphasized and a de-facto veto right is granted to every department by the formal rules of co-signature. However, we also discussed the Prime Minister principle and the possibility of setting general policy guidelines. The *normative* elements of the institutional framework refer to informal, social norms that guide actors' behavior and expectations during the coordination process. We distinguished between organizational norms and professional norms. While the first type refers to standards of appropriate behavior set by the respective organizations (i.e. departments), professional norms refer to the professional background of individual bureaucrats. In sum, the literature argues that the organizational norm of departmentalism and the professional norm of a legalistic orientation shape the coordination process within governments.

Table 7 Institutional framework of state governments

Element	Characteristics	Implication for coordination of wicked problems
	Regulative	
Constitutional Principles	Prime Minister Principle Departmental Principle Cabinet Principle	Prime Minister can set (formally) general policy guidelines Departmental interests as dominant Cabinet as head of departments and not collegial body Cabinet as bottleneck of coordination with very limited capacity
Joint Rules of Procedure	*Federführung* and co-signature as central concepts	Effective veto-power of every department Lowest common denominator as usual way to reach decisions
Rules of Procedure of the Government	Prime Minister can set (formally) general policy guidelines Early resolution of conflict required State Chancellery as the Prime Minister's office	Prime Minister can set (formally) general policy guidelines
	Normative	
Departmentalism	Departmental mindset and turf-battles as part of a bureaucratic role shaped by organizational factors Individual departmental bureaucrat's career prospects often limited to one department Selective perception of problems and solutions	Government as federation of loosely coupled departments Mutual norm of non-interference as strategy of conflict avoidance - "Better focus on your own department!" Coordination of cross-cutting policies suffers from selective perception of problems and solutions
Legalistic Orientation	Legalistic mindset as part of bureaucratic role shaped by dominant professional training	formal requirements of horizontal coordination are considered important - "Form is not empty nonsense"

5.2. Political framework of state governments

State governments are not only embedded in regulative and normative elements of institutions but also in more general circumstances that may be labeled with the term "political milieu of government" (Peters 2015: 151). For understanding the German context, this milieu is usually captured by five characteristics, namely *prime Minister democracy*, *negotiation-competition-hybrid democracy*, *party democracy*, *coalition democracy* and *media democracy*. Those

constitute the general political framework and influence the functioning of governments and therefore coordination (Bornemann 2013: 340ff.; Florack 2011b: 152ff.; Florack, Grunden, and Korte 2008; 2011: 183ff.; Grunden 2009: 78ff.; 2013: 375; Klein 2015: 41; Korte and Fröhlich 2009: 73ff.; Korte, Florack, and Grunden 2006: 86ff.; Schwickert 2010: 120ff.).

In the perspective of actor-centered institutionalism, these structural properties constitute the non-institutional setting of central government coordination in German states. They also lead to implications for the coordination of wicked problems that we will discuss in the next paragraphs.

5.2.1. Prime Minister democracy

This term resembles ideas of the concept of "chancellor democracy" as discussed in research on the federal level (Niclauß 1990). Although Prime Ministers on the state level do not have the same competences as Chancellors, the constitutional position within the politico-administrative system is quite comparable (Florack, Grunden, and Korte 2008: 60; Grunden 2009: 79; Korte, Florack, and Grunden 2006: 87). Hence, to some extend, this study can also draw on literature focusing on the federal level.

Prime Minister democracy is characterized by four features (Grunden 2009: 79ff.): First, the term points the dominant role of the head of government on state level. Second, the Prime Minister is accountable to the parliament. Third, there is a close connection between the Prime Minister and the respective party and parliamentary group and, fourth, the Prime Minister is the most popular politician on state level. We shall now discuss the three characteristics in more detail.

A dominant Prime Minister?

The Prime Minister is to some extend perceived as the most dominant actor within the government (Florack, Grunden, and Korte 2011: 183), meaning "a cabinet decision against the will of the Prime Minister is a case for law seminars at best" (Grunden 2009: 79).

The Prime Minister has the formal constitutional prerogative to set the overall policy agenda for the legislative turn (*Richtlinienkompetenz*); although he may not directly intervene in departmental competences or ignore a majoritarian cabinet decision (H. Schneider 2001: 50; Schümer 2005: 38ff.). The concept of formal *Richtlinienkompetenz* has led to a debate whether it has actual implications for policy making. From a perspective of practice, according to Heide Simonis hierarchical orders from the Prime Minister given to the Ministers are clearly limited: "One can do it once. After that one could resign. But influencing somebody, putting issues on the agenda or make it a top-priority project - that is allowed" (H. Schneider 2001: 223).[21] In academia, in line with the rather modest assessment of *Richtlinienkompetenz*, empirical research also hints to the fact that in the case of all-day-politics, the departmental principle is rather dominant and *Richtlinienkompetenz* in the sense of hierarchically giving orders seems to be clearly limited to crisis situations at best

[21] Prime Minister of Schleswig-Holstein (1993-2005).

(Blumenthal 2008; Schuett-Wetschky 2008). Not surprising then that there are proposals to remove the concept of *Richtlinienkompetenz* from the Basic Law and the state constitutions to no further confuse the public about the actual limited capabilities of the Chancellor and Prime Ministers in a pluralistic and democratic political system (Schuett-Wetschky 2003; 2004b; 2004a). However, others claim that *Richtlinienkompetenz*, although it mustn't be confused with giving orders to subordinated ministers, has some implications for policy making that are more subtle. In this reasoning, *Richtlinienkompetenz* is perceived as a power resource to the Prime Minister or as an ultima ratio that paradoxically works best if not applied (Holtmann and Gabriel 2005: 247; H. Schneider 2001: 224). Quite contrary, the formal use of *Richtlinienkompetenz* is often regarded as a weakness and first sign of a heavy crisis within the government (Mertes 2001: 22). Although legally codified in the respective constitutions, *Richtlinienkompetenz* does not function as a legal tool. Rather, it can only exert influence indirectly and is embedded in a specific context including the authority of the Prime Minister among the cabinet, the distribution of political power among the coalitions partners, the relationship to his own party in the parliament and his reputation among the population (Holtmann 2008: 84; März 2006: 157; Reithmeier 2013: 99). Schuett-Wetschky is rightfully confused why *Richtlinienkompetenz* is often so misunderstood among journalists and even political scientists as the Chancellor's or Prime Minister's right to give orders. With reference to Fraenkel, he argues that thinking about politics in Germany seems to be biased by a legally oriented mindset that overestimates the constitutional Prime Minister principle (Fraenkel 1979: 35; Schuett-Wetschky 2008: 89).

To conclude, in political reality, the right to set the overall policy agenda is not meant to be a hierarchical issuing of commands in the political day-to-day life, but rather a rhetorical form of guidance and often a matter of persuasion, negotiation and compromise (Busse 2010: 246; Gebauer 2006: 138; Grunden 2009: 80; Junker 1965; Korte, Florack, and Grunden 2006: 88; Murswiek 1990: 165). Rhetorical guidance may materialize in two ways: First, policy statements and, second, public declarations of a topic as a top-priority issue (*Chefsache*) (Busse 1994: 46; Korte 2002a: 17).

Policy statements (*Regierungserklärungen*) are comparable to the US-American "State of the Union Addresses" or Canadian "Speeches from the Throne" (Hofferbert and Klingemann 1990: 279). They serve a couple of functions for the government (Diederich 1976: 70ff.; Grunden 2009: 80; Korte 2002a: 16f.). Often presented at the beginning of a legislative period, they articulate the political aims of the government vis-a-vis the parliament and the broader public. In addition, policy statements provide orientation in case of conflict between departments and coalition partners. Thus, they function as a signal to the public and as a tool for keeping discipline among governmental actors. Of course, we must not forget that every *Regierungserklärung* is an output of intensive coordination efforts between the State Chancellery, line departments and coalition partners and therefore already incorporates a lot of compromises (Korte 2002a: 24ff.; Korte, Florack, and Grunden 2006).

The second rhetorical tool of *Richtlinienkompetenz* is to declare something a top-priority issue (*Chefsache*). The Prime Minister may declare a *Chefsache* to articulate his personal commitment and involvement in the decision-making process and issue (Knoll 2004; Korte and Hirscher 2000). Similar with the concept of *Richtlinienkompetenz*, we may not misunderstand what a *Chefsache* actually is: mostly it is a symbolic tool that declares vis-a-

vis the public that a certain issue is so important that the head of government himself takes responsibility for it. Of course, the Prime Minister still has to take decision with the most important stakeholders in mind. Thus, the concept of *Chefsache* has often been regarded as a myth rather than reality in politics (Korte 2000: 28ff.; 2002b: 32; Mertes 2001; T. E. Schmidt 1998). While the perception within the public suggests that the Prime Minister can simply decide how to proceed with an issue, the actual decision-making process is more complicated and restricted by political and legal matters. Hence, declaring a *Chefsache* is a form of political leadership that can only work if an issue is regarded as very important in the public debate. Mayntz and Scharpf argue that the selection of issues by the executive leadership, e.g. *Chefsachen*, is roughly based on six operating rules: (1) executive attention is allocated to political controversial problems and initiatives that may trigger intense political conflict; (2) executive attention is given to projects and initiatives that serve to overcome acute crises; (3) attention is given to projects that are likely to generate public acclaim and increase the popularity of the executive; (4) attention is given to matters that triggered public criticism in the past; (5) attention is given to projects that are recommended by close party or cabinet members and finally (6) an executive may simply have a personal interest in the topic, e.g. due to his own biography (Mayntz 1978a: 192; Mayntz and Scharpf 1975: 91).[22] Likewise, Grunden argues that only "winner topics" are appropriates choices for *Chefsachen* (Grunden 2013: 377).

Accountability vis-a-vis the parliament

German states are parliamentary systems in which the state parliaments elect the Prime Minister and can dismiss him with a constructive vote of no confidence. In most states, the Prime Minister appoints the Ministers and decides upon the portfolio and reshuffling of departments on its own without further formal approval by the parliament (Florack, Grunden, and Korte 2008: 60).[23] Of course, in the very likely case of a coalition-government, this is limited by informal bargaining between the parties that constitute the coalition. Thus, in coalition governments, the Prime Ministers de facto only controls the appointment of ministers from his own party (Andeweg 2000: 382).

In contrast to the "constitutional fiction" (Florack, Grunden, and Korte 2011: 184) of a confrontation between government and parliament, in reality there is a close connection between the government and the respective parliamentary groups of the coalition on the one side and the opposition on the other side. Thus, "elite positions of the executive and parliamentary majority form a political unit" (Niclauß 2011: 166). The function of controlling the government lies rather in hands of the opposition. But of course, this close connection does not exclude internal control exerted by the coalition parties, i.e. informally communicated resistance against particular governmental projects by members of parliament. For sure, a government will not put legislative initiatives to vote which do not have the support of the parliamentary majority (Florack, Grunden, and Korte 2008: 61; H. Schneider 2001: 63).

[22] This may also count for Line departments.

[23] Exceptions are Baden-Württemberg, Rhineland-Palatinate, Saarland, Hamburg, Berlin, and Bremen. Here, parliaments can issue a vote of no confidence on single ministers and force them to step down from office.

Close connection between Prime Minister and the party

Since there is a close connection between the own parliamentary group, the respective party and the government, Prime Ministers have to carefully consider the party's and parliamentary group's preferences, because the Prime Minister needs constant support by his party and parliamentary group (Schwarz 2010b; 2010a). As Schneider found out in a survey among German Prime Ministers, two-third of them pay particular attention to the need of the aforementioned stakeholders when taking decisions (2001: 63). Not surprising then that "support of this own party is the first and most important source of power for every prime Minister" (Florack, Grunden, and Korte 2008: 62). Consequently, Prime Ministers often request party chairmanship to ensure loyalty and influence; often this double burden is justified by the idea of potential alignment of governmental and party action (H. Schneider 2001: 75).

Popularity of the Prime Minster

Among all politicians at the state level, including cabinet members and the leader of the opposition, the Prime Minister has the highest reputation, is best known among the population and constantly in the focus of the mass media, compared to ministers (Florack, Grunden, and Korte 2011: 184; Grunden 2009: 82; Korte, Florack, and Grunden 2006: 90). This may partly be explained by its double-function as the head of government and head of state, because the representative functions may trigger a lot of media coverage (Klecha, Munimus, and Weinmann 2008; H. Schneider 2001: 47ff.). A good result in an election is always attributed with the person of the Prime Minister, providing him with credibility and authority within his party, the parliamentary group and the cabinet. Kropp argues that the Prime Minister serves a kind of fire wall against internal fights within parties, as long as the Prime Minister is perceived as successful. Few people in the party can afford to criticize the Prime Minister in public as long as the Prime Minister represents and ensures the success of the whole party and, ultimately, many individual career prospects (2001: 186).

Prime Minister democracy and the coordination of wicked problems

Bornemann (2013: 343f.) argues that a strong head of government with a capable center of government may in fact be able to overcome departmental turf wars and, thus, achieve (positive) coordination of wicked problems. However, we have to take into account the Prime Minister's limited formal rights: as it has been pointed out, he may not give orders, but rather could try to wield influence trough other more rhetorical channels, e.g. *Chefsachen* and *Regierungserklärungen*.

5.2.2. Negotiation-Competition-Hybrid Democracy

Conflict resolution and decision-making usually follows ideal-typically either a logic of competition (majoritarian democracies) or negotiation (negotiation/consensus democracies) (Korte and Fröhlich 2009: 75ff.; Lijphart 1999; Luthardt 1997). In Germany "elements of majority rule and negotiation democracy exist alongside each other, such as the coexistence of majority rule in party competition on the one hand with consociationalist negotiation in the

Bundesrat (which represents state governments) on the other" (M. G. Schmidt 2002: 153). Thus, it is considered a hybrid variant featuring majoritarian structures as well as many negotiation systems (Holtmann and Voelzkow 2000; Korte and Fröhlich 2009: 77).

State governments are embedded in various complex negotiation systems within the federal system of Germany (Blätte and Hohl 2013: 207). Hereby, vertical negotiation systems refer to multi-level governance, i.e. negotiation with the federal level and interaction with the European Union and horizontal negotiations refer to voluntary coordination among German states as well as negotiations with actors of the civil society, e.g. pressure groups. It is worthwhile to note that these negotiations are clearly dominated by the executive - the state parliaments are often limited to confirm negotiation results, but do not actively take part in creating them (Blätte and Hohl 2013: 208; Münch 2013: 202; Scharpf 1985).

Systems of vertical negotiations

Vertically, German states are part of a complex interweaving of formal and informal competencies in a system of multi-level coordination including the states, the federal level and the European Union.

States have influence on federal policy making via the *Bundesrat*, but have only limited autonomy when it comes to unilateral decisions in many policy domains (Korte, Florack, and Grunden 2006: 93). For example, many taxes are set by the federal level alone and can only be influenced via the veto power of the *Bundesrat*. Within the *Bundesrat*, again two competing logics of action meet: the logic of competition between parties and the logic of negotiation. The logic of competition refers to party political struggles, especially in case of different party-political compositions of federal government and the majority of the *Bundesrat*. On the other hand, the logic of negotiation refers to the notion of cooperation and the idea that mutual concessions lead to more beneficial solutions for everyone. Since many laws prepared by the federal level need approval by the *Bundesrat*, negotiations between the federal level and states are obligatory.

The difficulty to achieve successful negotiations in a setting of party competition can be illustrated by the self-classification of states in A-states (led by the SPD) and B-states (led by the CDU), which shows that state governments categorize themselves according to the political situation on the federal level, although the *Bundesrat* is meant to represent the interests of the German states vis-a-vis the federal level. If a party is in opposition on the federal level, but leads the majority of state governments in the *Bundesrat*, it can easily organize blockades of federal initiatives. Acceptance of federal initiatives is then achieved by various forms of bargaining.

Systems of horizontal negotiations

Horizontally, state governments are engaged in a variety of voluntary consultations. Most prominently are the Conference of the German Prime Ministers and the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the States in the Federal Republic of Germany (KMK) including a secretariat staffed with 200 people in Bonn. The aim is not to achieve total uniformity, but a certain connectivity and common standard in education policy

regarding quality standards in higher education and schools (Bull 1991: 33f.; H. Schneider 2001: 254ff.).
Furthermore, state governments engage in governance arrangements between civil society organizations and the government, often perceived as a non-hierarchical attempt of steering (Mayntz 1997: 283f.). A prominent example are the "Alliances for Work" (*Bündnisse für Arbeit*) between the government, unions and employers' organizations. These arrangements are suitable to counter the lack of formal competencies in policy making by directly negotiating with stakeholders. Furthermore, these arrangements can be a way to increase the government's legitimacy by establishing a broad consensus in particular policy issue (Florack, Grunden, and Korte 2011: 194). Next to these specific projects, participation of civil society groups in policy making and implementation is traditionally strong in Germany (Derlien 1995: 87; Rudzio 2015: 89). Departments and civil society organizations, e.g. sectoral pressure groups, are in constant contact to each other and exchange information (Mayntz 1978b: 202ff.).

Negotiation democracy and the coordination of wicked problems

The aforementioned cooperation between governments and civil society groups also has implications for effective coordination of wicked problems. Departments and specialized pressure groups in specific policy domains often may develop close ties and shared world views over time. As a consequence, departments may perceive themselves as defenders of "their" pressure group's interests which may increase fragmentation of governmental action (Bornemann 2013: 342). In this sense, the possibility of effective positive coordination is already limited because of diverging interests of departments and their respective policy domain oriented civil society groups.
Furthermore, Bornemann (2013: 342) argues that the high demand for negotiation between governmental actors as well as with civil society actors leads to rather high transaction costs even in the case of ordinary, "simple" polices. As a result, the potential for positive coordination is limited, because the actors don't have the resources to invest in the necessary transaction costs that may be necessary to tackle the even more complicated wicked problems.

5.2.3. Party democracy

In Germany, parties on the federal and state level are central or even omnipresent corporate actors within the political-administrative system (Korte and Fröhlich 2009: 93ff.; K. König 2002c: 72). Parties have several legally prescribed functions: 1) integration of different societal interests, 2) they serve as the interface between the society and the state, 3) they recruit and socialize people for political top positions, and 4) they compete for votes in elections with the aim to gain positions within the government (Böhret, Jann, and Kronenwett 1988: 90f.).

Ideal-typically, parties can be described as an association of citizens with similar values and aims. They integrate the interests of its members and the electorate within their party programs and try to make them a reality through political engagement in parliaments and the

government (Korte, Florack, and Grunden 2006: 99). In contrast to other societal actors, e.g. unions, parties are the only collective actor that may take part in parliamentary elections. Thus, they largely serve as the only legitimate source to recruit mostly all political top positions (K. König 2002c: 76f.). As a consequence, top politicians most likely also possess elite positions within their respective parties (Lösche 1989: 284f.; Wagschal 2001).

Horizontal and vertical fragmentation of parties

Parties are no monolithic organizations (Grunden 2009: 87ff.; Jun and Höhne 2010; Treibel 2013), but rather a loosely-coupled collection of different groups (Wiesendahl 1998) and horizontally and vertically fragmented into coalitions of people from the most diverse backgrounds.

In the horizontal dimension, parties on the state level are locally and regionally divided into several geographically organized sub-organizations, e.g. regional chapter. Furthermore, parties are formally and informally horizontally fragmented. Formally, parties consist of several interests groups with partly diverging interests (e.g. youth organizations, association of women, association of employers, etc.) (Poguntke 2005: 49ff.; Wiesendahl 2011: 85ff.). Informally, parties are characterized of party wings or cliques (Treibel 2013: 360).

On the vertical dimension, parties can be differentiated in three groups (R. Katz and Mair 1999): First, there is the "party on the ground", i.e. members that participate in party activities from time to time on a voluntary basis. Second, the "party in central office" describes the top positions and their respective staff that work in the party's head quarter. And third, the "party in public office" labels the members of parliament and ministers. In reality, the last two groups are often quite intermingled as top position within parties often held by members of parliament or ministers (Treibel 2013: 361). As a consequence of horizontal and vertical fragmentation, their political programs are based on many compromises and individual leaders may be very important for keeping these organizations stable (Bull 1999).

In a similar vein, Korte vertically differentiates party groups in a twofold way (2006: 100f.): First, he differentiates between basic members and party officials and, second, between party members that serve in the government and members of parliament. The first differentiation between basic members and party officials captures the increasing professionalization of political careers within parties (K. V. Beyme 2000; Jun 2004; H. Schneider 1997: 419). Party officials are part-time or full-time politicians, while basic members often work for the party on a voluntary basis. In 1997, there were in total 1.5 million party members. Only 10-15 percent were actively engaged in the party and 2.500 were professional politicians, i.e. members of parliaments (Grunden 2009: 89; Zeschmann 1997: 709). From the perspective of party officials, the members on the ground are a special audience that they need to convince. The own basis of the party serves as a mirror of interests and problems of the electorate that may not be directly perceivable for the politician (Grunden 2009: 90; Korte, Florack, and Grunden 2006: 101).

The second differentiation of party members concerns the differences between members of parliament and members of the government. This differentiation captures the socialization of party politicians within bureaucratic organization once they become ministers. In the political day-to-day life, ministers have more contact to their departmental staff than to members of

parliament and other party officials. Hence, ministers may tend to perceive facts, problems and possible solutions through the lens of "their" department. As result, departmentalism at the level of the political leadership of a department might develop. In turn, this can cause an alienation between ministers and members of parliament (Bull 1999: 174).

Aims and interests

According to von Beyme, parties have three main aims: 1) maximizing their vote share in elections, 2) to get party members into the government and 3) to implement their program through public policies (2000: 25). Similarly, Strøm and Müller distinguish between vote seeking, office seeking and policy seeking as party goals and drivers for their behavior (1999 5ff.). Of course, the three aims are interdependent: parties need success in elections to gain governments posts and pursue their favored policies. In turn, successfully implementing policies may increase chances of getting re-elected. However, party leaders rarely have the opportunity to maximize all three goals at the same time. Thus, there may be trade-offs: "The same behavior that maximizes one of their objectives may not lead to the best possible outcome with respect to the others. In some cases, policy pursuit may conflict with a party's ability to capture office. When parties bargain over participation in a new government coalition, for example, they may often be asked to sacrifice some of their policy preferences in order to gain seats at the cabinet table. In order to find coalition partners, party leaders may need to dilute their policy commitments and thus potentially antagonize their own activists" (Strøm and Müller 1999: 9).

Party influence on the government's work

According to Grunden, Florack and Korte, parties may influence a government's work mostly in the early days of a legislature (2008: 63). They argue that after elections, top officials from the parties and experts from the departments are heavily involved in negotiating the coalition treaty, which outlines the coalition's political agenda for the legislative period that often serves as the foundation for the Prime Minister's policy statement in which the political aims for the coming legislature are outlined (Ismayr 2012). After some time in the political day-to-day life, this influence decreases and the departments become the main sources of advise and agenda-setting for the members of government (Florack, Grunden, and Korte 2008: 63; Grunden 2009: 91f.; Korte 2002a: 24; Korte, Florack, and Grunden 2006: 103).

Party democracy and the coordination of wicked problems

How do the properties of party democracy influence a government's ability to coordinate wicked problems? Bornemann argues that especially one aspects is important in this regard: Parties are focused on competition to achieve a high vote share in elections (Tils 2003: 86f.). As a consequence, political choices are favored that are able to generate reception within the electorate in the short-term (Korte 2010b: 216; 2011: 295; Schwickert 2010: 20). But the long-term coordination of wicked problems generates political costs, while the outcome of this effort is temporally delayed, especially in the case of demographic change. Successfully coordinated policies might have a positive impact and get rewarded by the electorate, but accountability is quite blurry due to the temporal delay. Hence, there is the danger that the governing party changes and a competitor can claim the credits (Mayntz and Scharpf 1975:

25ff.). Hence, coordination of wicked problems is hindered by the simple fact that party competition and elections cause short-term thinking of departments' political leaderships (Zohlnhöfer 2013: 270).

5.2.4. Coalition democracy

As already outlined (see section 5.2.1), in the German states the state parliaments elect the Prime Minister. Thus, the government needs a stable majority within the parliament (Niedobitek 2004). As a result of the electoral laws in the states (Trefs 2008), the building of coalitions of two or more parties is encouraged to ensure a stable parliamentary majority, although single-party governments have existed in some states for quite some time and are not as uncommon as on the federal level (Florack, Grunden, and Korte 2008: 64; Grunden 2009: 93; Korte, Florack, and Grunden 2006: 104; Switek 2013: 277). Coalition governments are typical in Germany (Helms 2005: 178; Knoll 2004: 35; Saalfeld 2003): With only one exception, all federal governments were coalitions. Also, two-thirds of the state governments are coalition governments (Kropp 2010: 289ff.).[24] Minority governments are very uncommon. Except one example, since 1950 none of the nine minority governments at state level lasted a full legislative period. [25]
Coalitions often lead to compromises, so that no coalition-government partner can fully realize the party's program without constraints (Florack, Grunden, and Korte 2011: 188). Coalitions consist of "consensual veto players": they want the coalition to be alive and successful, but can (and sometimes will) effectively block or influence policies for tactical reasons to gain an advantages in elections over their competitors (Grunden 2009: 94; Wagschal 1999: 228).

Coalitions: the need to compete while being cooperative

Coalitions face a dilemma: on the one hand, coalitions are only temporary alliances. They need to make sure that they are ready for the next election, because they compete for a partly overlapping electorate. Thus, coalition partners try to make sure that they preserve an own, unique political profile. On the other hand, coalition partners need to avoid the public perception to be constantly at odds with each other. Being perceived as unified in harmony as coalition partners is important for two reasons: First, it increases the public's trust in the government's action and second, being perceived as united is an important measure to assess the quality of a government (Grunden 2009: 94). Hence, coalitions constantly face the need for cooperation and competition at the same time, which makes effective coalition management necessary (Switek 2013).

Settling conflicts within coalitions

Coalition partners utilize several tools to settle or avoid conflict (Grunden 2009: 95ff.; Korte and Fröhlich 2009: 97ff.): At the beginning of a legislative period, parties negotiate about a coalition contract that outlines the fundamental policy goals and can be used as a reference in

[24] CDU-government under Adenauer, 1960-1961.
[25] SPD government in Saxony-Anhalt (1994-2002), tolerated by PDS.

case of conflict in the future, although it is not a legally binding contract, i.e. justiciable (Jun 1994; Kropp and Sturm 1998: 88ff.). During negotiations over a coalition contract, bureaucrats from departments are usually involved and often play a crucial role, e.g. by providing expertise on a specific policy problem (K. König 2002f: 57ff.).
Next to policy aims, coalition contracts set the distribution of departmental portfolios among the coalition. However, coalition contracts mostly do not outline specific persons to become ministers, because the parties decide about these matters. As a result, a Prime Minister may be limited in removing a Minister from the cabinet. Of course, if the Minister belongs to the coalition partner, a consent of the respective party's authorities is needed (Wewer 1990).
In negotiations after elections, future coalition partners try to gain control of those departments and, hence, policy domains, that offer the possibility to realize own policy aims and fulfill demands of their clientele and traditional electorate (Grunden 2009: 95; Zohlnhöfer 2001: 30). This offers the possibility of improving the chances for a higher vote-share in the next elections.
As it has been described in 5.1.1.1, German departments are rather autonomous and the constitutional departmental principle guarantees the respective ministers a strong position within the government. To counter this a little bit, it is common that the second tier of the departmental hierarchy is staffed with a representative of the coalition partner, e.g. the Minister belongs to party A, the State Secretary to party B. Doing so, party B has access to information regarding policy proposals and the like, which might be useful in party-political competition (Manow 1996: 98; B. Miller and Müller 2010).
Another informal tool to settle conflict within coalition governments are coalition committees (Rudzio 2015: 270ff.; Switek 2013: 281f.). In these committees, the "oligarchy of top party politicians" (Schreckenberger 1992) negotiate about future decisions. Usually, the Prime Minister, the most important ministers as well as the party leaders and parliamentary group leaders are involved (Grunden 2009: 96f.; K. König 2002a: 190). These informal committees may even become more important bodies for decision-making that the formal one, e.g. cabinet or parliament (Korte 2002a: 22; Rudzio 2015: 266ff.). As pointed out in 5.2.3, parties are no monolithic organizations but fragmented horizontally and vertically. Thus, negotiators in coalition committees need to anticipate possible conflicts within the own party as the result of a bargain (Kropp 2001: 189).

Coalitions and the coordination of wicked problems

While single party governments have a higher probability of unitarian governmental action (Blondel and Müller-Rommel 1993: 8; Peters 2015: 151), coalitions have a higher potential for conflict and increase the difficulty of coordination (Andeweg and Timmermans 2008; Peters 2015: 35; Tils 2011b: 112). Put differently, coalitions have centrifugal effects on governmental actions making coordination of interdependent policy problems more difficult (Andeweg 1988). Furthermore, Andeweg argues that conflict in coalitions is more serious, because disagreement between parties is often more fundamental than between departments (1997). Put simply, chances for effective coordination of wicked problems are lower in coalition governments (Bornemann 2013: 346). Blondel and Müller-Rommel argue "delicate issues may simply not be raised, for fear that they might generate conflicts" (1993: 10).

As it has been pointed out, coalition contracts are an usual tool to settle or avoid conflict in coalition governments. It is argued that coalition contracts may also have an effect on the coordination of wicked problems: As they outline, among other things, sectoral policy goals, coalition treaties may further decrease the autonomy of the Prime Minister to make use of *Richtlinienkompetenz* during the term of office and therefore lower the potential of steering by the center of government (Bornemann 2013: 346).
Furthermore, as coalitions face the dilemma of cooperation and competition it can be assumed that this will have an effect on the coordination of wicked problems. Coalition partners that face elections may change their modus operandi towards a more competitive behavior with the aim to produce a unique party profile for the electorate.

5.2.5. Media democracy

The term media democracy captures the importance of mass media in the political process, its influence on political actors and policies (Sarcinelli 1997: 36; 2011: 116). Politics is under permanent observance by the media with considerable implications for political room to maneuver (Florack, Grunden, and Korte 2011: 191f.; Grande 2000: 298f.; Hustedt 2013b: 66ff.; Korte 2002b; 2011: 296; Korte and Fröhlich 2009: 100ff.; Korte, Florack, and Grunden 2006: 111f.; Massing 2004).
The crucial importance of media in the political process is based on two aspects: First, content provided by the mass media is often the only source of information received by the population (Kamps 1998). Second, legitimacy of democratic political action is to a great extend based on communication, not only on actual output, e.g. policies (Diermann 2013; Sarcinelli 2013). In this reasoning, political decisions are - ideal-typically - legitimized through public competition and discussion of ideas, problem definitions and solutions (Kamps 2007: 34).
Therefore, political actors tend to direct their behavior in accordance with the needs of media democracy (Jarren, Sarcinelli, and Saxer 1998: 678). Put differently, to gain and preserve political power, media competence has become an important factor (Grunden 2011: 262; Korte 2006). Consider, for example, the quantitative growth and increasing importance of press offices and public relation units in German departmental bureaucracies since the 1980s (Hustedt 2013b) and within the State Chancelleries on state level (Mielke 1999: 46; Schwickert 2010: 145). Furthermore, governmental public affairs has faced a process of professionalization and an increase of spin-doctors and use of public affairs agencies (Heinze 2012).

Media democracy and coordination of wicked problems

What consequences might be observable for coordination of wicked problems in a media democracy? Bornemann (2013: 348f.) argues that increased importance of the media might also influence interdepartmental policy making and coordination. In his view, incoherence and fragmentation of governmental programs is quickly detected and sanctioned. In this reasoning, incoherence of governmental action is attributed with insufficient capacity to solve policy problems or effectively coordinate and furthermore hints to internal conflicts. These internal conflicts are easy targets for the opposition. In turn, being perceived as a harmonious,

monolithic government may lead to better election results. However, we have to acknowledge that for political actors it may be more important to be just perceived as a coherent government than to actually jointly coordinate substantial policies.
But the omnipresence of media democracy also provides an easy stage for articulating and pushing particular interests of coalition partners or single departments (Bornemann 2013: 348). In this regard, properties of media democracy may have a centrifugal effect on governmental action. In addition, Bornemann (2013: 348f.) argues that media democracy structures how political agendas are shaped and prioritized. For example, it is a common claim that mass media favors rather simple political claims that can be attributed to single individual politicians (Weale 1993: 101). This might have implications for joint inter-departmental projects that try to tackle wicked problems, because no simple stories might be available and accountability for success or failure is rather blurry. As a result, inter-organizational projects that try to tackle wicked problems with a joint effort may have quite some disadvantages regarding the coverage in the mass media. In sum, the properties of media democracy may lead to rather unfavorable conditions when it comes to tackle wicked problems effectively.

Media democracy on state level

The structural property of media democracy on state level takes a rather different form than on the federal level (Florack 2011b; Korte, Florack, and Grunden 2006). First of all, importance of the mass media on state level has not as much increased as on the federal level (Korte, Florack, and Grunden 2006: 112; Marcinkowski and Nieland 2002: 113; März 2006: 169; Mielke 2003a: 90). Politics on the state level receives much less attention by the media than the federal level; which corresponds to the decreasing autonomy of politics at the state level (Florack, Grunden, and Korte 2011). Moreover, personalization of politics, i.e. the focus on an individual politician and not the respective party is said to be very high with a strong media focus on the Prime Minister. Particular ministers are often not very known to the population (Grunden 2009: 82; Korte, Florack, and Grunden 2006: 112; 2006: 90; Mielke 2003b: 126; 2003a: 90). As a result, policies that are organized within the State Chancellery and are actively sponsored by the Prime Minister receive much more attention and symbolic value (Florack, Grunden, and Korte 2008: 67; Schwickert 2011a: 233). However, the idea of media democracy also captures the State Chancelleries' need to identify issues that increase the political capital and reputation of the Prime Minister (Florack, Grunden, and Korte 2011: 192; Grunden 2013: 377; Schwickert 2010: 203; 2011b: 10).

5.2.6. Conclusion

We can now conclude the structural properties on state level and their implications for the coordination of wicked problems. As Table 8 shows, the conditions of coordinating wicked problems are far from perfect in the German political-administrative system: The Prime Minister and the State Chancellery can potentially push coordination and limit turf wars and conflict by exerting *Richtlinienkompetenz* through the Prime Minister's political authority, but this tool is clearly limited in any coalition government. Thus, the attempt of central steering

may rather come in the form of rhetorical guidance by declaring a *Chefsache* or issuing policy statements. Furthermore, party competition and regular elections rather lead to short-term thinking and, thus, disadvantages the coordination of wicked problems that need to be tackled in the long run. In addition, coalition governments may lead to the avoidance of conflictual issues to stabilize the government. Finally, the mass media favors simple political claims that can be attributed to individual politicians over complex projects with shared accountability.

Table 8 Structural properties of state governments

Structural properties	**Characteristics**	**Implication for coordination of wicked problems**
Prime Minister democracy	Rather dominant Prime Minister Prime Minister is accountable to the parliament Close connection between Prime Minister and the respective party Prime Minister as the most prominent politician on state level	Strong Prime Minister may improve coordination of wicked issues and overcome departmental turf wars, although formal rights are limited *Richtlinienkompetenz* and *Chefsachen* as rather informal tools of authority
Negotiation-Competition-Hybrid	Party competition Systems of horizontal and vertical cooperation	Close ties to societal groups may fragment governmental action In general high transaction costs for political decisions
Party democracy	Internal fragmentation of parties Vote seeking, office seeking and policy seeking	Party competition rewards short-term success and not long-term policy making
Coalition democracy	Dilemma of cooperation & competition Coalition contracts and coalition committees as tools to avoid or settle conflict	Coalition governments increase the potential for conflict due to diverging preferences Decrease for potential of Prime Minister's use of *Richtlinienkompetenz* Coalition partners may avoid conflictual issues to stabilize the government
Media democracy	Media logic in governmental action Strong focus on Prime Minister Symbolic value of policies that are managed from the State Chancellery	Media rewards coherent governmental action, but offers also a stage to articulate particular interests Media favors simple political claims over complex projects

5.3. Actors

In this section we are going to discuss the actors represented in inter-departmental committees. Analytically, we will distinguish line departments and the State Chancellery as

distinct types of actors during coordination. Discussing the actors is necessary as we follow actor-centered institutionalism's argumentation that institutional as well as actor-based factors need to be taken into consideration when seeking to explain coordination processes and outputs. First, we will locate line departments and State Chancelleries in the context of the ideal-type of bureaucratic organizations. Then, we follow the heuristic of ACI by discussing the respective action orientations and capabilities to influence the coordination process of each type of actor. Furthermore, we will consider more general contextual information, i.e. the respective structure of Line departments and State Chancelleries from a macro and micro perspective, as well as their function within the political-administrative system.

5.3.1. Line departments and State Chancelleries as bureaucratic organizations

In general, line departments' and State Chancelleries' structures rely on the principles of bureaucratic organizations as prescribed in Max Weber's model of bureaucracy (Jann and Bogumil 2009: 136; Mayntz 1978a: 110; G. Schmid and Treiber 1975: 21ff.; Weber 1980).
Ideal-typical bureaucratic organizations feature 1) a fixed division of labor, 2) a hierarchy of offices, 3) a set of general rules that govern action and decisions, 4) a separation of personal and official property, 5) selection of staff based on qualification and 6) employment is perceived as a career by members of the organizations (Scott 1998: 42f.). The principles can be grouped according to a vertical and horizontal dimension (G. Schmid and Treiber 1975: 112). Vertically, there is a strict line of hierarchy ("*Weisungskette*") and a formal system of communication ("*Dienstweg*"). Horizontally, the bureaucratic model features a strictly regulated system of division of labor based on specialization ("*Zuständigkeit*"), a formal system of regulations outlining rights and duties of individual bureaucrats and finally a formal system of rules prescribing work processes.[26]

Since these principles constitute an ideal-type of bureaucratic organization, in reality they are modified and weakened by a number of factors (Mayntz 1978a: 112ff.). First, the departmental hierarchy is complemented by network-like structures, such as project groups or inter-departmental committees. Furthermore, staff units (*Stabseinheiten*) may be established with direct access to the leadership, i.e. outside of the formal hierarchical *Weisungskette*. Second, the impact of formal hierarchy is often limited by practical factors. Superiors cannot fully steer or even understand their subordinate's actions, because this would require a tremendous amount of specialized expertise cognitively processed by the superior. Third, bureaucratic principles are modified and weakened by a variety of informal relationships, e.g. contact patterns outside the formal vertical system of communication (Busse 2010: 230). To some extend, these informal practices serve as important complements to formal regulations, prominently coined by the term "useful illegality" ("*brauchbare Illegalität*") by Luhmann (Luhmann 1999). Fourth and finally, bureaucratic organizations are full of internal conflicts that are not included in the ideal-typical model. According to the model, clear responsibilities and lines of hierarchy are ought to avoid conflict. However, in reality various conflicts are

[26] e.g. the Joint Rules of Procedure of the Departments, as discussed in this thesis.

present between levels of hierarchy as well as between equally ranked sections caused by selective perception and divergent priorities (Mayntz 1978a: 114f.).

Table 9 Model of bureaucratic organization and empirical modifications

Model of bureaucratic organization	Empirical modification
line of hierarchy formal system of communication strictly regulated system of division of labor regulations outlining rights and duties of individual bureaucrats formal system of rules prescribing work processes	network like structures and staff units practical limits to hierarchy informality conflicts

Notwithstanding these modifications in mind, the bureaucratic model of organizations still provides a valid broad picture of the German bureaucracy (Derlien 1995: 83; 2003: 403; Mayntz and Scharpf 1973: 201).

5.3.2. Line departments

A department is an organization within the politico-administrative system that bears responsibility in a clear area of competence with regard to the preparation and implementation of collectively binding decisions (Hustedt 2013b; Mayntz 1978a; Mayntz and Scharpf 1975). As ministers regularly enter and exit the departments after election, König and Knoll also labeled them as the "memory of government" providing stability and continuity to governmental action (K. König and Knoll 2001).

5.3.2.1. Functions of line departments

Regardless of the specific task, two main functions of departments on the state level can be distinguished (Becker 1989: 633; Derlien 1985: 1044; Jann and Bogumil 2009: 97; Laux 1986: 2): First, government functions, referring to the political assistance of a Minister as a member of the government and, second, rather administrative functions, derived from the departments' role as the highest ranked administrative body in a hierarchical chain of command between the department and subordinated agencies.

Activities connected to the government function mostly focus on the respective Minister and include activities, such as preparation of decisions that the Minister has to take, preparation of cabinet decisions within the responsibility of the respective Minister, preparation of analyses of future trends, development of sectoral goals, policy programs and alternatives, development of policy guidelines in new policy domains, cooperation with the respective parliament, cooperation with the *Bundesrat*, coordination with other departments in case of cross-cutting projects, cooperation with external stakeholders affected by the policy programs

and decisions and public relations activities in the own area of competence (Derlien 1988: 25; Laux 1972; 1986: 2; Mayntz 1978a: 183).
Administrative functions refer to the role of being superior in a hierarchical structure. On the state level with a rather high number of persons employed in the public sector (e.g. police, teachers), those functions have quite some weight. Tasks within this function include administrative implementation of programs and cabinet decisions, answering parliamentary inquiries, steering of more or less autonomous subordinated agencies in the respective area of competence to ensure appropriate enforcement of law (e.g. functional and administrative supervision), compilation of rather technical decrees and administrative regulations as well as implementation of decrees in the own area of competence. In general, on the state level implementation of policies and supervision of subordinate agencies are more important than on the federal level (Derlien 1988: 24; Laux 1972; 1986: 2; Mayntz 1978a: 183).

5.3.2.2. Structure

We will discuss departmental structure from a macro and micro perspective. The macro perspective refers to the system of government as a whole consisting of specialized departments, the micro perspective refers to the internal structure of individual departments.

From a macro perspective, vertically departments are superiors in a hierarchical relationship with agencies. Departments are a highest authority meaning that they do not have a superior authority (Derlien 1996b: 554; Hustedt 2013b: 29; Jann and Bogumil 2009: 94). Horizontally, departments are structured according to either functional considerations (e.g. Finance, Justice, Interior), policy domains (e.g. Agriculture, Environment) or with regard to certain clientele (e.g. Woman, Youth, Elders). Of course, the macro structures of departments does not only follow a logic of how to appropriately organize governmental tasks, but is also heavily influenced by power considerations within coalition governments (Derlien 1996b: 550; Kulik 2002: 38f.; Siedentopf 1976). Formally, the macro structure of departments is decided by the Prime Minister. However, this is limited by constitutional prescriptions in some states. For example, some state constitutions demand the existence of certain departments (e.g. Departments of Finance) or grant a formal veto-right to the state parliaments (Niedobitek 2004: 363f.).

We shall now discuss departmental structure from a micro perspective, i.e. the internal division of labor and hierarchical chain of command within departments, which largely follows the blueprint of the federal level (Becker 1989: 655; Jann and Veit 2010: 5). A separation can be made between the leadership (*Leitungsebene*), the divisional level (*Abteilungsebene*) and the working level (*Arbeitsebene*) (K. König 2012: 43ff.; Mayntz 1978a: 187ff.; G. Schmid and Treiber 1975: 187). In the following we will discuss each of the hierarchical levels.

Leadership level

The top leadership consists of the Minister and State Secretaries (Hustedt 2013b: 167ff.; G. Schmid and Treiber 1975: 116ff.).[27]

Ministers are cabinet members, who usually belong to a political party and often have held top party positions in the past (Jann and Veit 2010). They are typically career politicians and do not count as civil servants. However, on the state level, recruitment of non-party members is more common than on the federal level. Often, these former outsiders also try to become members of parliament to strengthen their position (Helms 2005: 175). As outlined in section 5.1.1.1, the departmental principle grants individual ministers great autonomy. All matters in the area of competence of a particular Minister are conducted independently and on his own responsibility. Formally, all actions of the department are attributed to the Minister himself, who is politically accountable. This monocratic idea of departmental responsibility is accompanied by a monocratic hierarchical formal authority structure. Despite obvious limits due to practical considerations, the Minister may reserve for himself any decision of the organization (Mayntz 1978a: 188; Mayntz and Scharpf 1975: 63). Put differently, hierarchically the Minister is the top position within the department and his competences can be seen as threefold (Koch 2005: 240ff.). First, regarding policy making ministers can ultimately decide about proposals prepared by the sectional level (*Sachgewalt*). Second, formally ministers decide about human resource matters (*Personalgewalt*). However, this competence is limited by a variety of factors, e.g. the right of co-determination granted to staff committees (Hustedt 2013b: 170f.). Finally, ministers can change the formal structure of departments as they wish (*Organisationsgewalt*). Within the limits of the general framework prescribed in the Joint Rules of Procedure of the Departments, the Minister may establish new organizational units, divisions, temporal internal project groups, etc. Put differently, the organizational structure of a department is ultimately formally decided by the respective Minister (E. Müller 1995: 15).

Ministers are supported by the *Leitungsstab* that includes the respective office managers, personal assistants, press aides, cabinet- and parliament officers, planning officers and special commissioners (Hustedt 2013b: 161ff.; A. Katz 1975: 181ff.; K. König 2012: 46; M. König 1997: 599; Kulik 2002: 25f.; Mayntz and Scharpf 1975: 86; G. Schmid and Treiber 1975: 116). Compared to the department as a whole, the leadership level is rather small and rather lacks capacity for substantial policy work (Mayntz and Scharpf 1975: 86; G. Schmid and Treiber 1975: 122). Without the capacity for policy initiatives, the Minister's function is rather to be found in representing the department within the cabinet and vis-a-vis the wider public, and (rarely) in final settlement of conflict within the department (G. Schmid and Treiber 1975: 125). However, to increase policy capacity at the top or to symbolize attention for a topic, ministers may establish staff units outside the ordinary hierarchy that enjoy direct access to the political leadership (E. Müller 1995: 17; G. Schmid and Treiber 1975: 120ff.).

[27] On the federal level one can find administrative and parliamentary State Secretaries. The former are officials (Beamte) while the latter are member of the parliament. They were established to increase the contact between the departmental bureaucracy and the Bundestag and *Bundesrat*. On state level, parliamentary State Secretaries are rather uncommon (Jann and Bogumil 2009: 155; Jann and Veit 2010: 5).

State Secretaries are the highest-ranked civil servants in departments (*Amtschef*) and serve as supervisors of lower-ranked officials (Kulik 2002: 35; G. Schmid and Treiber 1975: 117). They are usually career civil servants, slowly rising to the top of a department.[28] After elections and respective exchange of ministers, they may stay in office. However, they are political civil servants , i.e. they can be put on temporary retirement at any time without any reason given to ensure political loyalty (Jann and Bogumil 2009: 190; Jann and Veit 2010: 6).

Their role within the department is twofold: First, traditionally many organizational and management tasks required to keep the department going and functional (e.g. questions of human resources or budgets) are within the responsibility of the State Secretaries, whose attention is thus rather directed to the inside (management role) (Hustedt 2013b: 191ff.; Jann and Bogumil 2009: 155; G. Schmid and Treiber 1975: 117). Second, State Secretaries fulfill a role in policy making. In inter-departmental horizontal coordination, State Secretaries are the highest level of escalation below the ministers or the cabinet (Hustedt 2013b: 192). Furthermore, in many states, a weekly meeting of State Secretaries serves as a preparation of the cabinet meeting. Here, potential conflict can be settled or controversial topics might be removed from the cabinet meeting (Häußer 1995: 79; Hustedt 2013b: 192; Hustedt and Tiessen 2006: 30f.). In vertical intra-departmental coordination, State Secretaries are engaged in co-signature (*Mitzeichnung*) regarding all drafts in their area of responsibility, making them sometimes a bottleneck of coordination. Furthermore, they vertically communicate and channel demands and ideas of the Minister vis-a-vis the divisions (G. Schmid and Treiber 1975: 118)

Divisional level

Divisions are situated between the top leadership and the working level. They group sections from the working level according to a specific topic or a particular principle, e.g. clientele, regions, etc. Furthermore, each department has a division fulfilling a "housekeeping-function", i.e. organizational matters, human resources, budget and finances (*Z-Division*). (Mayntz 1978a: 188; E. Müller 1995: 17; G. Schmid and Treiber 1975: 111).
Divisions are managed by a head of division, who needs to fulfill a middle-management role "by providing substantive impulses for initiatives developed either at the level below or above, by repeatedly discussing projects in the phase of drafting with the responsible section, by screening section initiatives before passing them on, and by selectively promoting projects" (Mayntz and Scharpf 1975: 83). Put differently, heads of division can be described as filters or amplifiers between the top leadership and the sections at the working level (Mayntz and Scharpf 1972: 40; G. Schmid and Treiber 1975: 127ff.). They serve as mediators between the administrative logics of action of the working level and the top leadership's political logic that we will discuss later in 5.3.2.3 in more detail (Mayntz and Scharpf 1975: 85; Smeddinck and Tils 2002; Tils 2001a; 2001b). They "exercise their coordination function by correcting or supplementing draft proposals that are drawn up in each section"

[28] However, Jann and Veit show that mixed career paths of State Secretaries are not very uncommon at the state level. They conclude that on the state level there is an "increasing inter-sector mobility between politics and administration and a tendency toward a hybridisation of career patterns of executive politicians and - to a lower extent – of top civil servants" (2010: 16).

(Walzenbach 1999: 68). Ultimately, the divisional leaders' task is to mutually translate political expectations of State Secretaries/Ministers and administrative considerations of policy specialists and integrating them into politically feasible and technically correct decisions (Derlien 1995: 81). As a result, "to be able to perform this integrating function, divisional leaders must speak the language of the politician as well as of the bureaucrat, they must be men of two worlds" (Mayntz and Scharpf 1975: 85). This function as a mediator between different levels of hierarchy is further strengthened as divisional leaders have often no own staff at their disposal, meaning that their own capacity for substantial policy work is quite limited.

Sectional level

Finally, there is the working level consisting of sections. Sections are the basic operating units of departments. Each task prescribed in the internal task allocations plans needs to be assigned to a particular section (Derlien 1985; Lepper 1972a; Mayntz and Scharpf 1975: 67). As mentioned before, capacity for substantial policy work is not to be found at the leadership or divisional level. Hence, the lion's share of policy making, i.e. drafting and developing policies, is done at the operational level within the sections and most policy initiatives are developed there (Mayntz and Scharpf 1975: 67; Page 2012: 69). Departments feature a very detailed division of labor. Each organizational unit has formal responsibilities and tasks that are outlined in "task allocation plans" (Derlien 1985: 1047). As a result, sections are responsible for a very specialized part of social reality and therefore develop a selective perception of the social environment. Put differently by Mayntz and Scharpf: "The small size and the principle of fixed task allocation combine to produce a tendency for each section to work very intensively within a very limited substantive area. The attention of each section is focused on – and rather strictly limited to – a small sector of the environment" (1975: 70). The advantage of this is a high degree of problem sensitivity, expertise, and competence in a small and specified area. However, the consequences of this are coordination demands, because the governmental structure does not adequately match the real world problem interdependencies which makes inter-departmental coordination crucial (Lepper 1974: 110ff.). Sections do not only focus on drafting and revising bills in a specified area of the social environment; they also keep contact to interests groups and other civil society actors in their area of competence. These contacts serve as sources of information and expertise as well as sensors of potential policy problems. Furthermore, these contacts to civil society actors make sure that proposals developed at the sectional level do not only match administrative or technical requirements but are also politically viable, i.e. will not cause massive resistance by pressure groups (Mayntz 1978a: 203ff.).

The three vertical hierarchical levels of departments constantly interact with each other. This has been prominently described by Mayntz and Scharpf as an implicit dialogue. Decisions of the top leadership are based on problem perceptions and proposals of the working level. At the same time, the working level is constantly anticipating the political preferences of the leadership. Divisions, as already mentioned, serve as mediators between a political and functional/administrative action orientation (1975: 100ff.). Bureaucrats from the lower ranks of the hierarchy are very aware of the limited time budget, attention span and potential for

conflict resolution of ministers. Hence, they will mostly try to draft policies that do not cause heavy political conflict with other departments and, as a result, do not need special attention of the Minister. If conflict is inevitable and can only be settled on the political level, bureaucrats have to adequately assess whether the own Minister can actually win the confrontation with other ministers, because public failure of the own Minister will ultimately be harmful to the individual bureaucrats career prospects (E. Müller 1995: 25; Pehle 1998: 108).

To conclude, we can state that departments are no unitarian actors. Rather, their structure is characterized by various horizontally differentiated divisions and respective sections with own perceptions and interests (Häußermann 1974: 72ff.; Mayntz and Scharpf 1975: 71ff.). Capacity for substantial work is mostly based in the lower ranks of the hierarchy, i.e. at the sectional level. Furthermore, high degree of division of labor and respective concentrated expertise within the sections causes selective perception of policy problems and the desired solutions. Vertically, the relationships between the three levels can be described as a constant, often implicit dialogue that serves to mediate between the different action orientations at the respective level, which we will discuss in the next section.

5.3.2.3. Action orientations

In section 4.3 we introduced action orientations as one important part to understand actors' behavior. Action orientations refer to what is perceived as relevant and how situations are interpreted.

Action orientations are shaped by the organizational affiliation and the respective task and demands tied to it. Thus, at different hierarchical levels of an organization, different action orientations are likely to be found, i.e. different interpretations of the same situation will exist (Brunsson and Olsen 1998: 21; Egeberg and Sætren 1999). Within single departments we can ideal-typically distinguish between action orientations at the leadership and the sectional level. Following this line of argumentation, we can distinguish political and functional/administrative action orientations (Halstenberg 1976; Hustedt and Tiessen 2006; K. König 2002e; Smeddinck and Tils 2000; 2002; Steinkemper 1979; Tils 2001a; 2001b; 2002; 2003). The political logic can be found at the leadership level and functional/administrative action orientations are to be found on the sectional level, because expertise and policy making capacity is concentrated there. Of course, this separation remains ideal-typical. In all-day-life of departmental bureaucracies, logics are constantly at interplay and intermingled, because the strict 'politics-administration dichotomy' generally represents rather a myth than empirical reality, as many studies show (Hustedt 2013b; Hustedt and Salomonsen 2014; Mayntz and Scharpf 1975; Page and Wright 1999; Putnam, Aberbach, and Rockman 1981).

<u>Functional/administrative orientations</u>

In general, functional/administrative orientations refer to problem perceptions and solutions based on expert knowledge of various kinds (Tils 2001b: 33). Basically, policies seek to solve

(or at least address) problems i.e., they focus on substantial problem-solving capacity by means of technically correct, legal policies. The issues at stake are evaluated from a sectoral, expertise-based point of view as manifested by departmental remit. This perspective is considered to address problems in a mid- to long term-timeframe (Hustedt and Danken 2017). Of course, different disciplines and professional backgrounds represented in departments might assess problems and solutions differently, but the common ground is a functional perspective based on a problem solving ambition (K. König 2002c: 79).

In the context of departmental bureaucracies, this functional/administrative action orientation can be further separated into an orientation based on scientific knowledge, orientation based on law, and an orientation concerned with implementation (Grunden 2009: 19ff.; 2013: 372; Tils 2001b: 33ff.).

The scientific action orientation is based on scientific knowledge. It serves as a cognitive fundament for decision-making. Orientation for action is given by construction of reality based on theories. Based on theoretical cause-effect relationships in specific policy domains, problems and solutions are discussed and interpreted. Put differently, arguments and decisions in inter-departmental coordination are perceived as appropriate if they are backed by commonly accepted scientific knowledge. However, the scientific action orientation does not imply the absence of conflict. Hence, one should not assume that decision-making processes dominated by scientific action orientations lead - as it were - "automatically" to unanimous decisions. Often, scientific knowledge is lacking or contested and differs among academic disciplines or departments. As departments are often specialized in a certain policy field, a particular scientific discipline might also be dominant. As a result, interpretation of policy problems and solutions differs remarkably. Furthermore, scientifically proven cause-effect relationship do not have any normative implications in itself. Thus, what is desirable and what is not cannot be adequately based on a scientific action orientation alone (Tils 2001b: 35).

Action orientations based on law focus on the existing legal order as the main frame of reference when making decisions. In this line of reasoning, programs are perceived as good when they fulfill a couple of requirements of legislative techniques. For example, this includes the unambiguous use of terms, the unproblematic fit of a law into existing regulations or the avoidance of imprecise general clauses. Put differently, from the perspective of action orientation based on law, a new regulation or program is perceived as adequate if it is consistent with the existing legal order from a systematic point of view and if conformity with the intentions prescribed in existing laws is granted (Tils 2001b: 35).

Action orientations based on implementation focus on the actual practicability of programs and regulations. Ideal-typically, the main frame of reference is the minimization of implementation costs and maximization of program effectiveness. Action logics of implementation pose a variety of demands on policies: For example, policies need to be flexible enough to be adapted to various contexts by the implementing agencies, or policies need to match the respective agencies' resources of implementation to be effectively executed. Put differently, the main focal point of the implementation action orientation is the relation of agencies and the respective policies in terms of implementation costs and policy effectiveness (Tils 2001b: 38).

The presented sub-categories of functional/administrative action orientations can rarely be aligned without conflict or controversy. Consider for example, how a law-based action orientation demands strict use of legal terms and avoidance of general clauses, while at the same time an implementation action orientation demands flexibility that could be enhanced by using general clauses to be interpreted by the street-level bureaucrat according to a specific context and situational factors.

Political action orientations

Political action orientations leads to assessment of "good" policy programs and demands for coordination from a rather different perspective (Smeddinck and Tils 2002; Tils 2001b). Compared to the orientations discussed as sub-categories of the functional/administrative action orientations, there is one crucial difference: political action orientation does not focus so much on the actual policy at stake, but on various other factors. While the functional/administrative orientation addresses substantial policy content from various disciplinary perspectives, the political action orientation is rather about the political "rules of the game", because ministers need to "orient [their] actions at the needs of political survival" (Mayntz and Scharpf 1975: 91). Put differently, the main focal point of a political action orientation is the acquirement and preservation of influence and support for the individual Minister. At the leadership level of departments time is a scarce resource and, hence, attention is only paid very selectively and from a particular perspective (Mayntz and Scharpf 1975: 91). First, attention is allocated to politically controversial policies and initiatives that might trigger political conflict. Second, management of acute crises is given priority to avoid political damage for the individual Minister. Third, programs and initiatives are favored that are likely to receive wide publicity and public acclaim. We argued in section 5.2.5 that increased mediatization in a media democracy structures how political agendas are shaped and prioritized. As an implication of that, topics are favored that can easily be communicated and are not very controversial, i.e. do not cause massive resistance by important interest groups or other members of the coalition (Tils 2001b: 44). Fourth, political action orientation focuses on the demands of the respective party and their clientele. Programs and initiatives put forward by the Minister need to fit into existing party programs and governmental pronouncements (Tils 2001b: 45). On the other hand, individual politicians need to develop a distinct political profile recognizable by the electorate. Hence, the relationship between competition and collaboration within the government is complicated (Tils 2001a: 99ff.) (see sections on party democracy in 5.2.3 and coalition democracy in 5.2.4.).

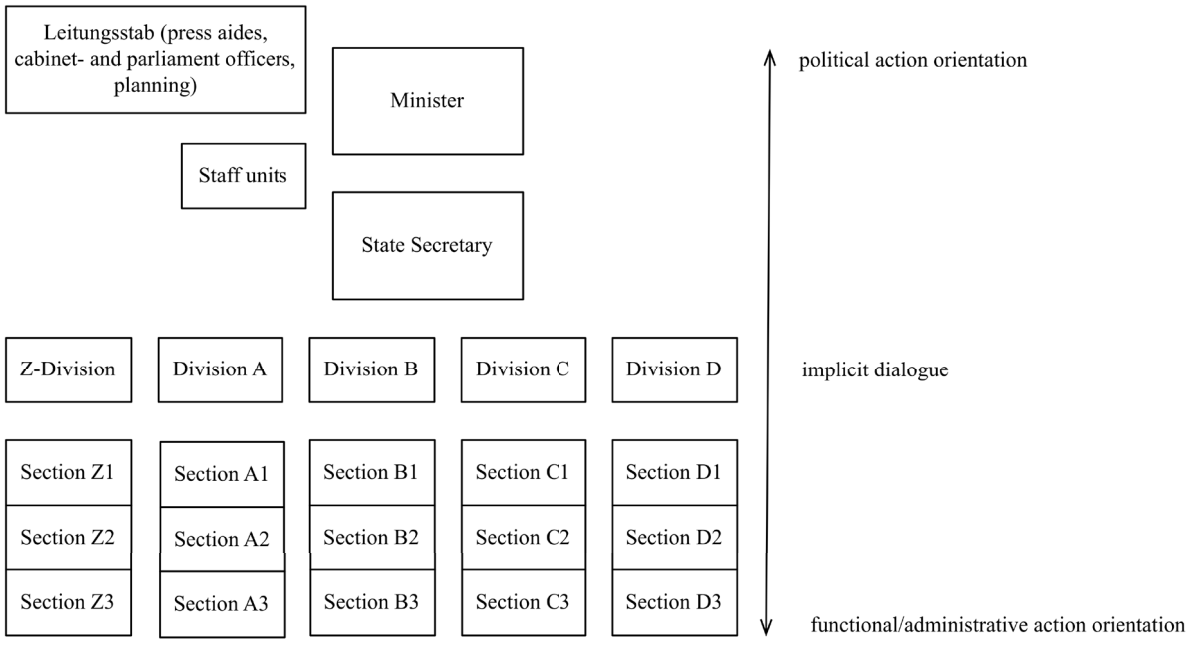
In contrast to the functional/administrative action orientation that rather has a long-term perspective on policies, political action orientation leads to short-term considerations. As ministers usually do not stay very long at the top position of a department and are furthermore often engaged in management of acute crises, they focus on projects that provide short-term success, i.e. public support and acclaim, and are focused to win elections (Hustedt and Danken 2017; Wagener 1971: 57).

Table 10 Action orientations in line departments

	Functional/administrative	**Political**
Level	sectional	leadership
Characteristics	scientific action logic law based action logic implementation action logic	political survival, increasing support for individual Minister
Demands on policies and coordination	utilization of knowledge, often based on departmental traditions consistency with existing legal system conformity with intention of existing laws low implementation costs program effectiveness	policies need to acquire public support and acclaim able to be communicated easily avoid controversy while sharpening the political profile of individual ministers
Time scale	mid-term; long-term	short-term

The ideal-typical structure of departments and the action orientations to a particular level of hierarchy can be summarized in Figure 2.

Figure 2 Scheme of ideal-typical line department



5.3.2.4. Capabilities

We introduced capabilities as "all action resources that allow an actor to influence an outcome in certain respects and to a certain degree" (Scharpf 1997: 43). We specified this reasoning by introducing four sources of power in inter-organizational settings - power based on need

imbalance (e.g. skills, information, money), power based on importance imbalance (e.g. centrality, uniqueness), power based on a structural position (e.g. formal hierarchical position, network centrality, discursive power) and finally power based on day-to-day activities (e.g. social skills, social capital) (see section 4.3).

The most important resource of line departments is information and expertise with regard to the own jurisdiction and area of competence (Derlien, Böhme, and Heindl 2011: 87; J. Schmid and Buhr 2013: 98; Smeddinck and Tils 2002: 301; Sturm and Pehle 2007: 58; Weber 1980: 855). In order to fulfill their aforementioned function within the politico-administrative system, departments control, collect and process information relevant for policy decisions in their organizational remit (Mayntz 1978a: 66). Hence, the "intelligence of bureaucracy relies on its expertise" (Derlien 1996a: 147). In inter-departmental committees, this policy specific knowledge can translate into several potential ways of influencing the coordination process. For example, information may be traded for influence over policy content or information may be provided selectively to steer the decision-making process (Peters 2001: 234ff.). Similarly, Mayntz and Scharpf hold that "to control the information premises of a decision means to influence substantively its content (1975: 131). However, since the departmental principle grants departments a great degree of autonomy, the active contribution of information in IDCs remains voluntary. Departments know about the great potential to influence policies by selective use and distribution of information. As Veit argues, keeping information distributed asymmetrical among departments is a valuable source of power. Hence, departments are very reluctant to give this source of power out of their hands in inter-departmental coordination (2010: 262).

Sources of expertise

Departments make use of several sources for needed information, which we can distinguish into internal and external ones. First, we shall discuss the sources of expertise inside the bureaucracy.

First, partly bureaucrats possess special knowledge about the relation between programs and their effects by their professional training. Furthermore, since bureaucrats often stay in one department for their whole career they accumulate expertise over time by reading relevant academic literature (Knill and Tosun 2012: 124).

Second, specialized agencies like the Statistical Offices collect and present statistical information on a variety of topics (Knoepfel et al. 2011: 97). Statistical Offices are either subordinated agencies supervised by a department, or Institutions under Public Law (*Anstalten des öffentlichen Rechts*). Next to Statistical Offices, departments can acquire information from their subordinated agencies concerned with implementation of programs. This may include sporadic and unsystematic accounts of problems, or elaborated statistics on particular matters. Access to these kind of information is not equally distributed among departments, because information flows better within vertical lines of hierarchies and follows institutionalized channels of upward communication (Mayntz and Scharpf 1975: 134). Hence, the superior organization to the Statistical Office may have a privileged access to its knowledge.

Third, there are governmental research agencies (*Ressortforschungseinrichtungen*). Usually they are under supervision of a line department. They are concerned with independent research, policy advice and other task prescribed by law, e.g. risk assessment or standardization (Bach and Döhler 2012; Barlösius 2010: 348). Since they act between the scientific system and the politico-administrative system, there are „potential conflicts between the two missions“ (Boruch and George 1988: 27).

We will know discuss the external sources of expertise used by departments. As policy problems become increasingly complex, not all relevant information can be accumulated within the departments. Hence, sources of expertise are not only to be found inside departments and their subordinated agencies.
First, external interest groups are typically in close contact with the sectional level of departments and provide expertise. Interest groups may supply valuable information concerning the effects of a policy as well as how it might be received by their members. Put differently, interest groups provide issue related knowledge as well as knowledge on political feasibility (Knill and Tosun 2012: 127).
The second source of external expertise is to be found in a variety of commissions or advisory boards that are staffed with scholars. These advisory bodies differ quite a lot regarding their endurance and composition. Some commissions may include representatives of interest groups as well as independent experts. As a result, they have a mixed character of interest representation and scientific advice. As they include representatives of interest groups as well as independent experts, they provide scientific advise and information on demands and wishes of interest groups (Busse 2010: 229; Hustedt, Veit, and Fleischer 2010; Mayntz and Scharpf 1975: 135; J. Schmid and Buhr 2013: 99; J. Schneider 2010; Siefken 2006; Veit 2010: 53ff.; Weimar 2004).

Although a lot of information is at the disposal of departmental bureaucracies, it is, however, quite often not used. Mayntz puts forward a variety of reasons for that. On the one hand, information processing capacity is limited by time and personal constraints. On the other hand, practical usefulness of scientific knowledge might be doubted or available knowledge might simply be ignored (1978: 207), or used "selectively and often distortingly" (Knorr 1977: 171).

5.3.3. State Chancelleries

To discuss State Chancelleries’ structures, functions, action orientations and capabilities we can partly rely on literature concerned with the German Federal Chancellery, as both organizations are very similar and seen as functional equivalents. Furthermore, their institutional framework and the political context is very similar in general (Helms 2005: 178; März 2006: 181). At the end of this section, we will also discuss an optimistic and pessimistic perspective regarding State Chancelleries’ potential to achieve positive coordination in inter-departmental coordination.

5.3.3.1. Functions of State Chancelleries

With regard to State Chancelleries and their respective functions, one can identify a lack of written law as most state constitutions or administrative laws do not mention them explicitly (Herzog 1976: 40; K. König 1993: 15). Furthermore, the states' respective Joint Rules of Procedure of the Departments and Joint Rules of the Government vary quite a bit with regard to State Chancelleries (K. König 1993: 15). Hence, a systematic legal framework that legally defines functions of State Chancelleries in detail cannot be found across the German states.

However, research on State Chancelleries and the Federal Chancellery points to a wide range of empirically evidenced functions within the German politico-administrative system that will be presented in the following section. Put differently, from a legal perspective, there is little to be found on what they *should* do, but empirical research on the Federal Chancellery and State Chancelleries describes what they *actually* do (Florack and Grunden 2011: 10ff.; Häußer 1995: 40ff.; A. Katz 1975: 222ff.; Knoll 2004: 45; 2010; K. König and Häußer 1996; Mai 2011; Müller-Rommel 2000: 82; Müller-Rommel and Pieper 1991: 5; OECD 2015: 95; Proeller and Siegel 2008; H. Schneider 2001: 284ff.; Zerr 2006). In general, the catalogue of functions has sharply risen during the last 30 years. Accordingly, human resource budgets of State Chancelleries have more than doubled during 1966-1999 (H. Schneider 2001: 297).

Presidential function

Unlike the federal Level, the German states do not separate between Head of State and Head of Government (A. Katz 1975: 75; März 2006: 149; OECD 2014: 14; Zerr 2006: 202). Thus, State Chancelleries have to fulfill a variety of tasks similar to the Federal Office of the Federal President (Häußer 1995: 40; H. Schneider 2001: 284). This includes task such as representation vis-a-vis the public (e.g. the federal level, other states, European Union, etc.), signing and promulgation of laws, formal appointment of officials and judges, granting pardon and drafting letters of congratulations and condolences, or organizing conferment of a decoration (Zerr 2006: 190f.). Furthermore, State Chancelleries are usual addressees of letters by citizens with a plethora of concerns. For example, in 1985 Bavaria's Prime Minister Franz Josef-Strauß received 40.000 letters, often with very technical questions (Strauß 1989: 541). Another usual form of interaction between the Prime Minister and citizens organized by State Chancelleries are dialog forums or town-hall meetings that need thorough preparation (Schilling, Ruckh, and Rübcke 2009: 26).

Leadership function

One of the main function of State Chancelleries is to support the Prime Minister in exercising executive leadership, sharply put by Hennis: "without the center, the head of government would be a pitiable fully disabled, who could not see, not hear, not write and certainly not set the policy guidelines of the government" (Hennis 1964: 64). As outlined in section 5.1.1.1, the constitutional Prime Minister principle prescribes the formal right to determine the government's overall policy guidelines (*Richtlinienkompetenz*) to the respective Prime Minister. Häußer (1995: 41) argues that this also constitutes a leadership function for State Chancelleries by supporting the Prime Minister to set and implement the overall policy

guidelines, regardless of the actual political chance to do so. However, this does not mean hierarchical command and control since the Prime Minister is rather a primus inter pares without the formal right to give orders (Häußer 1995: 43; K. König and Häußer 1996: 27). As discussed in section 5.2.1, policy guidelines are not enacted as orders but may rather come in the form of rhetorical statements, i.e. government policy statements by the Prime Minster at the beginning or during the term of office. Being the administrative and political support organization for a Prime Minister, State Chancelleries are heavily involved in drafting and negotiating about these policy statements (Häußer 1995: 42; H. Schneider 2001: 285f.).

Coordination function

Public administration research typically hints at State Chancelleries' important role in coordinating the day-to-day life of governments (Bornemann 2011; Fleischer 2011c; Häußer 1995; 1996; K. König 1993: 38; Müller-Rommel 2000; Zerr 2006). As Bouckaert, Peters and Verhoest put it: "The role of the center is crucial when studying coordination within central government" (2010: 19). Accordingly, coordination is seen as one of the main functions of the center of government (Knoll 2004: 431; Schilling, Ruckh, and Rübcke 2009: 15), since state governments are highly fragmented consisting of several departments with own policy agendas and responsibilities. Although the three constitutional principles Prime Minister principle, Cabinet Principle and Department Principle are legally meant to be in balance, empirical evidence shows that the departmental principle is rather dominant, as outlined in 5.1.1.1. Thus, from a rather normative perspective, it is argued that State Chancelleries have to make sure that governmental action is not dispersed into several particularistic policy agendas (Böckenförde 1964: 241; Häußer 1995: 45; A. Katz 1975: 255; H. Schneider 2001: 286). The coordination function is organizationally supported by mirror-sections (see section 5.3.3.2) that monitor the work of the line departments.

Cabinet and secretariat functions

In line with the Prime Minister's functions as the head of cabinet, the State Chancellery can be seen as the cabinet's administrative secretariat (Gebauer 2008: 129; Häußer 1995: 47). This includes preparation of meetings and their agendas and taking minutes. Furthermore, the State Chancellery has to prepare the Prime Minister for the weekly cabinet meeting (H. Schneider 2001: 287). This *Kabinettsvermerk* includes very concise information on each point of the cabinet's agenda, points of political controversy and a recommendation by the State Chancellery regarding how to proceed. As outlined in 5.1.1.1, cabinet meetings are not a place for discussion and conflict. Quite in contrast, typically consensus is reached beforehand on the lower ranks of hierarchy. The State Chancellery tries to mediate conflicts between departments as much as possible in advance. Usually, all remaining points of controversy are settled some days before the actual cabinet meeting by the State Secretaries of the respective departments and the Head of State Chancellery (Häußer 1995: 47).

Cooperation function

Since the German political-administrative system is decentralized horizontally and vertically, the State Chancelleries need to be part of complex network of cooperative relationships

between various actors (see 5.2.2). Cooperation exists between the State Chancellery and other administrative actors, with the parliament and with actors of the civil society.
With regard to administrative actors, cooperation has a vertical and horizontal dimension.
Vertically, cooperation takes place with the federal level and the European Union assisted by respective representations in Berlin and Brussels (Häußer 1995: 48; H. Schneider 2001: 288). In Brussels, German state governments established offices that gather information on policy processes at the European level. As a result of German federalism, state governments also hold offices in Berlin that serve to prepare sessions of the *Bundesrat* (Schrenk 2010).
Horizontally, there is a lot of cooperation between German states, often organized by State Chancelleries. This is especially the case for projects that cross territorial borders of states, e.g. regulation of rivers, joint preparation for floods, environmental protection or spatial planning (Häußer 1995: 51; H. Schneider 2001: 288). Especially important is the Conference of the Prime Ministers (*Ministerpräsidentenkonferenz*) in which the State Chancelleries are involved in various ways as they brief the respective Prime Minister or take part in preparation meetings and working groups with colleagues from other states to settle as many disagreement as possible in advance.
State Chancelleries also hold contact to the respective state parliament in various ways. For example, this may include planning of parliamentary sessions as well as passing on parliamentary inquiries to the adequate department. Furthermore, often officials from mirror-sections take part in sessions of parliamentary committees to increase their level of information in their area of competence. Next to that, the State Chancellery has a special relationship with the parliamentary groups that constitute the governing coalition. As Prime Ministers are dependent on the support of their parliamentary group, these - often informally organized - contacts are very important (Häußer 1995: 51; H. Schneider 2001: 289).
Next to cooperation with administrative actors and the state parliament, State Chancelleries regularly keep in touch with interest groups from various sectors. Sometimes their representatives even join cabinet meetings to be informed or asked for preferences (H. Schneider 2001: 289).

Planning & looking-out function

State Chancelleries are sometimes described as the appropriate place to develop long-term policy programs (Schwickert 2010; 2011b). The idea is to be one step ahead of day-to-day politics by recognizing future trends, identifying central problem fields and options and drafting broad strategies to adequately react to these challenges in the long run with the aim to overcome silo-oriented policy making or short-term budgeting.
Despite rather disappointing experiences in the past regarding planning, nowadays the general idea of long-term thinking in State Chancelleries might have become popular again in research and practice coined as "strategic management".[29] Organizationally, the planning and looking out function is often fulfilled by policy units (*Grundsatzreferate*), staff units

[29] Especially during the 1960s and 1970s in times of the so called "Planning Euphoria" at the federal and state level, many State Chancelleries established organizational structures and planning programs (e.g. "Großer Hessenplan" (Hesse), or "Integriertes Planungs, Entscheidungs- und Kontrollsystem" (Rhineland-Palatinate). However, the outcome of these efforts is valued as rather limited, because line departments reacted with heavy resistance and insisted on their autonomy.

(*Stabsstellen*) or internal advisory units, e.g. internal think-tanks (Haubner et al. 2006; Kaiser 2007; Knill, Bauer, and Ziegler 2006; Proeller 2007; Schilling, Ruckh, and Rübcke 2009; Schulze-Cleven 2011; Schwickert 2011b; Sturm and Pehle 2007).

Public relations function

With growing importance of private mass media during the 1980s, public relations became more important as an activity in State Chancelleries (H. Schneider 2001: 291). State Chancelleries and the government spokesman have to take care of a coherent communication with the mass media as well as audiences in the internet, despite potential diverging agendas in the departments. Hence, the press office in the State Chancellery has a rather coordinating role, while departmental press offices are responsible for contributing the actual content (H. Schneider 2001: 294). Furthermore, State Chancelleries are mostly responsible for the websites of state governments and take care of a common layout and design. Often, the very idea to introduce governmental web sites came from State Chancelleries as a result of their rather political action orientation (H. Schneider 2001: 293).[30]

Party function

Usually, the State Chancellery is keeping contact to the Prime Minister's party in some form. This function becomes more important when the Prime Minister acts as the Chairman of his respective party at the same time. However, there is a fine line between legal and illegal activities of a State Chancellery when it comes to supporting the Prime Minister in addressing his party (H. Schneider 2001: 294). For example, the State Chancellery may support the Prime Minister in drafting speeches for annual party meetings, as long as the Prime Minister focuses on his role as the head of government (Häußer 1995: 58; H. Schneider 2001: 295). On the other hand, the State Chancellery must not be engaged in party political campaigns or support the re-election of the Prime Minister, i.e. become some kind of substitute party head quarter (Häußer 1995: 58; H. Schneider 2001: 295).

Departmental function

The departmental functions refers to responsibility and accountability for a substantive policy domain. In our understanding, chairing an IDC that deals with demographic change belongs to the departmental function. As shown, mostly State Chancelleries are not responsible for substantive policies. Thus, the departmental function can to some extend be described as a contradiction to its traditional role of neutrally coordinating the government's work (Mai 2011: 109). However, there are some exceptions, e.g. usually media policies, broadcast and quite often matters of the European Union (Mai 2011: 109; Zerr 2006: 191). The reasons to incorporate responsibility for a substantive policy are various: lack of appropriate governmental structures for emerging policy domains, particular importance of an issue with special attention by the Prime Minister (discussed as *Chefsache*), trying to provide some symbolic value to a topic or simply tradition (Häußer 1995: 61; 1996; K. König and Häußer 1996: 30; H. Schneider 2001: 295). One can divide between a formal and informal departmental function (Knoll 2004: 59f.; 2010: 210). The first one refers to the formal

[30] In 1995, Bavaria's government went online, followed by all state governments until 1997.

governmental portfolio allocation; the latter to certain crisis or catastrophes that the Prime Minister is expected to deal with, because the media or opposition deems them so important - albeit they fall under the responsibility of a line Minister (Frohn 2011: 228).

In a nutshell, State Chancelleries fulfill a variety of different functions within government. In this thesis, we are particularly interested in the State Chancelleries' coordination, planning & looking out as well as departmental function.

Table 11 Functions of State Chancelleries

Function	**Characteristics**
Presidential function	Representation of state signing and promulgation of laws, formal appointment of officials and judges granting pardon etc.
Leadership function	Supporting Prime Minister in exercising leadership within the government (e.g. drafting policy statements)
Coordination function	Take care of coherent governmental action
Cabinet and secretariat function	Briefing Prime Minister before cabinet meetings Prepare cabinet meetings' schedule Mediating inter-departmental conflict before cabinet meeting
Cooperation function	Cooperation with administrative actors (Europe, federal level, other state governments), parliaments, and civil society actors
Planning & looking-out function	Develop long-term policy ideas
Public relations function	Take care of coherent governmental communication
Party function	Prepare Prime Minister in addressing his party State Chancellery must not be a secret party head quarter
Departmental function	Responsibility for substantial policy domain Policy issue declared as *Chefsache*

5.3.3.2. Structure

Similarly to departments, State Chancelleries are hierarchically organized and characterized by a high degree of division of labor (Häußer 1995: 69; Müller-Rommel 2000: 86). As State Chancelleries might differ quite a lot regarding size and horizontal or vertical specialization, we will rather discuss an ideal-typical structure (Häußer 1995: 76; K. König 1976a: 209). In general, we can divide the formal structure into a leadership level, divisional level and sectional level (Knoll 2004: 61ff.; K. König 2002a: 191f.).

Leadership level

The leadership level consists of the Prime Minister and the respective sections assisting him and the Head of the State Chancellery (*Chef der Staatskanzlei*), who is mostly ranked as a administrative State Secretary (K. König and Häußer 1996: 44). The Head of the State Chancellery fulfills an important role in moderating inter-departmental conflict, setting priorities, preparing decisions and advising the Prime Minister. Typically, Head of State Chancelleries are "efficient managers with high sensitivity for potential problems […] who have the ability to settle conflict at early stages of the decision-making process" (Zerr 2006: 192). Similarly, Knoll described them as grey eminences, heavily engaged in coordination (2004: 63f.; 2010: 212f.). For example, regarding the formal coordination process, he is responsible for preparing cabinet meetings in a weekly State Secretary meeting. Most topics on the cabinet meeting's agenda will be settled here and only approved by formal decision of the cabinet in a subsequent step. Moreover, Heads of State Chancelleries will have a variety of contacts to parties and parliamentary groups enabling them to be engaged in informal aspects of coordination behind the scenes. These informal ties to departments, parties and parliamentary groups enable the Head of State Chancellery to serve as an early sensor of conflict - the more he is part of informal networks and communications, the earlier can he sense conflict and act accordingly (Fleischer 2011b: 206).

Divisional level

Being situated at the middle ranks of the hierarchy, divisions of State Chancelleries function as mediators between the sectional level and the leadership level (Häußer 1995: 75; K. König 1993: 34). Although details of organizational structures of State Chancelleries might differ in each German state, their divisions are usually organized alongside the particular functions discussed in 5.3.3.1 (Gebauer 1994: 490; Häußer 1995: 77; H. Schneider 2001: 300; Schulze-Cleven 2011: 59f.).

First, similar to line departments, tasks like human resource management, budget or IT-services are organized in Z-Divisions, whose function can be briefly summarized as "the administration of administration" (Häußer 1995: 77). Second, there are divisions concerned with coordination of governmental action. Obviously, this is strongly connected to the coordination and cabinet/secretariat function. These divisions contain the characteristic specialty of State Chancelleries, the mirror-sections. Third, one division is usually engaged in managing relationships with other German states or the federal and European level. Fourth, the planning & looking out function is often organized at the divisional level, i.e. as part of the organizational hierarchy without direct contact to the Prime Minister, although exceptions exist and changes might occur rapidly contingent on the Prime Minister's preferences (Schwickert 2010: 134). Usually, these divisions have much contact with external stakeholders and civil society actors (Häußer 1995: 80f.). Finally, public relations are usually organized at the divisional level, although many variations exist (e.g. staff units). Given the increased importance of the media (see section on media democracy in 5.2.5), the government spokesman usually has direct access to the head of government and is characterized by a high degree of loyalty and enjoys a high status (Häußer 1995: 85).

Sectional level

Similar to line departments, most working capacity is concentrated at the sectional level and each task prescribed in the task allocations plans needs to be assigned to a section (Häußer 1995: 89). We can divide two types of actors that are relevant for analyzing coordination at the sectional level: First, mirror sections mainly concerned with the political routine and management of politics and, second, planning units that are rather oriented towards strategic long-term considerations (Schwickert 2011a: 229).

Mirror sections

Within the State Chancelleries' divisions concerned with governmental coordination, we find a specialty of German centers of government called *mirror sections* (*Spiegelreferate*) (Fleischer 2011b: 212; Häußer 1996: 301; Zerr 2006: 188). Mirror sections are responsible for organizing most of the relationships between State Chancelleries and departments. Usually, each mirror section monitors the work of one line department. Hence, they are crucial in structuring the flow of information between State Chancelleries and line departments (Häußer 1996: 301; K. König 1989: 56; E. Müller 1990: 171; 1995: 528f.).

The pace of mirror sections follows the weekly cabinet meeting, i.e. short term considerations are rather dominant. Their work is dominated by strict deadlines and the governmental routine of formal coordination (Schwickert 2010: 127). As a result, mirror sections are not so much engaged in long-term planning of policies, but in the political all-day life and routine (Zerr 2006: 190).

However, their tasks are still manifold: they are meant to evaluate cabinet proposals of line departments from a State Chancelleries' perspective and also serve as early sensors of potential conflict (Schwickert 2010: 127). Furthermore, their task is to make sure that preferences of the Prime Minister and the government are known in the particular line departments and watch over the compliance with the coalitions treaty or policy statements by the Prime Minister when reviewing proposals of line departments (Florack and Grunden 2011). They continuously provide access to information in both directions and, over time, may establish a trustful relationship between the State Chancellery and line departments (Häußer 1995: 90). Established trust between public servants of mirror sections and their counterparts in the departments can be useful to provide possibilities of informal communication, e.g. bypassing formal bureaucratic regulations and enable faster decisions (Zerr 2006: 189). However, Frohn assesses the relationship between State Chancelleries' mirror sections and their colleagues in line departments somewhat less idyllic. He holds that mirror sections are rather perceived by line departments as "spies from the center" (2011: 230).

With regard to the role of mirror sections in the coordination process, mainly two perspectives can be distinguished. On the on hand, mirror sections are perceived as an important resource of State Chancelleries to acquire information from departments, check departmental initiatives for political viability and to detect and settle conflict among departments (Fleischer 2011b: 213; Holtmann 2008: 80f.). This distinguished role during the coordination process is strengthened by the high reputation of officials from State Chancelleries that can usually

communicate with higher ranked officials of line departments on an equal footing (Brauneck 1994: 17; Schwickert 2010: 129).
On the other hand, the second perspective on the role of mirror sections in the coordination process evaluates the close connection between them and the respective line departments more critically: As mirror sections focus on the specialized portfolio of line departments, they tend to get "captured", i.e. acquire the same selective perception on public problems and conflicts as the departments they are supposed to monitor. This may contradict the State Chancelleries' ambition to perceive governmental action from a holistic perspective (Häußer 1995: 91; K. König 1989: 56). As a result, inter-departmental conflict might even be transferred to State Chancelleries, because mirror section officials perceive themselves as advocates of "their" departments' interests (Mai 2011: 111; Zerr 2006: 190). Another factor adding to this might be that many officials working in the mirror sections are seconded from the respective line departments and will eventually go back to them to continue their careers (Frohn 2011: 233). As a result, they have little interest in ruining their future career by causing to much trouble in their "home departments" (Beichelt 2007: 427; Jantz and Veit 2011: 304; Schwickert 2010: 149f.).

Planning sections
In contrast to mirror sections that are mainly concerned with coordination, planning sections are engaged in more conceptual work, i.e. they are connected to the planning & looking out function of State Chancelleries (Mielke 2003b; Schwickert 2011a: 229). In general, planning units' ideal typical function can be described as being sensors of new policy issues and developments that are not yet on the agenda of particular line departments and adequately develop approaches to deal with these new trends and problems. To do so, they are ought to stay outside of the political daily routine and its fast pace (Gebauer 1994: 514f.; Grunden 2009: 36).

We will discuss planning units' activities according to short-term, middle-term and long-term tasks (Schwickert 2011a: 236; 2010: 157ff.; 2011b: 14).
Tasks with a *short-term* time frame directly come from the leadership on short notice. These tasks are rather non-conceptual, e.g. providing information on a certain topic or preparing the Prime Minister for certain events. Often, these tasks have strict deadlines and are assigned to planning units, just because no one else in the State Chancellery is responsible for it. To some extend, these tasks work against the very purpose of planning units and can consume many resources that reduce their capacity for substantial strategic work (Schwickert 2010: 158).
Activities with a *middle-term* time frame are connected to the Prime Minister's term of office, i.e. usually 4-5 years. At the beginning of a term, planning units are engaged in developing an internal work program for the whole government, which usually involves to operationalize the coalition treaty into more or less specific work packages (Diederich 1976; Frohn 2011: 230). This task can be more or less demanding, depending on the formulation of the coalition treaty. Sometimes, specific targets are outlined ("We will introduce a tax on real estate property"), but often coalition treaties are deliberately kept vague ("We will strengthen the civil society"). Vagueness is a result of negotiations of parties that may have contrary positions on issues and could not agree to be more specific. In case of vague coalitions treaties, the planning units

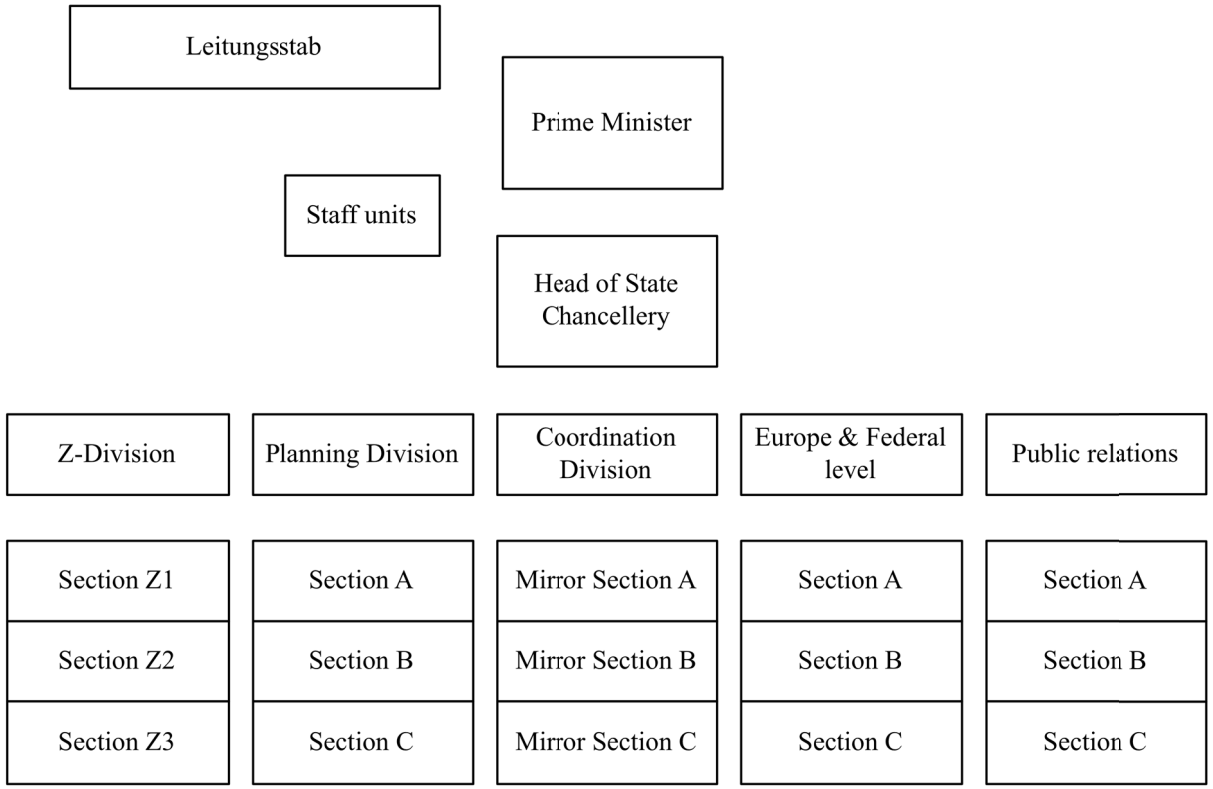
need to agree with mirror sections and the respective departments, e.g. on deadlines or certain milestones to be achieved (Halstenberg 1976: 36; Schulze 1976: 103; Schulze-Cleven 2011: 68). By doing so, a coalition treaty is operationalized into 400 to 600 projects (Schwickert 2010: 160) that are administered by the respective line departments. The internal work programs are designed to choreograph line departments' actions to fulfill the political intention of the coalition partners during the government's term of office (K. König 1975; Mielke 2003b: 128). The State Chancellery's task is to monitor the progress of the respective projects and to take care of timely implementation. Planning in this regard focuses on the process of governing and not so much on substantial policies. However, one should not believe that this work program is then implemented by line departments without any conflict. Quite in contrast, to make line departments implement the work program has been described as one of the most difficult tasks of planning sections (Mielke 2003b: 130).

The internal work program also serves as a blue print for the Prime Minister's policy statement (*Regierungserklärung*) that is usually held at the start of a term and outlines the main aims of the government vis-a-vis the public as well as topics and issues that receive special attention by the Prime Minister (*Chefsachen*) (Gebauer 1994: 511; A. Katz 1975: 237; Mielke 2003b: 129). Obviously, the aforementioned increasingly important media logic demands that 400 - 600 projects (the government's internal work program) are condensed into few major initiatives that can be communicated more easily by telling "simple stories" (Mielke 2003b: 128). Hence, prioritization of projects is one of the major tasks of planning units within the middle-term time frame. Of course, prioritization is conflictual, because some projects will receive more attention and budget and, inevitably, many will receive less - a constant source of struggle between the center and line departments (Schwickert 2011a: 231; 2010: 161; Zerr 2006: 197). Once agreed upon, the Prime Minister's policy statement serves as an important argument for the State Chancellery in disciplining the line departments in later stages of the term of office in case of conflict. As line departments contribute substantially to the policy statement and commit themselves to announced projects, it more difficult to ignore it later on (Zerr 2006: 197).

Finally, there are tasks of planning units with a *long-term* time frame of about 10 years. While middle-term tasks can rather be regarded as political management, these long-term tasks are more strategic. Schwickert identified a plethora of topics that are tackled from a long-term perspective in German State Chancelleries' planning units. These include, for example, demographic change or sustainability (Schwickert 2010: 163). Not every topic is equally attractive to planning units. Two conditions need to be fulfilled: First, it needs to be oriented towards the future including some potential for formulating visions and, second, it needs to have potential for shaping the Prime Minister's political profile, i.e. presenting him as the central figure in shaping the respective state's future (Schwickert 2010: 162). In addition, Gebauer argues that mostly topics are suitable for the State Chancellery that can be analyzed from a rather broad perspective with specific projects assigned to line departments in a second step, because expert knowledge and know-how regarding implementation of policies is concentrated there (2008: 132).

Ideal-typically, planning units are ought to develop strategic answers to long-term problems without being hesitated too much by the political business (Schwickert 2011a: 229).[31] However, Schwickert shows in an empirical study on planning units in State Chancelleries that time horizons of planning units are rather short and follow the fast pace of governmental routines. The term of office and the coalition treaty serve as the most important frames of references and long-term considerations rather stay in the background (Mielke 2003b: 127ff.; Schilling, Ruckh, and Rübcke 2009: 42; 2010: 167).

Figure 3 Scheme of ideal-typical State Chancellery



5.3.3.3. Action orientations

Similar to departments, State Chancelleries are non-monolithic organizations that are characterized by multiple action orientations (Florack 2011b; Mai 2011). In the section on departments (see 5.3.2.3) we argued that administrative action orientations (e.g. legal matters, policies, implementation, etc.) are rather to be found at the lower levels of the departmental hierarchy, while the political action orientations (e.g. party politics, coalition, elections, etc.) was assumed to be dominant at the leadership level. This vertical differentiation is certainly also true for State Chancelleries to some extend. However, quite in contrast to line departments, action orientations also differ horizontally based on the tasks of divisions, e.g. coordination, planning or public relations (Florack 2011b: 160ff.). Depending on the specific

[31] We must not confuse nowadays' understanding of planning with the ideas of the planning euphoria in the 1970s. The idea is not to strategically steer whole sectors or systems.

task to be fulfilled, a successful State Chancellery needs both action orientations in alignment, although their integration may be difficult to achieve (Mai 2011: 117). Taking this horizontal dimension of action logics into account, we can structure our discussion on action orientations in State Chancelleries according to mirror sections, planning units and public relation units.
Divisions comprised of mirror sections that are mostly engaged in coordination with other line departments rather follow an administrative action orientation that focuses on policy content and problem solving, often from a departmental perspective (Florack 2011b: 161; Mai 2011: 110). The relevant environment of these divisions are other line departments and their respective clientele that ensure a constant flow of relevant information. Hence, policy relevant knowledge is concentrated there and shapes the work of mirror sections. As discussed before, often mirror sections and the respective line departments develop common perceptions of a problem, potentially causing conflict within the State Chancellery. However, we must not overestimate the impact of an administrative action orientation. It is rather likely that officials of mirror sections are very aware of what is expected from them, i.e. is pushing line departments towards consensus and to solve conflict before an issue enters the cabinet.

Divisions that fulfill the planning and looking-out function, i.e. planning units, of State Chancelleries predominantly follow a political action logic (Florack 2011b: 161f.; Mai 2011: 112). Despite their ideal-typical role as governmental think tanks outside the political business, they are heavily occupied by short-term and middle-term tasks. As planning divisions are engaged in drafting the internal work program of the government as well as the Prime Minister's policy statements (*Regierungserklärung*), their relevant environment are, of course, the line departments, but also party organizations and parliamentary factions (Mai 2011: 112). Regarding their short-term and middle-term tasks, planning divisions do not concentrate so much on policy content, but are rather engaged in strategically choreographing governmental action to make the government as a whole look successful. In contrast, long-term tasks are orientated towards both, political and administrative orientations. The political orientation refers to the need to identify topics that are likely to increase the reputation of the Prime Minister and shape his political profile in a positive way. However, although political considerations are always present, planning sections also focus on a positive development of the society in the long run, i.e. are oriented towards policy to some extend (Schwickert 2010: 182).

Regarding the divisions concerned with public relations, we can identify a strong political action orientation, because these units are concerned with translating governmental action into something presentable to the public, e.g. develop rather simple stories that can be attributed to the Prime Minister and shape his political profile (Florack 2011b: 163; Mai 2011: 119).

In conclusion, despite variations among divisions and levels of hierarchy, the scholarly literature agrees that State Chancelleries are predominantly shaped, or at least infused, by a political action orientation implying "a greater sensitivity of civil servants for considerations of political feasibility" (Mayntz and Derlien 1989: 402). According to Goetz, officials of the center of government acquire "political craft", because serving in the Chancellery "is distinguished by the emphasis on the political rather than technical assessment of policy

proposals, and by political as opposed to administrative management" (1997: 758). This is the case even on the lower levels of the hierarchy, which distinguishes them from ordinary line departments (Fleischer 2011b: 219; Gebauer 2008: 133; Mai 2011: 109).

5.3.3.4. Capabilities

In the following section, we will discuss State Chancelleries' capabilities to influence the coordination process, i.e. their ability to "pull together and integrate central government policies, or act as final arbiters within the executive of conflicts between different elements of the government machinery" (Dunleavy and Rhodes 1990: 4). The capabilities of State Chancelleries to steer and influence coordination processes within IDCs are not to be found in a strong formal position of power, e.g. hierarchical superiority within the government. As we discussed in 5.1.1.1 and 5.2.1, the Prime Minister rather serves as a primus inter pares, whose room to maneuver is restricted by many factor (e.g. the department principle, coalition partners, etc.). Nevertheless, in many ways State Chancelleries are considered as being special and different from ordinary departments with regard to their potential of achieving coordination (Bornemann 2011: 172; 2013: 536). Conceptually, we cannot capture this phenomenon with "power" as imposing something over somebody in a hierarchical manner. Hence, we need to rely on another concept that will help us to understand the relationship between State Chancelleries and line departments and the implications thereof for the coordination process within IDCs. This concept is "authority" that we discussed as a legitimated and socially accepted form of power (see 4.3).

Borrowed authority of State Chancellery officials

The idea of State Chancelleries' distinguished position through authority in inter-departmental coordination has been mentioned early on in public administration research. Consider, for example, rather bold expressions like "inner yard of power" (Grunden 2009; K. König and Häußer 1996: 24), "sacristy of the state", "sacred halls" (Ossenbühl 1969: 503), or "center of power" (Bröchler 2011: 37; K. König and Häußer 1996: 38; Schwickert 2010) used to describe State Chancelleries in the academic literature.

Many authors agree that State Chancelleries' authority is "borrowed" from the Prime Minister, because he is the most prominent political figure on the state level, as already discussed in the section on media democracy (see section 5.2.5) (Halstenberg 1976: 34; Laux 1976: 140; Schwickert 2010: 129). In line with this reasoning, we can assume that the strength of the State Chancellery in the coordination process depends on the standing of the Prime Minister himself, i.e. his capacity to mobilize the party political, electoral, and policy resources determining his authority (Müller-Rommel 2000: 100; Rüb 2011: 89ff.; G. Smith 1991). In addition, Goetz also hints to the importance of the grey eminence, the Head of State Chancellery (1997: 759).

Having in mind the discussion on inter-organizational power sources in section 4.3, we can relate the idea of borrowed authority with the concept of social capital. In the scholarly debate on inter-organizational relations, it is well established that actors "with considerable

reputational power are particularly able to shape decision-making" (Ingold and Leifeld 2014: 5). Hence, the idea of "borrowed authority" leads to the assumption that speaking in the name of a strong Prime Minister may enhance the chances to get one's will in the inter-departmental coordination game, i.e. being a State Chancelleries delegate enhances one's influence and reputation in IDCs. However, being perceived as more important than other actors depends on certain factors. Put differently: borrowed authority does not work automatically. Rather, authority needs to be made plausible and somehow demonstrated by State Chancelleries' delegates vis-a-vis others during the coordination process, because in interactions within IDCs, the State Chancellery is obviously not represented by the Prime Minister himself, but by individual persons, i.e. mostly officials at the sectional level. Hence, we need to discuss how the Prime Minister's authority is transferred to individual State Chancellery delegates and communicated towards line departments.

First, some kind of credible direct or privileged access to the Prime Minister is an important factor in making line departments believe that State Chancellery officials speak with their master's voice (Korte 2010a: 29). Second, as the Prime Minister has obviously very limited time resources and can only pay attention to few selected issues, State Chancellery delegates have to credibly put forward that something is a priority project of the Prime Minister (Schwickert 2010: 129). For example, this might work trough symbolic acts that signal political preferences of the Prime Minister and label an issue as a *Chefsache* (Blätte 2011: 320). Put differently, we can assume that being the State Chancellery representative counts more in the coordination game if one can plausibly hint at the threat of an intervention by the Prime Minister. Of course, this may depend on his standing within the respective party and the coalition and whether the issue at stake is politically important enough (Busse 2010: 231; Grunden 2009: 36; Mielke 2003b: 131). To conclude, the "shadow of the hierarchy" does not work automatically, but needs to be adequately communicated by the Prime Minister or State Chancellery and perceived by the addressees, i.e. line departments. Consequently, to exert influence by borrowed authority involves the knowledge about one's limited formal potential of sanctions as delegates of the State Chancellery, while at the same time, letting line departments anticipate potential intervention of the Prime Minister due to high political commitment (K. König 2002b: 383). Hence, the use of authority can be seen as a difficult balancing act. The threat of an intervention by the Prime Minister can only be used in small doses. The more a State Chancellery delegate tries to exercise influence by borrowed authority, the faster it will become a blunt sword. Put differently: "understatement is State Chancelleries' elixir of life (Halstenberg 1976: 38).

Next to the idea of certain authority of the center of government, the academic debate also hints to some other factors leading to a distinguished position of State Chancelleries within the government and an increased capability to influence coordination processes.

Broad overview and political sensitivity

Another aspect that is regarded as a capability in inter-departmental coordination is the central access to policy knowledge of all line departments through mirror sections (Halstenberg 1976: 37; A. Katz 1975: 210; Laux 1976: 189). This potentially enables State Chancelleries to have a broader problem perspective and the possibility to detect interdependencies between policy

areas and potential synergies. Similarly, Knoll argues that "due to its overview over the work of all departments through its mirror sections, the chancellery can decrease the selective perception of issues and help to prevent negative coordination" (Knoll 2004: 57).
Furthermore, in addition to policy-knowledge gathered by mirror sections, State Chancelleries receive important knowledge on politics through various channels. As a result, they are politically more sensitive, meaning that they have a general overview over the preferences and discussions within the coalition, the parties and the parliament (Fleischer 2011b: 219; Halstenberg 1976: 37; Mai 2011: 112).

State Chancelleries as neutral players and honest brokers

An additional important capacity in inter-organizational coordination is "the ability to successfully broker solutions or deals between a number of different parties. This requires considerable expertise in influencing and negotiation, but also the perceived legitimacy to act objectively and openly for others" (Williams 2002: 117). This refers to State Chancelleries as honest brokers in inter-departmental coordination. This is most likely to be found in State Chancelleries, because they do not have own particularistic policy agendas in mind, but focus on the success of the government as a whole by trying to achieve consensus among line departments (Florack 2013; Frohn 2011: 234; K. König 2002a: 198; Müller-Rommel 2000: 91; Zerr 2006: 199). Being an honest broker is based on a certain reputation that is unique among governmental organizations and therefore an important trait in inter-organizational settings (Carpenter and Krause 2012; Ingold and Leifeld 2014). State Chancelleries, as perceived by line departments, are less engaged in the competition over budget resources and media attention. As a result, line departments' officials might be less reluctant to share information or behave more cooperative in general (Halstenberg 1976: 37). However, although this might sound plausible, especially in coalition governments the perceived role of State Chancelleries as honest brokers might be rather contested, because the State Chancellery may be connected to the bigger coalition partner and are therefore attributed to party politics and a political logic of competition (Jantz and Veit 2011: 303).

5.3.3.5. Centers of government and improved coordination?

State Chancelleries' actual contribution to integration and better coordination of cross-cutting polices is rather under-researched theoretically and empirically (Bornemann 2011: 154). Consequently, in the literature, we find two perspectives that are concerned with the center of government's role in coordination. The first perspective is more optimistic regarding the center's potential to achieve (positive) coordination, while the second perspective assesses the steering potential of the center rather pessimistically. The existence of two perspectives on this questions underscores that "it is difficult to assess the role of the Chancellery […] in coordination: there are well-founded doubts of its capacities on the one hand, but on the other hand there are clear examples of cases when the Chancellery took over the responsibility for a certain program from the actual lead department" (Hustedt and Tiessen 2006: 29f.). Both perspectives can be evidenced by a couple of arguments and empirical studies.

The optimistic perspective

The optimistic perspective on coordination through centers of government is based on the concept of "borrowed authority" discussed earlier. Coordination using "borrowed" authority "may be achieved relatively quickly if the participants in the process accept the legitimacy of the central actors" (Bouckaert, Peters, and Verhoest 2010: 45). Hence, the usual claim of the this perspective is "strategy needs a strong center" (Schwickert 2011b: 21). This perspective generally holds "if issues are critical and crosscutting, they should rightfully be managed from the center" (Alessandro, Lafuente, and Santiso 2013: 21) or emphasizes the importance of "strengthening the role of the center in building coherence in policies and implementation" (Bouckaert, Peters, and Verhoest 2010: 19). Proponents hold that centers of government "are becoming more and more relevant in a context where an increasing number of crosscutting issues demand whole-of-government approaches and coherent responses" (Alessandro, Lafuente, and Santiso 2013: 1). The inherent assumption is that the center of government may be able to effectively coordinate cross-cutting policies by "visible leadership from the center that is effectively transposed to [the] departmental level" (Andrea Ross 2005: 47). In a similar vein, Peters argues that heads of line departments rarely feel the need to take care of improved inter-departmental coordination. In contrast, the centers of government and "Prime ministers, however, do have some incentive to produce coordination and more effective management of government as a whole" (Peters 2015: 15).

The optimistic perspective is backed up by a couple of studies. For example, an analysis of the coordination arrangement of the German sustainability strategy ascribes the center of government "better possibilities for the vertical integration of Sustainable Development concerns in departmental policies. Clearly, a horizontal integration approach under the auspices of the Environmental Ministry would not have the same leverage" (Environmental Policy Research Centre 2004: 7). Also international observers analyzing Germany hold "to provide leadership in policy matters is accepted as a legitimate, even desirable part of the political culture" (James and Ben-Gera 2004: 16).

Through which mechanism do German centers of government try to coordinate and steer cross-cutting projects? Bornemann (2013: 343f.) argues that a strong head of government with a capable center of government may in fact be able to tone down departmental turf wars and, thus, enhance coordination of wicked problems. In a single case study, he identified three approaches that were used by the center of government to shape coordination in the field of the sustainability strategy (2011: 169ff.). First, simply by being responsible for the whole strategy process, the Chancellery was able to provide a framework in which line departments had to position themselves. By doing so, the Chancellery had the chance to limit departmentalism by insisting on a broader problem perspective. The center was able to choose the topics to be included in the strategy and, consequently, was perceived as the agenda-setter and driver of the process (Bornemann 2013: 508). Second, the Chancellery acted as a mediator in inter-departmental conflicts on strategy content in specific cases (Bornemann 2013: 490). Furthermore, he argues that the Chancellery provided a "shadow of hierarchy", because the line departments anticipated an unwanted intervention of the Chancellery in case of unsettled conflict and accordingly adjusted their positions. Third, the Chancellery tried to influence the coordination process by selectively supporting single departments in conflictual

situations. By doing so, it tried to balance positions of influential and less influential departments (Bornemann 2011: 170).

The pessimistic perspective

The second perspective on German centers' of government role in improving coordination is more pessimistic, arguing that the potential of formulating and enforcing own policy initiatives or to improve coordination among departments is clearly and ultimately limited by departmental autonomy. This perspective seems to be dominant in social sciences' assessment of the centers' coordination capacity (Knoll 2004: 427; Rüb 2011; 2012; Sturm and Pehle 2007: 70ff.). Similarly, a survey by the OECD among centers of government found that they assess their own capacity to coordinate line departments as rather moderate (OECD 2014: 30; 2015: 97).

The pessimistic perspective is evidenced by a couple of empirical studies analyzing the center's role in cross-cutting policy making, both on the federal and state level. For example, Veit and Jantz (2011: 306f.) assessed the Federal Chancelleries' role in steering the Better Regulation agenda of the German government and hold that the center remained in a rather reactive position with a clear dominance of the departmental principle. They found that the center's responsibility for the Better Regulation process did not result in better coordination because political commitment faded over time, which decreased the Chancelleries authority among the departments. Similarly, Florack's (2011a) empirical study of the reform of higher education policy in North Rhine-Westphalia and the State Chancellery's role in the coordination process paints a rather pessimistic picture of its steering potential. Although the Prime Minister classified the reform as a top-priority project, the State Chancellery remained in a rather unimportant position among departments and was mainly concerned with administrative support and collection of information for the Prime Minister. For example, conflicts during the policy making process were not mediated by the State Chancellery, but settled in other arenas, like coalition committees. Furthermore, the State Chancellery did not provide any substantial policy content to the reform package. Consequently, Florack rejects the idea of State Chancelleries as central steering bodies of the government (Florack 2011a: 219f.).

5.3.4. Conclusion

We have now extensively discussed line departments and State Chancelleries from a variety of perspectives. It has become clear that they constitute distinct actors with specific profiles, based on a fourfold argument. First, we discussed their distinct functions as presented in the scholarly debate. While departments traditionally draft and implement policies and supervise subordinated agencies, State Chancelleries are much more engaged as coordinators and administrative support units of the Prime Minister. Second, in accordance to their different functions, line departments and State Chancelleries are differently structured: line departments' organizational structure typically resembles policy domains with a high degree of specialization at the sectional level. In contrast, State Chancelleries feature structures that rather mirror the portfolio allocation of departments as a consequence of their coordination

function. Furthermore, State Chancelleries' planning units focus on the choreography of the government as a whole. Third, as a consequence of their different functions, both actors are dominated by different action orientations. We distinguished between administrative and political action orientations. In a nutshell, political action orientation refers to party competition, coalition government, mass media communication, and differs from an administrative orientation that is oriented towards policy expertise, administrative practicability, legal systematic and legality. In case of line departments we found that a political action orientation is dominant at the top level of the hierarchy, while an administrative action orientation is to be found at the sectional level. This vertical differentiation is also true for State Chancelleries. However, here we also find a horizontal differentiation. Political action orientations are especially dominant in planning divisions and public relation units, while administrative orientation are to be found in mirror sections within the coordination division. Fourth and finally we discussed both actors' capabilities to influence or steer coordination processes in IDCs. Line departments' most important capability during the coordination process is based on their specialized policy expertise within their organizational remit from sources inside (professional training, various supervised agencies) and outside (interest groups, commissions/advisory boards) the bureaucracy. In contrast, State Chancelleries' capabilities are more diverse. For sure, they are also able to accumulate policy relevant knowledge provided by expert commissions or agencies. However, what really distinguishes them from line departments is the authority of the Prime Minister transferred to individual bureaucrats that represent the State Chancellery during the coordination process, i.e. increased social capital based on reputation. Furthermore, we discussed State Chancelleries' broad overview of governmental action and political sensitivity as a result of its coordination function and dominant political action orientation. This may enable State Chancelleries to sense potential sources of conflict early on or hint to policy synergies. Finally, State Chancelleries are regarded as honest brokers and mediators between departments, as they may be perceived as neutral players by other departments, which may increase willingness to share information and behave cooperatively.

Table 12 Line departments vs. State Chancelleries

	Line department	**State Chancellery**
Function	Drafting policies	Coordination of governmental action
	Implementing policies	Support of the Prime Minister
	Supervision of subordinated agencies	
Structure	Focuses on specialized area of competence (policy domain)	Focuses on the government itself (coordination in mirror sections & political management in planning units)
Action orientations	Vertically differentiated: political action orientation at the top; administrative action orientation at lower levels of the hierarchy	Vertically differentiated: political action orientation at the top; administrative action orientation at lower levels of the hierarchy
		Horizontally differentiated: contingent on divisional task allocation
		In total, a political action orientation is rather dominant
Capabilities	Policy expertise	Authority of the Prime Minister
		Broad overview of governmental action and political sensitivity
		Honest brokers / neutral players

5.4. Inter-departmental committees as arenas of interaction

In this section, we are going to discuss inter-departmental committees as coordination bodies. After a general introduction we will focus on IDCs' functions, the twofold role of their members and different types of IDCs as identified by the academic debate. Finally, we will discuss two perspectives on IDCs and their capacity to achieve positive coordination.

The establishment of IDCs is a standard response of governments when they enter a policy area for the first time, or when there is a great deal of confusion about the actual nature of the problem at stake (Peters 1998a: 35).
They are described as "a central feature of the machinery of government partly because […] they deal with matters that spill over departmental boundaries, where departmental responsibilities, claims and interests overlap" (Painter and Carey 1979: 4). Similarly, also Mayntz and Scharpf identified IDCs as the standard instrument when "multi-lateral contacts are required" (1975: 147), i.e. a way to overcome departmental demarcations, enhance horizontal coordination and to reduce departmental egoism (Jann et al. 2005: 17; Pehle 1998: 88). In this regard, they are seen as a way to solve the mismatch between governments' formals departmental structure and actual problem structures and policy interdependencies (see section 3.1).

The term inter-departmental committee (IDC) as used in this study, may have different names in the practice of public administration, meaning basically the same thing, e.g. inter-agency task force, working group, coordinating committee, steering committee or standing committee (Peters 2006: 131). In academia, inter-departmental committees are refereed to as "coordination models" (Alexander 1991: 216), "coordination structures" (Alexander 1993: 340), "bureaucratic devices" (Painter and Carey 1979: 1) or "coordination mechanisms" (Alessandro, Lafuente, and Santiso 2013: 33).

They appear to be quite common in the German political-administrative system and elsewhere in the world (Halligan 2007a; Mackenzie 1953; Peters 1998a; Prior 1968; Wheare 1955). However, it is unclear how many exist in Germany or whether the use of such bureaucratic devices has increased over time as a reaction to an alleged more complex social world. Since there is no overview, the actual amount of IDCs in Germany can only be roughly estimated (Lepper 1976). Rather old estimations for the federal level range from 23 (Böckenförde 1964: 244), 65 (Groeben 1968: 392), 180 (Lepper 1976: 435) or up to 200 (Olivet 1978: 40). The increase of IDCs during the 1970s decade has been critically labeled "committee boom" by Lepper, who suspected IDCs to be a mere fashion among many others in public administration (1976: 447).

Given the scarce empirical knowledge, it is still fair to state that IDCs are “a little bit of a mystery” (Painter and Carey 1979: 16) making them an interest object to study. Similarly, von Beyme described the internal working procedure of IDCs as "not very transparent" (2010: 328).
In most German states, there is no formal procedure how and when IDCs get established and in general the nature of IDCs has been described as quite informal (Groeben 1968; Prior 1968).[32] Mostly, IDCs are established by the cabinet with a more or less clear-cut mandate to be accomplished within a certain period of time (Lepper 1976: 438). However, some IDCs also evolved into rather stable arrangements such as the IDC on CO2-reduction, which was established in 1990 and published six reports until 2007 (Hustedt and Fleischer 2012: 270ff.; Pehle 1998: 88). Others are established to report on one particular policy problem that requires inter-departmental coordination and the resolution of conflict. When they have reported, they may go out of existence.
IDCs are widely spread across various policy domains and can be found on different levels of the departmental hierarchy (i.e. head of units, head of divisions, State Secretaries) (Alexander 1998: 341; Becker 1989: 677; Lepper 1976: 435).

5.4.1. Function

According to the academic literature, at least five ideal-typical functions of IDCs can be distinguished (Lepper 1976: 435). All of them are strongly connected to the concept of positive coordination and the idea of getting governmental units to work better together,

[32] An exception is Thuringia (§4 (4) Joint Rules of Procedure of the Departments Thuringia).

which is obviously the very purpose of IDCs from an instrumental perspective (T. Christensen and Lægreid 2007: 1061; Prior 1968: 5; Rückwardt 1978: 101).

- resolution of conflicts,
- sharing of information and experience,
- coordination of future action,
- preparation of joint strategies and drafts and
- crisis management[33]

While this list sounds quite comprehensive, it is important to acknowledge that IDCs do not function as "little cabinets" meaning that most IDCs do not have any formal decision power as they mainly prepare drafts that have to formally pass the process of co-signature (*Mitzeichnung*) and cabinet vote as prescribed in the Joint Rules of Procedure (see section 5.1.1.2). Hence, it is important to achieve consensus in most IDCs as they usually cannot take decision by vote, but need to achieve consensus among their participants (Groeben 1968: 393; Lepper 1976: 444; Painter and Carey 1979: 62). Conflict unsettled in IDCs will ultimately be transformed into severe problems during the formal stages of co-signature. Thus, the importance to link decision-making in committees with the respective departments has been acknowledged early on, which illustrates the delegates' role as interfaces between the IDC and their respective department (Feldner 1978: 195f.).

5.4.2. Members

Departments decide independently whom to send as delegates to IDC meetings. Thus, it can happen, that members of different hierarchical ranks meet in IDCs. Conceptually, IDCs provide arenas for the interactions among nominal equals, meaning that there are no formal rank differences in IDCs. However, problems may appear, because members of a lower rank can only decide conditionally and need the approval from their respective departments in a second step, making the coordination process more complicated (Lepper 1976: 438).

Some IDCs invite representatives of interest groups or other persons providing external expertise, while others only consist of departmental staff (Prior 1968: 46f.).

It is important to note that IDC delegates to not work full-time for the IDC, but only meet for scheduled meetings and therefore stay within their departments. In the German context, an entity with full-time members from various departments would be called project group (*Projektgruppe*).

Members of IDCs are supposed to develop innovative policy solutions for problems cutting across several departmental portfolios, but are simultaneously expected to represent the interests of their respective departments (Lepper 1976: 440; Mayntz and Scharpf 1975).

[33] For an in-depth discussion of crisis management see Walzenbach's case study on coordination through IDCs during the BSE crisis in France and Germany (1999).

As delegates of their departments they have to fulfill two requirements to successfully solve problems that call for inter-departmental coordination: they have to understand the perceptions and preferences of their interaction partners within the IDC as well as those of their own departments (Feldner 1978: 215; Mayntz 1999: 84). Since every member of an IDC is part of the "home" department's hierarchy, anticipation of political preferences is necessary (Lepper 1976: 440) as illustrated in the seminal dialogue-model of administrative-political interaction (Mayntz and Scharpf 1975: 100). Put differently: departmental delegates serve as interfaces between the rather network-like structures of the IDCs and the hierarchically organized department they represent. There seems to be a twofold role of IDC members: On the one hand they are specialists with regard to the area of competence of their own section, on the other hand they are also generalists that need to have an overview regarding the work and needs of other divisions and sections of their department to properly represent them within the IDC and have a sense where things might go in the wrong direction. As put by Painter, successful IDC members have to "be sensitive to detect any aspects of technical or other significance to their departments. They need a feeling for departmental traditions and must be well versed in current policy development as well as in the political agenda of the Minister (1979: 67ff.).

An especially important delegate within the IDC is the main responsible section, which we will label as "chair organization" in the following. Interactions within IDCs need to be guided and steered, a process often captured by the idea of "network management" in a more general manner (Hovik and Hanssen 2015; Klijn, Steijn, and Edelenbos 2010). Put differently, the chair organization is in charge of *Federführung* and is responsible for organizing the coordination process within the IDC and needs to take care of the formal co-signature process after the IDC produced its output. The chair organizes and structures the overall process of coordination in the IDC. Consequently, the chair of an IDC serves as the main boundary-spanner and therefore has remarkable influence by arranging meetings and the work schedule or by distributing internal roles (Williams 2002). In our empirical case studies, we will pay particular attention to the chair organization (see 7.1).

5.4.3. Types

Prior distinguishes eight ideal-typical inter-departmental committees based on their primary function, ranging from rather technical matters to policy making (1968: 108ff.). This follows Wheare's early typology of committees in the United Kingdom to some extend (1955: 43ff.) and was also adopted by Feldner later on (1978: 167ff.). [34] For the purpose of this study, distinguishing this many types of committees is not necessary. Hence, we will condense them into three types. Of course, in reality, ideal-types intermingle and several function might be found in a particular IDC at the same time. As different types are based on different functions, we can also identify different ambitions regarding inter-departmental coordination and what actually needs to be coordinated. In turn, this may lead to different levels of potential conflict.

[34] For the Australien context see (Painter and Carey 1979).

First, we can identify committees to inform.[35] The purpose of this type of committee is to exchange information between departments on a particular matter (Laux 1971: 324). Exchange of information is a big part of any type of committee, as sharing information is a crucial aspect of effective horizontal coordination. However, committees to inform do not go any further than sharing information. Put differently: departments are not engaged in joint projects that need to be prepared collaboratively. Quite in contrast, every department decides on the use of the exchanged information on its own (Feldner 1978: 176). We can note that IDCs merely exchanging information have a comparatively low potential for inter-departmental conflict as the departmental principle remains uncontested (Prior 1968: 115).
Second, there are committees to plan and draft future policies. Policies can be rather small technical matters, but also comprehensive cross-cutting projects and strategy papers. In case of rather technical problems, the purpose is to inter-departmentally collect knowledge on a specific topic by more or less scientific methods and analysis and prepare a solution. In addition, the scope of activities is rather narrow as the task and expectations of the IDC are clearly mandated. Hence, conflict tends to be limited and manageable (Prior 1968: 117). In contrast, big comprehensive cross-cutting projects have a higher level of ambiguity in terms of their task and expected results. IDCs that plan and draft future policies need to negotiate about priorities and aims of policies with other departments (Feldner 1978: 181). Hence, this type of IDC will inevitably contest departmental turf and eventually will cause conflict that needs to be addressed somehow (Prior 1968: 132). Being situated at a rather low rank of the hierarchy, this type of IDC can only prepare decisions that still have to be formally approved by the political leadership in a subsequent step during the process of formal co-signature (Prior 1968: 129).
Third, we can distinguish committees to supervise and control (*Lenkungsausschuss*). They differ quite a bit from the other two types (Feldner 1978: 181). While the first two types of committees are usually staffed with delegates from the lower ranks of the departmental hierarchy, i.e. officials (*Referenten*), this type of committee is mostly staffed by top-bureaucrats, i.e. heads of division or State Secretaries (Laux 1971: 328). According to Prior, even cabinet committees staffed by Ministers belong to this type of IDC (Prior 1968: 134). The purpose is not substantial policy work based on expertise like in other IDCs, but resolution of conflict and to disburden cabinet by taking decisions (Prior 1968: 143f.). To do so and in contrast to the other types of IDCs that mainly prepare formal decisions, here political decisions can be taken. Committees to supervise and control can be complemented by other IDCs (Brauswetter 1976: 157f.; Lepper 1976: 437ff.). This can serve two purposes: First, IDCs on the lower ranks of the hierarchy prepare meetings of top bureaucrats' committees and, second, top-tier committees provide tasks and guidance for IDCs on the lower ranks of hierarchy, potentially contributing to a more structured coordination process and a possibility to resolve conflict (Feldner 1978: 202).

[35] An example of this type of committee is the committee on organizational matters on the federal level (*Ausschuss für Organisationsfragen*), chaired by the Federal Department of the Interior (Prior 1968: 115). In this committee bureaucrats inform each other regarding experiences with new communication technology. Furthermore, the committee sets technological and organizational standards for inter-departmental coordination. Interestingly, this is the only committee whose existence is mandatory, as prescribed in the Joint Rules of Procedure of the Federal Departments (§ 20).

Table 13 Types of interdepartmental committees (Feldner 1978: 167ff.; Prior 1968: 108ff.; Wheare 1955: 43ff.)

Type	Characteristics	What is coordinated?	Potential for conflict	Decision power
Committees to inform	Purpose of this type of committee is to exchange information between departments on a particular matter, without being further involved in a joint project, e.g. drafting a joint strategy paper. Shared information is used by each department voluntarily.	Exchange of information	low	No decisions
Committees to plan & draft policies	The purpose is the inter-departmental development of specific programs, technical or rather comprehensive.	Collection of information, building priorities & clarification of political targets as well as planning implementation	Depending on issue at stake	Only preparation of political decisions
Committees to control & supervise	These are high-ranked members of departments, e.g. State Secretaries. The purpose is not substantial work based on policy expertise but resolution of conflict and taking political decisions.	Not limited to specific issues. Decisions on political preferences are taken.	Depending on issue at stake	Political decisions can be taken

5.4.4. Prospects of & critique on inter-departmental committees

What might be the prospects of establishing inter-departmental committees for improving horizontal coordination, i.e. advancing towards the state of positive coordination? In section 3.3 we discussed the two ideal-types of negative and positive coordination. We will quickly restate the basic features of the two ideal-types: Negative coordination is based on sequential involvement of organizational units that starts with the development of a draft policy by the section with the main responsibility (*Federführung*) for the issue at stake. This draft is circulated first within the department and subsequently across all departments within the government in the process of co-signature. Involved sections only check the draft with regard to their own turf and whether it contradicts policy preferences. Hence, negative coordination implies that drafts are developed bases on the selective perception of highly specialized sections in departments. Typically, it results in modest, rather incremental policy innovations based on a lowest common denominator. Transaction costs are low and negative coordination represents the common mode of coordination within the German government. In contrast, positive coordination conceptually allows to tackle complex policy issues by pooling the expertise of diverse units in order to develop a draft that addresses the interdependencies of real-word policy problems. Positive coordination emphasizes the open exchange of ideas, following the mode of joint problem-solving and arguing rather than position-oriented bargaining. Potential of conflict and transaction costs are much higher in positive

coordination, making it a rare exception in the German politico-administrative system (Scharpf 1973a: 90).

How do IDCs perform in achieving positive coordination according to the academic debate? We will discuss two perspectives discussed in the scholarly literature; one of which is rather pessimistic with regard to the coordination capacity of IDCs, while the other assesses the potential for positive coordination more optimistic.

A pessimistic view on IDCs

Regarding the pessimistic perspective, IDCs are described as rather unable to achieve positive coordination or even improve horizontal coordination at all. This perspective is based on two dominant characteristics observed in IDCs: First, the tendency for departmental representatives to act as delegates and to see their role primarily in terms of defending their departments' interests, territories, procedures and policies. Second, scholars argue that the need to achieve consensus in IDCs reduces their potential for being innovative (Halligan 2007a: 211; Hustedt 2014b; Lepper 1972b: 153; Painter and Carey 1979: 62). As a result, IDCs "tend to be only as effective as their most committed members" in advancing the definitions of public policy problems and solutions (Peters 2006: 132; 2015: 90), because "any one reluctant actor can eliminate the trust and commitment needed for these organizations to be effective" (Peters 1998a: 37). Consequently, output of IDCs will often be shaped by narrow-minded and over-rigid departmental delegates resulting in a process in which agreement is reached by ignoring areas of disagreement (McGuire and Agranoff 2011: 269; Painter and Carey 1979: 63). As a consequence of this pattern of conflict avoidance, "rather than being arenas for positive coordination where action centers on resolving clearly defined conflicting views whether by bargaining, by debate, or by majority decision" (Painter and Carey 1979: 78), IDCs tend to be places of "negative coordination" in which results are achieved by focusing on a lowest common denominator that is defined by departmental interests and turf (Radtke, Hustedt, and Klinnert 2016). Even more pessimistic is Wanna's view on IDCs' coordination capacity: "Interdepartmental committees once had the reputation of being the graveyard of decision-making; the combatants of such committees went along to meetings to defend their turf and prevent decisions being taken contrary to their interests. Many considered a successful outcome of such meetings was that no decision was taken or that potential action was averted" (2011: 10). Furthermore, Baars, Baum and Fiedler argue that IDCs are not very likely to produce innovate solutions, because problem solving in IDCs is often hampered by short-term considerations of the departments involved (1976: 82). In addition to arguments stressing the pathologic consequences of departmentalism for effective coordination through IDCs, Mayntz and Scharpf stress limited information processing capacity of individual bureaucrats and argue that "any inter-divisional or inter-departmental project group will depend heavily upon the capacity of inter-subjective communications and upon learning processes which will quickly break down when overloaded with heterogeneous information" (1975: 148). Furthermore, Derthick concludes that IDCs are not very able to initiate measures of central coordination or consistency between departmental programs due to a lack of authority over the other departments (1974: 197ff.). Finally, Rückwardt states that

"conceptually and procedurally, IDCs should lead to positive coordination […] However, negative coordination often prevails" (1978: 102).

A (more) optimistic view on IDCs

We will now discuss the second, more optimistic perspective on IDCs' potential to improve coordination. It basically argues that IDCs may enhance horizontal coordination and offer the potential for positive coordination. First of all, it's worth noting that IDCs are the typical real-world examples from which Scharpf developed the concept positive coordination (Scharpf 1973a: 86). In a more recent publication, Wegrich and Štimac hold that "although the set-up of such ad-hoc coordination devices cannot be equated with positive coordination, such a device might be considered as a necessary condition for positive coordination" (2014: 54). Similarly, Müller argues "positive coordination […] is only possible if public officials engage in continuous exchange of ideas in some form of committee" (1986: 12) and "positive coordination requires organizational prerequisites and group-dynamic processes that facilitate communication and joint understanding" (1995: 28). Thus, it is fair to state that when one can expect to find positive coordination in the German context at all, it will be most likely in an IDC. This is rather convincing if we remember the classic way of decision-making in negative coordination and contrast it with the general modus operandi of IDCs: In negative coordination a first draft is usually completed by the main responsible section in charge of *Federführung* and formal involvement of other departments happens rather late. The involved actors decide whether or not to co-sign the draft depending on their own area of competence and whether their turf is affected in a negative way. In contrast, in IDCs that deal with cross-cutting policy projects, the main responsible section, i.e. chair organization, is usually not able to produce a first draft on its own, because this draft depends on the expertise and contributions of the actors involved. As a consequence, cross-boundary discussions and exchange of ideas are a crucial part of drafting policies in IDCs from the very beginning.

Although the critique on IDCs sounds quite fundamental, Painter and Carey point out that not all IDCs necessarily lead to negative coordination. For example, they provide examples of IDCs working in a more constructive and collective fashion, because the expected output was well defined and political backup was provided (1979: 64ff.). Similarly, Alexander argues that IDCs "can succeed in well-defined problem areas that enjoy sufficient political priority" (1993: 335).

In this line of argument, against the empirical backdrop of the sustainability debate, it is argued that effective horizontal integration of policies through IDCs, i.e. positive coordination, depends on high political will and commitment to counter usual tendencies of departmentalism (Steurer and Martinuzzi 2005: 461). Therefore, IDCs are seen as "important steps towards overcoming the sectoral rigidity of departmental governments" (Steurer 2007: 211). There are examples of IDCs in UK and Switzerland engaged in implementing sustainability strategies that were successful in "identifying priority areas, preventing duplication between departments, supporting networking activities between leaders […] within and between departments, and by improving coherence" (Steurer and Berger 2010:

11). Political will and commitment is also stressed by Müller as one crucial success factor of IDCs (1990: 171).

Furthermore, Feldner points to some advantages of IDCs that are closely related to positive coordination (1978: 215ff.). First, IDCs provide a coordination framework for long-term problems that can be inter-departmentally tackled by a stable group of people, eventually leading to trust and commitment. Second, IDCs provide a canalization of inter-departmental conflict and a possible arena of timely resolution thereof, because conflict is made explicit. Third, IDCs make sure that delegates share an equal pool of information, making fruitful discussions and sharing of experiences possible. Fourth, the chair of the IDCs has little room for bureaucratic ploys by limiting the participants to only "friendly" departments in order to avoid unwished questions or conflicts. Also Egeberg and Sætren hold that IDCs may be beneficial for horizontal coordination, because "committee participation may *add* some reference points, and create broader horizons. The setting that the collegiate structures provide imposes new expectations and obligations on the participants, and they become exposed to other problems, solutions and participants. Unlike hierarchies, committees are arenas in which discussion and persuasion through arguing are *the* legitimate ways of reaching decisions" (1999: 97f.). In this line of argument, the beneficial effect of IDCs for horizontal may be achieved by re-socializing bureaucrats into a more collegial role. Over time, bureaucrats' primary frame of reference, i.e. the own department, might change as a result. In a similar vein, Bornemann argues that members of IDCs can develop an own *esprit de corps* and actively defend inter-departmental matters vis-a-vis their departments (2013: 534).

From a practitioner's perspective, Lepper hints to positive effects of IDCs in coordination (1972b: 152; 1976: 443). By removing departmental, divisional and sectional borders, ways of communication and sharing information become much shorter and less hierarchical. In his view, over time IDCs lead to an atmosphere of trust and an increase of collegial bonds. Consequently, IDCs eventually provide an informal communication channel that can complement formal departmental communication. For example, official departmental statements may be communicated informally in advance including several "friendly" hints to possible compromises that would serve the official positions of both departments. Although this does not necessarily lead to pure positive coordination, it offers a lot potential for more effective horizontal coordination.

Finally, Katz argues (without proving it empirically) that IDCs can function effectively and improve horizontal coordination, if the center of governments manages its processes and if the IDCs' member rank high in the respective departmental hierarchies (A. Katz 1975: 208f.). Also Schimanke provides some anecdotal evidence in this regard, without systematically analyzing it (1976: 58).

We can now conclude the main arguments of the pessimistic and optimistic perspective. The pessimistic perspective mostly relies on the argument of departmentalism at the organizational level, i.e. self-interested departments that possess considerable autonomy in their area of competence without any incentive to pursue horizontal coordination. In contrast,

the more optimistic perspective points to the beneficial consequences of stable working arrangements among individual bureaucrats as provided by IDCs, eventually leading to trust and better flow of information. As a joined problem perception is often regarded as highly crucial for effective inter-departmental coordination, this aspect can be regarded as very important. Furthermore, potential of IDCs is expected to be influenced by political factors, e.g. commitment of the departmental leadership.
Both perspectives do not tell us very much about the crucial role of the chair organization that is in charge of *Federführung*. The center of government's potentially beneficial role as chair organization and its influence on the coordination process and output of IDCs is somewhat included within the optimistic perspective on IDCs, but is largely an empirical blind spot in the academic debate, because there are no comparative studies on center of governments' role in managing IDCs.

5.5. Conclusion

We have now adapted the analytical framework of actor-centered institutionalism for the purpose of this thesis and provided a lot of empirical information to prepare the case studies. In this section, we will briefly wrap up what we have discussed. Then, we will briefly restate the research questions. This serves the purpose of an interim-conclusion before the methodological and empirical part of this thesis begins.

The *institutional framework* in which interdepartmental coordination takes place is conceptualized as being comprised of regulative and normative elements. *Regulative* elements refer to formal rules that structure and prescribe the general structure and operation of state governments and consequently coordination. We identified the constitutional principles, the Joint Rules of Procedure and the Rules of the Procedure of the Government as the most important formal rules prescribing formal coordination. In those documents, departmental autonomy is emphasized and a de-facto veto right is granted to every department by the formal rules of co-signature. The *normative* elements of the institutional framework refer to informal, social norms that guide actors' behavior and expectations during the coordination process. We distinguished between organizational norms and professional norms. While the first type refers to standards of appropriate behavior set by the respective departments, professional norms refer to the professional background of individual bureaucrats. In sum, we argue that the organizational norm of departmentalism and the professional norm of a legalistic orientation provide the usual normative institutional underpinnings of the coordination process in IDCs.
Furthermore, we identified the rather strong positions of Prime Ministers in German states, the need for negotiations, usual coalitions governments, importance of parties and an increased importance of mass media as the five factors that comprise the *political framework* of German state governments that may shape coordination in IDCs.
We introduced IDCs as administrative coordination bodies that are usually established to tackle cross-cutting problems in an inter-departmental way. We identified two perspectives

regarding their actual capacity to improve coordination - an optimistic and pessimistic one. This relates directly to our first research question: *Do IDCs achieve positive coordination?* The *pessimistic perspective* mostly relies on the argument of departmentalism at the organizational level, i.e. self-interested departments that possess considerable autonomy in their area of competence without any incentive to pursue improved coordination. In contrast, the more *optimistic perspective* points to the beneficial consequences of stable working arrangements among individual bureaucrats as provided by IDCs, eventually leading to trust and better flow of information and consequently coordination. Furthermore, the optimistic perspective emphasizes the potentially beneficial role of the center of government for improving coordination in IDCs.

Finally, we introduced two types of *actors* in IDCs with distinct action orientations and capabilities to engage in the coordination process - line departments and State Chancelleries. Capabilities refer to the respective organizations' potential of influencing the coordination process and output. State Chancelleries' capabilities are to be found in the perception of being neutral, the center's borrowed authority based on the Prime Minister and their broad overview over the government's activity. However, due to the close connection to the Prime Minister, their action orientation is predominantly political, i.e. focused on elections and what might serve the Prime Minister. This is true even at the lower levels of the hierarchy. In contrast, lines departments' action orientations are twofold: a political action orientation dominates the leadership level, while an administrative action orientation is dominant at the sectional level that concentrates the departmental policy making capacity. Consequently, the line departments' capability to influence the coordination process is based on their often exclusive expertise that they acquire through their narrow perspective on a particular policy domain.

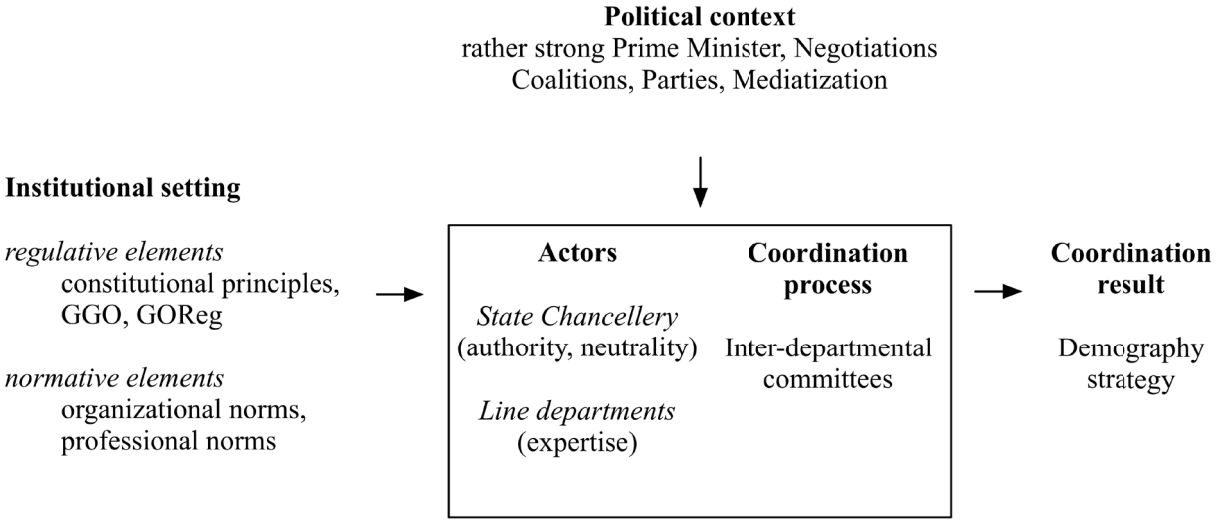
Regarding a State Chancellery's potential to improve horizontal inter-departmental coordination as the chair of an IDC, we identified two perspectives in the academic debate. These two perspective on State Chancelleries are directly connected to the second research question: *Does the State Chancellery as chair organization achieve positive coordination in IDCs?* The optimistic perspective holds that the center of government may be able to effectively coordinate cross-cutting policies. In contrast, the pessimistic perspective emphasizes that the center's potential of formulating and enforcing own policy initiatives or to improve coordination among departments is clearly limited by departmental autonomy.

In conclusion, the adaptation of actor-centered institutionalism can be illustrated in Figure 4. The institutional framework and political factors shape actor's behavior. However, actors are not fully determined by the institutional framework, but still have room for maneuver and potential for agency, based on their capabilities to influence the coordination process and output. How actors behave in coordination is further influenced by their action orientations.

In a nutshell, the first research question *Do IDCs achieve positive coordination?* helps to decide, which of the two perspectives on IDCs that we have discussed offers a more realistic picture of IDCs. With regard to the second research question *Does the State Chancellery as chair organization achieve positive coordination in IDCs?* we are interested whether the independent variable "chair organization" (State Chancellery vs. line department) of an IDC makes a difference for the first dependent variable "coordination process" and the second one,

"coordination output". The coordination process refers to the interactions of bureaucrats within the IDC, while the coordination output focuses on the IDCs' products, i.e. demography strategies. Both dependent variables will be further operationalized in section 7.1 at the beginning of the empirical chapter.

Figure 4 Adapted framework of Actor-Centered Institutionalism



6. Research design

In the following, the research design and methodological approach will be explained. Research design is an important factor in every research project, because an insufficiently developed design makes answering research questions in a convincing way very unlikely (A. L. George and Bennett 2005: 73f.). First, we will discuss the case study method and our case selection approach. Second, we will discuss expert interviews as a method of data collection. Third, we will introduce document analysis as a method to analyze the coordination output.

6.1. Case studies and case selection

Case studies are referred to as a research strategy rather than a method, since the researcher employs several methods within a case study research design (Hartley 2004: 323f.). According to Gerring "a case study may be understood as the intensive study of a single case where the purpose of that study is – at least in part – to shed light on a larger class of cases (a population) (2007: 20). Thus, the aim of a research design based on case studies is twofold: First, to generate in-depth knowledge about the specific cases under scrutiny and, second, to generate knowledge about other cases within the respective universe of cases from which the analyzed cases are selected, i.e. to achieve a generalizability of the findings within certain limits.
Case studies have strengths as well as weaknesses. We'll discuss the strengths first. In general, case studies are "strong precisely where statistical methods and formal models are weak" (A. L. George and Bennett 2005: 19). Case studies are strong in finding mechanisms (Gerring 2007: 20), meaning that they provide "independent stable factors that under certain conditions link causes to effects" in a co-variation manner (A. L. George and Bennett 2005: 8). This means "case study researchers are more interested in finding the conditions under which specified outcomes occur, and the mechanisms through which they occur, rather than uncovering the frequency with which those conditions and their outcomes arise" (A. L. George and Bennett 2005: 31). By identifying these conditions, case studies help to generate new knowledge. Further, Gerring argues that case studies offer the opportunity to conduct in-depth analyses, making them the appropriate choice for analysing rather complex issues, such as inter-organizational coordination. Put differently, case studies are instrumental to study "the detail, richness, completeness, wholeness, or the degree of variance in an outcome that is accounted for by an explanation" (Gerring 2007: 49). Thus, case studies as a research strategy are the adequate choice for the purpose of this thesis.

With regard to weaknesses of case studies, we can identify one weakness that especially affects this dissertation:

Qualitative case studies are weaker than quantitative research strategies at measuring causal *effects*, i.e. "(a) the magnitude of a causal relationship (the expected effect on Y of a given change in X across a population of cases) and (b) the relative precision or uncertainty of that point estimate" (Gerring 2007: 44). Hence, case studies do not enable the researcher to measure the *precise* impact of a particular value of a variable. Thus, they "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 the outcomes in a class or type of cases" (A. L. George and Bennett 2005: 25). Put differently, it is difficult to assess the precise effect that one variable has on another. Rather, conclusions can be drawn regarding whether and why an effect exists at all.

To estimate whether the independent variable chair organization (State Chancellery or line department, IV) of an IDC has an effect on the coordination process (dependent variable 1, DV1) and output (dependent variable 2, DV2), this thesis utilizes a co-variation analysis approach, meaning that "causal inferences are drawn on the basis of observed co-variation between causal factors and causal effects" (Blatter and Bume 2008: 318; Frendreis 1983). Hence, the research interest is focused on the question whether an independent variable makes a difference with regard to a dependent variable (Blatter 2013: 6). The logic of inference is that if "there exists such a covariance over time or space between the independent variable (X) and dependent variable (Y), we can infer that X caused Y [...]" (Blatter and Bume 2008: 318). Hence, we follow an x-centered approach in this thesis (Ganghof 2005).
This logic of inference is possible when cases are analyzed with a "structured focused comparison" (A. L. George and Bennett 2005: 67ff.). In this approach a set of theoretically motivated critical variables is identified and then their variation is analyzed across several detailed qualitative cases studies to derive systematic conclusions. It is structured in the sense that it formulates conscious questions that will guide the case study analysis. Furthermore, it is focused by limiting attention to only few possible aspects of the analyzed cases. This thesis follows the approach of structured-focused comparison in order to conduct a co-variation analysis. The critical variable identified is the chair organization of an IDC (State Chancellery vs. line department). Therefore, variation of this variable should cause variation with regard to the coordination process (DV1) and output (DV2). Our analysis will be structured, as all case studies will follow the same template. Furthermore, the scope of the case studies is sufficiently narrow, as our analysis is clearly limited to coordination within IDCs and the respective outputs.

Case study research is often criticized for not being able to validate findings (Sartori 1970: 1034). Thus, case selection needs to be highly intentional and justifiable to make any plausible inference plausible, because "the cases you choose affect the answers you get" (Geddes 1990; Leuffen 2007). Case selection determines which inferences can be drawn from the research, or as Blatter and Haverland put it: the "validity of the causal inference made by the investigator, or how compelling the claim is that the independent variable of interest, rather than another variable, caused the effect, is largely based on the properties of the cases selected" (2012: 41). Thus, selection of cases is a fundamental step in the research design,

because the case selection represents "the logic that links the data to be collected and the conclusions to be drawn to the initial questions of the study" (Yin 2003: 18).
In order to be able to make plausible causal inference by conducting comparative case studies with the aim of co-variation analysis, the case selection needs to ensure two things: First, strong differences in respect to the independent variable and, second, high similarity with regard to the control variables (Blatter 2013: 6). Hence, one should select cases that vary as much as possible with regard to the independent variable while being as similar as possible with regard to the control variables (Blatter and Haverland 2012: 42; Flyvbjerg 2006: 230; Gerring 2007: 131ff.; Thiel 2014: 90). In social sciences, this aim is not easy to achieve, as described by George and Bennett: "It is generally extremely difficult to find two cases that resemble each other in every respect but one, as controlled comparison requires" (2005: 152). A controlled case selection that fulfills the aforementioned criteria can be realized by following Mill's "methods of difference" (1983) that has been originally used for real experiments, but can also be applied in other settings. In the method of difference two or more cases are selected that differ on the independent variable while otherwise being as similar as possible. Przeworski and Teune (1982: 32) refer to this approach as the "most similar systems" design. If the dependent variable - given everything else remain constant - varies in correspondence with the key independent variable, we can plausibly assume a causal effect between the independent and dependent variable (Blatter and Bume 2008: 318). However, Gerring (2007: 132f.) hints to a important factor when applying a most-similar system design: potential independent variables have to be coded dichotomously (e.g. high/low; de-central/central, etc.). In this dissertation, this is not a problem, because the independent variable can be coded dichotomously, i.e. there is a clear-cut possibility to distinguish between the chair organizations (State Chancellery vs. line department).

Our case selection allows for a quasi-experimental research design, because we are able to nearly apply an ideal-typical most-similar systems design. As a consequence of the German federal system, all of our cases are situated within the same institutional framework, meaning they face the same regulative and normative prerequisites of coordination (see section 5.1). Furthermore, all cases are situated within similar political contexts (see section 5.2). For example, all cases under scrutiny featured a coalition government within the time period relevant for the analysis. Furthermore, all cases are situated in East Germany, which faces the most pressing demographic problems, i.e. shrinkage and aging of the population (Bundesministerium des Innern (BMI) 2012; Kröhnert, Medicus, and Klingholz 2006). Therefore, we expect a similar pressure for the respective governments to engage in coordination. In sum, we can hold the control variables constant across all cases. This case selection strategy enables us to draw plausible conclusions with regard to the independent variable *chair organization of IDC* (State Chancellery vs. line department) and its effect on the dependent variables *coordination process* (DV1) and *coordination output* (DV2).

Although a most similar systems design potentially enables plausible causal inference between independent and dependent variables in a comparative case study design, there is a pitfall that we need to address - equifinality. This means that a certain outcome may be achieved through different paths. Put differently, "equifinality challenges and undermines the

common assumption that similar outcomes in several cases must have a common cause that remains to be discovered" (A. L. George and Bennett 2005: 161). We can partly account for this problem by the amount of our cases, which enhances the internal validity of our findings (Gerring 2007: 43). This thesis does not only offer one case for each value of the independent variable, as a dichotomously coded independent variable would require. Rather, for the independent variable's value "State Chancellery" we will analyze three cases and for the value "line department" we will analyze two cases. In sum, we are able to validate our findings and avoid biased results and equifinality.

Table 14 Cases for comparative analysis

Case	**Chair of IDC (IV)**	**Control variables**
Thuringia	Line department	
Saxony-Anhalt	Line department	Institutional framework
Brandenburg	State Chancellery	Political context Problem pressure
Mecklenburg-Vorpommern	State Chancellery	
Saxony	State Chancellery	

6.2. Expert interviews - analyzing the coordination process

To analyze the coordination process (DV1) within the respective IDCs, semi-structured expert interviews were conducted as a tool for collecting data (Dawson 1997). In general, expert interviews are central inquiry instruments in political science and public administration research (Meuser and Nagel 2009; G. Pickel and Pickel 2009; Thiel 2014). As instruments of data collection they require much effort and field competence by the interviewer (Pfadenhauer 2009). Semi-structured expert interviews are a particular form of guided interviews. Rubin and Rubin (2012) refer to them as "responsive interviewing" stressing their dynamic and iterative nature that differs from a mechanical application of a standardized set of questions. Their design is more flexible than standardized questionnaires as they allow for a more or less natural talk between the interviewer and the interviewee making them the appropriate choice for the structured collection of interviewees' perceptions on rather complex issues within a case study design (Flick 2012; Hopf 2005; Thiel 2014: 94). Furthermore, a too narrow interview design might alienate interviewees and influence the interview situation in an unwanted way. For example, Aberbach and Rockman hold „elites especially – but other highly educated people as well – do not like being put in the straightjacket of close-ended questions. They prefer to articulate their views, explaining why they think what they think" (2002: 674). Having this in mind, a semi-structured interview approach was the adequate way to gather data, because it allowed for flexibility while at the same time ensured that a fix set

of questions was always part of every interview. The interview guideline can be found in appendix A.2. Questions in this guideline were based on the operationalization of the coordination process (see section 7.1). In some cases, interviewees requested the guideline before the interview to prepare themselves. This is a delicate issue of controversy in the literature on interviews as methods of data collection. Dexter (2006: 50) advises to provide as little information on the research project as absolutely necessary. In contrast, Odendahl and Shaw hold that is "advantageous to provide a copy of the interview protocol and/or general questions in advance" (2002: 309). In this thesis a pragmatic approach was selected: interview guidelines were shared upon request to establish trust between interviewer and interviewee and to get access.

Who is an expert?

The question who is considered an expert is obviously crucial in conducting qualitative research based on interviews (G. Pickel and Pickel 2009: 451f.). An expert is anybody who possesses an institutionalized competence to construct truth, e.g. by their occupation and privileged access to information that grants them access to special knowledge (Hitzler, Honer, and Maeder 1994). An expert is somebody who is somehow responsible for drafting, writing, implementing or controlling a particular solution to a problem and, thus, possesses privileged knowledge on decision-making processes, organizations, policy domains, etc. with respect to the analyzed cases (Meuser and Nagel 2009). The specific person and its biography is not in the focus of an expert interview, but only its position and function within a particular context, e.g. an organization. Thus, experts are chosen because of their professional expertise attributed to them by the interviewer. In this sense, the experts are considered to not only represent their own views but the ones of a wider group of experts or the organization they are a part of (Flick 2012; Meuser and Nagel 1991).

Sample strategy

Obviously, the question how and which interviewees are selected is crucial, because interviews serve as the primary source of data to capture the coordination process (DV1). Therefore, an adequate approach is necessary. With regard to the sample strategy, one can distinguish probability and non-probability sampling strategies. In the methodological literature, the latter is often advocated, because randomized approaches are not seen as feasible nor appropriate for qualitative research (Davies 2001; Dexter 2006; Goldstein 2002). To be more precise, this thesis utilized a snow-ball sampling approach. The interviewer can learn from the interviewee to whom he should talk by providing the interviewer with some insights into personal interrelationships of interviewees. In addition, snow-ball sampling allows the interviewees to establish further contacts with other potential experts. Put differently, the sample is somewhat selected "via the units of study" themselves (Thiel 2014: 46). Snow-ball sampling proved to be the adequate sampling strategy for the purpose of this thesis: Since IDCs are rather informal and respective membership lists are internal documents, only the chair organization of the IDC that is in charge of *Federführung* can relatively easy be found by desk research. Thus, the chair organization acted as a de-facto gate-keeper to further potential interviewees. Hence, snow-ball sampling represents the only feasible way to acquire a sufficient number of interviewees for each case. This sampling

approach turned out to be fruitful as many interviews could be arranged with the help of other interviewees.

Interviewees were approached by an email including a cover letter that entailed basic information on the researcher and the project (see appendix A.4). To some extend, cover letters were customized and mentioned other interviewees, who had established contact before.

Expert knowledge can be distinguished between context knowledge through passive observation and operational knowledge trough active participation. In this thesis the focus is on the operational knowledge of experts, i.e. knowledge than is acquired by active participation in IDC meetings. Delegates of IDCs have been interviewed to gather data on the coordination process and interactions among bureaucrats within IDCs. However, also expeorts' knowledge through passive observation was utilized by interviewing informants that were not delegates of IDCs, but had key positions within the organizations under scrutiny and therefore provide valuable knowledge that actual delegates might be hesitant to share with the interviewer (Thiel 2014: 96). Table 15 illustrates the number of interviewees conducted for each case. A more detailed list of all interviewees can be found in appendix A.1.

Table 15 List of interviews

Case	**No. of interviews**
Thuringia	7
Saxony-Anhalt	4
Brandenburg	6
Mecklenburg-Vorpommern	4
Saxony	5
Total	**26**

Data analysis: qualitative analysis using CAQDAS

Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis software (CAQDAS) offers some valuable features to systematically manage large amounts of qualitative data with regard to speed and rigor - for example, coding of material, taking memos, linking data to each other or searching and retrieve data extracts (Lee and Esterhuizen 2000; Spencer et al. 2014).

With some exceptions, interviews were recorded and fully transcribed by an external provider. In the case studies, transcripts are referred to with an unique label that allows identification of the particular transcript.[36]

Some interviewees requested the transcriptions of the interview for final authorization. Obviously, this entails the potential danger that interview data is changed and the original content of the transcript is cleansed from controversial (and interesting) content. However,

[36] e.g. TH1_5 would be Interviewee #1 from the Thuringia case and the 5. direct quote from the Thuringia case; SN4_16 would be interviewee #4 from the Saxony case and the 16. direct quote in the Saxony case.

one needs to keep in mind that qualitative studies trying to open the "black box" of organizations are extremely dependent on field access and therefore require to meet interviewees' demands in many ways. However, the authorization process did not result in substantial changes regarding the interview transcripts and is therefore not perceived as problematic.

Transcriptions provide the basis for further analysis with the help of CAQDAS. In case of this thesis the software MAXQDA 12 was used. The interview data was coded, i.e. raw data material was linked to certain categories, ideas or themes. The final coding scheme was based on both, a deductive and inductive approach. In a deductive coding approach, the coding scheme is defined ex-ante based on a conceptual, theoretical or an empirical research interest (Crabtree and Miller 1999). In contrast, inductive coding starts without a pre-defined coding scheme and rather searches for common topics and themes in the data that is then aggregated and interpreted (Boyatzis 1998). Both approaches can be combined in a hybrid-approach that incorporates the structured approach of deductive coding "while allowing for themes to emerge direct from the data using inductive coding" (Fereday and Muir-Cochrane 2006: 83). The deductive part was based on the operationalization of the coordination process that we will discuss at the beginning of the empirical analysis (section 7.1). Furthermore, the deductive coding scheme included actors' action orientations and capabilities as discussed in section 5.3.2.4 and 5.3.3.4. This was done to link the empirical adaptation of actor-centered institutionalism to the empirical data. By doing so, we get a more fine-grained analysis how actors use their capabilities to shape the coordination process as well as a better understanding how this was influenced by their action orientations. The inductive part of the coding scheme emerged by recognition of common topics and themes that occurred across several interviews transcripts, but were not captured by the initial deductive coding scheme. The resulting coding scheme applied to analyze the interview transcripts can be found in appendix A.3.

Problematic aspects of expert interviews

Obviously, interviews as a method of data collection and analysis have some flaws. We will discuss potential problems for this thesis regarding the data collection and data analysis.

Regarding data collection, as discussed earlier, interviews focus on collecting perceptual data. Hence, this data inevitably comprises subjective elements. Therefore, some factors, e.g. emotional state, opinions, attitude or values, may influence the interviewee and the interview situation and therefore may bias the data that can be collected (Dexter 2006: 101). Put differently, interview situations are always contingent on various contextual factors and inevitably represent a social interaction that might influence the data collection (Bogner and Menz 2009).

With regard to data analysis, there are potential problems of inter-coder-reliability and problems related to the translation of interview data. The issue of inter-coder-reliability points to the potential danger that different researchers would interpret and code data material differently and, consequently, would come to different conclusions. In this thesis, we cannot fully account for this problem. As this thesis is not a collaborative project inter-coder-reliability cannot be systematically enhanced by coding the raw material various times by different people.

Finally, there is a problem due to translation of interview data. While the thesis and its data presentation is written in English, the empirical raw data, i.e. transcripts of interviews, are in German. Direct quotes were translated by the author, which is obviously based on interpretation and might potentially reduce validity of findings or bias the results.

6.3. Qualitative content analysis - analyzing the coordination output

To analyze the coordination output (DV2), i.e. the demography strategies produced by the IDCs under scrutiny, a qualitative content analysis was conducted. The aim of qualitative content analysis is the "systematic processing of communication mediums" (Mayring 2009: 468). This thesis follows a deductive approach with an ex-ante defined analytical perspective regarding the analyzed documents. Put differently, the analysis aimed for a structured interpretation of empirical data guided by a pre-defined conceptual-analytical perspective (Gläser and Laudel 2010). MAXQDA 12 was used to manage the data and provide quick access to documents. The pre-defined analytical perspective was based on the operationalization of the coordination output (DV2) that we are going to discuss at the beginning of the empirical chapters (section 7.1). The application of a deductive approach based on a pre-defined analytical perspective ensures comparability of documents regarding our analytical interest, i.e. coordination output, because it focuses the researcher attentions to the essential aspects of the document, despite the structure of the respective documents may vary remarkably. A list of all analyzed documents can be found in appendix A.5.

7. Empirical case studies

In this chapter we will analyze the coordination process and output in the five case studies. In order to make comparison possible, the structure of each case study will be similar. First, we will discuss contextual information, e.g. establishment of the IDC and matters of staff composition. Second, we will discuss the *coordination process* (DV1), i.e. interactions between bureaucrats within the respective IDC that led to a certain result. This *coordination output* (DV2), i.e. demography strategies, will then be analyzed in a third step. Fourth, after each case study, a brief summary will be provided. Both, coordination process and coordination output will be operationalized in the following section.

7.1. Operationalizing coordination process and output

Operationalization is a crucial part of any research project, because it "shows exactly what will be studied or measured" (Thiel 2014: 43).

Operationalizing the coordination process (DV1)

The coordination process refers to formal and informal interaction among bureaucrats within the IDCs. In short, positive coordination aspires that policies of departments reinforce each other by pooling expertise and, thus, increase overall effectiveness of policy making. In contrast, negative coordination is about the agreement of actors to avoid conflicts and to not interfere in each other's turf, usually by negotiations that lead to the lowest common denominator of actor's preferences (Scharpf 1994: 38f.).

In the case studies, we will pay attention to three dimensions of the coordination process: *role of the chair organization*, *information processing* and *decision-making*. This threefold approach has already been proven useful for empirical case studies on coordination in IDCs and is therefore also deemed suitable for our comparative study (Hustedt 2014b; Hustedt and Danken 2017).

First, the role of the main responsible section, the 'chair organization' of the IDC, is to be analyzed. As we already discussed in section 5.4.2, the chair organization is a crucial member of each IDC, because interactions within IDCs need to be guided and steered, a process often denominated as 'network management' in a more general notion (Hovik and Hanssen 2015; Klijn, Steijn, and Edelenbos 2010). How an IDC is managed is important because the chair organizes and structures the overall process of coordination in the IDC. Consequently, the chair of an IDC serves as the main boundary-spanner and therefore has remarkable influence by arranging meetings and the work schedule or by distributing internal roles (Williams 2002). This section is in charge of *Federführung* which usually means the formal

responsibility for the content of a policy and the process of coordination and co-signature with other involved sections (see our detailed discussion on *Federführung* in section 5.1.1.2). In ideal-typical negative coordination, the unit in charge of *Federführung* would draft a proposal based on its own area of specialization and expertise. In a second step, departments would only check the proposed draft for consequences in their own domain of responsibility and check whether they have to issue a veto to protect their own interests. The *role of the chair organization* resembles negative coordination if the chair organization is both in charge of the draft content as well as the procedure in which the draft is discussed between the departments, without taking care of coherence or balance between departments. The goal would be a draft that foremost mirrors the interests of the own organization and which is largely based on own expertise. Other departments would only be included in rather late stages of the process. In contrast, positive coordination prevails if the draft is based on a broad pool of expertise and if the chair takes care that the draft includes a wide variety of departmental perspectives from the very beginning. However, departments might be reluctant to contribute to an IDC in a meaningful way. Therefore, if the chair has the ambition to put forward a truly cross-cutting coordination output by successfully engaging in conflict with departments over substantial content to improve the report's quality, we will attributed such behavior with positive coordination.

Second, the way of *information processing* is investigated, i.e. in what way information is passed, discussed and coped with within the IDC. How information is processed and shared in coordination processes is considered a crucial step in the coordination literature for the coordination process and output (Metcalfe 1994; Peters 2015; Scharpf 1994): For example, Peters holds that "information maybe the most important prerequisite for effective coordination" (2015: 27) as interdependent actors rely on each other's knowledge and information to put together a joint document. The exchange of information between departments essentially refers to "how they propose to act in their own domains" (Metcalfe 1994: 282). Because of its inherent specialization and internal division of labor, information is distributed unequally within the government. Put differently, information entrenched or held available in other organizational parts of the government are not easily accessed by other parts. As information is an inter-organizational power source (see 4.3) and therefore a core asset of actors, they rather tend to "secrecy" (Peters 2015: 29). Consequently, departments are usually hesitant to share information with others. Thus, the way information is processed is a precondition for building consensus and arrive at a decision. Furthermore, we are also interested whether discussions within the IDC become policy relevant and actually change governmental actions. If the delegates in an IDC actively engage in cross-boundary discussions and have the ambition to achieve a joint problem definition and arrive at policy implications thereof, the way information is processed reflects positive coordination. In contrast, if the representatives tend to secrecy or strictly discuss within their rather narrow departmental perspectives without the ambition of a joint perspective and understanding, the information processing is attributed with the notion of negative coordination. For the sake of completeness, we will also pay attention to the vertical dimension of information process, i.e. how delegates prepare IDCs meetings and official departmental contributions within their own departments.

Third, ways of *decision-making*, i.e. solving conflict and achieving consensus, within the IDC are to be studied. Building consensus places high demands on the involved actors. To build consensus, diverging policy objectives and inherent conflicts need to be addressed in some way. Negative and positive coordination capture two different ways of reaching consensus. Negative coordination would be about deliberate avoidance of conflict to "hide disagreements from outsiders" (Metcalfe 1994: 283). What is crucial though is that a solution is found that at least all involved actors "can live with", i.e. for which actors do not identify potential objections for their own area of competence. Put differently, departments would cautiously check, if proposed solutions discussed in the IDC do not object or undermine their own area of competence. Therefore, the individual delegate would be guided by the question: "Is there anything I have to object?". Consequently, negative coordination would lead to a lowest common denominator. In contrast, and certainly more ambitious is a consensus to which all represented departments actively agree after contributing actively to a draft with a problem-solving ambition, guided by the question: "What can I contribute to improve this policy?". Exactly this way of decision-making would resemble positive coordination. Put differently, in case of positive coordination, the decision-making process within the IDC would be less driven by departmentalism or the chair organization would be successfully limit or contain departmental egoism by insisting on an overarching perspective.

Table 16 Operationalization of the coordination process

	Positive coordination	**Negative coordination**
Role of chair	Moderation Pooling expertise of all departments	Dominant in terms of procedure and content Only focus on own expertise
Information processing	Open discussion of information across departmental boundaries	Delivery of content by departments without much discussion
Decision-making	Active approval "What can I contribute to improve this policy?"	Anticipation of veto "Is there anything I have to object?"

Operationalizing the coordination output (DV2)

Operationalizing and subsequently measuring coordination output is by no means an easy task (Bouckaert, Peters, and Verhoest 2010: 63; Peters 2015: 152f.). Nevertheless, numerous attempts have been made to measure and assess coordination outputs or to develop coordination scales (Bornemann 2013: 465ff.; Briassoulis 2004b; Hustedt 2014b: 323ff.; Matei and Dogaru 2013; Metcalfe 1994; OECD 2005; Ostrom, Parks, and Whitaker 1974).

What approaches did earlier research use to operationalize the coordination output? For example, Hustedt (2014b: 323ff.) analyzed the coordination output of an IDC by paying attention to three categories: First, joint understanding of the cross-cutting policy project (i.e., is there a common definition of the problem and its solutions?); second, dominance of central

actors (i.e., do departments equally contribute to the cross-cutting policy project?); third, collaboration (i.e., does the coordination output address policy interdependence by outlining joint projects that require collaboration of departments?). Similar to the notion of collaboration in Hustedt's approach, many researchers consider continuous collaboration between departments crucial when assessing policy integration and coordination. These ideas were also applied to sustainability strategies (Briassoulis 2004b: 121; Casado-Asensio and Steurer 2014; Nordbeck and Steurer 2015: 7; Steurer and Martinuzzi 2005: 460).

As a result of various definitions and dimensions (see our discussion on coordination in section 3.2), there are no "definitive measures of coordination that would allow us to say that one policy area is coordinated and another is not" (Peters 2015: 24). Hence, we will develop our own approach to measure coordination outputs for the purpose of this thesis, bases on the policy integration debate. Ultimately, we want to be able to assess whether a coordination output is rather an example of negative or positive coordination. Towards this end, we will construct categories that limit our attention towards particular elements of the coordination output. Furthermore, we will pre-define values for the categories that we analytically attribute with negative and positive coordination. Categories and their values serve as a pre-defined analytical lens for the structured analysis of the coordination outputs. We will analyze the coordination outputs of the IDCs along four dimensions: *addressing interdependence*, *setting specific goals*, *implementation mechanisms* and *reporting, monitoring & evaluation*.

First, we will refer to horizontal integration and collaboration as *addressing interdependence*. Our perspective on interdependence is twofold: First, we are interested, whether the reports acknowledge the need for cross-cutting action and the need for inter-departmental coordination on a more rhetorical level, i.e. do reports at least mention that an inter-departmental approach is necessary? Second, we will check whether the reports' structure (i.e. table of content) and the actual content matches the ambition of thinking in a cross-cutting manner in a more qualitative way. If the reports are clearly structured according to departmental silos without addressing policy interdependence, negative coordination is dominant. An indicator for this would be a very detailed table of content that clearly resembles departmental silos. In contrast, if reports address interdependence by explicitly outlining policy interdependencies and potential for cooperation between departments in order to tackle these interdependencies, positive coordination prevails. Another indicator that hints at positive coordination with regard to addressing interdependence would be rather broadly themed chapters that do not simply resemble the departmental portfolio allocation.
Second, another category frequently mentioned when assessing policy integration is *setting specific goals* (Mulgan 2008: 175). This refers to the question, if a strategy paper actually formulates specific policy goals that have the ambition to shape the future, or whether it can be primarily seen as a "bookkeeping"-device that is informative at best by collecting project that the governments was conducting in the past (Casado-Asensio and Steurer 2015). Formulating specific policy goals is much more ambitious and demanding in terms of conflict resolution, because departments need to mutually discuss their sectoral interests, policy tradeoffs and finally agree upon priorities. In contrast, "bookkeeping" is a save way to avoid inter-departmental conflict. Here, the coordination output is rather a collection of

departmental projects and information that describe the general situation and what has been done by individual departments, but is not directed towards the future by formulating goals to achieve. Closely connected is the question, whether goals are specific or rather vague (Martinuzzi and Steurer 2003: 278; Nordbeck and Steurer 2015: 8). Vague goals ("A good life for everybody!") are certainly easier to agree upon, but weaken the potential guidance a strategy can offer, because vagueness allows departments to keep their selective world views and ignore conflictual aspects of policies (Hustedt 2014b: 323). Agreeing upon specific goals requires much higher commitment and capacity for actively addressing and settling conflicts. Hence, we will analyze the coordination output of IDCs with regard to their commitment to specific goals. If we observe vague goals, we will interpret this as avoidance of conflict, which is a feature of negative coordination. In contrast, if we find specific goals and priorities, pro-active resolution of conflict has taken place and positive coordination prevails.

Third, *implementation mechanisms* are described as important factors in realizing policy goals of coordination outputs, i.e. connect the long-term strategy goals with everyday policy making (Briassoulis 2004b: 123f.; Casado-Asensio and Steurer 2014: 452; Tils 2007: 169). The simple argument is "policy documents alone, no matter how ambitious their objectives and projected measures may be, are not sufficient for effective policies but need to be accompanied by working implementation mechanisms" (Steurer and Martinuzzi 2005: 460). One possible implementation mechanism might be a centrally administered implementation plan that outlines targets, projects and deadlines (Martinuzzi and Steurer 2003: 276f.). Agreeing upon an implementation plan is very demanding and includes a lot of potential conflict, because departments would not only have to formulate goals, but can also be held accountable for implementing them and may receive blame in case announced projects are not put into existence. Hence, departments might rather agree to not set up an implementation plan to avoid conflict. Hence, if the analyzed strategy papers include an implementation plan and, thus, demonstrate credible commitment, we will assess the coordination output as an example of positive coordination. In contrast, if the strategy document lacks an implementation plan, its ambition is much lower and will be deemed as negative coordination.

Fourth, *monitoring and evaluation* are common categories in assessing strategies (i.e. coordination output) in the debate on policy integration (Briassoulis 2004b: 123f.; Martinuzzi and Steurer 2003: 278; Simeonova and Diaz-Bone 2005: 2554; Steurer and Martinuzzi 2005: 464; Tils 2007: 170). Monitoring provides a possibility to track the progress towards the goals outlined in the respective strategy documents. Furthermore, clearly defined indicators enable the general public audience and the political opponent to assess progress and formulate critique based on a lack of progress. Put differently: the possibility of being evaluated adds an additional element of accountability to the coordination output. Therefore, indicators might focus attention of policy makers and make effective implementation of strategies more likely. However, monitoring and evaluations are a double-edge sword, because missing to achieve self-imposed policy goals can cause negative repercussions. Technically, monitoring and evaluation may come in a variety of forms. For example, indicators may quantify policy goals (Brodhag and Talière 2006: 138), or governments may revisit their strategy documents after a while and update projects and reflect progress in a more qualitative way (Jordan and Lenschow 2010: 155; Andrew Ross and Dovers 2008: 253). Having briefly discussed the risky factors of monitoring & evaluation, i.e. being publicly accountable for missing policy

goals, it is fair to state that the existence of monitoring & evaluation mechanisms signals a higher level of commitment & ambition. Thus, a monitoring system mentioned in the coordination output will be attributed with positive coordination, while its absence signals the prevalence of negative coordination, most likely caused by conflict avoidance.

Table 17 Operationalization of the coordination output

	Positive coordination	**Negative coordination**
Addressing Interdependence	Addressing policy interdependence	Projects stay in departmental silos
Setting specific goals	Specific goals	Vague goals or bookkeeping
Implementation mechanisms	Implementation plan in place	No implementation plan
Reporting, monitoring & evaluation	Monitoring system	No monitoring system

7.2. Case I - Line department - Thuringia

Interview data on the coordination process in Thuringia covers events of a time period from 2004-2013. During this entire period, the Prime Minister was a member of the CDU. In 2009, after a 10 year period of a Christian Democratic absolute majority in the Thuringian parliament, a coalition of CDU and SPD formed the government (Hallermann 2008).

Table 18 Governments in Thuringia, 2003-2014

Legislative period	Governing parties	Prime Minister
2003-2004	CDU	Dieter Althaus
2004-2009	CDU	Dieter Althaus
2009-2014	CDU / SPD	Christine Lieberknecht

Establishment

Since the early 1990s, population projections predict a negative demographic development in Thuringia (TH1). However, the problem of demographic change was perceived as an issue of lower priority by most political actors. It was not until 2004 that demographic change was acknowledged as a cross-cutting problem by the government. In this year, as a consequence of new data provided by the 12. coordinated population projection, an inter-departmental committee was established by cabinet decree (TH1, TH7). It became quite apparent that the mismatch of birth rates, death rates and migration will be causing problems for nearly every policy domain in the near future and "*something had to be done*" (TH7). The IDC's initial task was to prepare an inter-departmental report on the demographic situation in Thuringia. Interestingly, due to changes in the IDC's staff, interviewees could sometimes not tell how the working group came into existence or what its initial task actually was (TH3, TH6). The IDC still does not have a formal rules of procedure (TH6).

From 2004-2005, the State Chancellery chaired the IDC, but this was "*quickly and surprisingly corrected*" (TH1). In 2005 the responsibilities for demographic change were transferred to the Department of Transport & Infrastructure and it also got in charge of *Federführung* for matters related to the IDC. Although the current lead department still believes that the State Chancellery would be the more appropriate lead organization for demographic change (TH1, TH2, TH7), being attached to a line department is not perceived as a fundamental disadvantage, because there is still a cabinet mandate that is ought to disciplines department and counter tendencies of departmentalism:

> *"Those reports are mandated by the cabinet and therefore gain more weight [...] If you want to spend money from different sources, it's way easier if there is a cabinet decision" (TH7_5).*

Organizationally, a section within the department is in charge of *Federführung* for the IDC. Consequently, it is subordinated to a head of division.

Staff composition

Each department decides independently who is sent to IDC meetings (TH3). The IDC initially consisted of high-ranked heads of division (*Abteilungsleiter*). However, after its initial phase, staff composition of the IDC changed a bit, because interest in the departments decreased (TH7):

> *"After a while, the departments sent head of sections or a deputy, or the deputies' deputy" (TH1_1).*

Nowadays, mostly head of sections and officials are sent to IDC meetings and occasionally head of divisions, depending on the importance of the topics to be discussed at the meeting (TH6). This mix of hierarchical levels is seen as slowing down the process of coordination:

> *"Heads of division could decide upon many matters in a quick way during a meeting. Officials will rarely make up their minds in a meeting, because they often need to coordinate with their departments" (TH1_2).*

Despite the meanwhile formal middle-ranked hierarchical position (head of section) of most IDC members, they nowadays still have a close connection to the leadership level due to their positions within the departments (TH2, TH5, TH6): Members are mostly affiliated to two types of units in the department: First, staff units (*Stabstellen*) that report directly to the State Secretary or the Minister without being part of the hierarchical structure. Second, policy units (*Grundsatzreferate*) that are not concerned with detailed technical matters of policy, but rather have a broad perspective over the departments' portfolio and deal with strategic questions (TH6). This indicates a certain relevance of the IDC's results to the departments' leadership:

> *"After 2009 we [from the staff unit] were sent to the IDC, because the leadership decided that it was too important and cross-cutting to send the experts from the line hierarchy" (TH6_3).*

In a similar vein, another interviewee from a policy unit reports that his leadership changed the department's delegate in 2011, because it was unsatisfied with the flow of information and was afraid of an insufficient representation of the departmental interests within the IDC (TH3).

In general, the chair organization favors a stable group of participants to ensure a continuous flow of information, because newcomers were often unsure about their departments' position within the IDC and slowed down the coordination process (TH7).

Mostly, each department is represented by a single individual person. However, the chair organization is represented by two or three persons and in some cases, e.g. discussions of topics deemed especially important, also some departments may be represented by two or three persons (TH6, TH1). The chair organization is sometimes even represented by four or five persons (TH6).

Next to bureaucrats, from 2010 to 2014 a "Commissioner for the cooperation of generations" was member of the IDC. This former member of Thuringia's state parliament perceived his role as a counterpart to the bureaucrats (TH4):

"Bureaucrats are blunt. They'll say: This street will be downgraded and we're done. That's how they discuss. I always tell them: You need to explain it to the people, you need to take your time and tell them what is happening and why […] As a politician, you need something to sell. You can't just present the facts. Nobody will thank you for that and after the election you'll be out of office" (TH4_4).

Furthermore, occasionally external experts are invited to IDC meetings, e.g. officials from the Thuringian Statistical Office, who also provide empirical data for the reports (TH6). However, permanent membership of those experts has been denied, because then it would become "*too big and not manageable anymore*" (TH1).

7.2.1. Coordination process

So far, the IDC successfully prepared two inter-departmental reports (Thüringer Ministerium für Bau, Landesentwicklung und Verkehr (TMBLV) 2006; 2011; 2012a; 2012b). The report of 2011/2012 was divided into three parts. However, the most recent attempt to draft a demography strategy failed in 2014.

After the two reports had been published, the cabinet mandated to the Minister of Infrastructure and the IDC to develop a demography strategy. The ambition of this strategy was to develop a guideline for future policies based on the analyses of the previous demography reports. After missing its planned deadline in December 2013 the attempt to develop a strategy finally failed in July 2014 in the formal interdepartmental process of co-signature (*Mitzeichnung*), which we will discuss in more detail in section 7.2.1.3. Our analysis of the coordination process regarding *decision-making* will focus mostly on the procedure of drafting the failed demography strategy, because many interviewees referred to recent events that led to the coordination failure. This provides us with valuable data on potential pitfalls and problems within IDCs. However, we will also take into account how the IDC worked in earlier points of time regarding reports that were less controversial. This enables us to fully understand the IDC's internal procedures.

7.2.1.1. Role of Chair

Structuring the coordination process

In general, conceptualizing the IDC' broad work schedule and to draft specific meetings' agendas is seen as the major capability of the chair organization to steer the coordination process (TH6). Consequently, an important task of the chair organization is to adequately plan the IDCs work schedule in the long run:

"In case of long-term projects that may require two or three years, we focus on the deadline and go backwards. If we want to meet this deadline, what milestones do we need to achieve to deliver the product that we were mandated to produce? Of course, this work schedule is then discussed in the IDC and needs to be confirmed by everybody. But even after confirmation some situations may mess up our plan and we might need to flexibly react" (TH7_6).

A major frame of reference are elections and the respective legislative period - in the case of Thuringia four years: One interviewee illustrates the importance of the very first couple of weeks of a new government after an election:

> *"In my experience, governments only plan for the legislative period. It's just like that. If one wants to achieve cross-cutting thinking, cooperation or reallocation of budgets, then the only window of opportunity is within the first four to eight weeks after the election […] After that period, budgets are allocated and cooperation will become very unlikely, because every department will defend its turf come hell or high water […] Once the coalition treaty is negotiated, nothing will happen anymore" (TH5_7).*

Although there is a work schedule, actual meetings are not planned much in advance (TH6). The head of section discusses a possible agenda for a meeting with his superior head of division and sends around an invitation and proposed agenda to other departments. Often, some points are left from previous meetings and will be set on the next agenda (TH7). Other departments can add own topics to the agenda or propose meetings, but no initiative for a meeting has ever been taken by any other department and there are very rarely any additions to the proposed agenda (TH2, TH7). Regarding the preparation of meetings within the chair organization, over the years and in the IDC's early days, the Minister or State Secretary was rarely consulted in planning the meetings by the responsible section. However, the superior head of division takes care of information flows in a weekly joint meetings of all heads of division and the Minister to get "*the leadership's blessing*" for the next planned steps (TH7). In contrast to the usually rather passive role of the department's leadership in the IDC's early days, in case of the failed demography strategy of 2013/20014, the leadership level was regularly involved in preparing the meetings' agendas. In addition, the State Chancellery was usually consulted before a meeting to agree on a common argumentation, if an issue was anticipated to be critical in the IDC (TH7).

Compiling a report

In case of all reports of the IDC Demographic Change in Thuringia, the chair organization drafted the outline of the reports after discussions with the delegates of the IDC:

> *"When sketching outlines for new projects we rely on experiences of previous reports […] For the second part of the 2012 report, there was no previous example. So we drafted a schedule and, of course, presented it in the IDC. We discussed it and made minor changes, if need be. This outline was then filled with content" (TH7_8).*

Put differently, after the IDC agreed upon a structure for the coordination output and responsibilities for particular parts of the draft, departments were more or less autonomous with regard to their particular contributions. Hence, the chair organization's influence on content delivered by the departments seems to be rather limited and, consequently, demography reports in the Thuringian case might rather resemble a catalogue of departmental contributions. For example, after the IDC agreed upon the general structure of the report of 2011/2012, the respective text blocks were explicitly put into the responsibility of the line departments. This is even backed up by a formal cabinet decision. After the chair organization caused conflict by trying to get too much influence over the demography report causing

resistance of the other departments, the cabinet made clear that every particular department is responsible for any content affecting the respective area of responsibility (TH3). As a result, the compilation of reports in Thuringia over the years was clearly structured by the departmental principle.

Consequently, departmental contributions that enter the draft are largely not discussed or contested, if they do not interfere with other departments' preferences (TH5). Furthermore, the chair organization is mainly concerned with slight editorial revisions and final technical compilation of the draft, i.e. technically administers the contributions of departments (TH1, TH5, TH7). Consequently, the chair was largely not able to ensure that departmental contributions take care of coherence or "speak to each other".

7.2.1.2. Information processing

Information processing can be distinguished into a vertical and horizontal perspective.

The vertical dimension

It is an important task of IDC delegates to adequately prepare meetings by intra-departmental coordination in their department (TH1, TH3). In order to acquire their department's position on a particular matter, delegates coordinate their inputs for the IDC in two ways:

First, intra-departmental coordination happens with the administrative level, i.e. the respective divisions and experts in the sections. In case of specific text blocks for reports, the delegates often only engage in editorial revision without much responsibility for content (TH3, TH5).

Second, IDC delegates coordinate on the political level with the State Secretary and - rarely - Minister (TH3, TH5, TH6). Coordination with the leadership level is only triggered by anticipation of future party political conflict:

> *"If I have the impression that matters of political relevance are discussed that go beyond the usual departmental conflicts, I will contact the leadership […] Usually the State Secretary. If something is very politicized and of fundamental importance, I will inform the Minister - that is very unusual, but happens occasionally" (TH3_9).*

As already said, members of the IMAG DC are rather well connected to the political leadership, because during the drafting of the failed strategy of 2013/2014, processes within the IDC were considered important by the ministers. Another interviewee points to the guiding function of the coalition treaty when anticipating need for intra-departmental coordination:

> *"I believe to have a sense for the Minister's and State Secretary's position and what's intended by the coalition treaty. So, I don't feed them every detail […] There is a balancing act between the administrative and political level in which we are more or less autonomous" (TH5_10).*

The horizontal dimension

The horizontal dimension of information processing refers to verbal discussions among delegates within the IDC.

Normally, a meeting lasts two hours and takes places every two or three months and proceeds like this: the head of division from the chair organization welcomes the members of the IDC, but the actual meeting is led by the head of section. First item on the agenda is simply to approve the last meeting's protocol (TH3). After that, a lot of simple information sharing takes place. For example, this includes presentations on current departmental projects and developments at the federal level and in other German states. Next to information exchange, updates of the demography reports are discussed, e.g. the possible construction of indicators to measure progress over time (TH7). Sometimes there were also controversies regarding the amount of space within the report granted to each department (TH1, TH3).

However, interviewees also believe that the IDC has improved the joint understanding of demographic change from various perspectives:

> *"Through discussion with colleagues, one understands other departments' positions better. And I believe that the IDC helps to perceive demographic change from a perspective that is different from one's own" (TH3_11).*

However, this enhanced understanding and exchange of perspectives does not lead to a different decision-making process, i.e. does not become policy relevant:

> *"I can understand the perspectives of other departments, but they are not my position and especially not in my function […] Yes, there is a different problem perception through the IDC, but that does not imply a change of substantial decision-making" (TH3_12).*

Put differently, although discussing openly, people remain captured by their organizational affiliation, because they are clearly expected to represent their department's positions within the IDC (TH1).

7.2.1.3. Decision-making

To understand decision-making procedures in IDCs, its important to acknowledge that they are "*working bodies that cannot take formal decisions*" (TH7). Consequently, everything has to be formally confirmed by the cabinet, as outlined in the respective Joint Rules of Procedure (TH6). Consequently, every output of the IDCs needs to pass the formal co-signature process to adequately prepare the cabinet meeting. Hence, decision-making processes within the IDC are clearly structured by anticipation of veto in the formal cabinet decision, as one interviewee points out:

> *"They need to put their heads together until they have a paper that is then finally agreed upon in the cabinet meeting and every single Minister votes yes […] If only one Minister is not convinced they need to start all over again - maybe when the political landscape is different" (TH4_13).*

Therefore, achieving consensus among departments before entering the formal governmental procedures is considered a main function of the IDC in Thuringia (TH1, TH7):

> *"Its main function is to avoid this situation [a formal veto]. I would say, a IDC missed its purpose if it doesn't deliver a draft that is de-facto ready for a cabinet decision […] If necessary, issues get settled bilaterally outside the meetings" (TH3_14).*

The failed strategy of 2013/2014

However, quite in contrast to this purpose, the capacity to achieve consensus within the IDC reached a limit in early 2014, as already mentioned in the beginning of this case study. Back in December 2012, the cabinet mandated the Minister of Infrastructure to draft a demography strategy with support by the IDC. The project started as quite ambitious. The chair tried to avoid a table of content that would merely mirror the portfolios of departments. Rather, the chair organization drafted a table of contents that was structured according to "*life situations*" (TH2) instead of mirroring portfolio allocation among departments. This way it was tried to keep the strategy relevant even after re-organizations of portfolios after the upcoming elections and to better address interdependence of policies. Furthermore, a questionnaire was send to interest groups asking for their main problems with demographic change. The results were then discussed in the IDC and incorporated in the draft to some extend.

However, during the process of coordinating the demography strategy in 2013, members of the IDC were very well aware to be part of an arena that is not only about tackling demographic change but about power within the Thuringian coalition government. The coordination process ultimately resulted in deadlock and failed to develop a demography strategy in the IDC. However, although it was clear from the beginning that the draft would not pass (TH2), a draft was sent to the formal co-signature process and nearly all departments issued a veto. The explanation for this is that even the chances of approval were zero, the Minister of Infrastructure had to deliver something in order to fulfill the cabinet decision and to avoid political blame (TH2). The failure of the demography strategy is somewhat surprising, because it was mandated by a cabinet decision and therefore politically backed up and expected.

Two factors can be identified within the IDC that structured the decision-making process and ultimately led to coordination deadlock: *departmental interests* at the administrative level and *party politics* at the political level.

Departmental interests and protecting turf

One of the interviewees explains that the first attempt to reach consensus on a demography strategy in winter 2013 failed, because the draft by the Department of Infrastructure was simply invading turf of other departments (TH6):

> *"Everybody, not only SPD departments, said: stop, that's not your business" (TH6_15).*

Especially two things were very controversial (TH2): First, the strategy suggested to establish a central unit in the Department of Infrastructure responsible for coordinating the policy domain "Demographic Change" in Thuringia. Second, a tool of evidence-based policy making, a so-called "demography check" was proposed. The purpose of this tool would have been to check all upcoming drafts and programs whether they adequately address the projections on demographic change, e.g. whether a certain infrastructure would still make sense in a particular region with a shrunk population. The Department of Infrastructure, i.e. the chair organization of the IDC, would have been responsible for checking all future policy initiatives in terms of their demographic impact, providing them with a substantial veto-right.

Furthermore, in contrast to the earlier demography reports "*that were mainly descriptive, the strategy paper had a massive orientation towards the future*" (TH2). This ambition of setting long-term guidelines proved to be a major factor in raising the level of potential conflict among departments, as one interviewee explains:

> *"After describing the situation without much controversy, the interesting part starts with a specific strategy that really affects the departments. That is, when it becomes political and the hidden agenda comes into play [...] That is the actual purpose of the IDC […] I have always said, you [the lead department] can't use this demography strategy to transfer and centralize responsibilities between departments" (TH5_16).*

The coordination process within the IDC was closely observed by the political leadership, i.e. considered important to their political interests. The capacity of the IDC to coordinate on the administrative level quickly reached a limit. One interviewee explained:

> *"We had one meeting that was quite short and we quickly realized that many aspects had to be decided on the political level" (TH3_17).*

The importance of departmentalism and turf protection in the Thuringian case, regardless of party political considerations, is further illustrated by events in the early days of the IDC. Even in times of a single-party CDU-government, compiling the first demography report in 2006 proved to be difficult:

> *"Everybody thinks his department is most important [...] It was hard to keep a balance, although the CDU governed alone at that time […] It was exhausting and took some strength to complete the report […] I can't say this has changed much since 2009 and the coalition government" (TH1_18).*

This underlines the problem of departmentalism and selective perception in coordination between departments, regardless whether they are situated in a single-party government or coalition government.

Party politics in a coalition government

As already mentioned in the contextual information at the beginning of the case study, since 2009 Thuringia is governed by a coalition of CDU and SPD. From 1999-2009 the CDU formed the government alone. We can identify two factors that caused the dominance of a political action orientation structuring decision-making in the Thuringian case:

First, one factor causing the dominance of a political action orientation of the IDC is certainly the pre-election context in 2013, as one interviewee explained:

> *"It's hard to get this done one year before the election, it is getting harder every month" (TH1_19).*

As a result of this political action orientation, the question of which department belongs to which political party became relevant:

> *"To me it is an important meeting, because it's about the political business" (TH6_20).*

The IDC was not only perceived in its role of preparing formal cabinet decisions in a rather informal setting, but as a political arena:

> *"We must not forget: we have a coalition and two parties that are part of it. Responsibility for demographic change lies with a CDU-department and that's the whole problem" (TH5_21).*

Party political action orientation within the IDC can be illustrated by some interesting observations. For example, during IDC meetings, departments belonging to a certain political party sat next to each other (TH6). More importantly, the departments belonging to a political party regularly met to discuss and prepare IDC meetings in advance:

> *"If we knew in advance that an issue would be controversial, we would meet before. How will we proceed together? For example, if there were deadlines that we didn't want to accept we simply said: We are four departments, we can't do it in such a short time, we need to consult our experts, and so on and so forth […] Yes, it's like that. It's important that the SPD-departments are on the same side in this" (TH6_22).*

In turn, the responsible Department of Infrastructure and the State Chancellery - both led by CDU politicians - regularly met to discuss and prepare IDC meetings (TH1, TH5, TH7).

Second, the political nature of the IDC is even strengthened, because the responsible head of division in the Department of Infrastructure is a former politician with a certain reputation:

> *"He [...] was Administrative Manager (Landesgeschäftsführer) of the Thuringian CDU and he has been an experienced election campaigner trough all the years. […] We all know: when he does something it becomes political. Well, I don't blame him - that's part of the game! [...] But: the SPD knows him. Our department's leadership watched him very closely, because if he does something he is never acting only as a head of division - he's engaged in politics for his master [the Prime Minister at that time]" (TH5_23).*

The former position of the Head of Division shaped the perceptions of the IDC's members as being part of something political rather than administrative:

> *"The head of division in the Department of Transport has a remarkable and impressive political vita in Thuringia, but because of that he is perceived in a certain way within his own party and the coalition partner. As a consequence, things are perceived in political categories that may be mere technical problems under other circumstances" (TH3_24).*

Both factors, party political competition and departmentalism changed the real purpose of the IDC, despite its usual function of achieving informal consensus among departments. The IDC became a tool of checks and balances within the coalition:

> *"We just have to watch out, what the CDU-departments want to impose on us SPD-departments. Without the IDC we would miss a corrective" (TH6_25).*

Similarly, another interviewee simply concluded:

> *"The IDC ensures that nobody wins too much" (TH5_26).*

This is obviously the very opposite of what IDC ideal-typically should do. As already mentioned, the coordination process resulted in deadlock and ultimately failed, because many departments issued a veto during the formal co-signature process. The party-political action orientation as well as the pre-election context shaped the coordination process that did not even result in a lowest common denominator.

7.2.1.4. The role of the State Chancellery

It's worthwhile to separately discuss the role of the State Chancellery within the IDC. Although the State Chancellery was not in charge of *Federführung*, it still influenced the coordination process over the years. It seems that this organization is driven by a particular political action orientation, confirming our previous considerations (see 5.3.3.3). Referring to earlier days of the IDC and the drafting of the first report in 2006, an interviewee illustratively explains:

> *"The State Chancellery, even not responsible anymore, wanted us to avoid negative interpretations of data and events. The numbers were in the tables and anybody could see them, but we were asked not to mention this in the text and to avoid too much negative rhetoric […] Demography has always been interpreted negatively, there were just no positive news or messages to tell. It was very clear that they tried to reformulate it in a more soft way. But that is how it is" (TH1_27).*

However, regarding more recent activities in the IDC, the State Chancellery is perceived as a "*passive observer*" (TH2, TH3) or as responsible for "*final inspection*" (TH6) at the end of the coordination process:

> *"They position themselves and express their opinion to every issue at the very end" (TH7_28).*

Still, although not being formally responsible for the coordination process in the IDC and perceived as passive, the State Chancellery has a special role based on its unique capabilities, discussed in section 5.3.3.4. Two of them can be identified in the Thuringian case.

First, interviewees refer to the center of government as being potentially perceived as more neutral during the coordination process:

> *"Of course, if the Department of Infrastructure suddenly feels responsible for social matters, our alarm bells ring - wait a moment, we plan hospitals and doctors, that's*

our job. I could imagine that the State Chancellery would be perceived a bit more neutrally" (TH6_29).

However, this rather neutral role seems to be caused by the government's grand coalition at that time:

"The good thing about coalition governments is: the State Chancellery is mostly quiet. Because it's really more about what serves the coalition partners" (TH5_30).

However, despite its passive role within IDC meetings, behind the scenes, the State Chancellery was engaged in mediating conflict between departments:

"It's always been possible and continuous to be to have trilateral talks with the State Chancellery and the departments outside the IDC if an issue can't be settled" (TH7_31).

Second, quite in contrast, other interviewees points to the potential authority of the State Chancellery within the government, in case it would be responsible for the process:

"One can say that the IDC or the topic as such should be attached to the State Chancellery, simply because there you can take more drastic measures. As a consequence of the cross-cutting nature of demographic change, the topic as such belongs to the State Chancellery […] Maybe it is moved back to the State Chancellery after the election, because one could better politically steer and influence the process from there. A State Chancellery can simply act differently than a line department" (TH1_32).

Another interviewee agrees that demographic change would symbolically increase in importance, if managed by the State Chancellery (TH3).

7.2.2. Coordination output

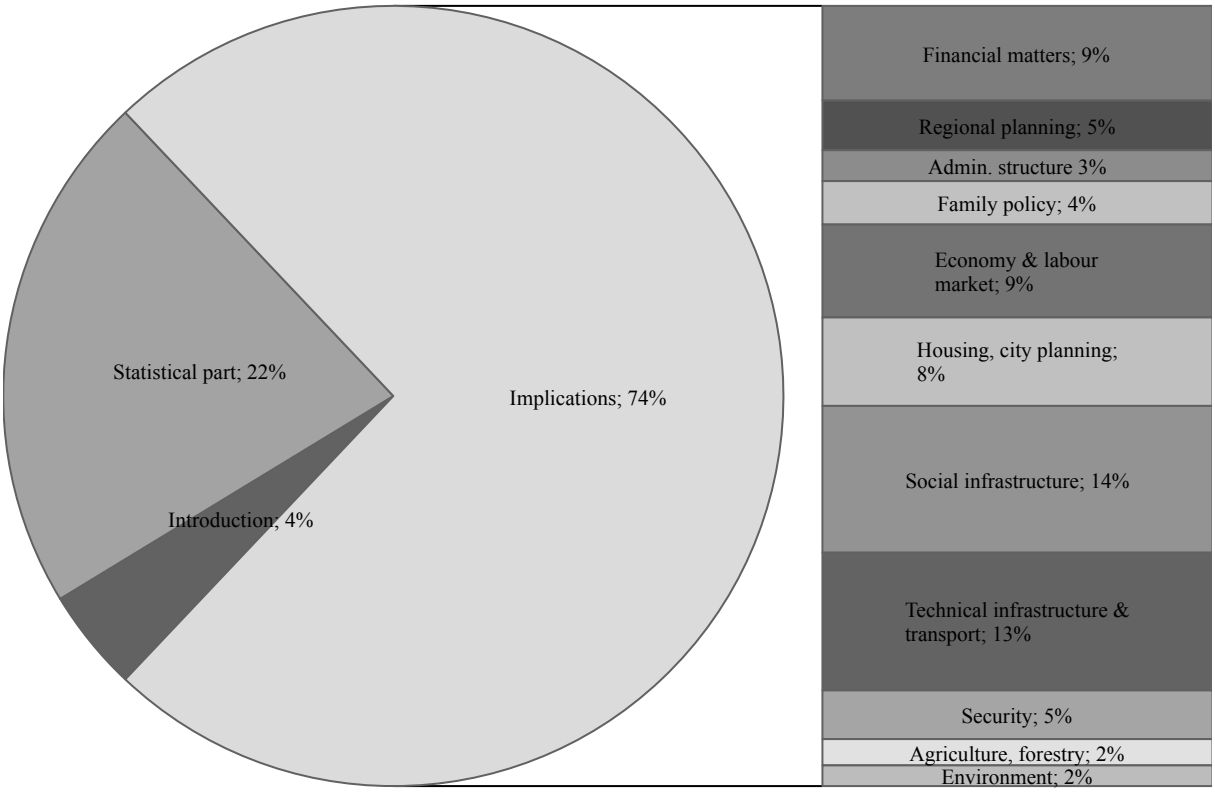
We will now analyze the coordination output of the IDC in Thuringia. As discussed earlier, the IDC did not achieve a result with regard to the demography strategy of 2013/2014. Hence, it cannot be incorporated in our analysis. Therefore, we focus on the reports published in 2006 and 2011/2012 (Thüringer Ministerium für Bau, Landesentwicklung und Verkehr (TMBLV) 2006; 2011; 2012a; 2012b). The strategy of 2013/2014 failed due to its politicized coordination process. In contrast, analysis of the earlier documents of 2006 and 2011/2012 rather illustrates the output that is achieved, if coordination is not politicized and rather works according to "business as usual" in government.

7.2.2.1. First Demography Report (2006)

Without appendices the first report is 129 pages long. Basically, the report is divided into three chapters: an introduction, statistical information illustrating population trends in Thuringia (pp. 7-43) and implications of those populations trends and recommendations for action (pp. 45-129). The report's section on implications for action is further divided into sub-chapters (financial matters, regional planning; administrative structure & municipalities;

family policy; economy & labor market; housing & city planning; social infrastructure; technical infrastructure & transport; security; agriculture & forestry; environment).

Figure 5 Structure of 1. Demography Report Thuringia (2006)



Addressing interdependence

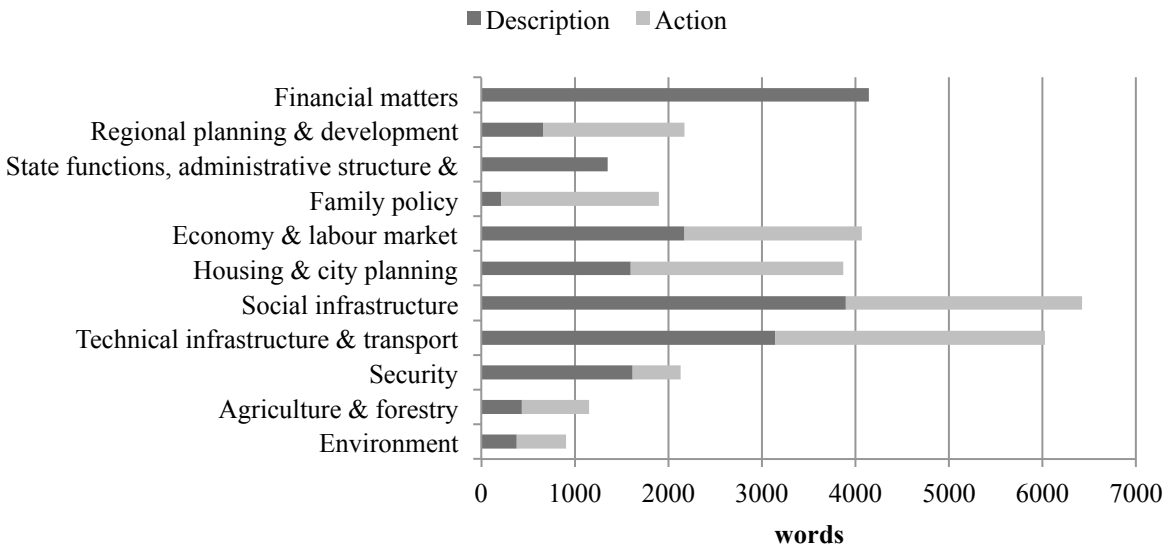
In the report, demographic change is not acknowledged as a cross-cutting issue that demands a coherent or cross-cutting approach. Accordingly, if we look closer at the text, no cross-references to other parts can be found. In other words, the report clearly stays within departmental silos as established through departmental portfolio allocation. In addition, the report does not explicitly outline potential ways for cooperation between departments. This corresponds with the role of the chair organization in the coordination process: it was mainly responsible for procedural aspects without little influence on actual content outside of its own area of responsibility. Consequently, the report resembles a loose collection of departmental contributions that are not interlinked very well and that do not address policy interdependence.

Setting specific goals

Within the chapter on implications, each sub-chapter is divided into two sections: First, description of demographic change and its impact with regard to a specific policy domain (*Situationsbeschreibung*) and, second, possible strategies to adapt to the new demographic

situation (*Anpassungsstrategien*). Figure 6 illustrates the distribution of content spend on descriptive information and programmatic sections for each sub-chapter. In sum, 42 % of the chapter on implications is dedicated to action, while 58 % describe the situation.

Figure 6 Distribution of descriptive vs. programmatic parts, 1. Demography Report Thuringia (2006)



We would expect specific planned projects in the parts that are dedicated to action. However, a closer look at the *Anpassungsstrategien* reveals that we mostly find a collection of projects that are already in action, or rather vague ideas, e.g. "strengthen the economy" (Thüringer Ministerium für Bau, Landesentwicklung und Verkehr (TMBLV) 2011: 70). Hence, the report is rather a bookkeeping of projects that were already planned or were in place. It is therefore questionable, whether the IDC can be regarded as a catalyzer for joint inter-departmental projects. In sum, we don't find specific projects in the Thuringian demography report of 2006.

Implementation mechanisms

The report does not mention implementation mechanisms, as planned projects and possible measures are formulated in a vague way.

Reporting, monitoring & evaluation

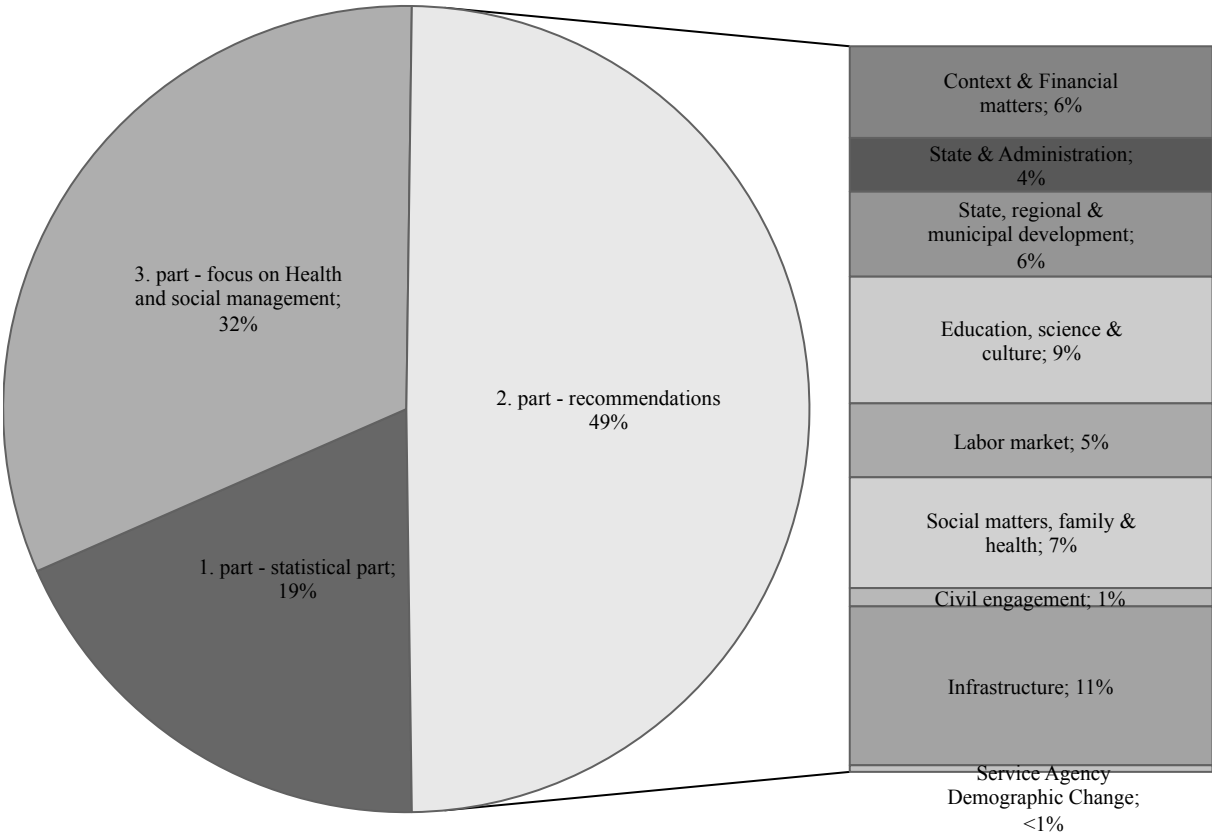
The report does not mention any monitoring or evaluation criteria.

7.2.2.2. Second Demography Report (2011/2012)

The second Thuringian demography report is divided into three parts that were published subsequently: the first part mainly consists of detailed statistical information on population development in Thuringia (61 pages without appendices); the second part focuses on measures to adapt to demographic developments or to even mitigate them (118 pages without

appendices); and the third part focuses on an annual special topic (78 pages without appendices). In comparison to the report of 2006 (129 pages), the reports of 2011/2012 provide more statistical information and more content regarding adaptation matters. In our analysis, we will focus on the second part, because here the IDC was mainly engaged. In contrast, the first part basically compiles statistical information provided by the Thuringian Statistical Office and the third part was mostly prepared by the University of Jena as mandated research. In other words, the IDC was only involved in preparation of the second part. Therefore, both the first and third part do not contribute much to our understanding of IDCs and will be largely left out of the analysis. Figure 7 illustrates the proportional distribution of the three parts.

Figure 7 Structure of 2. Demography Report Thuringia (2011/2012)

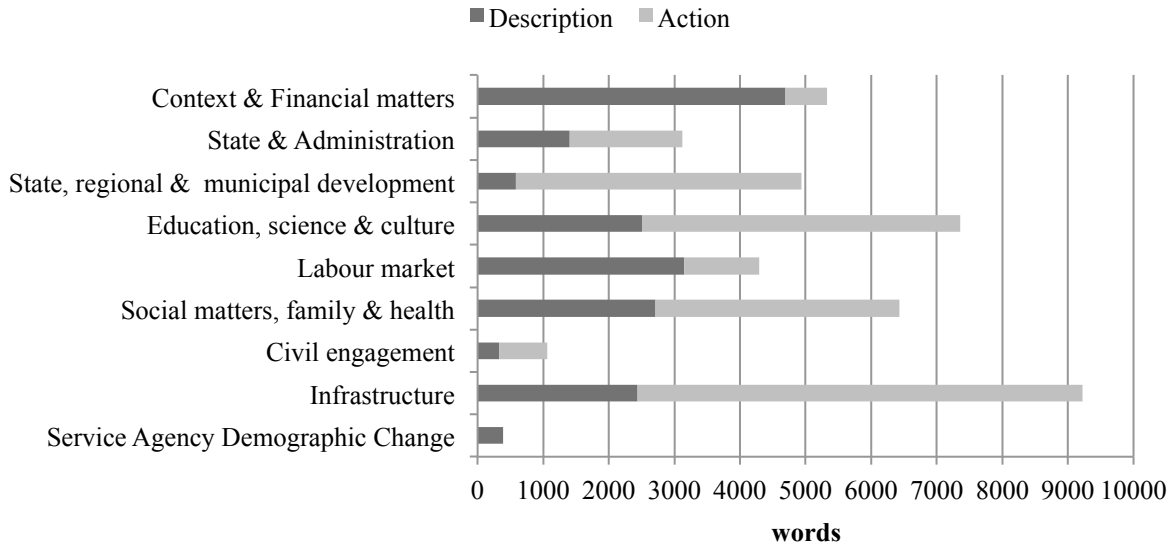


Addressing interdependence

The second report differs from the first one (2006), because - at least at the rhetorical level - the report clearly addresses the cross-cutting nature of demographic change, stating that an inter-departmental approach is required and that party political cleavages need to be overcome and long-term thinking is required (Thüringer Ministerium für Bau, Landesentwicklung und Verkehr (TMBLV) 2011: 7). However, still the report's structure resembles the departmental portfolio allocation (sub-chapters: state & administration; regional planning/municipal planning; education, science & culture; economy & labor; social, family & health; civil engagement; infrastructure. Despite it's cross-cutting ambition, the report is deliberately "*structured in accordance to the departmental principle*" and "*departments are responsible*

for content in their area of competence" (Thüringer Ministerium für Bau, Landesentwicklung und Verkehr (TMBLV) 2012a: 5). This corresponds with the chair organization's role of mostly being in charge of procedural aspects with little influence on substantial content.
Each sub-chapter is divided into specific sections that are structured as follows: a description of the situation (*Ausgangslage*), consequences for the respective topic (*Herausforderungen*), measures already taken (*Erreichtes*) and possibilities to further adapt to the situation (*Handlungsansätze*).
If one compares the amount of text spent on problem description and situation analysis (*Ausgangslage, Herausforderungen and Erreichtes)* to the text spent on outlining adaptation measures (*Handlungsansätze)*, descriptive parts are rather dominant. In sum, 57 % of the chapter is dedicated to action, while 43 % rather describes or analyzes the situation.

Figure 8 Distribution of descriptive vs. programmatic parts, 2. Demography Report Thuringia (2011)



Setting specific goals

Although the report explicitly includes adaptation measures into its structure, it does not formulate specific joint goals that can be regarded as a result of the IDC's work. In accordance with our analysis of the coordination process, interviewees are therefore sceptical whether the IDC's work resulted in "*a big step forward*" (TH5). For example, one interviewee explains very illustratively:

> *"To me, the report is a paper tiger. Of course, it outlines the situation and possibilities to adapt. When we updated the report, we just had a look: What did we write some years ago and what did we actually do? It's not like that we do something because it's written in a report […] It's not like this report triggers political action. It's rather like on the federal level: You just put together what nice things everybody has done and*

what might be on the agenda next. Maybe you already know what you want to do anyway. But all this would also happen without the report" (TH6_33).

In sum, like in the first report (2006), objectives in the programmatic sections of the report mainly remain vague and are formulated in a non-committal language or showcase projects that were already planned or in place ("bookkeeping of projects").

Implementation mechanisms

The report does not mention implementation mechanisms, as planned projects and possible measures are formulated in a vague way.

Reporting, monitoring & evaluation

The report does not mention any monitoring or evaluation. However, constant updates of part one and two were scheduled.

7.2.3. Conclusion

Conclusion of the coordination process

The *role of the chair organization* within the IMAG DC seems to be twofold and resembles elements of positive and negative coordination. The chair provides a first draft of the table of content that is then discussed in the IDC and changed if need be and organizes the meetings and sets the agenda without much contestation. This early discussion of the table of content may already pool expertise of various departments. However, the possibility to influence the actual content towards more coherence seems to be very limited. The chair organization does not interfere with contributions delivered by the departments or actively searches for policy interdependencies that might be addressed, but is mostly engaged in editorial revisions. Hence, we can identify a dominance in procedural aspects, but weak position when it comes to changing actual content of departmental contributions to reports towards a more integrated perspective.

Regarding *information processing* we distinguished a vertical and horizontal dimension. Vertically, IDC delegates coordinate with administrative and political actors in their departments. The former is characterized by a selective perception on one's own area of responsibility and the respective departmental interests, while the latter political coordination is rather shaped by political considerations of the departmental leadership in terms of power within the government coalition. As representing the own department's position in the IDC is perceived as the most important task of every IDC member, anticipating possible conflict and to react adequately is an important skill. Horizontally, discussions between departments are not relevant for substantial policy making. As the chair organization's role is limited to moderating and collecting departmental contributions, inter-organizational discussion of content is not common and rather has the form of information sharing. As a result, there is an exchange of perspectives and, hence, development of a shared problem perspective over time. This might hint at positive coordination, but does in fact not change departmental action, because departments' interests and political considerations are more dominant. Thus, the

process of sharing and discussing information within the IDC largely resembles a middle-position between positive and negative coordination.

In general, *decision-making* within the Thuringian case study is influenced by a shadow of the future, because the formal procedure of co-signature provides a de-facto veto power for every department. This leads to conflict-avoiding behavior, which is a property of negative coordination. Although one would expect a coordination process leading at least to the smallest common denominator based on the anticipation of veto, the latest attempt to draft a demography strategy in 2013 in the IDC resulted in complete deadlock. Departmental interests and party political competition made it impossible to arrive at even a modest result. Turf-protection and departmentalism are indicators of negative coordination. However, the failure to achieve any coordination output is actually even less than negative coordination is usually able to do, because not even a smallest common denominator was agreed upon. This is rather surprising since there was a clear mandate by the cabinet to draft a joint strategy.

Table 19 Coordination process in the Thuringia case

	Description	**Positive vs. negative coordination**
Role of chair	dominance in the procedure (agenda of meetings);	
	limited in terms of content	-+
	undisputed departmental contributions	
Information processing	information sharing without consequences	-+
Decision-making	departmentalism	
	party political competition in pre-election context	-
	deadlock	

Conclusion of coordination output

Both coordination outputs, the demography report of 2006 and 2011/2012, largely resemble the same pattern of negative coordination. In both reports, the table of content and structure follows the departmental principle. Put differently, the report mirrors the sectoral logics of departmental portfolio allocation and is weak in addressing policy interdependencies. In both reports, there are no joint goals formulated and the language of sectoral goals is rather non-committal. In addition, both reports lack implementation plans and monitoring mechanisms.

Table 20 Coordination output in the Thuringia case

	Description	**Positive vs. negative coordination**
Addressing interdependence	reports mirror departmental portfolios	-
Setting specific goals	no joint goals; vague language	-
Implementation mechanisms	none	-
Reporting, monitoring & evaluation	none	-

In conclusion, the Thuringian case study is rather an example of negative coordination. Furthermore, during the coordination process that led to the failed strategy in 2013/2014, the IDC was clearly dominated by a political action orientation that was caused by the pre-election context in 2013. As a result, the IDC's purpose changed to serve as an informal system of checks-and-balances within the coalition government of CDU and SPD.

Secondary output

However, apart from the modest primary coordination output, i.e. the published demography reports, interviewees hint to a secondary output that is not easy to measure but worthwhile to mention:

> *"What happens through an IDC is that people know each other better now. I know, okay this person is in charge of this topic and I know him personally […] This might enhance cooperation at some time […] It's easier to just pick up the phone and start talking if you know each other" (TH5_34).*

Furthermore, the IDC ensures that "*everybody keeps in mind the consequences of demographic change in the own area of responsibility*" (TH5) and that "*demographic processes are seen as problematic by every department nowadays*" (TH4). Finally, the case study revealed a broadened problem perspective by information exchange that is, however, not automatically transferred into more coherent governmental action. However, it might trigger inter-departmental cooperation and projects in the future that are not in the focus of this thesis.

7.3. Case II - Line department - Saxony-Anhalt

Interview data on the coordination process within the IDC in Saxony-Anhalt covers events of a time period from 1992 to 2013, although the main focus will be on recent events from 2010 onwards. Throughout the years, the Prime Minister was a CDU member and a coalition government in different constellations was in power.

Table 21 Governments in Saxony-Anhalt, 2002-2016

Legislative period	Governing parties	Prime Minister
2002-2006	CDU / FDP	Wolfgang Böhmer (CDU)
2006-2011	CDU / SPD	Wolfgang Böhmer (CDU)
2011-2016	CDU / SPD	Reiner Haseloff (CDU)

Establishment

The establishment of the IDC dates back to 1992. In its early days, matters of regional planning and finances were discussed, later demographic change became more and more important (ST1, ST4). However, this was not until the early 2000s:

> *"During the first ten or fifteen years, demographic change was a second-tier topic, because the focus was on economic development. The idea was that the demographic problem would disappear when the economic level would be on par with the Western states" (ST1_1).*

In 2000, a variety of factors made clear that the economic situation was inferior compared to the Western states, causing a "*significant pulling effect*", causing a lot of migration towards Western German states (ST1). Furthermore, in 2002 a new population projection was presented that sketched a rather pessimistic picture:

> *"The projections led to an outcry of the political leadership. As a result, we [the Department of State Development and Transportation] were required by the State Chancellery: Please stop to just describe the development, but tell us what the government could do to avoid these developments" (ST1_2).*

Put differently, these new population projections were the starting point of demographic change as a cross-cutting "*fashion-topic*" (ST2). During that time, there were also considerations to put the State Chancellery in charge of *Federführung* for matters of demographic change by the State Chancellery, but these ideas were stopped by a Minister who insisted to keep the topic within the Department of State Development and Transportation (ST1).

In the IDC's very early days during the 1990s, it was chaired by a head of division. Since 1994 the IDC was managed by its current chair, a head of section (ST1). In the 1990s the main task of the section that chairs the IDC today was spatial monitoring (*Raumbeobachtung*), i.e. the systematic and detailed collection of data as a basis of spatial

and regional planning. Among many other indicators, data on population development was within the section's area of responsibility. After the publication of the aforementioned pessimistic population projection, the section's task shifted from collecting data towards coordination of governmental adaptation and mitigation matters with regard to demographic change. Since 2009, the section that manages the IDC activities is organized as a staff section "Demographic development and projections" that is mostly engaged in coordination (ST4). As a result of its status as a staff section (*Stabstelle*), it is not part of the departmental hierarchy, but reports directly to the State Secretary in a weekly jour fixe of 30 minutes (ST3). In total, the staff section consists of five officials (Landesregierung Sachsen-Anhalt 2013: 17). According to one interviewee, dedicating a staff section to a topic indicates a certain symbolic value and ensures a close contact to the political leadership. On the other hand, it might loose contact to the specialized sections and their expertise within the own department over time making efficient coordination more difficult to achieve (ST4).

Staff composition

Departments mostly delegate head of sections (*Referatsleiter*) and officials (*Referenten*) to IDC meetings, i.e. middle-management ranks. However, temporarily even clerks (*Sachbearbeiter*) were sent to the IDC (ST1).

The delegates are mostly part of policy units (*Grundsatzreferate*), which ensures that delegates have a broad overview over their departments activities and portfolio. It is perceived as absolutely vital that IDC members have an established network within their department and know their department's and leadership's basic positions and topics by heart to adequately represents the respective interests in the IDC (ST3).

Depending on the topic, up to three people represent a department, if the topic on the agenda is considered important enough. Furthermore, external guests, e.g. the Statistical Office, were invited to some meetings to provide input for discussions (ST3).

There is little change in the composition of the IDC members - one interviewee was even part of the IDC since 1992 (ST2, ST4). Stability of the participants composition is seen as a major factor for effective and efficient work in the IDC:

> *"If new people join the IDC, they need to get a sense of the IDC's way of working. What can the IDC do? What do I need to do, what do I need to coordinate with my department? Which deadlines are realistic and how does business as usual work? How am I perceived in my department as member of the IDC? What kind of pressure can I build up on my fellow colleagues? Can I meet deadlines or is everything slipping through my hands? What kind of quality do our contribution to the IDC need to have, or can I just provide some nonsense? All this belongs to the internal dynamics of an IDC. If there is too much exchange of members, it can really become a problem" (ST3_3).*

7.3.1. Coordination process

As outlined earlier, the IDC in Saxony-Anhalt produced three inter-departmental outputs related to demographic change. The first paper ("*Handlungskonzept*") was published in 2005

and updated in 2006 and 2007. In 2011 this paper was substantially revised and republished. In 2013, upon request of the parliament, a more descriptive demography report was drafted. In this thesis we will focus on the report of 2011 (Ministerium für Landesentwicklung und Verkehr des Landes Sachsen-Anhalt (MLV) 2011), because interviewee mostly referred to this report in their reflections.

7.3.1.1. Role of chair

Structuring the coordination process

In general, the coordination process needs to respect the life cycle of a government, i.e. the legislative period. However, elections and resulting party-political struggle do not seem to affect the coordination process within the IDC very much:

> *"In the parliament, there is the discontinuity[37] principle, but not within the government […] This means I foremost need a cabinet order, regardless of the legislative period. If the government changes only slightly, it does not affect me at all" (ST3_4).*

There is no fixed schedule for IDC meetings (ST1, ST2). Usually, a meeting is hold twice a year, although during the late stages of drafting a demography report, meetings be will be held more often, e.g. quarterly (ST3). In the meantime, information is constantly exchanged using email. The chair organization sets the agenda of a meeting and sends around invitations two weeks in advance. Departments can put own suggestions for topics on the agenda, but this happens very rarely (ST1, ST2, ST4).

Three roles of the chair organization

During compilation of reports, the chair organization fulfills several distinct roles.
First of all, he perceives himself as a moderator:

> *"The IDC reveals departmental positions and it is my job to […] find the smallest common denominator and, moreover, to try to find possibilities of overcoming the smallest denominator and search for a better compromise" (ST3_5).*

Second, the chair organization acknowledges his role as a policy integrator of departmental positions into a coherent strategy:

> *"I want a paper without contradictions […] The action plans we collect should complement each other and provide a complete picture with a golden thread. That's my job, too" (ST3_6).*

This role seems to be especially important, since the Demography Strategy in Saxony-Anhalt tries to overcome the departmental principle by featuring a cross-cutting outline:

> *"For example, consider broadband internet. We all know, there still many white areas on the map […] There is the State Chancellery and two or three other departments*

[37] Legislative acts not completed at the end of a legislative period lapse automatically. The formal process has then to start from the very beginning.

that are concerned with this topic. Of course, every department tries to present its topics and I have to condense it to one claim. That is not easy" (ST3_7).

Finally, the chair wants to make sure that the resulting strategy paper balances the positions within the government:

"I can't explain one topic in detail, while another department delivers three sentences, because nobody there wrote anything about it. In such cases I have to shorten text or tell them to deliver some more specific text" (ST3_8).

To fulfill all the aforementioned roles and make the IDC effective in coordination, the chair organization points to the crucial role of trust among the participants:

"If my colleagues wouldn't trust me or would believe that I plot against them, we would not accomplish anything. They wouldn't even come to the meetings, you know. Ultimately, an IDC depends on the goodwill of all participants and a certain trust among each other. Without trust the IDC could handle some formalities, but not achieve coordination. All the things necessary to condense and qualify the report would be impossible, then" (ST3_9).

Compiling the reports

While drafting a demography strategy within the IDC, the chair organization is responsible for presenting a first proposal of the outline, which is then discussed and changed accordingly within the IDC (ST3). The chair organization has a more or less clear vision of the aspired coordination output:

"Of course, one has a certain idea of the product. The draft should not be 200 pages, because nobody will read that much […] Let's say, I calculate with 50 pages, that is then an orientation for the departments. They'll understand not to send me long novels […] So, what did we do so far, what are we doing right now, what is our goal? […] The departments had much freedom, but I also took my freedom as I advised them to be more illustrative or more concise, and so on. That's my coordinating and steering function" (ST1_10).

As we discussed earlier, the chair of the IDC perceives himself as a moderator, but also as an integrator of departmental contributions into a coherent governmental strategy. As the newer demography reports try to overcome a structure that merely resembles the departmental portfolio allocation, integration of departmental contributions becomes crucial, because several departmental contributions need to be put into relation to each other. Consequently, contributions to a demography report may be changed or condensed by the chair organization. However, in practice, this turned out to be clearly limited. In the following, we will discuss the chair's approach to steer the compilation of the strategy within the IDC. In general, the possibility to steer the coordination process and to influence departmental contributions is clearly restricted by the departmental principle:

"In general I have to accept what the departments deliver" (ST3_11).

On the other hand, the chair organizations claims the right to be an active part in putting different pieces delivered by departments together:

> *"I have a look whether facts are up-to-date or whether ten pages ahead a different department claims something different. I need to take care of coherence and the golden thread […] It's my job during the coordination process to hint at contradictions" (ST3_12).*

Moreover, the chair organization is also engaged in editorial revision of content delivered by departments:

> *"You get contributions of different quality that we put back together to produce the paper […] Sometimes there are three pages of text without substance […] In those cases, I tell my people: shorten the text without deleting the core or the political message, just condense it. Sometimes, departments send me passages from speeches of their ministers and think they can deliver something like that. They can, but I don't have to accept it […] Mostly, it's okay for them. Very rarely does somebody insist on a specific formulation" (ST3_13).*

On the other hand, however, despite possible editorial changes, the substantial policy content clearly remains in the realm of the departments:

> *"You know, we go to the meetings and have a look what might be relevant for us […] If we decide not to write anything on family friendliness, we simply don't do it […] If that's not accepted, the State Secretaries need to talk about it […] But there is little escalation, the topic is not worth it" (ST4_14).*

In sum, the chair engages in editorial revisions, but influence on substantial content is much more contested and clearly limited by the departmental principle.

<u>Putting pressure on departments?</u>

As the chair organization is not a hierarchical superior to the other departments and the departmental principle grants considerable autonomy to each department, the chair organization's general possibility to put pressure on departments is very limited. However, formal hierarchical competences are not the only means one may think of. The case study reveals two strategies how the chair organization tries to influence the coordination process despite its restricted formal hierarchical rights.

First, an interesting possibility to leverage coordination is based on peer pressure and reputation:

> *"You know, people tell me that their colleagues are ill, that they are so busy, they are on vacation or that it's Christmas - all those weasel words […] They work were the pressure is highest, so I have to put some pressure on them to get anything done in time […] I know my usual suspects that I have to blame during a meeting […] I can put some modest pressure on people: you're the only that didn't deliver, yet. It's not good for the individual reputation, nor the department's reputation. That's my strongest form of pressure […] These are ordinary people - they don't want to look*

like fools or being perceived as lazy. They want to have a good standing among their colleagues […] Of course, I have to dose blame carefully. If I do it too often, they might not show up again […] If I say that we had to extend the deadline again and who did not deliver, yet - it's unpleasant for everybody. I have to dose it carefully, but sometimes blame is the only possible way to keep the process running […] On the other hand, if I speak in high terms about a department during an IDC meeting and say 'Thank you!', it's music in their ears, of course" (ST3_15).

However, it is not easy to assess how pressure by the chair organization is interpreted by the respective departments and how it actually influences their behavior. In contrast to the chair organization, who is rather optimistic regarding the potential of putting pressure on delegates, one interviewee explains with regard to meeting deadlines:

"I don't let myself get strong-armed, because it just needs time. I told you, our department has ten sections that need to deliver their parts" (ST4_16).

Next to rhetorical pressure, the chair organization tries to establish "*strategic alliances*" (ST3) with individual actors in the IDC. An important ally in this regard is the State Chancellery:

"Throughout the years there was somebody from the State Chancellery with whom I talked about the topics of the next meeting bilaterally […] And sometimes he agreed to address certain points during a meeting - so, we passed the ball to each other […] I need to know where persons are with whom I can play the game indirectly, where I can establish strategic alliances and can convince them that cooperation will be beneficial for them, too" (ST3_17).

7.3.1.2. Information processing

We will discuss information processing within the IDC in Saxony-Anhalt from a vertical and horizontal perspective.

<u>The vertical dimension</u>

Delegates are clearly expected to represent their departments' position within the IDC and that is accepted as appropriate behavior without controversy (ST1, ST2, ST3, ST4).

Regarding intra-departmental preparation of meetings in Saxony-Anhalt, coordination mostly happens with the administrative levels of the department. Delegates of the IDC function as an interface between the line departments and the IDC. As such, they are mostly engaged in editorial revisions of the content delivered by their experts (ST2, ST4).

However, a focus on intra-departmental coordination with the administrative level does not automatically imply that understanding the leadership's political preferences is irrelevant. Quite in contrast, adequate anticipation is crucial:

"You need to reflect and anticipate what the leadership thinks regarding certain questions […] Nobody who wants to make a career can ignore this. However, it's not

in the focus in my IDC […] Often, political preferences are only communicated through the media. Hence, I need to reflect: what do my superiors say in public. Mostly, that's more important than internal orders […] I should certainly not contradict a speech my Minister just gave at a party convention" (ST3_18).

For the chair organization, another possibility to get input regarding political preferences is the weekly jour-fixe with the State Secretary (ST3). This rather unusual regular direct communication with the leadership is caused by the chair section's organizational design as a staff section that directly reports to the State Secretary.

The horizontal dimension

During meetings, there are open discussions among bureaucrats that enhance mutual understanding of demographic change from different perspectives. However, these mutual discussions do not become relevant for actual decision-making that is clearly focused one's own departmental remit and turf (ST2). This selective perception on departmental positions is confirmed by the chair organization:

"The IDC is certainly not a think-tank […] It's only a coordination body. A think tank would require free spirits and not colleagues who are very constraint by their circumstances. They need to represent their department's interests, they need to consider financial matters, they just censor themselves" (ST3_19).

Likewise, another interviewee also perceives the IDC's main function not as "*advising the government*", but rather to efficiently prepare cabinet decisions and fulfill cabinet orders (ST2). In the chair organization's perspective, the IDC is a useful tool to arrive at decisions with low transactions costs:

"It's a question of efficiency. Bilateral meetings need two hours per meeting, not including the time for preparation - in total, easily three hours. In the IDC I have everybody gathered around in two hours" (ST1_20).

Furthermore, the IDC is seen as a useful device to get the departments to inform each other on their particular positions without much effort needed:

"Everything that a department says might have implication for another department. Bilaterally, it would be an extremely complicated coordination process. I bypass this by concentrating everything within the IDC" (ST3_21).

7.3.1.3. Decision-making

As cabinets usually do not vote, but rather ratify proposals prepared by the bureaucracy in a consensual manner, each Minister has a de-facto veto right. Hence, IDC delegates need to adequately ensure flows of information between the IDC and the department in order to avoid unforeseen problems during the later stages of the co-signature process. For the chair organization this is absolutely important:

"If we send the draft for the cabinet decision around, I don't want this to be up in the air for months, because somebody forgot to involve his fellow colleagues" (ST1_22).

This possibility of a veto during the governmental administrative coordination process is seen a legitimate last resort in case one could not adequately represent one's own departmental position within the IDC (ST2). As a result, from the chair organizations perspective, avoiding the veto of a Minister is a crucial condition of success and a main frame of orientation (ST3), which we defined as a property of negative coordination.

The concept of positive coordination in decision-making would require active participation by departments with a problem-solving mindset. However, in the IDC under study this is not evident. Rather, we find that a major factor hindering more engaged participation in information exchange and coordination among departments seems to be unclear accountability for the coordination output, because individual departments' contributions are not clearly attributed to the respective organization, which is perceived as problematic:

"Our department's portfolio concentrates a lot of topics and responsibilities related to demographic change […] We could nearly write the demography strategy alone. So, we contribute a lot to the strategy […] It really bothers me, because we are not the lead department and others sell our content as their own, because they are the lead department […] In the end, there will be a title page that says: Responsible: the IDC, chair organization: Department of State Development and Transportation - not us" (ST4_23).

It's plausible to think that the problem of blurred accountability will cause the more trouble the more content needs to be delivered by a single department, because then the perceived mismatch between effort spent and credits gained becomes even bigger.

7.3.1.4. The role of the State Chancellery

We shall briefly discuss the role of the State Chancellery within the IDC in Saxony-Anhalt. In general, the State Chancellery seems to focus on political considerations (ST1) regarding demographic strategies and "*what impresses the Prime Minister"* (ST2). Furthermore, the State Chancellery was described as a sporadic strategic partner of the chair organization (ST3).

As already mentioned, nearly a decade ago there were considerations to move the responsibility for demographic change to the State Chancellery. These plans were then stopped by the respective Minister, who wanted to keep the topic in his portfolio. The interviewees assess the possibility for the State Chancellery to more effectively steer the coordination process in an ambivalent way (ST3, ST4). One the one hand, a State Chancellery might have authority among departments. On the other hand might the State Chancellery be perceived as too dominant and therefore alienate the other departments, making cooperation less likely in the end (ST3).

In the chair's perspective, the capacity to coordinate better and achieve coherence is not so much based on mere organizational affiliation to the State Chancellery or the line department, but needs to be backed up by the willingness of the own superior to engage in conflict:

> *"It depends whether my superior is interested in the topic and whether he his willing to fight for it against others […] I need someone who takes ownership of the topic and says: that's important, I will address it in the State Secretaries' meeting […] But this depends on my State Secretary's priorities" (ST3_24).*

This illustrates that, in general, the State Chancellery's authority does not automatically get transferred to low-ranked officials during inter-departmental coordination. Rather, without plausible hierarchical backup, the State Chancellery delegate might as well be perceived as a lame duck without much potential of steering.
Furthermore, regarding the idea of better coordination through State Chancelleries, one interviewee points to the problematic relationship between a coordinative function and access to necessary specialized expertise:

> *"One could attach responsibility for political coordination to the State Chancellery and keep the responsibility for information and data processing in a line department. Some German states do it this way […] However, this requires additional coordination. In my opinion, political steering and political goals follow from the data - empirical data and political practice belong together […] If I separate these two it becomes a very politicized topic in the State Chancellery and the others are the data-guys. If they understand each other well it might work, otherwise there will be new problems" (ST1_25).*

From this perspective, coordination of cross-cutting issues might only be improved by the center of government, if the State Chancellery also has the responsibility over a substantial source of relevant expertise.

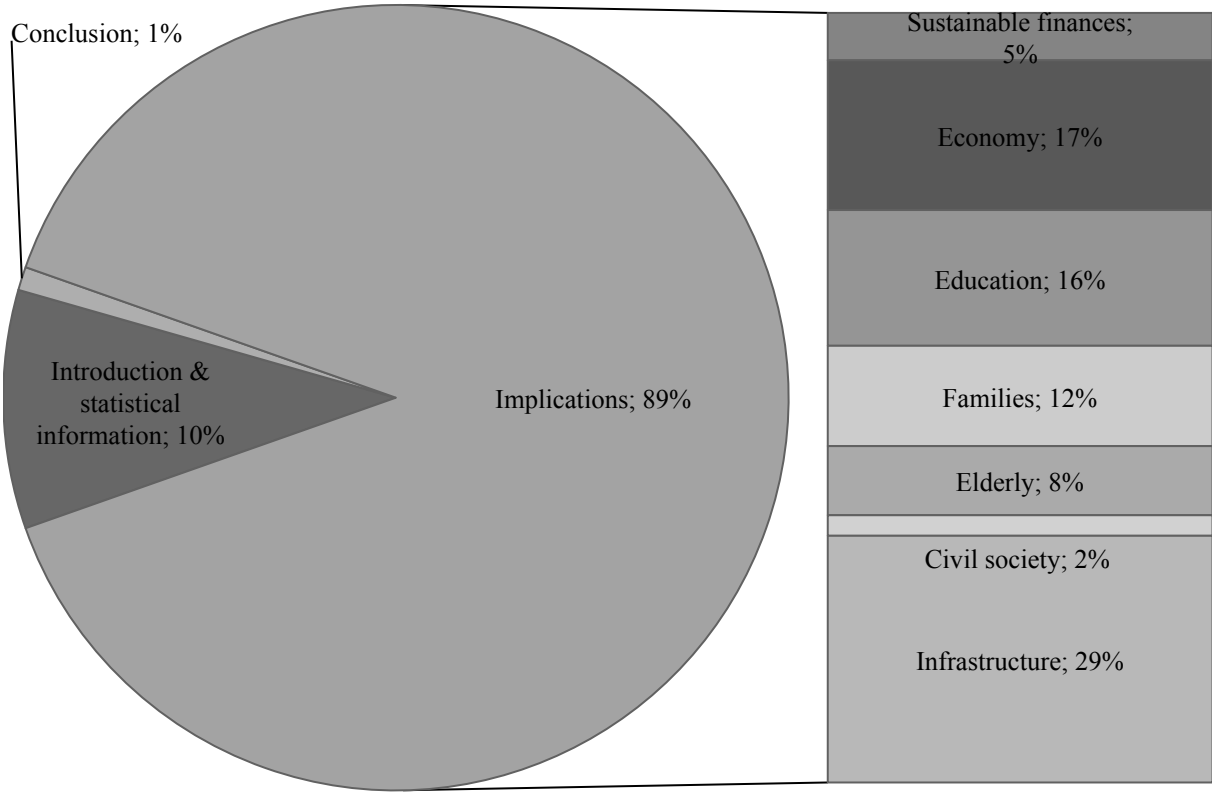
7.3.2. Coordination output

As outlined earlier, the analysis focused on the process that resulted in the report of 2011 (Ministerium für Landesentwicklung und Verkehr des Landes Sachsen-Anhalt (MLV) 2011). Accordingly, our analysis of the coordination output will focus on the respective report.

7.3.2.1. Action plan (Handlungskonzept) (2011)

The report is called "Action plan for sustainable population policy in Saxony-Anhalt" (STX_26) and encompasses 113 pages. Basically, three chapters can be found: an introduction with some statistical information (pp. 3-15), a part outlining developments and implications for policy domains (pp. 16-112) and a conclusion (p. 113).

Figure 9 Structure of Action plan Saxony-Anhalt (2011)



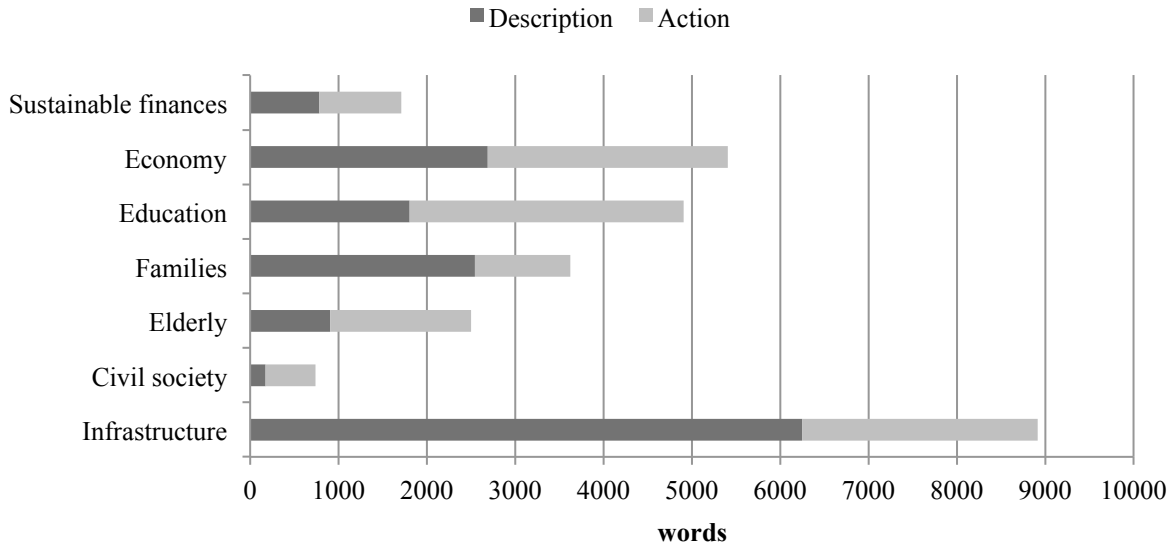
Addressing interdependence

The structure of the action plan follows a cross-cutting approach that aims to overcome rigid departmental silos. On a rhetorical level, it certainly aims to address policy interdependence:

> *"The action plan illustrates, how policy domains - regardless of actual departmental responsibilities - interlock with each other […] regarding an answer to problems of population decrease and the changing population structure in Saxony-Anhalt"* (Ministerium für Landesentwicklung und Verkehr des Landes Sachsen-Anhalt (MLV) 2011: 5) *(STX_27).*

However, despite its promise, the reports does not illustrate how policy domains interlock in a systematic way. Rather, the report features seven thematic clusters whose distribution within the report is illustrated in Figure 10. These thematic clusters are further divided by sub-headings.

Figure 10 Distribution of descriptive vs. programmatic parts, Action plan Saxony-Anhalt (2011)



Setting specific goals

The structure of each thematic cluster is largely similar. First, the situation is described and then possible ways to adapt and mitigate are sketched. In total, 54 % is spend on situation description and 46 % sketches ways to adapt and mitigate. However, the IDC's demography strategy does not formulate specific goals that can be seen as the result of joint inter-departmental work. The report rather resembles bookkeeping of projects that were already planned or are in place anyway. In accordance with this finding, an interviewee commented that the action plan is rather oriented towards the public as a way to demonstrate governmental activity vis-a-vis the public (ST2). Similarly, the chair organization reports the usual hesitation of delegates to be specific about future action:

> *"Colleagues from the departments struggle with being specific about planned action. They write a lot about stuff that happened in the past. We spoke about this for a long time in the IDC. Of course they agree to look forward, but it's difficult to implement it" (ST3_28).*

This is confirmed by a comment of one interviewee that is related to the problem of blurred accountability in IDCs discussed earlier:

> *"The chair told us: Please concentrate your contributions on goals and perspectives for the future. Why should I provide goals and perspectives to others?" (ST4_29).*

As a consequence, the action plan's possibilities with regard to specific goals seems to be limited. Rather, it aims at providing a broad frame of orientation, without clear ambitions for implementation:

> *"The action plan's message is: The challenges can be mastered, if the government and all other actors react in time and take the necessary measures. Towards this end, this action plan provides a basic orientation and presents need for action and "construction sites" in the near future that need to be specified by the respective specialists"* (Ministerium für Landesentwicklung und Verkehr des Landes Sachsen-Anhalt (MLV) 2011: 113) *(STX_30).*

Implementation mechanisms

There are no implementation mechanisms.

Reporting, monitoring & evaluation

There are no formal indicators for evaluating the action plan (ST2). According to one interviewee, this has to do with the character of demographic change as a long-term problem:

> *"In 2003, when we started with the first concept, we really wanted to measure progress annually […] But it's just not practicable. After one year, you can't seriously measure the economic development. Of course, colleagues can report what projects they did and how much money they've spend, but that is not the long-term answer to demographic change" (ST1).*

Indeed, demographic change is a long-term problem. But exactly this would make indicators of some sort rather useful, to meaningfully gather knowledge whether certain policies work in the long run.

7.3.3. Conclusion

Conclusion of the coordination process

The *role of the chair organization* reveals elements of negative and positive coordination. We can identify a dominance in procedural terms, i.e. setting the schedule and agenda of meetings. However, influence on substantial content seems to be limited. The chair organization is responsible for editorial revisions and hints at contradictions and furthermore advises departments to revise their contributions to a draft. In addition, the chair organization tries to integrate various departmental contributions under a specific cross-cutting topic . This provides the chance to focus the expertise of several departments on one specific topic from a variety of perspectives. Despite the chair's ambition to achieve coherence and a good balance in the reports, the actual capacity to influence substantial content is limited and depends on good-will of the respective department. However, since the newer reports produced by the IDC feature a cross-cutting table of content, a certain integrative function of the chair organization is necessary. Furthermore, the case study also revealed tools of soft-power used by the chair organization, e.g. to blame officials during a meeting in case they did not meet a deadline. However, this kind of behavior certainly requires an exceptional standing and authority of the chair organization, considering the equal rank of all participating departments. This is even more so, because the chair was affiliated to a line department and therefore lacks the reputation bonus of the State Chancellery.

Party political consideration were not considered very important in the case of Saxony-Anhalt. The IDC was clearly perceived as a committee of officials with an administrative action orientation (ST1, ST2, ST3, ST4). Hence, regarding *information processing* we find that vertically, delegates mostly coordinate with the administrative level, i.e. specialized experts in their respective departments. However, this does not imply that political considerations were irrelevant. Political preferences of Ministers are not actively communicated and coordinated within the departmental hierarchy, but rather anticipated through various indirect channels, i.e. media and Minister speeches. In terms of horizontal information, there is information exchange and discussion among bureaucrats within the IDC that ultimately leads to learning and an exchange of perspectives. However, these discussions remain without implications for actual decision-making, because delegates are clearly expected to represent and defend their departments' interests. In conclusion, information processing resembles negative and positive coordination.
Finally, regarding *decision-making* in the IDC, two aspects became evident. First, the possibility of a veto by each department during the formal governmental coordination process is anticipated by the chair organization and participants within the IDC. Furthermore, the unclear accountability for the IDC's result limits delegates' willingness to actively participate in the IDC - the own department clearly stays as the most important frame of reference. Hence, the decision-making processes within the IDC resembles negative coordination.

Table 22 Coordination process in the Saxony-Anhalt case

	Description	**Positive vs. negative coordination**
Role of chair	dominant in procedural terms influence in editorial revisions little influence on actual content soft-power (e.g. blaming)	-+
Information processing	revision of departmental contributions by the chair mutual learning without consequences	-+
Decision-making	anticipation of veto blurred accountability problematic	-

Conclusion of coordination output

The action plan on demographic change in Saxony-Anhalt largely resembles negative coordination. The coordination output features a cross-cutting table of content - but fails to address interdependencies in a more qualified way. The report does not include formal goals that can be regarded as a result of the IDCs work. Furthermore, no implementation plan or monitoring system is part of the action plan. Hence, the report's ambition is rather modest.

Table 23 Coordination output in the Saxony-Anhalt case

	Description	**Positive vs. negative coordination**
Addressing interdependence	report has cross-cutting table of content	-
Setting specific goals	no joint goals; vague language	-
Implementation mechanisms	none	-
Reporting, monitoring & evaluation	none	-

In conclusion, the case study of Saxony-Anhalt is an example of negative coordination.

7.4. Case III - State Chancellery - Brandenburg

Interview data on the coordination process in Brandenburg covers events from the early 2000s to 2011, although the focus is on the early to mid 2000s. During the entire time, the Prime Minister was a member of the SPD and a coalition government was in power.

Table 24 Governments in Brandenburg, 1999-2014

Legislative period	Governing parties	Prime Minister
1999-2004	SPD / CDU	Manfred Stolpe (SPD); since June 2002 Matthias Platzeck (SPD)
2004-2009	SPD / CDU	Matthias Platzeck
2009-2014	SPD / Left Party	Matthias Platzeck; since August 2013 Dietmar Woidke

Establishment

Until the early 2000s, demographic change was a rather unwanted topic in Brandenburg, because there were simply no good stories to tell from a politician's view. Demographic change was not a topic compatible to a political action orientation and did not meet the requirements of media democracies. One of the interviewees was engaged in research on demographic change in a subordinated agency in the late 1990s. According to him, the topic was deliberately ignored by ignored by politicians:

> *"In Brandenburg, there was an ‚ukase'[38] not to talk about the issue. It simply wasn't a topic that one could do politics with. Politicians didn't like it, because it's a negative subject. Less people, demise - there are simply no red ribbons to cut. That's why the topic wasn't appreciated by politicians" (BB5_1).*

In the early 2000s, this attitude towards demographic change changed. The nucleus of political attention towards demographic change is to be found in the State Chancellery, when Prime Minister Stolpe (1990-2002) and Head of State Chancellery Speer (1999-2004) got increasingly engaged in demographic change as political entrepreneurs. In 2002, Prime Minister Stolpe requested a short paper on said topic by the future head of the IDC, who was a head of section back then. This is seen as the seed from which the topic grew within the State Chancellery (BB3). In addition, Speer pushed the topic onto the political agenda:

> *"Speer understood that demographic change has implications: less money, less people. He communicated that we need to prioritize, because we can't adequately finance everything. It was really important that he insisted: enough is enough, we need to talk about the topic" (BB5_2).*

In 2003, after Matthias Platzeck had become Prime Minister, an internal project group on demographic change was established in the State Chancellery:

[38] Originally, this term described orders that came directly from the Russian Tsar.

"[Prime Minister Platzeck] asked if I wanted to continue to work on the topic. I did something rather risky in front of a Prime Minister: I formulated conditions. I said yes, but I don't do it as a part-time job. As a result, he founded a project group. Speer [Head of the State Chancellery] came to me and told me that they'd decided to establish a project group on demographic change and that the Prime Minister had told Minister Birthler: 'You, Wolfgang, will give me two officials'. Speer said I could choose whomever I wanted […] And that's how we started" (BB3_3).

Parallel to establishing the internal project group that consisted of the head, three officials and a clerk (BB3), an IDC was founded by cabinet decree that had the task to draft a first demography report (BB2, BB4, BB6).

Staff composition

Staff composition was not regulated within the cabinet decree that established the IDC. Hence, departments decided independently whom to delegate to the working group, often depending on the respective department and how much importance it attributed to the IDC and its task (BB3). Despite being chaired by the State Chancellery and politically supported, in the early days it was not always easy to mobilize adequate delegates from the departments:

"There were some difficulties to ensure a high ranked composition of the IDC. Some departments sent clerks […] We had to tell them: ‚Guys, please send us people that can actually decide anything' […] I urged them to send heads of section or at least officials" (BB3_4).

During the years, the IDC was staffed with heads of section (*Referatsleiter*) or officials (*Referenten*). Higher-ranked heads of division only participated in exceptional cases:

"[Heads of division] only came when they were afraid that their people would tell me too much" (BB3_5).

In total, the chair perceives middle-ranked heads of section as an adequate cast for the rather expertise oriented IDC:

"[…] Heads of section are the highest-ranked experts in departments. They still need to know their topic by heart. Heads of division are further away from policy work" (BB3_6).

Delegates were mostly sent from policy units (*Grundsatzreferate*), which ensured an overview over the respective department's portfolio. One delegate was even delegated to six IDCs at the same time and functioned as the central hub for cross-cutting policy issues in his department, i.e. demographic change, sustainability or gender mainstreaming (BB6). Over the years, the composition of delegates was stable with little exchange of individual bureaucrats (BB4, BB5, BB6).

Within the IDC, not all delegates were equally interested in participating. According to the interviewees there were clear differences regarding the ambition and motivation of the IDC's staff in Brandenburg (BB5, BB6):

"The first type is active and interested […] because there is a certain interest that own topics are represented in the reports […] Second, there are people, who just sit there silently and never contribute anything voluntarily […] The third type has the order to avoid any homework for their department, because the topic is not wanted there" (BB6_7).

7.4.1. Coordination process

So far, the IDC produced three reports (State Chancellery Brandenburg 2004; 2005a; 2011). In our analysis, we will focus on the coordination process that resulted in the first two reports, because interviewees mostly reflected on the early days of the IDC.

7.4.1.1. Role of chair

State Chancelleries as better coordinators?

Being part of the State Chancellery is seen as a clear advantage for the chair by all interviewees with regard to steering inter-departmental coordination (BB1, BB2, BB3, BB4, BB5, BB6). Reasons for that are manifold and resemble two capacities of State Chancelleries that we discussed in section 5.3.3.4.

First, interviewees refer to the authority of the Prime Minister and, hence, State Chancellery and its officials. According to this perspective, the Chancellery's authority makes it possible to change the processes within government that are usually based on the department principle and departmental autonomy, because the State Chancellery "*can't be just ignored*" (BB1):

"It's much easier as a State Chancellery representative. If a department requests information and sets a deadline for a text block, the other departments will say: ‚That's so nice of you! I will do it, if I find some time'. But if I would tell them, after one week of delay I would have the Prime Minister's clearance to write a letter to the respective Minister - that's a different story. I never had that clearance, but would have received it, if necessary" (BB3_8).

Although this sounds very straightforward, other interviewees explain the State Chancellery's more subtle style of influencing line departments. This underlines the rather discreet leading role of the State Chancellery, which is by no means based on direct confrontation, but departments' anticipation of future conflict:

"You don't threaten the departments with the Prime Minister, you have him behind you. Everybody knows it" (BB2_9).

Accordingly, another interviewee explains that being to offensive towards the other line departments might be disadvantageous, because it would lower the standing among the colleagues:

"If the head of section would have been stuck in a conflict and would have started to threaten us weirdly - he would have damaged his reputation remarkably. It just works differently" (BB5_10).

This illustrates the importance of appropriate behavior during coordination and that a successful chair of an IDC needs to know the informal rules of the game.

As outlined in section 5.3.3.4, authority of State Chancellery delegates in IDCs needs to be backed up by the Prime Minister or the Head of the State Chancellery, i.e. high-ranked figures. For example, the chair of the IDC could try to persuade the Head of the State Chancellery to address a certain topic in the weekly State Secretaries' meeting or by bilateral talks (BB5). However, this seems to be rather exceptional and limited to unresolved conflict. Next to occasional management of conflict by high-ranked bureaucrats, the State Chancellery's authority is clearly based on the Prime Minister's constant and visible personal commitment to the topic:

"The State Chancellery was the main driver of demographic policies in Brandenburg, because the topic was supported by the Prime Minister […] He focused on the topic since 2003. He was serious and pushed it and brought the topic on track, held speeches - also in the parliament. Brandenburg had a strong lead in the topic back then" (BB6_11).

The Prime Minister's support can be further illustrated by two closed cabinet conclaves (*Kabinettsklausur*) on demographic change in 2003. Such meetings signal commitment of the Prime Minister and therefore enhance the authority of the State Chancellery vis-a-vis the line departments.

Next to the Prime Minister's authority, from a more functional perspective, the State Chancellery's broad overview over governmental activities is seen as a clear advantage for coordinating cross-cutting topics, because the State Chancellery is not bound to a specific departmental perspective on the topic of demographic change (BB4). This makes a more holistic picture of the problem possible, which is perceived as more adequate for cross-cutting problems:

"In my opinion, if a line department coordinates such a topic, it will easily get caught up by the bureaucratic machinery. That's why I always wanted the topic in the State Chancellery. It's responsible for coordination, it's the genuine job […] Line departments need to have their specific perspective on an issue and that's really a problem for cross-cutting policies" (BB2_12).

In sum, the State Chancellery's authority and its neutral position with a holistic picture of the problem predestines the State Chancellery to steer governmental action accordingly:

"There are interdependencies between the departments and […] it's the Prime Minister's job to explain these interdependencies via-a-vis the departments. You [the State Chancellery] need to tell the Department of Finance that there is need for more

money for teachers […] A line department can't put pressure on the Department of Finance" (BB4_13).

Limits to central control

However, the State Chancellery's capacity to coordinate demographic change is also limited by a couple of factors. First, interviewees refer to the coalition treaty as a broad frame for the term of office:

"Politics is like soccer. The field is defined by the coalition treaty, which contains topics and limits to action" (BB2_14).

Put differently, the coalition treaty serves as a tool to avoid party political conflict during the term of office, but at the same time it also limits the exercise of central control of the State Chancellery.

Second, sometimes the Prime Minister was supposed to act adequately in concrete situations of conflict between the State Chancellery and departments, i.e. explicitly exercise *Richtlinienkompetenz*, which apparently did not always work as wished by the bureaucrats:

"We briefed him [Prime Minister Platzeck] to talk about a specific issue with Minister Wanka. After eight weeks we got the file back without a signature or any comment. He should have told her: ‚Minister, that's what you need to do now', but he didn't dare" (BB3_15).

Third, the State Chancellery's role in coordination is a double-edged sword as the case also reveals a possible pitfall of coordinating cross-cutting issues by the State Chancellery. As we discussed, the State Chancellery's authority was to some extend based on the personal commitment of the Prime Minister. For example, public speeches served as symbols vis-a-vis the departments and enhanced the authority of the State Chancellery. However, the Prime Minister and State Chancellery were only as long interested in the topic, as long the topic adequately served the State Chancellery's political action orientation. After Platzeck's kitchen cabinet decided that "*the topic was over*" (BB3), the center's engagement quickly declined:

"The State Chancellery concluded that the Prime Minister does not benefit enough from the topic. There was no electoral potential in the topic anymore - the State Chancellery always focuses on electoral potential" (BB5_16).

<u>Compiling the reports</u>

We will discuss the compilation of the first two reports separately, because the procedure differed in both cases.

First report (2004)

The chair clearly had a dominant position in the coordination of the first demography report in 2004. Both, the outline of the report as well as the actual draft were written by the chair organization. This is the case, because to gather information, a rather unusual approach was chosen. During the first meetings, he recognized that delegates felt uncomfortable to contribute to the IDC, because they were not sure how their respective leadership would react:

> *"Some of the delegates were more cautious. They were afraid that their State Secretary would censor what they wanted to deliver to us […] They immediately said: 'Help me god, I need to inform the leadership, if I write anything for this report' […] And then I said: 'Well, then don't write anything, I'll write'" (BB3_17).*

To avoid "*internal censorship*" (BB3), the chair's approach was to organize the whole IDC's information exchange orally. The term "censorship" refers to the vertical coordination process within the department by which the official position of the department is determined:

> *"That was a trick that one learns with experience in administrations. I told them: 'I don't want anything written from you. Just tell me your positions, we will discuss it and then I will make a draft'. Otherwise I would have received censored texts" (BB3_18).*

Furthermore, using this approach, the chair organization was able to relief the delegates from the fear of being accountable in case they offered to much information:

> *"I told the colleagues from the departments not to worry. If there is anything in the report you don't like then just repudiate it, blame me, tell your Minister I wrote it. My relationship with the Prime Minister was good enough that I would have survived a beating" (BB3_19).*

In conclusion, both, procedure and content were dominated by the chair organization, although with input from various departments (BB4):

> *"I only wanted oral statements, because that gave me more steering capacity […] I also added things the delegates did not tell me, just because I knew the topic by heart […] I was concerned with demographic processes my whole career" (BB3_20).*

The chair was not only familiar with the topic of demographic change, but also well connected to many experts in Brandenburg's administration. This opened up further sources of expertise (BB3). As a result, the whole draft was written by the State Chancellery without any written contributions by line departments. This allowed the chair to use the State Chancelleries' authority in the more formal stages of the coordination process.

> *"This way they [the other departments] had to change my text. Of course, formally the Head of the State Chancellery sent them the draft […] Consequently, the result was different than it would have been, when we would have worked with written statements rights from the beginning" (BB3_21).*

Second report (2005)

Compiling the second report proved to be more difficult. While the first report was conceptualized to provide a descriptive picture of the demographic situation (BB5), the second report aimed to point to potential fields of action in order to adapt and mitigate (BB3). At the beginning of the coordination process, the chair organization proposed an outline of the report, which was then discussed within the IDC and changed if need be (BB5, BB6).

The second report was more ambitious in terms of not only describing the situation, but to show potential fields of action. Hence, there was much more demand for the departments' active participation, as most detailed expertise is concentrated there (see section on expertise as departmental capability in coordination in 5.3.2.4) and implementation ultimately rests within their responsibility. Put differently, within the IDC it proved to be problematic that departments did not only have to provide information and expertise, but also commit to specific projects:

> *"It was much harder, because we wanted to decide upon to-do-lists […] I could not make them, they had to come from the departments […] The first report was relatively easy, because it was about analysis, prognosis and major developments. You could describe that on a very abstract level. But then there was the question: 'What do we do now?' […] It was much more technical and more difficult" (BB3_22).*

Consequently, the second report was based on written departmental contribution that were then often only slightly edited to match a common style of language (BB4, BB6):

> *"Everybody delivered a text block. Then you check whether all of it fits together and if there any questions left. At some point you'll have a draft that goes through the formal co-signature process like any other cabinet proposal" (BB6_23).*

Consequently, the State Chancellery's potential to steer the coordination process and content of the report became more limited to rather scheduling meetings and setting the agenda. Control over substantial content decreased and was put into the responsibility of individual departments.

Role of individual boundary spanners

From a micro-perspective, the case of Brandenburg also reveals the important role of individual actors in facilitating and managing inter-organizational relationships and coordination, i.e. boundary-spanning (Williams 2002).

During the years, the State Chancellery remained the chair organization of the IDC. However, individual persons that acted as chairs have changed various times. In 2007 the original head of section retired. Interviewees agree that this had a remarkable impact on shaping demographic policies in Brandenburg, because the standing among colleagues, i.e. social capital, and passion for the topic was seen as a clear success factor for effective inter-departmental coordination (BB1, BB2, BB3, BB4, BB5, BB6).

> *"Since he left [the chair], it stagnates. Nobody really interested and capable took his place […] If the center is not into the topic, the diverging colleagues from the line departments will certainly not fix it. Since he retired, nobody took ownership of the topic. That's the problem" (BB6_24).*

The retirement of the chair corresponds remarkably with demographic change's standing on the political agenda. For example, the first two reports on demographic change were published in 2004 and 2005. The third report was only published in 2011 and according to interviewees the IDC is more or less inactive (BB5, BB6) ever since.

Another interviewee points to the individual style of moderating the process that is contingent on the skill set of individual bureaucrats. In this perspective, the chair has to strike a balance between two possible ways of steering the process:

> *"You could just invite all departments to the IDC and say: ‚Demography is an important topic, let's all discuss about it for a bit'. Then they will think that you want them to do your job. The other way is to prepare everything very thoroughly. Then they will accuse you of invading their turf and exceeding your responsibilities […] You'll need to find something in between. That means you would have some structure in mind to be filled by the departments (BB5_25).*

This quote refers to appropriate behavior within governmental coordination and once more emphasizes the importance of departmental autonomy and responsibility. Not only needs departmental turf to be protected, but furthermore the quote also entails normative expectations with regard to *Federführung*, because the chair organization is expected to kick-off the coordination process with own ideas.

7.4.1.2. Information processing

We will discuss information processing within the IDC in Brandenburg from a vertical (intra-departmental) and horizontal (inter-departmental) perspective.

<u>The vertical dimension</u>

The vertical dimension of information-processing will be analyzed for the chair and the delegates separately.

During the early days of the project group and the IDC, the chair had close contact to the Head of the State Chancellery and to some extend even to the Prime Minister (BB3). This close contact to the leadership is by no means usual in State Chancelleries. It was possible, because demographic change was a topic in which the Head of State Chancellery was personally engaged in (BB2):

> *"I had close contact to him [the chair of IDC] […] We often sat together and reflected about the strategy and how to proceed […] Of course, it was a comfortable situation for him […] That's not the case for all sections. Usually they did their work and I didn't notice them, unless there was some kind of trouble" (BB2_26).*

This illustrates the high rank of demographic change on the political agenda at that time (BB2, BB3). However, as we already discussed, the leadership's attention for the topic decreased over time.

Now we will discuss the delegates' vertical coordination behavior. IDC delegates are described as "*ambassadors of the topic in their own department*" (BB6). As such, they need to keep contact to the political leadership as well as to the experts on the lower levels of the hierarchy. In contrast to the chair organization, delegates' contact to the political leadership was fairly rare during the years (BB5, BB6). As long as the IDCs functioned smoothly, the

leadership was usually not involved until the formal preparation of cabinet decisions. Knowing what might be politically sensitive and when to concern the leadership is described as an important skill for IDC delegates that requires a certain experience with political organizations and their action orientations (BB6).
Since direct contact with the political leadership is rare, IDC delegates mostly coordinate their departments' contributions to the IDC with experts from the lower levels of the hierarchy. This type of vertical coordination is based on an understanding of the administrative action orientation of colleagues and experience with intra-departmental coordination that is mostly found in policy sections (*Grundsatzreferate*).

> *"If you do that [intra-departmental coordination] permanently, you know how your colleagues tick and what they need to get started. If a specialist is told: 'You are somehow concerned with the topic - just do it' they don't have any experience with coordination. They may act a bit clumsy, because they lack knowledge. And then it may go wrong, because sometimes the divisions just don't want to cooperate" (BB6_27).*

Hence, effective intra-departmental coordination also needs to overcome resistance within the own department:

> *"First, there will be a collegial approach - friendly, but persistent. If need be, I go to their office and ask for the material […] As a last resort, there is escalation and hierarchy […] If they keep telling me that they don't have any time, I ask my boss to speak to their bosses […] Mostly, it works" (BB6_28).*

Apart from ensuring willingness of the departments' experts to contribute to the IDC, delegates also serve as a kind of translator between the sectoral experts and the more broadly oriented IDC, because a lot of details need to be boiled down to the essential message:

> *"Go to a road construction engineer and let him explain a cost-benefit-calculation in five sentences to you. It's not possible. I need to listen to his hundred sentences and then I make five out of them to explain it to outsiders" (BB6_29).*

<u>The horizontal dimensions</u>
In the IDC's early days, most delegates of the IDC were motivated to discuss matters of demographic change from various perspectives:

> *"After everybody presented in the IDC, I said: Okay, I will draft the report now. And then there was an outcry […] I found that very positive, because they wanted to discuss first. We discussed each chapter content-wise and not only from the departments' perspectives. The colleague from the Department of Economics had a debate with colleagues from finances and spatial planning, and so on […] They were so motivated to think outside of their little boxes - that was great. I was surprised, because I thought they would be happy to just be done with it. But no, they wanted to discuss with each other" (BB3_30).*

However, although the general atmosphere is described as friendly and collegial (BB3, BB4), not all departments were equally engaged in discussions. Clearly, discussions were most active among departments that were concerned with the topic of demographic change anyway (BB5, BB6). This corresponds with the interviewees' perception that some departments were not very interested in the topic, because they did not expect consequences of demographic change for their departmental remit:

> *"I can still remember that the Department of Justice didn't bother for years. We told them again and again: a court is important for a city and therefore the question whether the city can sustain it […] They didn't get it for years" (BB6_31).*

However, although there were open discussions, the chair also reports how departmental perspectives and interests became important again as soon as the official and final form of the report was discussed and decided upon, which we will discuss in the next section.

7.4.1.3. Decision-making

Everything that was drafted and discussed within the IDC had to pass the formal governmental coordination procedure to get eventually decided by the cabinet (BB2, BB6). This had implications for the decision-making processes of the first and second demography report. The need for official co-signature (*Mitzeichnung*) served as a kind of bottleneck of the coordination process.

<u>First report (2004)</u>

An anecdote from the coordination process of the first demography report is telling: although the chair tried to evade departmentalism by merely focusing on oral discussions and statements during the early phases of drafting the first demography report, eventually the departmental principle caught up in the more formal stages of the governmental coordination process:

> *"We [the State Chancellery] wrote the report and then there were proposals for adjustments and I realized: Well, now there is the departments' interests shining through and the colleagues need to demonstrate vis-a-vis their leadership that they defend their departments' turf […] In the formal process there were the official departmental statements that included a lot of requests for modifications" (BB3_32).*

Although the decision-making process was based on departmental interests and their veto-potential, it is worthwhile to note that party political questions did not play a dominant role within the IDC's work. Interviewees agree that the coordination process was predominantly shaped by an administrative action orientation, as interviewees perceived no party-politically motivated disagreement within the IDC (BB2, BB3, BB4, BB5, BB6).

> *"It was a technical process. That is always the best. There was no politicians' talk. It was solid administrative work. In the administration in Brandenburg, party colors do not play a big role" (BB5_33).*

Second report (2005)

Deciding upon the second report also was a process structured by the anticipation of departmental veto potential. As already discussed, the second report was much more ambitious in terms of providing guidelines for future action. Hence, potential conflict was higher. This conflict potential was ultimately addressed by deliberate conflict avoidance. During the formal co-signature process many ambitious text blocks were cut out by request of departments. This procedure resulted in a paper that contained everything the departments could not agree upon. This *Werkstattbericht* (State Chancellery Brandenburg 2005b) was officially supposed to provide additional information for the members of parliament (BB3). By using this approach, information could be made public that otherwise would be lost for the discourse. However, if one considers that the *Werkstattbericht* encompasses 114 pages, it is fair to state that the decision-making process was very well based on the veto-potential of the departments.

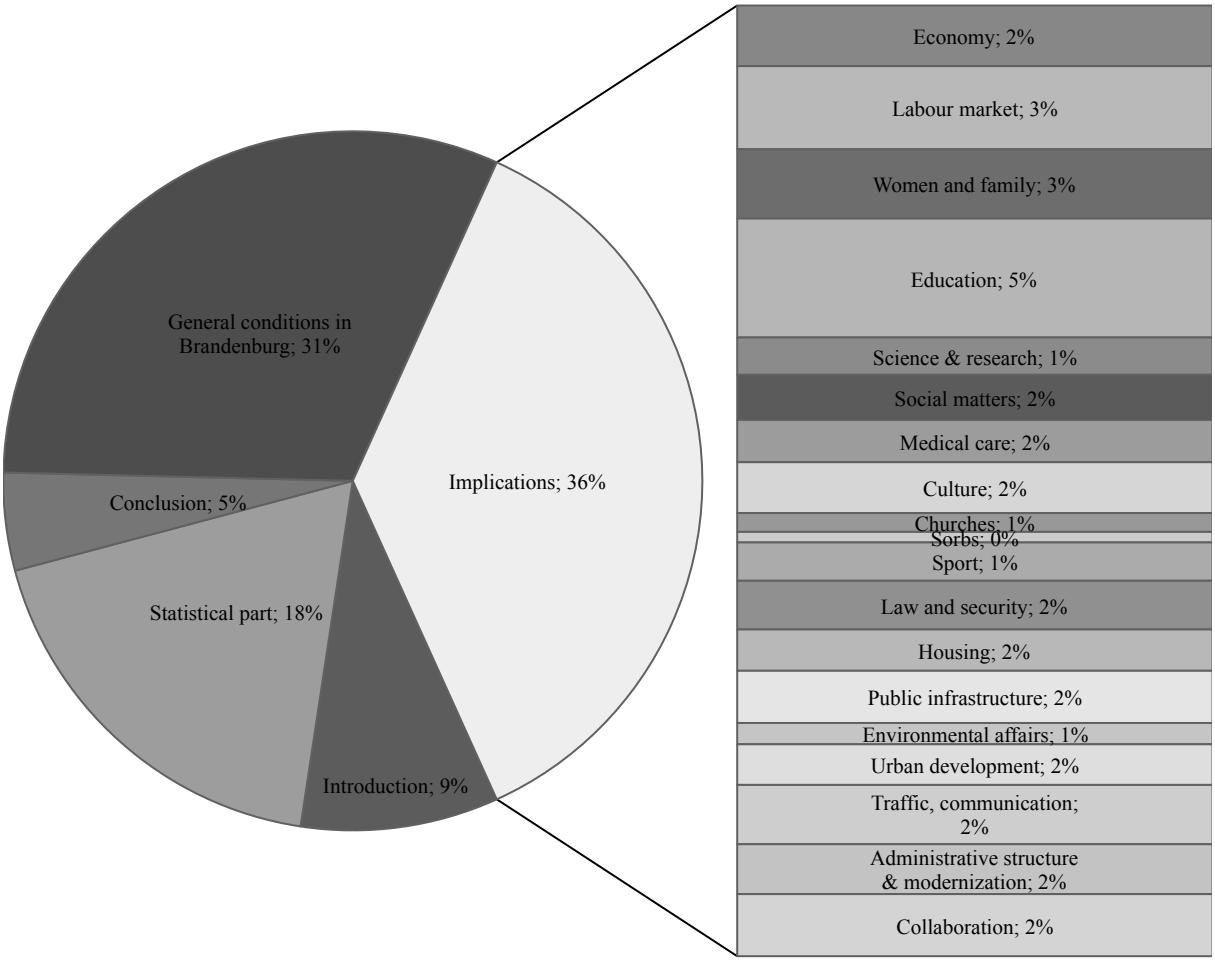
7.4.2. Coordination output

As already said, the IDC in Brandenburg produced three reports (State Chancellery Brandenburg 2004; 2005a; 2011). As our analysis of the coordination process focused on the first two reports, consequently those reports will be incorporated in the analysis of the coordination output. The aforementioned *Werkstattbericht*, the "leftovers" of the second report, will be included within the analysis of the second demography strategy to some extend, because it might be insightful to contrast the official governmental position with the content that was cut out of the report by a departmental veto. The report of 2011 will be left out of our analysis, because interviewees mostly experienced the early days of the IDC and consequently referred to the first two reports.

7.4.2.1. First Demography Report (2004)

The first report is 45 pages long. In general, the report's aim is to "*sharpen the understanding for future developments, increase awareness for the problem and facilitate a societal dialog based on the analysis*" (p. 8). This rather descriptive ambition of the report can be illustrated by its three parts: First, statistical information regarding the demographic situation in Brandenburg is provided (pp. 5-15). Second, the report explains the specific context of Brandenburg (economical situation, finances and social security systems) (pp. 16-28). Finally, the report includes a chapter on implication of demographic change for politics, economics and the society (pp. 29-43).

Figure 11 Structure of 1. Demography report Brandenburg (2004)



Addressing interdependence

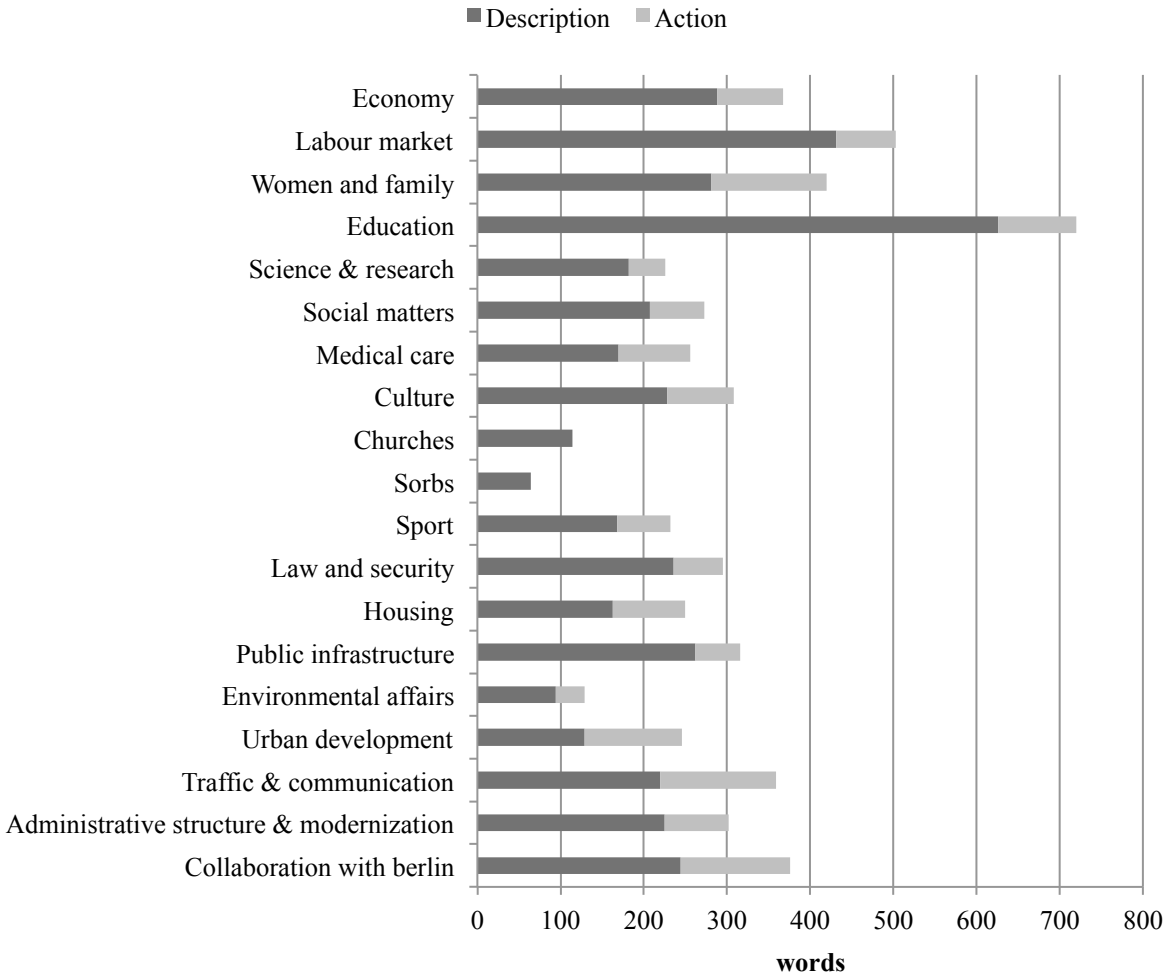
The third part of the report discusses implications of demographic change in various issue areas: economy; labor market; women and family; education; science & research; social matters; medical care; culture; churches; sorbs; sport; law and security; housing; public infrastructure; environmental affairs; urban development; traffic & communication; administrative structure & modernization; collaboration with Berlin. These issue areas are rather narrow without acknowledging possible policy interdependencies. Furthermore, the demography report does not include much commitment to inter-departmental action on the rhetorical level (e.g. "a cross-cutting approach is necessary to tackle demographic change").

Setting specific goals

Instead of goals, the report formulates "*further need for clarification*" in specific issue-areas. Put differently, the report hints to further need for research to meaningfully advance the debate on demographic change and its implications in Brandenburg. For example, within the issue-area of economy the following need for clarification is stated: "*How and to which extend should public funds be concentrated regionally?*". However it remains unclear,

whether and how these questions will be addressed in future reports and who is responsible to do so. To some extend, this might not be to surprising as the first report mainly aimed to raise awareness for the topic among the public and governmental organizations (BB5). Furthermore, we need to consider the rather unusual coordination approach that we discussed in section 7.4.1.1. The chair avoided written contributions of departments and merely condensed oral statements into the report under study. This approach was chosen to avoid "internal censorship". This approach might be fruitful for drafting an overview of a relatively new topic, but seems to be less appropriate to generate credible commitment for specific action among departments. Consequently, descriptive parts are dominant, as Figure 12 shows. In total, 75 % of the chapter on implications of demographic change in Brandenburg is descriptive, while 25 % sketch possible actions or further need for research.

Figure 12 Distribution of descriptive vs. programmatic parts, 1. Demography Report Brandenburg (2004)



Implementation mechanisms

The report does not mention implementation mechanisms, as there are no formulated goals.

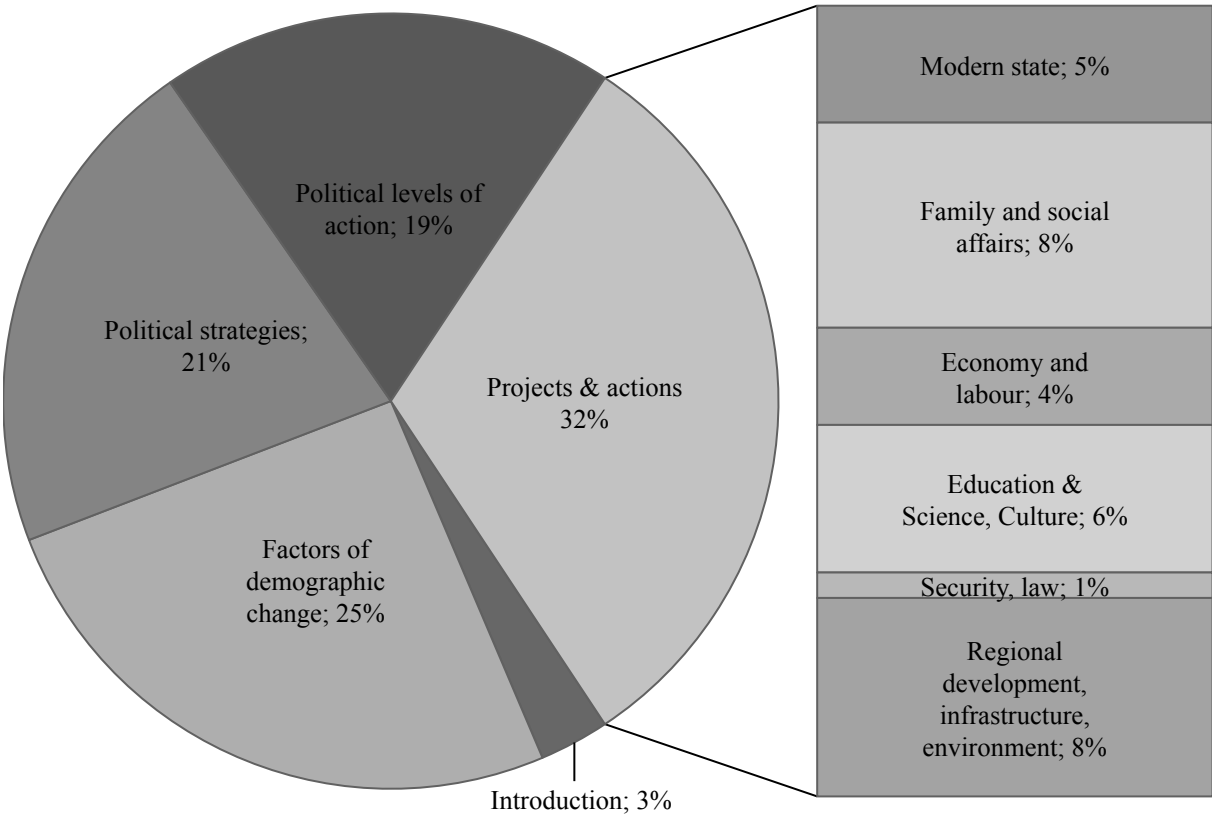
Reporting, monitoring & evaluation
The report does not mention any monitoring or evaluation criteria.

7.4.2.2. Second Demography Report (2005)

The report is 37 pages long and consists of four chapters. First, general statistical information on demographic change in Brandenburg is provided (pp. 4-12); second, the report addresses political strategies to adapt and mitigate demographic change in a more general manner (pp. 13-20); third, the report addresses the multi-level setting of demographic change in Europe and situates Brandenburg within this framework (pp. 21-26). Fourth, the reports presents specific projects and programs (pp. 27-37).

The second report aims to reflect on "*causes and implications of demographic change and to present strategies and ideas how causes of birth decrease and migration can be addressed and which consequences need to be drawn*" (p. 4). Put differently, while the first report was more orientated towards describing demographic change, the second report's ambition is to sketch specific measures to be taken.

Figure 13 Structure of 2. Demography Report Brandenburg (2005)



Addressing interdependence

The report's section on "projects and actions" is clustered around six key issues areas: modern state; family and social affairs; economy and labor; education, science & culture; security and law; and regional development, infrastructure and environment.

In general, the report acknowledges interdependence of demographic change and the need for coordinated action. For example, the report states:

> *"Consequences of demographic change can't be tackled by individual solutions, but need cross-cutting analysis and action"* (State Chancellery Brandenburg 2005a: 22). *(BBX_34).*

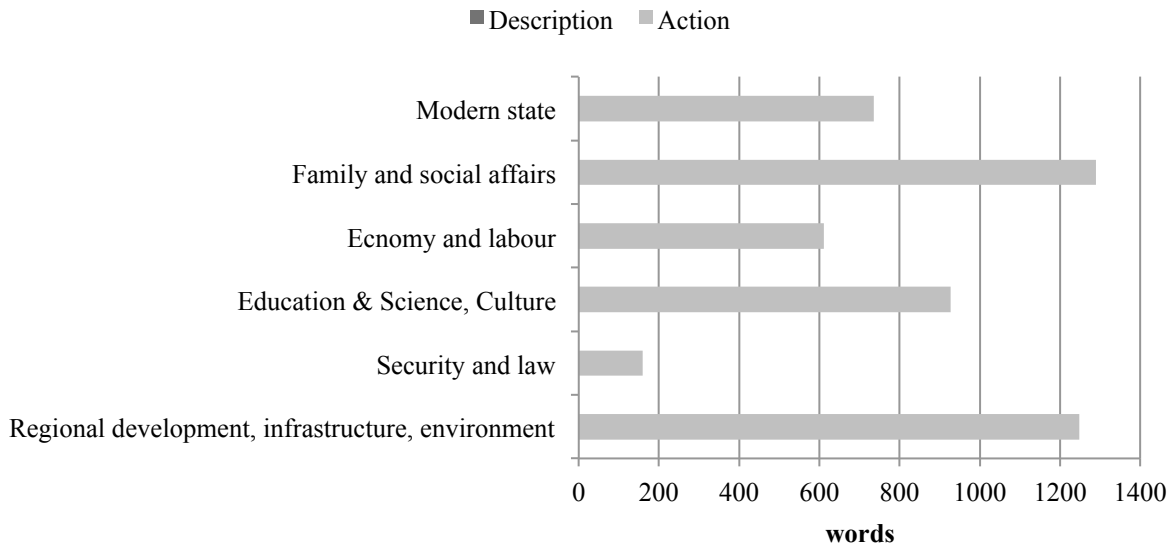
However, the report's take on policy interdependence remains rather abstract without meaningfully connecting departmental portfolios or policy domains in a systematic way. Put differently, policy interdependence and consequential potential cooperation between departments is not made explicit.

Setting specific goals

The report's section on "projects and action" mentions a variety of different goals and respective projects within the respective issue areas (see Figure 14). In the second report, clearly the focus is on future projects with little description. However, it seems questionable whether these projects can be seen as a joint result of the IDC's work. For example, one interviewee states that projects were often on the departmental agenda anyway:

> *"I am doing this for quite some time and the demography reports were a little bit like learning to walk. In the beginning it really was a collection of departmental projects […] It was a well-behaved 'Let's talk about what we do already'" (BB6_35).*

Figure 14 Distribution of descriptive vs. programmatic parts, 2. Demography Report Brandenburg (2005)



Implementation mechanisms

Achieving commitment for projects was a difficult task, as the chair explained (BB3). Accordingly, the report does not explicitly mention implementation mechanisms for the projects. The chair also reflects on problems regarding the implementation of the demography report and how the constitutional departmental principle became more dominant again, when credible commitment is needed:

> *"Implementation was difficult, because the actual implementation is in the responsibility of the departments - be it family policies, education, health or economics, everything. It was difficult, because in matters of actual implementation we couldn't tell the departments how to do it" (BB3_36).*

Reporting, monitoring & evaluation

The report does not mention any monitoring or evaluation criteria.

A short comparison: What has been left out during the coordination process?

We found that the official second demography report largely lacks systematic acknowledgment of interdependence, formulation of joint specific goals, mechanisms of implementation and evaluation criteria, i.e. indicators that would make progress measurable. Against this backdrop, it is quite illustrative to contrast the official governmental position with the *Werkstattbericht* that compiles all content that could not be decided upon in a consensual manner, i.e. a collection of controversial issues that were cut out of the second demography report.

The *Werkstattbericht* resembles the second report's section on projects and is equally structured, i.e. focuses on the same topic areas (see Figure 14). It consists of 79 pages (consider that the respective section within the official report is only 10 pages long). Regarding the dimension of *addressing interdependence*, we find that in contrast to the official report, the *Werkstattbericht* regularly stresses the need for inter-departmental (*ressortübergreifend*) cooperation and potential benefits of improved coordination. This cross-cutting ambition is also incorporated into the structure of the *Werkstattbericht*, as each issue area features a paragraph that explicitly outlines possibilities for cross-cutting activities. Furthermore, regarding *reporting, monitoring & evaluation*, the *Werkstattbericht* mentions some indicators, e.g. in the issue area of "families and social affairs" to measure progress with regard to family friendliness. In conclusion, the *Werkstattbericht* shows very illustratively that a lot of the State Chancellery's initial ambition was boiled down during the later stages of the coordination process. This underlines the role of the formal process of co-signature as a bottleneck of the coordination process. Furthermore, it underlines the mismatch between the State Chancellery's ambition of steering using the IDC and the dominance of the departmental principle:

> *"IDCs are foreign bodies in traditionally organized German governments […] People really need to show good-will. If that is missing, the whole thing will not function" (BB6_37).*

However, it seems that good will of individuals is certainly not enough, as delegates are embedded in their respective departmental hierarchies and need to adequately represent their department's interests within the IDC.

7.4.3. Conclusion

Conclusion of the coordination process

Regarding the *role of the chair organization*, our analysis of the State Chancellery's role during the coordination process revealed a certain capability to exert influence by informal ways, e.g. the rather unusual approach of oral presentation to avoid "departmental censorship" during the coordination process that resulted in the first demography report. However, the first report was largely a descriptive picture of the situation with a low level of potential conflict among departments. In later years of the IDC and during the drafting period of the second demography report, the departments were much more reluctant to cooperate and commit to specific action. Put differently, requesting information of departments to pool their expertise worked rather well, while committing them to certain action was clearly limited by the departmental principle and the departments' individual expertise and autonomy - even though the IDC was chaired by the State Chancellery. Hence, the role of the chair organization during the coordination process within the IDC in Brandenburg resembles characteristics of positive and negative coordination.

Notwithstanding the above, the State Chancellery was still perceived as the driver of the coordination process. Its distinguished position among the departments was based on three factors that we have analyzed. First of all, political leadership mattered: The visible commitment of Prime Minister Stolpe and Platzeck and the two Heads of State Chancellery Speer and Appel certainly improved the standing and authority of State Chancellery representatives. This helped to disseminate the topic of demographic change among the departments, regardless of the actual later commitment to implement a central strategy. Second, the State Chancellery's holistic perspective was perceived as beneficial to tackle cross-cutting problems and demographic change in particular. Third, the individual person of the chair had a good standing and remarkable reputation among the colleagues. This social capital provided him with the possibility to manage the coordination process more effectively and to serve as the most important boundary spanner within the IDC.
However, we also learned that the State Chancellery's particular political action orientation can be a pitfall for coordination. If issues lose political relevance, the center quickly loses interest in the matter and consequently the authority of its representatives decreases. This it was happened, when Platzeck's kitchen cabinet decided that "the topic was over".

Regarding *information processing*, we analyzed a vertical and horizontal dimension. Vertically, delegates mostly coordinated with the experts at the lower levels of the departmental hierarchy. Here, interviewees stressed two challenges: First, specialized expert knowledge needs to be transferred into something more suitable for the generalist context of the IDC. Second, ensuring cooperation of the own experts can also be difficult and needs

experience. Contact of IDC delegates to their political leadership was fairly rare and limited to sensitive matters.
Horizontally, information were discussed openly across departmental jurisdictions within the IDC. However, not all participants perceived demographic change as equally important for their departmental remit. Ultimately, these open discussion did not change very much regarding the modus of *decision-making*: we found that individual departments' interests clearly stayed dominant. Consequently, the departmental veto-potential was addressed by leaving controversial topics out of the reports without much resistant of the State Chancellery. Hence, the decision-making process resembles a lowest common denominator and therefore negative coordination. Although early stages of the coordination process included open discussions and exchange of perspectives, the formal preparation of cabinet decisions and the process of co-signature triggered departmentalism. In this regard, the formal governmental coordination process is a kind of bottleneck that clearly narrows the scope of innovation that is achievable in IDCs.

Table 25 Coordination process in the Brandenburg case

	Description	**Positive vs. negative coordination**
Role of chair	effective in pulling information limited in achieving commitment	-+
Information processing	open discussions rarely policy relevant	-+
Decision-making	based on departmental interests and potential veto	-

Conclusion of coordination output

Only the second report acknowledges policy interdependence on a rhetorical level. However, in more qualitative terms, interdependence is not addressed. Quite in contrast, exactly those parts were cut out of the report by departments' request and ended up in the unofficial *Werkstattbericht*. Furthermore, the reports do not include goals that can be regarded as a result of the IDCs work. Rather, projects are presented that were on the departmental agenda anyway or formulated goals remained very vague. Consequently, an implementation plan or monitoring system are not part of the strategy paper. Hence, the reports' ambition is rather modest and resembles negative coordination.

Table 26 Coordination output in the Brandenburg case

	Description	Positive vs. negative coordination
Addressing interdependence	little acknowledgement of interdependence	-
Setting specific goals	vague goals projects often already planned	-
Implementation mechanisms	none	-
Reporting, monitoring & evaluation	none	-

Problems of strategies and central steering

IDCs produce reports and other outputs, usually mandated by the cabinet as guidelines for further political action. Our analysis revealed that the primary output of the IDCs, the joint strategy papers, were rather examples of negative coordination. In addition, interviewees are a bit sceptical regarding the immediate usefulness of these reports:

First, the topic is simply considered to complex to be adequately grasped in a strategy:

> *"This idea 'We make a brilliant master plan and solve the demographic problem' - it does not function like that" (BB5_38).*

Furthermore, interviewees acknowledge that actual implementation is much more difficult than just drafting a strategy:

> *"It's always the danger that a report is written, put aside and then everybody forgets about it. That's really is a danger" (BB6_39).*

One obvious reason why reports are often ignored seems to be the mere amount of available information that needs to be processes by key actors, as one head of division explains:

> *"You know, such reports… I get tons of mail every day, I am stressed all the time […] Maybe I skim through the table of content and then I hand it over to the sections. Nobody can read all this stuff. We simply don't have the time, one needs to be realistic about that" (BB5_40).*

Furthermore, the case study also underlined the fact that topics managed by the State Chancellery need to fit a political action orientation to be attractive for the Prime Minister. That makes long-term commitment by the center of government rather unlikely. Demographic change had its highest standing on the political agenda during the years 2003 to 2006. After the original chair retired in 2007, the topic was less pushed by the State Chancellery. In addition, the Prime Minister's engagement in demographic change decreased. Consequently, the respective section within the State Chancellery became responsible for yet another broad topic (civil engagement) and it took until 2011 to publish another report. Today, there is no

ambition to address demographic change in a cross-cutting way and the issue became a topic of the "*third league*" (BB1). Consequently, one interviewee concludes:

> *"Nowadays, the departments muddle-trough for themselves. Sometimes, the topic is mentioned if red ribbons are cut or some infrastructure is closed down. It's certainly not alive as a specific policy domain in Brandenburg anymore" (BB2_41).*

Secondary output

However, apart from the primary coordination output, i.e. the actual demography reports, we will now briefly discuss secondary outputs of the IDC. One interviewee points to a changed mindset and knowledge base that he attributes directly to the work of the IDC and its reports:

> *"The topic is part of the mindset of politicians and administrators, now. Before it was considered uncomfortable and was neglected. This IDC and the reports made the topic common sense. And that makes it worth the effort […] In a meeting, I just need to say the word 'demography' and everybody immediately knows: at some places more people, at some places less people, at some places dramatically less people and all of them get older. And this affects housing, infrastructure, everything. It's very important that it became common sense" (BB5_42).*

In this regard, the IDC can be seen as rather successful, as the ambition was to achieve another attitude towards processes of demographic change:

> *"The whole idea was to change the attitude. The departments and people out there need to understand that […] it won't go on like they are used to" (BB2_43).*

The State Chancellery's role may be therefore not so much to be found in actively producing a comprehensive demography strategy, but rather in facilitating a public discourse and rather kick-start the debate on the topic, while specific policy making and implementation need to remain within the specialized line departments.

7.5. Case IV - State Chancellery - Mecklenburg-Vorpommern

Interview data on the coordination process in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern mostly covers events from 2008 to 2011, i.e. the period in which the IDC was established and the first demography strategy was drafted. During this period of time, a grand coalition of SPD and CDU was in power, led by a Prime Minister of the SPD.

Table 27 Governments in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, 2003-2014

Legislative period	Governing parties	Prime Minister
2002-2006	SPD / PDS	Harald Ringstorff
2006-2008	SPD / CDU	Harald Ringstorff
2008-2011	SPD / CDU	Erwin Sellering
2011-2016	SPD / CDU	Erwin Sellering

Establishment

The IDC is chaired by the State Chancellery and was founded in 2008 by a cabinet decree to "*identify action points and cross-cutting strategies with regard to demographic change*" (MV1). Formally, the head of division of the planning division within the State Chancellery acts as chair of the IDC. However, in day-to-day business, a head of section within the planning division takes care of managing the coordination process within the IDC.

Initially, the task of the IDC as outlined in the respective cabinet decree was less strategically oriented. The cabinet mandated the Department of Infrastructure to draft a new population projection. Subsequently, based on the initiative of the State Chancellery, this cabinet decree was changed and the ambition became more strategic to "*provide guidelines for action*" with the help of the IDC (MV3). Orientation towards adaptation and mitigation of demographic change was indeed something innovative in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern. Already since 1993 there were regular population projections, conducted by the Department of Infrastructure. However, it took more than a decade to sensitize the actors for demographic change and the need for political action (MV3). In addition to the IDC on the working level, there is a State Secretary Committee on demographic change.

Staff composition

Departments decide independently whom to send into the IDC. Mostly, heads of section and officials serve as delegates (MV1). Regarding delegates' position within their department, there is a mixed picture of specialized experts and more generalist policy unit officials with a broad overview of the respective department's policy portfolio. High-ranked bureaucrats, i.e. heads of division, only took part in meetings at the very beginning or in meetings of great importance (MV1). Throughout the years, there has been a stable composition of staff without much change in the IDC's composition. However, not all IDC delegates are seen as equally

eager to contribute to the IDC, which is explained by the departmental portfolios and the respective problem perspectives on demographic change (MV1, MV2). Delegates from departments with high exposure to the problem (e.g. State Chancellery, Agriculture, Infrastructure) are perceived as more motivated and more able to think in a cross-cutting way (MV2, MV4):

> *"There are three departments in the government that intensively deal with the topic in a cross-cutting way […] All other departments - without being disrespectful - perceive the topic only through their departmental perspectives and are a bit further away" (MV2_1).*

In addition to bureaucrats, also some members of the State Parliament are regular members of the IDC, but mostly function as observers and see themselves as the interface between legislative and executive bodies (MV4).

7.5.1. Coordination process

So far, the IDC only produced one report (State Chancellery Mecklenburg-Vorpommern 2011). Consequently, we will focus on the coordination process that led to this report.

7.5.1.1. Role of chair

State Chancellery as the better coordinator?

As already mentioned, the IDC is chaired by the State Chancellery, which is seen as a good choice to manage the coordination process (MV1, MV3). Interestingly, in the beginning of the IDC, also the Department of Infrastructure was considered as the predestined chair, because it was already responsible for the population projections for a long time:

> *"Demographic change was often equated with our projections. That there is much more to it took a while to get into peoples' heads. Then there was the question who should chair the IDC […] Some people pointed in my direction, but I insisted not to do it, because I knew: We as a line department for infrastructure and spatial planning may have the required cross-cutting problem perception due to our work, but to steer the process from here and maybe even invade other departments' turf would be very hard […] When it was politically decided [to put the State Chancellery in charge], I was very willing to contribute to the IDC" (MV3_2).*

The interviewee anticipated the difficult task of influencing other departments' agendas as a consequences of the departmental principle. Therefore, for the task of coordinating cross-cutting policy making, he perceived the State Chancellery as the appropriate choice. Also other interviewees from line departments hold that the State Chancellery is an adequate chair for the IDC:

> *"Important societal challenges need to be tackled by the Prime Minister and the State Chancellery" (MV2_3).*

However, although the State Chancellery is perceived as a good place to address cross-cutting challenges by *other actors*, its actual own ambition to steer the coordination process is rather modest, as the chair of the IDC explains:

> *"Our task is to manage the IDC and this section is the tool to do so, but demographic change is not in our jurisdiction […] All departments deal with demographic change to some extend. Hence, management of the IDC is a better description of our task" (MV1_4).*

The interviewee stresses the departmental responsibility for specific policy domains and therefore rejects that the State Chancellery needs to engage in central steering to ensure a broader perspective on demographic change. Put differently, its own role perception is more that of a moderator. Furthermore, the State Chancellery clearly perceives its lack of formal hierarchical abilities and other departments' political agendas as clear limits to own action without much ambition to cause political conflict within the coalition. Consequently, some controversial topics were just left out of the IDC:

> *"If there are clear political preferences of other departments […] It does not make sense to waste time on these issues […] We don't have formal tools - we can only insist or request" (MV1_5).*

The lack of "formal tools", i.e. formal hierarchical prerogatives for decision-making, were also not substituted by more informal means of authority: during the coordination process, there was not a single reference to the Prime Minister's political agenda or preferences regarding demographic change policies. This also corresponds with other departments' perception of the State Chancellery's role in the coordination process:

> *"In my opinion, it's rather a moderator. There is hardly substantial coordination. The State Chancellery perceives itself as the place where the threads come together. Technical aspects may be coordinated and work processes are structured, but there is no significant influence on content" (MV3_6).*

Similarly, another interviewee refers to a mere procedural dominance of the State Chancellery during the coordination process:

> *"If there is a request by the State Chancellery […] every department will try to fulfill this request precisely and timely. So, there is a high formal-disciplined willingness to comply with request from the State Chancellery […] If they say: 'Use blue paper on Thursday afternoon and not green paper on Monday mornings' the departments will do it. However, matters of substantial content are a very different story" (MV4_7).*

Interestingly, one interviewee from a line department would have wished for a more ambitious and active State Chancellery, because he was unsatisfied with the contributions delivered to the IDCs by other departments and how little the Chancellery did against it:

> *"I wish […] they would have been a bit tougher in some cases. […] Many departments just reported what they did in the past […] But the strategic part, i.e. what buttons do we need to press, should have been pushed a bit more" (MV3_8).*

It remains a bit unclear why the State Chancellery chose to remain in a rather passive moderator or secretariat role. Interviewees refer to different "*management styles of individuals*" (MV3) or to rather tactical behavior of the State Chancellery:

> *"Some line department delegates favored a more conceptual-coordinative role of the State Chancellery […] Sometimes the State Chancellery leaves decisions in abeyance to avoid its commitment […] until they support something […] And then they'll say: 'That's what we wanted from the beginning'" (MV4_9).*

Compiling the report

In the beginning of drafting the demography strategy, the big picture was coordinated in close contact to the Head of the State Chancellery. Subsequently, departments were asked to provide their perspective on possible key issues to be addressed in the report. The input of the departments was then compiled into an outline by the State Chancellery and discussed in a joint meeting by all delegates of the IDC (MV2). In addition, the Committee of State Secretaries provided input for the strategy. Subsequently, the report was drafted and discussed in several IDC meetings. To discuss strategic questions, there were preparatory meetings prior to the committee meetings with the most important actors of the IDC, i.e. the State Chancellery, Department of Infrastructure and the Department of Agriculture (MV2, MV3). These smaller meetings were used to avoid contradictions among the contributions of departments with the biggest potential policy overlap. In conclusion, a rather participatory approach was chosen that underlines the moderator role of the State Chancellery that we already analyzed.

The actual text of the demography strategy was written in the State Chancellery with the help of an editorial group, based on departmental contributions that were mostly edited to match style and language, but not substantially changed or discussed (MV1). Furthermore, the State Chancellery established an electronic communication platform to efficiently organize the departmental contributions. The report's structure was divided into 400 sub-topics that were distributed among the nine departments. Interviewees perceived the technical management of the coordination process as very efficient and well organized (MV4).

Interestingly, although the coordination processes remained in the administrative sphere to a large extent and was not closely observed by politicians, elections and the term of office served as important frames and it was perceived as important to finish the strategy paper early enough before the elections (MV4).

7.5.1.2. Information processing

As in the other case studies, we will discuss information processing within the IDC in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern from a vertical (intra-departmental) and horizontal (inter-departmental) perspective.

The vertical dimension

The vertical dimension of information-processing will be analyzed for the chair and the ordinary delegates separately.

The section that manages the IDC is in close contact to the respective head of division, i.e. the formal chair of the IDC, to regularly talk about the more general course of the strategy process. The head of division briefly introduces every IDC meeting and is, thus, briefed with all necessary information before a meeting takes place. Afterwards, the minutes of the meeting are send over to the head of division to keep him in the loop (MV1). While the head of division is mostly concerned with more broad strategic questions, more detailed matters are discussed with mirror sections that monitor the respective departments' work and therefore are sources of expertise and often know priorities of the departmental agendas. It needs to be noted that demographic change and the respective IDC does not seem to be a topic of particular relevance to the Head of the State Chancellery or the Prime Minister, because there is little interaction between the chair organization and the leadership (MV2).

In the following we'll discuss the delegates' vertical coordination patterns. IDC delegates prepare IDC meetings mostly with their colleagues at the lower levels of the hierarchy, meaning contact to the political leadership is rare and limited to strategic questions only, i.e. the general structure and purpose of the report (MV2, MV3, MV4). In one department, an internal working group staffed with officials from all divisions was established to efficiently prepare the departmental contributions to the IDC "*as if made from one piece*" (MV3). In general, the ministers are only concerned with the demography strategy during the preparation of formal cabinet meetings (MV2).

The horizontal dimension

Although IDC delegates are clearly expected to represent their department's sectoral perspective within the IDC, interviewees agree that there are cross-cutting discussions within the IDC (MV1, MV2, MV3). These discussions often follow a presentation of a delegate on a departmental project related to demographic change. "*In a best case scenario*" (MV2), discussions were able to facilitate spontaneous coordination among departments that resulted in joint projects. However, in most cases, discussions do not have immediate relevance for the departments' position on an issue or actual decision-making (MV1). In this regarding, discussions rather serve to disseminate knowledge and information across government, but do not seem to trigger much policy change. A positive side effect might be that over time interactions among bureaucrats result in bonds between bureaucrats that may lead to spontaneous horizontal coordination (MV2, MV3).

7.5.1.3. Decision-making

As the IDC does not have formal decision-making power, it can only prepare drafts that need to be formally decided upon by the cabinet (MV1). In general, the IDC had a low level of conflict (MV1, MV2). Potential conflict in the IDC was not based on party-political preferences and competition, because the political leadership was rather not interested in the

topic. An interviewee explains this with the rather difficult standing of demographic change that makes it an unattractive topic to be addressed by politicians:

> *"The topic is not easy to digest and it's not a winner-topic, because it is about things that will happen in 10 or 15 years […] It's not easy to make politics with it, because politics rather focuses on the term of office […] A politician won't get anywhere with the topic […] The Prime Minister shies away from the topic, because he would be accountable for failure" (MV2_10).*

Furthermore, there seems to be a general party-political consensus on the main drivers and consequences of demographic change with only nuanced differences in party programs and preferences (MV2). Hence, the dynamics and conflicts within the IDC were rather driven based on an administrative action orientation, caused by departmental tasks allocation and respective problem perspectives:

> *"There is a esprit de corps that says: On the working level we focus on work. Everybody knows that political decisions are based on the departmental leadership, but on the working level it's about problem definitions, problem analyses and potential problem solution" (MV4_11).*

Most points of controversy between departments were caused by the Department of Finance in its role as the watchdog of the budget. The demography strategy outlines for every issue area whether there will be need for more or less money in the coming years, based on the demographic developments. Those financial guidelines were the main cause of conflict within the IDC. The government of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern is heavily engaged in consolidating finances, which resulted in a balanced budget in 2006 and even surpluses in the later years. Hence, a balanced budget is perceived as "*trademark*" (MV1) of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern and guarded by the Department of Finance:

> *"Good officials from the Department of Finance know the departmental budgets by heart […] They wait for a while and as soon anything specific comes up they hit you hard and say: 'That's not possible and that's not possible. There will be less population, you say? That sounds like less crime to me and you'll need less money for police […] If that's not the case, prove it'" (MV4_12).*

As a result, the Department of Finance is clearly perceived as a dominant actor that shapes the work within the IDC remarkably:

> *"If something is prepared for the cabinet […] it's very unlikely that decision go against the interests of the Department of Finance" (MV2_13).*

An important factor in solving conflict and reach decisions in the case of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern is the committee of State Secretaries. After the report had been compiled by the editorial board, the complete draft was discussed in an IDC meeting, which resulted in some controversial points among IDC delegates. On many of these points a compromise on the working level was found during IDC meetings or in bilateral meetings of the respective departments (MV3). However, some issues could not be settled at the lower levels of the hierarchy. Instead of simply cutting the controversial parts out of the strategy to reduce the

level of conflict, the committee of State Secretaries was asked to find a compromise on the issue (MV1). In this regard, the decision-making process benefitted from this high-level committee that complemented the IDC on the working level, because it provided a structured outlet for conflict resolution. Furthermore, the early involvement of high-ranked bureaucrats resulted in an unproblematic formal governmental procedure of preparing the cabinet meeting:

> *"The formal process was cut short, because every IDC delegate had already read the paper two or three times and the State Secretaries had already approved it in their meeting (MV1_14).*

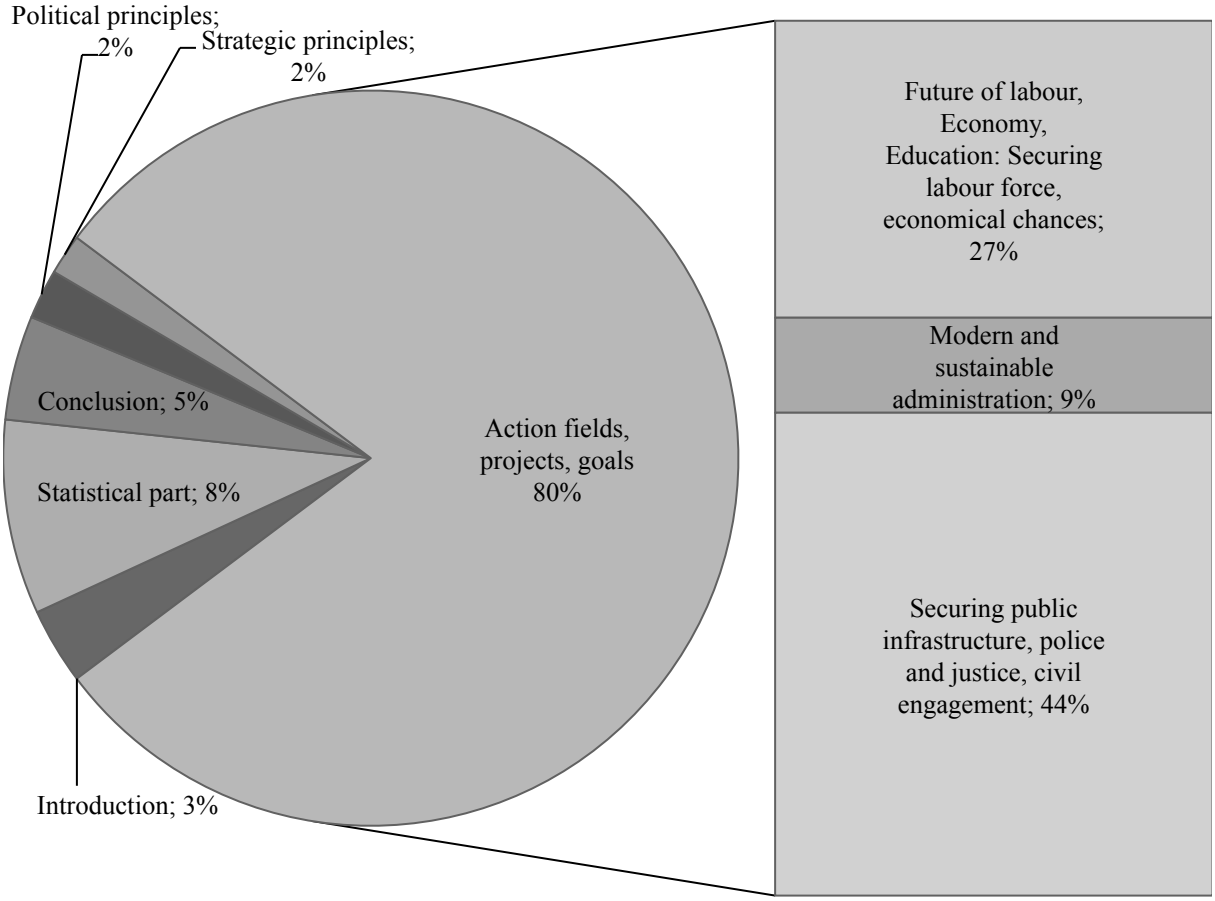
7.5.2. Coordination output

We will now analyze the coordination output of the IDC. So far, only one demography strategy was published in 2011 and updated in terms of statistical information in 2014 (State Chancellery Mecklenburg-Vorpommern 2011).

7.5.2.1. Demography strategy (2011)

The report encompasses 132 pages. It is divided into eight chapters that serve different purposes.
First, the statistical part provides the latest data on the demographic development as well as consequences thereof for the state budget in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern. Second, the chapters on strategic and political principles outline more general guidelines how to tackle demographic change. For example, it is stated that demographic change needs to be perceived as a chance or the combination of adaptation and mitigation measures is promoted. However, these guidelines are formulated in a rather vague way with presumably little impact on policy making. Third, the biggest part of the report is on action fields, projects and goals to be achieved.

Figure 15 Structure of Demography Strategy Mecklenburg-Vorpommern (2011)



Addressing interdependence

Throughout the whole strategy several claims can be found that stress the need for a coherent and cross-cutting approach to tackle demographic change. For example, the part on action fields, project and goals was "*deliberately organized in a cross-cutting way*" (p. 6), because "*consequence [of demographic change] do not stop at organizational boundaries and the government understands demographic change as a cross-cutting task*" (p. 5). However, despite the acknowledgment on the rhetorical level, interviewees perceive the strategy's actual ambition to address interdependence as rather modest:

> *"In the report it's still clearly visible who drafted which part […] But we tried to coordinate the overlapping policy areas that they at least do not contradict each other […] The sectoral approach is visible, but we tried to address the interfaces" (MV2_15).*

In a similar vein, another interviewee from a line department is rather disappointed by the lack of ambition of the strategy:

> *"In methodical terms, the report is not complete. Essentially, the report is a presentation of the general problem. Then there are sectoral passages that outline*

what single departments perceive as necessary or important. Then there is a conclusion - and that's it […] If its about a complex problem, the report is not complete, because the overlap of policy domains is not explicitly addressed […] I have to say […] it's avoidance of complexity" (MV4_16).

In addition, there seems to be a discrepancy between the upcoming financial situation and the projects presented in the report:

"We have a budget that will shrink in 2020 because federal funding will be shut down […] In 2010 or 2011 we assessed very roughly the projects in our report. Will they lead to more or less costs? We found that 119 of 139 will lead to more costs […] So, in the same report we state that the budget will shrink and then we present projects that will lead to higher costs - that doesn't seem to be the solution to a complex problem […] Too me, the report is a bit underperformed" (MV4_17).

Furthermore, from a more methodic perspective, the interviewee seems to be rather disappointed regarding the center's ambition to support the coordination process with certain tools:

"There is no conceptual tackling of complexity. Every department writes its own stuff […] In one meeting I said I would like to see some techniques like visualizations or a complexity matrix. What causes of demographic change might be multi-functional and might therefore be especially effective for tackling demographic change, and so on. They listened to me and then ignored it completely […] After the meeting, the chair came to me and said: 'You take this quite seriously!'" (MV4_18).

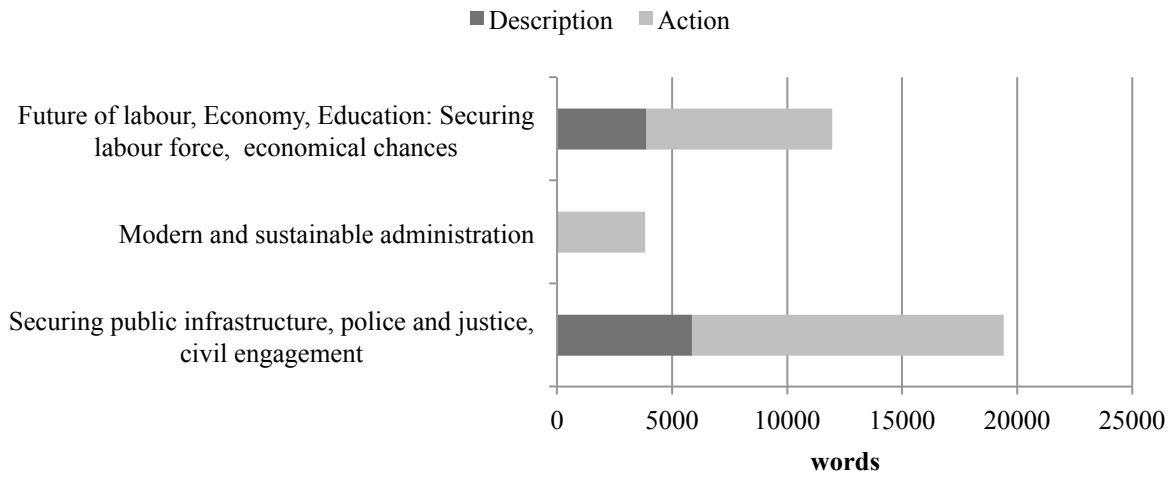
Setting specific goals

The report's part on action fields, projects and goals is divided as follows: 28 % is spent on policy domain specific situational analysis and description, while 72 % sketches projects and other possibilities of adaptation and mitigation. However, although the lion's share of this part is dedicated to "action", there is a lot of text spend on programs that were already planned and implemented in the past. This is confirmed by one interviewee:

"The report consists of large blocks in which it is reported what happened. The parts on the future and what will be done could have been a bit bigger […] The next report needs to be more strategic" (MV3_19).

In other words, the report does not formulate "own" goals and projects that can be regarded as a genuine coordination output of the IDC, but rather collects departmental projects and showcases them.

Figure 16 Distribution of descriptive vs. programmatic parts, Demography Strategy Mecklenburg-Vorpommern (2011)



Implementation mechanisms

There are no implementation mechanisms. Indeed, transferring the IDC's work into actual policies is perceived as a major challenge:

> *"We don't have a lack of information, we have a lack of implementation […] What we made clear [in the report] needs to be transferred into regular policies [i.e. programs, laws]. We have a good paper […] But the governmental and administrative routines will be business as usual […] That's the essential problem" (MV2_20).*

Reporting, monitoring & evaluation

There are no formal indicators for evaluating the action plan. According to an interviewee both, the missing implementation mechanism and the absence of indicators can be explained by the rather early stage of the approach of tackling demographic change in which the strategy paper is only seen as a first step:

> *"We need an operationalization of the strategy. That would be the next step. Okay, we have our strategy, we discussed it with civil society actors and now we operationalize it. Who does what and how is this then monitored? […] It wasn't on the agenda, yet. But we'll need to do it. The best paper is worthless without implementation" (MV2_21).*

7.5.3. Conclusion

Conclusion of the coordination process

Regarding the *role of the chair*, we found that the State Chancellery perceived its own role as a moderator mostly engaged in organizing the coordination process in an efficient manner. Consequently, there was little influence on substantial content during the coordination process and little ambition to commit departments on cross-cutting problem perspectives. Interestingly, interviewees would have wished for more central guidance and appeared to be

rather disappointed of the State Chancellery's passive role. The chair's role lies between positive and negative coordination, because the State Chancellery included all line departments in a participatory-approach from the very beginning, but remained passive with regard to committing departments towards a cross-cutting result.
With regard to *information processing*, we analyzed a vertical and horizontal perspective. Vertically, IDC delegate were mostly engaged with their colleagues at the lower levels of the departmental hierarchy with little attention of their political leadership. Horizontally, cross-cutting discussion within the IDC took place, but resulted only rarely in anything else than information exchange. However, these horizontal interactions increased trust between bureaucrats and triggered joint projects in some cases. Therefore, the information-processing within the IDC in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern resembles a position between negative and positive coordination. *Decision-making* and conflict resolution was mostly based on an administrative action orientation. The topic of demographic change was not on the agenda of politicians, because it was perceived as very hard to be communicated in a positive way. Consequently, the decision-making process within the IDC was based on departmental problem perspectives and traditional roles within the government. Especially the Department of Finance turned out to be a dominant actor that tried to fulfill its role as the watchdog of the budget within the IDC. Here, the State Secretaries' Committee served as an important outlet to efficiently deal with conflict and to avoid solutions based on the lowest common denominator. However, departmental interests were still the dominant driver for decision-making. Hence, the decision-making process resembles negative coordination.

Table 28 Coordination process in the Mecklenburg-Vorpommern case

	Description	**Positive vs. negative coordination**
Role of chair	perceived as moderator with little ambition to steer substantial content towards more coherence	-+
Information processing	open discussions rarely policy relevant increased trust	-+
Decision-making	departmental interests dominant	-

Conclusion of coordination output

The demography strategy in the Mecklenburg-Vorpommern case resembles negative coordination. Although the structure of the report is deliberately organized in a cross-cutting way, sub-chapters are still clearly separated from each other and represent sectoral contributions from departments. There is little commitment to specific joint goals and consequently no implementation mechanism and evaluation criteria.

Table 29 Coordination output in the Mecklenburg-Vorpommern case

	Description	**Positive vs. negative coordination**
Addressing interdependence	only rhetorical acknowledgement of interdependence	-
Setting specific goals	vague goals projects presented that were already planned	-
Implementation mechanisms	none	-
Reporting, monitoring & evaluation	none	-

Secondary output

It's worthwhile to reflect on the secondary output of the IDC, apart from producing the primary output, i.e. a rather modestly ambitious demography strategy. First, the IDC is perceived as a successful way to disseminate knowledge on demographic change and its implications into each department by providing an arena of discussion and exchange. In this regard, the report is seen as "*a good starting point*" (MV1) for the further strategy process. Second, there were spontaneous joint projects of departments that were facilitated by the IDC and would not have come into existence without it. These projects were possible, because the IDC established contact between bureaucrats from different departments and contributed to a relationship based on trust, which made informal interactions and cooperation more likely (MV2).

7.6. Case V - State Chancellery - Saxony

Interview data on the coordination process in Saxony covers events from 2004 to 2011, i.e. the period in which the IDC was established and the demography strategy was drafted. During the whole period of time, a coalition government was in power, led by a Prime Minister of the CDU.

Table 30 Governments in Saxony, 2004-2014

Legislative period	Governing parties	Prime Minister
2004-2008	CDU / SPD	Georg Milbradt
2008-2009	CDU / SPD	Stanislaw Tillich
2009-2014	CDU / FDP	Stanislaw Tillich

Establishment

In Saxony, demographic change was traditionally perceived as a *Chefsache* that is given priority by the Prime Minister. Both, Kurt Biedenkopf (1990-2002) and Georg Milbradt (2004-2008) are described as political quite engaged in the topic (SN1, SN2, SN5). However, the topic was not very popular within the line departments and was rather discussed at the municipal level that was aware of potential problems much earlier (SN1). It took until a population projection in 1999 to start a debate among the departments and to increase awareness for the problem (SN2). At this time, demographic change became organizationally affiliated to the State Chancellery by an own section:

> *"[Prime Minister] Biedenkopf was interested in the topic and therefore it was not questioned by anyone that the topic and its* Federführung *belonged to the State Chancellery" (SN2_1).*

In 2004, Prime Minister Biedenkopf declared demographic change a focus topic of his term of office and chaired a demography conference (SN1, SN5). In the same year, the IDC was established and the State Chancellery became its chair organization and was put in charge of its management. The tasks of the IDC was to develop a strategy on demographic change and provide future guidelines for action (SN2). To complement the IDC and to provide an interface to the political realm, a State Secretaries committee was also established, chaired by the Head of the State Chancellery (SN2).

Staff composition

The IDC is staffed with members that are ranked as heads of section or officials. Usually, they are sent from policy units (*Grundsatzreferate*) and, therefore, have a broad perspective over their department's policy portfolio (SN1, SN2, SN3). Although some departments' policy portfolio were not very closely connected to demographic change, IDC delegates were perceived as "*very engaged*", which is attributed to the open and productive discussion atmosphere within the IDC (SN4). The composition of individual members is relatively

stable, with some variation after elections (SN4, SN5). Interestingly, the chair of the IDC is very aware of the usual departmental mindset of delegates and tries to counter this by establishing a group identity:

> *"We try to establish a group identity […] We want the delegates' departmental background to become less important if he's engaged in the IDC. Of course, this remains important, but he shall also be looking forward to IDC meetings" (SN2_2).*

Furthermore, the chair acknowledges that the IDC puts a lot of work into bureaucrats' schedules on top of duties that already exist. Hence, another possibility to organize cross-cutting policy making would be to establish a project group staffed with delegates from departments that work full-time on the project group's task (SN2).

7.6.1. Coordination process

So far, the IDC only produced one action plan (Staatskanzlei Sachsen 2010). Consequently, we will focus on the coordination process that led to this report.

7.6.1.1. Role of chair

State Chancellery as the better coordinator?

The chair formulates its own role as "coordination and looking forward two or three years" and argues that a more coherent policy is ensured by the involvement of the State Chancellery (SN1). Accordingly, interviewees agree that the State Chancellery is the appropriate place to coordinate the cross-cutting issue of demographic change (SN1, SN2, SN3, SN4, SN5), because it has more weight during the coordination process:

> *"In Saxony, there is the understanding that the* Richtlinienkompetenz *of the Prime Minister has some weight. Consequently, in the Saxonian administrative culture, the State Chancellery has a slight advantage" (SN2_3).*

From this observation, a normative claim regarding the State Chancellery's role in coordinating cross-cutting projects is derived:

> *"Central topics need to be coordinated by the State Chancellery, but there is always the need for a sense of tact. But the center secures quick responses by the departments and a minimal level of quality. It's just like that" (SN4_4).*

This *sense of tact* is a necessary trait of the center during coordination, not only to demonstrate respect for the departmental autonomy: If the State Chancellery overstrains exercise of authority (e.g. by constant reference to the Prime Minister's possible intervention), its sword simply gets blunt (SN4). In addition, *sense of tact* is complemented by *fairness* as an important trait, which is mentioned several times by the same interviewee:

> *"I have to say it was always a fair process, I really want to emphasize that. Even in cases of conflict it's been very fair. And that was necessary, because otherwise the departments would have refused their cooperation […] The State Chancellery pushed*

the topic for the whole time, but in a good way. And one could influence the process, it was a good and open atmosphere" (SN4_5).

Both quotes illustrate the State Chancellery's capabilities (see section 5.3.3.4) to steer inter-departmental coordination by borrowed authority (sense of tact) and it reputation as a neutral broker (fairness).

Scheduling the IDCs work in the long run

When scheduling the IDC's work in a broader sense, the chair needs to take into account the legislative periods and respective elections, because elections do quite likely trigger party-political conflict that is then transferred into the IDC and meetings get tougher as elections come closer (SN1, SN2, SN4). Furthermore, while meetings usually take place two to three times per year, the IDC is on "*stand by*" (SN1) before elections. Hence, crucial decisions and milestones need to be fixed during the first two years of a term of office to be effectively addressed (SN1).

Regarding the general planning of the schedule, interviewees hold that the State Chancellery managed to keep delegates in the loop without overwhelming them with too many meetings:

"There [in the State Chancellery] is a lot of experience with inter-departmental bodies or topics. They have a good pace regarding meetings […] On the one hand, information are kept up to date and the topic remains present in the departments. On the other hand, departments do not get overwhelmed" (SN3_6).

The chair invited the departments to meetings based on need, without a fixed schedule in mind (SN1, SN2). The invitations included an agenda for the respective meeting (SN3) and the possibility for the departments to add own topics, which was rarely done (SN4). An usual meeting lasted for two hours (SN3).

Compiling the report

The whole strategy text was written in the State Chancellery, based on discussions with the departments and external experts, e.g. from the ifo institute or Bertelsmann Foundation (SN1, SN2, SN4). A first step was to "*get the topic into the departments*" (SN1). This "*intensive debate*" (SN2) already started in 2006 and was also complemented by detailed bilateral talks between the State Chancellery and line departments on more specific matters regarding current problems and expectations with regard to demographic change. During this early phase, the departments were also asked to provide a lot of their information, problem analyses and solutions within their specific policy domain in a condensed form to the State Chancellery (SN4, SN5):

"There was an enormous request for information by the State Chancellery. The departments were flooded with very detailed requests […] This caused a growing sense of alienation between the Chancellery and the departments […] At a certain point the State Chancellery had to hang a little lower to keep the departments on board […] The State Chancellery was a bit euphoric how much information, […] ideas and strategic thought was available in the departments" (SN5_7).

After three years of discussion, the first draft was completely written by the State Chancellery and subsequently presented within the IDC to keep the departments informed and to provide a structured possibility for line departments' feedback (SN1, SN2, SN4, SN5):

> *"There needs to be first draft that is then discussed. It is really an interaction. The chair provided fundamental, structural ideas, but at the same time was interested in our ideas and questions. And there was the chair's willingness to include these things into the draft" (SN3_8).*

Furthermore, to ensure political support right from the beginning of the process, an early draft of the strategy was discussed by the State Secretaries' committee (SN2). It took another two years of discussion within the IDC based on the State Chancellery's draft until an agreement was reached and the formal process of co-signature and the preparation of the cabinet decision began. However, as the draft was already based on intensive discussions with the departments, it was not fundamentally changed, but rather expanded and edited in certain areas (SN2).

7.6.1.2. Information processing

As in the other case studies, we will discuss information processing within the IDC in Saxony from a vertical (intra-departmental) and horizontal (inter-departmental) perspective.

The vertical dimension

Intra-departmental vertical information processing is mostly limited to the working level (SN1, SN2, SN3, SN4, SN5). The political leadership is only consulted or briefed in rather rare cases deemed politically relevant by the respective delegate. Hence, a certain understanding of political action orientations is required to keep the political leadership adequately informed, without overestimating its capacity to process information or getting perceived as overly eager:

> *"You need to make sure not to flood the leadership, because they get 20 or 30 of those briefings each day. You don't want to be the official, who is perceived to make himself too important" (SN4_9).*

This partly also true for the higher-ranked bureaucrats within the own department. Hence, a lot of anticipation regarding the preferences of the respective head of division and State Secretary is necessary (SN4).

Regarding vertical coordination with the own department's sectional level, ensuring appropriate distribution of information within the "home departments" on matters discussed in the IDC is seen as an important task of IDC delegates that requires an adequate overview regarding the department's policy portfolio (SN3). IDC delegates are also important as "*multiplicators*" (SN3) of a cross-cutting approach to demographic change vis-a-vis their expert colleagues in the departments and their respective selective perceptions on demographic change (SN3). In this sense, they are interfaces that communicate in both directions: on the one hand, they defend their departments preferences within the IDC and

need to make sure that departmental projects are appropriately showcased in the IDC and that the own department's interests are represented in the coordination process and output (SN3, SN4). On the other hand, they promote the concerns of the IDC within their departments.

The horizontal dimension

Interviewees report an open atmosphere and lively discussions within the IDC that resulted in a "*creative work environment*" (SN4). It was a declared goal of the State Chancellery to provide an arena for effective exchange that overcomes departmental borders by establishing a constructive atmosphere:

> *"We aspired open and honest discussions. It doesn't help if everybody hides behind the shield of departmental responsibility and needs clearance for every sentence. That does not get us anywhere" (SN2_10).*

However, one must not confuse discussions with formal decisions, as both seem to be clearly separated:

> *"Discussions are more lively, intensive and open than official procedures. It's just like that […] As soon as things get recorded in writing, people become more cautious" (SN2_11).*

Similarly, discussion between departments did mostly not change the dominant discourse or approach within the respective departments, because the IDC, of course, did not change the formal policy portfolios of departments and the respective selective perception of problems and solutions. For example, the Department of the Interior funded projects that were meant to persuade the population to move into cities, while the Department of Rural Development funded projects that tried to get people out of the cities. This apparent contradiction was discussed within the IDC, but policies did not change. Nevertheless, discussions within the IDC were perceived as "*trust building*" (SN4), making future bilateral cooperation more likely. Often, discussions followed presentations of delegates on current projects and developments regarding demographic change (SN3, SN4). Similarly, one interviewee emphasizes the IDC's function as a tool to gain information on other departments' internal concerns that would be much more difficult otherwise (SN5).

7.6.1.3. Decision-making

In general, the final decision-making process within the IDC was perceived as not very controversial and based on the expertise of the lower ranks of departmental hierarchies. Put differently, most conflict was settled on the working level, without the involvement of the political leadership or top-level bureaucrats (SN2, SN3, SN4). This is attributed to both, the commitment and work ethos of individual delegates and the participative management style of the State Chancellery discussed earlier (SN4).

Nevertheless, there war also some sources for conflict within the IDC illustrating potential dynamics within IDCs worth discussing.

Party-political struggles

First, in some rare cases, party-political conflict infused by a political action orientation within the subsequent coalition governments of CDU/SPD (2004-2009) and CDU/FDP (2009-2014) made the work of the IDC more difficult.

> *"During the grand coalition, the SPD established a little own State Chancellery within the Department of Economics and they installed distinguished SPD members from some West German states that had not been in Saxony before […] One of them became member in the IDC and checked whether everything is fine here. So, party competition was transferred into the IDC (SN4_12)".*

The politicization of the IDC is based on the interviewee's recognition of a certain style of saying things that is attributed to party-political competition, rather than usual departmental struggle:

> *"I had the feeling it's not about demographic change in the IDC […] Sometimes there were situations of conflict with reference to topics that didn't play any role in the IDC before: 'There and there you did that and this. We always told you that we see things differently' and so on. The* we *indicated very clearly to me that it wasn't about a department, but a political party" (SN4_13).*

We already briefly mentioned the importance of elections for triggering political conflict and, hence, the importance of scheduling the IDC's work according to the elections. This can be further illustrated by the fact that the demography strategy's draft was already finished in 2009, but was not decided upon by the cabinet because elections were near (SN4).

After the elections in 2009, the FDP became a coalition partner and took over responsibility for the Department of Economics. Party-political struggles continued to affect the work of the IDC:

> *"The delegate from the Department of Economics was not able to make any credible promises, because everything he said was conditional on the Minister's final approval. That made the cooperation very difficult" (SN5_14).*

Put differently, the politicization of the IDC made it less functional, because agreements and tentative outputs were sometimes made obsolete:

> *"We drafted a paper in a sub-committee in which the Department of Economics had participated. We reached a consensus on the paper, but the Department of Economics refused the co-signature and had new ideas […] without any technical or scientific foundation. It was just politically motivated and that's not acceptable […] The delegate from the Department of Economics was the conveyor of bad news: Guys, I worked on this and agreed on the draft, but now it's obsolete" (SN4_15).*

Both, the conflict with the SPD and FDP coalition partner required the CDU-led State Chancellery to engage in a lot of political management "*by internal talks*" (SN2, SN4) between the Head of State Chancellery and the respective Ministers. This is perceived as a task that can only be adequately accomplished by the State Chancellery (SN4). However, as

already mentioned, most conflict was settled at the lower ranks of the hierarchy among delegates of the IDC (SN2).

Agreeing on indicators as a source of conflict

Second, next to party-political conflict, controversy emerged within the IDC as a result to the State Chancellery's ambition to include indicators as an instrument of evaluation into the demography strategy. The State Chancellery's goal was to commit the departments to the demography strategy's long term perspective:

> *"[After the strategy's publication] the administration would fall back to passivity and be happy not to have new tasks to care for. So you need to keep the administration busy somehow" (SN2_16).*

Not surprisingly, the introduction of indicators proved to be a major point of controversy among the departments. However, the State Chancellery was able to settle the conflict and eventually succeeded:

> *"The biggest point of discussion was the introduction of indicators. We [the State Chancellery] decided to include benchmarks and milestones what we want to achieve by 2030. And that was the biggest issue with very controversial opinions within the IDC. Some were completely against it, some questioned the choice of indicators. But in the end, we were able to get our draft through the process with little changes, but after many discussions" (SN2_17).*

Topics left out and the good-news bias

Although the State Chancellery was successful in achieving agreement on indicators and large parts of its initial draft, some controversial points were left out to avoid party-political struggles (SN2). Furthermore, due to its political action orientation, the State Chancellery's draft did not include "*bad news*" (SN4) and rather wanted to "*spread optimism*" (SN4). This is perceived as one disadvantage of putting the State Chancellery in charge of such topics:

> *"If such a topic is managed from the State Chancellery, very near to the political leadership, there is obviously the danger of having a negatively attributed topic in the Chancellery. That's certainly a problem that one needs to be aware of" (SN5_18).*

7.6.2. Coordination output

So far, the IDC only produced one output (State Chancellery Saxony 2010).

7.6.2.1. Action plan (2010)

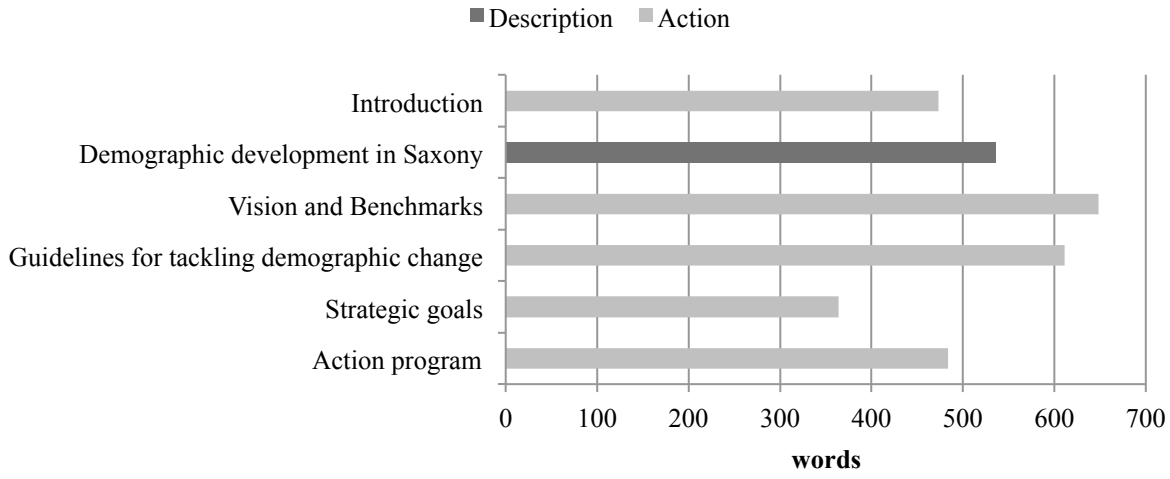
Interestingly, without the appendix, the action plan encompasses 10 pages only (17 with appendix). There is nearly no statistical information provided, which is based on a deliberate choice of the State Chancellery:

"We deliberately did not include a descriptive part [i.e. statistical information on population projections] in the report, although many other German states did […] The Department of the Interior drafts a population prognosis in each legislative period, anyway […] So, we concentrated on the implementation of the action plan and projects" (SN2_19).

Addressing interdependence

Throughout the action plan, we can find several claims that stress the need for coherence and cross-cutting policy making to adequately tackle demographic change. In addition, the report is not simply a collection of departmental contributions, because it was completely written by the State Chancellery. Rather, as already shown earlier, the action plan is based on intense discussions that included perspectives from various departments from the very beginning. This approach is also illustrated by the report's structure. It is not structured according to policy domains and topic areas, but in much more encompassing chapters, like "vision and benchmarks" or "strategic goals". It therefore clearly differs from reports that only compile departmental contributions.

Figure 17 Structure of Action plan Saxony (2010)



Setting specific goals

The report formulates seven "*strategic goals*" (p. 5) that are seen as necessary to adapt and mitigate demographic change in Saxony. These goals are: 1) improving the labor and income situation in Saxony; 2) improving life long learning and capacity for innovation; 3) securing public services in rural areas; 4) improving the cooperation between generations; 5) adapting the city and public service structure to new needs; 6) utilizing chances of active aging and 7) creating a modern administrative structure.

The seven strategic goals are complemented by eight specific projects (p. 9-10). The projects include 1) the operationalization of the seven strategic goals that are ought to addressed by the departments in a cross-cutting manner; 2) the introduction of a "demography check" as a tool of evidence-based policy making; 3) the improvement of E-Government services; 4)

improving the open-mindedness of Saxony regarding labor migrants and refugees; 5) improving the situation of local governments; 6) testing new approaches in model regions and 7) improving the cooperation between local governments.

Implementation mechanisms

The report includes a detailed implementation plan that serves as a "*road map with deadlines*" (SN1). In this implementation plan the eight projects are further operationalized into smaller packages with responsible departments and explicit deadlines.

The process of actual implementation

Although our analysis is primarily interested, whether the demography strategies feature an implementation mechanism in the first place, we shall also reflect briefly on the actual process of implementation. However, this will not influence our assessment of the coordination output, because this thesis' analysis does not include the process of implementation.

Albeit the implementation plan is very detailed and straightforward, implementation proved to be very difficult:

> *"During the implementation of the action plan, there were some departments that suddenly said: We will not fulfill our task […] Quality and quantity was quite reduced, compared to what departments had initially promised […] There are departments that didn't deliver anything, yet" (SN5_20).*

Furthermore, the implementation of each project listed in the implementation plan faces the same obstacles as the action plan itself - the tendency to agree upon the lowest common denominator.

> *"If you write things [into the draft] that are problematic, then there is the danger of a veto by the own departmental and even more so by another department. To me, these are the limits of action plans. Despite all the effort put into coordination and information exchange - at the end of the day there is the question: 'Do me make a boiled down paper without substance or a really good, really critical paper […] that outlines unpleasant consequences?'. And then there is the danger of not getting it accepted" (SN5_21).*

Put differently, departmentalism becomes virulent again, even though a "grand picture" (i.e. the action plan) had already been approved:

> *"That's the big problem that can't be solved by an IDC […] All our experiences made in the past show that the departmental interests remain too dominant" (SN5_22).*

The State Chancellery tried to exercise its authority to "*monitor and steer*" (SN1) departments and remind them of their assigned obligations through bilateral talks (SN1):

> *"The Head of the State Secretary's sent letters to them: 'According to the cabinet decree this and that needs to be done. We ask for your draft until xyz'" (SN2_23).*

A second possible intervention by the State Chancellery during implementation of the action plan was to act as a mediator in cases of conflict between departments over joint projects.

> *"During the implementation of the action plan, departments were responsible for drafting own proposals. And sometimes there were problems and departments could not agree upon certain issues. Then, we [the State Chancellery] engaged to start the process over or accelerated it or say: 'Due to this and that consideration, we agree with this side'" (SN2_24).*

However, success of these interventions of the State Chancellery is not guaranteed: Sometimes, departments did not deliver their work packages, although there was high-level commitment at the side of the State Chancellery:

> *"There was quite some pressure […] There were talks on the State Secretary level and the State Chancellery wanted to know why nothing was delivered […] But it didn't followed anything […] After the term of office, the whole thing slowed down" (SN5_25).*

Reporting, monitoring & evaluation

Saxony's demography strategy includes nine indicators that are meant to monitor the demography strategy in the long run. The nine indicators are grouped into three categories: economy, education and equality of chances. These indicators are meant to be "*the benchmark until 2030 whether Saxony is able to implement its vision. They include the long-term goals and serve for the qualitative and quantitative assessment of the development*" in Saxony (Staatskanzlei Sachsen 2010: 5).

Table 31 Indicators in Saxony's Action plan

Economy	**Education**	**Equality of chances**
GDP per employed person is on west-German level	Less than 5% leave school without graduation	Debt per person remains on the same level
At least 3% of the GDP are spent on research & development by private or public actors	50% of people older than 18 are eligible for higher education	Ambulance provides first aid within 12 minutes in every part of Saxony
Saxony is among the top three non-city states regarding jobs per 1000 persons	Saxony is among the top three states in national education benchmarks	Saxony's economic clusters (20000 jobs; 400 employees per 1000 inhabitants) can be reached within 60 minutes with public transport

7.6.3. Conclusion

Conclusion of the coordination process

Regarding the *role of the chair organization*, we can conclude that the State Chancellery was very active in compiling the action plan on demographic change. This is true for both, managing the meetings and drafting the actual action plan based on intense discussions with departments. Although the whole draft was written by the Chancellery, it was not based on a specialized and narrow perspective on demographic change, but resembled a variety of perspectives from all departments from the very beginning. Therefore, the chair's role resembles positive coordination.

With regard to *information processing*, we found that vertical information exchange mostly happens between IDC delegates and their colleagues from the respective departments at the lower levels of hierarchy. Only in rare cases was the political leadership involved in preparation or debriefing of IDC meetings. From a horizontal perspective, delegates emphasized the lively discussions within the IDC that often followed presentations of departmental projects. However, these discussions were rarely able to influence departmental policy making. Therefore, information processing is situated between negative and positive coordination.

In terms of *decision-making*, it became evident that the State Chancellery's draft was not fundamentally contested and only slightly changed. However, some controversial parts were left out to avoid conflict. However, the State Chancellery was still able to put indicators into the demography report and defend them against the departments. Hence, the report is not fully based on the lowest common denominator, although certain topics were left out of the report to avoid conflict. In sum we assess that the decision-making process therefore resembles elements of negative and positive coordination.

Table 32 Coordination process in the Saxony case

	Description	**Positive vs. negative coordination**
Role of chair	participatory approach that included departments from the beginning	+
Information processing	open discussions rarely policy relevant	-+
Decision-making	party-political struggles some topics left out State Chancellery defended indicators against departments	-+

Conclusion of coordination output

The demography strategy in the Saxony case resembles positive coordination to a large extend. Strategic goals and outlined projects are designed in a cross-cutting way to overcome

departmental boundaries. The responsibilities for the projects are outlined in the implementation plan that also sets deadlines. Furthermore, the action plan features nine indicators that are ought to be used as a benchmark for the aspired situation in 2030.
However, we also encountered problems during the implementation phase of the action plan requiring interventions of the State Chancellery that were not always successful.

Table 33 Coordination output in the Saxony case

	Description	**Positive vs. negative coordination**
Addressing interdependence	policy interdependence addressed	-+
Setting specific goals	goals exist	-+
Implementation mechanisms	implementation plan exists	+
Reporting, monitoring & evaluation	indicators exist	+

8. Cross-case comparison and discussion

This thesis utilized an adapted version of actor-centered institutionalism to answer two research questions related to inter-departmental coordination. In the following, we will conduct a cross-case comparison to answer these two research questions formulated earlier. Towards this end, we will comparatively discuss the results of our case studies regarding the question whether IDCs achieve positive coordination (RQ I) and the role of the State Chancellery for achieving positive coordination in IDCs (RQ II). Furthermore, we will briefly discuss why IDCs exist at all and finally, we will sketch avenues for further research on IDCs.

8.1. Research question I: Do IDCs achieve positive coordination?

To answer the first research question we distinguished between coordination as a *process* (i.e. interactions within the IDC) and as an *output* (i.e. the respective demography strategies).

Coordination process

The coordination process was analyzed along the dimensions *role of chair organization*, *information processing* and *decision-making*. In sum, we find that the coordination process in nearly all cases resembles negative coordination, with the exception of Saxony.

With regard to the *role of the chair organization*, we were interested whether the chair was actively trying to achieve coherence and to pool expertise and perspectives of all departments form the very beginning to improve the overall quality of the report (positive coordination), or whether the chair organization tried to foremost serve the interest of the own department by dominantly relying on own expertise and subsequently address criticism by departments in a second step (negative coordination). We found across all cases that there was clearly an uncontested dominant position in terms of procedural aspects, i.e. scheduling meetings and setting agendas, regardless whether the IDC was chaired by a line department or a State Chancellery. However, with regard to influence on actual content of the coordination outputs, there were some differences. In most cases, influence on content was rather limited to mere editorial revisions and departments had considerable autonomy regarding their contributions to the committees' output. Only in Saxony and Brandenburg was the demography strategy completely written by the chair, after discussing its content with the departments in detail. However, in Brandenburg the strong position of the chair was limited to the first, mainly descriptive report. The usual way of compiling reports was to mutually discuss the table of content, which was then filled by rather uncontested departmental contributions. Although the chairs of the IDCs were eager to achieve coherence and a cross-cutting result by engaging in discussions with departments early on, they were regularly dependent on good-will of

departments. In sum, we find that the role of the chair organization in nearly all cases (except Saxony) resembles a middle-position between negative and positive coordination.

With regard to *information processing*, we distinguished a vertical perspective (i.e. intra-departmental information exchange between IDC delegates and their respective colleagues in the home department) and a horizontal one (i.e. discussions and information exchange within the IDC). We were interested, whether there are mutual and open discussions that ultimately serve to achieve a joint problem definition and policy implications thereof (positive coordination), or if the delegates rather tend to secrecy or deliver information on their own departments' point of view without joint discussions and understanding (negative coordination). The case studies revealed that vertically IDC delegates mostly interacted with their expert colleagues in the home departments from the sectional level. The political leaderships' preferences were usually rather anticipated and therefore contact to the Minister or State Secretaries was usually limited to explicit strategic questions of political relevance. Thus, the vertical dimension of the information processing dimension illustrates that the classic dialogue model (Mayntz and Scharpf 1975: 100ff.) is also valid in the context of IDCs. Given the limited time resources of the political leadership, bureaucrats constantly anticipate the political preferences of the leadership and require a good sense what the Minister really needs to know regarding the respective IDC. However, there also exceptions from this general pattern. Consider Thuringia during the time of the drafting process of the failed demography report: the case study revealed that conflicts within IDCs are more likely to become politicized and thus problematic before elections. The IDC in Thuringia became politicized, i.e. an arena of party-political struggles, and therefore the political leadership of the involved departments became more interested and was regularly briefed on developments within the IDC by the respective delegates.

Horizontally, we found across all cases that IDCs were used as arenas for cross-cutting information exchange that often resulted in a broadened perspective on demographic change. In other words, delegates were free to discuss across organizational boundaries and were often interested in exchange with colleagues to broaden their perspective on demographic change. However, this open-mindedness was very clearly limited to verbal discussions. As soon as it came to credible commitment for joint action, the departmental mindset of delegates became dominant again, because delegates are clearly expected to defend their departments' interest within the IDC. Consequently, rarely did cross-cutting discussions became relevant for actual policy making. At best, discussions among delegates within the IDCs resulted in spontaneous coordination and bilateral joint projects as a desirable byproduct of the IDC. In sum, we find that information processing in all cases resembles a middle-position between negative and positive coordination. Although departmental interests stayed dominant and limited actual policy change, the oral discussions were still perceived as helpful in broadening the perspective on demographic change.

With regard to *decision-making*, we were interested whether decisions in the IDCs were dominated by departmentalism, turf-protection and therefore orientation towards the lowest common denominator (negative coordination) or rather by active contributions with the goal to improve the draft at stake (positive coordination). We found that nearly all cases resembled negative coordination. Decision-making was predominantly shaped by the departments' interests and their veto potential that often led to solutions based on the lowest-common

denominator. Put differently, controversial topics were usually left out of the demography strategies to keep the level of potential conflict low. An illustrative example in this regard is the *Werkstattbericht* (114 pages) in Brandenburg, which entirely consists of parts that were cut out of the official second demography strategy by departmental request. Only in one case was the chair organization willing to risk a bit of conflict: the Saxonian State Chancellery successfully defended overarching indicators and benchmarks as one part of the demography strategy against the departments' preferences, who tried to get rid of them. Therefore, we argue that the Saxony case resembles a middle-position between position between negative and positive coordination. A real ideal-typical example of positive coordination, in which the departments really *wanted* to contribute without resistance was not found in our case studies.

Coordination output

In our analysis we checked whether the coordination outputs of the IDCs under study *address interdependence*, set *specific goals*, include *implementation mechanisms* and feature a system of *monitoring & evaluation*. In sum, we find that the coordination outputs of all cases - with the exception of Saxony - rather lacks said features and thus resemble negative coordination to a large extend.

We found that addressing interdependence was rarely achieved in the coordination outputs under scrutiny. Most reports acknowledged the cross-cutting nature of demographic change in their introductory parts or conclusions. However, the more substantial parts that deal with policies rather stayed in their departmental remit without referencing to other policy domains. One explanation for this can be found in the typical way the demography strategies were usually drafted: after the tables of content were discussed, departments were typically responsible for providing content for their area of responsibility. This content was rarely contested and often only edited to match the style of language. However, really addressing interdependence would rather have required joint writing teams or a chair organization with much more influence on substantial content and the ambition and capability to actively search for coherence and policy integration. Only the Saxonian demography strategy was different in this regard. Its table of content did not follow the usual topic areas or policy domains, but was structured in more government-wide, encompassing terms, e.g. "vision" or "strategic goals". In contrast to the other cases, the Saxonian State Chancellery wrote the strategy completely alone after debating its content with the departments in detail. This made it possible to tackle demographic change outside of the usual departmental silos and to address more fundamental aspects. Both, regarding the *setting of specific goals* and *implementation mechanisms*, we found that most cases resemble negative coordination. Only in Saxony's demography strategy did we find explicit goals that were complemented by an implementation schedule. All other cases did not include such commitments to future action. Rather, reports listed departmental projects that were already planned and therefore do not count as coordination outputs of the respective IDCs. Regarding *monitoring and evaluation* we can conclude that only the Saxonian coordination output included indicators that were designed to put forward a benchmark for Saxony's economical and social situation in 2030.

In sum, both, the coordination process and coordination output largely resemble negative coordination, as Table 34 illustrates. Therefore, the question *Do IDCs achieve positive coordination?* can be answered with: they usually do not. "More coordination" is not simply achieved by setting up IDCs and coordination output can neither be taken for granted nor should one expect encompassing policy content to be achieved by IDCs.

However, differences occurred in the case of Saxony, whose peculiarities will be discussed later.

Table 34 Comparison of coordination process and output across all cases

		Thuringia	**Saxony-Anhalt**	**Brandenburg**	**Mecklenburg-Vorpommern**	**Saxony**
		Line department	*Line department*	*State Chancellery*	*State Chancellery*	*State Chancellery*
Coordination process (DV1)	Role of chair	-+	-+	-+	-+	+
	Information processing	-+	-+	-+	-+	-+
	Decision-making	-	-	-	-	-+
Coordination output (DV2)	Addressing interdependence	-	-	-	-	-+
	Setting specific goals	-	-	-	-	-+
	Implementation mechanisms	-	-	-	-	+
	Reporting, monitoring & evaluation	-	-	-	-	+

8.1.1. Factors limiting the potential of IDCs

In the following we will discuss the common factors that limited IDCs' potential to achieve positive coordination.

<u>The role of delegates and the dominance of departmental interests</u>

The usual role of delegates in IDCs is characterized by three factors: the importance of *departmental perspectives*, the need to find *consensus* and *conflict avoidance*.

While initial discussions within the IDCs were often open and cross-cutting, the actual willingness to cooperate diminished as soon as credible commitment became necessary,

which evidences the importance of *departmental perspectives* and the respective turf. The departments remained as the main frame of reference for individual delegates, which is caused by expectations that are attributed to the role of a departmental delegate. Clearly, they were expected to adequately represent their respective department's interest within the IDC. To do so, the delegates had to have a broad overview over their department's portfolio and agenda. In addition, delegates were required to be sensitive and detect any aspects discussed in the IDCs that might be significant for the own department and therefore must be reported back to colleagues or even the departmental leadership. In this sense, they served as an interface in both directions with a clear focus on their department. For the individual delegate, this focus on the own department is highly functional. Consider what we discussed in section 5.1.2.1: career prospects of individual bureaucrats depend to a large extent on single departments, because many bureaucrats stay within the same department during their entire career. Therefore, orientation towards the own departments' interests is highly incentivized.

However, the delegates' concentration on departmental interests is also highly functional from a more governmental point of view, because it ensures that potential conflict is addressed early on. Consider the formal prerequisites of the co-signature process (*Mitzeichnung*) that inevitably follows the more informal meetings of the IDCs. Any report prepared by the IDCs needs to pass the formal co-signature process that prepares the formal cabinet decision. Put differently, the formal co-signature process functions as a bottle neck for coordination that influences the coordination output remarkably. Ultimately, the formal co-signature process offers a possible "escape hatch" in case individual delegates were not able to adequately represent their departments' interests within the IDC.

Early detection of conflict ensures that the transition from the informal stages of coordination within the IDC to the formal process of co-signature runs smoothly. In other words, IDCs may include early participation of all departments and a more participatory approach in early stages of the coordination process, which certainly might be beneficial for potential positive coordination. However, what is actually sent to the co-signature process is assessed through the usual departmental lenses and therefore must not contradict any sectoral interests of individual departments. Of course, experienced chair organizations and delegates within IDCs anticipate this and accordingly cut controversial parts out of the report, before entering the formal co-signature process. They do so, because they understand the need to achieve *consensus* within the IDC to smoothly enter and pass the formal co-signature process. Cutting out controversial parts of the coordination output is a form of *conflict avoidance* that gets the job done, without hurting anybody.

In sum, delegates are interfaces between the IDC and the departments. They are crucial for ensuing information flows and detecting where things might go wrong. This is crucial for preparing a smooth co-signature process and ensures that IDCs at least produce a result, although this might rather not resemble positive coordination. Even if delegates would truly try to achieve an ambitious result, they still have to anticipate the following co-signature process. In Germany, co-signature as prescribed in the GGO has usually been attributed with the notion of negative coordination and IDCs and their members can usually not overcome this, because their agency is embedded within the institutional framework. Put differently, in the German politico-administrative system, departmental autonomy is a fundamental part of both, the regulative and normative dimensions of the institutional framework. Therefore,

IDCs might usually be able to achieve results that match the demands of this framework, but can't substantially change the way German governments work.

Blurred accountability of joint projects

Another factor connected to the dominance of departmental interests is the problem of *blurred accountability*. While many departments may have contributed content to a report in some way, only the chair organization in charge of *Federführung* may claim the credits for the finished report. In the case study on Saxony-Anhalt this problem was especially virulent, because large parts of the coordination output were contributed by a department that was not the lead department and therefore could not claim any credits for the strategy paper. This affected the motivation to actively engage in the IDC.

Elections and party-political competition in IDCs

Two other limiting factors that are closely connected are *the impact of elections on coordination in IDCs* and *party-political struggles within coalition governments.* IDCs are administrative coordination bodies usually staffed with middle-rank bureaucrats from many different departments that are ought to follow an administrative action orientation. Against this backdrop, it is worth noting that many IDCs still were affected by the legislative period in some way and that many chairs had to acknowledge the date of elections when planning their IDC's schedule in the long run. For example, consider that some IDCs entered a "stand-by mode" as early as one year before an election. Party-politically shaped conflict certainly became more explicit in pre-election contexts and the capacity to reach an agreement therefore decreased, as evidenced by the case studies of Thuringia and Saxony. Put differently, IDCs - although nominally being administrative bodies - can be very easily politicized and become infused with a political action orientation and party-political struggles. The study therefore once more illustrates that the idea of a clear separation between a political and an administrative sphere in government organizations is not very realistic.

8.1.2. The optimistic vs. pessimistic perspective on IDCs and coordination

In section 5.4.4 we discussed an optimistic and pessimistic perspective on IDCs' potential to achieve positive coordination. The pessimistic perspective mostly put forward the argument of departmentalism at the organizational level and emphasized self-interested departments with considerable autonomy in their area of competence and lack of motivation to pursue positive coordination. In contrast, the more optimistic perspective pointed to the beneficial consequences of stable working arrangements among individual bureaucrats as provided by IDCs, eventually leading to trust and consequently better flow of information. The pessimistic perspective offers a more realistic picture of IDCs and their role in coordination: although we found that the IDCs under scrutiny led to a more comprehensive understanding of demographic change, departmental interests and turf defending behavior was certainly more dominant and often resulted in agreements based on the lowest common denominator. However, as a side product of IDCs we can also partly confirm the optimistic perspective's argument that stable working arrangement lead to more trust over time and may trigger joint

projects. In our case studies, we referred to such side products as *secondary output of IDCs*: First, IDCs helped to disseminate the topic of demographic change within the government by bringing together various bureaucrats from different departments on a regular basis. In this sense they may serve as administrative agenda setters within the government. In addition, regular meetings of IDCs ensured that the topic remained somewhat present within the departments. Second, given a stable composition of IDC delegates, IDCs seem to enhance trust among individual bureaucrats over time. This could result in more informal coordination and quicker exchange of information outside the formal *Dienstweg*, e.g. people just pick up the phone and call their fellow colleagues. This might even result in spontaneous bilateral coordination and joint projects as a desirable side-effect of IDCs, as the case of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern illustrated.

8.2. Research question II: Does the State Chancellery as chair organization achieve positive coordination in IDCs?

First of all, interestingly, nearly all interviewees agreed that coordination of cross-cutting policies is more effectively done by the State Chancellery. According to the practitioners, the center is more likely able to overcome departmentalism and take care of policy coherence and ultimately enhance policy effectiveness. But do our results confirm the practitioners' claim?
As table Table 34 reveals, the answer to research question II *Does the State Chancellery as chair organization achieve positive coordination in IDCs?* is not a simple yes or no, because the cases in which the State Chancellery was in charge show dissimilar results. Four of five cases rather resemble negative coordination, regardless whether the State Chancellery was in charge (BB, MV) or a line department (TH, ST). Only Saxony, in which the IDC was chaired by the State Chancellery, actually developed in a different way and we found a coordination process and output closer to the ideal-type of positive coordination. Following the logic of our case selection and the most-similar systems design of this study, this means that the State Chancellery was a necessary, but not sufficient condition for more positive coordination. In other words, although the independent variable State Chancellery had an effect on the dependent variables coordination process and coordination output, there must be other factors that are also crucial for understanding the Saxonian case study and which explain why it developed differently. In the following, we will discuss those factors.

8.2.1. Why was Saxony different?

Academic research acknowledges that different centers of government can have different *roles* that influence their behavior and how they interact with line departments. How are differences between roles of the center of government usually explained? An usual explanation for these different roles is provided by pointing to different institutional and political contexts and traditions that are attributed to different countries (Pollitt and Bouckaert 2011; Proeller and Siegel 2008). This line of argumentation is rather convincing, given the different regulative and normative elements of the institutional context that might differ

remarkable across countries. However, we found different roles of State Chancelleries, albeit being situated in the *same* institutional context, i.e. the German politico-administrative system. Consider for example, while in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern the State Chancellery claimed the role of a neutral moderator without the ambition of influencing substantial content, in Brandenburg and Saxony there was much more ambition in terms of steering the coordination process towards more coherence. Since the institutional framework cannot account for this variance, we need to look at more actor-based arguments.

The focus on actor-based arguments brings us back to the capabilities of the State Chancellery to steer the coordination process that we discussed in section 5.3.3.4. We argued that State Chancelleries' capabilities are to be found in *borrowed authority*, *broad overview/political sensitivity* and *neutrality*. After finding different role profiles of State Chancelleries within the same institutional framework, we can plausibly argue that the role of the State Chancellery depends how these capabilities are actually used and activated during the coordination process.

First, *borrowed authority* was close connected to the style of political leadership of the Prime Minister. Accordingly, König holds that State Chancelleries' specific functions and working procedures largely depend on characteristics of the Prime Minister (1993: 16). Similarly, Peters simply argues "leadership is important" in coordination (2015: 142). In this line of argumentation, based on the political strength of the Prime Minister, State Chancelleries may be mere secretariats of the government or also actively engaged in centrally steering policy making (Becker 1989: 657; Schilling, Ruckh, and Rübcke 2009: 24; H. Schneider 2001: 283). It is plausible that coordination might be enhanced if the Prime Minister acts as a policy entrepreneur, who invests political capital in some way to improve the coordination between organizations and policy domains (Peters 2015: 140). As we have analyzed, the State Chancelleries' authority and capability to exert steering in the coordination process is based on the visible commitment of the Prime Minister and the declaration of a topic as *Chefsache* or the willingness to engage in conflict with other departments. However, coordination by the State Chancellery is a double-edged sword. On the one hand, the State Chancellery can exert influence and steer the coordination process to some extend as the main driver. On the other hand, the political action orientation proved to be a potential limit for more effective coordination and long-term commitment. Thus, inevitably, another question becomes then important: What are the topics that the Prime Minister actually wants to be engaged in as a policy entrepreneur?

In section 5.3.3.3, we discussed the dominance of a political action orientation within State Chancelleries that focuses predominantly on the potential for a successful re-election of the Prime Minister. This was confirmed in our case studies. For example, consider that the case studies evidenced how the State Chancelleries were engaged in the topic of demographic change and pushed its cross-cutting coordination, as long as demographic change was perceived as an issue that served the Prime Minister. Therefore, issues and *Chefsachen* that the State Chancellery and the Prime Minister might be engaged in are evaluated whether they serve the purpose of electoral success and not so much from a problem-solving perspective. This political action orientation proved to be especially tricky when it came to long-term commitment to demographic change. For example, in the case of Brandenburg, Platzeck's

kitchen cabinet decided that the topic of demographic change was not beneficial enough and consequently, the Prime Minister's engagement declined. Also in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern interviewees reported that the Prime Minister tried to avoid the topic, which might have contributed to a rather passive role of the State Chancellery mostly engaged in procedural moderation without the ambition to shape the substantial content of the coordination output. The argument in a nutshell would be that there needs to be a certain *topic fit* that addresses the Prime Minister's political action orientation and ensures that political capital is invested and the potential of the State Chancellery's capability of *borrowed authority* can unfold.

Second, next to borrowed authority, our case studies confirmed that the role of the State Chancellery is shaped by being perceived as a *neutral honest broker* and by acting in a *politically sensitive* way. How these two capabilities play out is closely connected to individual bureaucrats' skill with regard to collaboration within inter-organizational settings. For example, the Brandenburg case revealed how functionality of an IDC was attributed to the collaborative performance of one individual bureaucrat. Consequently, his retirement and the performance of the successor were described as a turning point for coordination of demographic change in Brandenburg. In Saxony, the chair's individual collaboration skills were encapsulated in the notions of "fairness" (i.e. capability of *neutral honest broker*) and "sense of tact" (i.e. capability of *political sensitivity*). This confirms the micro-based sources of power in inter-organizational settings that we captured by the concepts of boundary-spanning (Williams 2002: 117), network management (Hibbert, Huxham, and Smith Ring 2008; Klijn 2008: 130ff.) and social skills (Fligstein 1997: 398; 2001; Fligstein and McAdam 2012) (see section 4.3).

In sum, we argue that different roles of the State Chancelleries mattered for inter-departmental coordination in the cases under scrutiny and explain the differences we found in the State Chancellery cases. These different roles were contingent on the State Chancelleries' capabilities and how those were used and activated within the IDCs. We found that the combination of *borrowed authority*, perception as a *neutral honest broker and political sensitivity* was necessary for effectively influencing the coordination process and output.

In sum, we can conclude that the role of the State Chancellery in Saxony was different compared to Brandenburg and Mecklenburg-Vorpommern and resulted in more positive coordination in both the coordination process and output,

a) because the Saxonian Prime Ministers were visibly engaged in the topic of demographic change over the years and promoted the topic of demographic change as *Chefsache* (*borrowed authority*),
b) because the Saxonian Heads of the State Chancellery and Prime Ministers were engaged in conflict resolution within the coalition government (*borrowed authority*),
c) because the topic was perceived as viable for the political agenda of the Prime Minister, albeit a bit biased towards positive news and optimism (*borrowed authority & topic fit*) and finally,
d) because the chair of the IDC was perceived as "fair" and had "sense of tact" (*neutral honest broker & political sensitivity*).

Consequently, we confirm Bornemann's argument (2013: 343f.) that both, a strong head of government combined with a capable center of government are necessary to overcome

departmental turf wars and, thus, achieve more effective coordination. Put differently, political backup as well as individual bureaucrats' skill made the difference.

8.2.2. The optimistic vs. pessimistic perspective on State Chancelleries and coordination

What do our result tell us with regard to the two perspectives on the center of government in coordination, i.e. the optimistic and pessimistic perspective (see section 5.3.3.5). The optimistic perspective holds that that the center of government may be able to effectively coordinate cross-cutting policies by committed political leadership by the center that subsequently reduces departmental egoism and silo mentality. In contrast, the pessimistic perspective emphasizes that the center's potential of formulating and enforcing own policy initiatives or to improve coordination among departments is clearly limited by departmental autonomy. Our results show that the perspectives rather complement each other. Certainly, visible political leadership was instrumental in Saxony to achieve the cross-cutting coordination output. We also found that other factors, i.e. individual bureaucrats' skills, mattered for overcoming departmental resistance. In sum, the results show that achieving (positive) coordination is not simply done by putting the center of government in charge (consider the cases of Brandenburg and Mecklenburg-Vorpommern), but is much more complicated. This is even more true when one broadens the research focus from mere coordination output to outcome, i.e. implementation. The case of Saxony showed that successful implementation is by no means granted, even though based on a coordination output that resembles positive coordination.

8.3. Why do IDCs exist?

Why are IDCs established? We found that they (usually) do not achieve results that resemble more than the lowest common denominator of departmental preferences, regardless if they are chaired by the center of government. So, why do governments bother? In the following, we will discuss two potential explanations. However, we will not go into detail too much, because the focus and research interest of this thesis is on actual coordination behavior of IDCs and not to explain why and how they come into existence.

One potential explanation is based on a structural-instrumental perspective of organization theory (T. Christensen 2012: 150; T. Christensen et al. 2007: 20ff.) that conceptualizes organizations as "rational systems" (Scott 1998: 33ff.). From this perspective, IDCs are the organizational answer to perceived coordination demands, i.e. instruments established to achieve specific goals in an efficient manner. To some extend, this is exactly what IDCs do. They are usually mandated by the cabinet to come up with an inter-departmental answer to a specific issue that is perceived as a cross-cutting problem by the respective government's cabinet. IDCs offer a way of producing such outputs by pooling contributions from many actors in a process with comparatively low transaction costs, because the multilateral setting ensures that potential conflict is early detected and addressed. In contrast, successive bilateral

meetings between the chair organization and all departments would be much more time consuming. Certainly, often IDCs may not deliver the conclusive answer to a cross-cutting problem. However, they produce outputs that are "good enough" given the institutional and political constraints they usually face.

The second perspective sheds light on IDCs from an institutionalist point of view (T. Christensen 2012: 151; T. Christensen et al. 2007: 57). This perspective conceptualizes organizations as "open systems" that are influenced by their environment in various ways (Scott 1998: 82ff.). One possible institutionalist interpretation of the existence of IDCs is provided by Brunsson's concept of organized hypocrisy (2003a; 2003b). He argues that "hypocrisy is a fundamental type of behavior in the political organization: to talk in a way that satisfies one demand, to decide in a way that satisfies another, and to supply products in a way that satisfies a third" (Brunsson 2003b: 27). The starting point of this reasoning is that organizations face inconsistent demands formulated by the organization's environment, e.g. mass media, experts or professions. To satisfy these multiple demands at the same time and to win legitimacy and support, organizations de-couple talk, decision and action. However, this does not mean that policy-makers are deliberately trying to fool their environment in a tactical way. Rather, de-coupling is a way to cope with inconsistent environmental demands and keep the organization functional at the same time.

Consequently, while governmental *talk* about demographic change as a cross-cutting challenge might regularly stress the need for coordinated action, actual *decisions* and *actions* of governments might look quite differently. In this line of argumentation, *talk* would address demands from the general public and the media, which demands a functional and well coordinated government that delivers effective solutions for demographic change. This demand for coordination might be addressed by establishing committees and producing interdepartmental reports that demonstrate governmental activity and the ambition to coordinate. However, actual *decisions* and *actions* in interdepartmental coordination need to meet quite different demands. One might think of the constitutional principles that emphasize departmental autonomy, considerations of party-political competition and coalition governments with their requirements for compromise. From this perspective, demography strategies and IDCs rather serve as communication tools vis-a-vis the public. Consider, all IDCs under scrutiny were established by the cabinet (*talk*). But the respective Prime Ministers and Ministers were rarely interested in making the IDCs successful by actively searching for coherence (*decision* & *action*) - quite often they were not very interested in the IDCs' activities, as long as they did not become politically relevant, e.g. in terms power within the coalition or in pre-election contexts.

8.4. Avenues for further research

Obviously, this thesis could only capture a very narrow part of IDCs and their role in governmental coordination and which determinants shape the inner procedures of IDCs. In the following we will briefly sketch possible avenues for further research related to IDCs that might be instrumental in broadening our knowledge on these coordination bodies.

First, an interesting line of further research can be found in international comparisons regarding IDCs. For example, one could compare IDCs in the same policy domain chaired by the center of government in different national contexts. For example, while the center of government in Scandinavian countries is usually described as a moderator, the center in the United Kingdom is much more engaged in setting targets for departments and concentrates more power. Based on these different roles that are based in the institutional and political underpinnings, hypothesis regarding the center of government and its role in shaping coordination processes and outputs could be derived and empirically tested. In other words, while this thesis focused on different actor properties in the same context, an international comparison would shed light on the institutional and political context and its implications for coordination of cross-cutting policies.

Second, it could be interesting to compare the functionality of IDCs in different policy domains. This is closely connected to the intervening variable topic fit. Demographic change was often attributed with negative concepts like decline and financial cuts and therefore a bit unattractive for the center of government to be engaged with, which made political commitment difficult to achieve in the long-term. Therefore, comparing policy domains that differ regarding their potential conflict or reputation might add another interesting layer on the coordination debate.

Third, from a macro-perspective it would be worthwhile to analyze how the use of IDCs as coordination devices developed over time. This perspective could assess in a more quantitative way whether IDCs are the administration's typical response to an allegedly more complicated world with more and more cross-cutting policy issues and in which policy domains these IDCs were usually established. However, this kind of research would require very good access to data regarding the establishment of IDCs, which might be not available due to the rather informal nature of IDCs.

Fourth, a comparison of IDCs and project groups might be interesting. While delegates of IDCs only dedicate a small amount of their time to the committee, members of project groups work full-time on a particular project together with bureaucrats from many different departments. In case of IDCs, we found that the department remained as the main frame of reference for each delegate. Hypothetically, project group members might be more exposed to colleagues from other departments and, thus, socialized in a more collegial role. Consequently, the departmental mindset might be less dominant with beneficial effects on the coordination process and output.

Fifth, we need to know more about committees that are established on the political level, i.e. State Secretaries committees or cabinet committees staffed with ministers. In the cases of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern and Saxony we learned how the State Secretaries committee was instrumental in solving some controversial points. Yet, systematic empirical and conceptual knowledge on their role in inter-departmental coordination is scarce and deserves more academic attention.

Sixth, from a micro-perspective it might be fruitful to systematically conceptualize skills of individual bureaucrats in inter-departmental coordination as determinants of coordination processes and outputs and empirically test their explanatory power for better understanding coordination.

Finally, we learned that party-politics and implications of coalition governments played a role in many IDCs and influenced their functionality. Therefore, it might be worthwhile to compare IDCs in coalition governments with those that operate in a single-party context.

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A. Appendix

A.1. Interviewees

Code	Case	Rank	Role	Date	Length (in min.)	Transcript
TH1	Thuringia	Head of section	Chair	10.12.2013	48	yes
TH2	Thuringia	Head of section	Chair	06.05.2014	approx. 60	no
TH3	Thuringia	Head of section	Delegate	24.04.2014	36	yes
TH4	Thuringia	Member of Parliament	Delegate	24.04.2014	39	yes
TH5	Thuringia	Head of section	Delegate	17.04.2014	29	yes
TH6	Thuringia	Official	Delegate	17.04.2014	33	yes
TH7	Thuringia	Head of section	Chair	09.07.2015	46	yes
ST1	Saxony-Anhalt	Head of section	Chair	19.12.2013	53	yes
ST2	Saxony-Anhalt	Official	Delegate	20.03.2014	approx. 45	no
ST3	Saxony-Anhalt	Head of section	Chair	17.11.2015	72	yes
ST4	Saxony-Anhalt	Official	Delegate	20.10.2015	62	yes
BB1	Brandenburg	Head of Section	Insider	08.12.2014	approx. 45	no
BB2	Brandenburg	Head of State Chancellery	Insider	06.03.2015	42	yes
BB3	Brandenburg	Head of Section	Chair	31.03.2015	57	yes
BB4	Brandenburg	Official	Chair	27.05.2015	56	yes
BB5	Brandenburg	Head of Section	Delegate	07.08.2015	39	yes
BB6	Brandenburg	Official	Delegate	29.10.2015	65	yes
MV1	Mecklenburg-Vorpommern	Head of section & official	Chair	21.05.2015	47	yes
MV2	Mecklenburg-Vorpommern	Head of section	Delegate	01.07.2015	50	yes
MV3	Mecklenburg-Vorpommern	Head of section	Delegate	13.07.2015	28	yes
MV4	Mecklenburg-Vorpommern	Head of section	Delegate	08.10.2015	73	yes
SN1	Saxony	Head of section	Chair	18.06.2013	approx. 45	no
SN2	Saxony	Head of section	Chair	05.06.2015	35	yes
SN3	Saxony	Official	Delegate	23.06.2015	46	yes
SN4	Saxony	Head of section	Delegate	02.09.2015	72	yes
SN5	Saxony	Official	Delegate	26.11.2015	67	yes

A.2. Interview guide lines

Etablierung
Wie und wann kam es zur Etablierung der IMA?
Was war Arbeitsauftrag?
Durch wen formuliert?
Auf welcher Hierarchieebene wurde IMA formal eingesetzt?
Role of chair
Wie kann die Rolle des federführenden Referates beschrieben werden?
Unterscheidet sich die Rolle des federführenden Referates bei der IMA im Vergleich zu üblichen Vorhaben?
Wie groß sind Steuerungsmöglichkeiten / Möglichkeiten inhaltlicher Einflussnahme?
Gibt es klare Idee, wie Ergebnis des Arbeitsprozesses in der IMA aussehen soll?
Durch welchen Stil zeichnet sich die Federführung aus? Was ist für erfolgreiches Management der IMA wichtig?
Information processing
Wie werden Informationen aus verschiedenen Ressorts zusammengetragen und in der IMA diskutiert/bearbeitet?
Wie ist die allgemeine Arbeitsatmosphäre in der IMA?
Entstehen ressortübergreifende Diskussionen? Wozu führen diese Diskussion bestenfalls? Wozu führen sie gewöhnlich?
Orientieren sich Diskussionen eher an fachlichen oder politischen Fragen? Welche Rolle spielen Parteien/Koalitionen?
Wie werden Informationen für die IMA hausintern eingeholt, abgestimmt und rückgekoppelt?
Wie involviert ist die Leitungsebene in Vor- und Nachbereitung der Sitzungen?
Welche Rolle spielen fachliche Fragen, welche Rolle politische Aspekte für die Vorbereitung der IMA?
Decision-making
Wie konfliktreich ist der Entscheidungsprozess in der IMA insgesamt? Warum?
Welche besonderen Möglichkeiten hat die federführende Organisation um in Konflikten zwischen Ressorts zu vermitteln?
Welche Möglichkeiten gibt es, Präferenzen der federführenden Organisation steuernd einzubringen?
Sonstige
Nehmen alle Ministerien teil?
Wo liegen die Grenzen der IMA als Instrument ressortübergreifender Politikformulierung?
Wie zufriedenstellend sind Ergebnisse der IMA?
Wie würden Sie das Selbstverständnis der IMA Mitglieder beschreiben?
Welchen grundsätzlichen Vor- und Nachteile sehen Sie in IMA?
Fallen Ihnen noch interessante Gesprächspartner ein?
Möchten Sie noch etwas hinzufügen?

A.3. Interview coding scheme

Codes	#
Codesystem	1893
Situationsbeschreibung	2
Entwicklung	60
sonstiges	2
eigene Themen pushen	10
Change of governmental structure	3
Elections	34
Referenz zu ansderen Ländern	12
Coordination output	82
Reporting, monitoring & evaluation	13
Implementation mechanism	27
Setting specific goals	17
Adressing interdependence	21
secondary output	12
IDCs	14
Druckmittel	6
HIerarchiespiel	18
Vertrauen	2
Standing of people	26
Funktion IDCs	32
Dominant actors	31
Entscheidung Teilnahme	13
Role of individuals	48
Entscheidung Federführung	11
Establishment	28
Staff composition	71
Critique	26
Prospects	25
unclear accountability	4
Coordination Process	1
Konflikte	42
bilateral/trilateral outside IDC	26
Ablauf Sitzung	15

Decision-making	28
Avoiding veto	13
Active approval	2
Information processing	26
Departmental contributions	22
Mutual discussion	32
intra-departmental	90
Role of chair	130
dominant in process & content	23
Moderation	13
Actors	0
State Chancellery	43
improved coordination	1
pessimistic	24
optimistic	29
Action orientations	3
administrative	18
political	36
Capabilities	0
broad overview	8
neutral broker	15
borrowed authority	79
Line Ministries	1
Action orientations	3
administrative	42
political	52
Capabilities	1
expertise	43
Political framework	0
Negotiation-Hybrid Democracy	5
Party democracy	63
Prime Minister democracy	33
Coalition democracy	77
Media democracy	39
Institutional framework	0

normative	1
legalistic orientation	4
departmentalism	76
regulative	1
Constitutional principles	0
Departmental principle	30
Cabinet principle	8
Prime Minister principle	6
GOReg	0
GGO	16
Problemwahrnehmung	23

A.4. Cover letter

Interviewanfrage im Rahmen eines Promotionsvorhabens

03.09.2015

Im Rahmen des von der Deutschen Forschungsgemeinschaft geförderten Promotionskollegs WIPCAD promoviere ich an der Universität Potsdam unter Betreuung von Prof. Dr. Werner Jann. Das Kolleg geht der Frage nach, wie öffentliche Organisationen mit Problemen umgehen, die sich durch hohe Komplexität, Unsicherheit und Konfliktpotential auszeichnen (http://www.wipcad-potsdam.de).
In meinem Dissertationsvorhaben beschäftige ich mich mit den Prozessen der Formulierung der Demografiestrategien in den Ländern. Mich interessiert dabei, wie die Länder das ressortübergreifende Problem des demografischen Wandels organisieren und verarbeiten. Dabei ist von zentraler Bedeutung, Erfahrungen von Praktikerinnen und Praktikern in die Arbeit mit einfließen zu lassen. Als Mitglied der entsprechenden interministeriellen Arbeitsgruppe wären Sie ein sehr wertvoller Experte für mich. Darüber hinaus wurden Sie mir von [Name] als weiterer interessanter Gesprächspartner empfohlen.
Ich möchte daher anfragen, ob Sie bereit wären, im Rahmen eines Experteninterviews ein persönliches Gespräch mit mir zu führen? Dabei ginge es um Ihre Erfahrungen in Hinblick auf die interministerielle Koordination der Demografiepolitik in [Land].
Das Gespräch wird zwischen 30 bis 60 Minuten in Anspruch nehmen. Um eine bessere Auswertbarkeit zu gewährleisten, bitte ich um Ihr Einverständnis, das Gespräch auf Tonband aufzunehmen. Das entsprechende Transkript kann ich Ihnen natürlich zur Autorisierung zukommen lassen, bevor es in die Arbeit einfließt. Ihre Aussagen aus dem Interview verbleiben anonym.
Die Ergebnisse meiner Doktorarbeit stelle ich Ihnen nach Abschluss oder in Form einen Zwischenberichtes natürlich gerne zur Verfügung.

Für weitere Auskünfte und Fragen stehe ich jederzeit gerne bereit.

Für Ihre Mithilfe zum Gelingen meines Forschungsprojektes bedanke ich mich herzlich.

Mit freundlichen Grüßen,
Thomas Danken

A.5. List of IDC outputs

Not all outputs of the IDCs are included in the analysis. The respective case studies clearly state on which specific document the analysis focuses on.

State	Name	Year
Thuringia	Demographiebericht Thüringen.	2006
Thuringia	Demografiebericht 2011 - Teil 1. Bevölkerungsentwicklung des Freistaats Thüringen und seiner Regionen.	2011
Thuringia	Demografiebericht - Teil 2. Herausforderungen und Handlungsansätze bei der Sicherung ausgewählter Schwerpunkte der Daseinsvorsorge.	2012
Thuringia	Demografiebericht - Teil 3. Entwicklungen und Tendenzen der Sozial- und Gesundheitswirtschaft in Thüringen.	2012
Brandenburg	Bericht zu den demografischen und wirtschaftsstrukturellen Veränderungen in Brandenburg.	2004
Brandenburg	Demografischer Wandel in Brandenburg – Erneuerung aus eigener Kraft Ursachen und Folgen – Strategien und Handlungsfelder - Projekte und Maßnahmen. 2. Bericht der Landesregierung zum demografischen Wandel.	2005
Brandenburg	Werkstattbericht: Demografischer Wandel in Brandenburg Rahmenbedingungen, Konzepte, Handlungsempfehlungen.	2005
Brandenburg	3. Demografiebericht des Landes Brandenburg.	2011
Saxony-Anhalt	Handlungskonzept Nachhaltige Bevölkerungspolitik in Sachsen-Anhalt.	2011
Mecklenburg-Vorpommern	Mecklenburg-Vorpommern: Weltoffen, modern, innovativ. Den demografischen Wandel gestalten.	2011/2014
Saxony	Den demografischen Wandel gestalten. Handlungskonzept.	2010

Eidesstattliche Erklärung

Ich versichere an Eides statt, dass meine hinsichtlich der früheren Teilnahme an Promotionsverfahren gemachten Angaben richtig sind und, dass die eingereichte Arbeit oder wesentliche Teile derselben in keinem anderen Verfahren zur Erlangung eines akademischen Grades vorgelegt worden sind. Ich versichere darüber hinaus, dass bei der Anfertigung der Dissertation die Grundsätze zur Sicherung guter wissenschaftlicher Praxis der DFG eingehalten wurden, die Dissertation selbständig und ohne fremde Hilfe verfasst wurde, andere als die von mir angegebenen Quellen und Hilfsmittel nicht benutzt worden sind und die den benutzten Werken wörtlich oder sinngemäß entnommenen Stellen als solche kenntlich gemacht wurden. Einer Überprüfung der eingereichten Dissertation mittels einer Plagiatssoftware stimme ich zu.

Berlin, 31.10.2016

Thomas Danken