

**Regulatory Failures as Coordination Failures:
The Effects of Organisational Structure on Environmental Regulation**

Paper to be presented at the 6th IAS Congress,
Sub-theme 3 'New Trajectories to the Rising Need of Regulatory Regime',
04-08 July 2011, Lausanne

Julia Fleischer
Research Fellow
German Research Institute for Public Administration Speyer
fleischer@foev-speyer.de

****First draft, please do not quote without permission,
comments very welcome****

Abstract

This paper analyses how the organisational structure of 'environmental regulation', i.e. environment and consumer protection, affects horizontal and vertical coordination within central government. It applies a new institutionalist organisation theory perspective and argues that organisational changes in central government are influenced by internal requirements arising from governmental regulatory activities as well as external imperatives by the electorate, stakeholders, international bodies and the like. The paper assumes that governmental organisation influences coordination – with effects on the accomplishment of the regulatory task. The paper examines these effects of environmental regulation's organisation in the German federal ministerial bureaucracy, based on a dataset covering organisational changes in German federal ministries between 1949 and 2010. It reveals that the organisational responses to environmental regulation may reduce horizontal inter-ministerial coordination failures, but initiate new vertical coordination challenges because they resemble a new distribution of resources and legitimacy in central government.

'Politik ist Organisation. Und Organisation ist Politik.'
(Franz Müntefering, former Minister for Labour).

1 Introduction¹

Although the very meaning of the 'machinery of government' implies already how relevant it should be for politicians as 'drivers' (whereas bureaucrats may act as machinists, to stay in that metaphor), the well-known maxim noted above is rather exceptional for a German politician because most of them take the comparatively stable federal government organisation for granted. Partly, this may be related to the distinct nature of German executive federalism, whereby the federal level is mainly responsible for policy formulation and the *Länder* level for policy implementation – and thus (re)organisation at federal level is very rarely directly linked with policy delivery. However, from a comparative perspective it is puzzling how seldom organisational issues are debated in Parliament or addressed in party manifestos etc. Likewise, the Federal Ministry of Interior is responsible for general organisation issues, but cabinet ministers enjoy wide-ranging authority over their ministries' internal organisation and correspondingly (re)organisation strategies are rarely formulated for the whole central government organisation. In turn, departmental officials are more likely to conceptualise peace-meal organisational changes for their own ministry rather than comprehensive (re)organisation strategies.²

This paper argues that such 'structural choices' (Moe/Wilson 1994) in central government organisations are shaped by their distinct institutional context because the latter filter internal and external requirements on (re)organisation. As such, the institutional context affects the targeted levels and actor constellations in (re)organisation decision-making. These decision-making processes or 'organisation dynamics' result in a new organisational status quo and specific coordination patterns that unfold between responsible governmental actors. Therefore, this paper perceives organising central government as crucial for governmental actors as the 'collective puzzlement on the society's behalf' (Hecló 1974: 305). The paper aims to theorise and examine the dynamics of central government (re)organisation and its effects on governmental coordination with a special emphasis on the organisation of environmental regulation. Empirically, it analyses the organisational structures for environmental regulation in the German federal bureaucracy over the past decades.

The remainder of the paper is structured as follows. The next section outlines this paper's new institutionalist argument, emphasising the explanatory relevance of institutional context features to understand the decision-making processes that lead to particular structural choices which, in turn, have different outcomes in terms of the organisational status quo and government coordination. The third section informs about the data and methods used in this paper to analyse the organisational changes of the German federal government with a special emphasis for the organisation of environmental policy. The fourth section scrutinises and compares the organisational changes at federal level in environmental policy over time and reveals how these organisational dynamics influenced government coordination in this regulatory field. Finally, conclusions are drawn on how federal governments in Germany organise environmental regulation and with what effects for government coordination.

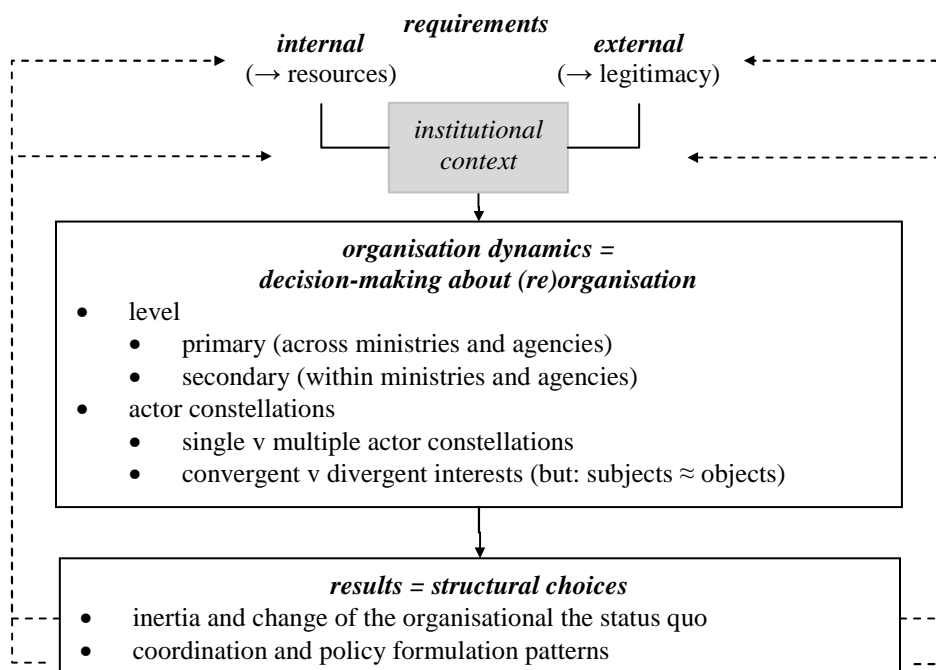
¹ I'm very grateful to the funding of a Short-Term Research Mission by the COST-Action CRIPO (see <http://soc.kuleuven.be/io/cost/>) that allowed me to conduct a considerable amount of my data analysis at the University of Bergen, Department of Administration and Organization Theory.

² Each federal ministry comprises at least one section responsible for internal organisation; the section heads meet regularly in an inter-ministerial committee on organisational issues, chaired by the Ministry of Interior (*Ausschuss für Organisationsfragen*, AfO; § 20 GGO).

2 Analytical framework

This paper follows new institutionalist organisation theory and argues that the decision-making processes leading to particular structural choices are shaped by institutional context features such as the type of party government or the structuring principles in cabinet. These institutional context features filter the *internal* functional requirements arising from governmental activities that refer mainly to resources and capabilities as well as the *external* imperatives on central government organisations formulated by the electorate, stakeholders, international bodies and the like that refer mainly to legitimacy (e.g. Christensen et al. 2007; Læg Reid et al. 2010; see also Scholz 1977; see figure 1). As such, institutional context features affect the primary targeted levels and actor constellations of organisation dynamics in central governments. On the one hand, organisation dynamics may target different levels of central government organisations, distinguished as *primary*, i.e. the functional separation across ministries and across subordinated entities such as regulatory agencies, public-owned state enterprises, foundations etc., and as *secondary*, i.e. the functional separation within ministries and within subordinated entities. On the other hand, organisation dynamics range from single- to multi-actor constellations. More importantly, the (re)organisation of central governments is very often conducted by the same actors whose organisation is addressed. Many scholars reflect this congruence of subjects and objects as particular characteristic of 'administrative policies' and argue that it limits the outcomes in terms of changing the organisational status quo (e.g. Böhret 1983, 2003; Jann 1986: 220-1, 2002; Christensen et al. 2007; see also Scharpf 1974). However, one may argue that if such organisation dynamics are enacted in legislation, i.e. transferred to the legislative arena, this dual role of executive actors is somewhat reduced – at least when parliaments amend or reject such changes.

Figure 1 The theoretical argument



Source: Own illustration.

Furthermore, this paper assumes that organisation dynamics result in the inertia or change of the organisational status quo with apparent effects on coordination patterns in central government and thus the accomplishment of the task. The basic rationale behind that argument is that organisational

structures determine the key orientations of members of organisational units, i.e. they prescribe their 'selective perceptions' (Dearborn/Simon 1958). Accordingly, the effects of organisation dynamics on coordination patterns are manifold (see also Scharpf 1977, 1982), e.g. a particular horizontal or vertical separation of functional responsibilities affects whether coordination is mainly conducted in one organisation (e.g. one regulatory agency, interacting with its parent ministry) or across several organisations (e.g. several organisational subunits within one ministry, several regulatory bodies subordinated to different ministries or several ministries). Besides, this paper perceives coordination not as a normatively speaking 'good thing' (see in contrast: Christensen/Lægveid 2008). In fact, coordination may be a highly asymmetrical relationship in which *power* and, in particular, veto power may be of crucial importance (Mayntz/Scharpf 1975: 149-50). Likewise, this paper does not equate coordination with coherence, i.e. coordination processes aim not necessarily at coherent results.

As such, 'regulatory success' or the opposite, 'regulatory failure', can be considered as 'coordination success' or 'coordination failure' respectively, i.e. they are influenced by distinct organisation dynamics and their targeted levels and actor constellations that affect coordination patterns among governmental actors. To analyse how organisation dynamics affect coordination patterns and thus regulatory success and failure, this paper suggests four ideal-types of organisation dynamics in central governments that vary according to their primary targeted levels and actor constellations – and are assumed to have different effects on the organisational status quo and coordination patterns (see figure 2).

Figure 2 Four ideal-types of organisation dynamics

		targeted key level	
		primary	secondary
actor constellation	single	mushrooming { <i>consensus</i> }	transfer { <i>consensus</i> }
	multiple	juncture { <i>consensus</i> → <i>conflict</i> }	turf war { <i>conflict</i> }

Note: Mechanisms of organisation are plain, long-term outcomes in terms of coordination are italic and in curly brackets.

Source: Own illustration.

First, 'mushrooming dynamics' address the transfer of responsibilities from a pre-existing unit to one or several *newly created* units in order to provide liaison and access points to actors in emerging policy fields, i.e. to increase legitimacy in new areas of government responsibility. These dynamics occur often in a rather ancient or 'immature' state of central government organisations, i.e. when a small number of existing ministries is expanded in order to accommodate additional responsibilities that are new to the central government. Therefore, the targeted level of mushrooming dynamics is the primary level, allocating resources across central government for emerging policy sectors, including the creation of new ministries and agencies. The actor constellation is rather limited, i.e. one organisational unit 'looses' some of its remit whereas another new organisational actor gains these functional responsibilities. In turn, their outcomes in terms of organisational change are wide-ranging, but they are rather 'peaceful' in terms of coordination because only the 'despatching' unit experiences a reduction of responsibilities, while the new units gain resources and legitimacy, although they may

initially need to proof their expertise in order to get an apparent reputation across central government and beyond.

Second, 'juncture dynamics' unfold in mature central government organisations and occur when crises or critical incidents jeopardise governmental legitimacy and require organisational changes, encompassing natural hazards such as earthquakes, disasters caused by technological failures such as oil spills or other incidents caused by human action (and thus including also scandals caused by misbehaviour). As such, the major concern of these dynamics is government's survival (see also Campbell 1983: 24). As such, the targeted level is most often primary – in order to signal governmental responses and responsibilities. The actor constellations differ according to the policy area affected by the juncture but can expand to a rather large number of multiple actors involved. Given the inherent exposure of government legitimacy, the outcomes of these dynamics are rather wide-ranging in terms of the organisational status quo. With regard to coordination, though, they may be rather 'peaceful' at first because of their primary interest in restoring legitimacy. Over time, though, these dynamics are prone to result in conflicts.

Third, 'specialisation dynamics' occur when existing ministries become specialised and fragmented; they transfer responsibilities between organisational units, often also accompanied by a renaming, in order to signal changing policy priorities. As such, they target the secondary level of central government organisation and address units within ministries. In turn, they may involve a varying number of actors and range from 'bilateral dynamics' between two organisational units to a rather huge organisational overhaul involving several units and thus multiple actors. These specialisation dynamics can be observed as two sub-types with similar outcomes in terms of the organisational status quo, but rather different in terms of coordination: If specialisation dynamics are singular transfers, their coordination outcomes are very likely to be rather consensual. Yet, most of such transfers represent the typical 'turf wars' among bureaucratic actors that aim to keep their responsibilities, expertise, and networks. Interestingly, these dynamics occur very often between units with close jurisdictions and thus some units are particularly disposed to regular specialisation dynamics. One possible explanation could be the general ambiguity among political actors organising rather close policy issues in two separate units in the first place, thus encouraging frequent reorganisations on a 'trial and error' basis. The other possible explanation would be that the concerned units (and ministers) are perceived as comparatively weak and/or irrelevant for governmental performance (in terms of policy formulation but also opinion polls etc.), thus making frequent reorganisations more easy, because their reputation is lower compared to others, and more likely, because a potential conflictual outcome in terms of coordination is not a hazard for cabinet, i.e. the cabinet ministers involved are less able to ally with other cabinet ministers and to elevate it into a severe governmental crisis. However, as a consequence, the coordination outcomes of such turf wars are very likely to prone conflicts between the units concerned.

3 Data and methods for studying organisation dynamics in German federal government

This paper analyses the organisation dynamics in central government organisations at the federal level in Germany between 1949 and 2011.³ This focus on the German federal government organisation allows reducing the institutional context variance and, in turn, supports this paper's major interest in actors and dynamics. In methodological terms, this paper is based upon a comprehensive mapping of organisational changes in the German federal government organisation between 1949 and 2011,

³ Although one may think of including organisational arrangements prior 1945, especially since various federal ministries have recently commissioned historical expert commissions to study personal continuities after the Nazi regime and thus provide some organisational insights about the structure of government during the Third Reich, this paper is confined to the organisational changes under a democratic regime with rather stable institutional context features.

including the federal direct administration (ministries) and indirect administration (agencies). The dataset covering these changes in German federal government is very much 'standing on the shoulder of giants' (Newton 1676) by replicating to a very large extent the existing database of the Norwegian state administration (e.g. Rolland/Roness 2009a, 2009b) and to a minor extent the existing database of the Irish state administration (e.g. Hardiman/MacCarthaigh 2010). In addition, other scholarly work inspired further specification of organisational changes that are peculiar to the German case (e.g. Siedentopf 1976; Derlien 1996).

The empirical data was gathered from two key sources that were collected from the Federal Archives: On the one hand, organisational charts of German federal ministries provide a very accurate description of organisational entities and their formal relations (Blum 1980a, b). On the other hand, German federal ministries issue so-called 'task allocation plans' (*Geschäftsverteilungsplan*, GVPI) that are commonly known among bureaucrats as 'departmental bibles', outlining for each organisational unit its formal responsibilities and tasks (down to the lowest organisational level). Whereas during the 1950s these GVPI comprised between 20 and 40 pages, they contain nowadays up to 200 pages – revealing not only the increasing functional and organisational specialisation and fragmentation inside federal ministries but also the growing interest in detailed turf descriptions.

In addition, major changes in portfolio allocation at federal level require the enactment of so-called 'organisational decrees' by the chancellor (*Organisationserlass der Bundeskanzlerin*, BKOrgErl; Lehniguth/Vogelgesang 1988) that are publicly available since 1977. Since then, however, German chancellors issued only 21 organisational decrees – and often with rather minor changes compared to other countries' cabinet reshuffles. Moreover, the German federal budget plans were used to gather further information about organisational changes, especially for the federal indirect administration that is not covered by ministries' organisational charts or by task allocation plans, but may occasionally issue own organisational charts.

The mapping of organisational changes within German federal direct and indirect administration was informed by a codebook replicating the Norwegian study (see Rolland/Roness 2009a, 2009b) and expanded with very few variables to assess additional information on functional changes (available for analysis due to the precise reporting in the task allocation plans). In contrast to the Norwegian database, though, the organisational levels included in the dataset are only divisions and subdivisions, thus neglecting sections as lowest organisational level in German federal ministries (so far). This decision was made to keep the mapping feasible, i.e. the number of sections in German federal ministries amounts to approx. 1,200 nowadays. In turn, the division and subdivision level provides already a comparatively large number of cases for observation. So far, approx. half of these entities under scrutiny have been inserted into the dataset.

As a consequence from this methodological approach, this paper faces similar challenges as the scholarly work already conducted in organisation structure analysis. First, the data sources provide a 'snapshot' of central government organisation at a given point in time. Although compared with other information sources such as yearbooks the German information sources may be more precise in terms of timing of organisational changes – because ministries tend to issue new organisational charts and task allocation plans directly after internal changes of their organisation – they are still provided at different dates, sometimes the day after a (re)organisation decision has been made, sometimes months after such a decision. In addition, ministries vary with regard to the frequency of publishing organisational charts, also over time. Likewise, as mentioned above, the increasing detailedness of task allocation plans over time results in an information bias. Second, the definition and distinction of different types of organisational changes is a recurring theme in mapping central government organisation (see Rolland/Roness 2009a, 2009b). And although one may further discuss the sense and logic behind these types, the emerging research community tends to follow the 'Norwegian standard' if

interested in organisational changes below the ministry level. However, especially the 'degree' or 'intensity' of distinct organisational changes might be a crucial topic for further discussion. Finally, the mapping of organisational changes is due to its information sources inherently limited towards formal organisational changes only and thus other – albeit empirically equally relevant – aspects of central government organisation such as informal relationships cannot be measured neither analysed. This may be a particular methodological caveat for emerging policy issues that are less easily covered by formal structures and processes.

4 The institutional context: (Re)organisation central government in a *Rechtsstaat*

Following this paper's theoretical argument, institutional context features are next to the initial internal and external imperatives the crucial explanatory features to understand organisation dynamics as decision-making processes resulting in distinct structural choices with apparent effects on the organisational status quo and the dominant coordination patterns. This paper focuses particularly on the institutional features shaping the federal bureaucracy as a proto-type of a *Rechtsstaat* bureaucracy (Pollitt/Bouckaert 2004).

In general, the German federal administration is widely perceived as a proto-type of a *Rechtsstaat* bureaucracy, assigning a central integrating role within society to the state – with a ministerial bureaucracy responsible for preparing, formulating, and enforcing laws (Pollitt/Bouckaert 2004). Accordingly, the German ministerial bureaucracy is characterised by a variety of requirements on (re)organisation (see for the following also Fleischer/Hustedt 2009). **First**, the *regulative* requirements on intra- and interdepartmental structures in Germany are defined by a comprehensive system of public law and other legal codifications (Knill 1999: 121; Bezes/Lodge 2007: 124). The most important formal rules concerning (re)organisation of federal government are the Basic Law (*Grundgesetz*, GG) and the 'Joint Rules of Procedure of the Federal Ministries' (*Gemeinsame Geschäftsordnung der Bundesministerien*, GGO). Since 1958, these rules are issued by the Ministry of Interior in consultation with all other federal ministries, many of these rules reflect previous rules enacted in the 1920s (Brecht 1927; Brecht/Glaser 1940: 13-6; Zypries/Peters 2003). A single article of the Basic Law outlines the key principles structuring cabinet or rather outlining the 'constitutional framework of executive action' (Mayntz 1980: 142):

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

Although this triangle of the principle of leadership by the chancellor (*Kanzlerprinzip*), by cabinet (*Kabinettsprinzip*), and by departmental ministers (*Ressortprinzip*) is perceived to be in permanent unbalance, in practice the third is the most recognised and protected (Johnson 1983: 110; Mayntz 1987: 4). However, as part of their prerogatives, German chancellors decide about the general allocation of portfolios and appoint and dismiss departmental ministers (Art. 64). Yet, three ministries, the Ministry of Defence (Art. 65 a), the Ministry of Justice (Art. 96) and the Ministry of Finance (Art. 108, 112, 114) are directly referred to in the constitution and enjoy a status of particular constitutional protection guaranteeing their existence. For other organisational structures at primary level, no further rules exist.

In addition, the constitutional principle of leadership by departmental ministers emphasises the responsibilities of departmental ministers for their ministry – which they conduct 'independently' and 'on their own responsibility' (Art. 65 GG). It covers also the minister's responsibility to decide about the internal organisational structure on her behalf (*Organisationsgewalt*). Besides, also the GGO contain two chapters on internal organisational issues (GGO, chapter 2 and 3). These rules formalise

inter alia the hierarchical organisation of federal ministries and strengthen its task specialisation and clear lines of responsibility:

'(1) In principle, Federal Ministries break down into directorates-general and sections, the key unit within the structure of a Federal Ministry normally being the section, which is the initial decision-making authority in all matters assigned to it within its area of competence.

(2) Between sections, and within each section, remits are defined by the subject areas they support, so that authority and responsibilities are clearly visible. Tasks which are related substantively are normally performed by a single organisational unit. Duties are assigned under a business assignment plan.

(3) In principle, no-one should ever be employed by more than one section, or report to more than one immediate superior, at the same time. Subject to the provisions of collective agreements and labour representation rules, the Directors-General may depart from the business assignment plan and second staff to another section within the Directorate-General and entrust them with equivalent duties for up to six months. Staff may be transferred from one Directorate-General to another, if the Directors-General involved agree. The sections in charge of staff and organisational matters must be involved.'
(§ 7 GGO)

Second, *Rechtsstaat* bureaucracies are characterised by *normative* elements prescribing e.g. the respect for the authority of the law, rule-following, correctness and legal control (Pollitt/Bouckaert 2004: 53). In the German federal bureaucracy, these norms are expressed in a strong mutual awareness of formal responsibilities, summarised by the typical response of a German official when confronted with a new file: 'Am I responsible'?⁴ Accordingly, German officials observe strongly each other and thus protect and reinforce the formal principles laid down in the Basic Law and the GGO. To put it differently: From a normative perspective, government organisation is primarily oriented towards signalling departmental responsibilities and less towards coherence across government.

Accordingly, central government organisation at primary level, i.e. portfolio allocation, is characterised by two dominant norms: On the one hand, it is generally perceived as appropriate to follow the previously established path in portfolio allocation across legislative periods, even after government turnovers. Here, the portfolio allocation in Germany favours normatively a medium size of the cabinet and thus number of ministries which oscillates between 16 and 19 ministries. On the other hand, this 'portfolio stability' in Germany can also be observed for cabinet reshuffles or rather replacements of ministers during legislative periods which are not associated with departmental reallocations. Instead, these replacements often address only one minister and thus do not directly require a reorganisation of responsibilities across ministries.⁵ In turn, these rare events of hiring and firing a minister during the legislative period are also not perceived as an appropriate event to reallocate portfolios. If such replacements address several ministers, e.g. in January 1993 (four ministers), they are likewise not accompanied with reallocations of portfolios.⁶ One of the few exceptions to this rule occurred in 2001 after the BSE crisis when the Ministry for Health and the Ministry for Agriculture, Food, and Consumer Protection were reorganised (see below). Put differently: The normative requirements on portfolio allocation suggest stability and permanence and ministerial officials' primarily orientations towards their parent ministry are not only supported by recruitment features in Germany which traditionally witnesses very few rotation across ministries or ministries and agencies, but particularly by the stable set of portfolios within German governments.

Finally, most scholars equate the term *Rechtsstaat* with its *cognitive* underpinnings enshrined e.g. in a distinct administrative culture in a narrow sense that stipulates a strong legal orientation of

⁴ I would like to thank Werner Jann for this semantic culmination.

⁵ See for example the very recent reshuffle of ministers between the Ministry of Economic Affairs and the Ministry for Health due to several changes in the Free Democratic Party after electoral defeats at the *Länder* level.

⁶ In fact, chancellor Kohl announced already directly after the general election in 1990 that he aims to reshuffle his cabinet after the first half of the legislative period (Der Spiegel 11/01/1993).

bureaucratic action, 'legal programming' of civil servants (Knill 1999: 124) and a general preference to maintain the institutional status quo (Peters 1997; Pollitt/Bouckaert 2004: 52). Accordingly, the German administrative culture in a narrow sense, i.e. as cognitive understandings shared *within* public administrations (Jann 2000, 2002) is characterised by a strong legal orientation and a general preference to maintain the status quo (Peters 1997; Pollitt/Bouckaert 2004: 52).

This general interest in maintenance can be observed for central government organisation at primary level, i.e. the German portfolio allocation is widely perceived as comparatively stable and witnessed only very few rather radical changes, including the expansion of the number of federal ministries after the general election in 1969 or the creation of two 'giant departments' during the last 60 years and lasted only one legislative period, namely the merger of the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry for Economic Affairs (1971-72) and the recent merger of the Ministry for Economic Affairs and the Ministry for Labour (2002-05). At secondary level, maintenance as key cognitive principle prevails, except during the late 1960s when the general and wide-spread planning euphoria in Europe motivated also German ministers to set up a government-wide planning system which required apparent internal organisational arrangements in federal ministries.

In sum, the institutional context of the *Rechtsstaat* bureaucracy in Germany impedes frequent organisation dynamics resulting in radical changes of the organisational status quo. The number of actors involved may vary, but the formal protection of departmental autonomy, also in organisational issues, makes comprehensive reorganisations addressing several ministries at the secondary level rather unlikely. Likewise, the reorganisation at primary level is regulated, but the chancellor's prerogative to decide about portfolio allocation is strongly framed by other norms and conventions with regard to the total number of ministries as well as the differentiation between different portfolios. With regard to the indirect federal administration, i.e. federal agencies, less strong rules or normative and cognitive orientations exist; instead, the German agency landscape is rather like a 'zoo' with many different animals and no central agency policy influencing inter alia their organisational settings (Bach/Jann 2010).

5 Organising environmental regulation in the German federal bureaucracy

In empirical terms, this paper compares the organisational structures in environmental regulation over time and focuses particularly on organisational changes at the sub-divisional level in the Federal Ministry of Interior (*Bundesministerium des Innern*, BMI) and the Federal Ministry for Environment, Nature Protection, and Nuclear Safety (*Bundesministerium für Umwelt, Naturschutz und Reaktorsicherheit*, BMU) and at organisational changes at the primary level for a federal agency subordinated to it, namely the Federal Environment Agency (*Umweltbundesamt*, UBA). For the organisation of environmental regulation at German federal level one may distinguish three phases, i.e. (1) an 'upcoming attention' phase between 1969 and 1986, ending with the crucial Chernobyl accident and the creation of a Ministry for the Environment, Nature Protection, and Nuclear Safety, (2) a 'consolidation phase' between 1986 and 1998, and (3) an 'acceleration phase' since 1998.

5.1 The upcoming attention for organising environmental regulation, 1969-1986

When in 1969 a Social Democratic government came into office, governmental attention for environmental policy increased significantly, albeit the creation of a distinct environment ministry was explicitly rejected because the new government feared it would become a 'responsibility conflict ministry' (Ehmke 1973: 320), torn between the pre-existing ministries with former competencies in different aspects of this emerging policy area. Instead, responsibilities were proliferated among seven ministries with some concentration in the Ministry of Interior (see table 1 in annex). Therefore, a new division for environmental protection was created in the Ministry of Interior, equipped with two

subsections on 'water management' and on 'air and noise pollution' with seven sections each. The advantage of concentrating these organisational capacities was that the interior ministry is traditionally a very strong ministry due to convention and several formal prerogatives in its other responsibilities (constitutional affairs). In addition, the new division for environmental protection did not clash with other internal divisions' objectives. In fact, the new responsibilities could be accommodated very easily just because the other internal organisational units were not affected at all. However, especially in the late 1970s, the minister got very occupied with other issues, foremost internal security concerns due to the emergence of the RAF (Günther/Krebs 2000: 20).

The Ministry of Interior issued in 1970 the first governmental programme in environment policy in Germany (BT-Drs. VI/2710 [1970]) that included inter alia the creation of an 'Advisory Council on the Environment' (*Sachverständigenrat für Umweltfragen*, SRU) as external scientific body assessing environmental conditions and problems, and pointing out solutions and preventive measures in regular reports. In addition, a cabinet committee for environmental policy was set up (the so-called 'Environment Cabinet'), supported by an influential inter-ministerial committee of division heads. In 1971, the division for environmental protection was expanded and a third subsection on 'general issues of environmental policy' established, thus strengthening the conceptual capacities that simultaneously could act as access points for the growing number of societal actors in the emerging policy field as well as the other federal ministries.⁷ Many sections of the new subdivision were previously affiliated to the Ministry for Regional Planning, Building and Urban Development.

In 1974, the former three subdivisions were uplifted and reorganised as two divisions with two and three subsections respectively. The new division for 'environmental policy, reactor and nuclear safety' comprised responsibilities that were previously affiliated to the Ministry for Research and Technology. The new division for 'water management, air and noise pollution, and waste management' was equipped with expanded responsibilities, particularly in the realm of waste management. As a consequence, two out of ten division heads were from now on responsible for matters of environmental regulation, increasing their capacities while enhancing their internal and external status. In addition, a Federal Environmental Agency (*Umweltbundesamt*, UBA) was established under the legal and substantial supervision of the Ministry of Interior. The general motive was to create a new actor in the emerging policy area that is credible and accumulates necessary expertise that was less available within the federal direct administration. Disregard the existing organisational structures within the Ministry of Interior, the new agency perceived itself as the first and key actor on environmental regulation in the German federal bureaucracy (Müller 1995). After a few years, the organisational structure of the division for 'water management, air and noise pollution, and waste management' was consolidated by merging the two subdivisions for air and noise pollution and waste management, also responding to the increasing activities of the federal agency in the emerging policy field that partly exercised the necessary tasks, thus reducing tasks inside the ministry. As a result, the previously more flat internal structure was hierarchised and more sections were now subordinated to one subdivision head.

In the early 1980s, particularly after the first successes of the Green Party in elections at *Länder* level, the political salience of environmental protection increased and also the newly elected Conservative government at federal level in 1982 aimed to address environmental policy issues. As a response, the merger of the two subdivisions in the Ministry of Interior was reversed. Given the general increase of responsibilities in the Ministry of Interior, among others sports and media policy, the ratio of division heads responsible for environmental issues compared to all division heads decreased (two out of twelve).

⁷ Each federal ministry contains a division for general affairs and thus these divisions had frequent contacts to the newly established subdivision in the Ministry of Interior.

In sum, during the upcoming attention phase the German federal government responded to the increasing awareness of environmental issues by strengthening the capabilities in the Ministry of Interior, supported with various newly created advisory resources. As such, the dominant organisation dynamics were transfers of responsibilities from selected ministries to the Ministry of Interior as well as a further specialisation within the interior portfolio; they enabled rather consensual coordination in environmental policy-making because of the targeted levels and actors concerned.

5.2 The consolidation of organising environmental regulation, 1986-1998

When the external shock of the Chernobyl disaster accelerated the need for governmental action, a new Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, and Nuclear Safety was created in June 1986 (six weeks after the accident), mainly out of the pre-existing units in the Ministry of Interior – albeit the environment cabinet including different cabinet ministers remained. Next to the responsibilities in environmental issues from the Ministry of Interior, the new ministry received responsibilities for environmental and nature protection from the Ministry for Agriculture and responsibilities for radiation hygiene, pollutants residues in foodstuffs, and chemicals from the Ministry for Youth, Family and Health (BGBl. I, 05 June 1986, p. 864). In addition, the pre-existing advisory council and the federal environment agency were affiliated to the new ministry.

The internal organisation of the environment ministry consolidated the pre-existing responsibilities under one portfolio and strengthened particularly the responsibilities in nuclear safety. As a consequence, many internal organisational changes were devoted to foundings by splitting pre-existing entities from other federal ministries, maintainings by task changes as well as very few endings (see table 2 in annex). The frequency of maintenance events, including task expansions, task transfers, task takeovers, and name changes reveal the growing internal specialisation of the environment ministry at sub-divisional level (see table 2 in annex)

Simultaneously, a 'notional shift' occurred by subsuming also other issues under the general realm of environmental policy: Next to rather domestic issues such as air and noise pollution or water management, also new issues that cut across national boundaries were increasingly discussed as environmental policy problems, most notably climate change. As a consequence, the awareness of the multi-levelness of potential solutions increased and various organisational changes reveal a stronger attention towards international decision-making arenas.

In addition, the advisory capacities of the new ministry were expanded over the years: On the one hand, an 'Advisory Council on Global Environmental Change' (*Wissenschaftlicher Beirat Globale Umweltfragen*, WBGU) was established in 1992 in order to assess global environmental change and its consequences and to help all institutions responsible for environmental policy as well as the general public to form an opinion on these issues by submitting an annual report to the federal government and preparing special reports and opinions about specific topics on demand. The council's members are jointly appointed by the ministry for the environment and the ministry for research and technology. On the other hand, the Parliament took up already in 1989 the suggestion of the then finance minister to use the proceeds from privatising the former steel group Salzgitter AG for setting up a 'German Federal Foundation for the Environment' (*Deutsche Bundesstiftung Umwelt*, DBU) to promote and finance innovative and exemplary environmental projects. The DBU was established under the legal supervision of the finance ministry.

In sum, the consolidation phase started with the Chernobyl accident as critical juncture that resulted in apparent organisational changes. These involved several ministries that transferred responsibilities to the newly created ministry. Whereas these organisational dynamics facilitated governmental coordination at first, somewhat centralising responsibilities and signalling access points

for societal and other actors in the emerging policy field, it witnessed also long-term effects when the environmental policy agenda became diversified and particularly recently with the dominance of the climate change issue (see below). During the 1990s, the environment ministry had the most intensive and frequent conflicts with the Ministry for Economic Affairs, echoing the then almost truism that economic growth conflicts with environmental policy. In addition, the Federal Environment Agency expanded its status and perceived an increasing competition with the environment ministry about the 'narrative dominance' (*Deutungshoheit*) in environmental policy. Here, the federal agency benefitted from the due to its activities and responsibilities in policy implementation it was more directly linked to citizens and thus widely perceived as rather influential.

5.3 The acceleration of organising environmental regulation

When after the general election in 1998 the Green Party came into office at federal level for the first time, environmental issues gained particular attention, but the ministry got no additional responsibilities. Also the internal structure of the ministry remained almost unchanged, the few minor changes included name changes and some task shifts (see table 2 in annex). However, after the subsequent general election in 2002, the environment ministry gained responsibilities for renewable energies from the ministry for economic affairs and labour, including the lead for the important bill on renewable energies, as well as the legal supervision of the DBU from the finance ministry (BGBl. I, 22 October 2002, p. 4206). During the first legislative period under a Green minister, the ministry's internal organisational structure may have stayed rather stable, but the personnel capacities in the newly prioritised policy issues, such as renewable energies, were clearly strengthened. After 2002, some further changes occurred, albeit especially in the division responsible for general issues and less in the line divisions specialised in particular issues such as air pollution or waste management. After the general election in 2005, a major internal organisational change occurred, resulting in the creation of a new division for 'climate protection, renewable energies, and international cooperation' – also recognising the importance of climate change as an environmental policy issue as well as its international nature, i.e. international negotiations such as the UNFCCC Conference of Parties and their preparatory meetings (see table 2 in annex). After the general election in 2009, the internal organisational changes in the ministry for the environment addressed mainly this youngest division, its subdivisions were renamed and their tasks expanded. Accordingly, this acceleration phase witnessed mainly founding or maintenance events, and the latter were mainly task expansions, i.e. subdivisions became responsible for issues that have not been handled explicitly by a particular organisational unit before.

Interestingly, the Federal Environment Agency lost some of its relevance in the general policy discourse because of the increasing attention of policy-makers and bureaucrats for the climate change issue. Here, new expertise tends to be necessary which is rather available in the external scientific community (albeit the agency has traditionally strong links to scientists and many natural scientists are recruited as agency officials) as well as the international community. Put differently: Given the scope and nature of the problem – and its perceived solutions – the national agency tends to be of less relevance compared to previous decades. This gap in status was partly occupied by the Ministry for the Environment, although increasingly also the Chancellor takes over some policy responsibilities and transnational decision-making.

At domestic level, the remit of the pre-existing cabinet committee for environmental protection was enlarged in 1998 by making it responsible for environmental protection and health, thus blurring the committee's mandate and simultaneously expanding the number of cabinet ministers participating in the committee. In July 2000, the cabinet created an additional inter-ministerial committee of administrative state secretaries (the so-called 'Green Cabinet') to coordinate governmental activities

towards sustainability, chaired by a state secretary at the chancellery and comprising the foreign office, the ministries of finance, for economic affairs, for agriculture, for environment, and for economic cooperation. After the next general election in 2005, the cabinet committee for environmental protection and health was abolished – increasing the negotiation power and relevance of the inter-departmental committee of administrative state secretaries.

In sum, the acceleration phase witnessed an expansion of responsibilities of the Ministry for Environment with apparent organisation dynamics of task transfers concerning a small number of actors – while the public debate about environmental policy issues, and in particular climate change, accelerated. Although the internal organisational changes in the Ministry of Environment can be characterised as mushrooming, i.e. formalising and 'spinning-off' previous vague responsibilities in the environmental policy area under new headings, especially climate change, the long-term effects of the initial juncture dynamics after the Chernobyl accident became now apparent: Many federal ministries created or changed pre-existing organisational units to handle distinct aspects of climate change, sometimes also just interpreting their parent ministry's key policies with regard to climate change. In turn, inter-ministerial coordination in environmental policy became more conflictuous because of the increasing number of actors interested in these issues, thus not only echoing the conflict between economic affairs and environmental policy (as e.g. in the nuclear phase-out issue) but also dawning new conflicts under the general umbrella of climate change, i.e. with research and technology, development aid, or transport and urban development.

6 Conclusion

This paper examined the inertia and dynamics of central government organisation in Germany with a special emphasis for environmental regulation, including organisational changes at the primary and secondary level of federal ministries (and the federal agency in that area). It revealed that despite the general notion that the German central government organisation is rather stable, also various (re)organisation dynamics can be observed that unfold between different actors and aim at different levels. This process-oriented perspective enables us to specify in which way actors and their constellations account for organisational changes at central governments, also differentiating external causes such as crisis from the general skirmishing of bureaucratic actors. In addition, a closer analysis at subdivision level provides first empirical insights into such organisation dynamics over time.

In general, the organisation of environmental regulation in Germany underwent different phases with different involved actors and targeted levels. The diverse formal responsibilities for environmental regulation in German federal government were for the first time concentrated by the new Social-Liberal coalition after the general election in 1969. Instead of centralising environmental regulation, e.g. in a new ministry for these issues, the new government decided to concentrate key responsibilities in the Ministry of Interior while maintaining the diverse allocation of responsibilities in several other federal ministries. These concentration dynamics were mainly done by task transfers involving a small number of actors and can be regarded in some sense as 'clearing the deck' in coordination of environmental policy. As such, these structural choices facilitated coordination among federal ministries, especially also to inform interactions between the increasing number of actors in the emerging policy area.

Over time, the Ministry of Interior expanded and specialised its organisational entities for environmental policy. After the creation of a new federal agency responsible for environmental regulation, the ministry focused on policy formulation in the rapidly growing policy sector and transferred some responsibilities to the agency. In turn, the coordination of environment policy became more complex because the ministry had to establish appropriate vertical relationships. However, these organisation dynamics involved only two organisational actors, the ministry and the

agency, and were mainly a mushrooming from the federal direct administration (the ministry) to the federal indirect administration (the agency).

When the Chernobyl catastrophe occurred, the previous path of organising German environmental policy was clearly challenged by a critical juncture. As a response – but also to electoral successes of the new Green Party – the new Conservative government decided in 1986 to reallocate the organisational resources from the Ministry of Interior and other federal ministries in environmental issues to a newly created Ministry for the Environment. These juncture dynamics involved various actors in federal government but centralised also responsibilities and thus facilitated a consensual coordination in environment policy-making at first. When the new Ministry for the Environment was created, the initial mushrooming dynamics out of the Ministry of Interior showed some long-term negative side-effects because the agency perceived itself as the more experienced and better informed governmental actor in the policy field. This resulted in frequent conflicts between the ministry and the agency, the agency is also the most well-known example for a German agency requesting also an active, sometimes even pro-active, policy role (Bach 2010).

The government turnover after the general election in 1998 provided an opportunity to uplift environmental policy on the new government's agenda and despite various rather radical policy ideas in the coalition agreement, the organisational structure of the Ministry for the Environment remained rather stable. Most initial organisational changes under the new minister from the Green party addressed the personal support of the minister, e.g. the general affairs division which acts traditionally as intra-departmental think tank and has strong links to similar divisions in other federal ministries. In contrast, line divisions underwent almost no changes. During the two legislative periods of the Red-Green government, these very few organisation dynamics involved only a limited number of actors and were mainly task transfers, only affecting the intra-departmental coordination (if any). When the new Grand Coalition came into office and a Social Democrat became environment minister, several changes occurred, mainly adjusting the internal organisation towards the arising issue of climate policy. However, the more radical changes in that respect were conducted under the current Conservative government, especially noting the international character of climate policy. These changes were mainly task expansions, executing functional responsibilities that were not been performed before by other governmental actors or where parts of other international negotiations mainly driven by diplomats (thus the Foreign Ministry and/or the Chancellery). Particularly the simultaneous presidencies of G8 and EU in 2007 enabled the environment ministry to take the lead in some of these areas, although particularly the chancellor took over some of the political capital.

In addition to these structural choices with regard to the monolithic organisation in German federal governments, various inter-ministerial committees, involving cabinet ministers as well as administrative state secretaries or division heads, supported the coordination in environmental policy. In a sense, the pattern of such inter-ministerial structures over time describes a development from providing a primarily political arena towards developing an administrative or bureaucratic 'court of appeal' – thus bureaucratising and therefore 'normalising' the environmental policy issue, i.e. applying similar structural choices as for other policy areas – resulting in similar coordination patterns.

These patterns of organisation dynamics are affected by the actor constellations and targeted key levels, but these are clearly influenced by the Rechtsstaat context that filters the internal and external requirements on organising environment policy in Germany. On the one hand, the various formal rules ensure relatively wide-ranging departmental autonomy, accordingly, many organisational changes occur within ministries – and exceptions occur (only) after critical junctures such as the Chernobyl accident that accelerated legitimacy concerns among the electorate. On the other hand, the norms and values as well as cognitive conventions towards stable organisation and less frequent changes in the status quo makes also coordination in central government more predictable for all involved actors.

Although their level of conflict may differ (also according to the organisation dynamic), German officials can clearly rely upon a stable organisation and thus distribution of responsibilities – concentrating on their own turf and portfolio, implicitly ensuring that the responsible organisational unit enjoys the policy initiative privilege (as ruled in the GGO, see above). Since departmental officials can rely upon clearly visible responsibilities, they look also strongly after them and thus these rules become mutually protected and reinforced. To put it differently: From a normative perspective, government coordination in Germany is primarily oriented towards achieving departmental interests and less towards coherence across government, also supported by the distinct nature of organisational dynamics that rarely change the organisational status quo.

Next to their short- and long-term effects on coordination, these observed organisational dynamics in environmental regulation in Germany affected also the general distribution of resources and legitimacy in central government – this reinforcing either stable or changing internal and external demands on the organisation of central government in this growing policy area: When the new federal agency was created, parts of the status of the Ministry of Interior in that policy area were also transferred to the new agency, with apparent effects on the legitimacy of the Ministry of Interior in these issues. Likewise, the growing number of advisory councils can be regarded as an instrument to gather additional resources and expertise in a diversifying policy area.

A next step in research will be to relate these observed patterns of organisation dynamics and the underlying organisational changes with information about policy outputs. The comparatively detailed information on tasks of organisational entities in German ministries would allow, for example, assessing all entities across federal government concerned with particular issues (such as climate change) or e.g. engaged in EU affairs – at least according to their formal denomination. A diachronic comparison would then allow approaching one of the most crucial questions in comparative public administration research and public policy: What comes first: organisational changes or policy shifts?

References

- Bach, Tobias (2010): Policy and Management Autonomy of Federal Agencies in Germany. In: Lægheid, Per/Verhoest, Koen (eds.): *Governance of Public Sector Organizations – Proliferation, Autonomy, and Performance*. Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 89-110.
- Bach, Tobias/Jann, Werner (2010): Animals in the administrative zoo: organizational change and agency autonomy in Germany. In: *International Review of Administrative Sciences*, 76(3), 443-468.
- Bezes, Philippe/Lodge, Martin (2007a): Historical Legacies and Dynamics of Institutional Change in Civil Service Systems. In: Raadschelders, Jos C.N./Toonen, Theo A.J./van der Meer, Frits M. (eds.): *The Civil Service in the 21st Century*, London: Palgrave, 121-136.
- Blum, Egon (1980a): Möglichkeiten und Grenzen des Organigramms. 1. Teil: Konventionelle Organigramme. In: *Zeitschrift für Organisation*, 49(1), 42-51.
- Blum, Egon (1980b): Möglichkeiten und Grenzen des Organigramms. 2. Teil: Organigramme für mehrdimensionale Organisationsstrukturen. In: *Zeitschrift für Organisation*, 49(2), 84-91.
- Böhret, Carl (1983): *Politik und Verwaltung: Beiträge zur Verwaltungspolitologie*, Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag.
- Böhret, Carl (2003): *Verwaltungspolitologie*. In: Eichhorn, Peter (ed.): *Verwaltungslexikon*, 3rd ed., Baden-Baden: Nomos, 1149-1158.
- Brecht, Arnold (1927): *Die Geschäftsordnung der Reichsministerien: Ihre staatsrechtliche und geschäftstechnische Bedeutung, zugleich ein Lehrbuch der Büroreform*, Berlin: Heymann.
- Brecht, Arnold/Glaser, Comstock (1940): *The Art and Technique of Administration in German Ministries*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Campbell, Colin (1983): *Governments under Stress. Political Executives and Key Bureaucrats in Washington, London and Ottawa*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Christensen, Tom/Lægheid, Per (2008): The Challenge of Coordination in Central Government Organizations: The Norwegian Case. In: *Public Organization Review*, 8(2), 97-116.
- Christensen, Tom/Lægheid, Per/Roness, Paul G./Røvik, Kjell A. (2007): *Organization Theory for the Public Sector: Instrument, Culture and Myth*, London: Routledge.
- Dearborn, DeWitt C./Simon, Herbert A. (1958): Selective Perception: A Note on the Departmental Identifications of Executives. In: *Sociometry*, 21(2), 140-144.
- Derlien, Hans-Ulrich (1996): Zur Logik und Politik des Ressortzuschnitts. In: *Verwaltungsarchiv*, 87(4), 548-580.
- Ehmke, Horst (1973): Planung im Regierungsbereich. In: Naschold, Frieder/Väth, Werner (eds.): *Politische Planungssysteme*, Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 311-334.
- Fleischer, Julia/Hustedt, Thurid (2009): Creeping changes in central government coordination: The case of Germany. Paper to be presented at the 5th ECPR General Conference, Section 25 on 'Organizing Government: Theoretical and Empirical Perspectives', Panel 356 'The core executive in interministerial coordination', 10-12 September 2009, Potsdam.
- Günther, Edeltraud/Krebs, Maja (2000): Aufgaben- und Organisationsstruktur der Umweltpolitik in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, Dresdner Beiträge zur Betriebswirtschaftslehre Nr. 40/00, Technische Universität Dresden.
- Hardiman, Niamh/MacCarthaigh, Muiris (2010): Organising for Growth: Irish State Administration 1958-2008. In: *The Economic and Social Review*, 41(3), 367-393.
- Heclo, Hugh (1974): *Modern Social Politics in Britain and Sweden*, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Jann, Werner (1997): Regierungsumzug als Chance zur Verwaltungsreform. In: König, Klaus (ed.): *Ministerialorganisation zwischen Berlin und Bonn*, Speyer, 28-44.
- Jann, Werner (2000): Verwaltungskulturen im internationalen Vergleich. Ein Überblick über den Stand der empirischen Forschung, in: *Die Verwaltung*, 33(3), 325-349.
- Jann, Werner (2002): Verwaltungskultur. Ein Überblick über den Stand der empirisch und international vergleichenden Forschung. In: *Die Verwaltung*, 33(3), 325-349.
- Johnson, Nevil (1983): *State and Government in the Federal Republic of Germany: The Executive at Work*, 2nd ed., Oxford: Pergamon Press.
- Knill, Christoph (1999): Explaining Cross-National Variance in Administrative Reform: Autonomous versus Instrumental Bureaucracies. In: *Journal of Public Policy*, 19(2), 113-139.

- Lehnguth, Gerold/Vogelgesang, Klaus (1988): Die Organisationserlasse der Bundeskanzler seit Bestehen der Bundesrepublik Deutschland im Lichte der politischen Entwicklung. In: *Archiv des öffentlichen Rechts*, 113(4), 531-582.
- Læg Reid, Per/Rolland, Vidar/Roness, Paul G./Ågotnes, John-Erik (2010): The Structural Anatomy of the Norwegian State: Specialization or a Pendulum Shift? In: Læg Reid, Per/Verhoest, Koen (eds.): *Governance of Public Sector Organizations – Proliferation, Autonomy, and Performance*. Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 21-43.
- Mayntz, Renate (ed.) (1980): *Implementation politischer Programme*. Empirische Forschungsberichte. Königstein/Ts.: Verlagsgruppe Athenäum, Hain, Scriptor, Hanstein.
- Mayntz, Renate (1987): West Germany. In: Plowden, William J.L. (ed.): *Advising the Rulers*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 3-18.
- Mayntz, Renate/Scharpf, Fritz W. (1975): *Policy-making in the German Federal Bureaucracy*, Amsterdam: Elsevier.
- Moe, Terry M./Wilson, Scott (1994): Presidents and the Politics of Structure. In: *Law and Contemporary Problems*, 57(1), 1-44.
- Müller, Edda (1995): *Innenwelt der Umweltpolitik: Sozial-liberale Umweltpolitik – (Ohn)macht durch Organisation?* 2nd ed., Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag.
- Murswiek, Axel (2003): Des Kanzlers Macht: Zum Regierungsstil Gerhard Schröders. In: Egle, Christoph/Ostheim, Tobias/Zohlnhöfer, Reimut (eds.): *Das rot-grüne Projekt: Eine Bilanz der Regierung Schröder 1998-2002*, Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 117-135.
- Newton, Isaac (1676): Letter to Robert Hooke, 5 February 1675.
- Peters, B. Guy (1997): The Diffusion of Administrative Reform. In: *West European Politics*, 20(4), 71-88.
- Pollitt, Christopher/Bouckaert, Geert (2004): *Public Management Reform: A Comparative Analysis*, 2nd ed., Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Rolland, Vidar W./Roness, Paul G. (2009a): Mapping Organizational Change In The State: Challenges And Classifications. Paper presented at the COST meeting, Brussels, 21-22 April 2009.
- Rolland, Vidar W./Roness, Paul G. (2009b): Mapping Organizational Change in the State: Challenges and Classifications. Paper presented at an international workshop on 'Mapping State Administrations: Towards a Common European Research Agenda', Dublin, 20 April 2009.
- Scharpf, Fritz (1974): Politische Durchsetzbarkeit innerer Reformen. Report for the Commission on Economic and Social Change, No. 28. Göttingen: Otto Schwarz.
- Scharpf, Fritz W. (1977): Does Organization Matter? Task Structure and Interaction in the Ministerial Bureaucracy. In: *Organization and Administrative Sciences*, 8, 149-168.
- Scharpf, Fritz W. (1982): Der Erklärungswert "binnenstruktureller" Faktoren in der Politik- und Verwaltungsforschung. In: Hesse, Joachim J. (ed.): *Politikwissenschaft und Verwaltungswissenschaft*, Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 90-104.
- Scholz, Gotthard (1977): Organisationsuntersuchungen in der Bundesverwaltung. In: *Die Verwaltung*, 10, 222-342.
- Siedentopf, Heinrich (1976): Ressortzuschnitt als Gegenstand der vergleichenden Verwaltungswissenschaft. In: *Die Verwaltung*, 9(1), 1-18.
- Zypries, Brigitte/Peters, Cornelia (2003): Eine neue Gemeinsame Geschäftsordnung für die Bundesministerien. In: *Zeitschrift für Gesetzgebung* (15)4, 316-327.

Annex*Table 1 Overview of responsibilities for environment issues in German federal government, 1969*

Ministry	Tasks
Ministry of Interior	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • coordination of the environment programme, • air pollution, • noise pollution, • water management, • waste management, • environmental health, • nuclear safety (since 1972), • radiation protection (since 1972), • environmental chemicals, • traffic noise legislation, • bilateral, international and supranational cooperation in environmental protection
Ministry for Food, Agriculture and Forestry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • nature conservation, • landscape management
Ministry for Regional Planning, Building and Urban Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • regional planning (1972), • urban planning, • urban development
Ministry for Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • environmental affairs at the road construction, traffic emissions, maritime surveillance
Ministry for Youth, Family Affairs and Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • human and veterinary aspects of environmental protection, • lead for the chemicals law
Ministry for Research and Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • research and technology policy
Ministry for Economic Affairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • raw material and energy policy, • overall responsibility for commercial laws, consumer policy

Source: Müller 1995: 544.

Table 2 *Organisational changes in the Ministry for Environment, Nature Protection, and Nuclear Safety, 1986-2010 (subdivision level)*

		1986-1998	1998-2005	2005-2009	total
founding	secession	15	1	1	17
	splitting	4	0	0	4
maintenance	secession	1	1	0	2
	task reduction ¹	2	1	4	7
	task expansion ²	5	3	6	14
	task transfer ³	0	2	0	2
	task takeover ⁴	1	3	0	4
	change of name	8	4	6	18
termination	pure termination	1	0	0	1
	absorption	0	0	1	1
	splitting	1	0	0	1
total		38	15	18	71

Legend

- ¹ abolishing one/several tasks and functions of a pre-existing unit that are not transferred to other units (the pre-existing unit remains).
² expanding the tasks and functions of a pre-existing unit (the tasks are new and have not been managed by the unit or another unit before and the pre-existing unit remains).
³ transferring selected tasks and functions of one unit to one/several pre-existing unit/s (the pre-existing unit/s remain/s)
⁴ receiving selected tasks and functions from one/several pre-existing unit/s (which either remain/s or cease/s to exist)

Note: This table includes only a selection of organisational changes, the dataset contains also other types of founding, maintenance, and termination events.

Source: Own dataset, based upon archived organisational charts and task allocation plans from the Federal Archives.