



Public Sector Reform in Germany: Views and Experiences from Senior Executives

Country Report as part of the COCOPS Research Project

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About COCOPS

The COCOPS project (Coordinating for Cohesion in the Public Sector of the Future) seeks to comparatively and quantitatively assess the impact of New Public Management-style reforms in European countries, drawing on a team of European public administration scholars from 11 universities in 10 countries. It analyses the impact of reforms in public management and public services that address citizens' service needs and social cohesion in Europe. Evaluating the extent and consequences of NPM's alleged fragmenting tendencies and the resulting need for coordination is a key part of assessing these impacts. It is funded under the European Union's 7th Framework Programme as a Small or Medium-Scale Focused Research Project (2011-2014).

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Executive Summary

This country report summarizes the findings from the COCOS survey in Germany and aims to systematically map German experiences with administrative reform and performance management from a top executive perspective. It is based on answers from 566 public sector executives and separately describes the results for central government (both federal and Länder) as well as for the employment and health sector and also includes comparisons with the overall COCOPS survey with 4814 answers from 10 European countries. The results of this executive survey confirm both an ongoing relevance of the legalistic Weberian tradition and a more incrementalist approach to public administration in Germany, but also bring a more nuanced image of the administrative reform introduced and implemented in Germany. The results show interesting differences at policy sector level and in particular a significantly higher adoption and institutionalization of performance management as well as a stronger reform intensity in the employment sector along with a significantly more positive assessment of these reforms. The data also indicate that a higher adoption of management instruments goes a long way with a more positive assessment of administrative performance and – contrary to the common assumption – does not have a negative impact on factors such as work satisfaction, social capital and organizational commitment. From an international comparative perspective administrative we find evidence for a rather similar reform agenda with most other European countries but also a more hesitant adoption – especially of performance management – in Germany.

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1. Introduction

Coordinating for Cohesion in the Public Sector of the Future (COCOPS), as one of the largest comparative public management research projects in Europe, intends to provide a comprehensive picture of the challenges facing the public sector in European countries and to systematically explore the impact of New Public Management (NPM)-style reforms in Europe. The project brings together public administration scholars from eleven universities in ten countries¹ and is funded as part of the European Union's 7th Framework Programme from January 2011 till June 2014.² The research is comparative and evidence-based, drawing on both existing data and innovative new quantitative and qualitative data collection, at both national and policy sector levels. A cornerstone of the project is

¹ Erasmus University Rotterdam, Hertie School of Governance Berlin, University of Bergen, Bocconi University, University of Cantabria, Cardiff University, CNRS Paris, Corvinus University Budapest, University of Exeter, KU Leuven, Tallinn University of Technology.

² More information on the project is available at www.cocops.eu.

the *COCOPS Executive Survey on Public Sector Reform in Europe*: an original, large-scale survey of public sector top executives in ten European countries, exploring executives' opinions and experiences with regards to public sector reform in general government, as well as more particularly in the health and employment policy sectors.

Scholars within the public administration discipline have long underlined the need for more quantitative and rigorous comparative research, going beyond single-country and single-organization approaches (see Derlien 1992; Fitzpatrick et al 2011; Pollitt 2011; Raadschelders and Lee 2011). Moreover, few research initiatives have explored in depth the transformation of public administrations as triggered by NPM reform discourses in a systematic comparative form (Van de Walle and Hammerschmid 2011). Responding to such concerns, the COCOPS survey offers systematic evidence regarding the dynamics of public administration reform in Europe, with the goal to create an encompassing and systematic picture of public administration in Europe after more than two decades of NPM reforms.

From a theoretical perspective the survey builds on the perception of three different major reform paradigms (New Public Management, Public Governance and the Neo-Weberian State) as described by Pollitt and Bouckaert (2011). Focusing on top executives, it follows pioneering elite studies such as those of Aberbach, Putnam and Rockman (see Putnam 1976, Aberbach et al. 1981, and Aberbach and Rockman 2006), which lay the foundation for many other both national and cross-national executive surveys (e.g. Mayntz and Derlien 1988; Christensen and Laegreid 2007; Bertelli et al. 2007; Trondal 2010; Bauer et al. 2009; COBRA survey 2012; UDITE 2011).

Methodologically it also draws inspiration from cross-national population surveys such as the European Social Science Survey, European Values Survey or the International Social Survey Program, as well as from experiences with cross-national surveys such as those of the Survey Research Centre at the University of Michigan (2010).

As set out by the project's terms of reference the goal of this large-scale survey is to analyse national administrations (both ministries and agencies) in the participating countries and also to take a closer look at the policy fields employment and health. The survey aims to explore public sector executives' perceptions, experiences and opinions with regard to their work context and administrative reforms, but also on other factors such as values and identities and the impact of the fiscal crisis. The core survey implemented in all participating countries consists of 31 questions structured in four parts (I) General information; (II) Management and Work Practice of Your Organization; (III) Public Sector Reform and the Fiscal Crisis; (IV) Attitudes, Preferences and Personal Information. The survey is a result of joint work of all the national research teams within the COCOPS project and under the leadership of a team of researchers at the Hertie School of Governance in Berlin. In addition, further universities from other European countries were included as strategic partners to replicate the survey in these countries.³

Three essential challenges connected to the design of the questionnaire and the survey methodology had to be handled by the research team: a sample design that would allow systematic comparative analyses; an access strategy to produce (statistically sufficient) high response rates; and a

³ Vienna University of Economics and Business for Austria, Kaunas University of Technology for Lithuania, Technical University of Lisbon for Portugal, Copenhagen Business School for Denmark, Belgrade Fund for Political Excellence for Serbia and University of Bern for Switzerland.

questionnaire design and translation that would assure conceptual equivalence between all countries. As a general principle, the survey team opted for a balanced and pragmatic approach with a view on a maximum of quality and comparability, while still allowing for sufficient flexibility within each country's context. A core questionnaire developed by the survey team in English was translated into country-specific versions by the respective national research teams and – if assumed helpful – optional questions were added. With regard to the population definition, the research team targeted a group with relevant experience to assess overall developments and trends both on an organizational and policy field level. In general, top executives are viewed as such informants regarding the state of administration, given their privileged vantage point (Walker and Enticott 2004), but also, with the blurring of the classical boundaries between politicians and civil servants (Aberbach et al. 1981) due to their own role in policy-making, and their influence on the choice and implementation of reforms (Christensen and Læg Reid 1999; Ridder et al. 2006). A major critique raised against elite surveys however (see in particular Enticott et al. 2008) is that they usually focus on a limited selection of individuals at the top of the organization. As these individuals are relatively disconnected from processes at lower levels in the organizations, and also due to issues of desirability, such an approach is bound to provide a biased image of the respective organization(s). These are important points to take into consideration when interpreting the results.

In order to avoid random sampling and issues of representativeness, the COCOPS executive survey is based on a full census of all central government ministries and agencies. It covers all high level public sector executives who in their respective positions can be expected to be involved in public administration reform processes. A core set of binding sample principles, based on a detailed mapping of national administrative structures, was followed by all teams for central government areas and in both the employment and health sector as focus areas. Deviations were only allowed if precise equivalence could not be established due to the specificity of administrative structures. Local government and service delivery levels were excluded for the purpose of this survey. Generally, within all central government ministries and subordinated agencies the two top-administrative levels were addressed; in some cases invitations were also sent to executives on the third level if, due to their policy relevance, this was deemed appropriate. State-owned enterprises and audit courts were not included due to their different task repertoire. In the fields of employment and health, as special focus areas, regional and state government ministries and agencies were also included if relevant, without addressing however direct service delivery levels (e.g. hospitals, job centers).

Moreover, the survey explicitly covers different units of analysis (see Pollitt 2011: 121, on units of analysis in comparative public administration research) to allow for multi-level analyses: policy field, organization and individual experiences of the respondent. These are explored through the (self)perceptions of public sector executives, acknowledged in research as the closest channel into objective processes and developments within public organizations and, at least in the absence of stringent limitations, as reliable predictors of administrative behaviour (see Aberbach et al. 1981; Bauer et al. 2009).

The survey was implemented online, with standardized webpages being built in the national language(s) for each country. Flexibility was allowed, and even recommended, in the data collection strategies used by national teams, due to major differences in administrative cultures between the countries. A major emphasis was put on a thorough data cleaning and harmonization at the end of

the survey, to make sure that final results were comparable across countries and that any deviations allowed during the implementation process were explained and controlled.⁴

The survey was launched in May 2012 and implemented in two rounds (May-July 2012, and September-November 2012). These two rounds combined, the survey was sent out to over 20.000 high ranking civil servants in the ten participating countries via post and email (using either a personalized access link or an anonymous one), depending on each country's predefined access strategy. Invitations were followed by reminders and, in cases where response rates were low, teams took additional measures, such as phone or postal reminders, to increase the number of survey participants. In the beginning of November 2012, all surveys were closed, and all datasets were cleaned, checked and harmonized according to a standardised procedure for all countries. By the end of 2012 there were 4814 valid answers available from ten participating countries and an overall response rate of 23.7% (for details see Table 1). These answers are the basis for the respective country reports. The data in both the national and the integrated datasets are subject to strict anonymity regulations, to protect individual respondents, whereas aggregate data will be published according to a set of rules commonly agreed upon by the research teams involved.

Table 1. Number of invitations and response rates of the COCOPS survey (by end of December 2012)

| Country | Invitations Sent* | Survey completions | Response rate % |
|----------------|-------------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| Austria | 1745 | 637 | 36.50 |
| Estonia | 913 | 321 | 35.16 |
| France | 5297 | 1193 | 22.52 |
| Germany | 2295 | 566 | 24.66 |
| Hungary | 1200 | 351 | 29.25 |
| Italy | 1703 | 343 | 20.14 |
| Netherlands | 977 | 293 | 29.99 |
| Norway | 1299 | 436 | 33.56 |
| Spain | 1778 | 321 | 18.05 |
| UK | 3100 | 353 | 11.39 |
| Total | 20307 | 4814 | 23.71 |

*The invitations sent represent the final number of invitations that has reached respondents, after the exclusion of any failure deliveries, wrong addresses etc.

The current country report summarizes the findings for **Germany** along with some first comparisons with the aggregate results from all of the ten validated surveys in Austria, Estonia, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Spain and UK. A more systematic comparative report based on these country reports will follow in summer 2013.

⁴ The details of the survey design and implementation process can be found in the survey Research Report (see Hammerschmid, et al. 2013 on the COCOPS webpage).

2. Context and Status Quo of Public Administration Reform in Germany

Like in most other countries, public administration reform is a recurrent issue in the German public sector and has been described as a 'permanent reflex of administrative practice' (Mayntz 1997). Several shifting narratives of reform have been identified for Germany (Jann 2003: 105). An 'active state' narrative emerged in the 1960s emphasising the necessity of state planning and intervention as a prerequisite for further social and economic development. It was superseded by a 'lean state' leitmotif emphasising privatization, de-bureaucratization and management approaches in order to tackle the perceived overburdened and overblown condition of the German welfare state and in line with the NPM ideas. Finally, the concept of an 'activating state' as a new narrative or leitmotif of public sector reform emerged in the late 1990s. This new narrative circles around new ways of engaging with society in order to deal not only with pressures to cut back public expenditures, but also with the implications of an 'accelerating modernization and differentiation of the modern world' (ibid., 111) where the state guarantees the extent and the quality of public services and, at the same time, creates and encourages alternative ways of financing and delivering these services, using the whole spectrum of possibilities between state, third sector, civil society and market (Jann 2003: 111; also coined as *Gewährleistungsstaat* – see Schuppert 2005). These shifting discourses are clearly reflected in the various public sector reform programs from the federal government over the last two decades. A large scale initiative for 'Lean Government' (*Schlanker Staat*) under the Kohl government in the mid-90s was followed by 'Modern Government – Modern Administration' (*Moderner Staat, modern Verwaltung*) under the red-green coalition government in 1998, then by 'Innovative Administration' (*Zukunftsorientierte Verwaltung durch Innovationen*) in 2006 and finally by a program for a 'Networked and Transparent Administration' (*Vernetzte und transparent Verwaltung*) as the most recent reform program passed in 2010. Whereas the program in 2006 clearly resembles both NPM and Neo-Weberian ideas (see Pollitt and Bouckaert 2011), such as a professional and flexible HRM, better public management based on modern management concepts, structural changes (e.g. shared services, task reduction, process orientation, customer service) and an ambitious e-government program, the title of the most recent program on network-based and transparent administration shows clear linkages to what has been described as a new public government reform paradigm (Pollitt and Bouckaert 2011). A closer look at the program⁵ however reveals strong continuity with the previous reform program. It addresses Germany's demographic challenge and the digitalization of society and aims to increase administrative efficiency, transparency and responsiveness via three fields of action, namely human resources, organisational optimisation, and ICT. More noteworthy most projects such as the 'open government' initiative are only in rather early or piloting stages. The program is not only characterized by a high continuity with previous reforms, but also by the limited leeway of the Ministry of Interior in designing and implementing administrative reform. Although the ministry is formally responsible for coordinating administrative reform government wide, it cannot interfere with the jurisdiction of other departments to foster more fundamental and innovative reform projects due to the high degree of departmental autonomy in German federal government.

Despite these lively and shifting discourses of public sector reform and many related reform initiatives, the general pattern of German administrative reform at the federal and the state (*Länder*)

⁵ The English version of the program can be accessed at www.verwaltung-innovativ.de/

level can be described to date as a trajectory of minor adjustments within the boundaries of the established institutional framework.⁶ Conventional accounts of this reform pattern therefore describe the German case as a ‘plodding tortoise’ characterized by incrementalism rather than fundamental change (e.g. Benz and Goetz 1996: 4-9). In international comparative literature, Germany is frequently coined as ‘laggard’ or a ‘latecomer’ with regard to (new) public management reforms (OECD 1995; Politt and Bouckaert 2004; Hood 2006). Bouckaert and Halligan (2008: 50) in their comparative analysis of performance management diagnose Germany as being at a quite early stage of ‘performance administration’ based on a preliminary analysis that indicates that “Germany at the national level continues to operate without commitment to, and application of, performance, measurement and management principles”. German research – albeit rather limited and preliminary – comes to similar conclusions (e.g. Proeller and Siegel 2009; Hammerschmid et al. 2010). Even though this contrast has been challenged and nuanced by some authors (e.g. Hood and Lodge 2005), in overall this picture of rather incremental and hesitant reform still retains.

The traditional accounts draw on an institutionalist perspective in order to explain Germany’s hesitant stance towards administrative reform. Using Pollitt and Bouckaert’s (2011: 48) framework of the five key features influencing the process of public management reform⁷, the following features of Germany’s politico-administrative system seem important in understanding the dynamics of public sector reform. First, a highly decentralised federal system with most government functions delegated to the state (*Länder*) and local government level – both with strong constitutional protection – that makes centrally imposed administrative reform in the UK-style practically impossible. An approach of functionally divided policy-making and -implementation between federal and state level, as well as the strong involvement of the states in federal legislation forces the different layers of government to cooperate (‘interlocking of responsibilities’). Due to this interaction, the German system is also known as ‘cooperative federalism’ (Grasse 2011: 245). The constitutional principle of ‘equivalence of living conditions’ further enhances the complexity of this arrangement and the interdependencies of the different layers of government. The principle implies sizeable inter-state fiscal transfers. Finally, judicial review by the Federal Constitutional Court (*Bundesverfassungsgericht*) plays a key role in the system of German federalism because it resolves, inter alia, fundamental conflicts between different government levels (as they arise, for example, in the context of redistribution under fiscal federalism; Grasse 2011: 263). All in all, these factors imply that political decision-making processes are rather time-consuming and complex (Schweiger 2010). In addition to this, Germany features an intermediate form of executive government with a mixture of majoritarian and consensus-oriented elements. Germany’s decentralized power structure, the sharing of power between multiple actors, the strong role of judicial review and a fairly proportional (i.e. mixed-member proportional) electoral system mean that Germany represents a classic case of a consensus democracy according to Lijphart (1999). The chancellor, as head of government, enjoys a number of prerogatives, such as organising government, appointing and dismissing cabinet ministers, and issuing general policy guidelines, which are binding for cabinet members (according to article 65 of the Basic Law, this is referred to as the *Kanzlerprinzip*; Fleischer 2010: 356). While he or she is thus more than just a *primus inter pares*,

⁶ Indeed, the greatest degree of innovative public administration reform activity in Germany has so far occurred at the local government level, where the reform pressure from tight budgets and increasing citizen demands is much higher. Also, service delivery plays a more prominent role than at the federal level (Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2011).

⁷ These features are state structure, executive government, minister/mandarin relations, administrative culture and diversity of policy advice.

the functioning of government is also structured by the cabinet principle and the principle of departmental autonomy (*Kabinettsprinzip & Ressortprinzip*, as laid down under article 65 Basic Law). In practice, the latter is the most “dominant and protected” (ibid.), whereas the former ensures the participation of all cabinet members in cabinet decisions. Executive leadership is thus also more fragmented and weaker than in many other European countries.

Furthermore, Germany’s politico-administrative system displays fairly politicised minister/mandarin relations and mainly draws on civil service and academic policy advice. As regards the administrative culture, Germany is marked by a distinctive legalistic *Rechtsstaat* tradition (e.g. Ziller 2003) and a deeply ingrained civil service identity and ethos (Ellwein and Zoll 1973; Luhmann and Mayntz 1973; Bosetzky 1994). This philosophy implies an emphasis on formal processes, rules, directives and stability (e.g. König 2001; Derlien 2003; Kickert 2005). Indeed, administrative work in Germany is in principle organized in a quasi-judicial fashion: Since almost all bureaucratic decisions are potentially subject to appeal in administrative courts, decisions are to be taken in an objective, equitable, impartial and legal-rational manner both vis à vis the citizen and the sovereign (e.g. Ziller 2003). In other words, legal and procedural correctness prevails over performance and results; in a neo-institutionalist understanding (March and Olsen 1989) a logic of appropriateness prevails over a logic of consequentiality. Consequently, most procedures, especially those for budget and personnel administration, are subject to statutory regulation. Civil servants (who form the so-called *Berufsbeamtentum*) enjoy a special status that functionally-historically derives from their specific duty relationship with the state, and the sovereign character of public tasks (e.g. Mayntz 1997). As a result, they enjoy life-long tenure, career paths with promotions based on seniority and protection from job transfers. Transfers to private sector employment are likewise very uncommon. This results in a very low intersectoral mobility of civil servants (Derlien 2003, 2008). In addition, older statistics (Derlien 2003) show that the majority of high-level civil servant positions are still filled by lawyers, and management skills remain irrelevant as a recruitment criterion; hence, the legalistic culture is likely to live on (Klages 2001). Finally, since these principles are partly laid down in the constitution, the status quo of the administrative structure is firmly entrenched (constitutional amendments require two-thirds majorities in both chambers of parliament).

Although as a general rule, German bureaucrats are hesitant to become involved in day-to-day politics and seek to uphold their neutrality and public interest-orientation, the top-level bureaucrats in Germany are increasingly politicised (e.g. Schwanke and Ebinger 2005). High-ranking public officials take on a political (though not necessarily party-political) role as they coordinate the development and execution of policies on behalf of the political executive and often have to mediate between various political actors and institutions. Ministers have a far-reaching influence over job placement and promotion decisions in their departments (Schröter 2004). These observations apply in particular to the two uppermost layers of the bureaucracy (state secretaries/parliamentary state secretaries

and departmental heads (*Abteilungsleiter*), or *Ministerialdirektoren*), which comprise about 125 individuals.⁸ Through the institution of the ‘political civil servant’, ministers can send their top

⁸ Schröter (2004: 56) defines the ‘higher administrative class’ in the German system as the four top ranks in the – comparatively small – federal administration. Apart from state secretaries, these are departmental (*Abteilungsleiter*), subdepartmental (*Unterabteilungsleiter*) and division heads (*Referatsleiter*). The overall number of employees at this level today is approximately the same as in 2001, when about 1800 people belonged to the category of the higher administrative class (Schröter 2004: 56). The current survey with its focus on top executives however excludes the level of *Referatsleiter*.

advisers into temporary retirement (a common occurrence as a result of a change in government). Also there are a number of loopholes for patronage. For example, there is no central recruitment agency, which means that there are no uniform hiring or promotion procedures across departments or bureaucratic ranks. However, studies of, for example, German state secretaries show that even though they are involved in political matters, they still consider themselves in the first place as neutral public servants (e.g. Gusovious 2010). Also, the comparatively rigid and detailed civil service law with a very pronounced career-based HRM system and administrative courts function as an institutional constraint against patronage.

These factors do not mean that the German politico-administrative system is not capable of institutional innovation. The past decade has seen two major cross-party reform efforts aimed at increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of the arrangement of German federalism, the so-called 'federalism reforms' I and II. These reforms refer to a series of constitutional amendments, which were passed in 2006 and 2009 respectively. The first reform represented an attempt to more precisely clarify the legislative competencies of the *Länder* and the federal government (Burkhart 2008). In essence, the negotiations between *Länder* and federal policymakers involved a bargain: weakening the states' veto power in the *Bundesrat* in exchange for a reallocation of certain legislative powers to the *Länder*. The second reform mainly focused on fiscal federalism issues and brought a number of governance innovations regarding administrative cooperation between the *Länder* and federal government (Freigang and Ragnitz 2009). Apart from a far-reaching constitutional debt brake along with a limited bailout arrangement for fiscally troubled *Länder*, the constitutional amendments introduced two interesting innovations. First, they created an IT planning council, a body comprising representatives from both the *Länder* and federal government that is to develop a comprehensive national strategy of IT standardisation and cooperation. Second, they inserted the so-called 'benchmarking clause' into the constitution (article 91d of the Basic Law). This clause explicitly allows for benchmarking performance within federal administration but especially between the *Länder*. However, such benchmarking studies can only be carried out on a purely voluntary basis and there is no administrative structure yet in place for putting the constitutional law into practice. All in all, it remains an open question whether these recent institutional alterations will eventually yield more fundamental changes in public administration and public management. This study contributes to clarifying this question by analysing public sector executives' assessment of recent reforms and thereby determining to what extent German public administration has experienced a turn away from the traditional Weberian model of public administration towards NPM or post-NPM ideas as discussed in public management literature.

3. Data and Method

3.1 Sampling, Access Strategy and Survey Implementation

The German COCOPS survey was conducted by a team of researchers at the Hertie School of Governance, which was also the main coordinator for this survey in all participating countries. In keeping with the survey's general sampling principles and population definition, the German sample represents a full census, avoiding random sampling. In line with the sampling strategy the survey invitations were sent to the first two levels of public sector executives in all federal government ministries (i.e. all *Abteilungsleiter* and *Unterabteilungsleiter*) and in all agencies directly subordinated to federal government ministries. In order to increase the relatively small sample size at federal government level, invitations were also sent out to all ministries in the 16 German states (*Länder*). State secretaries were also included for all ministries at federal and state level. Although state secretary positions are generally regarded as highly politicized (see Derlien 2003), they were included in the sample due to their high relevance for policy making and their overall small number.⁹

As mentioned earlier in this report (see Introduction), there was a particular focus on employment and health policy areas. The same sampling rules as in central government were followed, with some additions at state (*Länder*) and regional levels such as also including agencies at *Länder* level for these policy fields. Also for the employment sector, a broader number of executives in the Federal Employment Agency (*Bundesagentur für Arbeit* or BA) – with over 100.000 employees one of the largest agencies in Germany – was included, albeit not going down to the service delivery level of the *Arbeitsamt*. Invitations were sent to the top executive level at the BA headquarters, the directors of the ten regional sub-agencies across Germany (*Regionaldirektionen*), as well as the heads of the 178 agency units (*Agenturen für Arbeit*).¹⁰ Similarly, for the health sector, further executives at state and regional level were included in the survey in line with the overall sampling principles and definitions. More specifically, state hospital associations were targeted, given their specific role in policy-making. Lower service delivery levels, such as hospitals, were however left out.

With regards to access, for Germany a postal distribution of the survey seemed the best option to achieve higher response rates. Previous survey experiences (see Hammerschmid et al. 2010) showed that in the rather hierarchical and legalistic context of German public administration a more official approach such as that of personalized letter invitations would render higher response rates. The invitations were therefore sent by post, including a copy of the questionnaire and allowing two options to fill in the answers: either directly online – using the German webpage – or by returning the questionnaire via post, fax or email. A PDF version of the questionnaire was also available on the survey webpage to be downloaded for such cases.

The German survey was kept very close to the core questionnaire, with only one optional question added at the very end and question 4 modified to the German context. A different approach was followed with the Federal Employment Agency (BA). The head of the organization officially endorsed the survey and made an email announcement to all executives recommending a participation in the

⁹ In total 22 state secretaries responded to the survey, and their answers were included together with the answers from the departmental heads in the first hierarchical level.

¹⁰ The head of the BA sent a letter of endorsement for the survey to all senior executives, which led to a considerably higher response rate in this policy sector.

survey; this was then followed by the email invitations sent out by the Hertie School of Governance. Given this special distribution a separate survey page was built for this Agency.

The postal invitations for the general German survey (excluding the BA sample) were sent out May 28-30th 2012 and giving June 22nd as deadline for the answers. Given the logistical difficulties of postal invitations, no reminders were sent to this part of the target group. In the case of the BA, the email invitations were sent May 25th 2012 and followed by two email reminders before the deadline of June 29th ..

Overall, a total of 2295 invitations were sent out for the German COCOPS survey: 1695 to central government executives, 240 to health sector executives, and 360 to executives in the employment sector. In total, the survey received 566 partially or fully filled out questionnaires, which lead to an overall response rate of 24.7%, as shown in Table 2. Total response rates in the German case, as well as those at central government level are well in line with those from the overall COCOPS survey (24.7% Germany vs. 23.7% in overall COCOPS sample resp. 19.5% vs. 21.4% for central government). For the health sector, the German response rate is comparatively lower (22.1% vs. 30.6%) and for the employment sector, due to institutional support, considerably higher (53.3% vs. 26.9%).

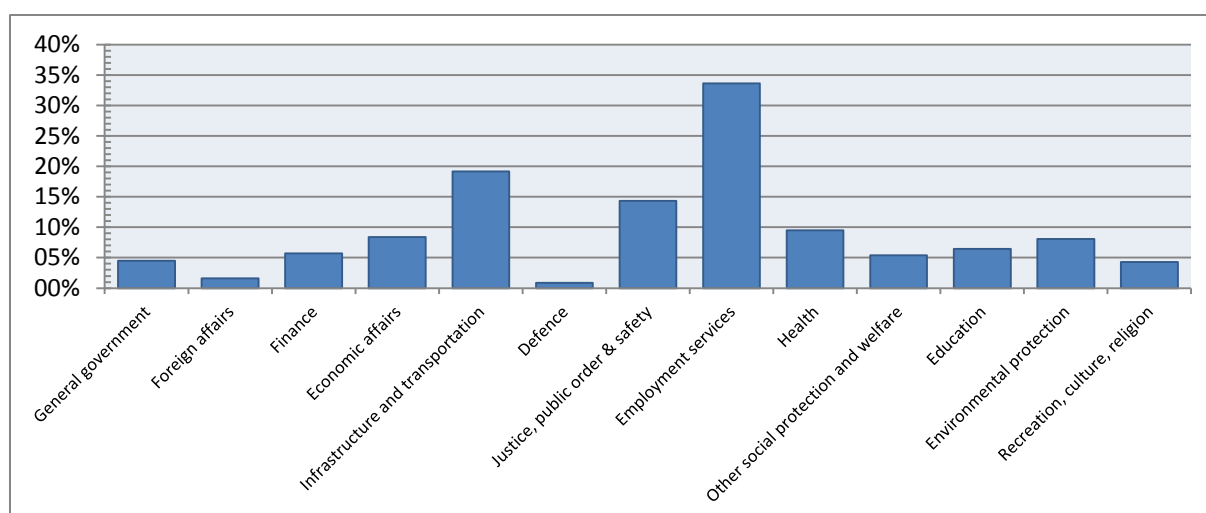
Table 2. Sample size and response rates

| | Central Government | Health Sector | Employment Sector | Germany Total | Total COCOPS Sample |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------|---------------|-------------------|---------------|---------------------|
| Invitations sent | 1695 | 240 | 360 | 2295 | 20307 |
| Completed surveys | 331 | 53 | 192 | 566 | 4814 |
| Response rate (total COCOPS sample) | 19.5% (21.4%) | 22.1% (30.6%) | 53.3% (26.9%) | 24.7% | 23.7% |

Looking at the distribution across policy fields (see Figure 1 – please note that respondents were allowed to select more than one option) we can see that there are 33.6% responses from the employment sector. A considerable share of responses also comes from infrastructure and transportation (27.3%), justice, public order and safety (20.3%) and health (11.5%) whereas the share of answers from defence (1.3%) and foreign affairs (1.9%) is rather low, indicating a somewhat more closed administrative culture in these two areas, which also could be observed in the other countries and the overall COCOPS sample.

Related to this particularly high response rate for the employment sector for this country report results from this sector will be tackled separately in chapter 9. This also seemed necessary for a second reason. While German public administration has often been described as a ‘laggard’ with regard to the implementation of public management reforms (e.g. OECD 1997, Politt and Bouckaert 2004, Hood 2004) this verdict does not hold for German employment services, where a plethora of NPM reforms have been implemented in recent years (e.g. Meynhardt and Metelmann 2009; Meynhardt and Diefenbach 2012). The latter implies that these respondents could potentially be structurally different from the rest and which was clearly confirmed in preliminary statistical analyses. The bulk of the following report (chapters 3.2-8) will therefore excludes the answers from the employment sector (both at Ministry level and the BA) and both the employment sector and the health sector are dealt with separately in chapter 9.

Figure 1. Respondents' background: Policy field



In terms of statistical methodology all references to differences between sub-populations refer to differences that are statistically significant at max. 5% assuming unequal variances. Similarly, any references to a correlation between ordinal variables imply that this (Spearman rank) correlation is statistically significant, again at 5% significance. To indicate significance levels, the following designation is used: (***) denotes a significance level of $p < 0,001$, (**) denotes a significance level of $p < 0,01$ and (*) denotes a significance level of $p < 0,05$.

Unless otherwise indicated, the following categories are used to interpret the results: if a scale ranging from 1 to 7 is used, 1 means 'Strongly disagree' and 7 means 'Strongly agree', the percentage shares for scale numbers 1, 2 and 3 (vs. 5, 6 and 7) are added and interpreted as 'Rather disagree' (vs. 'Rather agree'). In other cases, the percentage shares for scale numbers 1 and 2 (vs. 6 and 7) are calculated and interpreted as 'Agree' vs. 'Disagree'.

Before exploring respondents' opinions and attitudes towards their role and work in public administration, it is important to establish some of the key contextual features that set the organizational and socio-demographic background of the respondents. The answers from executives in the employment sector are not included in the following descriptions but separately described in chapter 9.1.

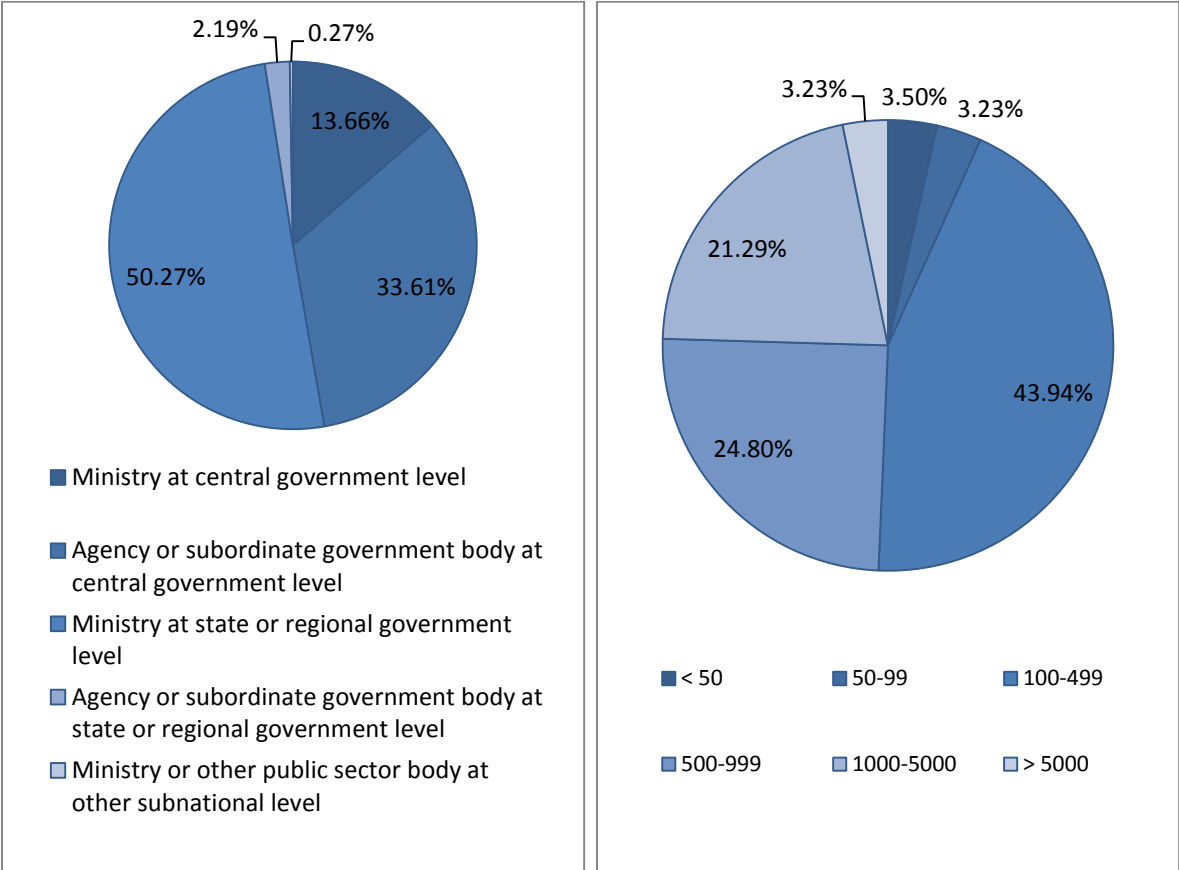
3.2 Organizational Context of Respondents (Excluding Employment Sector)

Organization type (see Figure 2). The greatest share of answers (50.3%) come from executives within ministries at the state (*Länder*) level; this is in line with the overall population, where, given its important policy making role, almost half of civil servants work at this tier of government (OECD Government at a Glance 2009). For the overall COCOPS sample the share of executives in ministries at state or regional level is considerably lower (15.4%). Merely 13.7% of the German sample respondents work in ministries at central government level (vs. 34.8% for the overall COCOPS sample) whereas the share of respondents working in agencies or subordinate government bodies at federal government level - with 33.6% - is rather high (vs. 32.4% for the overall COCOPS sample). Only a very low share of answers comes from executives in state (*Länder*) level agencies (2.2%) and from

government levels beyond state government (0.3%; this level was addressed only for the health sector).

Organization size (see Figure 2). Around 51.4% of respondents work in organizations with up to 500 employees, similar to the overall COCOPS sample (50.9%). Another 46.7% work in larger organizations of 500-5000 employees (vs. only 32.2% in the overall COCOPS sample) and around 3.2% of respondents come from organizations with over 5000 employees (vs. 16.9% in the overall COCOPS sample).

Figure 2. Respondents' background: Organization type and organization size



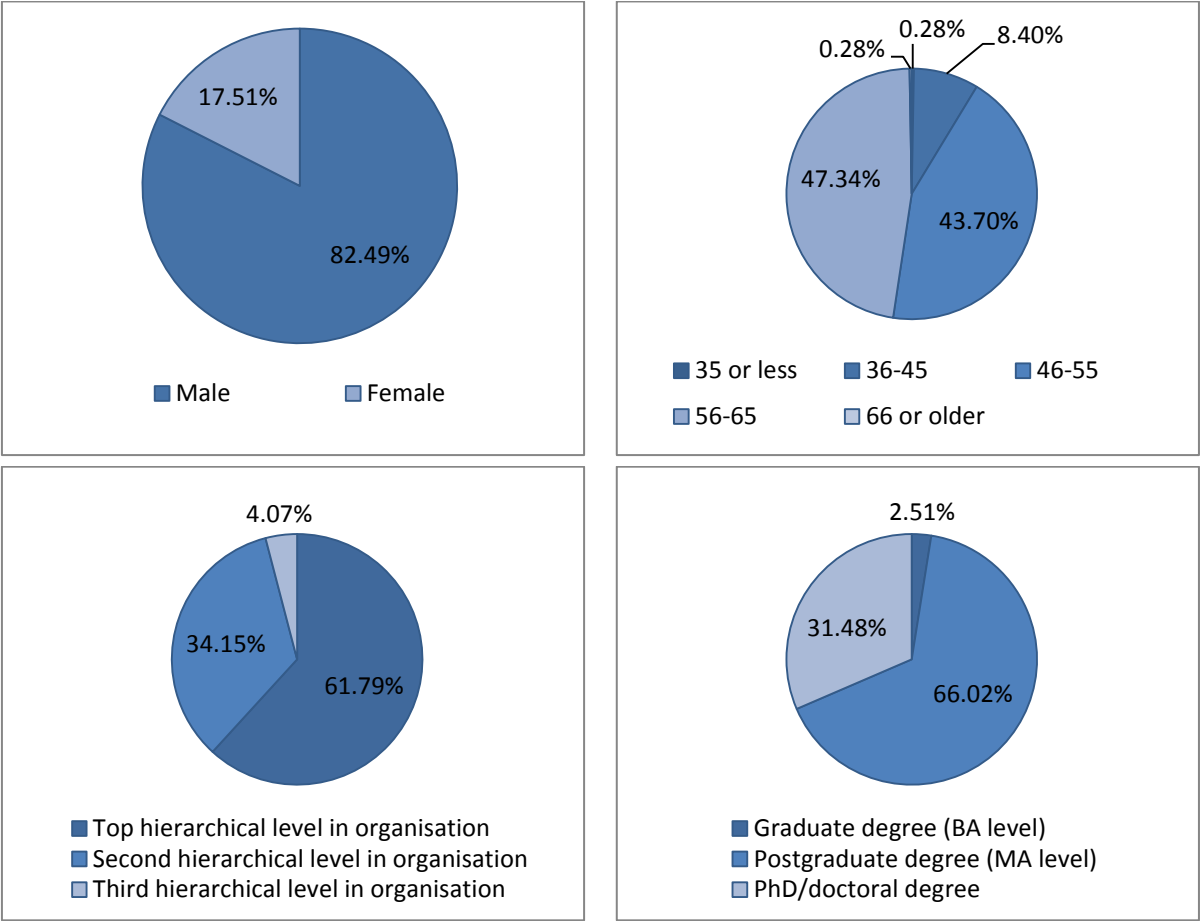
3.3 Socio-demographic Background of Respondents (Excluding Employment Sector)

Gender (see Figure 3). The great majority of respondents are men (82.5%), and only 17.5% are women – a proportion which confirms the traditional and still existing male dominance among German public sector executives (Derlien 2003). By comparison, in the overall COCOPS sample over a third (32.1%) of the respondents are women. These results enforce other studies underlining that women are underrepresented in the German upper tiers of government, especially when taking into consideration that 52% of the entire government workforce is female (see OECD Government at a Glance 2009: 70).

Age (see Figure 3). The majority of respondents (52.1%) are between 36-55 years old (vs. 61.6% in the overall COCOPS sample), with another 47.3% being aged between 56-65 years (here the share among the overall COCOPS sample is considerably lower with only 31.8%). Only 0.3% of the German

respondents are under 35 vs. 5.8% in the overall COCOPS sample. The results point to a relatively older executive population in Germany, which mirrors the hierarchical tradition of German administration with seniority-based promotion, and public officials remaining in the administration throughout their professional life.

Figure 3. Respondents' background: Gender, age, hierarchical level in organization, educational level

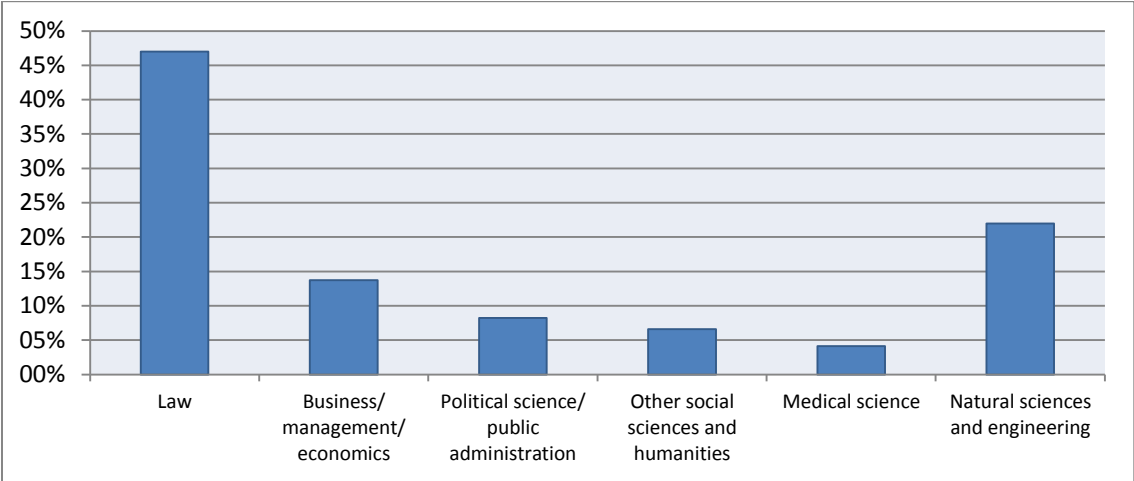


Hierarchical level (see Figure 3). With regards to their position in the work hierarchy, most respondents (61.8%) are top executives at the first hierarchical level (e.g. *Abteilungsleiter in Ministerien* or *Direktor, Präsident, Geschäftsführer, Vorstand/in einer Behörde des nachgeordneten Bereichs*). About a third of the respondents (34.1%) are second level, and the remaining 4.1% indicated other hierarchical levels. The overall COCOPS sample has a surprisingly lower share of respondents from the first level (24.2%) and more answers from the second level (40.4%) and also other hierarchical levels (35.4%).

Education (see Figure 3). A clear majority of all respondents (66.0%) have a Master as highest degree, which is about the same share as the overall COCOPS sample (68.8%). However the rather high share of over a third of respondents (31.5% vs. 15.5% in the overall sample) with a doctoral degree confirms the very high education level of German public sector executives. Only 2.5% of all responding executives have graduated with a Bachelor's degree or do not have a university degree (vs. 15.6% in the overall COCOPS sample).

As to the **disciplinary field of education** (see Figure 4), the highest percentage of respondents still has a degree in law (47.0%), confirming the traditional German focus on the legal profession: according to Derlien (2003) in the in 1990s more than half of the German administrative elite had a background in law, a position starting to be challenged by other disciplines, especially by business studies (around one fifth at that time). Almost fifteen years later, the situation seems to have changed little, with law still playing a dominating role, and the administration being only rather slowly populated by professionals with a background in other fields, majorly natural sciences and engineering (22.0%), but also business, management and economics (13.7%), political science and public administration (8.2%), other social sciences and humanities (6.6%), or medical science (4.1%). By comparison, in the overall COCOPS sample a much lower share of only 27.7% of respondents has a background in law, which leaves a larger share for respondents with a background in business, management and economics (22.8%), political science and public administration (14.4%) and other social sciences (15.2%).

Figure 4. Respondents’ background: Educational fields (respondents could click more than one option)

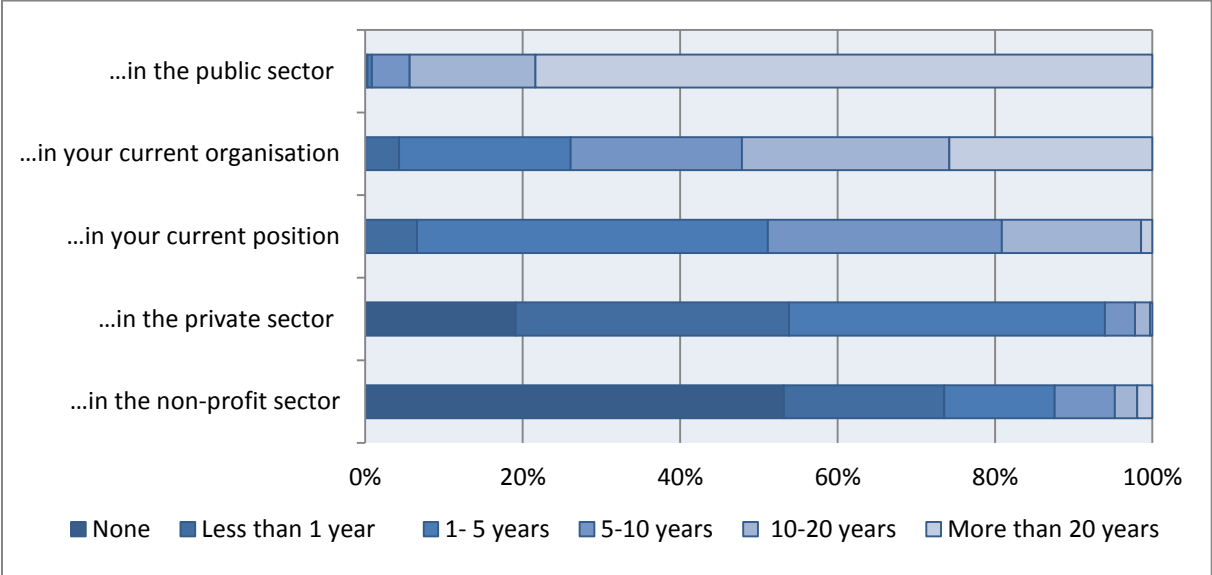


Tenure (see Figure 5).The results related to the respondents’ tenure and sector experiences mirror some of the key characteristics of the German public administration, such as life-long careers in the civil service and also seniority-based promotion. An overwhelming share of 78.4% of the respondents has worked in the public sector for more than twenty years (vs. 58.2% in the overall COCOPS sample) and only 5.6% have a public sector experience of less than five years (vs. 13.8% in the overall COCOPS sample). The rather low mobility within the sector is indicated by a share of 52.2% of respondents who have been working in the current organization for more than 10 years (vs. 47.8% in the overall sample), respectively in the same position for more than 10 years (19.1% vs. 16.0%).

When looking at the respondents’ experiences outside the public sector, we see that a relatively high share of public sector executives has at least some private sector experience – albeit mostly rather short – with only 19.2% of the respondents having no previous private sector experience (considerably lower than in the overall COCOPS sample (26.8%), or less than one year (34.7% vs. 23.4%). Previous experience in the non-profit sector is less common, with 53.2% of respondents declaring no experience in the non-profit sector (similar to 55.9% in the overall COCOPS sample), or less than one year of experience (20.4% vs 10.1% in the overall COCOPS sample). The data also clearly shows that the large share of this non-public sector experience of German public sector executives is only of a rather short length, especially in comparison to the overall COCOPS sample.

Only 6.0% of the German respondents have experience of more than 5 years in the private sector (vs. 18.8% in the overall COCOPS sample), respectively 12.4% in the non-profit sector (vs. 20.6% in the COCOPS sample).

Figure 5. Respondents' background: Tenure and other sector experience (excluding employment) (Q. How many years of work experience do you have ...?)



4. Values and Attitudes of Public Sector Executives

After describing the respondents with regard to their organizational and socio-demographic background, the following section will present data on how public sector executives in Germany perceive their role as executives, their motivation and social values and preferences.

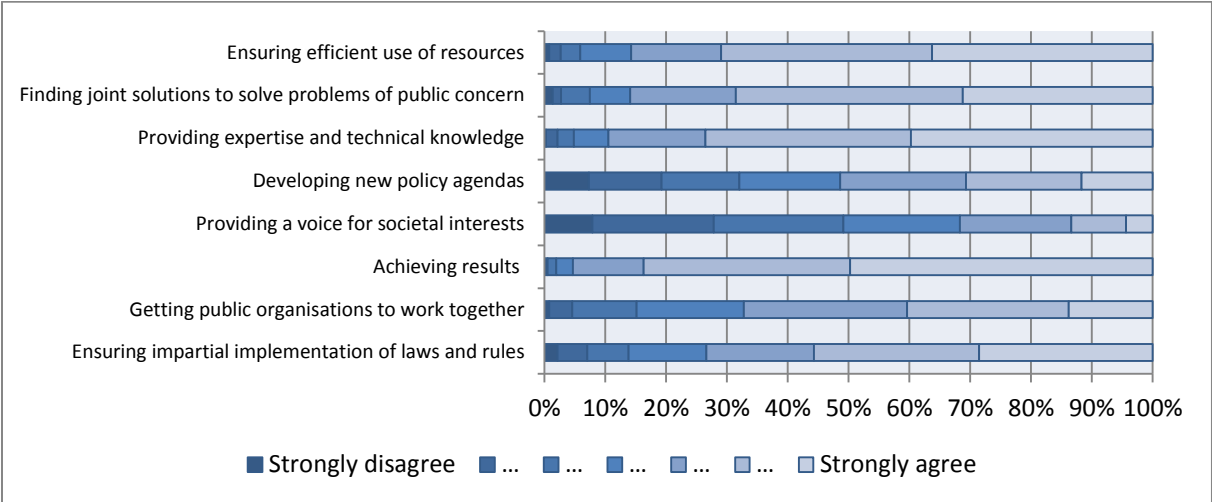
Identity and role perception as executive (see Figure 6). When asked about their self-understanding as public sector executives, a clear majority of the respondents strongly confirms achieving results (83.%) providing expertise and technical knowledge (73.5%), ensuring an efficient use of resources (71.0%) and finding joint solutions to solve problems of public concern (68.5%) as central for their role. Other aspects such as ensuring impartial implementation of laws and rules (with a surprisingly low 55.7%), getting public organizations to work together (40.4%) and developing new public agendas (30.4%) are also well anchored but to a much lesser degree. In contrast, only a rather low share of respondents (13.4%) agrees on providing a voice for societal interests as part of their role as executives (vs. 27.9 disagreeing).

With regard to the profile of German public sector executives emerging from these answers we find a clear dominance of roles that are in line both with a Weberian self-understanding (e.g. providing expertise and technical knowledge, ensuring impartial implementation of laws and rules) and a managerial self-understanding (e.g. achieving results, ensuring efficient use of resources) indicating a certain hybridization of these two reform paradigms which could be interpreted as a Neo-Weberian

model as argued by Pollitt and Bouckaert (2011). In contrast, a more political self-understanding and roles in line with a more networked-governance reform model are resonating to a lower degree.

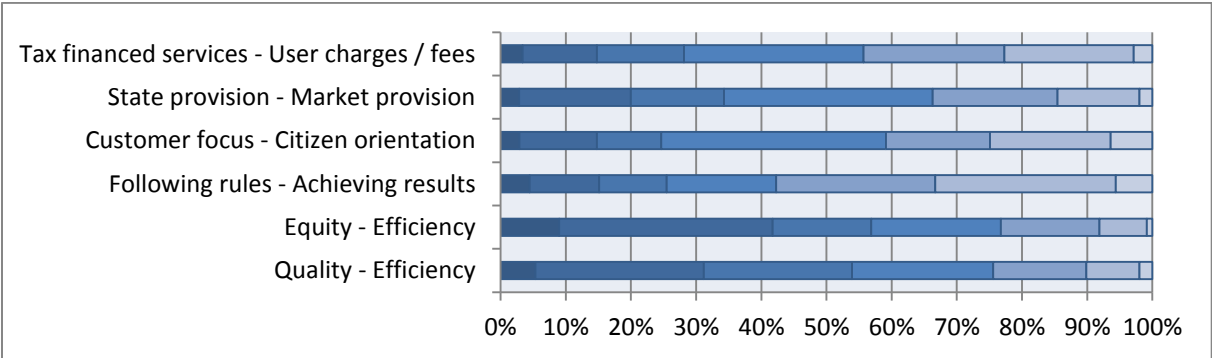
These answers from German public sector executives are rather in line with the results from the overall COCOPS sample. We find significantly higher means for the overall COCOPS sample only for the variables: ensuring impartial implementation of rules and laws (a mean of 5.35 in the German sample vs. 5.92 in the overall COCOPS sample); getting organizations to work together (5.01 vs. 5.43) and providing a voice for societal interests (3.64 vs. 4.38).

Figure 6. Role and self-understanding (Q: I mainly understand my role as public executive as...)



Value preferences for public sector priorities (see Figure 7). The survey also asked for more general preferences with regard to public sector priorities based on polarizing options. The results again indicate a prevalence of the traditional Weberian bureaucratic model but also an increasing openness towards managerial values. With regard to values, we find a clear preference for traditional civil service values such as equity and quality over efficiency (agreement 41.7% vs. 8.1% resp. 31.2% vs. 10.1%) and a traditional citizen focus, instead of a more managerial customer focus (24.9% agreement vs. 14.8%). On the other side, a rather surprisingly substantial share of respondents emphasises achieving results (33.3%) over following rules (15.1%), and show a preference for user charges/fees (22.7% vs. 14.8% tax finance services) and even market provision (14.6% vs. 20.0% state provision).

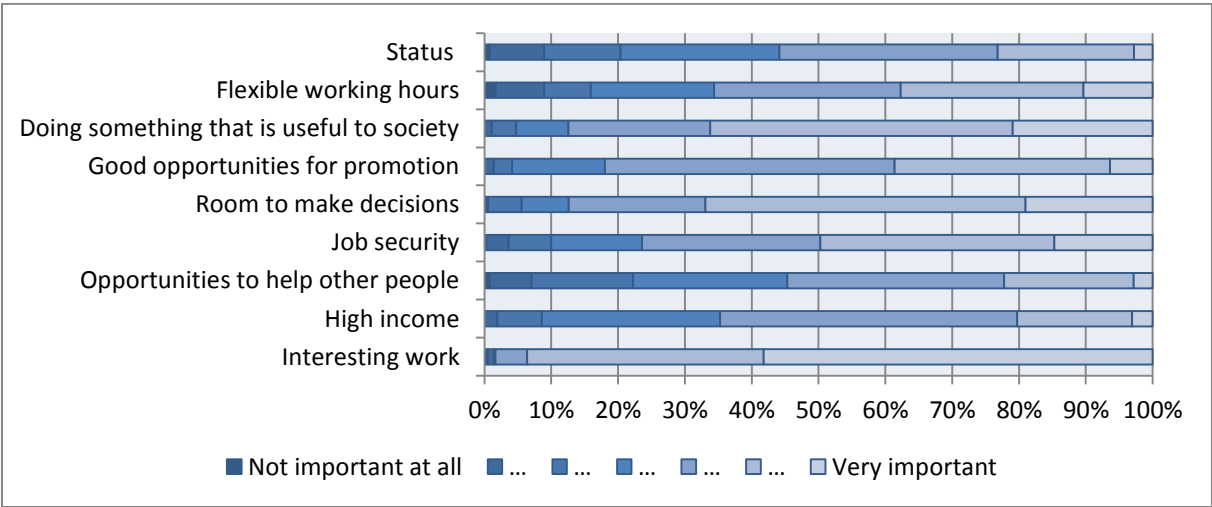
Figure 7. Priorities as public servants (Q: Public services often need to balance different priorities. Where would you place your own position?)



In comparison with the overall COCOPS sample, we again find a relatively similar pattern of preferences. Surprisingly however, considering the common characterization of German public administration as rather traditional and laggard with regard to NPM ideas, we find a significantly higher percentage of executives favouring market provision and achieving results.

Motivation (see Figure 8). A common research theme is the question about the specific motivation in the public sector. Following the common distinction of extrinsic and intrinsic motivation, our results confirm a clear prevalence of intrinsic motivation among German public sector executives. By far the greatest importance is given to interesting work (93.6% agreement vs. 1.4% disagreement) followed by room to make decisions – respective autonomy (66.9% vs. 0.6%). Extrinsic factors such as job security (49.7%), good opportunities for promotion (38.6%), flexible working hours (37.7%) and especially status (23.2%) and high income (20.3%) are much less relevant as motivational factors, albeit the fact that they all find a relative agreement among the respondents. With regards to altruistic motivators, the picture is less clear: whereas we find a strong agreement on the possibility of doing something useful for society as a motivator (66.2% vs. 1.1%), opportunities to help other people seem to play a much lesser role (20.3%). We also find significant variations among the respondents: higher level of education goes along with a stronger altruistic motivation, higher tenure with a stronger importance of autonomy, promotion, income and altruistic factors, whereas job security is of higher relevance for executives with lower education and a lower hierarchical position.

Figure 8. Motivation (Q: How important do you personally think it is in a job to have...)



Along general lines, we do not find significant differences between the German and overall COCOPS sample when it comes to motivational factors. The only significant differences found are – as to be expected – a lower importance of altruistic motivators and a higher importance of job security and status among German executives.

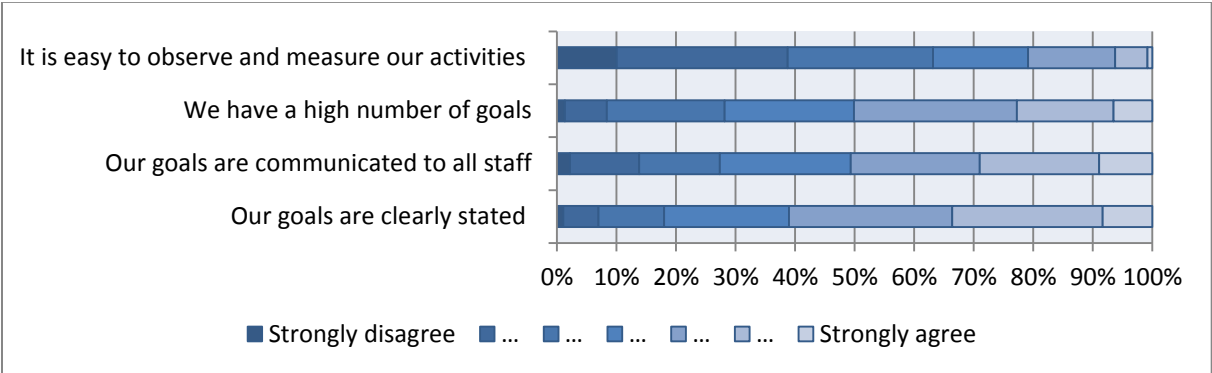
5. Characteristics of the Public Administration Work Context

The success of introducing management concepts and instruments such as performance management to the public sector depends on the extent to which the specific work context in public administration resonates with the logic behind the NPM paradigm. This chapter analyses how top German civil servants perceive their work context to especially allow a first assessment of the openness of German public administration for the transfer and implementation of management concepts.

Performance management and result-orientation is difficult to implement if goals are perceived to be ambiguous and activities are less measurable and easy to observe (e.g. Rainey and Jung 2010). For an effective performance management a rather limited number of goals clearly stated and communicated to staff as well as activities and results to be observed and monitored are important enabling factors. When asked about these characteristics for their own work context (see Figure 9), German public sector executives appear to be rather sceptical of the possibility to observe and measure their organization’s activities: Only a fifth (20.8%) of the respondents rather agrees that their activities can be observed and measured easily, while 63.1% rather disagree. Similarly and related, more than half (50.7%) of the respondents rather agree that their organization has a high number of goals, with only 28.2% perceiving their number of goals to be rather limited. These two results indicate potential difficulties in applying performance management logic. With regard to aspects which can be more influenced by the leadership of an organization the assessment is more positive.

50.7% rather agree that goals are communicated to all staff, while only 27.5% have doubts about the clear communication of goals within their organization. 61.0% of the respondents also report that their goals are rather clearly stated, whereas only 18.0% report that this is not the case.

Figure 9. Goal ambiguity and measurability (Q: To what extent do the following statements apply to your organization?) (n=369-374)

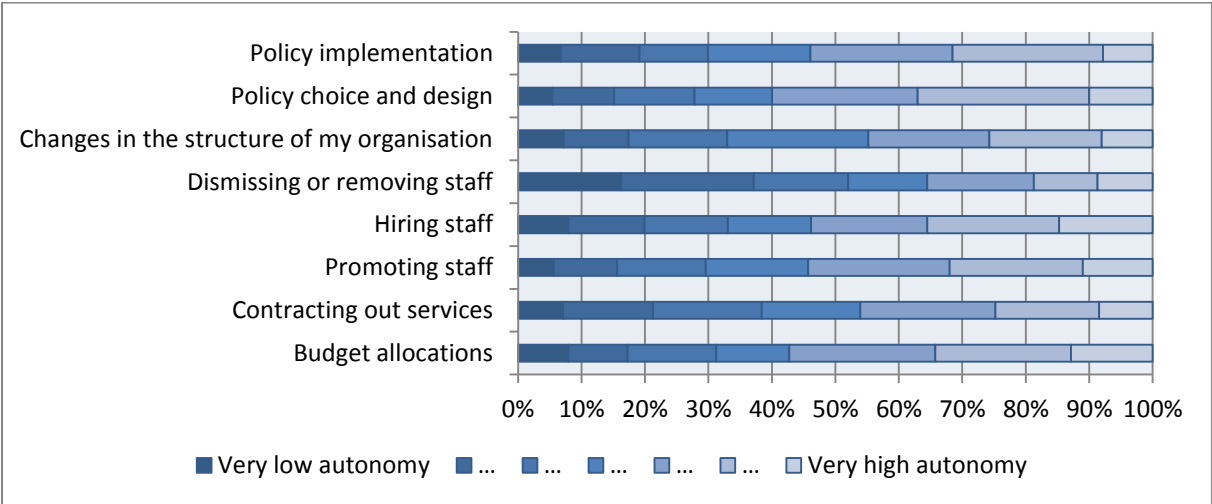


Not surprisingly, managers of agencies perceive less goal ambiguity than those working in ministries (***). Executives working in large organizations (that is, organizations with more than 500 employees) also perceive their goals as less ambiguous than their colleagues in smaller organizations (***). Across policy fields, goal ambiguity is relatively stable, except for the policy field of employment (where goals are perceived as less ambiguous) and infrastructure (where goals are perceived as more ambiguous) (***).

Compared with cross-national data, German public officials state considerably more often than others that their activities are rather difficult to be observed and measured, namely 63.1% compared to 42.0% in the overall COCOPS sample. On the other hand, their European colleagues report that the number of goals with which their organizations have to cope is higher than in the German case (65.2% state that they have a rather high number of goals, compared to 50.7% in Germany). As far as stating and communicating goals is concerned, public executives from the overall COCOPS sample are even more positive about the clarity of statement (77.6% internationally vs. 61.0% in Germany) and clear communication of goals (73.0% internationally vs. 50.7% in Germany).

Management autonomy is a further variable influencing the transferability of management practices to the public sector. The less top executives are autonomous in managing their organization, the less they can be made accountable for successes or failures. The results (see Figure 10) show that, in general, German executives perceive a relatively high degree of autonomy, albeit with a rather high variation. 60.0% of the respondents perceive a rather high degree of autonomy in choosing and designing policies, which surprisingly is higher than with regards to the implementation of policies (53.9%). Managerial autonomy is also relatively high albeit to a lesser degree; it is lower with regard to changes in the structure of their organization (44.8% see a rather high autonomy) and contracting out services (46.0% see a rather high autonomy). Autonomy in personnel decisions is relatively high concerning hiring and promoting staff (roughly 54% in both cases), but much lower in the case of dismissing or removing staff (35.5%). Finally, autonomy in allocating budget is also relatively high (57.3% rather agree).

Figure 10. Degree of management autonomy (Q: In my position, I have the following degree of autonomy with regard to) (n=365-373)

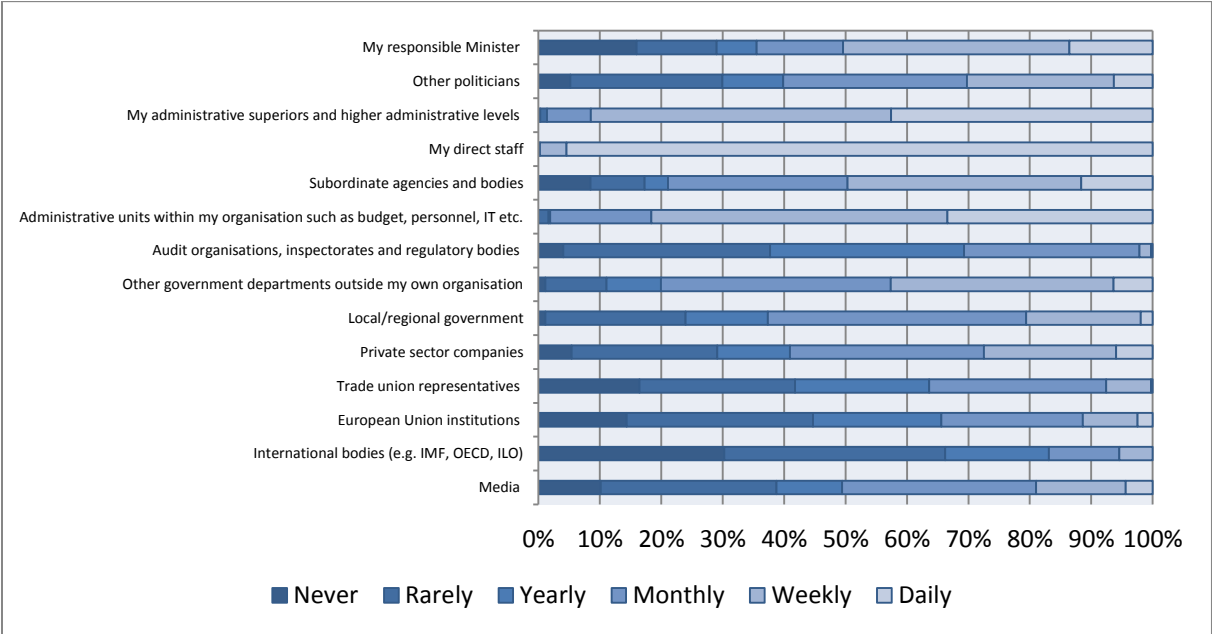


Executives working in ministries (as opposed to agencies) perceive significantly more autonomy concerning policy choice, design and implementation, but less autonomy concerning hiring, promoting and dismissing staff (***) . Compared to international experiences, we would expect Germany’s administrative sector to be rather tightly regulated and characterized by a high degree of input control and lower managerial autonomy. Surprisingly however, German executives perceive a greater degree of autonomy in almost all aspects. This is especially the case for policy choice and design, where 60.0% of the German respondents perceive a rather high degree of autonomy, whereas this is the case for only 40.0% of the overall sample. German top executives feel less

autonomous than their European counterparts only with respect to implementing policies (53.9% vs. 61.7% of overall respondents observing a rather high degree of autonomy here).

Interaction frequency is a way to measure the coordination intensity of public sector executives and also could allow interpretations with regard to coordination and fragmentation challenges. If different organizations that are relevant to provide public goods tend to work in a relatively isolated atmosphere and do not regularly work together, the public sector is characterized by a ‘silo culture’. The German public sector would be expected to be rather fragmented and our results tend to support this diagnosis (see Figure 11): Not surprisingly, German public sector executives interact most often with the actors within their own organization – 94.5% interact daily with direct staff, 91.5% interact at least weekly with their administrative superiors and higher administrative levels and 98.1% interact at least monthly with administrative units within their organizations. Interaction is somewhat more rare with subordinate agencies and bodies (78.9% have at least monthly contact) and their responsible minister (64.5% have at least monthly contact). Among the outside actors, a high (that is, at least monthly) frequency of interaction takes place only with other governments outside their own administration (80.1%). Interaction frequency with local/regional governments, other politicians and private sector companies is comparatively low (roughly 60% interact at least monthly with these actors). Much lower levels of interaction take can be observed with international bodies,, trade union representatives and European Union institutions.

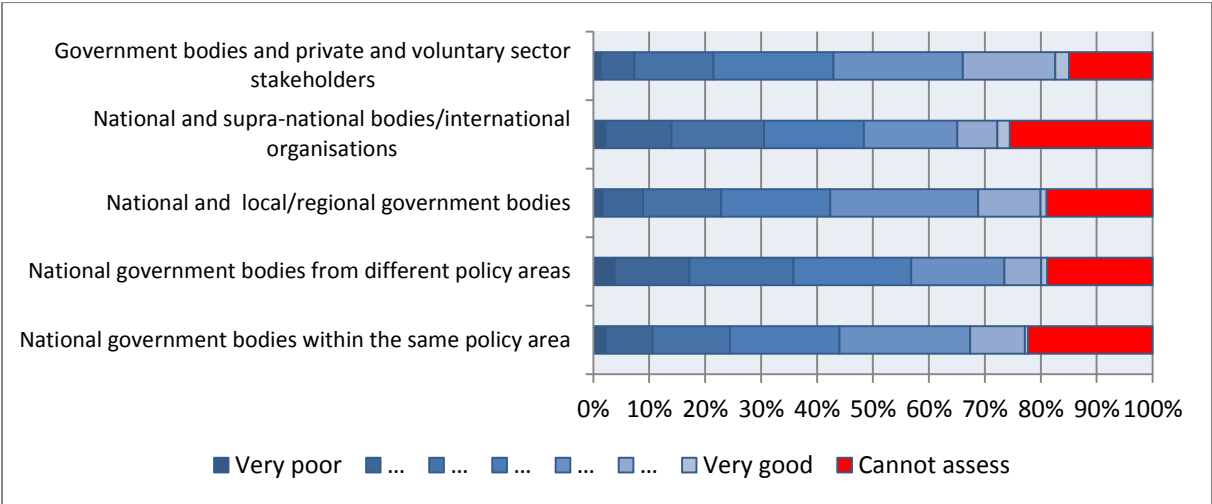
Figure 11. Interaction frequency (Q: Please indicate how frequently you typically interact with the following actors or bodies) (n=318-372)



A comparative perspective reveals a rather similar picture for the overall COCOPS sample where public service executives also interact most often with actors within their organization. We also find clear evidence for a higher politicization in Germany: 64.5% of German executives interact with their minister at least monthly compared to only 29.5% in the overall sample. Similarly, 60.2% of the German respondents interact at least monthly with other politicians vs. only 35.6% of European respondents. German executives also have significantly more contact with the media (50.5% compared to 39.9%) and European Union institutions (34.4% compared to 23%).

In contrast to interaction frequency, **coordination quality** is a more qualitative than quantitative measure of fragmentation in public administration. It is interesting that considerably less respondents have answered this question and that among those who answered, 14.9% to 25.5% stated that they cannot assess the quality of coordination (see Figure 12). Among those who answered, only 42.1% perceive the collaboration with private and voluntary sector stakeholders as rather good. An even lower share positively assess the collaboration between national and local/regional government bodies (38.7%), between national government bodies within the same policy area (33.7%), between national and supranational bodies or international organizations (26.1%) and between national government bodies from different policy areas (24.3%). Together with the results of the previous question, these results indicate that a certain coordination deficit and fragmentation can be observed for German public administration.

Figure 12. Coordination quality (Q: How would you characterize collaboration in your own policy field between) (n=271-313)



Executives working in ministries (as opposed to agencies) perceive a better coordination quality between national and local/regional government bodies, as well as between national government bodies from different policy areas (***) . Employees of large organizations perceive a better coordination quality concerning the cooperation between national and supra-national bodies or international organizations (**).

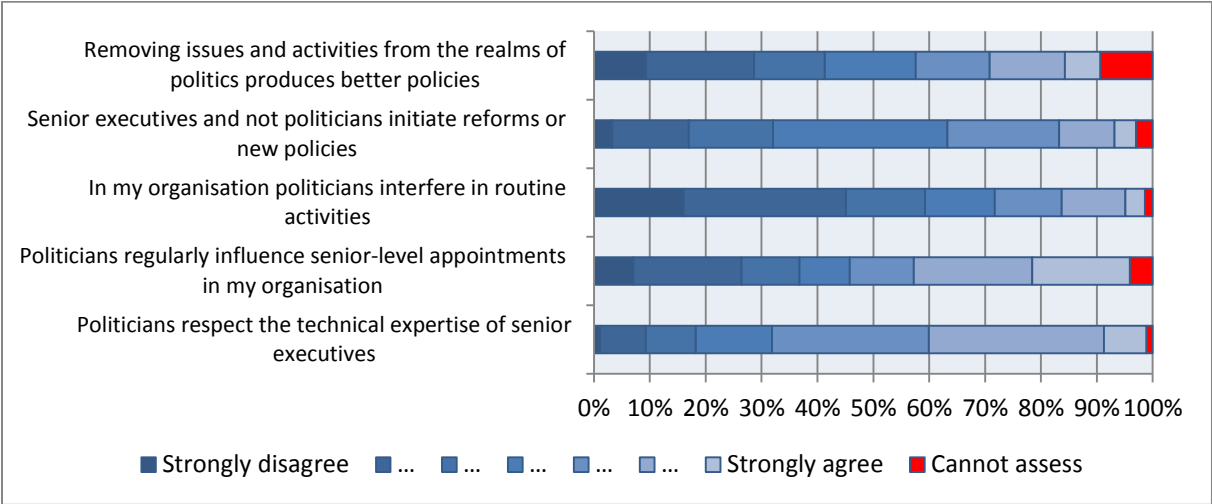
Executives in the overall COCOPS sample assess coordination quality more favourably in almost all cases; this applies especially for the collaboration between national government bodies within the same policy area (48.8% of international respondents evaluate this as rather good, compared to only 33.7% of German respondents).

The degree of politicization indicates to what extent public sector institutions can make decisions on technical criteria or are subject to being influenced by political processes (on politicization and the difficult role of senior executives between government and management cf. Derlien 2003; Goetz 1999; Schwanke and Ebinger 2006; Van der Meer et al. 2007). Our results clearly confirm politicization in German public administration where a rather high share of executives rather agrees that politicians interfere in routine activities (27.3%) and that politicians regularly influence senior-level appointments (52.3%)(see Figure 13). It also seems that there is a tendency for reforms to be initiated by politicians and not by by senior executives (only 34.7% think that senior executives and

not politicians initiate reforms or new policies). On the other side, 67.8% of the respondents feel that politicians respect their technical expertise. Interestingly, while politicization is clearly observable only a relative minority of 36.5% of the respondents rather agrees that removing issues and activities from the realms of politics would produce better policies (vs. 45.6% rather disagreeing).

We also find some interesting variations among the respondents. Ministries are significantly more politicized than agencies (***) and top-level executives also perceive different politicization levels than lower-level executives and in overall tend to be less critical in their assessment of politicization.

Figure 13. Degree of politicization (Q: *What is your view on the following statements*) (n=329-363)



Cross-nationally, a significantly higher share of executives think that removing issues and activities from the realms of politics would produce better policies (54.8%, compared to 36.5% in Germany).

In sum, the transfer of managerial approaches to public administration in Germany is clearly impeded by goal ambiguity and difficulties of measurement as observed by the executives whereas the degree of autonomy for executives is already rather high in German public administration. Coordination deficits and fragmentation are clearly observable in the respondents' answers and seem to be a major challenge, whereas politicization which is clearly present seems to be of lesser concern for the German respondents.

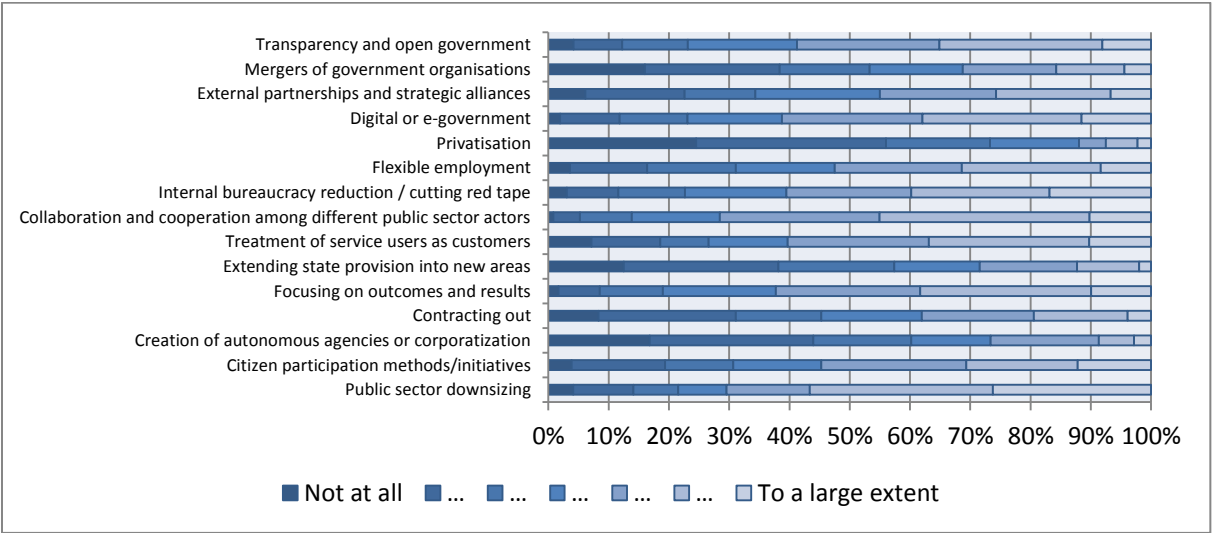
6. Relevance of NPM and post NPM Reforms

This chapter provides information on German public sector executives' perception of public administration reforms in overall and especially the implementation of NPM and related management concepts and instruments. . The respondents have been asked to assess the type and character of reform trends in their policy field (6.1.), their organization (6.2.) and in their own work (6.3.).

6.1. Policy field level

Public administration **reform trends** can follow very different goals and directions. While classical NPM reforms focus on measures such as performance management, contracting out, privatization or the flexibilization of employment, other reforms – often labelled as `post-NPM reforms` – are characterized by a stronger emphasis on coordination and networked forms of governance and aim at enhancing transparency, citizen participation or coordination. With regard to reform trends at the policy field level (see Figure 14) we find clear evidence that the arguably most pronounced NPM types of reform, such as privatization, contracting out or agencification are of only limited relevance in Germany: 73.3% of the respondents report a rather low importance of privatization (respective 45.3% for contracting out and 60.2% for agencification). However, state provision is also not extended into new areas; only 12.3% of the respondents report extent rather high importance of such a trend (percentage share for scale numbers 6 and 7). Instead, public administration in Germany is clearly subject to downsizing: 70.4% of the respondents see a rather high importance of downsizing, making it the most relevant reform trend in Germany (together with collaboration and cooperation among different public sector organizations). Other reform trends which have a moderately high prominence in Germany are outcomes/results orientation (62.3%), e-government (61.3%), cutting red tape (60.5%), customer orientation (60.3%), and transparency and open government (58.8%). In contrast, mergers of public sector organizations seem to have only a very low relevance in German public administration.

Figure 14. Importance of reform trends (Q: How important are the following reform trends in your policy area?) (n=350-364)

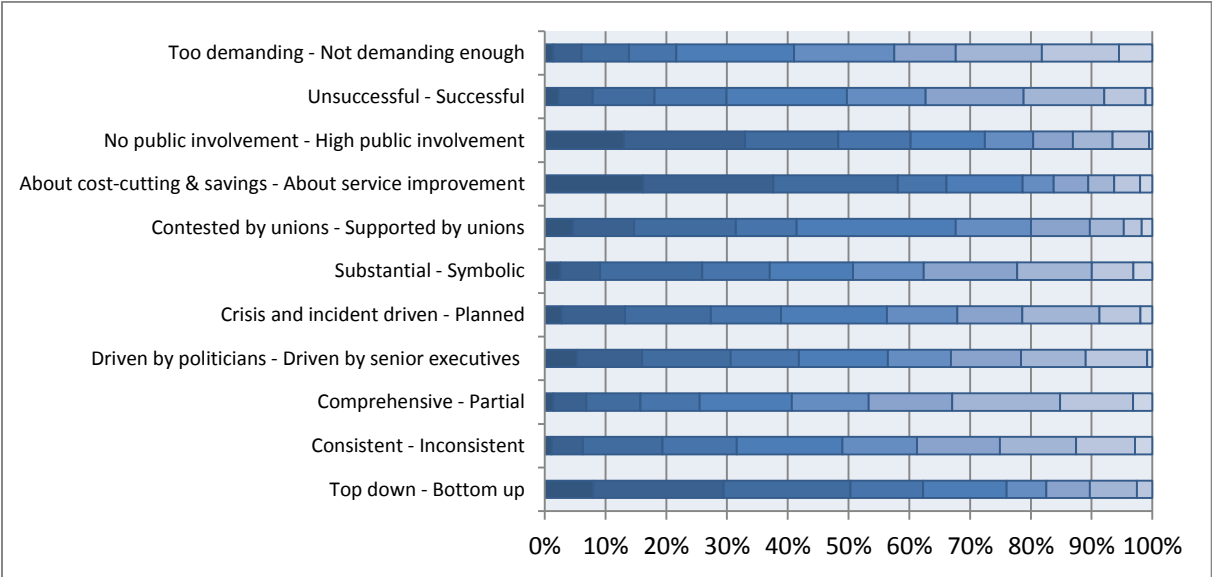


There are some remarkable differences within the sample. Most interesting is that executives in ministries perceive significantly more public sector downsizing (*) and less contracting out (**). Also, the policy field Infrastructure is subject to more public sector downsizing (**), more contracting out (***) and more privatization (***), whereas the policy field health is perceived to be subject to less public sector downsizing (*) and in general government customer orientation is less relevant (*).

The results for the other countries are remarkably similar to the German sample, except for the following differences: public sector executives in other countries perceive a more frequent implementation of transparency measures, e-government and especially of external partnerships and strategic alliances. Interestingly, in Germany flexible employment and citizen participation seem to be of higher relevance. Overall, the results do not confirm the position of German public administration as a laggard or hesitant with regard to public administration reform. German executives report the relevance – albeit to a rather moderate degree – of reform trends both in line with a more moderate NPM agenda (e.g. downsizing, outcome/result orientation, customer orientation) and a post NPM understanding of a more networked governance (e.g. collaboration and cooperation, e-government, transparency and open government, citizen participation) and especially not lesser than executives in the overall sample.

When asking for the **dynamics of public sector reform** (see Figure 15), we are interested in finding out how public sector executives evaluate the reforms in the policy field. With regard to the overall assessment of the success of public administration reform in Germany the responses are rather mixed: whereas 18.1% of the respondents perceive the reforms as not successful (scales 1-3), a similar share (21.2%; scales 8-10) of the respondents regards the reforms as rather successful. In line with our expectation of a more incremental approach to public sector reform in Germany (e.g. Bogumil and Jann 2009, Kuhlmann 2010, Hammerschmid et al. 2010, Schröter 2007), a considerable share of German executives (32.4%; scales 8-10) assess the reforms as not demanding enough (vs. 13.9% too demanding) and partial (33.0% vs. 15.8% comprehensive).

Figure 15. Dynamics of public sector reform (Q: Public sector reforms in my policy area tend to be) (n=340-364)



With regard to the categories symbolic vs. substantial, and inconsistent vs. consistent the assessments are more mixed and balanced. With regard to the drivers and dynamics, public sector reform in Germany seems to be implemented predominantly without public involvement (48.3% agreement), top-down (50.3%) and more contested than supported by the unions. As already confirmed by the previous question, reforms seem to be clearly more about cost-cutting and savings (58.1% agreement) than about service improvement (10.5% agreement).

Reform dynamics differ to a certain extent across policy fields. Most importantly, executives in the policy field infrastructure and transportation perceive the reforms as more top-down, less consistent, and as more symbolic than substantial (all at least *). More than others do executives in the health sector perceive the reforms as not demanding enough (***). Top-level executives perceive the reforms as more consistent than second-level executives (*).

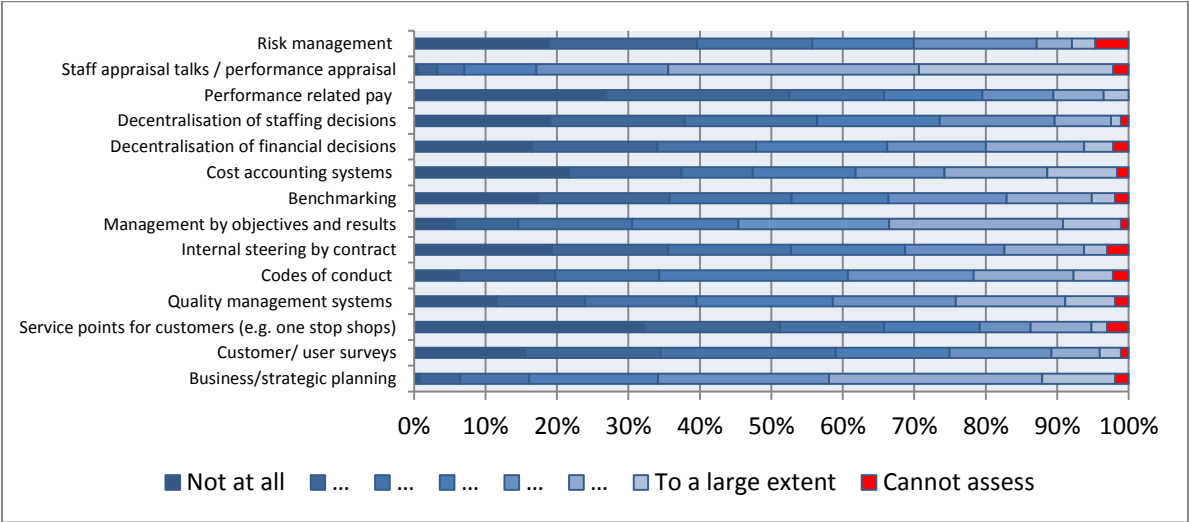
Some interesting differences appear if we compare the German responses to those of the overall COCOPS sample and again confirm the more incremental approach in Germany. With regard to the reform design, Germany seems to have introduced reforms that are perceived as more inconsistent, more partial and considerably more symbolic. With regard to the drivers, reforms in the other countries are clearly more top-down, more driven by politicians and more contested by the unions. However, the overall assessment among public sector executives seems to be quite similar (both 21.2% agreement that reforms have been rather successful).

6.2. Organizational level

Analogue to our results on the policy field level (see Figure 14) as well as to previous surveys (Hammerschmid et al. 2010), **management instruments** have only a rather low relevance at the level of organizations. The only instrument systematically implemented and used are staff appraisal talks (82.5% state that they rather use these). The only other two instruments used by a majority of the respondents are business/strategic planning and management by objectives and results (65.2% resp. 54.1% rather agree). Rather uncommon are performance related pay, risk management and internal steering by contract (65.8%/58.5%/54.3% of the German respondents rather not use these instruments). Approaches to increase management autonomy (*dezentralisierte Ressourcen- und Ergebnisverantwortung*) are also rather uncommon. Interestingly, whereas the majority of the respondents confirmed customer orientation as a central trend in their policy field, (see above) respective instruments such as service points for customers or conducting customer/user surveys are rather not used by the majority of the respondents (67.8% resp. 59.7%). With regard to codes of conduct, quality management systems, cost accounting systems and benchmarking, no clear patterns are observable here albeit implementation and usage also seems to be rather limited with only about 20% clearly agreeing that the tools are used

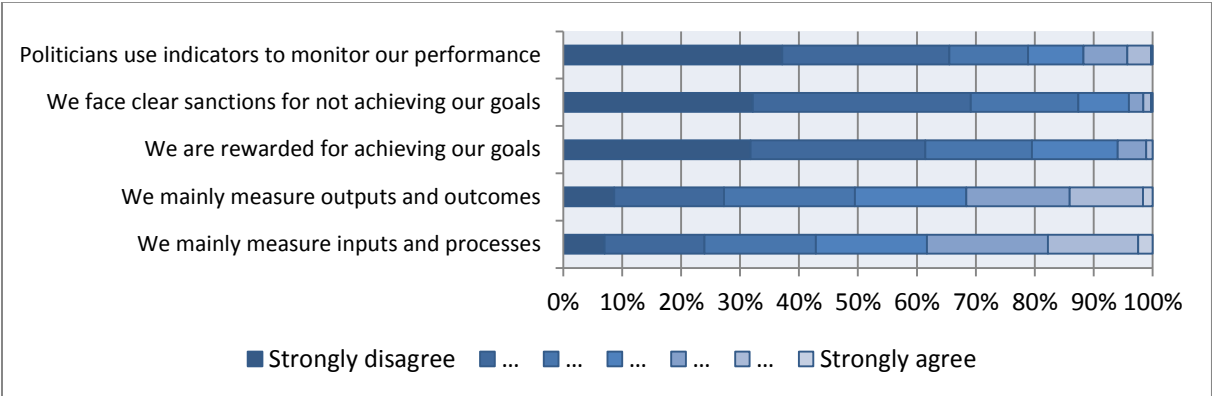
Executives in the overall COCOPS sample use almost all of these management instruments significantly more often than their German colleagues. This is especially the case for customer surveys and service points, quality management systems, codes of conduct, management by objectives and results, benchmarking and risk management. This clearly confirms – as to be expected – the hesitant reception of managerial reforms in German public administration.

Figure 16. Relevance of different management instruments (Q: To what extent are the following instruments used in your organization?) (n=349-371)



Previous studies have confirmed that **performance management** – with goals/targets and measurement as core elements – is institutionalized only at the level of local governments in Germany and has found only limited access into ministries (Proeller and Siegel 2009, Lynn 2006). Our results from questions on the relevance of performance information within the organization again confirm this (see Figure 17). Neither is goal achievement rewarded, nor is non-achievement sanctioned. Politicians do use indicators to monitor performance only to a very limited degree and only about a third of the respondents reports a clear measurement of outputs/outcomes and inputs/processes. This is somewhat surprising since the executives state that outcome orientation is used to a rather large extent in their policy field.

Figure 17. Relevance of performance management (Q: To what extent do the following statements apply to your organization?) (n=369-374)



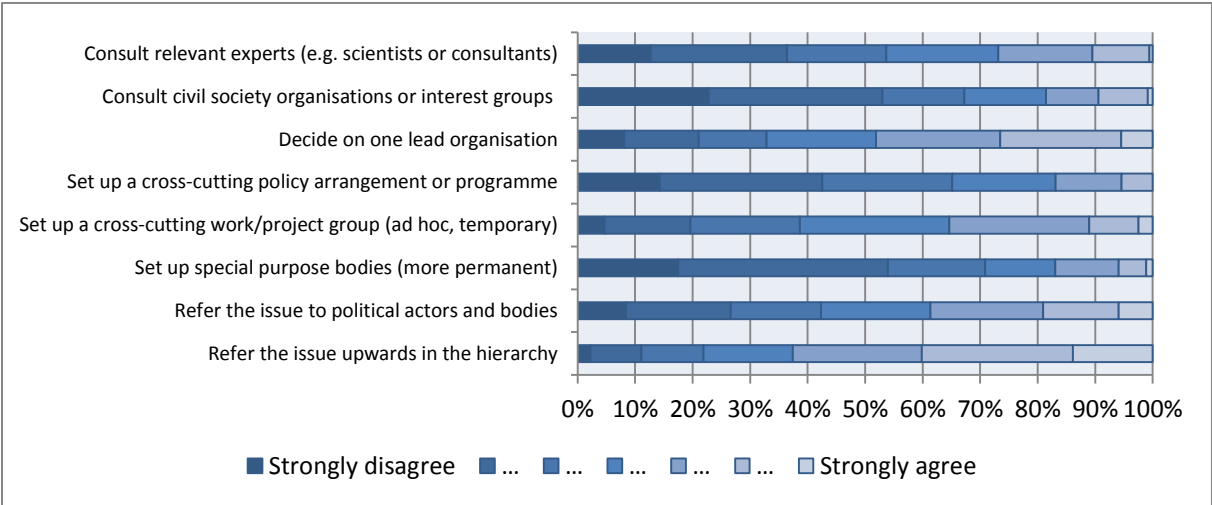
The results with regard to the institutionalization and use of performance information do not differ significantly across policy fields or type and size of organizations. The results also clearly confirm that performance management is used much more intensely in other European countries. Sanctions, rewards and output-orientation are significantly less relevant in Germany than in the overall sample.

A question on the relevance of different **coordination solutions** (see Figure 18) tries to capture to what extent post NPM reforms, in the form of new coordination mechanisms and measures to counter fragmentation, have been implemented. As already observed in chapter 5 (Figure 12),

fragmentation and a hierarchical work culture are still quite present in Germany. This is also supported by current data. In the case of coordination problems, most often the issue is referred upwards in the hierarchy (62.6% rather agree on this). 48.1% of the respondents report that their organization would rather decide on one lead organization. The other more post-NPM led proposals are of more limited relevance in German public administration: Setting up a permanent special purpose body (70.9%), consulting civil society organizations (67.2%) or setting up a cross-cutting policy arrangement (65.1%). It is somewhat more likely that they will set up a temporary cross-cutting work group, refer the issue to political actors or consult relevant experts. Coordination solutions differ slightly across policy fields and types of organizations. For example, executives in ministries do more often refer an issue of conflict to political actors (***) and more often install cross-cutting policy arrangements (**). Employees in the policy field education more often consult civil society organizations (***) and experts (***). Those in the policy field environment also more often consult civil society organizations (**).

The results for the overall sample are remarkably similar; interesting differences only occur concerning the option to decide on one lead organization (this happens more often in Germany) or to set up a cross-cutting policy arrangement or programme (this is significantly less likely in Germany).

Figure 18. Coordination solutions (Q: To resolve coordination problems when working with other organizations, we typically) (n=347-362)



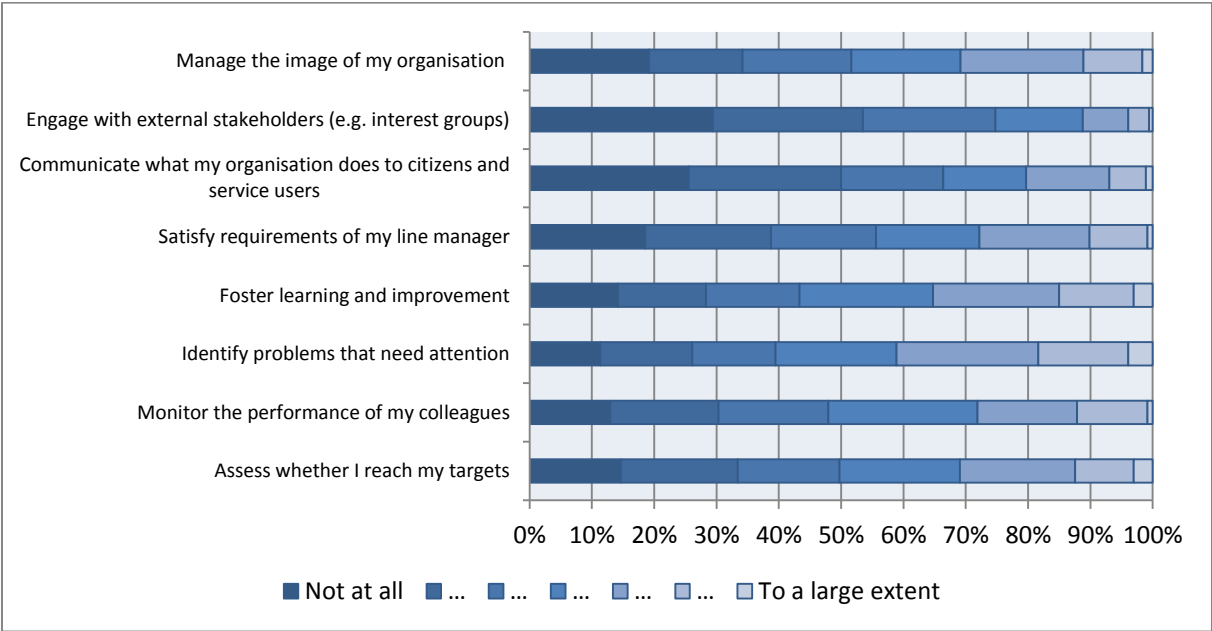
Thus, at the organizational and policy field level, we can say that German senior executives clearly observe public administration reform trends in their policy field (quite similar to the international executives), but that classical performance management reforms are rather weakly institutionalized on the organizational level. The next sub-chapter provides information on the use of performance indicators at the level of individual senior executives.

6.3. Individual level

The actual use of performance indicators in administrative practice is often rather limited and has become a major area of public management research over the last decades (e.g. Van Dooren and Van de Walle 2008M; Moynihan and Pandey 2010). The observation of a rather hesitant reception and

limited institutionalization of performance management in Germany at organizational level is again supported for the individual level of public sector executives (see Figure 19). The overall picture reveals that such indicators are rather rarely used. This is especially the case for an external use of performance indicators such as for engaging with external stakeholders (74.8% of the respondents state that they rather not use performance indicators for this task) and communicating the organization’s activities towards citizens and service users (66.4% rather not use performance indicators for this purpose). Performance indicators however are more likely – albeit also to a rather low degree –to be used to identify problems that need attention (41.1% rather use performance indicators for this purpose) and to foster learning and improvement (35.3%). In overall only about 10-15% of all respondents seem to use performance indicators to a higher degree.

Figure 19. Use of performance indicators (Q: In my work I use performance indicators to) (n=356-363)



The use of performance indicators only differs slightly across policy fields and types of organization. As to be expected, senior executives in ministries use performance indicators less often with respect to all fields of application (at least *). Also, employees in the policy field general government use performance indicators less often to manage the image of their organization (*). Performance indicators are also significantly more often used in other European countries with respect to all fields of application.

In sum, we observe that classical NPM reforms like performance management and performance indicators do not play a significant role in the work of the German senior executives. Reforms have been initiated, but do have only limited relevance for administrative practice, a finding which is similar to previous studies of local government reform in Germany (Schröter 2007; Bogumil and Jann 2009; Kuhlmann 2010).

7. Impact of the Fiscal Crisis on Public Administration

Due to its strong export orientation, Germany was rather strongly affected by the economic crisis yet could quickly and strongly rebound from it. As the crisis hit Germany in late 2008, the country reacted with a comprehensive package of measures that are now widely regarded as successful (IMF 2010; Schelkle 2010). Two expansionary fiscal stimulus packages including various measures (such as subsidies for short-term work) adopted in late 2008 and early 2009 had a budgetary impact of around 1.5% and 2% of GDP respectively. The design and administration of these stimulus packages involved all ministries at the federal level and was followed by a rather diverse degree of implementation at the state level. Even though the steering of the stimulus packages' implementation was informal and crisis-induced, and involved little tracking and a low amount of transparency, they have been evaluated quite positively ex-post (Hammerschmid and Stemmler 2010).

Despite its good recent economic performance, Germany has not been an outstanding performer on the Maastricht criteria. Most notably, it has had a total debt level of more than 60 per cent of GDP for more than seven years in a row by now. In addition, it was among the first states to violate the deficit criterion in 2003 and violated it again in 2009 and 2010 as a result of the crisis. Consolidation as a response to the crisis became a priority for the German government from 2011 onwards.¹¹

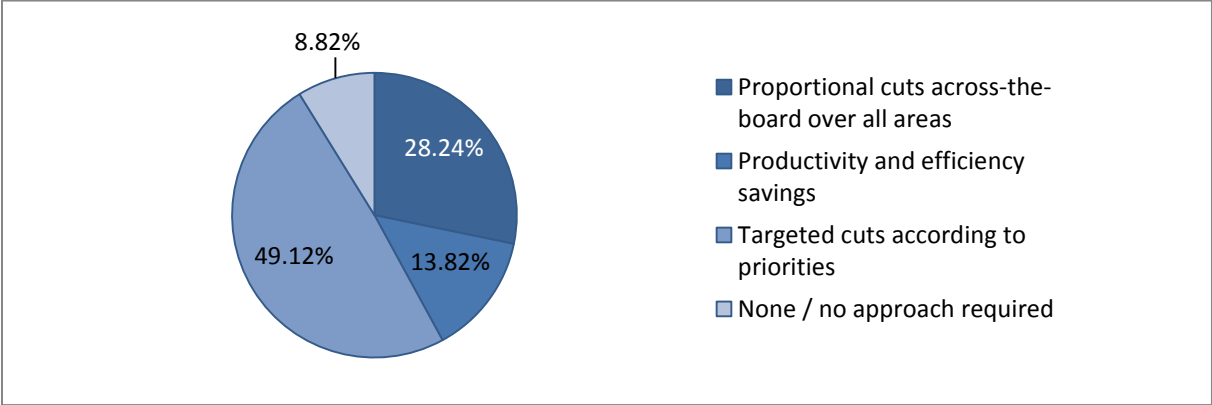
In line with the provisions of the excessive deficit procedure the EU Commission had opened against Germany in 2009 and the debt brake introduced in the same year, the federal government passed a comprehensive consolidation package in 2010 (OECD 2011). The cutback programme (the so-called '*Zukunftspaket*', or future package) of the current government foresaw a balanced federal government budget for 2014 through cuts of about €80bn in the period 2011-2014 (Federal Audit Office 2010: 76) and is strongly helped by a record level of tax revenues due to a strong economy. Overall due to these external factors, the impact on ministry spending at federal government level was rather low and led to a continuation of incremental staff cuts at all government levels.

Despite the lack of evidence for ambitious administrative reforms or cutback management at central government level in the wake of the crisis, the COCOPS survey responses by German executives assert as a general finding that most of the respondents have observed some kind of cutbacks (see Figure 20). Only a minority of executives has not witnessed any cuts (the highest figure is 13% for respondents from federal ministries; this share is smaller among federal agency and *Länder* executives). In other words, there is clearly a perception of consolidation pressure within German public administration, as already confirmed in the previous chapter. According to Pollitt and Bouckaert (2011: 75), cutbacks can be either of a 'cheese-slicing' (i.e. incremental) nature, be targeted according to priorities mandated by the political executive or involve a more performance-oriented approach. Considering Germany's historical trajectory of administrative reform, it is interesting that one half of federal ministerial executives perceives the nature of cutbacks to be targeted according to priorities, while 20% say that they have observed productivity and efficiency

¹¹ It should be noted that federal government in Germany has a large tradition of consolidating its administrative expenditures ever since the German reunification and not just beginning with the crisis. Between 1991 and 2010, the number of staff employed at the federal level decreased by roughly 30 per cent (e.g. Vesper 2012: 10). While part of this decline can be attributed to efficiency savings, special factors such as privatization and corporatization of a number of activities (e.g. telecommunication, postal services, railways) played a more important role (ibid.).

savings. Only an unexpected low share of 17% of the respondents state their organization implemented ‘classic’ incremental-type cuts. This pattern is nearly identical at the level of *Länder* ministries, where the only difference lies in a more prominent role of proportional cuts compared to productivity and efficiency savings (about 30% vs. 13% respectively). Taking into account the higher prevalence of managerial ideas within federal agencies (Hammerschmid et al. 2010), it is not surprising that the survey responses from these organizations are tilted more towards productivity and efficiency savings (37% in all federal agencies) as well as targeted cuts (40%) rather than across-the-board savings.

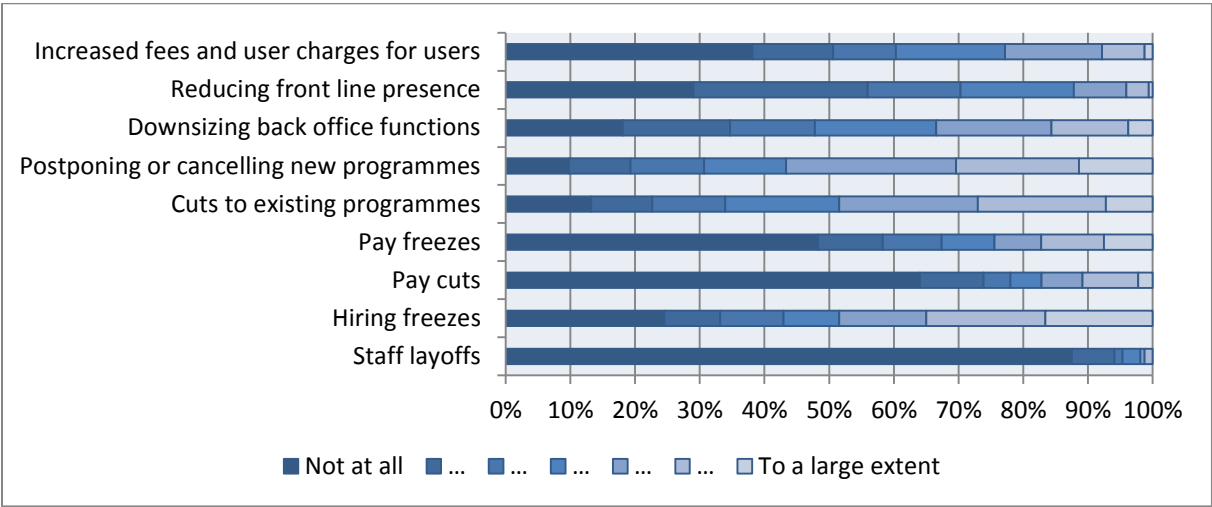
Figure 20. Cutback measures at organizational level (Q: In response to the fiscal crisis, to what extent has your organization applied the following cutback measures?)



With regard to the more specific approaches to implementing cutbacks (see Figure 21) the survey clearly confirms that due to the specific legal status of public sector employees, layoffs and pay cuts are not a relevant option in Germany. This finding can be explained with the rigidity of German civil service law, which rules out layoffs but in very exceptional cases involving judicial proceedings (Herbig 2001: 474).¹² Similarly pay cuts, which are also ruled out by existing legal provisions, are not a viable option, except in the case of special allowances (e.g. holiday or Christmas allowances) and bonuses or with regard to externally hired staff. This option was perceived by executives at the *Länder* ministerial level to a significantly higher degree. The most commonly used approach to realize savings in German public administration are obviously postponement or cancellation of new programs (56.6% rather agree), cuts to existing programs (48.4%) and hiring freezes (48.5%), whereas all other measures are used to a much lower degree. This strong emphasis on hiring freezes is consistent with the historical trajectory of administrative reform in Germany, where such freezes have featured quite prominently (Herbig 2001: 487). About 16% of ministerial and roughly 30% of agency executives agree strongly that hiring freezes have been used to cut down expenditures.

¹² Since layoffs are practically not possible in the German public sector but in very exceptional cases, the very small sample of executives observing staff layoffs do not refer to layoffs in the classical sense but to ‘*Stellenstreichungen*’ which denotes the abolition of certain posts (independent of whoever occupies it).

Figure 21. Overall saving strategy (Q: *In response to the fiscal crisis how would you describe the broader approach to realizing savings in your policy area?*)

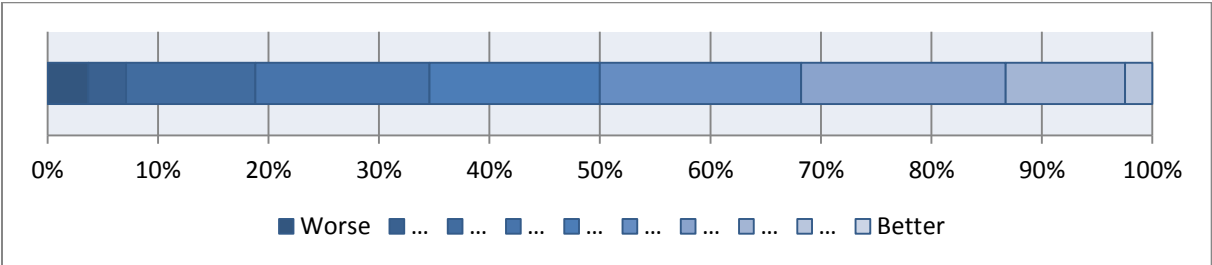


8. Impact of Public Administration Reform

A main goal of the present study is to obtain systematic information on how public sector executives assess the impact of the various managerial reforms at organizational level, but also other public administration reforms on a policy field level. In this chapter, we present the results of such evaluative questions.

As concerns an **overall assessment of public administration** (see Figur 22), a relatively low share of 13.3% respondents state that the way public administration runs in Germany has clearly improved (marked 8-10 on a 10 digit scale) over the last 5 years. Most respondents rather assess it as more or less the same (67.9% marked 4-7), whereas still a considerable share of respondents observes a clear deterioration of public administration in Germany over the last 5 years (18.8% marked 1-3).

Figure 22. Overall PA assessment (Q: *Compared with five years ago, how would you say things have developed when it comes to the way public administration runs in your country?*) (n=324)



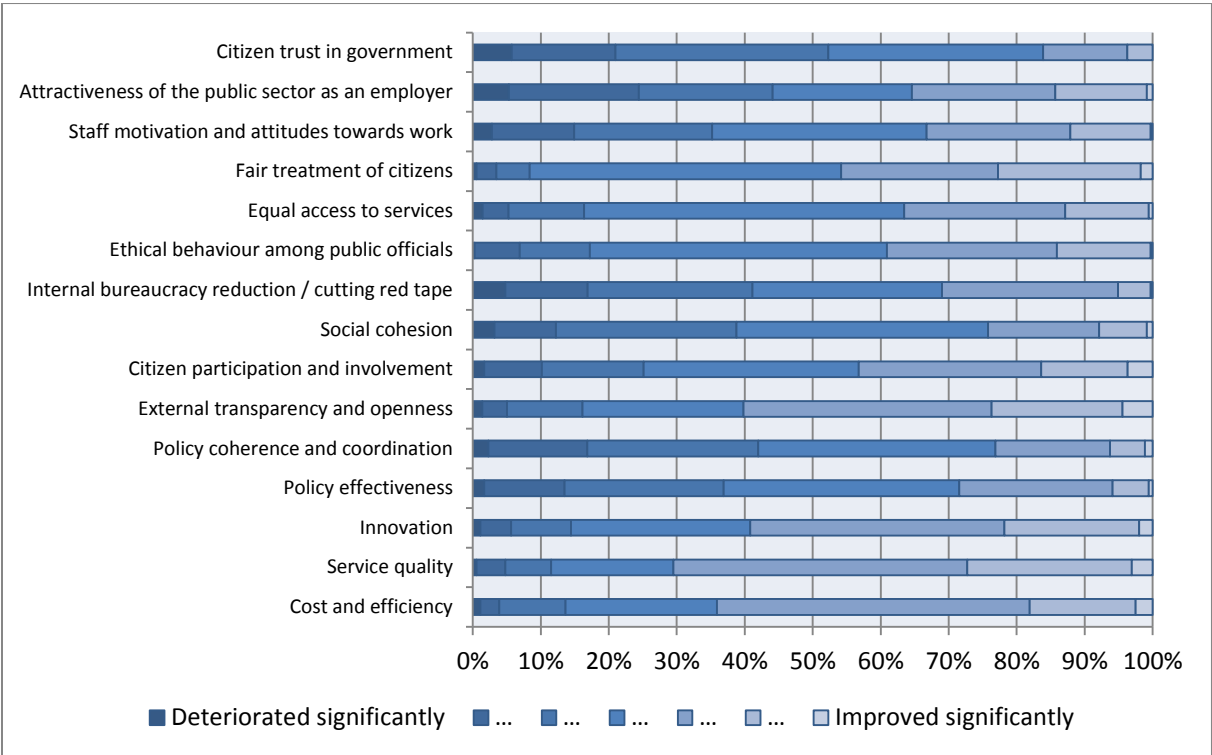
Top-level executives have a significantly more positive assessment than second-level executives (**). The same applies to executives in the policy field general government, whereas those working in the policy field infrastructure and transportation have a significantly more negative assessment (***) according to the Eurobarometer Social Climate Full Report 2010, citizens have a more critical view

than the responding executives: 33.0% state that the way public administration is run in Germany has deteriorated, whereas only 8% see improvements. Executives from the other European countries show a significantly more positive assessment with 22.3% of them observing an overall improvement (vs. 13.3% in Germany).

It can be however misleading to evaluate public administration reform in such a one-dimensional way. We therefore provided the respondents with a more nuanced question addressing a spectrum of **different performance dimensions** as found in public management literature (see figure 24).

Interestingly, the clearest and most positive results can be found for managerial aspects of public administration: The majority of German executives perceive an improvement in service quality, cost and efficiency and innovation over the last five years in the policy field (70.5%/64.1%/59.2% state that these have rather improved), as well as in external transparency and openness (60.2%). With regard citizen related factors the executives also observe improvements over the last five years, at least as fair treatment of citizens, citizen participation and equal access to services are concerned (45.8%/43.2%/36.5% state that these dimensions have rather improved). In contrast, public administration performance is seen to have rather deteriorated with regard to more policy-relevant categories such as citizen trust in government (52.3% report rather a deterioration), policy coherence and coordination (42.0%), social cohesion (38.8%), as well as policy effectiveness (36.9%). With regard to other aspects such as attractiveness of the public sector as employer, staff motivation and attitudes towards work, the assessments are rather diverse with similar shares of respondents observing improvements and deteriorations. The only internal administrative factor where the respondents observe deterioration is internal bureaucracy and red tape (41.1%).

Figure 23. Different performance dimensions (Q: Thinking about your policy area over the last five years how would you rate the way public administration has performed on the following dimensions?) (n=342-359)



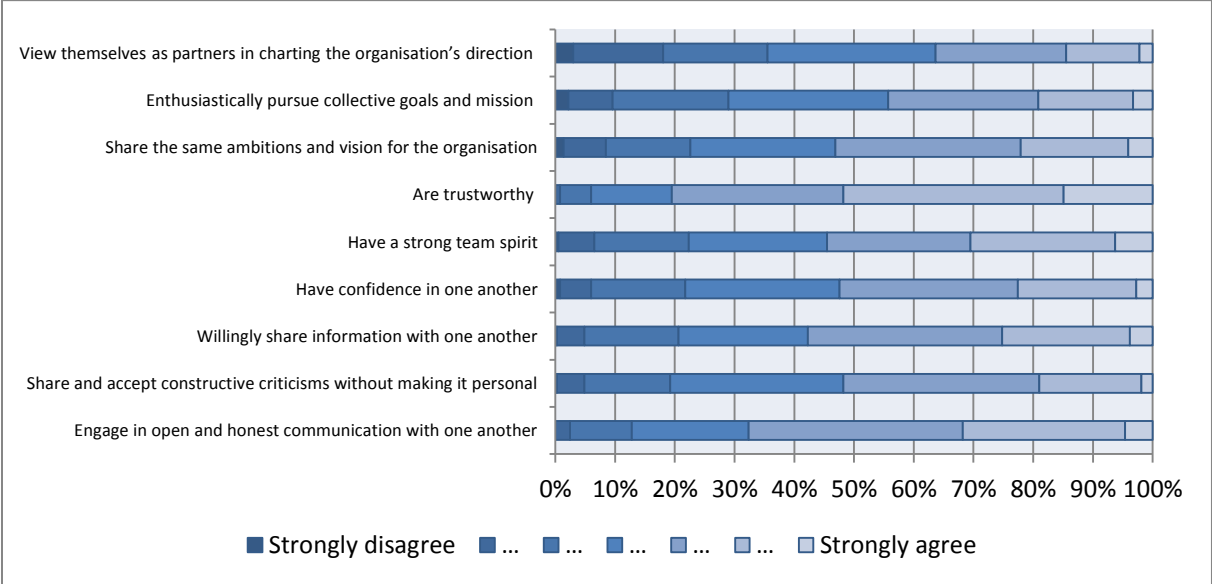
Executives' assessment of the different performance dimensions differs across policy fields. For example, in the policy field finance, executives perceive less fair treatment of citizens (*) and those in justice perceive a higher degree of bureaucracy reduction (**). Also, senior executives working in

ministries, top-level executives and executives working in general government assess policy coherence and coordination more positively (all at least *). A correlation with the reform trends perceived as relevant in the policy fields (cf. Figure 14) yields interesting results: The more a policy field is subject to outcome orientation and treating service users as customers, the more the senior executives working in it assess that innovation, service quality and cost and efficiency aspects have improved.

The results for the overall, cross-national sample are remarkably similar. Only policy coherence and policy effectiveness are perceived more positively in the overall sample, while citizen participation and involvement is perceived to be somewhat lower in the other European countries.

Central to the overall COCOPS project is also the question whether NPM reforms have a negative impact on social cohesion (Van de Walle and Hammerschmid 2011). For the German sub-sample, we found that the previous reforms do not appear to have negatively affected **social capital and trust** within the respondents’ organization (see figure 25). German executives assess nearly all aspects of social capital and trust as operationalized by Nahapiet and Ghoshal (1998) as rather positive. This is especially the case for their assessment of trustworthiness of their colleagues (80.5% assess this as rather positive) and open and honest communication (67.7%). Also overall positive, albeit to a lesser degree, is the assessment of all other dimensions (sharing same ambitions and vision, team spirit, mutual confidence, information sharing, constructive criticisms) with only two exceptions. Executives agree less that people within their organization enthusiastically pursue collective goals and mission and that they view themselves as partners in charting the organization’s direction (only 44.3% resp. 36.3% assess these two aspects as rather positive).

Figure 24. Social capital and trust (Q: People in my organization) (n=366-369)

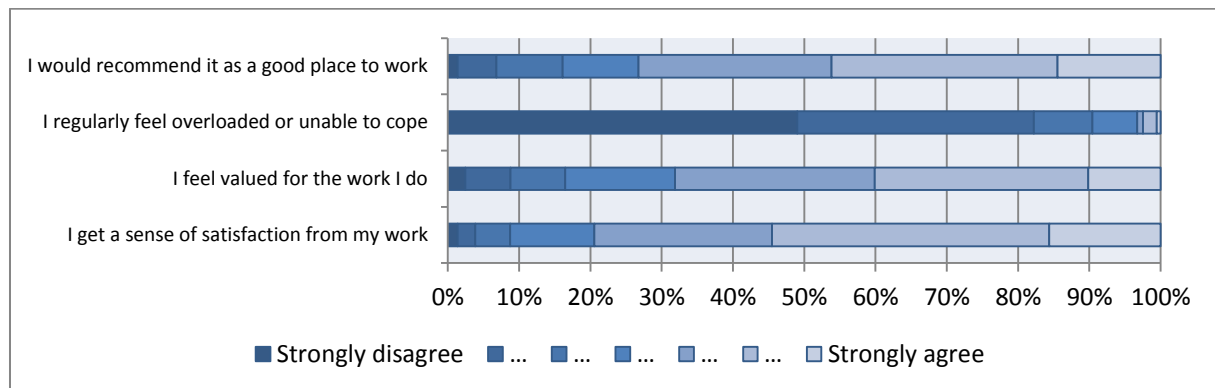


Social capital and trust levels show a relative stable pattern across organization types, sizes and policy fields. A first correlation of social capital levels (Figure 24) with the usage of different management instruments (cf. Figure 16) indicates that – contrary to the common assumption – higher use of management instruments goes along with higher social capital and trust levels. This is especially the case for using business/strategic planning, codes of conduct and decentralization of

financial and staffing decision. The results also show that executives in other European countries have an even more positive assessment of social capital and trust in their organizations.

Similarly interesting is the level of **job satisfaction** at the individual level. The results confirm a very high level of job satisfaction among German executives (see Figure 25): 79.5% rather agree that they get a sense of satisfaction from their work (vs. less than 10% disagreeing). Also a relatively high share of 68.1% feels rather valued for the work they do, and 73.2% would rather recommend their organization as a good place to work. Virtually no one feels regularly overloaded or unable to cope.

Figure 25. Job satisfaction (Q: When thinking about my work and the organization I work for) (n=359-366)

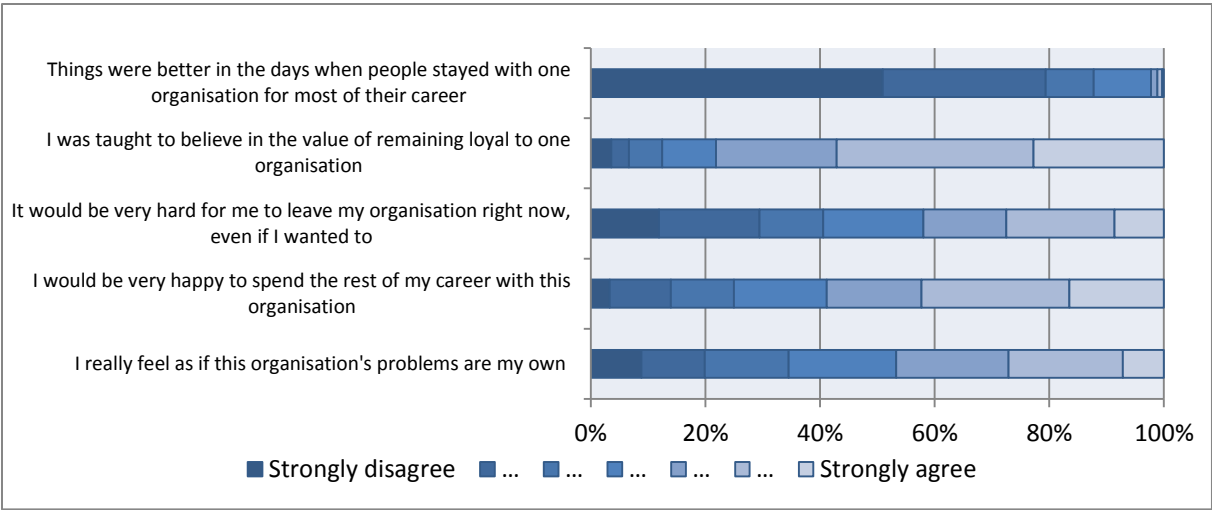


Top-level executives feel significantly more valued for the work they do than second-level executives (*). Otherwise, job satisfaction levels are relatively uniform across policy fields and organization types. Job satisfaction among the European COCOPS sample is even higher, but at the same time, a significantly higher share of executives in the overall sample feels regularly overloaded or unable to cope (the mean is 3.41 compared to 1.85 in Germany).

A further related question aims to assess **organizational commitment** (see Figure 26), a concept commonly used in public management research and important proxy variable for organizational performance (e.g. Moon 2000). Following the broadly used operationalization from Allen and Meyer (1991) we thereby differentiated between three types of organizational commitment: normative, continuance and affective commitment.¹³ For Germany, we find a high degree of normative commitment (both dimensions with agreement higher than 50%), a medium level of continuous commitment (58.8% rather agree that they would be very happy to spend the rest of their career with their current organization). Affective commitment is also rather high but varies considerably between the two items (58.8% rather agree on being happy to spend the rest of their life in the organization and 46.7% rather agree that they feel the organization’s problems as their own). In overall organizational commitment in Germany thus appears to be strong, but not excessive and lower as to be expected in view of the very high tenure and lack of career mobility (see Figure 5)

¹³ The three dimensions are operationalized in the following form: normative commitment (Things were better in the days when people stayed with one organization for most of their career (R); I was taught to believe in the value of remaining loyal to one organization), continuance commitment (It would be very hard for me to leave my organization right now, even if I wanted to) and affective (I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this organization; I really feel as if this organization’s problems are my own). See Allen and Meyer 1991.

Figure 26. Organizational commitment (Q: When thinking about my work and the organization I work for) (n=359-366)



Employees in the policy field environment show a significantly higher overall organizational commitment (**), top-level executives a higher affective commitment (***). Compared to the overall COCOPS sample, German public sector executives show a significantly higher normative commitment in combination with a significantly lower affective commitment towards the organization. This goes well in line with the Weberian ideal of formalistic impersonality “without any enthusiasm or affection” (Weber 1978: 225) and the complete subordination of personal interests to the professional normative fulfilment of duty towards society and the state (also captured by the German notion of *‘Staatsdiener’*).

In sum, we can say that public administration reform – and especially more managerial reforms - have not negatively affected social capital and trust, job satisfaction and organizational commitment in Germany. However, we also have observed that NPM reforms have not played a large role in German public administration as covered in this survey. It is thus interesting to compare the results with those for the employment services, a policy field which has been subject to considerable managerial reforms (cf. chapter 9).

9. Findings from the Employment and Health sector

9.1 Employment Sector

As mentioned in section 3.1., the German results in the previous chapters have excluded the employment sector, due to both an over-representation of respondents from this sector within the total sample, but also due to recent developments in the sector and substantial differences with other policy fields. There are two inter-related aspects that make the employment area potentially more NPM orientated: 1) the set of NPM-type of reforms implemented over the last few years, and 2) the structure and functioning of the sector itself with a much more pronounced service delivery function.

With regards to the functioning of the employment sector, there are here some peculiarities compared to other sectors. Responsibility for policies is shared between the federal level, in particular the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, and a subordinate body – the Federal Agency for Employment (*Bundesagentur für Arbeit* – or BA). The Ministry has a key role in initiating policy and legislative proposals (together with the Chancellery and the parliamentary committee in charge of Labour and Social Affairs), and in developing policies. The policy implementation falls then under the responsibility of the Employment Agency.

The BA is the biggest German agency, with 113,000 employees altogether in 2010 (Meynhardt and Diefenbach 2012: 12) and a special profile in the landscape of German agencies. It has a distinct legal personality and responds directly to the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. It also has its own budget and an important autonomy in relation to financial and personnel management matters (Bach and Jann 2010). Most federal agencies have advisory functions, with policy implementation being usually the domain of state and local levels. The BA however deals directly with policy implementation on these levels, and in doing so shares implementation responsibilities with local level actors. Recent reforms have re-designed the administration of service delivery between these levels, and have mandated a more coordinated, user-friendly delivery, in the form of one-stop-shops, or 'Jobcentres'. While strategy is adopted centrally, in the Ministry and the BA, based on labour market differences at the regional level, there are also regional interpretations and adaption of central level decisions, and a more targeted local service-delivery (Meynhardt and Diefenbach 2012; Ochs 2005).

The major reforms implemented in recent years have made this sector one of the most NPM-influenced within German administration. More precisely, the 2003-2005 laws on *Modern Services of the Labour Market*, also known as the *Hartz laws*, made use of a series of principles and tools related to NPM, including decentralisation, customer orientation, cost accounting, contract management, target steering etc. An important effort has also been made to increase coordination between actors and institutions in the field: the 'Jobcentres' created to bring service delivery in this sector under the same roof is one of the most relevant examples.

Looking at the survey results, respondents from the employment sector – in overall 88.5% from the BA and 11.5% from ministries – are somewhat younger than in the other sectors: 15.0% are 45 or younger (compared to only 8.7% in the rest of the sample) and the percentage of female executives is higher than in the rest of the sample (28.9% vs. 17.5%). There are fewer respondents with a

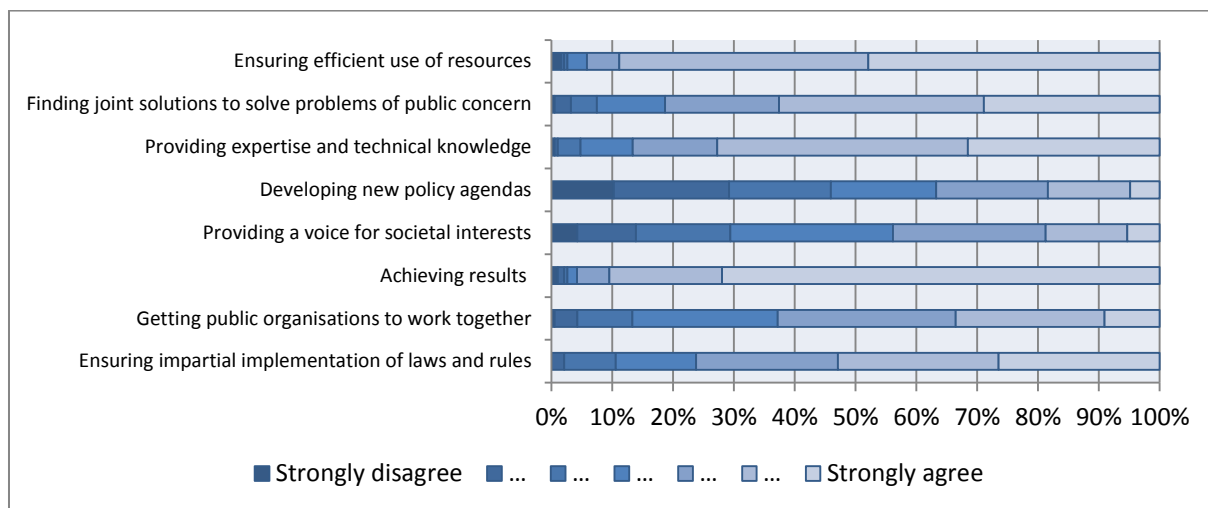
background in law (35.4% vs. 47.0%), but more with degrees in business/management/economics (26.4% vs.13.7%) and political science and administration (15.2% vs.8.2%).

The length of public sector tenure in the employment sector sample is relatively similar to the rest of the sample. A significant difference can be found with regard to tenure within the organization, with a much higher share of respondents in the employment sector being within the same organization for more than 20 years (55.1%, compared to only 25.7% in the other policy areas). The share of executives with private or non-profit sector experience is also relatively similar between the two samples with even less other sector experience among executives in the employment sector.

Values and Attitudes in the Employment Sector

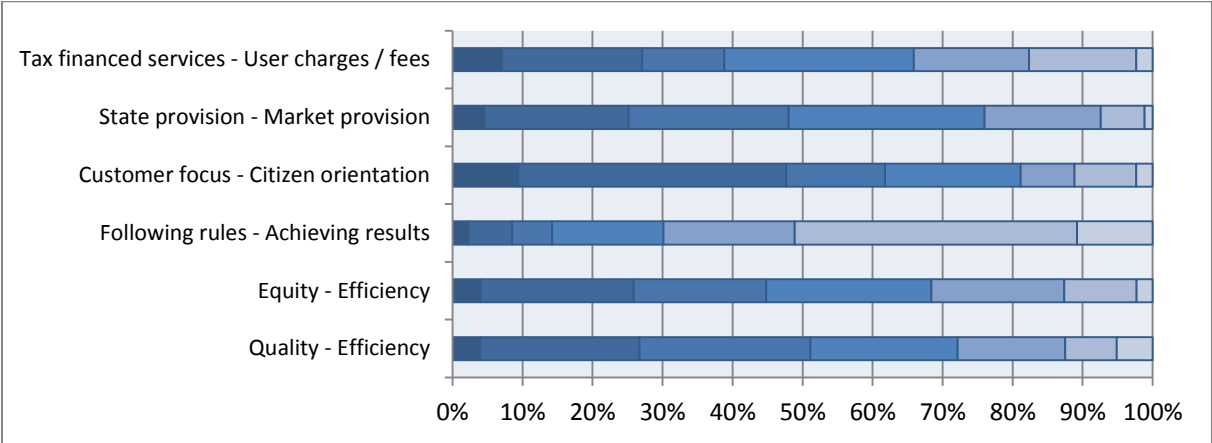
Identity and role perception as executive (see Figure 27). When asked about their self-understanding as public sector executives, a clear majority of the respondents strongly confirms managerial roles such as achieving results and ensuring an efficient use of resources as central for their role and to a larger degree than their colleagues in other sectors (mean of 6.52 vs. 6.26 respectively 6.24 vs. 5.84). Executives in the employment sector also have a significantly higher commitment towards ‘providing a voice for societal interests’ (mean of 4.20 vs. 3.64) whereas – not surprisingly- ‘developing new policy agendas’ finds significantly lower agreement (mean of 3.75 vs. 4.35). Within the employment sector the perception of roles and identities seems to be relatively uniform with a single exception: respondents from the ministry level – as to be expected – show a higher preference for developing new policy agendas (***) . Overall these findings confirm a more managerial but also service delivery oriented self-understanding in the employment sector.

Figure 27. Identity and self-understanding (Q: I mainly understand my role as public executive as)



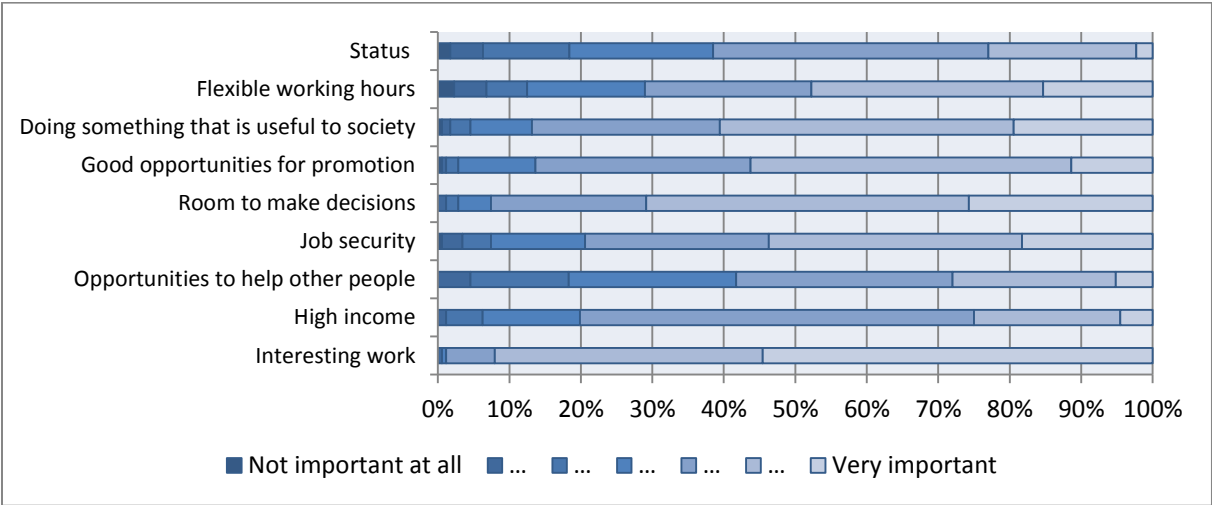
Values and preferences for public sector priorities (see Figure 28).With regard to these values and preferences and in comparison to the other sectors sample, we find a significantly higher preference in the employment sector for tax financed services and state provision in combination with a much more pronounced customer focus and result orientation.

Figure 28. Priorities as public servants (Q: Public services often need to balance different priorities. Where would you place your own position?)



Motivation (see Figure 29). Executives in the employment sector show again an interesting combination of a very high intrinsic motivation (interesting work and room to make decisions) with a rather high – especially in comparison to the other policy sectors – extrinsic motivation where promotion opportunities, flexible working hours and also high income are clear motivational factors.

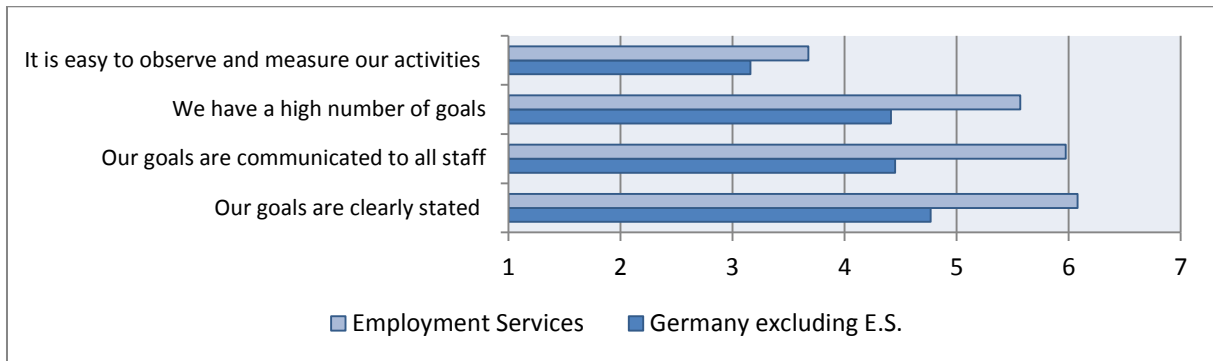
Figure 29. Motivation (Q: How important do you personally think it is in a job to have)



Characteristics of the Employment Sector Work Context

Goal ambiguity as a factor potentially impeding the resonance and implementation of management concepts seems to be lower in the employment sector than in the other policy fields. Goals are perceived to be much more clearly stated (mean of 6.08 vs. 4.77), more comprehensively communicated (mean of 5.97 vs. 4.45) and, though the answers still reveal scepticism, perceived to be slightly easier to be observed and measured easier (mean of 3.68 vs. 3.16). In contrast, executives in the employment field report that they face an even higher number of goals than their colleagues in other policy fields (mean of 5.57 vs. 4.41).

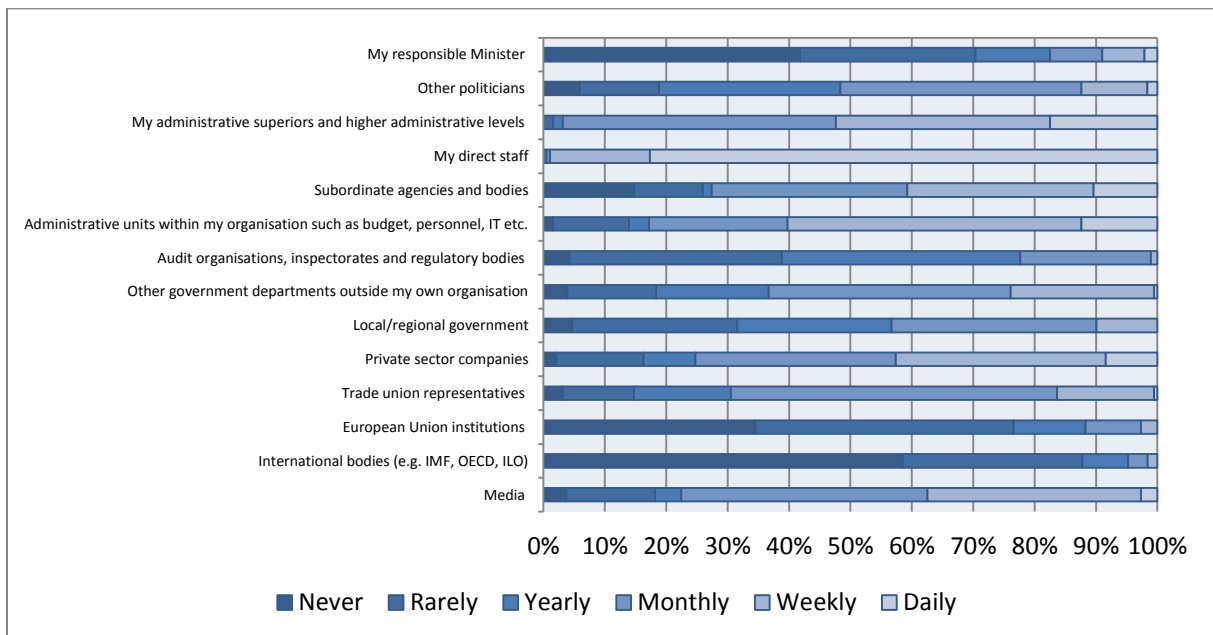
Figure 30. Goal ambiguity, means comparison employment sector versus other policy fields (Q: To what extent do the following statements apply to your organization? 1 "Strongly disagree" ... 7 "Strongly agree")



The answers concerning **management autonomy**, as perceived by executives in the employment sector, do not differ significantly from the other policy fields. If anything, senior executives in employment perceive slightly more management autonomy in most aspects than their colleagues in other policy fields.

With regard to **interaction frequency** we find clear – but not unexpected – differences for the German employment sector (see Figure 31): executives interact much less often with their responsible minister, with administrative superiors, with other government departments outside their own organization and with European Union institutions and international bodies. However, executives in the employment sector interact much more often with private sector companies, trade union representatives and the media. Organizations in this policy field thus appear to collaborate more with actors outside of public administration.

Figure 31. Interaction frequency (Q: Please indicate how frequently you typically interact with the following actors or bodies) (n=135-190)



A more qualitative indicator of interaction patterns is the perceived **coordination quality**. Overall, it is perceived as relatively poor by the senior executives in the non-employment policy fields. Values

are relatively similar for the employment services, except that much more respondents state that they cannot assess the coordination quality.

With regard to the **degree of politicization**, we observed a medium degree of politicization in the other policy fields' sample, with ministries being more affected than agencies. In line with these results politicization is perceived significantly lower for the employment services: politicians are perceived to respect senior executives' technical expertise to a somewhat greater extent; they influence senior-level appointments less often, they intervene less in routine activities and senior executives have more chances to initiate reforms. Again, executives in the employment sector state much more often that they cannot answer the question, especially as concerns the more normative question whether removing issues from the realms of politics produces better policies.

In sum, the work context in the employment services is perceived to be better suited for implementing management reforms: goals are perceived to be less ambiguous, autonomy is perceived to be slightly higher, employment sector organizations collaborate more with actors outside public administration, and the executives perceive less politicization.

Public Administration Reform in the Employment Sector

With regard to the **importance of reform trends**, we found for the non-employment sector that pronounced NPM tools such as privatization or flexible employment play only a minor role, but that public sector downsizing, the treatment of service users as customers and outcome orientation are the most relevant reform trends as perceived by the executives. Interestingly, almost all reform trends are significantly more relevant in the employment sector (see Figure 32). This is especially the case for focusing on outcomes and results and the treatment of service users as customers (mean values here are 6.16/6.15, compared to 4.81/4.55 for the other policy sectors sector).

Asking senior executives to assess **dynamics of public administration reform** allows us to observe how they evaluate the success and overall approach of the reforms that have already been implemented. Again, we find interesting differences in the assessment between employment services and the other sectors (see Figure 33). In general, executives from the employment sector perceive the reforms as significantly more successful (the mean is 7.32 compared to 5.60 in the other policy sectors). Also, the reforms are perceived as right in the middle between too demanding and not demanding enough (the mean is 4.92). The senior executives also perceive the reforms to be more consistent, more comprehensive and more substantial than their colleagues in other policy sectors. Interestingly, they also think that the reforms are less contested by unions and that they are better balancing cost-cutting and service improvement. Overall, the assessment of public sector reforms in the employment sector is perceived significantly more positive than in the other policy sectors.

Figure 32. Importance of reform trends, means comparison employment sector versus other policy fields (Q: How important are the following reform trends in your policy area? 1 "Not at all" ... 7 "To a large extent")

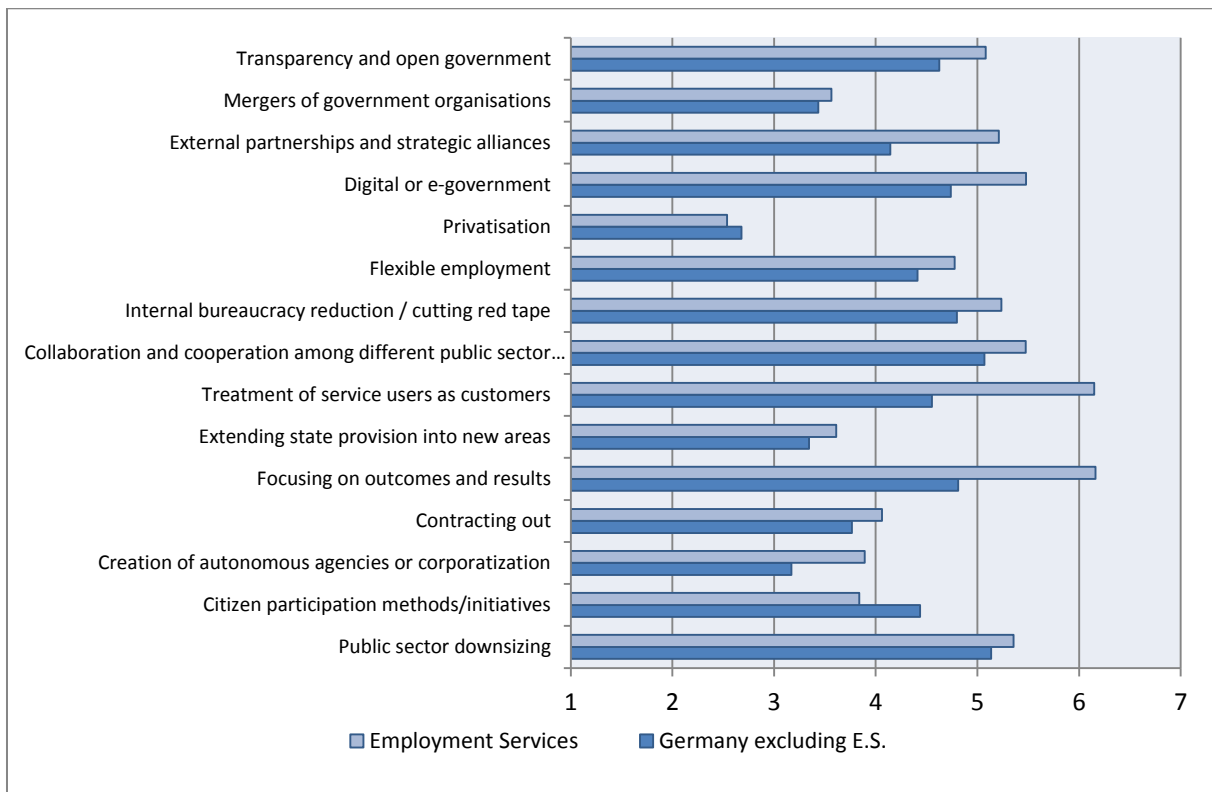
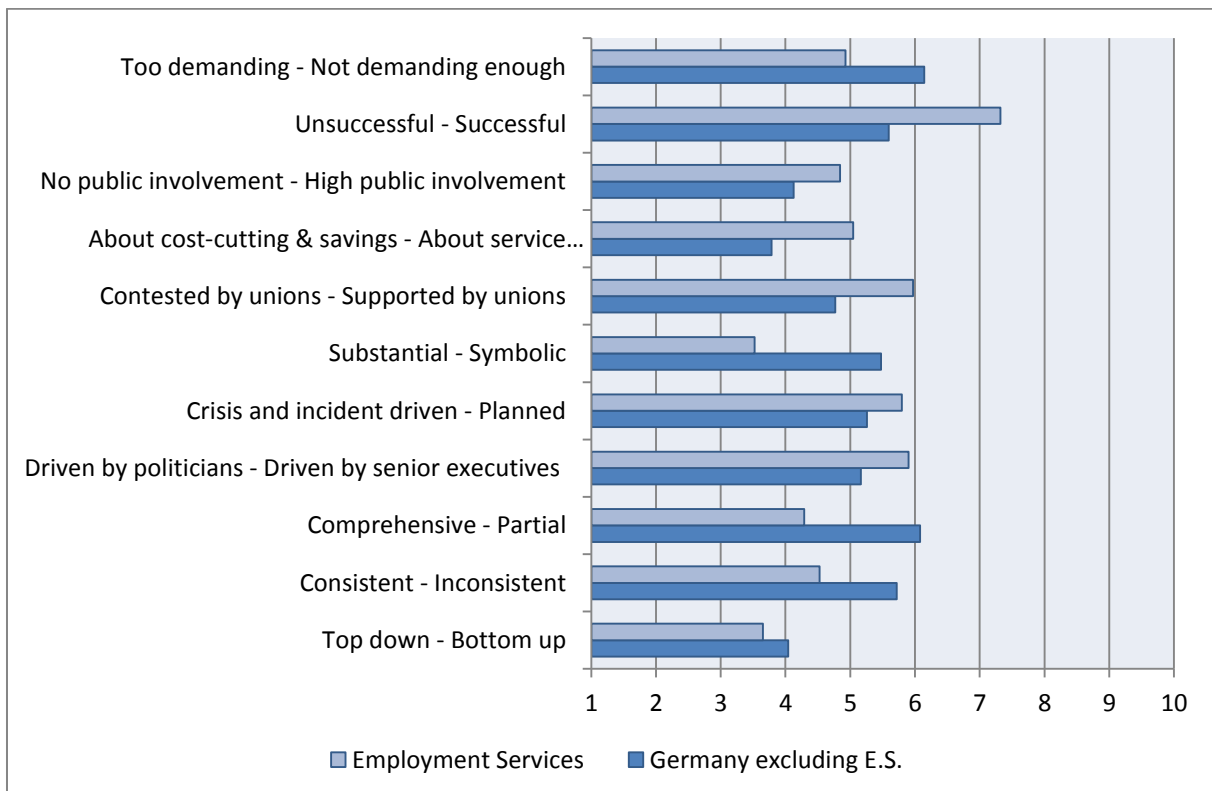


Figure 33. Dynamics of public sector reform, means comparison employment sector versus other policy fields (Q: Public sector reforms in my policy area tend to be.. 1: e.g. Too demanding, Unsuccessful ... 10: e.g. Not demanding enough, Successful)



It is also interesting to compare the executives' assessment of reforms in their policy sector (see Figure 33) with their assessment of the use of **management instruments** in their own organization (Figure 34). Executives in the other sectors state that except for some measures like staff appraisal talks, they rather not make use of these management instruments. This is in clear contrast with the employment sector where executives use all of these instruments significantly more often and to a rather high degree. Especially broadly used are management by objectives and results, staff appraisal talks, benchmarking and business/strategic planning; only performance related pay is more rarely used.

Figure 34. Relevance of different management instruments, means comparison employment sector versus other policy fields (Q: To what extent are the following instruments used in your organisation? 1 "Not at all" ... 7 "To a large extent")



In line with these results, we observe a stronger institutionalization of **performance management** within the employment sector (see Figure 35). This is especially the case for the measurement of outputs and outcomes and the political use of indicators. Consequences for achievement and non-achievement of goals are more pronounced, albeit also here to a rather low degree.

Figure 35. Relevance of performance management, means comparison employment sector versus other policy fields (Q: To what extent do the following statements apply to your organisation? 1 "Strongly disagree" ... 7 "Strongly agree")



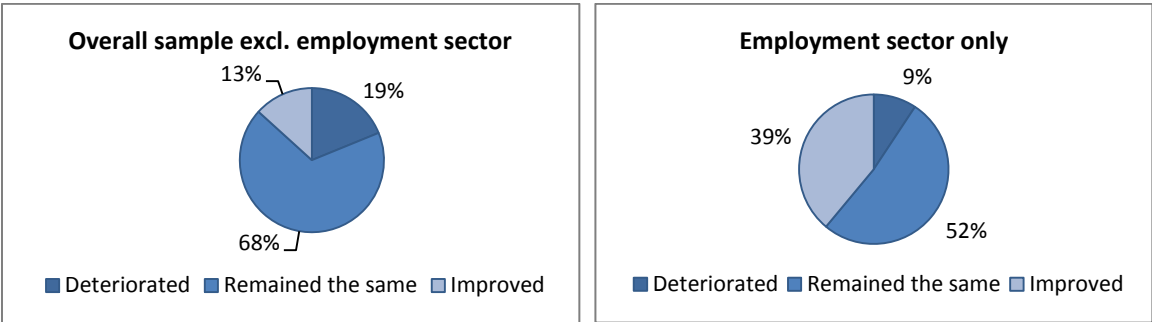
We already know that senior executives in the employment sector are much more likely to use **performance indicators** than executives in other policy fields. We asked them for which purpose they mainly use these performance indicators due to the higher relevance of such reforms and again we find clear evidence for a significantly higher use of the indicators for all of the proposed purposes. They use them especially to assess whether they reach their targets and to identify problems that need attention and less for engaging with external stakeholders.

In sum, as to be expected we observe that executives in the employment sector are much more affected by NPM reforms than their colleagues in other policy fields and that these reforms have already been institutionalized at the organizational level to a rather high degree. This is an important finding to keep in mind when comparing the perception of the impact of the administrative reforms between employment sector and the other policy sectors.

Impact of Administrative Reform in the Employment Sector

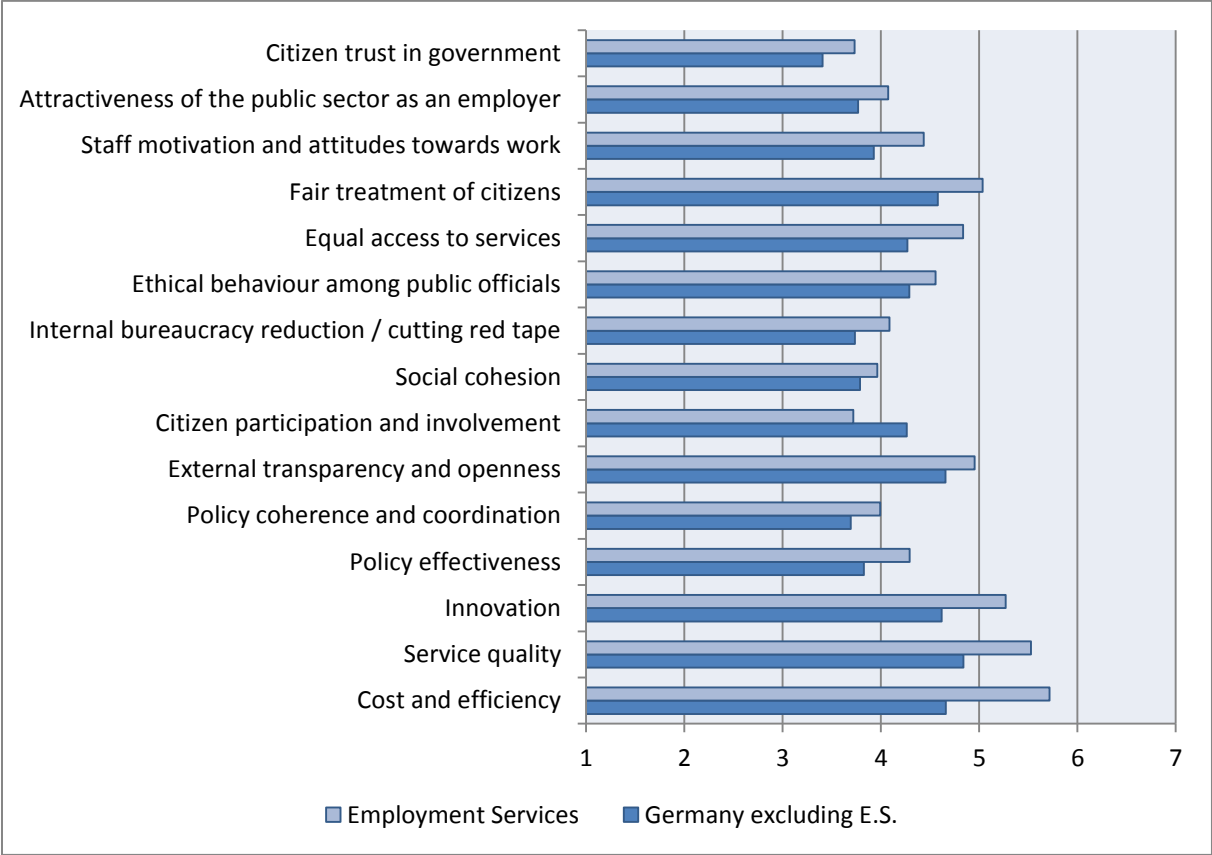
The public sector officials were asked to assess the overall development of public administration in the last five years. The **overall PA assessment** given by the executives not working in the employment sector is reserved; only 13% state that the way public administration works has improved. This is rather different for the executives working in the employment sector where a rather high share of 39% observes overall improvement (see Figure 36).

Figure 36. Overall PA assessment (Q: Compared with five years ago, how would you say things have developed when it comes to the way public administration runs in your country?)



This rather positive assessment from executives in the employment sector can also be found with regard to a more nuanced assessment of **different performance dimensions**. Here again with regard to all dimensions, executives in the employment sector report better outcomes, albeit often to a rather moderate degree. Substantial improvement is again seen with regard to more managerial dimensions such as cost and efficiency, service quality and innovation but also, albeit to a lesser degree, with regard to fair treatment of citizens, external transparency and openness and equal access to services. With regard to most other performance dimensions executives perceive neither clear improvements nor deteriorations.

Figure 37. Different performance dimensions, means comparison employment sector versus other policy fields (Q: How do you think PA has performed in your policy area over the last 5yrs on the following dimensions? 1 "Deteriorated sig." ... 7 "Improved sig.")



With regard to **social capital and trust**, results are quite similar to the results for the non-employment policy fields; the managerial reforms in the employment sector do not appear to have negatively influenced social capital and trust. **Job satisfaction** seems to be slightly lower among executives in the employment sector and these executives also feel slightly more often overloaded by their work. The differences are rather minor in extent, though.

Our findings also indicate that **organisational commitment** is significantly better assessed by executives in the employment sector. These executives for example agree more with the statement that they would be happy to spend the rest of their career with their organization (with a mean of 5.35 compared to 4.75 for the other policy fields).

In sum, the employment sector has been subject to considerable managerial reforms, and the executives assess these changes as rather successful, especially in comparison to the executives in the other policy fields. The efficiency gains and service improvements are not perceived as having negatively affected social capital and organizational commitment. If anything, job satisfaction is perceived as slightly less positive than in the other policy fields.

9.2 Health Sector

The analysis for the health sector – albeit based on a rather small sample of 53 answers – yields the following results.

Values and attitudes

The answers from executives working in the health sector indicate a very similar self-understanding and similar identity patterns as their colleagues in other policy fields; the only difference here is that ensuring impartial implementation of laws and rules is slightly more relevant to them (the mean for the health sector is 5.77, compared to 5.33 overall). We did find some significant differences concerning their value preferences. Health sector employees give more weight to ensuring quality as opposed to efficiency (the mean for them is 3.10, the one for the overall sample is 3.56). Also, equity (as opposed to efficiency) is more important for them than it is for their colleagues in other policy fields (the mean for health is 2.86, compared to 3.46 overall). Finally, their orientation is stronger towards citizens than towards customers (a mean of 4.66 compared to one of 3.83 overall) and they prefer tax financed services over user charges (the mean for health here is 3.62, the one for the overall sample is 4.15).

Work context

Executives working in the health sector perceive their goals as even more difficult to observe and measure; asked whether they agree with the statement that their activities are easy to observe and measure, the mean value was only 2.96, compared to an already low value of 3.37 for the overall sample. In addition, they feel less autonomous than their colleagues in other policy fields. This is especially the case for promoting staff (a mean value of 4.09 in health, one of 4.65 in the overall sample) and policy implementation (3.90 vs. 4.46).

Interaction frequency is relatively similar to the overall sample, besides that employees in the health sector interact somewhat more frequently with administrative units within their organization (here a mean value of 5.33 is observed, compared to a value of 4.83 for the overall sample). Coordination quality, however, is perceived as poorer. Health senior executives also perceive a slightly higher degree of politicization.

Relevance of NPM Reforms

Almost all NPM reform trends are less relevant in the health sector as compared to the overall sample. In particular, public sector downsizing occurs to a lower degree (a mean of 4.63 in the sub-

sample for health vs. one of 5.27 in the overall sample). Also, health sector executives perceive significantly less relevance of outcomes and result orientation (a mean value of 4.75 for health, one of 5.31 in the overall sample), as well as external partnerships and strategic alliances (4.00 vs. 4.55).

Health sector executives assess the dynamics of reform in their policy field much more critical. In particular, they describe the reforms as not demanding enough (a mean value of 6.98 in the health sector, compared to a much lower value of 5.61 in the overall sample), as more symbolic (5.58 vs. 4.74) and more partial (6.25 vs. 5.39).

On an organizational level, management instruments are less used in the German health sector than in the overall sample. This is especially the case for customer/user surveys (a mean value of 3.41 in the sub-sample for health vs. one of 4.23 in the overall sample), service points for customers (2.78 vs. 3.61) and benchmarking (3.49 vs. 4.40). In general, performance management is less relevant and institutionalized in health than in other policy fields; this applies to policy field, organizational and individual levels.

Impact of Public Administration Reform

As concerns the overall assessment of public administration reform, it is interesting to compare the mean values for the sub-sample for health with the ones for employment and the overall sample excluding employment. The executives in the employment sector state that things have rather improved; the mean value for this sub-sample is 5.88. The mean value for the overall sample (excluding employment) is lower (5.33), but the least positive evaluation is given by the executives working in the health sector, with a mean value of only 5.14. As concerns the more nuanced assessment of different performance dimensions, the executives in the health sector give a slightly less positive evaluation of all performance dimensions. The same applies to job satisfaction. The results for social trust and capital are almost identical with the results for the overall sample, but organizational commitment is slightly lower in the health sector.

In sum, public sector reforms and especially management ideas are perceived as less relevant in the health sector. The work context is perceived as less suitable for management reforms and executives assess public administration reform more critical.

10. Conclusion

German public administration is commonly described as being strongly embedded in a legalistic Weberian tradition and being a hesitant reformer, often lagging behind international reform developments (see Pollitt and Bouckaert 2011, OECD 2009). The results of this COCOPS executive survey confirm such characterizations to a certain extent, but also bring a more nuanced image of the administrative reforms introduced and implemented in Germany. Moreover, they show interesting differences at policy sector level and in particular a significantly higher NPM-orientation and stronger reform intensity in the employment sector along with a significantly more positive assessment of these reforms.

The results for the German sample (excluding the employment sector) confirm that German public administration retains some of its traditional elements (see Derlien 2003), which generally indicate a prevalence of a Weberian type of public administration: legal studies dominates the educational backgrounds of the respondents and the executives are comparatively older than those in the overall COCOPS sample (reflecting the seniority principle). German respondents show comparatively low job mobility – with large shares of the executives having worked in the same organization or position for a considerable amount of time. The data also confirms relatively strong sector closeness with a clear majority of executives having none or less than 1 year of private or nonprofit sector work experience.

By contrast, with regards to the **self-perception of their roles** as executives we see – similar to the overall COCOPS sample – a mix of Weberian and managerial values, which would indicate a certain hybridization of roles and identities in German administration and the possible emergence of a Neo-Weberian model as described by Pollitt and Bouckaert (2011). We do not find significant differences between the German and overall COCOPS sample when it comes to motivational factors. The only differences are a significant lower importance of altruistic motivators and a somewhat higher importance of job security and status among German executives.

A major focus of this report is the executives' perception of their **work context**. We find that goal ambiguity as well as measurement problems are perceived as relatively high and that fragmentation resp. coordination problems and politicization are clearly present in the German public sector. An interesting result is that executives report a rather high autonomy with regards to almost all aspects especially compared to the overall COCOPS sample.

Although German public administration, similar to most other countries, has experienced a wave of different public administration reform initiatives over the last decade, we find clear evidence that the arguably most pronounced NPM types of reform, such as privatization, contracting out or agencification are of only very limited relevance in Germany. In contrast, public administration is clearly subject to considerable downsizing. Other reform trends, which have a moderately high prominence in Germany, are outcomes/results orientation, e-government, cutting red tape, customer orientation, as well as transparency and open government. The perceptions of the German respondents do not vary significantly from the overall COCOPS sample and confirm the existence of both a New Public Management (NPM) and New Public Governance (NPG) reform agenda, albeit to a rather moderate degree. A comparison with the overall sample confirms a clearly more incremental reform approach. Administrative reforms in Germany are perceived as more inconsistent, more partial and considerably more symbolic. With regard to the drivers, reforms in the other countries

are clearly more top-down, more driven by politicians and more contested by the unions. However, the overall assessment among public sector executives seems to be quite similar and mixed with a similar share of positive and negative assessments of the overall success of the reforms.

On the organizational level, **management instruments** have only a rather low importance and a performance management logic is institutionalized only to a low degree. The only concept systematically implemented and used are staff appraisal talks. Two other instruments also used by a majority of the respondents are business/strategic planning and management by objectives and results. Executives in the overall COCOPS sample use almost all management instruments, as well as performance information significantly more often than their German colleagues. This clearly confirms – as was to be expected – the hesitant reception of managerial reforms in German public administration.

One key goal of the present study is to obtain systematic information not only on how public sector executives assess the **impact of the various public administration reform** on an organizational, but also on a policy field level. In an overall assessment of public administration, a relatively low share of respondents state that the way public administration runs in Germany has clearly improved. Citizens, according to the Eurobarometer 2010, have an even more skeptical assessment. Asked for a more differentiated assessment of various performance dimensions the clearest and most positive results can be found for managerial aspects such as service quality, cost and efficiency and innovation, as well as external transparency and openness. In contrast, public administration performance is seen not to have rather improved or even deteriorated with regard to more policy-relevant categories such as citizen trust in government, policy coherence and coordination, social cohesion as well as policy effectiveness (remarkably similar results for the overall sample). On the organizational level, we find rather high levels of social capital and trust, albeit slightly below the level of the overall COCOPS sample, and no indicators for a negative impact of management concepts and ideas on these dimensions. The survey also confirms a very high level of job satisfaction among German executives. Again, we find an even higher level among international executives, but at the same time, a significantly higher share of executives in the overall sample feels regularly overloaded or unable to cope. Compared to the overall COCOPS sample, German public sector executives show a significant higher normative commitment, in combination with a significant lower affective commitment towards the organization - which is well in line with the Weberian ideal of public administration. In sum, we do not find indicators that public administration reforms – and especially more managerial reforms – have negatively affected social capital and trust, job satisfaction and organizational commitment in Germany. However, we also have observed that NPM reforms have not played a large role in German public administration.

Apart from the central government, the survey also targeted more specifically the health and employment sectors. With regards to health, results do not differ substantially from the rest of the German sample. **Health sector** respondents have been confronted with less reforms, which are perceived as not demanding enough, more symbolic than substantial, and more partial than comprehensive. Performance management is seen as less relevant than in the overall sample for Germany, and there is a perception of higher goal ambiguity and politicization, but of less autonomy and coordination quality.

The employment sector however shows interesting and highly significant differences – and in fact one of the central findings of this country report is the extent to which executives from this sector

are more open towards managerial ideas and administrative reform. A series of rather far reaching reforms have been implemented in the **employment sector**, which are also duly mirrored in the perceptions of the respondents from this sector: they perceive that their sector has been subject to considerable administrative reforms and especially a strong managerialization, which they assess as overall quite successful. The work context in the employment sector is perceived as better suited for implementing management reforms: goals are less ambiguous, autonomy is higher, there is more collaboration with actors outside public administration, and the executives perceive less politicization. Respondents in the employment sector also observe a much better institutionalized performance management and generally make more use of performance indicators than executives in other fields. Significant improvements are seen especially with regard to several management dimensions, such as cost, efficiency, quality or innovation, but also with regard to a fairer treatment of citizens. Moreover, in the eyes of the executives these improvements do not seem to have negative effects on social capital and trust, organizational commitment and job satisfaction – which is higher overall among executives in the employment sector than in overall German sample.

Overall, the results do not indicate a substantial change in the dominantly Weberian and legalistic character of German public administration and in the clear dominance of an incremental reform dynamic. Executives' values, self-perceptions and reform experiences indicate a certain opening for reforms and a management logic, taking up both elements of a NPM and NPG reform agenda as described by Pollitt and Bouckaert 2011, albeit the practical impact of these reforms both at policy field level, but even more at the organizational level is still rather moderate. We also find a different speed of reforms within German public administration with only the employment sector showing a clear reformative picture: a pronounced move towards performance management and an overall clearly positive assessment of the reforms.

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