Beyond Portfolios:
Bureaucratic Issue Attention
in Coalition Governments

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PhD Dissertation

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Introduction

In many cases, there is no complete clarity about the precise
jurisdictions of the individual ministries
(a junior minister in the German chancellery,
quoted in Hoffmann 2003, 28; own translation).

While civil servants might lament the unclarity of ministerial jurisdictions, this dissertation argues that this fuzziness of responsibility does not exist without a reason. Quite in contrast, designing government structures in which multiple ministries attend to the same policy issue helps governments to manage diverging expectations and preferences. While observed within the single-party governments of Great Britain (Dewan and Hortala-Vallve 2011; Heppell 2011), *bureaucratic issue attention* that transgresses ministerial boundaries can also be harnessed by coalition governments to resolve conflict among their constituent parties. If the involved ministries feature different partisan leaderships, coalitions can ensure that their policy compromises are honoured, while simultaneously enabling multiple parties to engage with their favourite policy matters. Against this backdrop, this dissertation studies the circumstances and conditions under which coalitions decide to create such redundancies among their ministries and identifies their repercussions for policymaking.

In the parliamentary democracies that occupy most of the European landscape, it is ministries which process political ideas and translate them into legislative drafts that might eventually become law (Bonnaud and Martinais 2014; Page 2003). This centrality of civil servants' attention to policy issues makes this dissertation relevant for the political process that connects voters' preferences with political outputs. Both mandate theory (McDonald 2005; McDonald and Budge 2005) and the growing bulk of literature on the fulfilment of election pledges (Costello and Thomson 2008; Mansergh and Thomson 2007; Thomson et al. 2017) argue that parties are elected on the basis of policy promises they have made to their voters, which grants them the mandate but also the obligation to work towards their fulfilment once incumbent. Hence, the extent to which incumbent parties' ministries attend to such promised issues may be the prerequisite that enables parties to live up to their promises. Thus, this research into the allocation of bureaucratic attention to single policy issues may represent the link that connects electoral preferences with governmental policies.

The ministerial capability to design legislation can be seized by the political leadership. Ministers are central political actors that can set the government's agenda on policy matters under their purview and leave their imprint on pieces of legislation, which becomes especially intricate in coalition governments composed of parties with often diverging policy objectives (Laver and Shepsle 1996). Across many European countries, experts describe how the first draft that ministries ask their civil servants to draft, as frequently as it may be revised and amended, tends to set a bill's course as it winds through the legislative process (see country chapters in Laver and Shepsle 1994). Bearing this in mind, it is no surprise that upon forming a coalition government, parties struggle to seize control over those ministries whose policy domain is substantively important to them, seeking to obtain an advantage in nudging government policies towards their own preferences (Bäck, Debus, and Dumont 2011; Budge and Keman 1993).

The bulk of literature that followed Laver's and Shepsle's (1996) work on the formation of coalition governments, which was later too starkly reduced to the catch phrase *ministerial dictatorship*, bought into the idea that ministers wield unparalleled agenda-setting powers in their policy domains and problematized it from a principal-agent perspective in which the government seeks to limit policy drift (Andeweg 2000). Even before their incumbency, coalition partners were found to draft often comprehensive coalition agreements, which both sought to provide reconciliatory instruments to solve disagreements (Bowler et al. 2016; Müller and Strøm 2008) and outline policy guidelines that can be used as a public yardstick against which ministerial policy proposals can be compared (Joly, Zicha, and Dandoy 2015; Klüver and Bäck 2019; Moury and Timmermans 2013; Timmermans 2003, 2006). During their term in office, coalition governments can curtail ministers' impact on legislation within both the cabinet and the parliament. With regard to the former, coalitions sometimes install "spies" in their partners' ministries that are meant to report on ongoing proceedings and potential deviations from the agreed policy guidelines (Thies 2001). Regarding the latter, many parliamentary democracies feature strong legislatures with the rights and powers to scrutinise, revise, and amend ministerial bills if they are found to be in disagreement with the government's policy goals (Carroll and Cox 2012; Fortunato, Martin, and Vanberg 2017; L. W. Martin and Vanberg 2005, 2011).

Yet, this dissertation claims that ministers' ability to bias legislation to their party's benefit and, hence, the necessity for coalition governments to contain the resulting policy drift may be less acute. By ensuring that different parties lead the ministries responsible for a policy issue, governments deliberately deprive ministers of their exclusive advantage to shape policies according to their preference. Forcing different ministries to collaborate during the

process of drafting legislation facilitates that deviations are spotted early on and can be rectified in a process of inter-ministerial coordination (Bo Smith-udvalget 2015, 85–86; Jensen 2008; Mayntz and Scharpf 1975; Scharpf and Mohr 1994). Importantly, such a stimulated coordination between ministries does not only police policy suggestions but rather impede that biased policy proposals survive until they reach the cabinet table.

Besides rectifying biased bills, shared responsibility also grants numerous ministers and their parties the opportunity and right to sit in the driver's seat of policy projects under their purview. This may be especially relevant for valence issues (Stokes 1963), where policymaking is not about political disagreement, but about implementing and getting credit for the "objectively" right policy solution. Since the unveiling of a new policy bill often generates huge media attention and, if done right, bestows public credit upon the minister and party in charge (L. W. Martin and Vanberg 2011, 13), overlapping jurisdictions can effectively split the resulting fame among incumbent parties.

To test these arguments, the dissertation draws on novel data about the set of and extent to which ministries attend to individual policy issues, which was explicitly collected for this purpose. Instead of relying on the nomenclature of ministries, which used to be the natural starting point for gaining insights into the policy focus of ministries, the data presented and used here relies on official publications on the public sector that in depth describe the numerous policy issues with which the individual policy units in ministries are tasked. These official publications, which are either organisation charts of ministries or written enumerations of the individual policy units, were broken up into single policy tasks, which were subsequently coded according to the coding scheme developed by the Comparative Agendas Project (CAP) (Baumgartner, Breunig, and Grossman 2019; Bevan 2019; Green-Pedersen and Walgrave 2014). This procedure, which was applied to five Danish, seven Dutch, and four German coalition governments that were in office between the mid-1990s to about 2010, yielded about 30,000 individual mentions of policy issues across the lowest level administrative units of the sampled ministries. Crucially, the data collected this way has a couple of advantages that facilitate my research. Firstly, it makes research less reliant on the political process that creates ministerial jurisdictions (Mortensen and Green-Pedersen 2015; Sieberer 2015; Sieberer et al. 2019), but allows the research to determine the set of observed policy issues and keep it constant across the entire political process. Secondly, by drawing on the definition of policy issues developed by the CAP, the collected data is directly connectable to the vast pool of available information on the entire policy process already elicited by this project, which both simplifies and improves this dissertation's research designs. Lastly, and

probably most importantly, data collected this way lends itself to be understood in terms of bureaucratic attention to policy issues, which may vary both with regard to its extent, its location in, and its distribution across different administrative units (read: ministries). Hence, it allows observing how attention to specific policy issues may be spread out across ministries run by different incumbent parties, which would stimulate inter-ministerial coordination.

Based on this data about bureaucratic issue attention, this dissertation paves the way for a new research infrastructure to study coalition governments. Inspired by the literature on political agenda setting (Baumgartner and Jones 1993; Jones and Baumgartner 2005), issue competition (Green-Pedersen 2019), and the related Comparative Agendas Project (CAP) (Baumgartner, Breunig, and Grossman 2019; Green-Pedersen and Walgrave 2014), it argues that likewise coalition governments can be understood in terms of political attention to policy issues. In a way, this completes the CAP's central quest, which has been studying the entire policy-process from input to output, by adding crucial information about the stage of "policy throughput" in coalition governments. The four papers, of which, in addition to this summary report, this dissertation is comprised, follow this idea and shed light on different stages of decision and policy-making in coalition governments. The four individual papers are:

1. Klüser, K. Jonathan. 2020a. "Beyond Portfolio Allocation: Bureaucratic Issue Attention in Coalition Governments." Manuscript.
2. Klüser, K. Jonathan. 2019. "Coordination Instead of Control? Ministerial Policy Responsibility Across Party Boarders." Manuscript.
3. Klüser, K. Jonathan, and Christian Breunig. 2019. "Ministerial Policy Dominance in Parliamentary Democracies." Under review at *Political Science Research and Methods*.
4. Klüser, K. Jonathan. 2020b. "From Bureaucratic Attention to Legislation: When do Coalition Governments Deploy Their Ministries to Draft Policies?" Under review at *European Journal of Political Research*.

Studying how parties' preferences for policy issues are translated into bureaucratic issue attention, the first paper (Klüser 2020a) zooms in on the link between input and throughput. Drawing on recent advances in the scholarly literature regarding the recurring restructurings of ministerial portfolios (Fleischer, Bertels, and Schulze-Gabrechten 2018; Mortensen and Green-Pedersen 2015; Sieberer 2015; Sieberer et al. 2019), it criticises that central studies on the qualitative aspect of portfolio allocation (e.g. Bäck, Debus, and Dumont 2011; Cutler et al. 2016) may paint a distorted picture of what they

claim to observe (Saalfeld and Schamburek 2014). Departing from this criticism, it revisits some central questions of the literature about qualitative portfolio allocation with the novel data on bureaucratic attention to policy issues. Doing so both circumvents the issue of malleable ministerial portfolios and casts a continuous perspective on the matter of allocation by not only asking 'who gets what', but also 'who gets how much'.

The second paper (Klüser 2019) directly delves into the question what political contexts induce coalition governments to spread bureaucratic attention to policy issues across ministries of different parties and, hence, create overlapping ministerial responsibilities. It shows that coalitions are wary to allow one party to monopolise control over commonly salient policy issues, but prefer a structure in which numerous incumbent parties have the right to poke their noses into the matter. Moreover, it uncovers evidence that some governments also use overlapping ministerial jurisdictions to curtail a minister's potential to bias governmental bills.

The last two papers deal with how bureaucratic issue attention translates into policy outputs. Against this backdrop, Klüser and Breunig (2020) address question of what ministerial dominance means empirically in terms of drafting legislation is raised in the third paper. Drawing on data about legislation, the alleged exclusivity with which ministers are responsible for legislation under their purview is put to a test – and cannot be corroborated empirically for most issue areas. Moreover, there is evidence of strategic interaction at the cabinet table during which parties bargain for the right to see their ministries in charge of the legislative process.

Finally, the fourth paper (Klüser 2020b) researches how the extent, location, and distribution of bureaucratic attention to policy issues across different ministries affect the legislative process. For sure, more bureaucracy produces more paperwork, but that is not the main story. Rather, the translation of bureaucratic attention to legislation is conditional on the political and administrative context: parties and their ministries are more reluctant to draft legislation if they do not have the attentional monopoly over an issue area, as they presumably fear their bills being caught up in the process of inter-ministerial coordination.

In what follows, this summary report presents most of the raised issues and the individual papers' empirical findings in greater detail. Specifically, chapter two discusses the theoretical basis of ministerial autonomy and presents the toolkit of coalition management devices governments use to monitor ministers. Chapter three continues with a presentation of the central theoretical claim of how overlapping ministerial jurisdictions can facilitate the coalition governance. Chapter four delves into the issue of measuring and operationalising the set of policy issues for which ministries are responsible and

presents the data collection that underpins most of this dissertation's research. Chapter five presents the results of the individual papers and some additional analyses that elaborate on some of the main findings. Lastly, the concluding chapter six condenses the individual results and discusses them in the light of the analytical limitations that apply to this research.

The Literature: Coalition Governance

In developed democracies, the entire way from voters' utterance of political preferences to implementation of government policy by bureaucrats is about delegation (Müller, Bergman, and Strøm 2008). In contrast to presidential systems with their double sources of political legitimacy, parliamentarian democracies rely on simple and direct chains of delegation (Strøm 2008). Voters delegate to their representatives, who convene in parliament to elect a government. Governments partition and assign policy responsibility to specific ministers, who in turn rely on the expertise of their ministerial bureaucracy to cast policy ideas into legal language. This insight, as basic as it may appear at first glance, is crucial for the weal and woe of coalition governments and, thus, represents the basic theoretical foundation on which this dissertation is based. Hence, in what follows this chapter will lay out the theoretical foundation of ministerial dominance and thereafter briefly discuss different devices coalition governments deploy to attenuate the problem.

The Problems of Delegation

In abstract terms, delegation refers to a single person or a group of people – commonly dubbed the *principal* – relying on a different (body of) people – the agent – to realise their preferences (Lupia 2008, 33). As ubiquitous as it is, delegation comes with strings attached. At each link, the chain of delegation is prone to break, confronting the principal with an agent who is either unwilling or incapable of acting according to the former's preferences. For representative democracies, these cracks in delegation can impede the translation of electoral preferences into policy outputs. The resulting *agency loss*, i.e. the discrepancy between the principal's preferences and the agent's actions, can be traced back to two sources. The first, *adverse selection*, refers to a wrong choice of agents to exercise power on the principal's behalf. Agents can either be unwilling to act faithfully because they desire a different outcome, or they can be bluntly incapable of delivering the outcome their principal was asking for (Lupia 2008). The second source centres on the principal's ability to control an agent. Unless properly held accountable, agents have little incentive to value and enact their principal's preferences. Thus, a delegation that suffers from insufficient control is likely to induce *moral hazard* and make agents pursue their own goals (Lupia 1992)

The problems arising from improper delegation have traditionally been studied in a minister-bureaucracy context, where the political elected heads of the bureaucracy seek to ensure the loyalty of their staff (Strøm 2008, 91). After all, the successful pursuit of political priorities relies on a willing and able public sector that turns preferences into policies (Bonnaud and Martinais 2014; Page 2003). Already Max Weber was aware of the gaping discrepancy between the political dilettante who faces the over-towering competence, power, and expertise of the bureaucracy (Weber 1972). Yet, the political leadership is not toothless. Based on the principal-agent framework, political scientists have uncovered a sizable set of tools politicians have at their disposal to tackle the problems of adverse selection and moral hazard. With regard to the former, they have particularly pointed to ex-ante remedies, helping politicians to learn about the qualities and preferences of potential agents prior to delegating power to them. The institutionalised career system of the public sector is probably the most prominent tool that seeks to differentiate between bureaucrats who lend their expertise to the implementation of government policies and those who are either unwilling or unqualified to do so (Lupia 2008). Moreover, political principals can draw on signals of potential agents. By taking a firm public stand on controversial issues, actors can reveal previously private information about their characteristics and recommend themselves for receiving power. The classic discussion of such signalling is contained in Spence's (1974) discussion on how employers can learn about the qualities of prospective employees.

With regard to moral hazard, the political leadership has to rely on ex-post measures to ensure accountably of their agents, i.e. they must be able to learn about their actions and potentially sanction them. The most obvious, yet also most costly controlling device is direct *policing* of agents, by which principals learn about their behaviour and actions (Weingast 1984; Weingast and Moran 1983). Principals who are looking for a less costly way of ensuring accountability can instead turn to *fire-alarms* triggered by concerned stakeholders (McCubbins and Schwartz 1984). Either way, the political leadership is able to garner information about the actions of their bureaucrats and agencies; the only difference is whether principals engage in monitoring themselves or decide to outsource it. Each device seeks to attenuate the roots of unsuccessful delegation and, thereby, diminishes politicians' agency loss.

Delegation within Cabinets

While the government-bureaucracy perspective has traditionally received most attention, the link between the government as such and its distinct ministers is equally important. In fact, delegating from governments to ministers comprises a perilous element of circularity:

> The process of delegation from government to ministers appears to differ fundamentally from delegation processes elsewhere in this democratic chain. The complication is that, as we commonly understand the term, the government, which delegates to heads of departments, also consists of heads of departments (with exceptions for the Prime Minister and ministers without portfolio). In other words, the principal is made up of its own agents (Andeweg 2000, 377)

In essence, what Andeweg is claiming is that delegation within governments implies a certain schizophrenia where ministers are simultaneously principal and agent. In extreme cases, ministers can be essentially autonomous within their own ministry and are in a prime position to leave their imprint on the policy designed and drafted by their department.

The compartmentalisation of governments into distinct ministries facilitates this ministerial autonomy. Firstly, ministers steer a skilled bureaucracy, which often has "impressive reservoirs of technical expertise that can help cabinet ministers to achieve their policy goals" (J. D. Huber 2000, 401). Beyond the informational advantage resulting from this pool of bureaucratic expertise, bureaucracies also equip ministers with the administrative capacity to process the plethora of inputs and expectations within their policy areas (J. D. Huber and McCarty 2004). In conjunction, both elements enable ministers to translate the government's policy ideas into legal language that is compatible with existing provisions. In a case study on UK government departments, Page (2003) separates this process of ministerial policy making into three distinct phases, which he calls policy input, drafting, and parliamentary management. The first step is clearly political and describes how the bureaucratic machinery is triggered by inputs from the political leadership. Thereafter, the actual work of translating policy inputs into fully-fledged policies and finally legal clauses is commissioned to highly specialised experts within the ministerial bureaucracy (see also Bonnaud and Martinais 2014). Lastly, parliamentary management denotes the task of steering a bill through the parliamentary process of legislation. This mainly involves both insulating it from too far-reaching amendments but also keeping it open enough to embrace necessary MPs. Simultaneously, the content of a bill needs to be properly communicated to parliamentary committees, the media and other potential stakeholders (Page

2003). None of these steps would be possible without a skilled bureaucratic machine that responds to its political leadership.

Besides the informational advantage, most governments know a "tacit rule of non-interference", which entails that ministers do not face too much control from their colleagues regarding their matters within the jurisdiction of their ministry (Andeweg 2000; Rhodes 1995). The reasons for this tacit norm are, again, twofold. The first one, overload, is essentially the flipside of the informational advantage ministers enjoy within their own policy area: they simply lack the necessary time and administrative resources to engage in affairs that do not directly touch upon their own turf. The other, anticipated reciprocity, describes the reluctance to trigger tit-for-tat within the government. Ministers fear that their colleagues will strike back at them if they decide to meddle in their affairs. Thus, seeking to insulate their own ministerial jurisdiction from unwanted interference, they voluntarily forgo their right to scrutinise and question proceedings in and outcomes of other ministries. While this ministerial advantage is certainly not absolute, several country experts confirm the strong influence of ministers on governmental policies in many European countries (Andeweg and Bakema 1994; King 1994; Larsson 2016; Müller-Rommel 1994; Strøm 1994; Thiébault 1994; Timmermans 1994).

The problem of ministerial autonomy that governments face is particularly precarious in countries with a tradition for coalition governments. For sure, also single-party governments sometimes struggle to make sure that their ministers remain loyal agents and prevent them from following their individual career incentives or policy preferences (Strøm 2008), as various anecdotes in Heppell (2011) demonstrate. Yet, the situation is distinctly more challenging for coalition governments. Prime ministers usually find themselves in a much worse position to use their formal powers and sanction ministers who go native, as their directives effectively do not extend beyond fellow partisans. Any attempt to exercise their formal powers and dismiss disloyal ministers from other incumbent parties from office can result in severe backlash and eventually endanger the viability of the entire government (Andeweg 2000; Müller, Philipp, and Gerlich 1993; Rose 1991). Therefore, even if they could effectively monitor their ministers, prime ministers' tools to sanction individual members of their governments are often blunt.

Based on these observations, the early 1990s witnessed the emergence of a conception of policy-making in coalition governments that took the accountability problems of coalition governments to the extreme:

> Given the intense pressure of work and lack of access to civil service specialists in other departments, it seems unlikely that cabinet ministers will be able successfully to poke their noses very deeply into the jurisdictions of their cabinet

colleagues. This implies that members of the cabinet will have only very limited ability to shape the substance of policy emanating from the department of a ministerial colleague (Laver and Shepsle 1996, 32).

Working from the assumption that parties are policy-seeking unitary actors – and, therefore, ministers' policy preferences align with those of their party – this *policy dictator* model, as it was later dubbed, was based on the unfettered and unchallenged dominance of incumbent parties within the policy areas their ministers rule (Austen-Smith and Banks 1990; Laver and Shepsle 1994, 1996). While the model was not meant to be a precise description of policy-making in multiparty governments, the numerous country chapters in Laver and Shepsle's central publications on this matter (1994, 1996) indeed elucidate the strong imprint ministerial tenure can have on policy outcomes, which is why the model was (partly wrongly) condensed to the idea of *ministerial dictatorship*.

It is important to stress that the model draws on, but does not predict, the assumption of ministerial discretion. Rather, it uses ministerial discretion to reduce the set of viable policy bargaining outcomes to the set of all potential allocations of ministries to incumbent parties. The underlying reasoning is straightforward: if parties dominate the policy emanating from their ministries, any general policy deal can only consist of the parties' ideal policy preferences within the policy area each ministry governs. Any other policy agreement would not be implemented by the responsible minister, as the principal-agent relationship between the larger government and the individual minister lacks effective monitoring and sanctioning. Thus, the notion of ministerial autonomy counteracts the problem of circular preferences within models of coalition formation.

A Toolbox of Controls

The idea that parties enjoy unparalleled discretion within the policy areas their ministers govern did not go unchallenged. Much like with ensuring political supremacy over the bureaucracy, political scientists uncovered an entire coalition management toolbox that governments have devised to curtail the problem of ministerial direction. Also these tools can be classified as ex-ante or ex-post (Strøm and McClean 2015).

Beginning with the ex-ante perspective, ever since World War II, parties have drafted contract-like documents containing the agreements reached amongst them. Whilst about 90% of those documents concern policy intentions, they also contain often detailed decision-making rules and procedures for settling intra-coalition conflict (Müller and Strøm 2008). For apparent

reasons, such an agreement is more common in polities where coalition governments are the rule, but even in these polities, occurrence varies across countries and over time. At the onset of the new millennium, over 80% of all coalition governments negotiate such agreements (Timmermans 2003). Since they are in essence statements of good will, which are non-enforceable by any third party, coalition agreements are usually made public before the coalition assumes office (Müller and Strøm 2006) in order to set a public reference point and increase commitment to the intentions stated therein (Klüver and Bäck 2019).

However, there is dispute about the function of CAs. Traditionally, they have been disregarded as a *ritual dance* between parties before they enter government without much substantial value (Klingemann, Hofferbert, and Budge 1994, 33; Laver and Shepsle 1990; Luebbert 1986, 189). In contrast, a second group of scholars regard CAs as a *real chance* (Timmermans 2003). As the negotiations which eventually lead to agreements take place in "institutionalised extrainstitutional areas" (Peterson et al. 1983, 82) where parties can discuss policy outside the "annoying" public's scrutiny, these bargains are policy-making in its purest form and set important focal points for the ensuing term (Peterson et al. 1983; Timmermans 2003). From this perspective, governments use CAs to set out general and specific intentions for the years to come and pre-emptively sort out potential conflict (Müller and Strøm 2008). From this perspective, CAs can explicitly be thought of as a *conflict prevention device* (Budge and Keman 1993, 47) which streamlines decision-making and explicitly shelves unresolved issues (Timmermans 2003). This directly speaks to how CAs can mitigate the problem of ministerial autonomy (Moury 2011) by serving as a cabinet conflict management device, which explicates the reciprocal nature of the coalition compromise and, hence, reduces mistrust and uncertainty amongst the partners (Timmermans 2006). A corollary of such a perspective it that coalition agreements ought to be more extensive where conflict between partners is fiercer. While this holds true empirically, it is unclear whether they seek to contain agency loss by providing more detailed policy descriptions (Indridason and Kristinsson 2013; Klüver and Bäck 2019; Moury and Timmermans 2013) or more elaborate conflict resolution procedures (Bowler et al. 2016).

Another ex-ante mechanism governments use to indirectly mitigate the problem of ministerial autonomy relies on the proper screening of candidates for ministerial office (Bäck, Debus, and Müller 2016; Fleischer and Seyfried 2015; Kam et al. 2010). These studies explicitly break with the unitary party assumption and allow politicians to hold preferences that differ from those their party advocates. They show that parties are often composed of different intra-party groups whose preferences may differ markedly and, thus, play an

important role in coalition bargaining (Giannetti and Benoit 2009; Giannetti and Laver 2005; Meyer 2012). Therefore, in order to avoid the adverse selection of ministers, principals strive to select candidates whose preferences align with their own or candidates who are primarily office-seeking and do not seek to press through their own agenda (Andeweg 2000). However, from a research point of view, the major complication is selecting the right principal, i.e. finding out whether ministers' preferences ought to align with those of their party, the coalition, or the prime minister. This shifting point of reference is mirrored in the results of studies that addressed the problem of ministerial selection from a principal-agent perspective. Generally, prime ministers do not appear to be strong principals, but governments and parties rather choose politicians whose preferences align with those of their party. In Germany and the UK, a candidate's alignment with their party primarily drives their odds of being promoted to ministerial office. In contrast, Austrian and Swedish governments place more emphasis on the cabinet's policy position as a point of reference, and candidates' chances of becoming minister decline as they move away from it (Bäck, Debus, and Müller 2016; Kam et al. 2010).

With regard to the ex-post perspective on agency loss, governments seek to monitor the actions of ministers in order to spot and potentially rectify ministerial policy proposals that deviate from the government's preferences. A useful arena for engaging in such monitoring is the parliament itself, which contains plenty of legislative institutions that can be employed to reel in agency drift. In virtually all parliamentary systems, the legislative retains considerable powers with regard to amending bills sponsored by the executive. One of the most powerful of such institutions are parliamentary committees, which often mirror the policy areas of ministries (Mattson and Strøm 1995). While the precise powers devolved to these committees varies among polities, they commonly have the right to subpoena documents, compel witnesses (including ministers and other top-level public servants) and, thus, can effectively extract information on current affairs and legislative proposals from the responsible ministry. Importantly, most of these committees are quasi-permanent, which enables the MPs within them to build up sufficient expertise in their committee's policy area. Hence, committees cannot only extract information from the executive but also process and understand it. This combination mitigates the informational advantage of ministers vis-à-vis the parliament.

Given the powers and expertise of parliamentary committees, coalition parties use them to monitor the legislative agenda of ministries run by their coalition partners. The first mechanism to achieve this end is to ensure that committees not only attend to but also scrutinise policy proposals within their

policy areas. Since the task of setting a committee's agenda is usually the prerogative of the chair, parties seek to eschew situations in which a committee's chair and the respective ministers belong to the same party. Rather, coalitions strive for a structure where the shadowing committee chair is not the minister's partisan and, hence, has a genuine interest in monitoring ministerial proposals (Carroll and Cox 2012; Kim and Loewenberg 2005).

Another institution that is designed to extract information from the government are parliamentary questions. In most parliaments, single MPs, groups thereof, or entire party factions can address questions to the government and request them to be answered by the responsible minister. This legislative instrument and the attention parties or even single MPs devote to specific policy issues have been studied rather intensely from an agenda-setting perspective (e.g. S. Martin 2011; Van Aelst and Vliegenthart 2014; Vliegenthart, Walgrave, and Zicha 2013). However, this tool also has the potential to facilitate mutual control of coalition parties. More precisely, parties can use questions strategically and engage in patterns of questioning that align with the allocation of ministerial portfolios (S. Martin 2011). The implicit hypothesis is that incumbent parties particularly address questions to ministries run by their coalition partners on issues where their preferences diverge. Tapping into this matter, Höhmann and Sieberer (2020) find that German coalition parties use parliamentary questions more often to elicit information from their coalition peers in policy areas where they pursue different policy goals.

Curtailing ministerial discretion in the parliamentary arena is, of course, not just about the collection of information. Rather, what coalition parties are really after is reeling back in agency drift, i.e. amending ministerial policy proposals in such a way that they align with the coalition agreement struck between the incumbent parties. Martin and Vanberg (2005, 2011) show how coalition parties use the process of legislative review to amend government policies. Studying the incidences of amendments to bills as they wind through the parliamentary process, they find that preference divergence between coalition parties crucially determines the readiness of incumbent parties to rectify bills sponsored by ministries belonging to their partners in government.

Ex-post control mechanisms also exist in the executive arena. Largely, these devices aim at attenuating the problem of circular delegation within cabinets by introducing an element of hierarchy to the relation between ministers and the government. The most direct means to achieve this is to vest the prime minister with powers to control and correct proposals submitted by the different ministers. For instance, in many countries with ministerial equality, the PM's vote carries some extra weight when it comes to breaking a tie within the cabinet. Some countries, like France or Germany, allow the PM to give instructions to different ministers (Art. 21 French Constitution, Art. 65 German Basic

Law), however, this is not the norm. Quite in contrast, the Austrian principle of unanimity for cabinet decisions explicitly makes the PM a primus inter pares (Müller 1997, 134). Yet, delegation is by no means restricted to flow from the PM. Particularly in Denmark, the Ministry of Finance has been bestowed with the task of governmental coordination since the 1980s. Due to its function as watchdog over the national budget, it retains considerable power over ministerial proposals which involve the allocation of funds (Greve 2018; Jensen 2008). Lastly, delegation can also flow from institutions comprised of multiple actors. Many countries know coalition committees that often include, but are not restricted to, top ministers and the leaders of the party groups in parliament (e.g. von Beyme 1983; DeWinter 1993; Müller 1997). During their meetings, coalition parties sort out contentious issues and subsequently delegate their implementation to the responsible ministers, as Miller and Müller (2010) exemplify on the German case. Thus, from the perspective of ordinary ministers, they fulfil a similar hierarchical function as PMs or the Ministry of Finance.

However, formal or informal hierarchy within the cabinet does not mean much on its own. While they equip the government as the principal with the potential to sanction its ministers, those tools remain toothless unless supported with the power to elicit information on ministerial activities. Therefore, many PMs have support structures at their disposal which shadow the individual ministries and scrutinise their activities. With regard to coalition management, however, these support structures do not give parties much leverage to control ministries which do not furnish the PM. While the PM party in the coalition may be in a position to effectively control ministers, its partners are still left without any insight into the affairs of ministries that are not run by them. Combatting this informational disadvantage, many coalitions strategically appoint "hostile" junior ministers, i.e. junior ministers who belong to a different party than the minister. Shadowing their bosses, these junior ministers are meant to learn about and report potential agency drift to their party. Subsequently, these issues can be raised and reconciled in the wider cabinet, before ministerial bills find their way to the parliamentary process (Thies 2001).

It is important to bear in mind that all of the coalition governance devices discussed here are used to curb policy drift that may ensue from ministerial dominance in multiparty governments. By doing so, they silently buy into the assumption that ministers ought to be properly selected and monitored, because they can drive legislation in policy areas under their purview without major interference form their colleagues. This dissertation takes issue with this last assumption. The following chapter illustrates how government administrations are designed to trigger competence struggles among ministries

that stimulate inter-ministerial cooperation. Once ministers lose their exclusive grip on policy matters, the problem of ministerial dominance becomes less acute for coalition governments.

The Argument:
Rather Coordination than Control

The problem with ex-post controls of ministerial discretion is that they are inherently reactive. Instruments of parliamentary review only get to scrutinise and amend bills after the government has already set their general course. Junior ministers are meant to ring the alarm bells if they spot their bosses going native. Even hierarchy within the government, be it with regard to the PM or any sort of "inner cabinet", is mostly used to react to policy initiatives drafted by the responsible minister. To be clear, sometimes PM retain competence in a few areas to establish policy guidelines for the entire government, however, in common day-to-day business "taking initiatives" is not one of their primary characteristics (Müller, Philipp, Gerlach 1993: 226-228). Quite in contrast, "they intervene only after an issue or proposal has reached the agenda, which leaves agenda-setting primarily to the individual ministers" (Andeweg 2000, 383). In what follows, this chapter explains how governments coordinate decision-making among involved ministries and how coalitions can exploit this coordination to curb ministerial discretion by carefully allocating and adapting ministerial portfolios.

Inter-Ministerial Coordination

This perspective does not pay due credit to the multiple mechanisms of inter-ministerial coordination present in most governments. These mechanisms can be either (semi-) formalised venues or incentive structures, which encourage ministers to consider their colleagues' preferences or even cooperate during the process of designing legislation. The latter explicitly speaks to instances of *positive coordination*, i.e. situations where actors seek solutions to policy problems while simultaneously trying to resolve distributive problems (Scharpf and Mohr 1994, 18). In their study on the German federal bureaucracy, Mayntz and Scharpf (1975) frequently identified this mode of coordination, whenever solutions were to be found to problems that transgressed the jurisdictions of ministerial portfolios (also: Wegrich and Hammerschmid 2018). The working groups that were established in response to these problems were tasked with both providing innovative and effective solutions and protecting the interests of their home ministries. In practise, if ministries disagree on the proper handling of a policy issue, drafts are discussed in inter-ministerial working groups where the disagreements are sought to be resolved. This form of inter-ministerial coordination is even enshrined in the by-

laws regulating the rights and duties of German federal ministries: they clearly stipulate that for issues falling under the purview of multiple ministries, the administration must cooperate to ensure a cohesive government policy (Bundesregierung 2011).

By no means are instances of positive coordination limited to the German ministerial bureaucracy. In Denmark, the government regularly leaves the precise coordination of policy proposals between ministries to two standing committees, chaired by permanent secretaries from the PM's office and the Ministry of Finance (Greve 2018). These bodies – the coordination committee and the economy committee – seek solutions to important policy problems that crosscut ministerial boundaries and coordinate the day-to-day business between the members of government. The existence of these committees results in frequent inter-ministerial coordination and cooperation. While issues generally used to be addressed individually within the respective ministry, the coordination and cooperation requirements ensuing from both committees has transformed decision-making into a reconciliatory process, in which contentious issues must be resolved among those ministries upon whose stakes they touch (Bo Smith-udvalget 2015, 85–86).

While the different manifestations of positive coordination may be the preferred mode of inter-ministerial cooperation (Mayntz and Scharpf 1975), they involve substantial transaction costs (North 1990). Hence, governments only resort to this form of coordination if the stakes are high, i.e. if both the political problem to which a solution must be found and the distributive struggle a potential solution entails are salient (Scharpf and Mohr 1994). For lower profile cases that, however, still require inter-ministerial coordination, governments rather opt for a cheaper alternative. Ministries can use *negative coordination*, which resembles a form of voluntary self-restraint to avoid negative externalities a decision might induce (Scharpf and Mohr 1994). This kind of non-cooperative coordination dovetails with Charles Lindblom's notion of deferential adjustment:

> In a decision situation, a decision maker X does not seek, as a condition of making his own decision, to induce a response from another decision maker Y. He either deliberately avoids impinging adversely on Y's values or he takes care not knowingly to impinge adversely, except trivially, on Y's values as Y perceives them at the time of X's decision; nor does he tailor his decision to create a gain for Y (1965, 45).

In other words, if ministers know that the cabinet is likely to stall proposals in the light of unresolved inter-ministerial conflict, they design policies that do not stir up conflict with other ministers upon whose stakes an initiative may touch. For sure, this form of coordination does not extract sizable resources

for the initiating minister – which in the light of low salience would not be worth much anyway – but on the other side, it only requires minimal to no active coordination among the involved ministries, as initiatives are pre-emptively designed to be mutually acceptable. It is probably for this reason that it is the most prevalent form of inter-ministerial coordination (Mayntz and Scharpf 1975, 145–50)

Coalition Governance by Coordination

Both forms of inter-ministerial coordination lend themselves to curbing ministerial discretion, and, hence, coalitions can use them as a governance device. However, this requires a slight change in perspective. As coordination has been described so far, it speaks to diverging preferences among ministries, while coalition governance is generally concerned with how ministerial discretion can be exploited to implement preferences of incumbent parties. In order to turn inter-ministerial coordination into a coalition governance device, the focus needs to move from interests of single ministries to preferences of parties represented by the ministries they direct. From this perspective, speaking of inter-ministerial coordination refers to employing coordination tools between ministries to sort out disagreements among the coalescing parties.

While inter-ministerial coordination can attenuate ministerial discretion, it is important to note that it addresses a different aspect thereof. Control and monitoring devices, such as legislative review (L. W. Martin and Vanberg 2005, 2011), shadowing parliamentary committees (Carroll and Cox 2012; Kim and Loewenberg 2005), hostile junior ministers (Thies 2001), and even prime-ministerial hierarchy (Andeweg 2000) are meant to spot and, ex-post, remedy policy drift within coalition governments (Andeweg 2000, 383). In contrast, inter-ministerial coordination forces ministers to cooperate, either explicitly or implicitly, during the stage of policy formulation. This directly reduces the potential for ministerial autonomy and, therefore, ensures that ministers cannot merely follow their own preferences in the first place. In other words, while control and monitoring only attenuate the symptoms of ministerial discretion, inter-ministerial coordination directly heals the disease.

If coalition governments want to use either form of inter-ministerial coordination to rein in ministers, they must ensure that potentially contentious legislation indeed touches upon the jurisdiction of ministries that belong to different incumbent parties. Put differently, ministerial jurisdictions must overlap in policy areas that are contentious within the coalition. If this is given, parties can use coordination mechanisms to either jointly cooperate on prospective legislation (positive coordination) or have the ministries in charge voluntarily exercise self-restraint (negative coordination). In both cases, the

suggested policy that emanates from the ministerial bureaucracy mirrors the coalition's agreed policy objectives much closer than if it had been drafted unilaterally by one ministry or different ministries belonging to just one party. In fact, Andeweg (2000) specifically bases his analysis of ministerial autonomy in coalition governments on the scope condition that "ministerial jurisdictions are mutually exclusive" (378). Hence, if coalitions actively seek to eliminate this necessary condition for ministerial discretion by forming jurisdictions that transgress partisan boundaries, they both strip ministers of their informational advantage and, even more crucially, push them to collaborate and coordinate within existing institutions of inter-ministerial coordination.

The idea of "divide and rule" is well documented in the Westminster system of single-party governments, to be exemplified by Harold Wilson's incoming Labour administration in 1964. Having won the leadership of the Labour party, prevailing against his inner-party rivals George Brown and James Callaghan, the prime minister was suspicious of them plotting a coup within his government. Hence, he deliberately recast Brown's and Callaghan's departments – economic affairs and the treasury – to stimulate tensions between the two contenders and thereby deflect their attention from mobilising against him (Heppell 2011). Such examples of overlapping policy responsibilities are also found in the more recent, outgoing government of Gordon Brown in 2010: Both the Department for Health and the Department of Education attended to health care policies; counterterrorism and security was dealt with by the Department of Foreign Affairs as well as the Commonwealth Office; international relations fell under the purview both the Minister of Defence and the Minister for Environment, Food, and Rural Affairs. Drawing on these eclectic anecdotes, Dewan and Hortala-Vallve (2011) cast the idea of overlapping ministerial jurisdictions in a cheap-talk model and show how strategic overlapping assignments can "limit the type of proposals that a minister brings to cabinet and introduces to the floor of the House of Commons" (613).

Speaking to this idea, Fernandes et al. (2016) describe how coalitions employ "wary partners" to curb ministerial discretion. However, they study the strategic allocation of existing ministerial portfolios, which does not equate the divide-and-conquer strategy used by PM Harold Wilson (Heppell 2011). Essentially, wary partners denote a couple of ministers whose policy jurisdictions happen to be connected, which stimulates inter-ministerial coordination. Examples of connected portfolios are finance and economy, justice and interior, as well as foreign affairs and defence. While the extent to which governments assign these portfolios strategically to coalition parties varies between countries, Danish, Dutch, and German governments (inter alia) are particularly likely to create wary partners and thereby enforce inter-party coordination in these policy areas.

Stimulating Coordination through Overlapping Attention

The embrace of inter-ministerial coordination via overlapping ministerial jurisdictions as a coalition governance device necessitates a change of the analytical focus. The traditional literature on coalition governments tends to centre on ministerial portfolios and studies both the question of how many (e.g. Bäck, Meier, and Persson 2009; Browne and Franklin 1973; Gamson 1961; Warwick and Druckman 2006) and which portfolios (e.g. Bäck, Debus, and Dumont 2011; Browne and Feste 1975; Budge and Keman 1993; Warwick and Druckman 2001) parties receive upon entering a coalition government. Yet, despite the concept's ubiquity, the idea of portfolios has rarely been precisely defined. In coming close to a definition of portfolios, Laver and Shepsle borrow from stock market parlance and essentially think of them as a basket holding ministerial assets: "each department has formal jurisdiction – determined by the constitution, by law, or by precedent – over a particular set of policy areas" (Laver and Shepsle 1996, 30). However, for the purpose of this dissertation, which centres on parties' potential to devolve ministerial agenda-setting power for policy areas, this focus is unsuited for two main reasons.

Firstly, relying on ministerial portfolios assumes overlap between neighbouring jurisdictions, where it should indeed be testing it. Fernandes et al. (2016) simply presuppose that the minister of foreign affairs regularly devotes time and attention to proceedings within the Ministry of Defence, just as finance ministers are tracked by their colleagues in the Ministry of Economic Affairs. However, this flies into the face of the common assumption of *portfolio exclusivity*. As explained previously, the entire idea of ministerial discretion, which needs to be contained by coalition management devices, rests on the assumptions that ministers are unchallenged agenda setters within their portfolios (Andeweg 2000; Laver and Shepsle 1994, 1996). Naturally, an argument seeking to break with this tradition cannot draw on a concept that a priori rules out overlapping jurisdictions.

Secondly, it assumes that portfolios are a *fixed prize* to be distributed during government formation and, hence, do not allow governments to adapt the ministerial structure. While the argument put forward here does not require governments to wildly re-arrange ministerial responsibilities for policy areas at the onset of each new governments, it explicitly grants them the agency to adapt ministerial structures in order to create overlaps where they are needed in order to curb ministerial discretion. Indeed, the anecdote described by Heppell (2011) and the growing body of literature on portfolio design (Fleischer, Bertels, and Schulze-Gabrechten 2018; Sieberer et al. 2019) underscore the notion that governments regularly adapt the structure of ministries in order

to fit their political needs. For instance, in the UK, restructurings are "such an important tool that only one new Prime Minister since 1950 has chosen not to reconfigure departments in some way after assuming the leadership" (White and Dunleavy 2010, 1).

In most countries, PMs can re-design ministerial portfolios rather easily via organisational decrees: "To change the shape of Whitehall – and by extension to alter the trajectory of ministerial careers – at the stroke of a pen is one of the most powerful tools at the disposal of the British Prime Minister" (White and Dunleavy 2010, 7). However, traditionally this portfolio malleability has been studied along two dimensions which do not explicitly consider overlapping jurisdictions (Heppell 2011; White and Dunleavy 2010). The first dimension concerns the creation versus elimination of portfolios, which affects the number of ministries governments can distribute among the incumbent parties. When governments change, only 37% of incoming European administrations keep the number of ministries constant. Instead, they choose to decrease (28%) or increase (34%) the number of ministerial positions in the majority of changes (Sieberer et al. 2019). Similarly, Davis et al. (1999) find that this trend is not confined to Europe but extends to both Australia and Canada. However, the phenomenon has usually been analysed within single countries. In a report commissioned by the British government, White and Dunleavy (2010) analyse Whitehall changes to the "Machinery of Government". In Germany, alterations in the number of ministries have been dealt with on both state (Saalfeld and Schamburek 2014) and federal level (Sieberer 2015). Mortensen and Green-Pedersen (2015) study the creation and elimination of ministries in the Danish central government.

The second dimension of portfolio change can be described as addition versus deduction of policy areas to ministerial jurisdictions, i.e. it refers to the reshaping of portfolios regardless of their number. These adaptions to the distribution of policy areas to ministries occur frequently, as both country and comparative studies show. According to White and Dunleavy (2010), almost 150 UK governmental departments reconfigured their policy briefs in the nearly 60 years between 1950 and 2009. In a study of organisational decrees issued by the chancellor during most of Germany's post-war existence, Sieberer (2015) counts a total of 38 reforms – the majority concerning shifts in jurisdiction – affecting 147 ministries. Such changes are common throughout Europe (Fleischer, Bertels, and Schulze-Gabrechten 2018; Sieberer et al. 2019). On average, governments change their structure about once per year, but the actual frequency of changes differs considerably among countries. France, where the President can adapt government's structure by decree, occupies the upper end of the spectrum with changes about twice per year. Austria occupies the bottom of the spectrum with about one change every two and

a half years, which may partly be due to the legal requirements imposed on portfolio changes by the constitution (Sieberer et al. 2019).

In light of the exclusivity restriction and the often fleeting nature of ministerial portfolios, Saalfeld and Schamburek (2014) rightfully lament that "due to the limited cross-fertilization between formal coalition theories and academic scholarship on ministerial organization, coalition theories have remained unspecific about the precise nature of the 'prize' parties are believed to pursue when entering government" (Saalfeld and Schamburek 2014, 193). In other words, if ministerial portfolios are nothing but a snapshot of the collection of policy areas over which ministers wield agenda-setting power, it raises serious questions about the analytical advantage of ministerial portfolios with regard to *policy issues*. From a policy-seeking perspective, I contend, there is none. If parties seek to obtain influence over certain policy issues, there is no good reason for taking a detour via ministerial portfolios except for the literature's tradition. Quite in contrast, the restrictions of ministerial portfolios are are especially harmful to the central argument about inter-ministerial coordination. Therefore, this dissertation instead conceives of incumbent parties' potential to draft legislation in terms of the extent to which their ministries are devoted to policy issues, called *bureaucratic issue attention*, since ministerial discretion depends directly on the extent to which ministries and their bureaucrats address policy issues (Bonnaud and Martinais 2014; Laver and Shepsle 1996; Page 2003).

Unlike portfolios, the existence of policy issues is exogenous to the process of government formation and, indeed, to the process of governance overall. While portfolio allocation studies can only analyse the distribution of issues as defined by the incumbent parties and reflected in the nomenclature of ministerial portfolios, this restriction does not hold for the study of ministerial influence over policy issues. Instead, this perspective allows the research question to guide the focus instead of having the focus determined by a government's choice of portfolios. However, claiming that policy issues are exogenous to the process of government formation does not mean that their definition is exogenous to the political process. In fact, quite the opposite. While the term "issue" is often used in an almost impressionistic fashion, it usually contains some reference to an underlying array of political problems. Where exactly political problems are located, i.e. through which issue lens they are perceived in the political process, is a question of problem definition and in itself inherently political: "A policy issue is a question of public policy, as demarcated, defined and specified by political actors, possibly giving rise to one or several positions" (Guinaudeau and Persico 2014, 316). To be sure, this definition does not identify the precise set of policy issues that exist within a po-

litical context at a given point in time; however, this is not a theoretical question and does not undercut the concept's usefulness. The strength of focusing on policy issues rather lies in allowing the researcher the necessary flexibility to apply a metric that is suitable for the specific research question (Green-Pedersen 2019, 27–28).

Importantly, the argument put forward here only stipulates that incumbent parties distribute bureaucratic attention to policy issues strategically across ministries of different parties in order to curb ministerial discretion. By welcoming the push towards acknowledging portfolio malleability advocated by the growing body of studies of portfolio design (Mortensen and Green-Pedersen 2015; Sieberer 2015; Sieberer et al. 2019; White and Dunleavy 2010), the argument allows governments some flexibility to adapt the attention structure of their ministries according to their political needs. However, this claim does not assert that coalition governments completely disregard the status quo of existing ministries and ´freely alter the bureaucratic attention structure at the onset of their term to create overlaps. Neither does it mean that governments are unrestricted in rearranging bureaucratic attention across ministries, or that all policy issues can be equally well grouped together. In fact, most policy issues do not exist in isolation but are usually closely connected to neighbouring issues that either address similar problems, involve similar stakeholders, or require similar expertise. As a result, issues tend to cluster into larger policy themes (Green-Pedersen 2019, 28; Guinaudeau and Persico 2014), such as family policy, environmental protection, or traffic. Therefore, it is unlikely to see a ministerial structure in which bureaucrats in the Ministry of Defence attend to matters of education, or civil servants in the Foreign Ministry devote attention to matters of local administration.

However, these extreme examples are not required for governments to employ overlapping bureaucratic attention as a coalition governance device. Crucially, if used to curb ministerial discretion, inter-ministerial coordination induced by overlapping attention does not operate at the level of ministries but refers to the set of ministries under a coalition party's purview. Unless parties only steer one ministry, they already possess bureaucratic attention to numerous policy areas, which considerably relaxes the practicability restrictions by providing more policy connections. Hence, governments do not need to create ministries with a policy brief that transgresses policy areas in a haphazard manner. Minor adaptions may often suffice to ensure that decisions on new policies touch upon the stakes of ministries pertaining to different parties. Nevertheless, the question whether governments indeed deliberately adapt ministerial structures to create overlapping bureaucratic attention is longitudinal and not directly addressed in this dissertation. In other words, the argument made here is primarily about allocation, not adaption.

Focusing on bureaucratic issue attention provides a new approach to studying coalition governments. Firstly, it makes it easier to define the "prize" parties receive upon entering a coalition government. In contrast to classic studies on qualitative portfolio allocation which seek to explain allocation of portfolios based on party status (Browne and Feste 1975), party family (Budge and Keman 1993), or issue salience (Bäck, Debus, and Dumont 2011), this dissertation is not limited to studying the allocation of fixed and exclusive portfolios. Instead, it can appreciate the distinctiveness of parties' issue agendas and study their direct impact and interactive moderation on the process of assigning incumbent parties control over policy issues (Klüser 2020a). That is, from a party perspective this dissertation can go beyond the common "parties get what is dear to them" and research how the often complex and overlapping issue agendas of political parties (Damore 2004; Green-Pedersen 2007; Sigelman and Buell 2004) play out during the process of allocating bureaucratic attention. Hence, it revisits the traditional question of qualitative portfolios allocation (e.g. Bäck, Debus, and Dumont 2011; Browne and Feste 1975; Budge and Keman 1993), yet, draws a more realistic picture.

Employing a coalition perspective allows to study when and how multiparty governments allocate bureaucratic attention to policy issues in a manner that transgresses party boundaries (Klüser 2019). For one, this perspective fully embraces the idea of overlapping political attention (Damore 2004; Green-Pedersen 2007; Sigelman and Buell 2004) and suggests that the bureaucratic attention structure we find in coalition governments is a mirror image of parties' electoral campaign foci. Consequently, whenever policy issues are important to numerous coalescing parties, coalitions are reluctant to grant full control thereof to ministries of just one party, to make sure that all parties to whom an issue is important can initiate and collaborate on governmental bills that address it. Likewise, these parties can all benefit from the potential media attention that regularly follows the public presentation of salient bills (L. W. Martin and Vanberg 2011, 13). Going beyond mere issue emphases, a coalition perspective on the allocation of bureaucratic issue attention also directly addresses the literature about coalition governance and allows to study how overlapping bureaucratic attention should be particularly prevalent in issue areas where parties hold different opinions, in order to seize the full potential of inter-ministerial coordination during the phase of policy design.

Are political parties whose ministries address individual policy issues really in the driver's seat when it comes to drafting coalitional policies regarding this matter? Quite in contrast, this dissertations argues that there is a strategic interaction between political parties at the cabinet parties when it comes to assigning ministerial leadership over policy initiatives (Klüser and Breunig 2020). It is asserted that ministries run by parties, which diverge from the

coalition's centre of gravity, are more likely to ignore the limitations of their policy domains and intrude into other ministries' territory. However, given that supplying the first draft of a bill often puts a ministry, and, hence, its governing party, in charge of the ensuing legislative process, this advantage is not simply granted to a party out of kindness, but parties must make a powerful claim for why they should be allowed to be in the driver's seat.

Going beyond the mere question of assigning ministerial responsibility for a specific bill, the research perspective advocated here also lends itself to investigate how the amount of bureaucratic issue attention that resides within ministries lends itself to legislative activity, i.e. the policy output of ministries (Klüser 2020b). Under what conditions does ministries attention to policy issues affect the amount of legislation coalitions and their individual ministries produce? Drawing on the argument that ministerial bills are often caught up and amended in the process of inter-ministerial coordination if bureaucratic issue attention overlaps party boundaries, parties may be more wary to commission their ministries with designing policies in issues areas where they do not enjoy an attention monopoly.

The Data: Bureaucratic Issue Attention

This chapter outlines the data collection effort that facilitates the larger research project. It discusses various possibilities to gauge the set of policy issues ministries attend to and presents their shortcomings, in particular their endogeneity to political preferences, their limited temporal and spatial comparability, as well as their exclusivity assumption, which renders them less than ideal for the present study. The chapter explains why *organisation charts* are a valuable data source for this endeavour and how they can be turned into data that is spatially and temporally comparable, and relatable to existing data on the policymaking process collected by the Comparative Agendas Project (CAP). The chapter closes with a descriptive presentation of the novel data on the set of policy issues to which ministries attend and outlines how bureaucratic issue attention can be used to gauge ministerial influence on and party responsibility for governmental policies.

The data collection spans Denmark, Germany, and the Netherlands, which is a sample selection driven both by theoretical and data availability concerns. With regard to the main argument laid out in the theoretical framework, all countries represent unlikely cases. They all have strong parliaments with numerous means at their disposal to gather relevant information, monitor governments, and amend bills during the legislative process if deemed necessary (Lijphart 1999; L. W. Martin and Vanberg 2011). Hence, parties in the three countries do not have to rely on the executive responsibility structure to curb ministerial discretion, and they have plenty of tools available farther down the line of legislation. Regarding data availability concerns, the collected data will be used in conjunction with CAP data on the policymaking process, which is why the universe of possible cases is restricted to the pool of countries included in the CAP. Denmark, Germany, and the Netherlands are all countries where data on party preferences and policy outcomes is readily available. For each country, the collection spans four to seven governments between the mid-1990s and roughly 2010 (table 1).

Table 1. Sample of governments

Country	Government
Denmark	Nyrup Rasmussen III
	Nyrup Rasmussen IV
	Fogh Rasmussen I
	Fogh Rasmussen II
	Fogh Rasmussen III
Germany	Schröder II
	Merkel I
	Merkel II
	Merkel III
The Netherlands	Kok I
	Kok II
	Balkenende I
	Balkenende II
	Balkenende IV
	Rutte I
	Rutte II

Roads to Bureaucratic Issue Attention

Broadly speaking, four major sources identify the array of policy issues to which ministries in coalition governments attend. The classic perspective, which is found in most qualitative portfolio allocation studies (Bäck, Debus, and Dumont 2011; Browne and Feste 1975; Budge and Keman 1993; Cutler et al. 2016), focuses on the denotation of portfolios based on a ministry's name. Naturally, the assumption is that ministries devote attention to what they carry in their name. While there is some truth to this assumption – the ministry of social affairs will deal with social policy – the approach is problematic for at least three reasons. First, the number of analysable portfolios is subject to governmental discretion. Researchers can only study policy areas which are mentioned in at least one ministry's name. This is a problem for comparability across countries and over time. An example is the former Danish Ministry of Fishery. For many years, this topic was fairly important to most Danish governments and, thus, warranted the establishment of a ministry fully devoted to it. In Germany, such a ministry was unknown. Does this mean that the German government did not deal with fishery matters? The more likely answer it that this policy area was simply incorporated in the agricultural portfolio, as

it was not salient enough to figure in a ministry's name, as demonstrated by the data collected for this project.

The environment policy issue exemplifies how the study of portfolio names raises problems of temporal stability. Rising social awareness of environmental matters and the surge of political parties promoting green policies in the 1970s and 1980s led to a mushrooming of ministries dealing with green issues. In 1975, Danish PM Anker Jørgensen first attached environmental matters to the portfolio of the minister of housing, before he decided to consolidate them in a stand-alone environmental portfolio in his next but one cabinet. Similarly, in Germany, Helmuth Kohl responded to the foundation of the German Green Party in 1980 by creating a Ministry of Environment, Nature Conservation and Reactor Security at the onset of his third cabinet. Yet again, the absence of such a portfolio does not mean that Danish and German national governments before had not covered environmental issues. For instance, data on legislative activity from the German part of the Comparative Agendas Project (Breunig and Schnatterer 2018) reveals that in the three years preceding the first German environment portfolio, the Bundestag dealt with on average 16 environmental bills per year. Hence, the government must have been aware of the matter although the ministerial attention remains hidden. Therefore, researchers interested in portfolio allocation and its impact on policy-making are restricted to the subset of spatially and temporally salient policy issues.

Lastly, by nature, nomenclature data assumes that policy areas are exclusively dealt with in just one ministry. While this assumption is widespread throughout the literature and lies at the very foundation of ministerial government, an analysis of governmental bills reveals that it might be too much of a simplification: ministries regularly draft about 30% of legislation outside of their portfolios (Klüser and Breunig 2020). Beside this empirical misfit, at its core this dissertation seeks to describe and explain the allocation of policy attention to ministries of different party colours. Obviously, if the data-generating process assumes clear and impermeable portfolio boundaries, such an endeavour cannot seriously be pursued.

The study of the ministerial nomenclature is also oblivious to the actual structural organisational changes within the ministerial bureaucracy. While the creation of a portfolio signals governmental activity, it is a different question whether and how this signalling translates to the establishment of new offices and the development of new topical expertise within the bureaucracy. Hence, a second approach looks at organisational decrees changing the portfolio structure (Sieberer 2015; Sieberer et al. 2019). Adapting ministerial portfolios via executive instruments is usually a prime-ministerial prerogative (G. Davis et al. 1999; Heppell 2011; White and Dunleavy 2010). These decrees me-

ticulously list the envisioned changes to ministerial portfolios, such as creation or devolution of policy areas, as well as shifts of policy responsibility from one ministry to another (Hoffmann 2003). For instance, from the first comprehensive re-design of German portfolios in 1957 to 2013, the allocation of policy responsibility was changed almost 40 times in Germany (Sieberer 2015). Hence, portfolios were changed on average two times per cabinet. However, while it is more detailed than ministry names, this data source suffers from three potential problems. First, organisational decrees usually just mention changes to the existing structure but remain silent about policy foci carried over. For research not interested in changes but snapshots of the policy substance of portfolios, this may necessitate long regresses in time to track down all policy areas once assigned to and retained by a portfolio. Second, supposedly minor details of the delineation between portfolios may often be agreed upon between the affected ministries and, thus, do not show up in the organisational decrees (Hösl, Irgmaier, and Kniep 2016). Lastly, organisational decrees usually seek to clarify the array of policy issues ministries ought to attend to and only occasionally mention that disputes between potentially involved ministries should be mutually reconciled (Hoffmann 2003). Hence, this approach overestimates the exclusivity of ministerial portfolios, limiting its value for projects interested in overlapping portfolios as a tool of coalition governance.

Bureaucratic Issue Attention in Organisation Charts

I suggest a different way to measure the array of policy issues ministries attend to that draws on organisation charts. This traditional organisation tool originates from the structural approach to management, which had its heyday in the early 1900s and supplies a widespread representation of ministerial responsibilities on a bureaucratic level. Besides showing hierarchy, the charts inform about the set of responsibilities assigned to each organisational unit by attaching a brief task description to each unit within the larger organisation (Fraser 1978).

Analysing Organisation Charts

Admittedly, neither the larger public nor the social science community finds organisation charts particularly exciting. Yet, they can tell the story of both ministerial power plays and societal changes. They show how social developments become institutionalised in the government's structure and, thus, which governmental unit possesses the expertise to tackle an issue – and they

assign the bureaucratic competence to act upon it (Hösl, Irgmaier, and Kniep 2016). In particular, there are two common adaptions to organisation charts that are informative of attention (re)allocations (Pohle, Hösl, and Kniep 2016). The most obvious change is mere *quantitative growth* that, following an office-maximising logic (Niskanen 1971), usually squares with increasing importance of a policy area. The way the German ministerial bureaucracy dealt with the policy area of internet and telecommunication is a case in point. Originally, the policy unit dealing with internet affairs and internet security was a small specialist unit of three departments, but over time it grew to a stand-alone division with two subdivisions and more than ten departments (Pohle, Hösl, and Kniep 2016). The staffing increased as German parties' attention to IT matters grew. While it was only mentioned once in all parties' manifestos in 1990, computer and information technology was mentioned almost 60 times only twenty years later.

Another organisational change that can be interpreted as a manifestation of increasing bureaucratic attention to a policy issue is the *partition* of policy units. In these cases, one policy unit that had a broad and rather general task description is subdivided into various, more specialised entities (Hösl, Irgmaier, and Kniep 2016). It is reasonable to assume that this often results from increased importance of policy areas, which are then meant to be handled independently and more professionally. The flipside of both procedures, quantitative shrinking and consolidation, can be interpreted as the government's response to policy issues losing social importance. When formerly specialised units are merged, this frees resources for other policy areas. The policy area of telecommunication and postal affairs exemplifies this development in the German ministerial bureaucracy. Formerly constituting an entire ministry of its own, it was transformed into a simple policy division in the Ministry of Economic Affairs, until Gerhard Schröder's governments eventually reduced it to a mere subdivision (Pohle, Hösl, and Kniep 2016).

While these two processes, quantitative growth and partition, describe developments of ministerial attention to policy issues, their static peers *abundance* and *autonomy* provide a snapshot at a certain point in time. The abundance of ministerial units working on policy issues and their autonomy to do so without having to take other topics into consideration yield an estimate of the bureaucratic attention a ministry pays to a policy issue. Issues that are mentioned ten times in isolation receive more attention than issues of equal abundance that, however, "share" ministerial departments with other issues.

More Than Just Bureaucratic Attention

Those charts reveal more than just the bureaucratic attention ministries devote to policy issues. Observed for an entire government, they also provide a notion of executive attention to issues. While research often relies on other approaches to gauge executive attention to issues, most notably through speeches (Bevan, John, and Jennings 2011; Jennings and John 2009; Mortensen et al. 2011) or budgetary outcomes (Breunig 2011; O. A. Davis, Dempster, and Wildavsky 1966; Jones et al. 2009), the focus on bureaucratic structures is preferable for at least two reasons. Unlike budgetary outcomes, it is exogenous to the political outputs, which echoes the argument made previously. It does not assume that bureaucratic attention and capacity trickle down to political results but leaves this relation to be empirically supported. With regard to executive speeches, shifting priories within the organisational structure of ministries is expensive (White and Dunleavy 2010) and, thus, likely be a more truthful indicator of where executive priorities are to be found. While executive speeches "deliver a high-profile signal of the priorities of the executive to the legislature, governing and opposition parties, bureaucrats, interest groups, the media, and the public" (Jennings et al. 2011, 1009) and as such may be used as a yardstick for policy results, they nevertheless remain a relatively cheap signal. In contrast, the budgetary allocation decisions and transaction costs (North 1990) involved in the reorganisation of the ministerial bureaucracy make organisation charts a more credible proxy for executive attention. Moreover, changes of ministerial divisions and departments can happen silently and are unlikely to stir up the same media coverage as public speeches. Hence, at least theoretically, governments could express their preferences more openly, as the risk of public backlash in case of disalignment with other stakeholders' preferences is reduced.

From bureaucratic issue attention measured within ministries, it is only a small step to issue responsibility. Working from the assumption that ministries that are meant to operate in policy areas to which their staff attends, bureaucratic attention also reveals the location of responsibility (Lyden and Shipman 1966). If a government's entire issue attention is concentrated within just one ministry, it is fair to assume that this ministry is deemed completely and exclusively responsible for handling the policy issue. However, crucially, this logic extends to the case where multiple ministries possess organisational units dealing with a policy issues. In these instances, the distribution of bureaucratic issue attention across ministries provides a measure of how much responsibility each ministry possesses, and, thus, of how much responsibility

overlaps. Aggregating from the level of ministries to the level of parties eventually yields data about the set of issue responsibilities incumbent parties hold in multiparty governments.

Retrieving Organisation Charts

Most public organisations issue charts outlining their current internal structure. While the most current version can often be obtained online, this is not true for historic versions of organisation charts that have become outdated after structural changes. Historic organisation charts must generally be requested from archives.

In Germany, the bulk of organisation charts is kept in the Federal National Archive,[1] except charts issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Defence. The Ministry of Foreign Affair's archive[2] collects all historic material regarding the organisational structure of the ministry itself and its agencies. Moreover, the information is available as a monograph (Bettzuege 1995). Likewise, the German federal Ministry of Defence has its own archive, which collects organisation charts concerning military agencies.[3] Conditional on a positive security clearance, the documents can be obtained from all archives as a digital scan.

In the Netherlands, the national archive furnishes the required information[4] in digital form or it can be downloaded in a computer-readable format. The national archive has collected basic institutional information for each individual department in central and decentral governments. Each entry holds information on the department's name, its tasks, lifespan, and location within the governmental hierarchy. While the archive does not directly provide organisation charts, such charts can be compiled from the retrieved data for any point in time, essentially creating a snapshot of the Dutch national government.[5]

The situation is slightly different in Denmark. To the best of my knowledge, organisation charts of Danish ministries have not been systematically collected. However, since 1734, the government has issued an annual publication about the Danish public sector called *Hof & Stat*, which describes all Danish agencies with independent budget appropriations in minute detail. For

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[1] Bundesarchiv, https://www.bundesarchiv.de/

[2] Auswärtiges Amt Politisches Archiv, https://archiv.diplo.de/

[3] Militärarchiv, https://www.bundesarchiv.de/DE/Navigation/Meta/Ueber-uns/Dienstorte/Freiburg-im-Breisgau/freiburg-im-breisgau.html

[4] Nationaalarchief, https://www.nationaalarchief.nl/

[5] Actorenregister, https://actorenregister.nationaalarchief.nl/

more recent years, the publication is available online as *Det offentlige Danmark*.[6] While it does not provide organisation charts per se, these annual publications make it possible to infer a ministry's policy tasks. A further complication is that the Danish ministerial structure has mostly shifted to an organisational agency model (Greve 2018). In Germany and the Netherlands, most political functions are concentrated within a single ministry, but in Denmark, many mundane political functions are outsourced to officially independent public agencies – usually called *styrelser* – that are attached to a core ministerial department, which only retains the staff to politically advise the minister. Yet, according to the description of these agencies in the annual publications, they often carry out tasks that have direct political repercussions or at least provide advice to the minister on policy areas within their field of expertise. For this reason, the data collection for Denmark understands ministry more broadly in terms of the core department and its attached agencies.[7]

Organisation charts are usually updated multiple times over the course of a government. However, not all changes are of similar political relevance and, in particular, relevant for this project, which is interested in a snapshot of how coalition governments decide to distribute bureaucratic issue attention at the onset of their term. However, if governments deem it necessary to change the issue attention profiles of ministries, they usually need up to 12 months to do so, which is the time in which 70% of portfolio re-designs occur (Sieberer et al. 2019). Hence, to both capture the intended bureaucratic attention structure at the onset of a government and render the data collection manageable, only the first version of a ministerial organisation chart published six to twelve months after a government took office is retained. This selection mimics similar data collection efforts (Saalfeld and Schamburek 2014). The final selection includes one organisation chart per ministry per government.

Coding Organisation Charts

The last step is turning ministerial organisation charts into a comparable measurement of bureaucratic attention and issue responsibility. This involves two decisions: which hierarchical level to code according to which content coding scheme. The two aspects interact, and a sensible decision for one cannot be made without considering the other. With regard to the latter, given that this dissertation concerns overlaps in bureaucratic issue attention as an essential element of coalition governance, it needs to resort to a coding scheme

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[6] https://digst.dk/data/det-offentlige-danmark/

[7] While *Hof & Stat* lists many agencies per ministries, *styrelser* are printed in bold face in the table of contents and are therefore easy to identify.

of policy issues that does not falsely spot overlaps due to a broad issue conception. If the analysis discriminates between too few policy issues, it is likely to find overlap as a methodological artefact because two distinct policy issues have been wrongfully grouped together. For instance, the issues of child benefits and social assistance could be clustered together and lead to a false-positive detection of overlap of bureaucratic attention to the policy theme of welfare. A similar concern is voiced by Guinaudeau and Perisco (2014), who suspect that many results on the overlap of political attention (e.g. Baumgartner, Brouard, and Grossman 2009; Sigelman and Buell 2004) produced in response to the concept of issue ownership (Petrocik 1996) are driven by reliance on policy themes instead of more detailed policy issues. In order to safeguard against such false-positive overlaps of bureaucratic issue attention, I resort to a rather narrow operationalisation of policy issues, developed by the Comparative Agendas Project (CAP, Baumergartner, Breunig, and Grossman (2019)). Inspired by Frank Baumgartner's and Bryan Jones' early work on policy agendas in the U.S. (Baumgartner and Jones 1993), CAP globally united scholars interested in political attention and its ramifications for policy-making. They share the idea that the allocation of scarce political attention to issues is a crucial and consequential process in politics (Green-Pedersen and Walgrave 2014, 6), the pursuit of which led to an award-winning international data collection effort. Tracing back to 1945 and encompassing over 20 different political entities, the project has analysed over 2 million political events, ranging from party manifestos and executive speeches to bills and budgets (Klüser and Radojevic 2019). Hence, the CAP data allows researchers to trace political issues as they travel through the policy-making process in a comparative fashion, which makes it well suited for the analysis of bureaucratic issue attention.

The CAP is based on a truly comparative taxonomy to classify political activities and events, which defines 19 major policy domains that contain macro-economy, civil rights, health care, law and order, social policy, international relations and many more. Each major category is subdivided into multiple detailed subcategories, resulting in slightly less than 250 policy topics defined in a mutually exclusive and exhaustive fashion. Besides the substantive definition of all policy topics, the codebook outlines some general rules that guide the coding process. For instance, each political activity can only receive one policy code, i.e. if the task was to classify parliamentary bills, each bill would have to be given just one policy code. Moreover, activities are to be coded according to their policy substance, not their target group. This is especially relevant for social policy, where both rationales often diverge. For instance, a hypothetical bill on healthcare benefits for asylum seekers would have to be

coded has healthcare, not immigration matters.[8] While the national versions of the general codebook have often been slightly adapted to fit national idiosyncrasies, it is important to note that they are fully compatible (Bevan 2019).

The detailed character of the CAP coding scheme facilitates the analysis of organisation charts on a low level within the organisational hierarchy. In their study on ministerial jurisdictions in German federal states, Saalfeld and Schamburek (2014) observe the hierarchical level of divisions and sub-divisions to analyse how attention to policy issues is spread across ministries. For their study, which focuses on an ad-hoc set of 37 policy domains, this observational level is sufficiently detailed and effectively counteracts the risk of over-counting overlapping policy areas, which is likely to occur given the limited degree of detail of their coding scheme. However, using the detailed CAP coding scheme allows delving deeper into the hierarchical structures of ministries. Hence, the organisational entity in each ministry that is coded according to the national version of the CAP coding scheme is the lowest organisation unit. The German Ministry of Food and Agriculture in Angela Merkel's third government () illustrates the coding process, which is largely analogous in both Denmark and the Netherlands. The chart displays the minister (Christian Schmidt) at the top and attaches his personal staff (*Leitungsstab*) horizontally to him. Below him are three junior ministers. Whereas the left and right *Staatssekrätär* is a political position largely responsible for executive-legislative relations, the centre one is a bureaucratic position in charge of running the ministerial day-to-day business. One level down, there are six divisions (*Abteilung*), which deal with larger policy areas. The first division (*Zentralabteilung*) is usually in charge of running the ministry administratively; the others are responsible for substantive policy topics. Each division is further subdivided in two or more sub-divisions (*Unterabteilung*), which are the unit of analysis employed by Saalfeld and Schamburek (2014). Each subdivision contains numerous policy departments (*Referat*) represented by little boxes, which is where most of the substantive policymaking is done (Fraser 1978). Although these departments are graphically stacked, they are all on the same hierarchical level, meaning that they are only directly accountable to their specific *Unterabteilung*. Besides the name, each policy department names the department head and, most crucially for this study, furnishes a brief and concise description of the policy issues for which it is responsible. The CAP coding scheme is applied to these descriptions of the lowest hierarchical unit related to the minister. This focus explicitly excludes departments that are not hier-
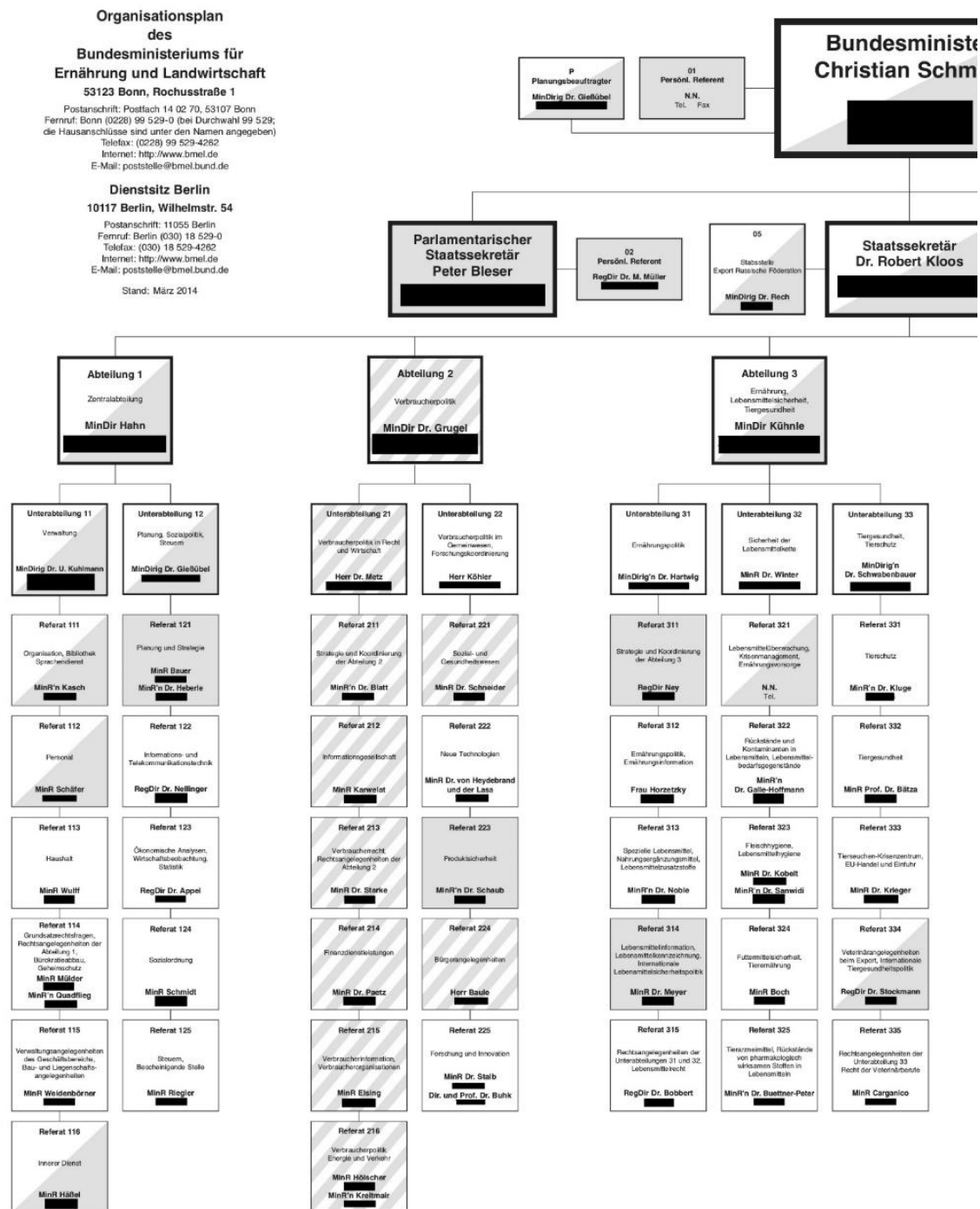
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[8] The codebook is available online: https://www.comparativea-gendas.net/pages/master-codebook

archically connected to a ministry's leadership, such as staff councils (*Person-alvertretungen*) or representatives for severely disabled employees (*Schwer-behindertenvertretungen*).

The actual coding process was carried out by three student coders and the author, all of whom were trained in and had ample competences with the CAP coding scheme. Moreover, all coders were either native speakers of or completely fluent in the language the organisation charts were written in. For each policy department, the coders first decided whether the unit was merely in charge of administrative tasks, such as HR or budgeting. These departments were flagged as such and not content coded.

For units that were deemed to be in charge of substantial policy content, the coders determined how many different policy tasks they perform, usually based on conjunctions or appropriate punctuation. As policy areas are often split up or consolidated in the bureaucracy (Hösl, Irgmaier, and Kniep 2016), simply assuming that all departments are only responsible for one policy task could severely misrepresent the set of responsibilities each ministry bears. On average, a Danish department attends to 3.8 distinct policy issues, which is twice the number of issues their German counterparts deal with. Lastly, each identified policy task was coded according the national version of the CAP coding scheme. Some examples may clarify this process. According to the organisation chart in , "Referat 512" is tasked with plant protection (*Pflanzen-schutz*). This is clearly just one topic that falls within the macro-category of environment (7) and is further classified as species and forest protection (709). In contrast, the organisation chart states that "Referat 522" is tasked with biodiversity and biological patents (*Biologische Vielfalt und Biopatente*), which was identified as two separate policy issues. The first part was coded as species and forest protection, and the second as copyrights and patents (1522) within the macro-category of domestic commerce.

Figure 1 Organisation chart of the Ministry for Food and Agriculture, Germany, 2014 (double page)

L   Leitungsstab
MinDirig Dr. K. Heider Tel. 3106 Fax 3112

MB	L 1	L 2	L 3	L 4
Ministerbüro	Presse	Kabinett-, Parlament- und Protokollangelegenheiten	Öffentlichkeitsarbeit, Internet	Kommunikation, Reden
MinR Windmöller	**Herr Teschke**	**RegDir Dr. Franken**	**RegDir Brockhaus**	**RegDir Dr. Sondermann**

Personalvertretungen

Personalrat	Hauptpersonalrat	Jugend- und Auszubildenden- vertretung	Haupt-, Jugend- und Auszubildenden- vertretung
Vorsitzender	Vorsitzender	Vorsitzende	
OAR Langner	**Herr Hotopp**	**Frau Mertscheit**	**Herr Lauber**

Schwerbehindertenvertretungen

BMEL Vertrauensfrau	Geschäftsbereich Hauptvertrauensfrau
OAR'n Bösenberg	**OAR'n Bösenberg**

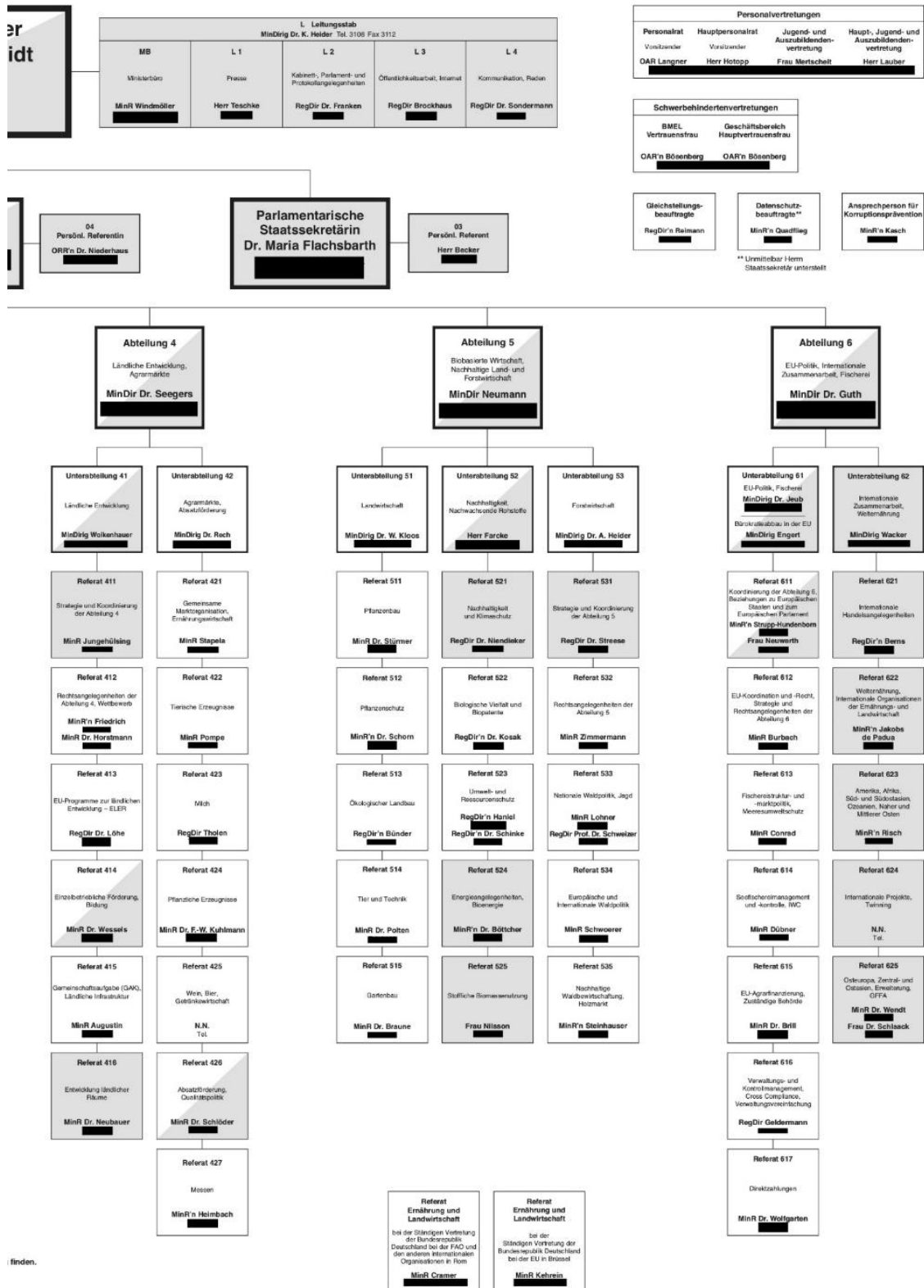| 04 Persönl. Referentin	**Parlamentarische Staatssekretärin Dr. Maria Flachsbarth**	03 Persönl. Referent
ORR'n Dr. Niederhaus		**Herr Becker**

Gleichstellungs- beauftragte	Datenschutz- beauftragte**	Ansprechperson für Korruptionsprävention
RegDir'n Reimann	**MinR'n Quedflieg**	**MinR'n Kasch**

** Unmittelbar Herrn Staatssekretär unterstellt

Abteilung 4
Ländliche Entwicklung, Agrarmärkte
MinDir Dr. Seegers

Abteilung 5
Biobasierte Wirtschaft, Nachhaltige Land- und Forstwirtschaft
MinDir Neumann

Abteilung 6
EU-Politik, Internationale Zusammenarbeit, Fischerei
MinDir Dr. Guth

Abteilung 4

Unterabteilung 41	Unterabteilung 42
Ländliche Entwicklung	Agrarmärkte, Absatzförderung
MinDirig Wolkenhauer	**MinDirig Dr. Rech**

Referat 411	Referat 421
Strategie und Koordinierung der Abteilung 4	Gemeinsame Marktorganisation, Ernährungswirtschaft
MinR Jungehülsing	**MinR Stapela**

Referat 412	Referat 422
Rechtsangelegenheiten der Abteilung 4, Wettbewerb	Tierische Erzeugnisse
MinR'n Friedrich **MinR Dr. Horstmann**	**MinR Pompe**

Referat 413	Referat 423
EU-Programme zur ländlichen Entwicklung – ELER	Milch
RegDir Dr. Löhe	**RegDir Tholen**

Referat 414	Referat 424
Einzelbetriebliche Förderung, Bildung	Pflanzliche Erzeugnisse
MinR Dr. Wessels	**MinR Dr. F.-W. Kuhlmann**

Referat 415	Referat 425
Gemeinschaftsaufgabe (GAK), Ländliche Infrastruktur	Wein, Bier, Getränkewirtschaft
MinR Augustin	N.N. Tel.

Referat 416	Referat 426
Entwicklung ländlicher Räume	Absatzförderung, Qualitätspolitik
MinR Dr. Neubauer	**MinR Dr. Schlöder**

	Referat 427
	Messen
	MinR'n Heimbach

Abteilung 5

Unterabteilung 51	Unterabteilung 52	Unterabteilung 53
Landwirtschaft	Nachhaltigkeit, Nachwachsende Rohstoffe	Forstwirtschaft
MinDirig Dr. W. Kloos	**Herr Farcke**	**MinDirig Dr. A. Heider**

Referat 511	Referat 521	Referat 531
Pflanzenbau	Nachhaltigkeit und Klimaschutz	Strategie und Koordinierung der Abteilung 5
MinR Dr. Stürmer	**RegDir Dr. Niendieker**	**RegDir Dr. Streese**

Referat 512	Referat 522	Referat 532
Pflanzenschutz	Biologische Vielfalt und Biopatente	Rechtsangelegenheiten der Abteilung 5
MinR'n Dr. Schorn	**RegDir'n Dr. Kosak**	**MinR Zimmermann**

Referat 513	Referat 523	Referat 533
Ökologischer Landbau	Umwelt- und Ressourcenschutz	Nationale Waldpolitik, Jagd
RegDir'n Bünder	**RegDir'n Haniel** **RegDir'n Dr. Schinke**	**MinR Lohner** **RegDir Prof. Dr. Schweizer**

Referat 514	Referat 524	Referat 534
Tier und Technik	Energieangelegenheiten, Bioenergie	Europäische und Internationale Waldpolitik
MinR Dr. Polten	**MinR'n Dr. Böttcher**	**MinR Schwoerer**

Referat 515	Referat 525	Referat 535
Gartenbau	Stoffliche Biomassenutzung	Nachhaltige Waldbewirtschaftung, Holzmarkt
MinR Dr. Braune	**Frau Nilsson**	**MinR'n Steinhauser**

Abteilung 6

Unterabteilung 61	Unterabteilung 62
EU-Politik, Fischerei **MinDirig Dr. Jeub**	Internationale Zusammenarbeit, Welternährung
Bürokratieabbau in der EU **MinDirig Engert**	**MinDirig Wacker**

Referat 611	Referat 621
Koordinierung der Abteilung 6, Beziehungen zu Europäischen Staaten und zum Europäischen Parlament **MinR'n Strupp-Hundenborn** **Frau Neuwerth**	Internationale Handelsangelegenheiten **RegDir'n Berns**

Referat 612	Referat 622
EU-Koordination und -Recht, Strategie und Rechtsangelegenheiten der Abteilung 6 **MinR Burbach**	Welternährung, Internationale Organisationen der Ernährungs- und Landwirtschaft **MinR'n Jakobs de Padua**

Referat 613	Referat 623
Fischereistruktur- und -marktpolitik, Meeresumweltschutz **MinR Conrad**	Amerika, Afrika, Süd- und Südostasien, Ozeanien, Naher und Mittlerer Osten **MinR'n Risch**

Referat 614	Referat 624
Seefischereimanagement und -kontrolle, IWC **MinR Dübner**	Internationale Projekte, Twinning N.N. Tel.

Referat 615	Referat 625
EU-Agrarfinanzierung, Zuständige Behörde **MinR Dr. Brill**	Osteuropa, Zentral- und Ostasien, Erweiterung, GFFA **MinR Dr. Wendt** **Frau Dr. Schlaack**

Referat 616
Verwaltungs- und Kontrollmanagement, Cross Compliance, Verwaltungsvereinfachung **RegDir Geldermann**

Referat 617
Direktzahlungen **MinR Dr. Wolfgarten**

Referat Ernährung und Landwirtschaft	Referat Ernährung und Landwirtschaft
bei der Ständigen Vertretung der Bundesrepublik Deutschland bei der FAO und den anderen internationalen Organisationen in Rom	bei der Ständigen Vertretung der Bundesrepublik Deutschland bei der EU in Brüssel
MinR Cramer	**MinR Kehrein**

finden.

To check for internal consistence of the data, a number of sanity checks were applied to the coded data. Firstly, a subsample of each country was re-coded by different coders to gauge the reliability of assigned policy categories. At the level of macro-policy areas, inter-coder agreement is about 87% and 80% at the more detailed level of minor policy areas. Secondly, a computer programme used the task descriptions to identify departments that are substantially similar across all ministries and governments within each country. Unfortunately, the department's name does not always identify the same unit across time, as ministries often adapt it to match the consecutive numbering of departments within policy divisions. Therefore, name changes may be indicative of changes somewhere else in the same division, but they are often unrelated to the bearer itself. Having identified similar departments, the programme checked whether all had been equally flagged as either administrative or substantial and, subsequently, whether their policy description had been subdivided into the same number of codes. Inconsistencies were reported to the author, who decided authoritatively to make corrections where necessary. Thereafter, the programme crawled through all individual policy tasks, not policy departments, and identified those cases where different CAP content codes had been assigned to linguistically similar policy task descriptions. Again, all inconsistencies were reported to the author, who decided to make changes where necessary. Given the very specific and brief language of policy descriptions in organisation charts, these computational sanity checks ensure the internal consistency of the data within each country sample. The final dataset, which comprises more than 30,000 coded policy tasks, is summarised in table 2.

Table 2 Summary of Dataset

	Denmark	**Germany**	**The Netherlands**
Governments	5	4	7
Ministries	86	59	97
Policy Units	3823	6197	4183
Administrative Units	1185	1955	1712
Policy Tasks	14593	11983	4866

The unit-level policy codes can be aggregated to yield information about executive issue attention and ministerial issue responsibility. Yet, the aggregation must account for the fact that the amount of policy tasks each department performs has theoretical repercussions for its importance within the organisation (Hösl, Irgmaier, and Kniep 2016). To ensure that the aggregation follows the

notion introduced earlier that issue attention is a function of abundance and autonomy, all codes are weighted by the inverse of the number of policy topics a policy unit deals with. As a result, a unit that only deals with one policy issue denotes more attention than a department that deals with several topics. Following this procedure, the attention each ministry and in fact the entire government devote to each of the more than 200 policy issues defined in the CAP coding scheme can be quantified as the weighted relative frequency.

Looking at the entire ministerial bureaucracy of a government, this issue attention can furthermore be used to measure the amount of responsibility each ministry bears. If issue responsibility is defined, as argued before, as the relative amount of attention residing within a ministry, dividing ministerial issue attention by the total governmental issue attention elucidates in which ministries responsibility resides. Of course, by further aggregating ministries into groups of ministries pertaining to an incumbent party, the same logic seamlessly extends to quantifying the array of issue responsibilities each party in a coalition government bears.

Describing Bureaucratic Issue Attention

To lend some face validity to the elicited data, this section presents one Danish and one German case of changes in ministerial competences to show how bureaucratic issue attention to energy policies and consumer safety is regularly shared between different ministries and frequently travels across time. The results are graphically depicted in the treeplot charts in figure 2 and figure 3. Each tile shows a different government, with the tiles' order representing their sequence. Within each tile, the area of each square is proportional to the amount of responsibility a ministry bears for a policy issue. The colour of each tile represents the party affiliation of the respective minister. In conjunction, they both show how bureaucratic attention to policy issues is distributed among ministries and incumbent parties and how governments adapt the precise location of bureaucratic issue attention over time. To improve legibility, all ministries that bore less than 5% of ministerial responsibility for the shown policy issues are collapsed in a residual category.

Case: Danish Energy Policy

The treeplots shown in figure 2 exhibit how Danish governments from Poul Nyrup Rasmussen's third cabinet to Fogh Rasmussen's third cabinet administratively dealt with the policy theme of energy (major category 8 of the CAP coding scheme). In the first coalition governments between the Social Democrats (*Socialdemokraterne*) and the Danish Social Liberal Party (*Det Radikale*

Venstre), the bulk of responsibility resided within the Ministry of Environment and Energy, often dubbed the "Svend Auken-imperium" after the former social democratic chairman (Rothenborg and Mygind 2007). This distribution only changed slightly after the ensuing coalition – still lead by Nyrup Rasmussen – took office in 1998. Relatively speaking, the environment and energy ministry lost some relevance, as a new competition agency (*Konkurrencestyrelsen*) was established under the auspices of the Ministry of Business Affairs and charged with price steering for oil, gas, and electricity. A major change to the established structure happened in 2001.

After the Social Democrats lost the general election, Anders Fogh Rasmussen forged a conservative government between the Liberal Party (*Venstre*) and the Conservative People's Party (*Det Konsevative Folkeparti*), which took office on November 27. Soon after, Fogh Rasmussen signed the royal decree "BEK 1107"[9] that considerably reshuffled issue responsibilities between ministries. Besides the establishment of a new Ministry of Refugees, Immigrants and Integration, as well as the re-designed Ministry for Science, Technology and Development, the previous environment and energy ministry was abolished. Neither the Liberals nor the Conservatives prioritised energy and environmental issues at all during their electoral campaign – they did not mention the issue in their manifestos – and the portfolio of energy vanished from the ministerial landscape after 21 years of existence (Tornbjerg 2007). It was moved to the new Ministry for Economic and Business Affairs, led by the Conservative Party's chairman Bendt Bendtsen, who controlled over 80% of this policy issue. Only energy issues directly related to climate remained with the Ministry of the Environment, run by Hans Christian Schmidt from the Liberal Party. Yet, only four years later, Fogh Rasmussen's second government overhauled it completely via the royal decree "BEK 209",[10] which placed energy policies in an autonomous portfolio that was attached to transportation.

[9] https://www.retsinformation.dk/Forms/R0710.aspx?id=20966
[10] https://www.retsinformation.dk/Forms/R0710.aspx?id=20966

Figure 2 Danish ministries that attend to the policy issue of energy
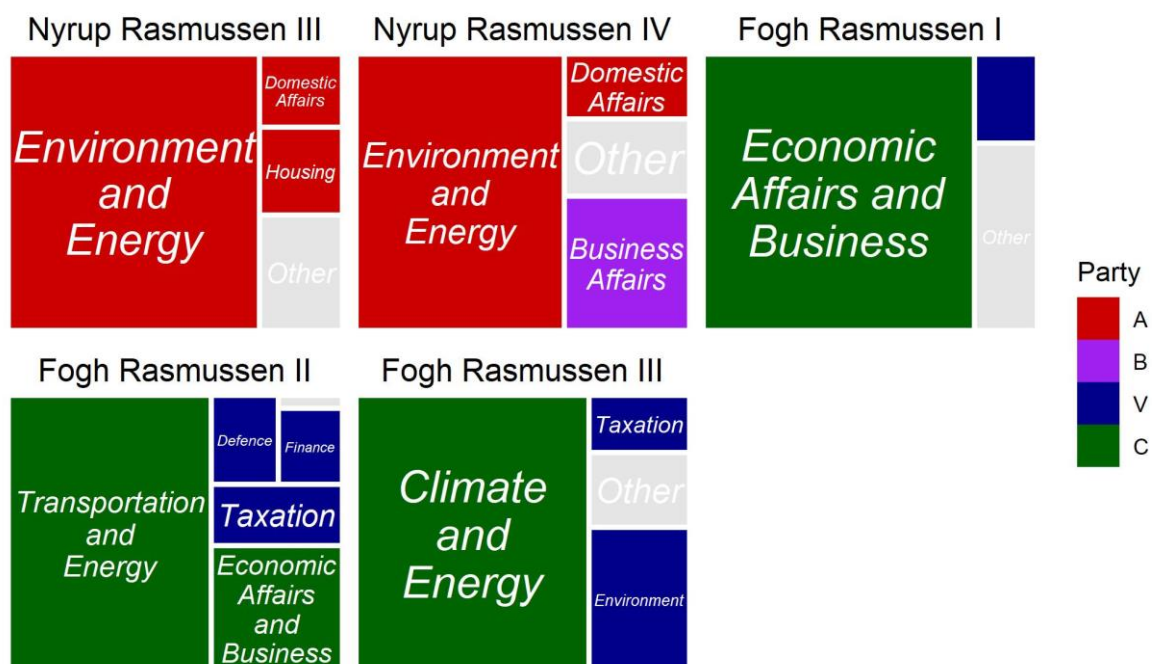
Notes: Relative size of each square denotes relative amount of attention. Colour shows party affiliation of minister.

However, this responsibility allocation was not meant to persevere either. During the 2007 election campaign, both incumbent parties showed a keen interest in energy matters. Especially the Liberal Party, which dedicated about 18% of their party manifesto to this topic, pushed for a more pronounced focus on renewable energies and energy efficiency: Denmark should aim to become "self-sufficient in renewable energy" and "one of the countries that makes the best and most efficient use of energy" (The Liberal Party's 2007 electoral programme, own translation). Likewise, their coalition partner rallied for a "greener Denmark" through "more renewable energy" (The Conservative People's Party's 2007 electoral programme, own translation). The royal decree "BEK 266", signed by Fogh Rasmussen on April 17, 2008, cast this commitment into a new allocation of ministerial responsibility for the energy issue. After having been dealt with from an economics perspective by the past two governments, energy was now married to climate and formed a ministry of its own. Led by later EU Commissioner for Climate Action Connie Hedegaard, it was responsible for the vast majority of energy-related matters. However, some responsibilities remained at the Ministry of Environment, which stirred up discussions about whether it would have been more sensible to recreate the "Svend Auken-imperium" that the coalition had abolished at the onset of the new millennium (Rothenborg and Mygind 2007).

Case: German Consumer Protection

The history of the consumer protection issue in Germany is a little less turbulent, which the treeplots in figure 3 show. Initially regarded as an issue of food safety (Bauchmüller and Kuhr 2013), it primarily rested with the Ministry of Food and Agriculture, with some responsibility scattered across the ministries of economic affairs, finance, and justice. Angela Merkel's first Grand Coalition between her Christian Conservatives (CDU/CSU) and the Social Democrats (SPD) in 2005 adopted this allocation from the previous social democratic government. This overlapping responsibility structure became apparent in policymaking when the government decided to take action against unsolicited advertising and sales calls in 2007. Cold calls had developed into a real nuisance in Germany. Within just one year, the amount of such calls rose by about 30% (Graw and Ehrenstein 2007), which, according to pollsters, annoyed about 90% of the German population (Leins 2007; Süddeutsche Zeitung 2007).

Although the matter fell within the responsibility of the Ministry for Food, Agriculture and Consumer Protection, led by CSU chairman Horst Seehofer, the social democratic Ministry of Justice took the lead and announced legislative countermeasures. As the issue was highly salient and resonated with the public, it was promising for the coalescing parties to take action. Unwilling to surrender and let the Social Democrats scoop the credit, the CDU-led Ministry of Economic Affairs also got involved, which is why the legislative proposal ended up being coordinated between three ministries from all three governing parties (Die Welt 2008; Sigmund 2009). As a result, the introduction of the bill was postponed multiple times and was not signed into law until mid-2009, bearing the signatures of three different ministers.

Figure 3 German ministries that attend to the policy issue of consumer safety
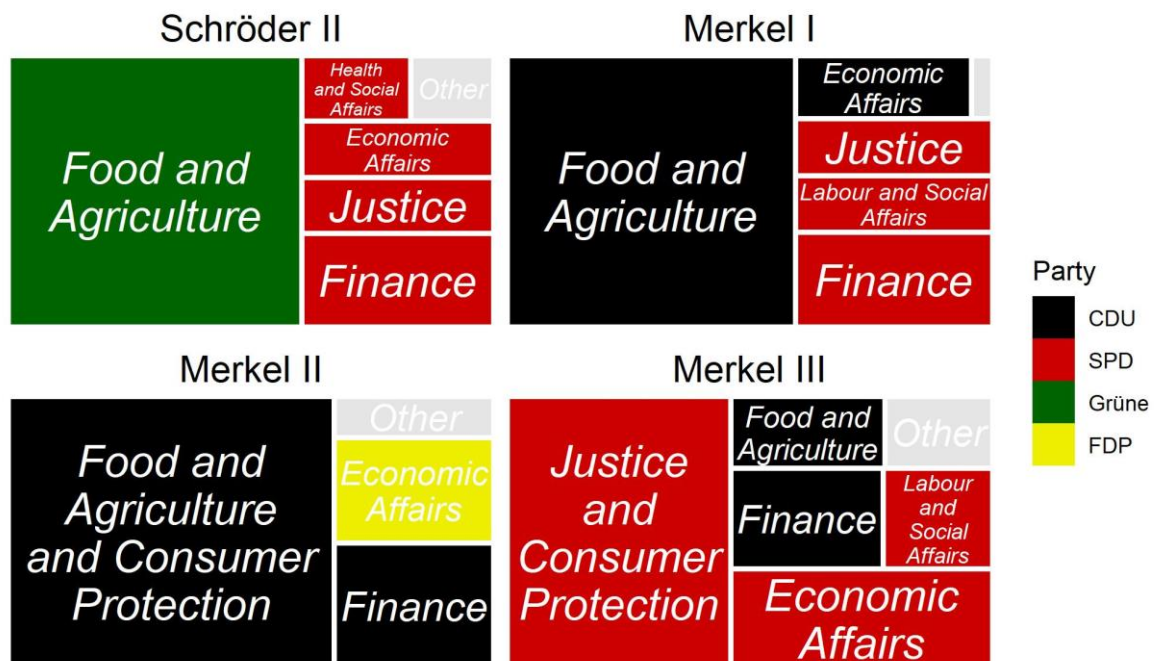
Notes: Relative size of each square denotes relative amount of attention. Colour shows party affiliation of minister.

Fed up with the overlapping responsibility structure in this issue area and determined to emancipate consumer protection from its origins in food safety, the Social Democrats rallied for a re-organisation of competences in their 2013 election manifesto, explicitly demanding to "re-allocate responsibility for consumer protection among the federal ministries" (The Social Democrat's 2007 party manifesto, own translation). This demand materialised in Angela Merkel's second Grand Coalition. The organisational decree "OrgErl 2013"[11], signed by the chancellor on December 17, 2013, mandated consumer protection to be moved to the Ministry of Justice, led by SPD newcomer Heiko Maas. However, the decree was sufficiently vague and asked for inter-ministerial coordination regarding the final allocation of responsibilities, which set in motion a struggle over consumer protection competences (Bauchmüller and Kuhr 2013). Eventually, the bulk of responsibility moved to the Ministry of Justice; however, considerable parts remained in the previous agricultural domain or were integrated in the Ministry of Economic Affairs due to its increasingly strong foothold in this issue area.

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[11] https://www.gesetze-im-internet.de/bkorgerl_2013/BJNR431000013.html

The Results

This chapter summarises the central findings of the four individual articles which constitute this dissertation. The presentation roughly follows the political process, in that it first glances at the allocation of bureaucratic attention during the phase of government formation, thereafter discusses how overlaps are established to stimulate inter-ministerial coordination to manage a coalition, and lastly sheds light on the repercussions of bureaucratic attention for the formulation of policies. Unless otherwise noted, all analyses rely on the estimation of country fixed-effects, and the reported findings are based on estimated regression coefficients that are significant at the 5% level. More detailed information regarding each aspect can be found in the individual articles.

Bureaucratic Issue Attention in Coalition Governments

How do we explain the allocation of bureaucratic issue attention in coalition governments? Typically studied as the allocation of ministerial portfolios, the related question of how many ministries each incumbent party is allocated upon entering a coalition government has been at the centre of coalition research from the early beginning. Gamson (1961) conjectured a strict proportionality between the share of portfolios a party receives in a coalition and the share of parliamentary seats it contributes to the government. This expectation was later on corroborated empirically and became known as *Gamson's Law* (Bäck, Debus, and Dumont 2011; Browne and Franklin 1973; Carroll and Cox 2007; Warwick 2001; Warwick and Druckman 2001, 2006).

As a brief primer to the matter of allocation and to lend some face validity to the data collected for this dissertation, it is thus worthwhile to check whether the close relationship can be replicated using the total amount of bureaucratic attention parties are allocated in a coalition government. To be sure, Gamson (1961) and his successors have a clear office-seeking perspective on political parties. Portfolios are bargained about for their own sake, not for influencing policy-making. This is in stark contrast to the inherently policy-seeking nature of bureaucratic attention as collected in this project. Having one's ministry focus on certain policy issues does not bestow any sizable value of its own upon parties. It does not yield an impressive office, nor does it come with a car or a driver. However, it directly grants the opportunity to participate in governmental policymaking with regard to those policy issues.

Figure 4 Gamson's Law revisited
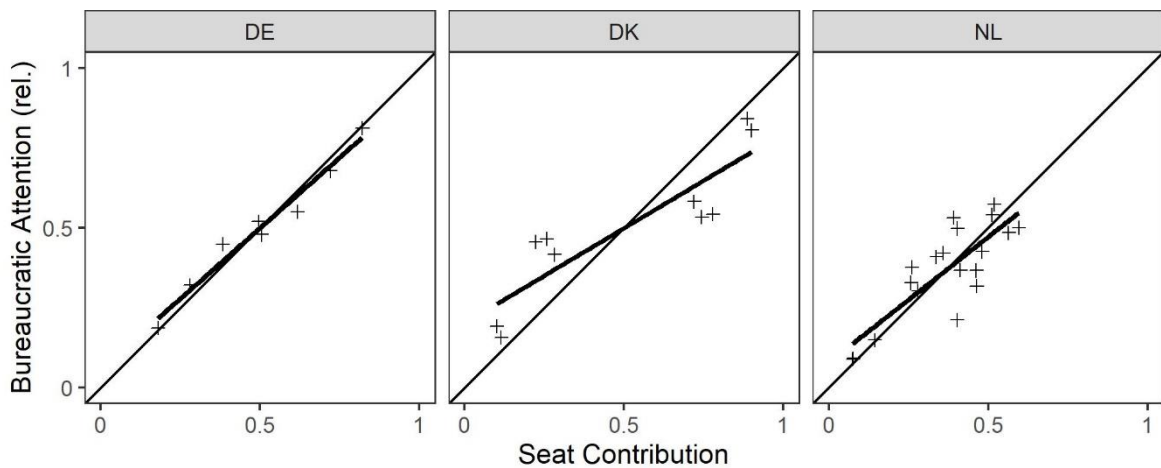
The plots in figure 4 illustrate the extent to which the allocation of bureau-cratic issue attention corresponds to Gamson's Law. For each analysed coun-try, the x-axis shows the relative contribution of parliamentary seats a party brings to a coalition, while the y-axis depicts the relative amount of bureau-cratic attention to policy issues it receives in return. The broad black line de-notes the best linear approximation per country, which is to be compared to the thin diagonal line sloping upwards from the bottom-left corner in a perfect one-to-one proportionality. The tiles show that generally coalition govern-ments follow Gamson's Law when dividing the total pie of bureaucratic atten-tion among its constituent parties. Yet, except for Germany, the proportional-ity is far from one-to-one. In the Netherlands and especially in Denmark, there is a clear tendency for smaller parties to reap an over-proportional amount of bureaucratic attention. This is in line with previous research on this topic, which found a strong and persistent small-party bias in most countries (Browne and Franklin 1973; Warwick and Druckman 2001), giving small par-ties an edge over their larger coalition partners. Thus, these descriptive in-sights insinuate that Gamson's Law is not restricted to the analysis of minis-terial portfolios, but that coalition governments indeed consider the more fine-grained bureaucratic attention this allocation process grants to political parties.

The dissertation does not stop at investigating the allocation of bureau-cratic issue attention at this aggregate level. Rather, it investigates for which policy issues incumbent parties receive bureaucratic attention (Klüser 2020a). While this question mimics previous studies researching the qualitative aspect of portfolio allocation (Bäck, Debus, and Dumont 2011; Browne and Feste 1975; Budge and Keman 1993), it goes beyond them by also looking at the amount of bureaucratic attention parties receive per policy issue. Thus, given insights about the malleable nature of ministerial portfolios (Sieberer et al.

2019), it turns a dichotomous allocation process into a continuous. Based on this perspective, it follows Bäck et al. (2011) and reasons that parties are especially eager to receive bureaucratic attention to policy issues that they have emphasised during their electoral campaigns. However, it acknowledges that parties may compete on the very same policy issue (Green-Pedersen 2007), which is why other parties' political attention to the same policy issues likely attenuates the amount of bureaucratic attention thereto parties can expect to receive. Lastly, it conjectures that parties do not just receive large amounts of bureaucratic attention to issues that are salient to them out of their partners' benevolence, but because parties possess the bargaining power to push through their will against resistance.

The explanandum, bureaucratic issue attention, is measured as described in chapter 4. Making the main explanatory variable, parties' emphasis of policy issues, compatible therewith, its operationalisation draws on data that has been collected within the CAP and, hence, follows the applied coding scheme. More precisely, the CAP furnishes data on party manifestos that are content-coded on the level of quasi-sentences.[12] This facilitates an operationalisation of campaign emphasis as relative frequencies of issue codes within a party manifesto. The operationalisation of the first moderator, competing issue emphasis, draws on the same raw data. However, in order to capture the notion that incumbent parties may compete in case of overlapping emphases, it is operationalised as the extent to which all coalition partners of a party emphasise a policy issue. Lastly, the bargaining power of a party is measured as the normalised Banzhaf power index (Banzhaf 1965), which quantifies the ability of a party to topple a winning coalition. Regarding the estimation strategy, it is important to highlight the non-negative and highly skewed empirical distribution of the dependent variable (see figure 1a in Klüser 2020a). Hence, the analysis resorts to a two-part model, combining a binary process predicting whether a party receives any amount of bureaucratic attention for a policy issue with a continuous part that, conditional on positive values, estimates the precise amount parties receive. After their separate estimation, both parts can be multiplied to yield the overall predicted amount of bureaucratic issue attention conditional on the data (Belotti et al. 2015; Min and Agresti 2002).

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[12] The data in the Danish Policy Agenda Project has been collected by Christoffer Green-Pedersen and Peter B. Mortensen with support from the Danish Social Science Research Council and the Research Foundation at Aarhus University. The data on manifestos of German parties has been collected by Christoffer Green-Pedersen and Isabelle Guinaudeau. The Dutch data has been collected by Simon Otjes.

The contour plots in figure 5 illustrate the central findings. Each plot shows the extent to which a party has emphasised a policy issue pre-electorally on the x-axis and pits it against different interacting covariates on the y-axis. The solid contour lines denote the estimated amount of bureaucratic attention each party receives as produced by different combinations of covariates. Where necessary, dashed lines represent 0.5 increments. Regardless of the value of a moderator, parties' emphasis of policy issues has a positive marginal effect on the amount of bureaucratic issue attention contained in their ministries. This finding supports Bäck et al. (2011) by showing that parties indeed seem to get what they care about upon entering a coalition government. Yet, it goes considerably beyond this by showing that parties' issue emphasis also positively affects the extent to which their ministries attend to it. This insight speaks to studies of ministerial portfolio design which found that parties regularly redefine the attentional focus of ministries according to their preferences (Mortensen and Green-Pedersen 2015; Sieberer 2015). However, as mentioned before, a serious exploration of this question, i.e. in how far the attentional focus of the ministerial bureaucracy changes as a response to changed issue emphases of political parties requires an explicit time-series study, which the short time span of the data collected for this dissertation does not facilitate.

Figure 5 Predicted amount of bureaucratic attention parties receive for a policy issue as a function of their issue emphasis, moderated by competing issue emphasis (a) and power (b)
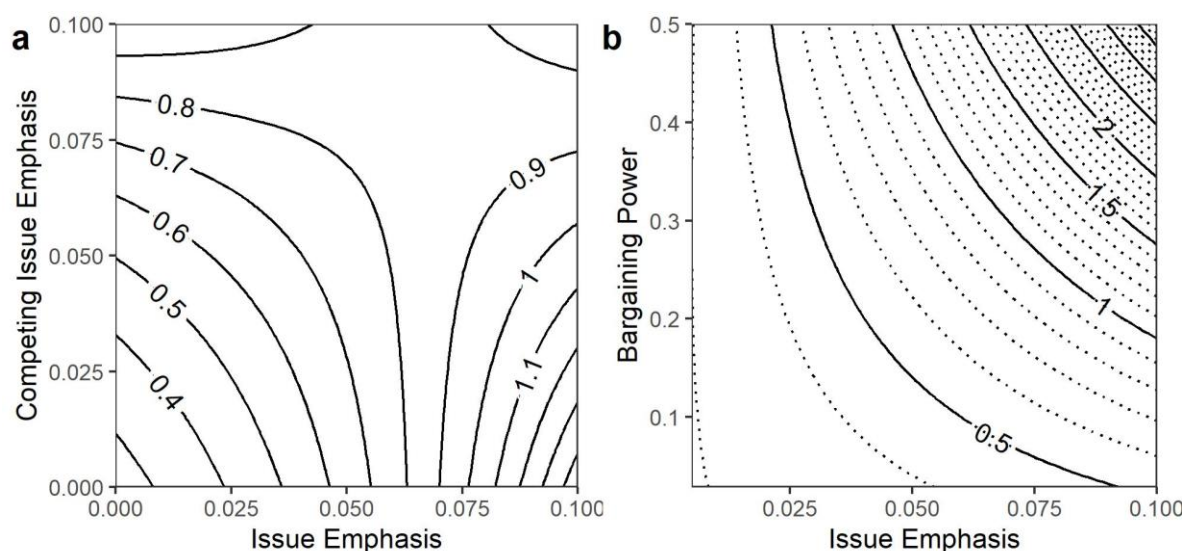
In their totality, the plots also illustrate a potential interaction effect between both covariates. If the contours' slopes remain equal along both axes, both variables may exert an individual effect but do not interact. In contrast, chang-

ing slopes show that both effects are interdependent and both covariates indeed moderate each other. More specifically, a smaller distance between the individual lines at the bottom compared to the top hints at an overall negative interaction effect. This pattern is apparent in the left tile (subfigure a in figure 5), which plots the predicted amount of bureaucratic attention a party receives per policy issue across the range of their own and their coalition partners' emphasis of the same issue. For low values of competing issue emphasis, the received amount of bureaucratic issue attention rises rapidly; however, this increase levels off once other parties care for the same issue. For very high values of competing issue emphasis beyond 0.075, the marginal effect of any additional unit of the central explanatory variable is essentially non-existent, as portrayed by the contour lines approaching horizontality in this region.

Vice versa, a larger distance between the contours at the bottom compared to the top indicates a positive interaction, which is the theoretically expected effect of a party's bargaining power on the bureaucratic attention allocation process. This pattern is exactly what subplot b in figure 5 reveals. Weak parties essentially do not stand a chance of turning their policy issue emphases into palpable ministerial impact within the coalition government. In stark contrast thereto stands the marginal effect of emphasis for the more powerful parties. They are equally likely to just receive small amounts of bureaucratic attention for policy matters they have not mentioned pre-electorally, as the first, almost vertical dashed lines illustrates. However, once they start caring about a topic, they are much more successful at receiving those parts of the ministerial bureaucracy that attend thereto and, thus, bestow them with sizable influence over coalition policymaking in this area.

Coalitional Coexistence through Coordination

Related, yet distinct is the question whether overlaps in bureaucratic attention to policy issues follows political considerations. Do coalition governments deliberately create overlaps to lay the ground for inter-ministerial cooperation as stipulated by the main theoretical argument laid out in chapter three? This matter is directly addressed in Klüser (2019) by recasting the focus from individual parties to the entire coalition government as such. This change in perspective is reflected by a different dependent variable, responsibility scattering, which directly measures how ministerial responsibility for policy issues is spread across all incumbent parties. It is operationalised as the normalised Shannon's-H (Shannon and Weaver 1949), which is a measure of entropy ranging from zero, which means that one party has monopolised responsibility for a policy issue, and one, which means that responsibility is evenly spread

out across all incumbent parties. As figure 2 in Klüser (2019) shows, the resulting measure is not only contained on the closed unit-interval but is also considerably skewed to the right in both Denmark and the Netherlands. Therefore, the underlying data-generating process is modelled according to a beta distribution, which is a highly flexible distribution defined between zero and one (Cribari-Neto and Zeileis 2010; Ferrari and Cribari-Neto 2004). For more information, please consult the appendix in Klüser (2019).

Figure 6 Country fixed effects of beta regression analysis
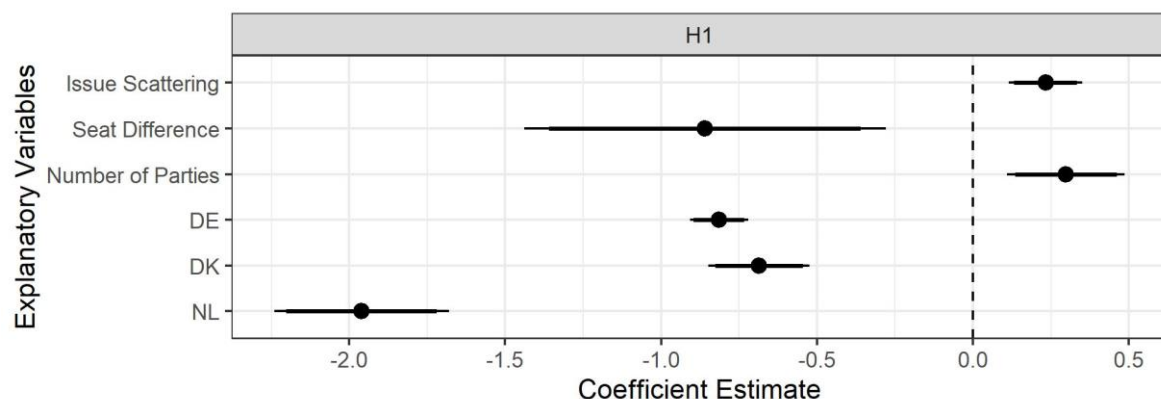
Notes: Issue scattering is the focal explanatory variable. Thin whiskers show 95% confidence intervals based on cluster robust standard errors.

Firstly, the logic that drives the distribution of bureaucratic issue attention within coalitions draws on issue competition and issue salience (Budge 2001; Budge and Farlie 1983). During electoral campaigns, parties usually rally on a set of issues that is particularly advantageous for them. While the detailed argument is left to the corresponding paper, I expect that overlapping issue emphases of incumbent political parties, which are frequently observed during electoral campaigns (Damore 2004; Green-Pedersen 2007; Sigelman and Buell 2004), induce coalition governments to create overlapping policy responsibilities as to facilitate inter-ministerial coordination in mutually salient policy areas. Figure 6 presents the results of the corresponding fixed effects beta regression model. The effect of issue scattering, i.e. the extent to which issue emphases overlap across incumbent parties, is estimated at 0.22 (se = 0.08) and thus indicates that more scattering on the side of parties' issue salience makes governments create overlapping responsibility structures in this issue area. This effect is also substantial, which becomes apparent if expressed in terms of fitted values. Holding all non-focal covariates at their mean, German governments respond to an increase of issue scattering from the 25% to the 75% quantile by a growth of responsibility scattering that corresponds to 13% of its standard deviation. Importantly, this effect even persists if estimated within each country individually.

Figure 1 Responsibility scattering as a function of policy conflict
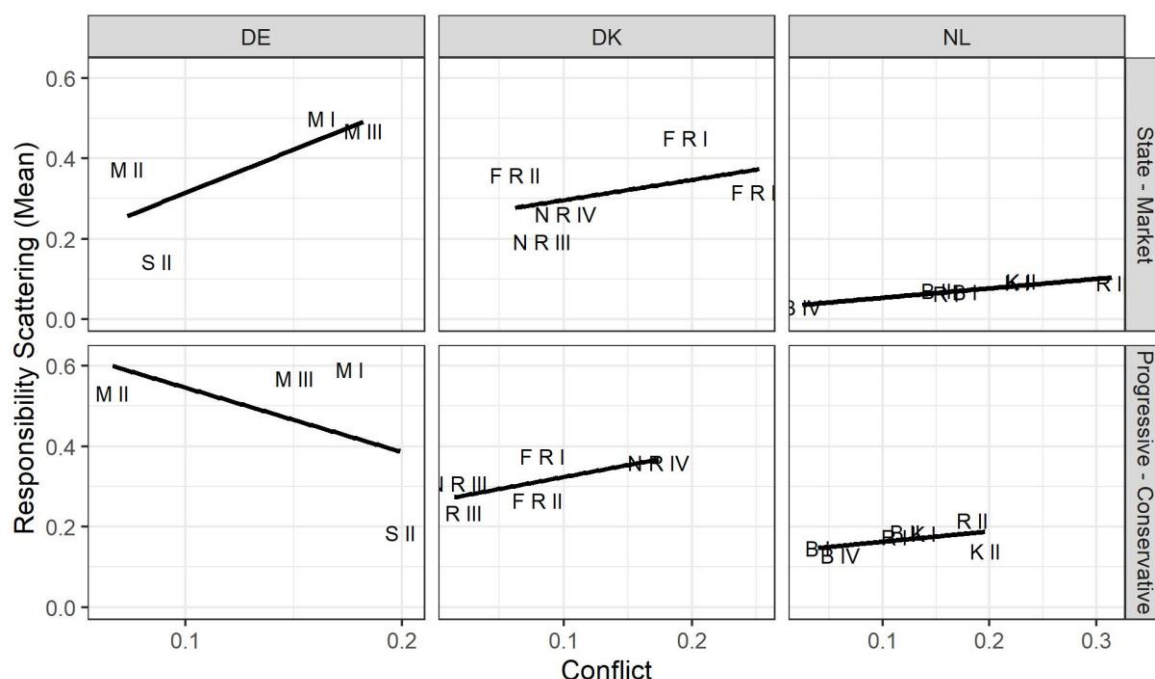
Notes: Abbreviations: S - Schröder, M - Merkel; N R - Nyrup Rasmussen, F R – Fogh Rasmussen; K - Kok, B - Balkenende, R – Rutte.

Leaving the turf of pure issue competition and delving into the preferential logic that motivates most of the literature on coalition governance (L. W. Martin and Vanberg 2005, 2011, 2014), this dissertation asserts that scattering of issue responsibilities across party lines should be particularly likely for policy areas where the incumbent parties' preferences diverge. However, the problem with testing this conjecture is that data measuring parties' preferences on the level of all 250 policy issues defined by the CAP codebook does not exist. Therefore, the corresponding paper resorts to a more abstract approach, which clusters and aggregates responsibility scattering across two commonly used policy dimensions: state versus market and progressive versus conservative. The result, which is, admittedly, rather descriptive, is depicted in figure 7. The top row plots the scattering of bureaucratic responsibility against conflict on the state-market dimension, whereas the bottom row inspects the effect of conflict on the dimension contrasting progressive and conservative social values. With regard to Germany, the panels show only mixed evidence of the alleged effect of policy conflict. To be sure, on the state-market dimension, the more diverse Grand Coalitions show higher levels of responsibility scattering; however, on the second dimension, Gerhard Schröder's second governments apparently defies the expected relationship and displays overlap that is almost three times as high as in any of Angela Merkel's coalition governments. The Danish case is more promising. On the first dimension, both the more

homogenous governments led by Poul Nyrup-Rasmussen and the first liberal coalition under his successor show lower levels of overlap than the more diverse later governments by Anders Fogh Rasmussen. Considering the progressive versus conservative dimension, the association is more pronounced but not necessarily stronger, showing an increase from about 0.25 units of overlap in the first Fogh Rasmussen government up to 0.33 in last government led by Nyrup-Rasmussen. The right column plots the same association for the Netherlands and essentially mimics the Danish results: there is a small but positive association between ideological conflict and the average scattering of issue responsibility. In conjunction, the plots yield two insights. Firstly, there is some descriptive evidence for the alleged positive association between intra-coalition policy conflict and the level of responsibility overlap, which, secondly, is not necessarily homogenous across the studied sample. The analysis is clearly hampered by data limitations and more detailed preferential data is needed to deliver more compelling evidence that coalition governments indeed use overlaps to stimulate inter-ministerial coordination in contentious policy areas.

A Robustness Check: Same Question, More Nuanced Preferential Data

Pre-empting some of this justified criticism, this chapter's analysis goes beyond Klüser (2019) and presents the results of a regression analysis that relies on more detailed preferential data. Confronted with a research question whose analysis also requires preferential data on a vast range of single policy issues, Klüver and Zubek (2018) leveraged data from the manifesto project (Volkens et al. 2019) to gain salience scores of political parties on 13 different policy areas that could be mapped on the broader issue clusters as defined by the CAP. Within each of these areas, positive and negative mentions by parties can be used to compute an index that yields a party's position on each dimension, following the recommendations by Lowe et al. (2011). While still not ideal, using data generated by this process considerably expands the available observations to scrutinise the effect of ideological conflict on the extent of responsibility. To this end, I refit the respective model from Klüser (2019), using the new policy distance variable as described above. The results of the beta regression model are shown in table 3.

Table 3 Results beta regression mode with new policy distance variable

| | Responsibility Scattering | | | |
| | (1) | | (2) | |
	Coefficient	CI	Coefficient	CI
Policy Distance Issue Scattering	-0.003	-0.021, 0.017	0.035	0.006, 0.067
Seat Difference	-0.169	-0.220, -0.115	-0.154	-0.207, -0.100
Policy Distance X DE			-0.135	-0.193, -0.077
Policy Distance X NL			-0.040	-0.079, 0.000
DK	0.454	0.396, 0.511	0.401	0.335, 0.467
DE	0.527	0.484, 0.511	0.604	0.549, 0.467
NL	0.219	0.177, 0.257	0.215	0.164, 0.266
Log-Likelihood	4991 (6 DF)		4997 (8 DF)	
N	1789		1789	

Note: Bootstrapped 95% confidence intervals.

Both models explicitly address the effect of diverging policy preferences within coalition governments, using the preferential data on 13 distinct policy dimensions as suggested by Klüver and Zubek (2018). The first analysis shows that there is no significant effect of policy distance on the extent of responsibility scattering across parties within coalition governments that could be generalised across the three sampled countries. The estimated effect is almost zero and, hence, the bootstrapped 95% confidence interval extends to both the positive and the negative spectrum (-0.021, 0.017). Similar to the approach in Klüser (2019), the second model includes interaction terms between the effect of policy distance and the individual countries. A likelihood ratio test indicates that the inclusion of interaction effects, i.e. allowing the slope to vary across the different countries, improves the model's fit significantly ($\chi^2 = 11.907$ on 2 d.f.), which supports the differences in the empirical patterns across Denmark, Germany, and the Netherlands uncovered in the previous analysis of government averages (figure 7). In this interactive model specification, the "unconditional" effect of policy distance, which gauges the effect within Danish governments, is significantly positive. However, as the statistically significant interaction terms reveal, this effect is not generalizable to Germany or the Netherlands.

Figure 8 Country-wise effects of policy distance
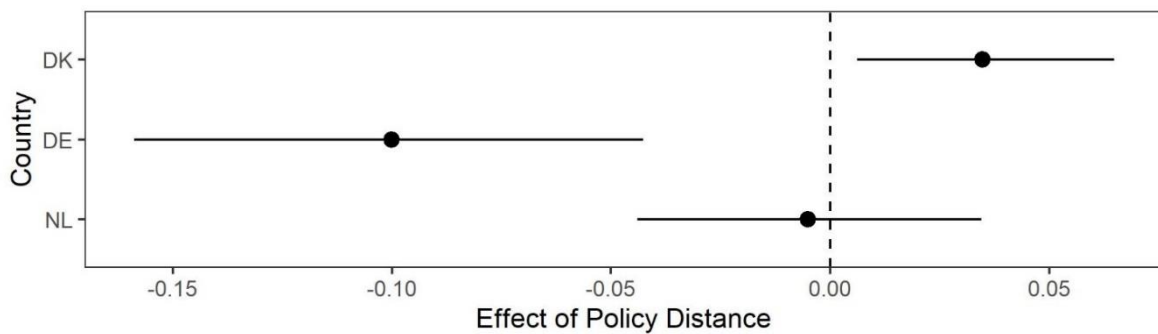
Note: Whiskers represent 95% confidence intervals.

These country particularities become apparent from the effects plot in figure 8, which shows how policy distance affects the extent to which responsibility for policy issues is scattered across parties. As also directly visible from the tabular representation of the respective regression model, Danish governments make sure that ministerial responsibility for contentious policy issues transgresses party lines, which at least facilitates that parties exploit inter-ministerial coordination to contain policy drift. In contrast, there is no effect of policy conflict in Dutch cabinets, which dovetails with the previous descriptive analysis of responsibility scattering across party lines. However, the results for Germany are more striking. Indeed, German governments appear to pursue the exact opposite strategy of their Danish colleagues. Instead of spreading out responsibility for contentious policy issues, they rather seek to consolidate it within ministries of just one party. While it clearly goes against the theoretical expectation laid out in this dissertation, the result is nevertheless interesting. Certainly, German governments do not allow their ministers to go native, but maybe they prefer to have conflicts resolved outside the executive area and shift this duty to the parliament (L. W. Martin and Vanberg 2011). This thought speaks to potential substitution effects between different coalition management devices, which are picked up in the following section.

Coalition Management in the Light of Inter-Ministerial Coordination

As an addition to the question whether coalition governments use inter-ministerial coordination to attenuate the problem of ministerial dominance, this section taps into how this coalition management strategy is deployed in the light of other means to control coalition partners. As chapter two has already outlined central aspects of the toolbox of strategies coalition governments can use to curb ministerial autonomy and ensure that struck deals are being hon-

oured, I will not revisit this discussion here. Yet, the expectation is that different management strategies substitute each other. More specifically, this section contrast inter-ministerial coordination with parliamentary review and junior ministers representing two frequently discussed management tools. If countries have powerful parliaments that can effectively scrutinise and rewrite ministerial bills (L. W. Martin and Vanberg 2005, 2011), there is less need for governments to create overlapping ministerial jurisdictions to stimulate inter-ministerial coordination. In a similar vein, coalitions that install hostile junior ministers to monitor the intra-ministerial procedures (Thies 2001) reduce the informational advantage of the responsible minister vis-à-vis the cabinet and, thus, once more diminish the necessity to have ministries attend to the same issue across party boarders.

Testing these expectations requires a shift in the analytical focus. Since parliamentary review and hostile junior ministers operate at the level of entire governments or ministries, there is little reason to stick to previous focus on cross-party scattering with regard to single policy issues. Instead, this analysis concentrates on ministerial dyads within each government and measures the degree to which their respective bureaucratic attention to the entire set of defined policy issues is similar. To operationalise this degree of inter-ministerial similarity, assume that all about 250 distinct observed policy issues span a geometrical space of equal dimensionality. Since all ministries are measured on the entire set of policy issues, they can be uniquely placed within this hyperspace. Moreover, since their location is known, their Euclidian distance can easily be calculated, which quantifies the closeness of two ministries' attentional issue foci. Therefore, assuming two ministries, A, and B, their distance with regard to their bureaucratic attention (a) to all observed policy issues (I) is computed as:

$$d(A,B) = \sqrt{\sum_{i=1}^{I} (a_i^A - a_i^B)^2}$$

This *attention distance* is computed for all ministry dyads within all sampled governments in Denmark, Germany, and the Netherlands. To get an idea of the empirical distribution of this variable, figure 9 illustrates it as boxplots. In each country, the data is almost normally distributed, yet, the overall level of attention distance varies. While Danish ministries are on average most similar with regard to their attentional focus on policy issues, the variance of their similarity is the largest of all three countries. In contrast, Dutch ministries usually stand a little farther apart from each other, yet, they also do so more consistently. Lastly, Germany occupies the middle ground. The total variation

in attention distance is regressed on a set of explanatory variables. Firstly, in order to capture the effect of hostile junior ministers being present in a ministry, the variable *hostile* is a simple dummy that takes on the value one if the party running ministry B has a junior minister in ministry A, and otherwise zero. The necessary information about the allocation of junior ministers is furnished by the Dutch parliament's website[13] and the online version of the German Parliament's data handbook.[14] In Denmark, the post of junior minister does not exist (L. W. Martin and Vanberg 2011, 89), which is why the variable is always zero. Secondly, *policing strength* quantifies a parliament's power to review and rewrite ministerial bills. The variable is operationalised as an index of seven structural features with regard to legislative committees, the powers of legislative committees, and the parliament's power to enforce the scrutiny of bills even against a minister's will (L. W. Martin and Vanberg 2011, 45). The index is constructed using the annualised information on parliamentary powers provided in the replication files and the individual factor scores reported in online appendix C to Martin and Vanberg (2019).

Figure 9 Attention distance per country
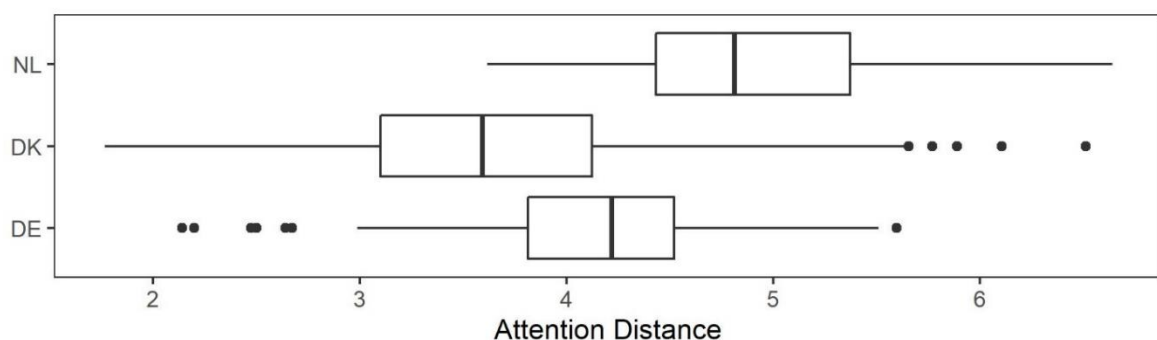
This differently constructed measure of closeness of two ministries' attentional foci can also be used to re-assess the hypothesis that coalitions create ministries whose attentional foci align more closely in an attempt to counteract policy divergence between the respective ministers (Klüser 2019). To this end, the variable *policy distance* measures the distance on the left-right dimension between the parties who sponsor the ministers running a ministerial dyad. Naturally, in situations where both ministers belong to the same party, the distance between them is zero. The necessary positional data is retrieved

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[13] https://www.parlement.com/id/vh8lnhrp1x03/kabinetten_1945_heden, accessed on 30 March 2020.

[14] Das Datenhandbuch zur Geschichte des Deutschen Bundestages, chapter 6.4, https://www.bundestag.de/re-source/blob/196246/67f86923acca5fd738bbc8c69210545d/Kapitel_06_04_Parlamentarische_Staatssekret__re-data.pdf, accessed on 11 March 2020.

from the ParlGov repository (Holger Döring and Manow 2013), which combines several expert surveys (Benoit and Laver 2006; Castles and Mair 1984; J. Huber and Inglehart 1995; Polk et al. 2017). Moreover, the analysis controls for the effect of *size difference* between parties, operationalised as the difference in seats the parties furnishing the ministers of the observed dyad contribute to the coalition. To rule out measurement artefacts that result from the operationalisation of attention distance, the analysis also estimates the effect of the *total amount of bureaucratic attention* contained in the ministerial dyad. The underlying logic is that ministerial dyads with small ministries should be closer together as the individual ministries do not pay any attention to the overwhelming majority of observed policy issues. Larger ministries, while still not devoting any attention to the majority of issues, will in contrast be farther apart just because there are fewer issues to which they pay zero attention.

The results of a fixed-effects linear regression analysis modelling attention distance as a function of the described covariates is presented in table 4. The individual country dummies are all statistically significant and, therefore, align with the empirical observation drawn from the boxplots about cross-country difference. With regard to the two control variables, both total attention and size difference are statistically significant and point towards the expected direction. Likewise, the analysis reveals that policy distance has a significantly negative effect on the distance between two ministries, which is in line with the general argument that coalition governments use inter-ministerial coordination to curb ministerial autonomy. However, while significant, the effect is only small in terms of its size: a one standard deviation increase in policy distance only induces a 0.04 growth of the attention distance between two ministries, with only translates to a meagre 4% of its standard deviation. Moreover, this result is not directly comparable to the previous findings about the effect of policy disagreement, which zoomed in on individual policy issues and ministerial attention thereto across party lines. Hence, by definition, each observation is based on at least a pair of different parties, between which policy distance can easily be measured. The situation is a little bit different here. Since the unit of analysis is the ministerial dyad, it will often be the case that both ministries forming a dyad belong to the same party. Naturally, in these instances the policy distance between the parties within the dyad is zero. As a consequence, apart from simply indicating that policy distance matters, this effect alludes to coalitions generally seeking to structure and allocate their ministries in a way that generally clusters ministries of different parties together. In this case, it would not be policy distance primarily but simply different ministerial tenure that drives the clustering of ministries.

Table 4 Results of linear regression model

	Attention Distance	
	Coefficient	Std. Error
DE	2.943	0.458
DK	2.666	0.396
NL	3.437	0.275
Total Attention	8.545	0.265
Size Difference	0.286	0.069
Policy Distance	-0.036	0.015
Policing Strength	0.035	0.638
Hostile	0.004	0.012
Res. Std. Error	0.601 (2997 DF)	
F Statistic	17 874 (2997 DF)	

Note: Standard errors are cluster robust.

Regarding the central objective of this section, namely to research whether different coalition management devices can substitute each other, the results are highly inconclusive. While both variables, hostile and policing strength, are estimated to affect the distance between ministries positively, their respective effects are far from statistically significant. Hence, based on the present analysis, there is no substitution effect between inter-ministerial cooperation and either the allocation of hostile junior ministers or the opportunity of parliaments to review and rewrite bills. Admittedly, these results can only be a first attempt to answer the question about substitution effects with regard to coalition management devices. The principal problem with the analysis is that, while the unit of analysis is the ministry dyad, the central explanatory variables are primarily measured on the level of countries. Although the existence of hostile junior ministers can be observed for each ministry dyad, the unequal deployment of hostile junior ministers in the three sampled countries essentially reduces the origin of variation to the Netherlands. As mentioned before, the post of junior ministers is unknown in Denmark and while principally known in Germany, in the sampled German governments almost all instances where junior ministers have been assigned as watch dogs were during Gerhard Schröder's second government. Hence, in the present regression setting with country fixed effects, the model essentially estimates the effect of hostile junior ministers in the Netherlands alone, while it cannot make any predictions with regard to the other two countries. However, if the deployment of hostile junior ministers is indeed more of a national characteristic, the correct modelling strategy would be to drop the fixed effects and instead investigate whether countries that know the instrument of hostile junior ministers create

ministries that are farther apart. Unfortunately, such a strategy is ruled out by the narrow country focus of this dissertation, which renders any attempt to estimate cross-country effects nonsensical. A similar reasoning is valid for the effect of policing strength on inter-ministerial distance. Although Martin and Vanberg (2019) provide annualised scores of parliamentary policing powers, given that these scores rely on essentially institutional characteristics of parliaments, there is not much variation across the roughly 15 years this dissertation studies per country. In fact, there are only six distinct observations of policing strength across the entire sample: three for Germany at the top, two for the Netherlands at the bottom, and only one for Denmark somewhere in the middle. Hence, much like before, in order to fully appraise the potential substitution effect between parliamentary review, we either needed long time series per country if we were to stick with the fixed-effects set-up, or alternatively a larger sample of countries in order to facilitate a comparative strategy.

Repercussions for Policy-Making in Coalitions

So far, the dissertation has sought to explain how parties garner bureaucratic attention for policy issues upon entering a coalition government (Klüser 2020a), and how these governments create overlapping responsibility for policy areas to stimulate inter-ministerial cooperation across party lines (Klüser 2019). This part is devoted to the repercussions for policy-making. More explicitly, Klüser and Breunig (2020) research which ministry is in charge of legislation issued by the government across policy areas. Following a slightly different research question, Klüser (2020b) glances at the different political conditions under which bureaucratic attention effectively translates into coalitional policy-making.

Both papers rely on data about the policy area and sponsoring ministry of parliamentary bills. This data is largely furnished by the Comparative Agendas Project, which asked multiple coders to classify parliamentary bills according to their coding scheme, based on the bills' title, official summary and, if necessary, the entire content. Details about exact coder training and data characteristics for each country can be found in the respective country chapters in Baumgartner et al. (2019). In the analysed countries, the inter-coder reliability is well above 90% at the major topic level. The second piece of information, ministerial sponsorship, requires a recourse to the official parliamentary repositories of legislative activities.[15] The CAP data on parliamentary bills pro-

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15 Denmark: http://webarkiv.ft.dk/samling/arkiv.htm and
https://www.ft.dk/da/dokumenter/dokumentlister/lovforslag,

vides a national identifier that uniquely locates each bill within these databases and, hence, facilitates the retrieval of additional meta-data about each bill, e.g. which actor was in charge of the drafting process. Depending on the analysed country, this can be the parliament, the executive, or – in Germany – the individual federal states. With regard to bills designed in the executive, the repositories also furnish information about the precise ministry that contributed the initial draft and later on managed the bill as it wound through the executive and legislative process. After mapping all ministerial bills on the specific national government during whose incumbency they were drafted, the information about ministerial sponsorship can additionally be used to add information about the political party that was implicitly in charge of developing the bill by steering the respective ministry. The data for this last step was retrieved from the "Party Systems & Governments Observatory", which informs about the ministerial and party composition of national governments in Europe and beyond (Bértoa 2016). The final data set on legislative activity, containing information on Denmark (1988-2011), Germany (1972-2009), and the Netherlands 1995-2009), is analogous to the extract show in table 1 in Klüser and Breunig (2020).

Figure 10 Boxplots show the scope of ministerial activity across 13 heuristic ministries within each country
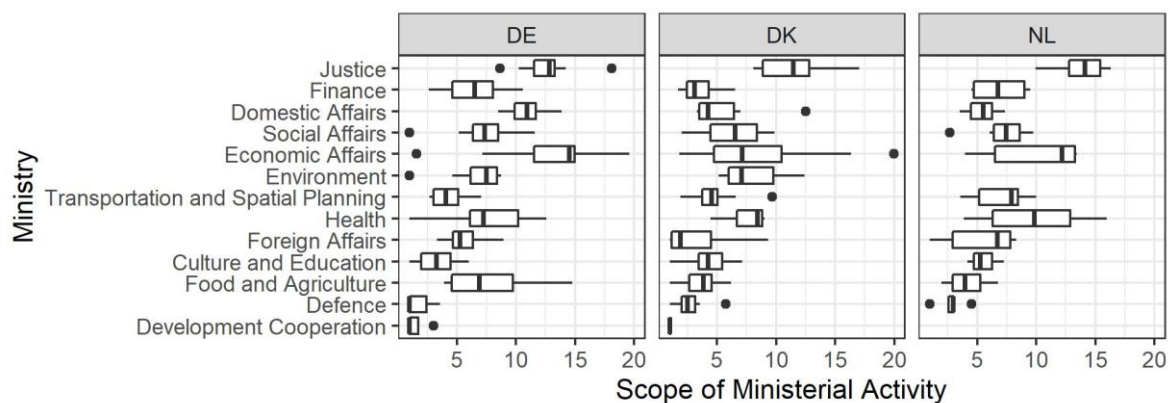
Note: For more information on the creation of the heuristic ministry clusters, consult Klüser and Breunig (2019).

Based on this data, Klüser and Breunig (2020) start by descriptively investigating the "scope of ministerial activity" – a concept that describes the diversity of the set of policy issues a ministry covers. Analogously to the "effective number of parties" (Laakso and Taagepera 1979), the measure is operationalised as the Inverse Simpson Diversity Index and likewise gauges the "effective"

Germany: http://dipbt.bundestag.de/dip21.web/bt, the Netherlands: https://zoek.officielebekendmakingen.nl/uitgebreidzoeken

number of policy issues within which a ministry sponsors legislation. There-fore, it theoretically ranges from zero, in case of a ministry that does not spon-sor bills in any issue area, to 250, meaning that a ministry sponsors legislation equally across all policy issues defined by the CAP coding scheme. For each country, the boxplots in figure 10 summarise the measure across 13 different heuristic ministries. As a general trend, the justice ministry drafts bills across the largest (Denmark, the Netherlands) or second largest (Germany) set of policy issues, being active in between 10 to 15 issue areas. With regard to the other ministerial clusters, the pattern is less clear. For instance, finance min-istries, doubtlessly a powerful ministry and important broker in Danish gov-ernments (Jensen 2008), draft legislation on a wider range of issues in the two other analysed countries. Similarly, Danish governments are considerably more restrictive regarding the scope of their foreign ministries. In their en-tirety, the descriptive results show that governments in the three analysed countries have different interpretations of the issue scope they grant to their ministries.

A different question is whether all legislation issued by single ministries falls within their official policy domain. The sometimes large issue scopes ra-ther suggest that ministries regularly leave their policy domain and intrude into their colleagues' turf. Naturally, answering this question requires infor-mation on the precise set of policy issues ministries are officially expected to attend to. Instead of relying on the bureaucratic attention data derived from organisation charts, Klüser and Breunig (2020) use a different approach to tap into the policy domains of ministries. Within the Comparative Agenda Project's coding scheme, the task of defining ministerial habitats boils down to selecting the set of policy issues (out of about 250) that pertain to a ministry. A similar procedure with data retrieved from the Manifesto Project (Volkens et al. 2019) was employed by Bäck et al. (2011) in their study on the effect of issue salience on portfolio allocation. While the mapping process presents some challenges, which are discussed in the corresponding paper, we essen-tially asked several student coders to decide for each policy issue whether it belongs to a ministerial policy domain. Inter-coder reliability is 92%, and wherever disagreements arose, they were resolved by discussion among the coders. For the final mapping see tables 3, 4, and 5 in the appendix to Klüser and Breunig (2020).

Combining the legislative data with the coded information on ministries' policy domains, the paper finds that ministries draft on average 30% of their bills outside of their allotted policy domain. Yet, the figure varies slightly among countries, with Danish ministries being less prone to intrude into other ministries' turf. From a within-country perspective, the individual ministries' propensity to leave their policy domain varies substantially. The patterns in

this variation suggest strategic interactions at the cabinet table where parties bargain for the right to be in charge of drafting and managing a bill. Briefly, it is argued that cabinet parties try to put their ministries in the driver's seat of bills whose policy content is contested within the coalition government. Yet, the success of such strategic bargaining hinges on a party's power to get its will, i.e. to be awarded the right to sponsor the first draft. The analysis of this expectation draws on a binary model that estimates the probability that a bill is outside the policy domain of the sponsoring ministry as a function of a party's ideological distance to the coalition's centre of gravity and the party's bargaining power. Like before, the computation of ideological distance rests on positional data from the Manifesto Project (Volkens et al. 2019), whereas bargaining power is operationalised as the normalised Banzhaf power index (Banzhaf 1965), drawing on data from the ParlGov repository (Holger Döring and Manow 2013). More information on the precise operationalisation in contained in Klüser and Breunig (2020). Unlike in the other analyses, the inclusion of country-dummies does not improve the model fit significantly.

Figure 11 Marginal effect of ideological distance on the probably of a bills to be sponsored outside a ministry's policy domain
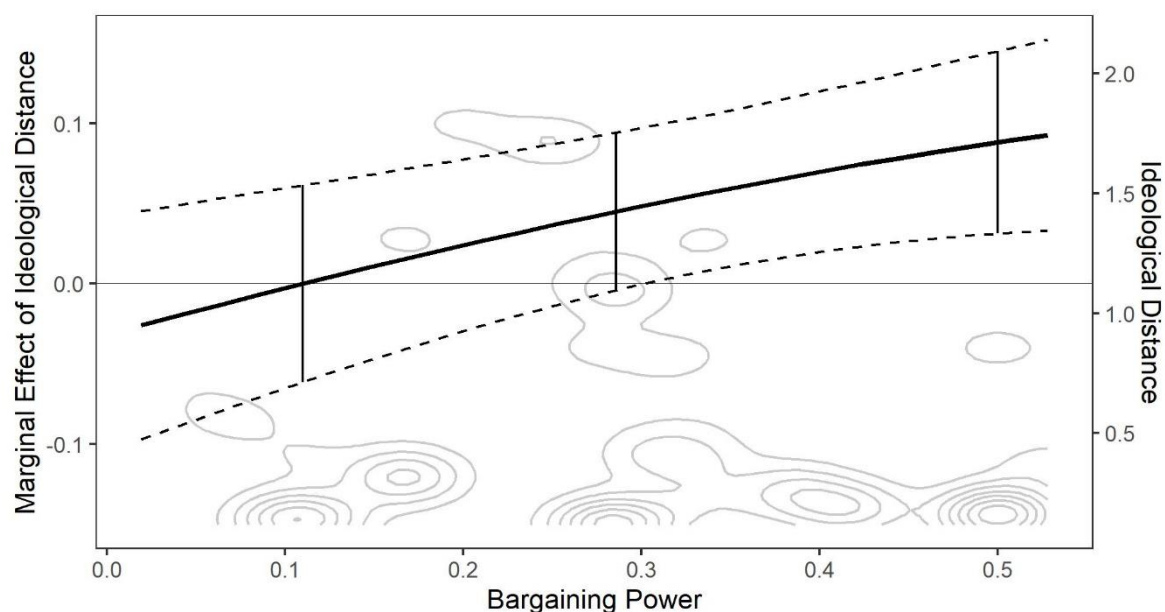
Notes: Effect shown conditional on the bargaining power of an incumbent party. Dashed lines show 95% confidence interval around the marginal effect. The three vertical lines mark the midpoints of the three empirical tercentiles of bargaining power. The contours in the background show the distribution of both interacting variables (scale of ideological distance on right y-axis).

The result of the analysis is summarised in a marginal effect plot (figure 11). The solid, upward sloping line depicts the marginal effect of policy distance,

conditional on the range of bargaining power. The dashed lines around it represent the 95% confidence bounds. Following Hainmueller et al. (2019), the three vertical lines mark the midpoints of the tercentiles of bargaining power and, thus, facilitate the analysis across the entire range of the moderator. Weak parties (first tercentile) cannot improve their chances of winning the right to issue legislation outside their own ministries' policy turf, even (or especially?) if they diverge considerably from the coalition's policy position (b = 0.00, se = 0.03). However, as parties become stronger, the effect of ideological distance turns clearly positive and statistically significant for the upper 44% of incumbent parties (last tercentile: b = 0.09, se = 0.03). These results underscore the expectation that the high non-compliance rate with which ministries intrude into their colleagues' turf is not distributed haphazardly but follows a political logic that allows strong incumbent parties to steer the process of legislation in contentious policy areas even though their ministries are, strictly speaking, not responsible for it.

The final paper addresses a related question concerning how bureaucratic attention translates into legislative output of coalition governments (Klüser 2020b). It combines the data on bureaucratic issue attention derived from the coding of organisation charts with the information on bills and their ministerial sponsorship already used in the previous paper (Klüser and Breunig 2020). The paper presupposes that parties whose ministries devote more attention to a policy issue are also more active in sponsoring legislation. Yet, it does not primarily focus on this rather obvious association but instead argues that the extent to which bureaucratic issue attention lends itself to legislation is conditional on political interests and the administrative context. In order to test these expectations, the analysis models the amount of bills drafted by an incumbent party according to a negative-binomial distribution. The methodological discussion and the appendix to Klüser (2020b) presents numerous tests, suggesting both that a negative-binomial model is significantly better at approximating the empirical data-generating process than a simple poisson model and that resorting to a two-part model (comparable to Klüser 2020a) is not necessary to fit the data adequately.

Before delving into the results concerning the aforementioned conditionality of effects, analysis firmly supports the presumption that bureaucratic issue attention lends itself to the drafting of bills. Across all model specifications the estimated coefficient is positive and statistically significant (b = 8.89, se = 0.43; model 1 in table 1 in Klüser 2020b), which implies that parties whose ministries devote more attention to a policy issue are also more active in sponsoring respective legislation. In order to test the conditionality of this effect, the analysis resorts to interaction effects. Firstly, and in line with Klüser

(2019), it is argued that bureaucratic issue attention is less effectively translated into bills, if it is spread out across ministries belonging to different incumbent parties. While the argument is spelled out more in detail in the respective paper, the expectation is as follows: Parties, wary that their bill proposals could be caught up in the process of inter-ministerial coordination and, hence, substantively amended to reduce potential policy bias, are more reluctant to sponsor legislation. In line therewith, the regression analysis indeed suggests that the positive effect of bureaucratic attention shrinks in contexts where it is more evenly distributed across the incumbent parties ($b_{\text{Bureaucratic Attention X Attention Spread}}$ = -1.82, se = 0.73; see model 2 in table 1 in Klüser 2020b). Importantly, this does not imply that bureaucratic attention exerts a negative effect on the amount of bills a party drafts. In contrast, the Johnson-Neyman technique, which inspects the conditional effect of a focal predictor across the values of a moderator (e.g. Bauer and Curran 2005), shows that the marginal effect of bureaucratic attention remains significantly positive across the entire range of observations. This notion is also apparent from the left marginal effects plot (figure 12), which shows the marginal effect of bureaucratic issue attention on the number of bills a party drafts conditional on the amount of bureaucratic attention it possesses within its ministries and the distribution thereof across incumbent parties. To aid interpretation, the x-axis denotes the multiplicative effects induced by a one standard deviation change in the focal variable instead of the estimated coefficients on the scale of logged counts. If attention to an individual policy issue is consolidated in ministries of just one party, a one standard deviation increase of bureaucratic attention more than doubles the amount of bills a party is predicted to initiate in a policy area. On the opposite end, if attention to one and the same issue is evenly distributed across coalescing parties, the same increment only produces a 80% increase in legislative activity.

Figure 12 Marginal multiplicative effect of one standard deviation change of bureaucratic attention conditional on covariates
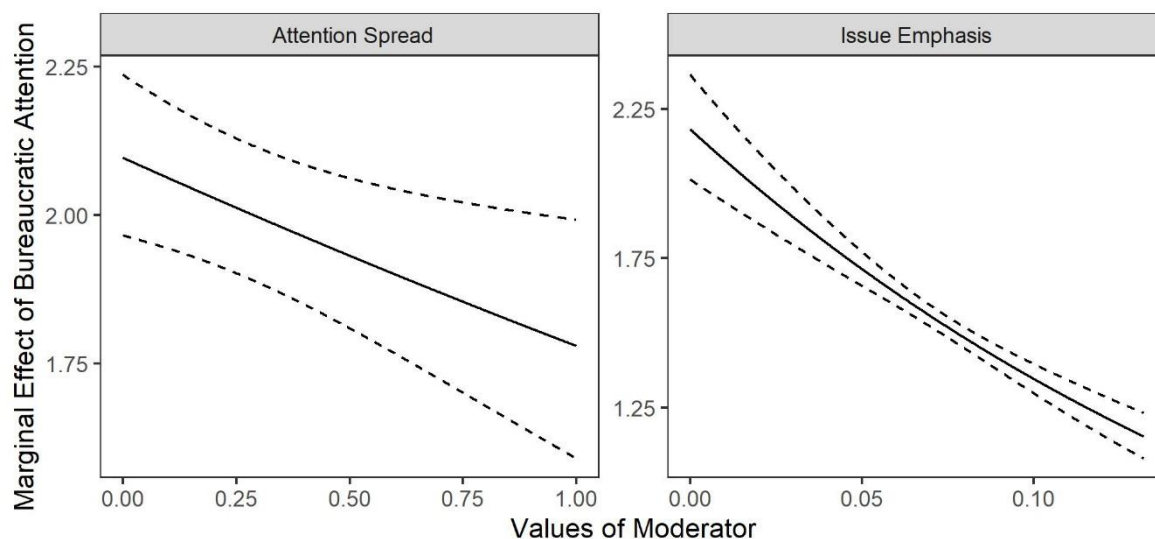
Note: Dotted lines represent the 95% confidence intervals.

Lastly, the paper conjectures that the amount of bureaucratic attention only primarily drives bill production in contexts of low importance, i.e. if parties have not committed themselves to address a certain policy matter. In contrast, whenever parties have emphasised policy issues pre-electorally, they are prone to override the standard modus operandi of "more bureaucracy produces more paperwork" and push through their political ideas regardless of the amount of attention their ministries devote to a policy issue. As a result, bureaucratic attention becomes a less potent predictor of bill production. The results of the regression analysis are in line with this expectation and reveal that the positive effect of bureaucratic attention diminishes in high salience contexts ($b_{\text{Bureaucratic Attention X Issue Salience}}$ = -53.65, se = 5.98; see model 3 in table 1 in Klüser 2020b). Importantly, this does not stipulate that the joint effect of both covariates turns negative in any realistic scenario. Again calculating the Johnson-Neyman interval reveals that the conditional effect remains significantly positive up to values of issue salience beyond the 99.9% percentile. The right tile in figure 12 again visualises this relationship by plotting the multiplicative marginal effect. With regard to the conjectured negative interaction effect, it illustrates how bureaucratic attention more effectively translates into drafted bills in low-salience contexts, as shown by the markedly downward sloping line. For policy matters that parties have not mentioned in their manifestos, a one standard deviation increase in bureaucratic attention more than doubles the number of bills parties initiate. Yet, this effect strength rapidly deteriorates as parties have committed themselves to a policy matter.

Limitations

Gauging the dissertation's results, there are a couple of limitations that ought to be considered. Firstly, using the CAP coding scheme to measure ministries' attention to policy issues can induce measurement error. It is possible that parties only appear to attend to the same issue, although the defined policy issue clusters are vague enough to allow for a neat allocation of ministerial responsibilities within them. Hence, while *prima facie* multiple ministries seem to address the same CAP policy issue, governments may actually have a shared internal understanding of how sub-aspects of this policy issues pertain to the involved ministries. If this was the case, the measures of bureaucratic issue attention used throughout this dissertations' papers would overestimate the extent to which bureaucratic attention is distributed across multiple ministries. However, the detailed nature of the CAP coding scheme, which comprises about 250 distinct policy issues, counterbalances these tendencies and ensures that the measure should generally pick up on real overlaps within narrow categories. The brief case study presented at the end of chapter four, considering German consumer protection legislation intended to limit unwanted advertising and sales calls illustrates this point. When the bill was eventually signed into effect, it bore the signatures of the three ministers involved its drafting. This example of positive cooperation resulting from overlapping responsibility is clearly reflected in the data, which lists 13 mentions of the corresponding issue category (15-25) in the entire government. Of this number, six belonged to social-democratic and seven to Christian-democratic ministries, which yields policy responsibility scores of 0.46 and 0.54 respectively.

Moreover, and particularly valid with regard to Klüser (2019), thoroughly testing the expectations regarding responsibility overlap requires better data on parties' policy positions on a large set of dimensions. While the abstract approach of aggregating overlap across entire governments may be theoretically defensible, it counteracts the detailed nature of the elicited data on bureaucratic issue attention. The alternative strategy presented in the section "Coalitional Coexistence through Coordination" is kind of a quick fix that exploits available MP data to measure party positions on 13 different dimensions (Klüver and Zubek 2018). However, such a procedure again requires a crosswalk between different metrics, which in itself is prone to misspecifications. Moreover, the necessity to map one metric onto another thwarts the benefits of having one unified measurement infrastructure along the policy process, which was a central motivation for relying on the expertise and definitions of the CAP for the data collection underlying this dissertation. At the same time,

given the detailed nature of the CAP codebook, it appears unlikely to successfully extract policy positions from textual data on about 250 distinct policy issues.

As mentioned previously, the short time span of the studies, which only sample between four to seven coalition governments per country, may be inadequate to test some implications that derive from the theoretical arguments laid out in this summary report and the individual papers. In particular, the assertion that parties' attention to policy issues drives the amount of bureaucratic issue attention they receive within their ministries in a continuous fashion would benefit from longer times-series of data. Likewise, the small set of sampled countries is potentially problematic. While there are good convenience reasons to focus on these countries, such as availability of information on the policy issues ministries attend to and the wealth of CAP data provided by the three respective country projects, the countries have also been chosen because they are unlikely cases to observe overlapping bureaucratic issue attention meant to attenuate ministerial dominance. Yet, the sample makes it hard to gauge in how far the use of overlapping bureaucratic issue attention is a general phenomenon of countries where multiparty governments are the norm. As coalitions have numerous tools at their disposal to curb ministerial influence, it cannot be taken for granted that coalitions generally resort to inter-ministerial coordination. As discussed before, different coalition devices likely interact and substitute each other. However, as many of those rest on institutional setups that only change sporadically, testing such claims either requires very long time series or data that spans a large set of countries, none of which this dissertation furnishes.

Lastly, the data and analyses this dissertation marshals to underpin its theoretical claims can only ascertain that governments allocate bureaucratic issue attention strategically across partisan boarders. While such overlaps provide the foundation for coalitions to use inter-ministerial coordination to both curb ministerial discretion and spread out the right to initiate legislation across interested incumbent parties, the dissertation does not study to what extent such overlaps really trigger coordination between ministries. Instead, it assumes that administrations, striving for efficiency, generally seek to abolish redundancies, which is why their presence is indicative of a strategic purpose.

The Conclusion

This dissertation suggests a novel perspective on how coalition governments allocate responsibility for policy issues among its constituent parties. Within this endeavour, it presents both empirical evidence and theoretical arguments for why we should regularly see multiple ministries, and in fact multiple incumbent parties, attending to the same policy issue. While the preceding chapter presented the results of each paper individually, this final chapter draws them together and highlights the common thread running through the entire dissertation. The first part discusses the scientific relevance and puts the individual findings into context. Thereafter, the second part suggests possible extensions to the research presented in my dissertation.

Scientific Relevance

Although some parts of the dissertation might have come across as attacking the commonly raised claim that "ministers matter" for governmental policy-making, such a criticism has never been its central motivation. Quite in contrast, the advocated perspective embraces the idea that ministers and their ministries are inextricably involved in the process of designing legislation. Unlike other political actors, ministers enjoy access to a skilled armada of civil servants, capable of turning faint policy ideas into palpable policy drafts (Bonnaud and Martinais 2014; Page 2003). Hence, for most governmental bills, it is ministers who supply the first draft and thereby set the course for a bill's passage through the legislative institutions (Laver and Shepsle 1994). None of this appears implausible. However, the dissertation objects to the notion that there is only one minister with the potential to sponsor any particular piece of legislation (Laver and Shepsle 1996). Importantly, this objection is not just based on a theoretical discussion regarding the simplifying assumptions to facilitate the modelling of government formation, but on an empirical reality that is too ubiquitous to be simply defined away. As alluded to in the introductory epigraph to this summary report, the precise ministerial location for policy matters often remains vague within German governments (Hoffmann 2003). In the UK, health care matters are attended to in the ministries for health and education, while counterterrorism walks the line between the Foreign and the Home Office (Dewan and Hortala-Vallve 2011, 613). Yet, the most compelling reason for my objection are not the numerously described instances of unclear ministerial responsibilities but the vast set of tools governments have developed and actively use to coordinate and reconcile conflict between ministers and their ministries (Greve 2018; Jensen 2008; Mayntz and

Scharpf 1975). None of these coordination mechanisms would be necessary if the boarders separating the different ministries' policy domains were sufficiently impermeable. Given these empirical hints against the notion of exclusive ministerial responsibility for policy matters, ministerial dominance should rather be understood as multiple ministers can matter. This dissertation suggests different avenues to incorporate this perspective into the study of ministerial policy-making, with a particular focus on coalition governments.

Motivated thereby, this dissertation proposes a unified infrastructure to research how multiparty governments deal with policy matters. While rich and insightful, the literature on governments in parliamentary systems is often fragmented, which is reflected by both the objects of study and the ensuing analytical decisions. Most traditionally, scholarship zooms in on the question of portfolio allocation, seeking to explain which parties win control over which policy areas by essentially mapping temporally stable portfolios on party families (Budge and Keman 1993) or issue salience (Bäck, Debus, and Dumont 2011; Volkens et al. 2019). In contrast, the literature on portfolio design takes the formation and rudimental allocation of portfolios as a given and argues that the creation and abolition of ministries (Mortensen and Green-Pedersen 2015) as well as the inflation and deflation of portfolios (Sieberer 2015) follows parties' salience for policy areas. Eventually, studying policy outputs and outcomes, the coalition governance literature zooms in on the timing of bills introduction (L. W. Martin 2004), the extent to which governmental bills are adapted in parliament (L. W. Martin and Vanberg 2004, 2005, 2011), and the actual policy content of bill within the area of social policy (L. W. Martin and Vanberg 2019). However, they generally do so with a focus on the entire government instead of the allocation and design of single ministerial portfolios.

This dissertation suggests a common thread that connects the different stages of government formation, management, and policy-making. Inspired by the burgeoning literature on political agenda setting (Baumgartner and Jones 1993; Jones and Baumgartner 2005) and issue competition (Green-Pedersen 2019), as well as the related Comparative Agendas Project that supplied the necessary empirical data (Baumgartner, Breunig, and Grossman 2019; Green-Pedersen and Walgrave 2014), I suggest that coalition governance likewise can be understood as political attention to policy issues. This perspective has numerous advantages. Firstly, by studying policy issues that are defined by the researcher (Bevan 2019) instead of the political context (as it is the case with ministerial portfolios), it furnishes a common metric that applies to all stages of the policy-making process, from political input, via governance throughput, to legislative output. Secondly, zooming in on attention to policy issues suggests a unified concept that can be observed at different

stages and levels of the policy-making process, yielding insights into parities' issue salience, the extent to which the ministerial bureaucracy is devoted to policy issues, and the legislative attention governments pay to given policy areas. Thirdly, arguing that also the ministerial bureaucracy can be understood via the concept of attention to policy issues, which is sensitive to the political context by definition, embraces the notion that portfolios are malleable and regularly changed according to political and administrative rationales (G. Davis et al. 1999; Fleischer, Bertels, and Schulze-Gabrechten 2018; Mortensen and Green-Pedersen 2015; Sieberer et al. 2019). At the same time, glancing at the grouping of bureaucratic attention to policy issues within different portfolios can be informative of the administrative context within which governments deal with political questions. Conditional on where policy issues are handled – whether immigration is attend to in the ministry of domestic affairs or social policy – can influence the policy frame that governments apply to these problems and, hence, ultimately affect the policies they formulate (Axelrod 1976). Lastly, and crucially for the theoretical argument laid out in this dissertation, conceiving of governments in terms of bureaucratic attention to policy issues makes it possible to study its distribution across ministerial and party boundaries and, thus, integrates the claim that ministerial control over policy issues is not exclusive, but rather frequently shared among colleagues.

This endeavour is facilitated by the provision of novel data on the set of policy issues to which ministries in Denmark, Germany, and the Netherlands attend. The collection followed the definitions and rules laid out in the coding scheme developed by the Comparative Agendas Project (Baumgartner, Breunig, and Grossman 2019; Green-Pedersen and Walgrave 2014). It yields information that is compatible with existing data on the policy process, obviating the need to map data from one metric onto another (e.g. Bäck, Debus, and Dumont 2011; Klüver and Zubek 2018). Furthermore, with regard to the aforementioned unified research infrastructure, the collected information on bureaucratic issue attention completes CAP data on the process from policy inputs to outputs by furnishing data about the "policy throughput" in the executive that informs about the amount, location, and concentration of attention ministries devote to policy issues.

Substantially, this dissertation yields insights into how coalition governments process the interests of their constituent parties. By revisiting the old question of "who gets what" in multiparty governments, it found that the allocation of ministries and their attention to policy issues also follows parties' tastes for political issues. However, by moving beyond a dichotomous operationalisation of allocation, it was shown that coalitions also adapt the extent to which their ministries focus on policy matters according to issue salience. In brief, more important issues enjoy more bureaucratic attention. Secondly,

the dissertation embraced the new perspective that ministers (plural!) matter and showed that coalitions deliberately distribute ministries to parties to create responsibility overlaps. This ensures that parties can exploit the numerous mechanisms of inter-ministerial cooperation in mutually important policy areas. In contrast, there is no general tendency that governments use overlapping ministerial policy domains to reconcile preferential conflict within policy areas. While Danish governments indeed create more overlap in governments where parties' preferences more markedly diverge, there is no such trend in Germany or the Netherlands. Importantly, this is not just another tool in the box to manage coalition governments (e.g. Andeweg 2000; Carroll and Cox 2012; L. W. Martin and Vanberg 2005, 2011; Moury and Timmermans 2013; Thies 2001), but describes a different modus operandi of political decision-making within coalition governments than on what most of the coalition governance literature relies. Inter-ministerial coordination across party boundaries does not reel back in ministerial dominance but seeks to attenuate at its origin. Simultaneously, conferring the right and opportunity to present legislation within commonly important issue areas to multiple parties grants all of them the possibility to benefit from the media coverage that may be sparked by the presentation of novel legislation (L. W. Martin and Vanberg 2011, 13). Lastly, this dissertation does not stop at the stage of policy throughput but also examines the impact the amount and location of bureaucratic attention has on the legislative activity of coalition governments and their parties. While it cannot determine whether too many cooks spoil the broth – since it does not look at policy content – it finds that more cooks do cook less. Thus, non-exclusive ministerial policy domains have negative repercussion on the process of policy formulation.

Future Research

The dissertation's suggestion to study coalition governments through the lens of bureaucratic issue attention sheds light on a research agenda, part of which speaks to the limitations raised in the previous chapter, while the other addresses its scientific relevance for political science. As mentioned before, some parts of this dissertations' analysis are hampered by insufficient preferential data. Admittedly, there is not an easy fix for this problem. Given the detailed nature of the CAP codebook, it appears unlikely to successfully extract policy positions from textual data on about 250 distinct policy issues. In fact, glancing at the distribution of parties' attention to policy issues, as measured via their pre-electoral manifestos, shows that for many issues there are only very few mentions per party, which renders an approach based on the aggregation

of positive and negative mentions of issues similar to the MP almost impossible. Likewise, little textual information about many policy issues does not satisfy the lavish input demands of computerised methods to extract policy information, like Worfish (Slapin and Proksch 2008) or Wordscore (Lowe 2008), let alone more advanced machine learning approaches. However, the nested structure of the CAP coding scheme suggests a middle ground. Depending on the precise national version, it groups all detailed policy issues into a set of about 21 logical policy clusters. Within these clusters, there may be enough information per party to successful gauge position based on the textual data contained in parties' policy platforms. The resulting data would be fully compatible with the elicited data on bureaucratic issue attention and, hence, facilitate a more nuanced analysis of the extent to which coalition governments create overlapping issue responsibilities for contentious policy issues.

Secondly, future studies might want to research to what extent governments expand or reduce the extent to which their ministerial bureaucracy attends to individual policy issues. In line with findings regarding the abolition and creation of ministries (Mortensen and Green-Pedersen 2015) as well as the inflation and deflation of ministerial portfolios (Sieberer 2015) according to issue salience concerns, a question is whether governments change the amount bureaucratic attention devoted to policy issues in a similar pattern. The current analysis only suggests that parties garner more bureaucratic attention if issues become more salient to them; however, it does not say whether these additional units of attention are additionally created or rather won via the monopolisation of attention within one ministry.

There are reasons to believe that coalitions in some countries may prefer to resort to different coalition governance mechanisms, obviating the need to stimulate inter-ministerial coordination. Many countries are known to commonly use parliamentary review to spot and amend policy drift (L. W. Martin and Vanberg 2011). Given the high costs that positive inter-ministerial coordination inflicts upon the involved parties (Mayntz and Scharpf 1975), it is conceivable that, on balance, amending legislation within parliament is cheaper and, hence, preferable to having differences being sorted out within the executive in a ping-pong-like procedure. Furthermore, relying on parliamentary review shifts the burden of coalition management from the executive to the legislative branch of government. Since the same party elites who often form a coalition, design its portfolios, and negotiate its policy agreement are regularly rewarded with a ministerial office, it might be that they rather have their fellow partisans in parliament taking care of curbing ministerial dominance. As for a different mechanism, both Germany and the Netherlands are

used to seeing their governments draft lengthy coalition agreements (Timmermans 2003) that are intended to a priori set policy guidelines (Moury and Timmermans 2013; Timmermans 2006) between the coalescing parties and prescribe mechanisms and rules specific to each institution that can be used to reconcile disagreements during the incumbency (Bowler et al. 2016; Indridason and Kristinsson 2013). Finally, the Netherlands are the textbook example of how coalitions employ hostile junior ministers to control whether "real" ministers remain faithful to the coalition's policy goals (Thies 2001). All these different mechanisms to resolve conflicts ensure that coalitions are not reliant on inter-ministerial coordination. In turn, countries with fewer available management tools, such as Ireland or Spain, should be more prone to use inter-ministerial coordination and have conflicts resolved directly within the government. In the same vein, it is telling that the mechanism of actively devising overlapping ministerial portfolios was first discussed in the context of the British Cameron-Clegg government and the notoriously weak House of Commons (Dewan and Hortala-Vallve 2011). While chapter four provides some insights into the interdependence of different mechanisms, the potential country differences can only truly be analysed by expanding the data collection beyond the present sample.

With regard to the legislative repercussions of bureaucratic issue attention, it may be worthwhile to research how different levels of bureaucratic attention to policy issues, its location and distribution across ministries affects policy-making substantively. This dissertation only glances at how legislative activity, i.e. the amount of legislation coalition governments produce, responds to which and how ministries attend to the corresponding policy issues. However, it is silent about whether these empirical patterns affect coalition policy substantively. Indeed, there are good reasons to assume that the administrative context within which policy issues are dealt with leaves its imprint on the applied policy frame (Axelrod 1976). For instance, if immigration matters are handled in the ministry of domestic affairs, the applied frame likely juxtaposes it to issues of national security and, hence, leads the ministry to design policies that are more restrictive. If immigration is dealt with in the ministry of social affairs, the attention may rather zoom in on matters of successful integration, which likely results in the ministry drafting more welcoming policies. The collected data on bureaucratic issue attention makes it easy, in principle, to scrutinise such claims, as it directly informs about the entire set of policy issues ministries deal with. The unequally trickier part is to get data on the policy content of legislation issued by governments. To the best of my knowledge, such data is only available for a few policy areas, particularly within the cluster of social policy (Scruggs, Jahn, and Kuitto 2014). Yet, at least within this one policy area, delving into how coalition policy outcomes

respond to how coalition governments design the corresponding bureaucratic attention structure could elucidate the substantive policy repercussions that follow from this dissertation's central argument.

Lastly, it remains an open question in how far bureaucratic issue attention indeed helps parties in coalition governments to remain faithful to their electoral promises and party manifestos. Both mandate theory (McDonald 2005; McDonald and Budge 2005) and the growing bulk of literature on the fulfilment of election pledges (Costello and Thomson 2008; Mansergh and Thomson 2007; Thomson et al. 2017) argue that parties are obliged to work towards the fulfilment of their promises. Yet, in coalition governments, ministerial responsibility for such promised issues may be the prerequisite that enables parties to live up to their promises. Against this backdrop, Robert Thomson and his collaborators on the Comparative Party Pledges Project (Thomson et al. 2017) argue along the conventional lines of the policy dictator model claiming that parties within coalitions should strive to seize control over the ministerial department responsible for redeeming their pledge; yet, the empirical evidence remains inconclusive. The reason may be that portfolios are too fleeting (Mortensen and Green-Pedersen 2015; Sieberer et al. 2019) and too imprecise (Klüser 2019, 2020a) to sufficiently determine whether parties are indeed able to redeem their promises and implement their mandates. The perspective zooming in on bureaucratic issue attention advocated in this dissertation is not hampered by such problems and, thus, facilitates to revisit the claim that relevant ministerial tenure connects electoral preference with governmental policies.

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English Abstract

Central literature on coalition governance argues that ministers are central for coalitional policy-making. Based on the idea that each minister controls the government's actions in a unique set of policy issues – the ministerial portfolio – it is claimed that ministers can severely bias bills drafted under their purview and, hence, break with the policy guidelines of the coalition government. In response, a streak of literature unravelled a toolkit of devices coalition governments can use to monitor ministers, i.e. curtail their potential to go native. These tools range from pre-emptively sorting out policy conflict even before the coalition commences, over installing partisan spies in ministries to report to the cabinet about intra-ministerial proceedings, to reviewing and revising legislation in parliament.

This dissertation does not directly object to this research but rather welcomes the notion that ministers matter for designing policies. However, it questions whether the problem of ministerial dominance is as acute as generally assumed. In many instances, several ministries may attend to one and the same policy issue. Theoretically allowing for such overlapping ministerial jurisdictions has a couple of implications for the study of coalition governments. Neither the right nor the opportunity to draft legislation must necessarily pertain to just one ministry, or more crucially, to ministries that belong to just one incumbent party. Hence, parties can access the often manifold institutions available to governments to resolve inter-ministerial disagreements to stimulate collaboration of ministries across party lines. Instead of monitoring ministers, such inter-ministerial coordination directly attenuates ministerial dominance by distributing both expertise and opportunity more equally across the coalition partners.

Drawing on novel data on the extent to which ministries attend to individual policy issues in five Danish, seven Dutch, and four German coalition governments from about 1995 to 2010, the dissertation examines how parties' interest for policy issues travels through the processes of coalition formation, management, and policy-making. It shows how parties struggle to garner influence over policy issues that are important to them, which is more often granted to the more powerful partners in government. Moreover, coalitions are reluctant to allow one party to monopolise control of mutually salient policy issues in an attempt to spread out the right and opportunity to initiate legislation across incumbent parties. Zooming in on situations where incumbent parties' references diverge, Danish governments appear to increase the overlap of ministerial jurisdictions to contain policy disagreements between coalition partners. Lastly, with regard to policy-making, unclear responsibility

structures can effectively stymie ministerial attempts to initiate legislation. These results not only provide new insights into the internal operations of coalition governments but also suggest novel avenues to study the translation of voters' preferences into final government policies in parliamentary democracies.

Dansk resumé

Litteratur med fokus på koalitionsregeringer argumenterer, at ministre er centrale for koalitionens politiske beslutninger. Baseret på ideen, at hver minister kontrollerer regeringshandlinger i et unik politikområde – den ministerielle portofolie -, er det hævdet, at ministrene kan påvirke beslutningsudkast under deres ansvarsområde og på den måde bryde koalitionsregeringens politik målsætninger. Som modsvar herpå er der udviklet en række værktøjer, som koalitionsregeringer kan anvende til at overvåge ministrenes forsøg på at forfølge deres egeninteresser. Disse værktøjer rangerer fra forbyggende arbejde, som skal finde konflikter før koalitionen træder i kraft, over plantning af partispioner med det formål at rapportere til bestyrelsen om intra-ministerielle aktiviteter, til at bedømme og revidere lovgivninger i parlamentet.

Denne afhandling forsøger ikke at modsige denne forskning, men i stedet byder den ideen om, at ministrene har betydning for beslutningernes udformning, velkommen. Dog stiller den spørgsmålstegn ved, at ministerieldominans er et så stort problem, som det ellers normalt antages. I stedet er der mange eksempler på, at flere ministerier kan påvirke et eller flere områder. Teoretisk har denne mulighed for overlappende ministerielle ansvarsområder flere implikationer for studiet af koalitionsregeringer. Hverken retten eller muligheden for at lave lovgivningsudkast tilfalder kun et ministerium og, mere vital, til ministre, som tilhører det samme regeringsbærende parti. På denne måde kan partier tilgå de til tider mangfoldige institutioner, som regeringer kan benytte til at løse interministerielle uenigheder, hvilket i sidste ende stimulerer samarbejde mellem ministerier på tværs af partilinjer. I stedet for at overvåge ministre kan sådan interministeriel koordination dæmpe ministerieldominans ved at fordele ekspertise såvel som at mindske forskellene mellem koalitionsparterne.

Med brug af nye datakilder omhandlende, i hvilken udstrækning ministerier deltager i individuelle policy-emner i fem danske, syv hollandske samt fire tyske koalitionsregeringer fra 1995 til 2010, undersøger denne afhandling, hvordan partiers interesser i politikemner rejser på tværs af koalitionsformationer, ledelse samt politikudformning. Resultaterne viser, hvordan partier kæmper for at opnå indflydelse over politikområder, som er vigtige for netop dem, hvilket i sidste ende ofte tilgår de mest magtfulde regeringspartier. Koalitioner er derudover mere modvillige til at tillade, at et parti får monopol på gensidig saliente politikområder i et forsøg på at sprede retten og muligheden for at påbegynde lovgivning på tværs af de regeringsbærende partier. Ved at zoome ind på situationer, hvor regeringspartiernes præferencer divergere, vi-

ser de danske regeringer sig at øge overlap mellem ministerielle ansvarsområder med det formål at holde politiske uoverensstemmelse mellem koalitionsparterne i skak. Slutteligt kan uklare ansvarsstrukturer vedrørende beslutningsprocessen effektivt hindre ministerielle forsøg på at initiere lovgivninger. Disse resulterer giver ikke bare nye indsigter i, hvordan koalitionsregeringer internt fungerer, men de viser ligeledes nye veje til at studere, hvordan vælgernes præferencer oversættes til politiske beslutninger i parlamentariske demokratier.