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Mapping the Swiss Public Administration:
Challenges and First Research Steps

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Abstract : In the present paper, we argue that the existing data collections fail to map specific features of modern public administration in Switzerland, namely new modes of governance with hybrid state structures. After presenting the Swiss federal administration in a nutshell, we discuss the challenge of mapping hybrid state structures based on different studies focusing on four different aspects: first, quasi-state bodies; second, joined up government; third, emerging new institutions for problems not adequately captured by existing political geography, most prominently seen in the case of functional urban regions; and fourth, new modes of governance with co-production of public goods by state and non-state actors. We then present newer studies and ongoing research (which could be coupled with the mapping of public administration in Switzerland), namely the "agenda setting"-project, research on independent regulatory bodies and, finally, the courts' impact on public administration. In further conceptual work, we may discuss in more depth how the challenge of new modes of governance and cooperative government can be addressed by focusing on the transformation of state structures rather than by adopting a static view.

1. Introduction

In the present paper, we discuss the question of how to deal with the phenomenon of "hybrid state structures" in systematic surveys of public bureaucracy, based on experiences made in the data collection for comparative policy analysis at different federal levels in Switzerland.

In Switzerland exist various attempts to systematically map public administrative structures, the most important one is the BADAC (*Banque de données sur les administrations cantonales et communales*) hosted at the IDHEAP (Swiss Graduate School of Public Administration) in Lausanne. BADAC is a data base of comparative information and analysis on the administrations of the Swiss cantons and cities. The bilingual (French-German) Website describes the main characteristics of the structure and size of government, the political-administrative organization (governments, parliaments, management and public policy), the civil servants and their wages, the finances as well as inter-cantonal cooperation. The database contains more than 600 variables and indicators, as well as a large number of downloadable tables in Excel format. It is supplemented by survey data about the cantonal and municipal administrations, collected by the BADAC, and by other official statistics. It offers numbers possibilities of performing comparative analyses (benchmarking, monitoring, links, organization charts) for the 26 cantons and 120 Swiss cities with more than 10,000 inhabitants (including at the level of departments and services of the respective public administrations). General overviews of the federal administration have been offered by Germann (1998) and Varone (2007). The Swiss COBRA project is currently running at the IDHEAP by our colleagues Y. Emery and A. Ladner (cf. Common Public Organization Data Base for Research & Analysis; www.publicmanagement-cobra.org). The original survey will be slightly adapted to the Swiss context and then conducted in agency-like organizations. Specific questions related to political control, public corporate governance and public management of agencies will be possibly added. Statistical analysis will be done, according to previous exploitation of the COBRA questionnaire.

However, we argue that the existing data collections fail to map specific features of modern public administration, namely new modes of governance with hybrid state structures are difficult to capture in a comparative and systematic manner. While previous research corroborates this fact, there are new projects under way that seek for ways of overcoming these deficiencies. We will present the Swiss situation in the following manner:

In the next section 2, we will present the Swiss federal administration in a nutshell drawing from existing work. In the subsequent section 3, we will discuss the challenge of mapping hybrid state structures based on different studies focusing on different aspects: first, quasi-state bodies; second, joined up government; third, emerging new institutions for problems not adequately captured by existing political geography, most prominently seen in the case of functional urban regions; and fourth, new modes of governance with co-production of public goods by state and non-state actors. In section 4, we will present newer studies and ongoing research on public administration, namely the "agenda setting"-project, research on independent regulatory bodies, and, finally, the courts' impact on public administration. In the concluding section 5, we argue that both conceptual implications of these experiences as well as methodological lessons need to be further discussed (in order to inform the actual and upcoming data collection).

2. The Swiss administration in a nutshell

We begin our short presentation of the Swiss administration by sketching the outline of the federal administration and its evolution over time. Attention is drawn to the fundamental aspects of the ministerial structure of the administration. Furthermore, the importance of the volunteer or civilian forms (the so-called "*Milizverwaltung*") is underlined, as opposed to professional forms of administration, such as extra-parliamentary commissions and quasi-state implementation agencies (see Varone 2007 for more details).

2.1. The evolution of the federal administration

From a legal standpoint, the *central* administration consists of the Federal Chancellery and the seven Federal Departments: the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA), the Federal Department of Home Affairs (FDHA), the Federal Department of Justice and Police (FDJP), the Federal Department of Defence, Civil Protection and Sport (DDPS), the Federal Department of Finance (FDF), the Federal Department of Economic Affairs (FDEA), and the Federal Department of the Environment, Transport, Energy and Communications (DETEC). These departments are made up of General Secretariats, Federal Offices and their respective subsidiary units.

The *decentralized* administration consists of committees with decision-making powers, certain independent authorities such as the Federal Data Protection Commissioner, Presence Switzerland, the Swiss Agency for Therapeutic Products, and the Office of the Prosecutor General of the Swiss Confederation, as well as autonomous firms and organizations.[i] Due to the federal process of implementation which is characteristic of the Swiss political system, the framework of the decentralized administration also includes the cantonal administrations and the dispersed services of the Federation, such as customs management.

Going beyond this formal distinction, the federal administration can be represented by a model of four concentric circles. The model of concentric circles describes a vision of the administration in terms of a central core in which politics clearly dominate and, as we move away from the centre, we observe an increase in the influence of private market forces on the administration.

1. The *central administration*, which carries out the roles of leadership, formulating and coordination policies, and providing internal management services, makes up the essential core. The General Secretariats of the departments, the Federal Office of Justice or the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs are prime examples of core elements.
2. The second circle consists of those offices that are managed according to New Public Management principles (the so-called *Gestion par Mandats de Prestations et Enveloppe Budgétaire*, or "GMEB" -> "Performance contract"). The Federal Office for Communications, the Swiss Federal Nuclear Safety Inspectorate and the Swiss Meteorological Institute (MeteoSwiss) are examples within this circle.
3. Public agencies, institutes and firms that are wholly owned by the Federation, regardless of whether they have an independent legal status, make up the third circle. This category consists of a very mixed group of organizations, including the Federal Institute of Intellectual Property, the Federal Institutes of Technology or the Federal Pension Fund (PUBLICA).[ii]
4. Within the widest circle, we find private or special-agreement companies in which the Federation is the sole or majority owner. This category includes former monopolistic public companies, notably the Swiss Federal Railways,[iii] Swisscom[iv] and Swiss Post.[v] These public service sectors have gradually been opened up to competition, and have (in some cases) been subject to a transformation in terms of their legal and ownership status;

RUAG[vi] and Skyguide are examples of organizations that have become private corporations.

In order to understand the evolution of the "borders" of the federal administration, Table 1 presents an inventory of the number of full-time permanent employees in the various administrative units from 1975 to the present. The general federal administration, i.e., the two central spheres described above, has been reduced to approximately 30,000 civil servants. In contrast to the growth experienced during the period from 1945 to 1975, which is known as the "Glorious Thirty", the total number of administrative personnel of the Federation has been in decline for the past decade; a similar trend can be found in the formerly public corporations.

Table 1: Evolution of the workforce (full-time, permanent employees)

Unit/Year	1975	1985	1995	2000	2004
General federal administration[a]	32,355	33,541	34,883	31 269 (including 2,177 GMEB)	29 966 (including 2,733 GMEB)
Post Telephone Telegraph (PTT)	50,578	56,557	58,975	Swiss Post: 42,884 Swisscom SA: 18,155 Total: 61,039	Swiss Post: 38,972 Swisscom SA: 15,664 Total: 54,636
Swiss Federal Railways	40,487	36,785	32,661	CFF SA: 28,272	CFF SA: 28,351

[a] Since 2000, several administrative units from the third sphere are no longer taken into account, such as the Federal Institutes of Technology.
Source: State Accounts 1995 (p. 278), 2000 (p. 280) and 2004 (p. 291) and annual reports of Swisscom SA, the Swiss Post and the Swiss Federal Railways (CFF SA).

A similar trend can be found when examining the personnel costs of the general federal administration, which have grown in constant Swiss francs (1975 basis) from 1.65 billion in 1975 to 2.01 billion in 1985 and 2.6 billion in 1995, only to drop to 2.05 billion in 2000 and 1.58 billion in 2004.[vii] These major changes are the result, in large part, of successive waves of administrative reforms.

2.2. Federal departments (ministries) and offices

The structure of the seven ministries of the federal administration appears to be as permanent as the Churfisten string of seven mountain peaks in the canton of Saint Gallen (Germann 1996: 34). The number of (Federal Councillors leading the) *departments* has been set at seven since the adoption of the 1848 Constitution. Switzerland has not experienced the kind of restructuring, break-up or creation of governmental ministries which are typical to the arrival of new governments in power in other democracies. The immutability of the seven departments has nevertheless been subject to (ultimately unsuccessful) challenge on several occasions, including the question appearing on ballots in 1900 and 1942. The opposition to institutional change is not absolute, however, as several reorganizations have been carried out in the distribution of offices across the departments.

The *federal offices* that are directly under the control of a department represent the real "spinal cord of the federal administration" (Grisel 1984: 213). Given the steadfastness of the departments, the evolution of state activities has taken place at this level, following the emergence of the welfare State and according to the respective weight of various public policies.

The distribution of offices across departments is thus no small undertaking. Should the balance of responsibilities be distributed equally across the seven departments and thus across

the seven Federal Councilors responsible for each department? Or should the responsibilities be grouped along functional lines, grouping together complimentary policy fields? Or, from a management perspective, should the primary concern be the governability of the departments? These three approaches seem to form the basis of the organization and management of the administration by the Federal Council, which carries out the distribution of "offices between the departments according to the demands of management, the closeness of the links between administrative tasks, and the political and financial equilibrium".[viii]

Nevertheless, the departments remain very unbalanced in terms of the number of employees and personnel costs. Table 2 shows that the Department of Defence, Civil Protection and Sports accounts for over 40% of the staff and budgetary resources, while the Department of Finance takes up 25% and the other departments account for less than 10%. Of course, a smaller size does not necessarily translate into less prestige or political weight, especially when we consider the growing importance of the Department of Justice and Police or the Department of Foreign Affairs. *A contrario*, the DDPS often serves as a kind of training ground, given to the most recently elected Federal Councillor.

Table 2: The distribution of employees and personnel costs (in millions of Swiss Francs) by department in 2004

Department	Workforce (absolute)	Workforce as a %	Expenses (absolute)	Expenses as a %
FCh	195	0.65	23,860	0.76
DFA	2,930	9.77	266.746	8.55
DHA	1,978	6.60	229.636	7.36
DJP	2,377	7.93	283.660	9.09
DDPS	12,498	41.71	1,252.009	40.12
FDF	7,630	25.46	759.582	24.34
DEA	1,117	3.73	140.907	4.51
DETEC	1,271	4.24	164.401	5.27
Total	29,966	100	3,120.77	100

Source: my own calculations, based on the State Accounts 2004 (pp. 291–293).

The distribution of offices across departments is carried out in an *ad hoc* manner, rather than as the result of any real planning or rational assessment of administrative capabilities or policies to be implemented. The DHA thus appears to be a typical "mixed bag" ministry, an assessment of which would be worth carried out by the yardstick of the tangible effects of the RGA. If we compare the respective size of the workforces of the seven departments during the last decade, the relative size of the DFA (5,4% in 1994 versus 9,8% in 2004), the DJP (5.5% versus 7.9%), the FDF (18.1% versus 25.5%) and the DETEC (1.9% versus 4.2%) have all increased significantly, whereas that of the DHA (22.2% versus 6.6%) dropped dramatically, notably due to the shifting of the Federal Institutes of Technology and the military hospital at Novaggio to the third sphere. The DDPS maintained a relatively stable workforce (40.6% versus 41.7%).

It is also useful to compare the historical evolution of federal spending by task groups. The main changes in terms of sectoral spending are related to national defence (from 34.7 % in 1960 to 9.2% in 2004), as well as in food and agriculture (from 12.3% to 7.8%), whereas those related to social security (13.4% to 27.5%), traffic (from 5.9% to 14.8%), education and training (from 3.6% to 7.8%) or to the protection of the environment and land-use planning (from 0.8% to 1.5%) are increasing, although all at very different levels.

In addition to the structural inequalities between the departments and the areas regulated by the federal State, we must now take a critical look at the "governability" of the ministries. Limitations on the extent of the supervisory capacity, in terms of the number of subordinate offices answering to one department head, would seem to be a *sine qua non* condition for efficient management (Gulick and Urwick, 1937). In fact, the range of offices answering to the departments remains quite high at times, despite the Huber Commission recommending in 1971 that the number of directly subordinate offices should be between five and seven. A majority of departments had until recently a larger range of responsibilities, which grew primarily in the 1980s (see Table 3). The DDPS has been subject to the reverse tendency, despite its significant size, due to its use of the regrouping of offices that was provided for in the LOA. In the 1980s, the DHA, which is by definition a diverse and varied department, was also subject to reforms aimed at improving its governability, such as the regrouping of offices responsible for science and research.

Table 3: Services answering directly to department heads from 1928 to 2004[ix]

Year/Department	DFA	DHA	DJP	DDPS	FDF	DEA	DETEC	Total
1928	1	7	6	15	7	6	3	45
1959	4	12	6	11	8	6	6	53
1980	5	14	8	7	13	7	7	61
1991	6	11	11	7	11	8	7	61
2001	5	11	11	7	10	8	9	61
2005[x]	6	11	9	7	11	8	9	61

Sources: Germann (1996: 49) for the years 1928 to 1991 and "La Confédération en bref" for the years 2001 and 2005. My own calculations for 2004, based on the list of federal administrative units contained in OLOGA (RS 172.010.1).

3. Challenges to the mapping of public administration: previous experiences

There have been several research endeavors aiming at mapping specific aspects of administrative organization. All of these projects have shown the limits of the existing data bases and exhibited challenges for the realistic mapping of bureaucratic structures in Switzerland. These challenges regard, first, quasi-state bodies and the Swiss *Milizverwaltung*, second, the question of joined-up responsibilities of various units for the same tasks, third, the newly emerging institutions in functional urban regions, and fourth, the co-production of public goods by state and non-state actors. In the following, we will present the respective parts of these research projects and derive the challenges for further research.

3.1 The "Milizverwaltung": extra-parliamentary commissions and quasi-state organs

The Federal Council and the departments are also able to consult organizations or persons outside of the federal administration[xi] by creating, for example, extra-parliamentary commissions. These commissions take over certain responsibilities, either temporarily or permanently, from the Government, a department or an office. Their function consists of making recommendations and preparing projects (consultative commissions or *Verwaltungskommissionen*), which is the case, for example, for the Federal Commission on Medicine, or making binding decisions (decision-making commissions or *Behördenkommissionen*), as in the case of the Competition Commission.[xii]

The composition of the expert commissions should be representative of the general population and of the interest groups active in the domain under consideration.[xiii] A detailed study of 373 extra-parliamentary commissions active in 1978 (Germann 1981, 1985) showed that, among the 5,376 seats within commissions, 20% went to civil servants, 20% to cantonal and municipal representatives, 22% to representatives of private or mixed companies, 18% to professional associations, 11% to university professors, with other categories making up the remainder. These bodies are thus a place for encounters, exchange and negotiation between public and private actors, between the federal State and the cantons and, finally, between scientists and politico-administrative decision-makers.

The vast network of extra-parliamentary commissions that have been institutionalized represents a true *"Milizverwaltung"*, or "volunteer administration" for the Federation (Germann 1981, 1985). The members of these bodies participate on a part-time basis and do not receive payment for their services on a level equal to the salaries of employees of the administration. Nevertheless, these volunteer structures take the place of a Weberian administration, such as the Federal Banking Commission, or at the very least form a

complement to the administration, such as the Federal Commission for AIDS. The list of commissions, maintained by the Federal Chancellery, attests to the fact that there is no department that does not make use of such services, although the distribution across domains varies significantly.

Table 4 presents an inventory of extra-parliamentary commissions narrowly understood, as well as appeal commissions (e.g., the Federal Commission for Data Protection), representatives of the Federation (e.g., Swiss Tourism) and the leadership organs (e.g., Swiss National Commission for UNESCO) that are also responsible for general interest assignments. Consultative commissions are the most numerous. Taking into consideration all types of extra-parliamentary commissions, nearly half of all commissions are based in the DHA.

Table 4:   Extra-parliamentary organs appointed by the Federal Council in 2005[xiv]

Type of organ / Department	FCh	DFA	DHA	DJP	DDPS	FDF	DEA	DETEC	Total
Consultative Commissions	0	1	31	4	3	3	21	10	73 (40%)
Decision-making Commissions	0	1	32	2	2	2	2	9	50 (28%)
Appeal Commissions	1	0	11	3	2	8	1	1	27 (15%)
Representatives of the Confederation	0	0	8	1	0	3	5	6	23 (13%)
Leadership Organs	0	1	3	2	0	2	0	0	8 (4%)
Total	1 (0,5%)	3 (1,5%)	85 (47%)	12 (7%)	7 (4%)	18 (10%)	29 (16%)	26 (14%)	181 (100%)

Sources: List provided by the Federal Chancellery (as of November 2005).

This volunteer administration has raised and continues to raise a number of questions, both political and scientific. The fundamental question that underlies these debates is whether or not the commissions represent a shift in legislative power from the political sphere to these pre-parliamentary organs. In effect, if these represent the *de facto* locations where compromises between the various parties involved in the formulation of a public policy are being reached, then these extra-parliamentary commissions are doing much more than simply providing a source of expertise and advice. Through their role as intermediaries between the interest groups who are represented within them, the commissions have a decisive impact on the form of the compromise solutions that emerge. A number of parliamentary reports and speeches have raised questions concerning the costs and weak results of the extra-parliamentary commissions, as well as the ability of this volunteer administration to create, at an early stage in the decision-making process, a compromise that the Federal Council and Parliament can rarely modify at a later stage. This critique of the defining and framing power of the commissioners also underlines the manner in which certain private actors have appropriated the consultation procedures managed by the federal administration.

In terms of the function of implementing political decisions, we should note that there are a number of quasi-state bodies that play an important role in this respect within Switzerland. The various private organization, mixed-ownership companies and associations having the most hybrid of statuses represent another hidden side to the iceberg.

By 1979, the Financial Authority had already identified the presence of 189 quasi-state organizations with more than 11,000 personnel that operated in accordance with federal sovereignty, received more than CHF 730 million in subsidies, or enjoyed guarantees against

deficits. A number of studies on the decision-making process in Swiss democracy (Linder 1988) have also shown the growing influence of quasi-state administration, for example professional associations in the education sector and producer associations in the field of agricultural policy.

In brief, an important "intermediary zone" (Germann 1987) stretches out to cover the centre of the continuum between public administration and private organizations. The diverse institutions which make up this zone, and which provide services of general interest at both the pre- and post-parliamentary stages, constitute a very complex system, our knowledge of which remains incomplete. Many questions concerning the representativeness of their composition, the efficiency of their activities and their role in the connection between interests and the decision-making process remain largely unanswered to this day.

3.2 Joined up government and shared competences

Switzerland has a political system of power sharing government at all federal levels. As a consequence, the allocation of departments is less substantially than politically driven. For administrative organization, joined up government and the shared responsibility of two or more units of the same administration for one task or group of tasks is the result. This causes measurement problems that can be illustrated with two cases, the one at the federal level (Vatter et al. 2000), the other at the cantonal level (Sager 2003).

Vatter et al. (2000) is a commissioned study by the Federal Department of External Affairs to capture and assess the various Swiss activities in peace promotion. Goal was to ameliorate the coherence of Swiss peace policy. To this end, the authors undertook a vast survey among 43 different federal services in four of the seven federal departments. The survey was in the form of a matrix in order to identify which goals were pursued with what means and in collaboration with which other federal services. The finding was that almost all 43 services shared the same six general goals and partly used the same or similar policy instruments, but did so in a much uncoordinated manner beyond the organizational borders of their respective departments. The cause of policy incoherence was the politicized distribution of tasks and the recommendation was the limitation of the departmental discretion (which by the way was the reason why the report was so passionately attacked by chief officers that it finally was buried in the desk). As for the question of mapping public administration, the implication of our study is that is almost impossible to identify the workforce active in a specific policy field and that respective numbers only with great caution can be derived from formal bureaucratic organization.

This finding was corroborated in a study on cantonal alcohol prevention policy (Sager 2003). The aim was – among other information – to compare cantonal investing in alcohol prevention policy and explain these differences. However, the problem started with the identification of the relevant workforce. First, cantons are autonomous political systems with their own administrative organization. So, a standardized survey was a problem from the beginning. Second, many tasks in the policy field were spread over various different departments such as Police/Security, Justice, Public Health, Education, Economy and even Transport. What started as a standardized survey became a very laborious work of picking up pieces and putting them together. In the end, it was not possible to make a statement about budgets, but we had a lot of information about the organization and the policy instruments of cantonal alcohol policy. The result is a fundamental mistrust in figures on costs of public

action as our experience showed that in the case of joined up government, respective numbers are almost impossible to gain.

The two examples emphasize the difficulty in collecting data on administrative workforce dealing with the same policy.

3.3 Functional urban regions and new "administrative scale"

Switzerland at the beginning of the 21st century is a service based economy and a highly urbanized country. According to the 2000 population census, 73.3% of the population nowadays lives in cities or communes within metropolitan areas. However, pressures and problems resulting from this urbanization process have been ignored for a long time.

In spite of increasing territorial interconnectedness, the institutional structure of Switzerland has virtually not changed since the beginning of the 20th century. As far as the communal level is concerned, annexation of suburban communes by major cities has occurred between 1893 and 1934. The most significant of these annexations took place in Zurich (1893: eleven suburbs; 1934: eight suburbs), Winterthur (1922: five suburbs), St. Gallen (1918: two suburbs) and Geneva (1931: three suburbs). Back then, suburban communes with feeble resources agreed to amalgamate with prosperous cities that lacked space for further development. After 1934, such amalgamations have been very rare or were not significant in terms of population or surface. Indeed, most suburban communes were able to consolidate their economic basis, whereas core cities ran into financial difficulties due to the loss of wealthy taxpayers during the phases of sub- and peri-urbanisation. Since communes have to agree to amalgamation and cannot simply be obliged to do so by higher state levels , this configuration is an obstacle to territorial reform in most urban areas: rich suburban communes ferociously oppose any step towards annexation by financially distressed core cities (Geser 1999: 426). Only the extraordinarily wealthy city of Lugano managed, in 2004, to annex eight suburbs, thereby almost doubling its population. Similarly, the territory of cantons - the intermediate territorial level between communes and the Swiss Confederation - has not witnessed major change since the mid 19th century. Cantons as the federate states are the constitutive entities of Swiss federalism and the formal hurdles to changing cantonal boundaries are so high that they are almost impossible to implement (Germann 1999: 397). Finally, the creation of regional institutions (i.e. situated between the communes and the cantonal level) during the 1970s has been limited to peripheral mountainous regions in order to improve infrastructure for economic development.

Hence, unlike most other Western European Nations Switzerland has seen no significant reform of its institutional territories during the 20th century, and the likeliness of such a reform to come about in the near future is very small. As a consequence, institutional fragmentation of urban areas is high in Switzerland. Unlike most other European countries, there is however no institution whereby cooperation could be enforced: metropolitan areas are the 'lost dimension in Swiss federalism' (Linder 1994: 77). Reforms of territorial institutions in metropolitan areas are highly unpopular (Kübler et al. 2001), and in the absence of such reforms, voluntarism is the only path through which area-wide governance can be achieved in Swiss metropolitan areas (Sager 2005).

Indeed, surveys on local government activities have shown that the importance given to policy-oriented cooperation among local authorities in metropolitan areas has increased

during the 1990s (Ladner et al. 2000), as a response to increasing urban sprawl. Focusing on horizontal cooperation between communes, a survey conducted in 16 large and mid-sized metropolitan areas found 444 mechanisms of purpose-oriented inter-communal cooperation, i.e. more than two dozens for each metropolitan area (Arn and Friederich 1994). In terms of policy fields, these cooperational structures are most important in land use planning, transport, environmental protection, but also energy and water supply, waste disposal, cultural institutions, social welfare, etc. There is a wide variety of legal forms: legal entities, associations established under private law, cooperatives, joint-stock companies, inter-communal associations under public law, as well as public- and private-law foundations. Not only horizontal cooperation between communes, but also vertical intergovernmental cooperation has become more and more important for metropolitan policy making (Schenkel and Güller 2000). Cantons and in some cases even the Confederation are also often associated to purpose-oriented co-operational arrangements, especially so in the fields of land use planning, transportation, and environmental protection. Here too, there is a great variety of forms, ranging from discussion platforms, over consultative commissions to formal organizations charged with implementing a particular service. In any case, public-private partnerships are very frequent in Swiss metropolitan governance: since non-governmental agencies are not bound to any particular territory they can execute area-wide public tasks more flexibly. In addition, through project-based financial contracts, governmental partners can easily get involved with a non-governmental agency - therefore offering an easy way to achieve single-level or even multi-level intergovernmental cooperation. There is even evidence that non-governmental agencies have become the main vectors for the emergence of a truly regional scope in some areas of metropolitan policy-making.

Thus, metropolitan governance in Switzerland basically results from horizontal, as well as vertical cooperation between existing institutional entities, sometimes with significant involvement of non-governmental actors. The new administrative structures that emerge from these institutional changes in the political organization of functional urban regions (Nahrath and Varone, 2007) form a challenge to systematic data collection. In the BADAC, the need for the consideration of city regions has been recognized, however, so far the respective data only provide information on the core city administrations. The joined up-provision in cooperative inter-municipal arrangements is not mapped so far. The challenge for surveys is just the greater as some of these inter-municipal arrangements cross cantonal borders and unite again administrations from different cantonal subordinate systems.

3.4 New modes of governance: co-production of public goods by public administration and private actors

As seen above (in 3.2), the political field of alcohol prevention policy is regulated with singular inconsistency, since the cantons, i.e. the middle federal rung in the Swiss state structure, are equipped with very extensive programming and implementation competencies, leading to a pronounced heterogeneity and correspondingly interpretable statistic variance in cantonal prevention efforts (Sager 2003). Another problem in the mapping of public administration that can be illustrated with this data is the case of new modes of governance with co-production of public goods by state and non-state actors (Sager 2007, 2008).

Governance structures are understood as networks of various types of public and private actors addressing the same problem. The definition of governance structures as networks embracing both public and private actors means that the mere outsourcing of tasks without

communication structures between commissioning agency and mandatary is not considered to be a governance structure.

Based on two major surveys of the Swiss cantons conducted in 1999 and 2004, the strength of governance structures in a canton's alcohol policy domain is measured in terms of the question of who is the most important decision maker in terms of both strategic and operative decisions. That is, for analytical reasons, we apply Osbourne and Gaebler's (1992) distinction between "steering" and "rowing", but without acknowledging their normative claim that governments should "steer, not row." Both levels of policy decisions are expected to be important because both decisions can be delegated to governance actors while only a part of the chosen instruments can be implemented by all actors, namely those instruments that are not coercive and do not rely on state power. For the U.S., Hall and O'Toole (2000) found that the importance of governance structures for policy implementation has not changed much over time. We asked with regard to both strategic and operative decisions whether they are taken by the public administration, the executive, the legislature, whether they take place in informal governance structures (i.e. networks of various types of public and private actors addressing the same problem) or whether the tasks are outsourced to external organisations in a one-way manner without interaction between commissioning agency and assigned organisation. The respective replies were subsequently coded dichotomously, which allowed for multiple counting in cases in which it was not possible to clearly distinguish the importance of different types of actors. Tables 5 and 6 present the respective data.

Table 5: Most important strategic decision maker in the cantonal alcohol control policy

Most important strategic decision maker	n	Cantons
Public Administration	12	AR, BE*, BL, BS, GR, LU, NW, OW; SG, TI, VD, ZG
Executive	1	AG
Legislature	1	BE*
Governance structures	12	AI, FR, GE, GL, JU, NE, SH, SO, TG, UR, VS, ZH
External organisations	1	SZ

*Bern double counted

Table 6: Most important operative decision maker in the cantonal alcohol control policy

Most important operative decision maker	n	Cantons
Public Administration	9	AI, AR, BL, BS, NW, OW, TI, ZG, ZH
Governance structures	4	AG, GE, JU, LU
External organisations	12	BE, FR, GR, NE, SG, SH, SO, SZ, TG, UR, VD, VS

Glarus: missing

The cantonal data shows that while public agents and governance actors play a decisive role to the same degree on the strategic level, it is mainly the mandated external organisations that are the key actors on the operational level. As for the remainder, in the majority of the cantons, public administration bodies implement the policies, while in four cantons, governance networks encompassing both public and private actors dominate operative decisions. Cantonal legislatures and executives play a very minor role, in that in only one canton in each case are they the most important actors regarding the strategy, while they are not decisive on the operational level in any of the cantons.

4. New approaches to the mapping of public administration: current research

Having identified challenges to the systematic mapping of public administration, we present three projects which could party address theses issues and, furthermore, which could be coupled to the mapping of public administration: first, the agenda setting project, second, research on independent regulatory agencies, and third, a project on judicial reform.

4.1 Transformation of public administration and "policy punctuations"

In order to assess the transformation of public administration we may also draw upon Baumgartner & Jones' theory of *punctuated equilibrium*. Bryan Jones and Frank Baumgartner consider policy change to be a matter of agenda-setting. A crucial condition for policy change is political *issue attention*. An issue must be put on the political agenda, it has to attract resources (e.g. time, money, expertise) before any policy change is possible (Jones and Baumgartner 2005). In their longitudinal agenda-setting analysis of the functioning of the American political system, these authors show convincingly that, in contrast to the classic thesis of the incrementalist approach (Lindblom 1959), policy change does frequently happen in the US (Baumgartner and Jones 1993).

Dramatic changes -- they call these *policy punctuations* -- alternate with long periods of stability. Thus, sometimes, sudden sweeping movements challenge closed sub-systemic politics: policy monopolies collapse, high politics gets temporarily heavily involved until the policy domain at stake is contracted out again to a small group of experts and stakeholders; a new policy monopoly gets established. The main reason for the changeability of (American) policies is the availability of many *policy entrepreneurs* (Kingdon 1984) and, even more important, the presence of a lot of institutional *policy venues* that can be used to sell an alternative *policy image* to. Policy venues are institutional arenas were decisions on an issue can be taken. Policy images are policy communities' shared ideas about the policy at stake. They explain what the issue is about, how it should be seen and which solutions are appropriate. Venues and images are coupled. Policy change, essentially, happens when a new policy image finds receptive ground in a new policy venue and the old venue looses control over the issue, leading to *issue expansion*.

Policy punctuations can be initiated by several factors, one of which are so-called *focusing events*. These external shocks, policy analysts agree, highlight policy deficiencies. They may directly challenge the existing policy image and the venue that promotes it. Consequently these external shocks may lead to grand changes (see also Hall 1993; Sabatier 1988; Sabatier and Jenkins 1993). Birkland ascertains that focusing events, under specific conditions, lead to the most drastic policy changes we observe in reality. Such events are defined along five dimensions: they are sudden, uncommon, harmful, concentrated on a particular geographical area or community of interest, and known to policy makers and the public simultaneously (Birkland 1998). Thus, the media coverage of these focusing events immediately highlights obvious harms for specific publics. The evidence of the damage done by external events is "focal" in the sense that government may respond by putting a new policy issue on its agenda or by modifying previous policies (e.g. the public administration in charge of the policy implementation). Naturally, focusing events do not mechanically lead to policy changes: the impact of external events on politics and policies depends upon the media coverage and social mobilization (external pressure) and upon political actors' position within the policy domain (internal response). One might expect agenda-setting and policy change after a focusing event

if the nature and harms done by the event are visible, if a community of interest is mobilized, and if this community can instrumentalize this event to put forward its own values, beliefs, and interests.

Relying on the agenda-setting approaches of both Baumgartner & Jones' (1993, 2005) and Birkland (1998), one research hypothesis to explain the transformation of public administration could read as follows: If a focusing event strongly increases public and political attention for a policy issue, then it will modify the dominant policy image and create new policy venues and, consequently, it will translate into a major policy change and a transformation of the public administration in charge of this policy. Of course, several other hypotheses can be formulated on the impact of issues attention by the media, political parties, new social movements, etc. on the transformation of public administration.

In the punctuated equilibrium approach, policy change is normally measures through two formal outputs of the decision-making process: the number and content of passed bills on the one hand, and the relative part of the yearly budget dedicated to a specific policy on the other hand. Furthermore, a *major* policy change is defined as the formulation of a new policy paradigm, objectives, instruments and implementation arrangements institutionalized by laws, and as an increase of the financial resources that goes beyond the traditional incrementalism of public expenditures (Hall 1993; Sabatier 1988; Sabatier and Jenkins 1993). *Minor or intermediate* policy changes, on the contrary, are limited to the modification of the settings of policy instruments and implementation arrangements, without inducing a dramatic shift in the policy paradigm or in financial resources. In all cases, the transformation of public administration could be used to identify and measure policy changes.

The work of Baumgartner and Jones (1993) has not only shaped the theoretical development of agenda-setting studies but also very much the *methodological approach*. Instead of case studies, which dominated agenda-setting studies before, agenda-setting studies have increasingly been based on systematic quantitative coding of agenda content. Baumgartner and Jones started out by content coding hearings in the US Congress over decades using a coding system with more than 200 categories. The dataset that came out of this was unique as it for the first time made it possible systematically to trace over time how scarce attention within an institution is allocated among scores or hundreds of different issues. This approach, which has since been extended to other political activities such as Congressional bills, State of the Union addresses, and other data resources in the American "Policy Agendas Project," has now become a standard data source for the study of American politics (see www.policyagendas.org). Using content coding of large number of political activities has since become the standard within quantitative agenda-setting studies as it has opened many new ways of studying agenda-setting processes beyond case studies even as the systematic data allows for the combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches as well. For instance, the interaction between different agendas can be studied statistically the distribution of change across the different content categories has been used to evaluate the "punctuated equilibrium model" (Jones & Baumgartner 2005), and the approach also makes systematic cross national comparisons of issue evolution over time possible (Baumgartner, Green-Pedersen & Wilkerson 2006).

To map the (evolution of the) Swiss public administration, we may share the same theoretical and methodological perspective as briefly laid out above. As a matter of fact, we are currently leading an ambitious research project on agenda-setting in Switzerland for the period 1978-2008 (Varone et al. 2007). We are coding how various policy issues attract attention of the

federal government (e.g. bill proposal, press releases, etc.), the parliament (e.g. parliamentary motions, passed laws, etc.) and how policy actors mobilize direct democratic devices (such as the optional referendum and the popular initiative) to put an issue on the political agenda. This database could easily be *coupled* with a new database on public administration (at the federal level at least). Such a coupling will be very innovative and promising to identify, to measure and to explain the transformation of public administration. Last but not least, if other countries (which are already members of the policy agenda project, like Belgium, Denmark, the UK and the Netherlands) also proceed to such an empirical analysis, then a *comparative analysis* of the links between policy punctuations and transformation of public administration would be feasible.

4.2 "Europeanisation" of public administration: emergence of new IRAs

The liberalization of sectors that had previously been under monopoly control (e.g., telecommunications, railways, the postal service, electricity and gas) as well as the eventual privatization of public corporations has significantly transformed the modes of delivering public services. Switzerland is currently undergoing a shift from the "ownership State", in which the corporations were guarantors of the general interest and provided the goods and services that met the needs of the collective users, to a "regulatory State", which is limited to monitoring the adherence to rules of competition and the sectoral regulations by the service providers (both public and/or private) of the functions of the former public service. The re-regulation that is required for the control of this "functional" form of public service implies a number of explicit political choices, most importantly with respect to the range of goods and services to maintain as public services, the assignment of service providers and the method of financing.

In light of the past practices of the Federation, fundamental questions must be asked regarding, on the one hand, the effects of the liberalization and privatization process and, on the other hand, the modes of re-regulation, particularly with regard to the eventual establishment of sector-specific independent regulatory authorities IRAs. Previous studies have analyzed both the *formal* independence of IRAs (Gilardi 2006) as well as the *real* independence of IRAs from elected politicians and from the regulees (Maggetti 2007). A further systematic mapping of the regulatory powers, resources and internal organizations of IRAs in Switzerland is anyway necessary. Thus, the next step could consist in integrating and expanding the previous databases developed by Gilardi and Maggetti. This follow-up work should include IRAs regulating *network industries* (e.g. telecommunications, railways, the postal service, electricity and gas) as well as *economic* regulation (e.g. general competition, financial and banking sectors) and *social* regulation (e.g. pharmaceuticals, food safety, environment, etc.). Of course, comparative studies of Swiss IRAs and IRAs in other European countries (including their role in European networks of IRAs) will also allow to identifying and assessing the (net) impact of the European Union and other international organizations (such as WTO) on Swiss IRAs in particular, and on administrative structures in general.

4.3 Judicialisation and courts' impact on public administration

Last but not least, we are currently working on administrative litigation through judicial review in Switzerland. We are undertaking an empirical analysis at both the federal and the cantonal levels. Our main goal is to analyze the actual use of judicial review of administrative action by combining qualitative and quantitative methods.

As a matter of fact, new procedures in the administration of justice at the federal level have come into force as of 1 January 2007. This reform encompasses not only a significant overhaul of the Swiss judicial system at the federal level, but also the constitutional implementation of a general right of access to the courts. The practical effect of this reform will mainly be seen in the field of administrative law.

Our project aims to provide key information on the extent and scope of appeals against federal and cantonal administrations' decisions by identifying the policy fields in which judicial review of administrative action is, in practice, most sought, determining who the typical plaintiffs are and assessing the level of success of the studied litigation. Additionally, the research project focuses on the strategies of policy actors as well as on the impact that the use of judicial administrative litigation has on the content of public policies and, on the activity and structures of the administration.

Our methodological approach combines, in the first stage, a quantitative analysis of appeals against federal and cantonal agencies' decisions that will be completed, in a second stage, by a more in-depth qualitative analysis, including case studies, in order to provide information on the main groups of applicants and on the outcome of their cases.

The project will analyze the period covering the two years (2005, 2006) preceding the implementation of the reform as well as the two years following it (2007, 2007). The year 2000 will serve as our "control" year.

The following judicial authorities with jurisdiction over administrative action will be analyzed: the Federal Supreme Court, the former federal appeals commissions, the *new Federal Administrative Court*, cantonal judicial authorities (proper courts and court-like bodies). At the cantonal level a selection of two urban cantons (Zurich and Geneva), one mixed canton (Bern) and two rural cantons (Jura and Glarus) has been made.

For the first stage of the study, we will collect data and analyze court's decisions, followed by the organization, analysis and interpretation of the collected information and the presentation of our first findings. On the basis of these first results, three to five policy sectors showing particularly interesting characteristics will be subjected to a more qualitative in-depth analysis, through case studies and interviews with the actors.

At the end, we should be able to assess the impacts of courts decision on the practice (and maybe on the structure of the federal and cantonal public administration).

5. Conclusions

The present paper had a rather modest and descriptive aim in that we wanted to show where we have identified challenges to the systematic mapping of public administrations and in what parts ongoing research may help filling identified gaps. In further conceptual work, we may discuss in more depth how the challenge of new modes of governance and cooperative government can be addressed by focusing on the transformation of state structures rather than by adopting a static view.

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[i] See Articles 6, 7 and 8 as well as the appendix of the Regulation of 25 November 1998 on the organization of the government and administration (OLOGA, RS 172.010.1).

[ii] See chapter 6 of the report of the Control Committee of the Council of States devoted to problems arising during the launching of Swissmedic and the evaluation of the current situation (FF 2005 259) as well as the 13 September 2004 postulate of the Control Committee on administrative management in the third circle (04.3441).

[iii] The federal law of 20 March 1998 on the Swiss Federal Railways (LCFF, RS 742.31) transformed the former public corporation into a private company, in which the federation is the sole shareholder.

[iv] The corporation Swisscom SA was created by the federal law of 30 April 1997 on the structure of the federal telecommunications corporation (LET, RS 784.11).

[v] The federal law of 30 April 1997 on the structure of the federal postal corporation (LOP, RS 783.1) created Swiss Post as a legally independent institution with its own legal identity.

[vi] The federal law of 10 October 1997 on corporations providing weapons to the federation (LEAC, RS 934.21) authorized the federation to create private law-based public companies or to invest in such companies in order to guarantee the availability of resources needed by the armed forces.

[vii] My own calculations, based on the State Accounts of 1995 (pp. 278–79), 2000 (p. 280) and 2004 (p. 291).

[viii] Art. 43 al. 2 LOGA.

[ix] For 2004, the services directly under a department consist only of the units within the central federal administration (not including General Secretariats). The services from the decentralized federal administration, such as decision-making committees and the various autonomous corporations and agencies are not included in the calculation.

[x] The list of the federal administrative units contained in the OLOGA (RS 172.010.1; in July 2005) contains only 46 units of the central administration (not including General Secretariats, decision-making commissions and autonomous enterprises). The distribution of these 46 units across the federal departments is the following: 5 within DFA, 8 within DHA, 4 within DJP, 7 within DDPS, 7 within FDF, 7 within DEA and 8 within DETEC.

[xi] Article 57 LOGA.

[xii] Articles 4 and 5 of the *Ordonnance* on the commissions of 3 June 1996 (RS 172.31).

[xiii] Article 9 of the *Ordonnance* on the commissions.

[xiv] The figure of 181 organizations identified by the Chancellery differs from the 195 indicated by the Federal Council in the context of their renewal for the administrative period of 2004 to 2007. In addition, it is necessary to take into account those organs which are created in another framework due to the limited duration of their mandates (FF 2004 1839).