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Ministerial bureaucracies as stand-in agenda setters? A comparative description

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Ministerial Bureaucracies as
Stand-In Agenda Setters?
A Comparative Description

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Zusammenfassung

In dieser Arbeit wird versucht, die Möglichkeiten von Ministerialverwaltungen zur Beeinflussung politischer Entscheidungsprozesse theoretisch zu fassen und anschließend quantitativ zu beschreiben.

Das theoretische Konzept beschreibt den Einfluss von Bürokratien als aus drei Quellen kommend: den Organisationsstrukturen der Bürokratie selbst, dem Entscheidungsspielraum, der ihr als Folge bestimmter Präferenzkonstellationen der politischen Akteure erwächst, sowie der Möglichkeit der Bürokratie, unter bestimmten Umständen die Setzung der politischen Tagesordnung anstelle der politischen Akteure zu übernehmen.

Mit dem Ziel eines Vergleichs der relativen Einflussposition ihrer nationalen Ministerialbürokratien wird eine quantitative Beschreibung der Ministerialverwaltungssysteme von 21 OECD-Ländern geliefert.

Die Arbeit schließt mit einer empirischen Klassifikation von Verwaltungssystemen. Japan, Belgien und Irland werden als Länder beschrieben, in denen die Ministerialbürokratie auf allen drei theoretisch etablierten Dimensionen relativ einflussstark ist. Das andere Ende des Einflussspektrums wird von Neuseeland mit einer vergleichsweise schwachen Bürokratie eingenommen.

Abstract

This paper sets out to theoretically conceptualise and empirically describe the potential ability of ministerial bureaucracies to influence policy-making.

The theoretical framework describes the chances for bureaucracies to influence policy-making as accruing from three sources: the organisational structures of the bureaucracy itself, room for bureaucratic discretion resulting from the preference configurations of the political actors, and the chance for the bureaucracy to act as political agenda setter rather than politicians.

A quantitative empirical description of 21 OECD-countries is presented with the aim of comparing the relative strengths of the national ministerial bureaucracies.

The paper concludes with an empirical classification of administrative systems. Japan, Belgium, and Ireland are found to be countries with a strong position for the bureaucracy in all of the theoretically described dimensions. The opposite end of the spectrum is marked by New Zealand, where the bureaucracy appears to be comparatively weak.

Table of Contents

List of Figures

List of Tables

Kai-Uwe Schnapp

Ministerial Bureaucracies as Stand-In Agenda Setters?
A Comparative Description

1   Introduction[1]

In the political science and public administration literature there is a virtual consensus that bureaucracies have an impact on policy at both the implementation phase as well as the planning stage. This is documented by a wealth of case-oriented empirical studies with a benign as well as a rather hostile perspective towards bureaucracies (see Barberis (1996) as a recent, Heclo and Wildavsky (1974) as well as Campbell and Szablowski (1979) as very important but slightly dated examples for the more benign, and Kellner and Crowther-Hunt (1980) as an outstanding example for the rather hostile perspective). But analyses of everyday experience, showing the impact of administrators, do not translate easily into any kind of generalisation. The most important problem with these case-oriented studies is that they lack a common theoretical framework suitable for comparative analysis. As a consequence, the question this paper tries to answer is threefold:

1) Can the potential ability of ministerial bureaucracies to influence policy-making be theoretically conceptualised in a meaningful way?
2) Is it possible to find quantitative indicators that capture elements of such a theoretical concept?
3) How do different countries compare with regard to the potential impact of their national level bureaucracies on policy-making?

Acting capacities of bureaucracies have been described recently with two formal concepts. The first describes the possibilities for bureaucrats to use the bureaucratic (organisational) decision-making process to influence decision outcomes (Hammond 1986). The second

describes the room to manoeuvre that results as a consequence of the preference configuration of the political actors (Hammond and Knott 1996).

Each of these concepts captures a different but important element of bureaucratic influence on policy-making. I integrate these ideas and propose an addition that shows when and how bureaucrats can become what I call "stand-in agenda setters" in the policy-making process.

In order to do this I loosen the assumption that political players always have clear policy preferences. This is reflected in a spatial model to be developed by substituting ideal points with ideal ranges. Additionally, the model can account for the limited acting capacities (resources) of political actors (parliament and cabinet alike).

It is explicitly modelled why and how politicians may have ideal ranges instead of ideal points. In order to do this I introduce a concept of saliency where saliency is understood as an aggregate of (1) the priority a given politician has for a certain policy, (2) the clarity of the preference she has about this policy, and (3) the distance of the status quo of this policy to the ideal point (or range) of the politician.

This paper demonstrates that as a consequence of the interplay of limited resources and ideal ranges bureaucracies can stand in as effective agenda setters under clearly identified circumstances (no political actors put forward a proposal on a certain problem, chances exist for the bureaucracy to increase its utility by advancing a policy proposal, the minister is willing to sponsor the bureaucratic proposal into the political process of decision-making).

In the empirical section I present a number of indicators for the structural characteristics of the bureaucratic and political policy-making apparatus, that have been modelled to have an effect on bureaucratic chances to influence policy-making. The data presented covers up to 21 OECD countries (see Table 9 for a list of countries) and is partly based on quantitative indicators and partly on aggregations of qualitative descriptions of national political-administrative systems. I try to provide information from 1970 onwards. However, in many cases data is only available from 1980 or in some cases after 1990.

As a consequence of the comparative design not all peculiarities of a country's administrative system and policy process can be given due attention. Informal rules and informal behaviour do have their impact on political strategies and policy output, guided by administrative as well as a more general political culture. But with a comparative perspective, as it is attempted here, these details need to be left out of the perspective so that the argument can be advanced in a structured manner.

To my knowledge, no account has attempted yet to model the impact of structural features of national ministerial bureaucracies on policy-making in a comparative study of broad scope. One reason for this seems to be the difficulty of gathering data that describes

bureaucracies in a way conducive to such analysis. A number of researchers have complained, time and again, about the status of quantitative comparative administrative research (Peters 1988: Introduction; Page 1992: 2-3; Pierre 1995; Peters 1996). Luckily, recent developments within the OECD, especially the efforts of the Public Management Project (PUMA) as well as some other institutions have produced comparative information that can be moulded into a unified body of data. This enables us to conduct broad-based quantitative comparisons that hitherto have not been possible.

Eventually, the classification developed here will have to be tested against appropriate measures of policy output in order to evaluate the model and its operationalisation. One can think of budget volatility as potential dependent variable with the hypothesis that decision-making processes dominated by the bureaucracy yield less volatile budgets than decision-making processes dominated by the political players. If this hypothesis proves to be true that would imply that politicians are better able to realise their intentions with a comparatively weaker bureaucracy or, from the opposite point of view, that strong bureaucracies facilitate continuity in policy-making. Whether a high policy adaptability or a high policy continuity is the more desirable condition remains yet another question. From the view point of budgeting, a recent World Bank paper emphasised the positive effects of continuity accruing from the involvement of technocratic bureaucrats in the process of policy-making (World Bank 2000). Politicians, on the other hand, often complain about the fact that their hands are tied by refractory bureaucrats. But this more normative discussion is not pursued here.

The paper proceeds as follows: First, I demonstrate how and why bureaucrats can have an impact on policy-making at the national level. Second, a set of indicators is introduced that are intended to measure the characteristics that define bureaucratic ability to participate in policy-making according to the model. In a third step a quantitative description for a number of countries along the concept and indicators developed so far is presented. In the conclusion, countries are characterised by the strength of the potential of their bureaucracies to take an active part in policy-making and an outlook is given how this typology might be used in further research.

2 Bureaucrats, Agendas, and Political Decision-Making

2.1 Policy-making and the veto model

Policy-making has recently often been modelled with the veto model. This model allows to explain policy stability and change as a function of the institutional setting and the preferences of the veto players in a political system (Hammond 1996, Tsebelis 1995).

Veto models are used to define those participants in a decision-making process who play pivotal roles for the final outcome of the decision process. "Veto players are individual or collective decision makers whose agreement is required for the change of the status quo" (Tsebelis 1995). The potential to veto a decision may or may not be used according to the preferences of the actors.

In parliamentary systems the party or parties in political power are usually counted as veto players. In presidential regimes the president is an additional veto player, as can be second chambers where they have a genuine impact on policy-making. The former are also referred to as partisan, the latter as institutional veto players. When ideological differences between different institutional and/or partisan veto players become (too) small two or more veto players may effectively become one veto player and are then to be counted as such (Tsebelis 1995, 1999).

The veto concept cannot be understood as a concept of policy-making. Since its main interest is the explanation of policy stability it could almost be described as a concept for the explanation of policy prevention. It is concerned with the ability of participants in a decision process (veto players) to prevent unwanted decision-outcomes from happening by using the power of the veto position and the possible consequences of this power as a threat in processes of political bargaining. It is not concerned with the ability and ways to positively frame decisions. Veto players define whether new policies are possible and which policies are possible by the power of their necessary consent and by the position of their preferences in the policy-space in relation to each other and in relation to the status quo (abbreviated as SQ).

Bureaucracy can, in contrast to the partisan and institutional veto players, be understood as a framer and shaper of decision options, but a bureaucracy lacks the specific ability to involve itself in the decision procedure by the power of a formal veto. This conclusion could be countered with the argument that there exists a veto point for the bureaucracy, at least in specific situations. For example, bureaucrats could try to block policies by arguing to their principals (the minister or the cabinet) that a policy proposal is against a particular law or is not covered by the expenditure frame appropriated in the government budget. In both circumstances (law or budget), however, this "veto" can at best be suspensive,

because the law can be changed and moneys appropriated at political will. It is very unlikely that bureaucrats can effectively block policy using this "bureaucratic veto" at the national level for a long period of time if politicians really want a certain change.

This may be different with administrations at the state (Länder/province) or local level. The law cannot (or only in certain policy areas as far as the state-level is concerned) be changed at that level of government, leaving more possibilities to use the conformity with the law as an effective veto instrument for the bureaucracy. But these lower level administrations are not discussed here. At the national level it is not reasonable to model bureaucracies as veto players because they lack the respective institutional devices. Bureaucracies cannot, in democratic systems and under normal circumstances, become veto players.

Even though bureaucracies are not veto players themselves, they have more recently been successfully integrated into the veto framework, as Hammond (1996), Hammond and Knott (1996), and Hammond (1999) demonstrated. The veto model was used in these works to explicitly model the bureaucracy's room to manoeuvre in the face of different institutional structures of the national polity as well as different preference distributions of veto players. This point will be argued in more detail in the next section.

2.2   Bureaucratic impact on political decision-making

There are at least two paths for bureaucratic influence on policy-making that have recently been described in the literature.

1) Bureaucracies can use organisational structures to co-define what policy options become available to political decision makers in inner-administrative decision process. According to Hammond (1986) organisational structures can be used by strategically acting bureaucrats to have an impact on decision outcomes. This point will be taken up in section 2.2.1.

2) It was stated above that the veto model was used to describe bureaucracy's room to manoeuvre depending on the institutional structure of the national polity as well as the preference distribution of the veto players. This point is the subject of section 2.2.2.

As I will argue in this paper, there is yet another way in which bureaucracies may influence policy-making. Under certain circumstances bureaucracies can act as agenda setters by proposing policy initiatives to their political superiors who can officially bring these proposals into the political decision process. Under normal circumstances, however, bureaucracies will be weak or ineffective agenda setters. That means that all proposals put forward by the bureaucracy are subject to open amendment rule afterwards and can thus be

shifted to any point in the policy space that is suitable to the players that act later in the game (cf. Alt/Shepsle 1998 for a typology of agenda setters). Bureaucracies may define the political agenda, but they do not have much impact on the content of the final policy decision. As can be derived from Hammond and Knott (1996), however, there are circumstances where bureaucracies can become effective agenda setters.

Whether bureaucracies can become effective agenda setters is conditional on the preference configuration of the political veto players as well as on structural features of the policy-making process that have an impact on the bureaucracies ability to effectively act as agenda setter, as I develop in section 2.2.3.

Before discussing routes of bureaucratic influence, a note about preferences is necessary. The veto as well as the agenda setting idea generally imply that we know something about the preferences of the actors involved. Although exact knowledge of the preferences is not necessary for the arguments developed in this article, we need to be sure, that the actors do have preferences.

For the political actors, the existence of preferences is a matter of course. After all, this is what politics is about, having preferences and bring them to bear on political decisions. Preference structures of political actors have been measured as their political positions on a uni-dimensional left-right-scale by expert-surveys (Castles/Mair 1984, Huber/Inglehart 1995) or as positions in a multidimensional policy-space by content analyses of party manifestos (Volkens 1995)[2]. Results of the expert surveys have already been used in veto analyses (Tsebelis 1995, 1999).

For bureaucrats, it is not quite as self-evident that they do actually have policy preferences. As Egeberg (1995) points out, there are preferences in the sphere of the bureaucrat's own interest, i.e. administrative politics. Here we can expect bureau shaping (Dunleavy 1991), and budget maximising intentions (Niskanen 1971), or a mix of the two. It is plausible as well, as Krause (2000) demonstrates, to expect that bureaucrats have clear preferences about the amount of discretion they would like to have on a certain policy. In addition bureaucracies are likely to have preferences about the means they would use to solve a certain policy problem as is demonstrated Aberbach et al. (1981: chapter 4).

More important, however, is the fact that many bureaucrats do have political convictions and preferences as well. This too was shown by Aberbach et al. (1981: chapters 4 and 5). These preferences can have causes strictly confined to the individual bureaucrat, but they can be consequences of professional interactions as well. The mission-minded bureaucrat for example, who has frequent contacts with interest groups in her field of responsibility may take over the policy views of her clientele. She may thus become an actor in the

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2   For a recent discussion of advantages and disadvantages of these different techniques and their consequences see McDonald/Mendes 1999, Budge 2000, Huber/Gabel 2000.

policy game who is not only guided by standards of good practice and bureaucratic self-interest but by (ideological) ideas and respective preferences.

It can be concluded that, even though bureaucrat's preferences will most often not be openly observable (Egeberg 1995), we can work with the assumption of their very existence. It is therefore plausible to theoretically describe preference configurations in which the room to manoeuvre for the bureaucracies develops and to describe structural situations which further the development of room for bureaucratic discretion. That means, we can describe the structural situation of a bureaucracy in a way that allows for statements of the type "if the situation of a bureaucracy is of a type A then action possibilities B result for it." Please note the intentional use of the word "possibilities." It is only a *potential* for bureaucratic action that can be derived from structural characteristics. Whether bureaucrats do indeed use this structurally defined potential depends on their actual preferences and probably on yet more factors not considered here. These questions have to be left to future research.

Having discussed the question of existence of bureaucratic preferences, I can now proceed to the description of the first type of bureaucratic impact on political decisions.

2.2.1   Strategic use of organisational structures

Bureaucracies can use organisational structures to influence final decision outcomes. Hammond (1986: 381-383) equates the consequences of organisational structures on decision outcomes with the consequences that agendas can have on decision outcomes. With agendas, it depends on the sequence in which the alternatives are set against each other in voting rounds as well as on the preferences of the actors which alternative will finally prevail.

Voters with complete knowledge of the sequence of alternatives and of the preferences of the other voters can try to deliberately steer the voting process into a direction favourable to their own preferences. This is commonly referred to as strategic voting.

Strategic voting describes a behaviour where true preferences may be concealed and outcomes are voted for, that are not the most preferred outcomes of a given actor. Strategic voting occurs because (and only when) a game has more than one decision stage. Considering the whole game and the likely decisions of actors at later stages (game theorists call this "backward induction" or more colloquially "working the game tree backwards") it is possible for an actor to find that a choice which is not her preferred choice will nevertheless lead the final decision closer to her ideal point than a vote according to her preferences. A vote according to once preferences is known as a "sincere vote." The last voter in

a chain of decisions never votes strategically but always sincerely because there are no other players to whom her decision is an input to their own decision (see Hammond 1986: 393-398 with graphical examples and references to a wider literature on strategic and sincere voting).

Organisational structures allow for strategic voting because they too order decision alternatives to occur in a certain sequence. The ministerial organisational structures are mechanisms for the purpose of preparing, processing, and filtering information with the goal to reach policy decisions. Within these structures people that are later in the process or likewise higher up in the hierarchy critically depend on input, advice, preselection, proposals and alternatives put forward by their predecessors in the process, i.e. by their subordinates. That means by implication that people at various levels of the decision-making hierarchy have an impact on a decision. That is even more the case, when actors use their knowledge about the process and the other actors in the process to strategically influence the final decision outcome.

The final stage in ministerial decision-making does not usually involve a multitude of participants, but only the minister herself. This means that any alternative actually making it to the minister could be chosen by her. But not all matters are decided by the minister herself. Since the resources to digest information and decide upon matters are limited even for the most industrious decision maker there have to be rules to decide when to deal with a matter and when not.

In the ministerial setting that turns into the question when to interfere with proposals coming up through the hierarchy to a given management level and when not to interfere. One of the commonly used decision rules is the so called "Management by Exception" (MBE). MBE means that officials, including the minister, usually "rubber stamp" the proposals (advice) coming up to them when there is a consensus among their subordinates or advisers about the matter. They only interfere in exceptional situations, i.e. when concordant advice is lacking or when they are really concerned about a certain policy matter. If bureaucrats succeed in providing their minister with concordant proposals their chances are increased that the minister will approve of these proposals without interference (Hammond 1986: 391).

Knowledge of this commonly applied rule in conjunction with knowledge about the organisational structures and the preferences of co-workers as well as superiors can give officials in the lower ranks of the hierarchy the possibility to steer a decision process towards an outcome closer to their own ideal point by sending advice up the hierarchy that aggregates into consensual proposals delivered to the minister or respective final decision maker. This mechanism can, of course, not be successfully employed under any preference

configurations among the bureaucrats, but it is still a formidable instrument in the hands of an astute bureaucrat.

It is a precondition for this instrument to work that bureaucrats know the preferences of their superiors and colleagues. As Rose (1987) and Barker and Wilson (1997) showed, bureaucrats do know the preferences of their political superiors quite well. It is equally likely that they know the preferences of their co-workers so that it is not an uneasy assumption that bureaucrats have the informational prerequisites for strategic action.

The possibility to use organisational structures to strategically influence decision outcomes can be countered, however, by certain changes to this very structure. It can be concluded from Hammond's analysis that ministers are more likely to achieve their preferred decision outcomes the more they are able to appoint officials to places further down in the hierarchy who are close to their own ideal points. Hammond argues that officials are more likely to achieve their preferred outcome in a decision process (or get closer to it) the higher up in the hierarchy they are (1986: 415). This is so because they can influence the process when there are only few decision stages left in which further aggregation can redirect a proposal. Taking this argument in reverse, the further down into a hierarchy the minister can plant close trustees, the higher are the aggregate chances to influence decision-making in a way favourable to her political goals (preferences).

Concluding this section, it can be said that bureaucrats can use organisational structures through strategic voting in order to influence decision outcomes. Their chances of bringing final decisions in line with their own preferences can, however, be limited by their superiors through structural "counter measures." How far ministers are allowed such counter measures is an empirical question. I shall return to this point in section 3.1.

In this section I described a type of bureaucratic influence that originates inside the structures of the ministerial apparatus. In the next section I take up a type of bureaucratic influence on policy-making that arises as a consequence of the interactions between the preferences of the political actors in the policy-making process.

2.2.2 Bureaucratic room to manoeuvre, the core, and the gate

The basic conceptual tools that are needed for the description of the bureaucratic room to manoeuvre are the spatial concepts of core and gate. They are introduced in this section. For a more extensive treatment of the spatial models with implications for bureaucratic discretion I refer the reader to Hammond and Knott (1996) and Hammond (1999).

Defining the core

Figure 1 depicts a one dimensional policy space in which four veto players (A-D) are placed according to their ideal point. An ideal point (IP)is defined as the preferred point of a player in a preference—here policy-space. The set of points between B and C, the median players, is called the *core*. The core's important characteristic is that none of the points between B and C (inside the core) can be beaten in a vote by any other point in the policy space. In other words, any policy status quo inside the core is in equilibrium. A policy status quo outside the core, however, can always be moved inside the core.

As visible in Figure 1 the core has a certain size. The basic determinants of this size are:

- the number of veto players,

  [When there is an odd number of veto players in a political system then there is only one median player. In this situation the size of the core shrinks the ideal point of the median veto player. This core is called a point-core.]

- and ideological distance between median players (provided that there are two median players).

  [Hammond and Butler 1996 describe a variety of configurations for parliamentary as well as presidential regimes demonstrating the effects of ideological distance between median players on the size of the core and describing which players are median players under variants of party coherence and party voting.]

A detailed discussion of the meaning of the core and the logic of core forming processes can be found in Hammond and Knott (1996) and Hammond and Butler (1996).

Figure 1:   An Illustration of Core and Gate
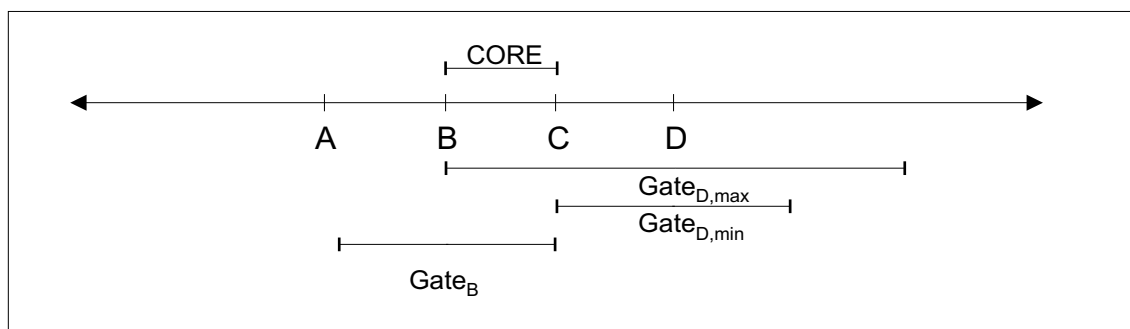
Defining the gate

If the right to advance policy proposals for a certain policy area is given to a specific politician or group of politicians (e.g. a parliamentary committee) then these actors are said to be *gate keepers* for this policy area. Policy proposals will not be advanced by a gate keeper under circumstances described in the next paragraphs with consequences for bureaucratic room to manoeuvre similar to the consequences of the core.

The right to advance a proposal may be codified by rules defining (agenda setting) jurisdictions but it may as well be a customary law that players who are actually dealing with a given policy field (the respective committees etc.) act as agenda setters in the field of their interest. Although, without formal restrictions it is always possible that some other politician or group advances a proposal in a field they are not responsible for, it seems save to assume that for most policies, the division of labour in parliament or in government has as one result the existence of effective gate keepers.

Hammond and Knott assume that politicians are strictly risk averse. Strictly risk averse politicians do only advance policy proposals when it is certain that, as a consequence of their action, they can move a policy inside their preferred-to-set and thus increase their utility. The preferred-to-set of a player is defined as the set of points of a (policy) space that is closer to the player than the status quo, i.e. that is preferred by this player to the status quo.

The *gate* of a strictly risk averse player acting under an open amendment rule is defined as the set of policies that is closer or as close to this player then the most distant point of the core. This can be explained as follows: With an open amendment rule policy proposals have a tendency to move into the core, but it cannot be said in advance where inside the core a proposal will be moved by amendments. Once a process is started the final decision can therefore be at any point inside the core. When the status quo is closer to the player than some points inside the core that implies that the final vote can as well be outside the preferred-to-set of the respective player (Hammond/Knott 1996). The gate is therefore defined as above. With complete risk aversion the gate is always bigger than the core.

Because policy proposals may move outside the preferred-to-set of the agenda setting politician when the status quo is closer to this politician than at least some points inside the core a risk averse politician will not advance a policy proposal when the status quo policy is inside her gate. She will keep her *gates* to the agenda closed for this policy. Gate$_B$ and Gate$_{D,max}$ in Figure 1 mark the gate of politician B and D respectively given the that the core is between B and C.

Note that gate and core are independent of the status quo, but that they are dependent of preference configurations. Note in addition that the gates of different players are independent of each other but not independent of the core.

The problem of risk-aversion

Let me elaborate on the problem of risk-aversion before continuing. As Hammond and Knott point out the far bound of the core to a given player defines the width of her gate when this politician is completely risk averse. However, it seems to be reasonable to conceptualise risk aversion as continuous from completely risk averse to non risk averse. Complete risk aversion would mean that the whole core will have to be a subset of the gate as Hammond and Knott describe. But if risk aversion is not complete, one can argue that a player will advance a policy proposal as soon as there is a certain likelihood, that the new policy will be closer to her ideal point than the status quo. This likelihood is equivalent to the share of the core that gate would have to cover. If, for example, a politician is risk taking enough to advance policy proposals whenever there is at least a 50% chance to have a favourable outcome (i.e. the new policy being inside her preferred-to-set) the gate of this politician would only have to cover half the area taken up by the core.

The portion of the core that has to be covered by the gate is directly proportional to the risk aversion of the player. The extreme positions are marked by the completely risk averse player and the minimally or non-risk averse player. The characteristics of the former's gate have already been described. The gate of the latter would only extend to that point of the border of the core least distant to the respective player. That means that a minimally risk averse politician is willing to advance policy proposals whenever there is at least one point inside the core that is closer to her than the status quo. The gates with minimum and maximum risk aversion are illustrated in Figure 1 for player D with gate$_{D,min}$ and gate$_{D,max}$ respectively. Note that with limited risk aversion, the gate may become smaller than the core.

When there is an uneven number of veto players in a political system, and hence a point-core, differences in risk aversion are without effect because the distant and the close border of the core collapse into the ideal point of the median player. The width of the gate of any given player is then defined by the distance of this player's ideal point to the ideal point of the median player. The actual width of the gate is twice this distance.

Even though I used a constellation of politicians to demonstrate the consequences of limited risk aversion, in the remainder of the text the idea of limited risk aversion will only

be used for bureaucrats under conditions to be described (section 2.2.3 below). For politicians, I stick to the assumption of complete risk aversion for the sake of simplicity.

Implications of core and gate for the room to manoeuvre of the bureaucracy

The existence of a core has, according to Hammond and Knott (1996), the following consequences for bureaucratic room to manoeuvre: the bureaucracy can move policy freely across the policy space inside the core because there is no majority that is able to upset any status quo inside the core by an alternative proposal.

With effective gate keepers, the gate has similar consequences for the discretionary space of the bureaucracy as the core. The gate keeper will not advance a policy proposal when the status quo is inside her gate. This does leave additional room in the policy space to discretionary action by the bureaucracy because the gate is always bigger than the core.

These conclusions have to be differentiated, however, for decisions with and without parliamentary involvement (laws and administrative decrees respectively) and for various configurations of the actors.

For quasi-legislative measures like administrative decrees that do not necessitate parliamentary involvement the question is whether the whole cabinet or the individual ministers are policy-responsible.

With individual policy-responsibility by the respective minister, the core reduces to the ideal point of the minister, hence there is no room to manoeuvre for the bureaucracy.

With collective responsibility, it depends on the number of ministers or likewise on the number of parties in a coalition, whether there is a point-core or a bigger core. With an even number of ministers or coalition parties the core will be stretching out between the two median actors.

Additionally, with collective responsibility, the gate of the minister responsible for a certain policy becomes important. The minister will not propose policy changes when the status quo is located inside her gate. As a consequence, the discretionary freedom of the bureaucracy may grow as well.

With collective cabinet responsibility, the strength of the Prime Minister may become consequential as well, leading to a point core again, when the Prime Minister has a strong position in the cabinet. But in order not to complicate things further, this will be left out of consideration here, and the Prime Minister be assumed to be a perfect primus inter pares.

To summarise, under collective cabinet responsibility it is likely that there is more room to manoeuvre for the bureaucracy than under individual policy responsibility. This conclu-

sion is in line with the findings of Baylis (1989: 156) that strong bureaucracies do often go together with collective cabinet decision-making.

Normal legislation with parliamentary involvement depends on (1) the type of parliamentary support the government has, and (2) which core is responsible for bureaucratic room to manoeuvre. If there is a majority government the relevant core is the majority core, whereas with a minority government the relevant core is that of the whole house.

There are then the various possible combinations of number of veto players and parties voting as unitary actors, in factions, or individually that define whether there is a point-core or a core stretching between two median players with the respective consequences for bureaucratic room to manoeuvre. For an extensive discussion of thinkable configurations see Hammond and Butler (1996) and Hammond (1999).

To conclude this section, it can be said that the room to manoeuvre that may open up for the bureaucracy as a consequence of the core and the gate is a function not only of the preference configuration but of the type of legislation (law/decree), cabinet decision rule, type of government, and the number of veto players. These characteristics define where the relevant core and gates are.

2.2.3 Bureaucracies as stand-in agenda setters

The third type of bureaucratic influence on policy-making is that of agenda setting. The general idea of *bureaucracies as stand-in agenda setters* is that politicians do not have the time and resources to actively deal with all political problems that is to set the agenda for all problems that may arise in a polity. It is the bureaucracy that can stand in here, take up problems, and advance proposals for their solution, thereby becoming the agenda setter for a certain policy.

When the bureaucracy becomes an agenda setter the additional question is whether it can become an effective agenda setter. As effective agenda setter, I understand an actor, who can not only put a proposal on the agenda but can also predefine the final decision outcome.

Saliency of a policy problem

The room to manoeuvre that bureaucracies possess has been described with the concepts of core and gate. In an ideal world this would suffice to completely describe the discretionary leeway for bureaucracies, but the world of politics is, of course, not ideal. One of the major

restrictions for politicians when they deal with policy problems is that they need resources—especially people—to effectively be able to tackle a problem and advance a proposal. In a situation where the resources available to politicians do not suffice to deal with all problems at hand a criterion is needed to decide which policies to deal with, and in which order.

A rational actor will deal with policy problems in order of their importance to her. I will model this importance with the concept of saliency. Saliency is here understood as a combination of the priority a given politician has for a certain policy, the clarity of the preference she has about this policy, and the distance of the status quo of this policy from the ideal point of the politician.

Priorities, preferences, location of status quo, and hence the distances between the status quo and the ideal points of the politicians are given external to the model presented here. It does not matter for the problem at hand where they come from, it is only important that they are there and guide decision-making. The priority a politician gives to a certain policy may be high or low, she may have clear or unclear preferences about the problem, and the status quo of a policy can be close or distant to the ideal point of a politician. All three saliency components are of course inherently continuous, but they will be considered as dichotomous for the sake of clarity of the theoretical argument.

Table 1 gives an overview of the different combinations of the three components of saliency. With dichotomous components saliency has an ordinal scale with "3" as the highest value. This value marks the presence of high priority, clear preferences, and great distance of the status quo from the ideal point of a politician. If one of these characteristics is lacking the policy will be of medium-high saliency for a politician, marked by an entry of "2" in Table 1. If only one characteristic is present then saliency will be rather low, signified by an entry of "1". At last when none of these characteristics is present, a policy problem will be of no saliency to a given politician. The dotted lines in Table 1 divide the two unequivocal combinations of characteristics from the ones with mixed characteristics.

Table 1: Saliency of Policy Problems to Politicians

Priority	Distance SQ-IP	Preferences	
		clear	unclear
high	high	3 (high)	2
	low	2	1
low	high	2	1
	low	1	0 (low)

The combination "priority high" and "preference unclear" may seem a bit odd. It can, nevertheless, be plausible. Consider for example a newly emerging apparently urgent policy problem. It may not be clear yet for politicians where they should stand on the issue, but the problem could nevertheless be of high priority because some part of the electorate really cares about this problem or because it is clearly visible that it must be dealt with for the purpose of provision of a common good.

The consequences of the saliency of problems for bureaucratic agenda setting are expressed in the following two propositions:

Proposition 1: Under conditions of limited resources, politicians decide which problems to deal with (put them on the political agenda) by ordering problems according to their saliency. A problem will be dealt with by a politician, when there are no unresolved problems left that have higher saliency.

Proposition 2: When no politicians put a problem on the political agenda, bureaucracies may under certain circumstances stand in as agenda setters.

Note that when bureaucracies act as agenda setters they do have a gate as well ($gate_{Bu}$). But in contrast to the gates of politicians the core does only define the width of $gate_{Bu}$ but is not part of $gate_{Bu}$ itself. The core is not subsumed into $gate_{Bu}$ because, as Hammond and Knott (1996) demonstrate, the policy space inside the core is the space, which a bureaucracy can fill using its discretion (above p. 13). Therefore, whenever the status quo is inside the core the bureaucracy will have the possibility of moving a policy to that border of the core closest to its own ideal point without having to act as stand-in agenda setter. Furthermore, since bureaucracy can always move a core policy to the border of the core closest to itself, in the case of the bureaucracy it is the close rather than the distant border of the core which defines the width of the bureaucracy's gate.

Parliamentary chances to amend legislation and bureaucratic agenda-setting

It was said above that the size of the gate of an actor is a function of the risk aversion of this actor in composition with the distance of this actor's ideal point to the border of the core. The likely risk aversion of the bureaucracy when trying to stand in as agenda setter can, in large part, be explained by parliamentary chances to amend policy proposals put before it for approval. The following paragraphs therefore contain a discussion of parliamentary chances to amend and the likely consequences for the bureaucracy's risk-aversion.

One way parliamentary chances to amend legislation may be limited are by formal restrictions on parliamentary amendment rights and time. The more extensive the amend-

ment rights and time granted to parliament are, the more risk averse the bureaucracy should be, because extended amendment rights and extended time increase the chances that parliamentary decision makers are able to move the proposal outside the preferred-to set of the bureaucracy. The more limited parliament's rights and time to amend are on the other hand, the higher the chances for the bureaucracy to get its proposal through because the parliament has only a few chances to have an impact on a policy proposal brought before it.

Proposition 3: The more restricted amendment rights and elaboration time for the parliament are, the smaller the risk-aversion and as a consequence the gate of the bureaucracy, and likewise the greater its chances to influence political decision-making by effectively standing-in as an agenda setter.

Another factor influencing parliamentary willingness to amend legislation is the type of government, conceptualised via the parliamentary base of the current government (single/multi party majority, single/multi party minority).

The reliability of the parliamentary support for the government can be seen as a function of the type of government. Laver and Schofield (1990: 150-155) present empirical evidence supporting this argument. Reliability of parliamentary support decreases with the increase in the number of coalition partners and as the size of the coalition moves away from a close majority to either side—oversized majority or minority.

The more reliable the parliamentary support base of a given government, the less likely is the parliament to amend government proposals brought to the chamber for approval. The smaller the reliability of parliamentary support, the higher is the likelihood that parliament will successfully try to amend policy proposals from the government. The decreased likelihood of parliamentary amendments that is concomitant with a more stable basis of parliamentary support of the government will in turn decrease the risk aversion of the bureaucracy, and again as a consequence of its gate, increase the chances of the bureaucracy to stand in as agenda setter.

The comparatively strongest position of the bureaucracy can be expected in circumstances of a close single party majority as is usually the case in the United Kingdom where the parliament almost is obliged to vote through government proposals in order not to endanger its own power position. Circumstances like these leave the bureaucracy with the only necessity to ensure that their proposal will pass cabinet. From there on, all later moves can almost be taken for granted.

Proposition 4: The more reliable the parliamentary support base of the government, the better are the chances for the bureaucracy to effectively stand in as agenda setter.

Unclear preferences and the shape of the core

Neither priority nor distance of status quo to the ideal point of a politician has an impact on core and gate (It could be argued that low priority of a policy increases the risk a politician is willing to take and would thus decrease the politicians gate. This will not be explored here because it would unnecessarily complicate the argument). The clarity of preferences, however, is assumed to have an impact on the size of the gate as is demonstrated below.

Hammond's and Knott's core has clearly defined boundaries. Implicit here is the assumption that politicians do have clear preferences about the policies involved, i.e. that they do have an ideal point. If one relieves the assumption about exact preferences, it becomes necessary to discuss what the core will look like under such circumstances.

With unclear preferences, actors know at best the range in which their preferences lie, but they do not know their ideal point exactly. Actors will have to be seen as having an ideal range rather than an ideal point. In this view, the existence of an ideal point is a limiting case where the borders of a preference range collapse into one point—the ideal point. With the idea of a preference range goes the assumption that an actor is indifferent about all policies inside this preference range and will therefore abstain from all votes as long as the status quo and the alternative are both inside her ideal range. This has important implications for the characteristics of the core.

In Figure 2 the borders of the preference range of (the median players) B and C that are pointing towards each other will be called "inner bounds" whereas the far borders will be called "outer bounds." The area between the inner bounds does have the classic character-istics of the core (there *classic core* or $core_C$ from now on): policies inside this $core_C$ can-not be overruled by any other policy in- or outside $core_C$. The two areas between the inner and outer bounds do not share this characteristic. These areas will be called *weak core* ($core_W$, and since there are two such weak cores differentiated into $core_{W,B}$ and $core_{W,C}$). Any policy status quo inside $core_{W,B}$ can be overruled by a policy between the inner bound of B's ideal range and this status quo. The same is true for C respectively.

The classic and the weak cores together form the *total core* which I shall refer to as $core_T$.

Note that it is still not possible to move a policy status quo that is inside the core (either weak or classic) outside it. Likewise, a policy inside either weak core cannot be overruled by a policy alternative in $core_C$. Such a policy can, at most, be moved to the border between the weak and the classic core. A policy can only be moved into the classic core, when the status quo is outside the ideal range of any of the median players, that is outside $core_T$.

Consider for example a policy status quo inside the ideal range of B (IR_B in Figure 2). Since B is indifferent about all policies inside IR_B, she would abstain from a vote as long as the alternative proposal is inside IR_B as well. Since C would only vote for policies that are closer to her ideal range then the status quo there would be a majority for all policy alternatives between status quo and the inner bound of IR_B.

Figure 2:   Unclear Preferences, Ideal Range, Weak and Classic Core
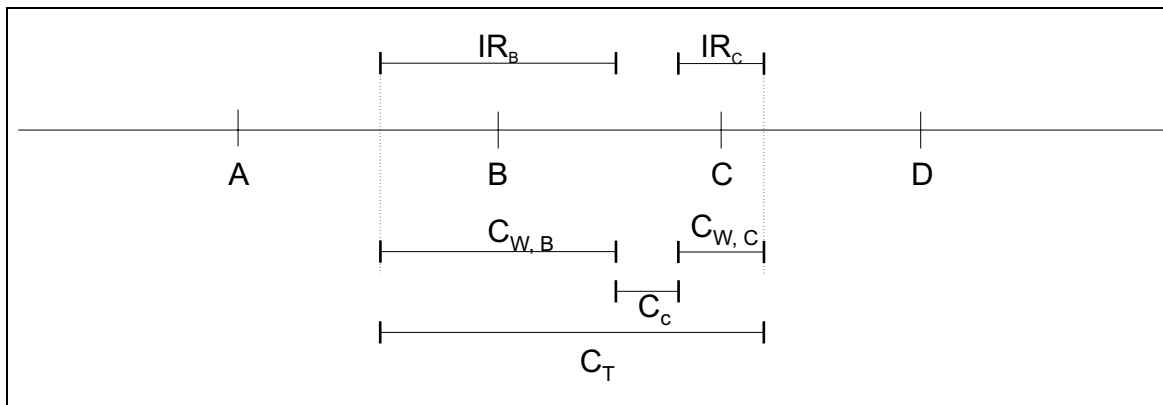
When the inner bounds of the preference ranges of the median players overlap, the classic core disappears. The core left has only the characteristics of a weak core. There will be no unbeatable policies any longer, but policies inside the core$_T$ are still unbeatable by policies outside it.

With only one median player and unclear preferences the situation is different. To begin with there is no core with one median player with clear preferences and hence an ideal point as stated above (p. 10).

With unclear preferences, however, the ideal range of the median player ($IR_{median\ player}$) becomes the core of this configuration with the known characteristics that a policy status quo inside her ideal range could not be upset by any other policy.

The mechanics are clear for the case, where either policy status quo or policy alternative are inside the ideal range of the median player and the other is outside and vice versa.

The interesting case is when policy status quo and an alternative proposal are both inside the $IR_{median\ player}$. In this situation the median player will abstain from a vote, and hence the remaining number of voting politicians is even. This puts the players left and right of the (now silent) median player into the positions of median players. The invulnerability of the points inside the ideal range of the true median player remains unchanged, however, because the area between the two (new) median players has now the characteristics of a core. A policy status quo inside this new core will likewise be invulnerable to any other

policy proposal. Therefore, with only one median player and unclear preferences $IR_{median\ player}$ becomes the core of such a configuration.

The following Figure 3 demonstrates what these new elements of the model mean for bureaucratic participation in the policy process. Here we have an odd number of players with C being the median player.

Figure 3:   Room to Manoeuvre for the Bureaucracy as a Consequence of Unclear Preferences of Political Actors.
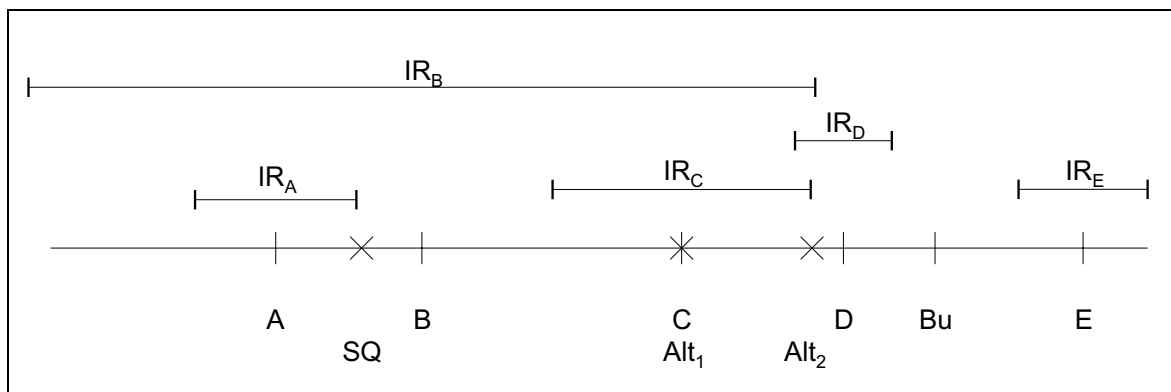
IR   ideal range
SQ   status quo
Bu   Bureaucracy
Alt1 Alternative 1, when Politicians have ideal points
Alt2 Alternative 2, when Politicians have ideal ranges

When the players in this example have ideal points, the closest an agenda-setting bureaucracy can get a proposal to its own ideal point is C (alternative 1 in Figure 3). In the case that politicians have more unspecific preferences and hence ideal ranges, bureaucracy can place a proposal at alternative 2 and this proposal will still be passed by the political body (parliament or cabinet) voting on it. If the ideal ranges of C and D would stretch so far as to include the ideal point of the bureaucracy, then a bureaucracy could even move policy to its own ideal point.

If preferences are extremely unclear then the ideal range of most politicians may stretch across large areas of a policy dimension such that it is likely that there will be no effective core at all. Under such circumstances, bureaucrats are free to move policy to almost every point in the policy space without having to fear political intervention. Likewise, the risk aversion of bureaucrats would decrease with increasingly unclear preferences of politicians. Bureaucrats could become ever more willing to table policy proposals of their own, hoping that they will be able to get them through and bring the finally approved policy close to their own ideal point. In other words, increasingly unclear preferences of politicians are likely to decrease the size of the bureaucratic gate.

Saliency, resources, and agenda setting bureaucracies

Let me now turn to a description of the various constellations between bureaucracy and politicians which define whether a bureaucracy will have the chance to act as an agenda setter or not. There are general rules for political and bureaucratic actors when they will "move," that is when they will try to advance a policy proposal.

Proposition 5: Politicians will advance a policy proposal when:
   a) they are responsible for a certain policy for which they are the gate keepers,
   b) and the status quo is outside their gate,
   c) and there are no policy problems with higher saliency they haven't been dealing with yet,
   d) and they still have resources available to deal with the problem.

To make a structured presentation of the following ideas possible I assume that there will always be resources available for problems of saliency level 3. For medium saliency problems (saliency levels "2" and "1") a politician will advance a proposal according to availability of resources (cf. proposition 1). Resources will never be sufficient and/or politicians are not interested to actively pursue low saliency problems (saliency level 0).

Proposition 6: Bureaucrats move when:
   a) no politician has moved,
   b) and the status quo is outside the gate of the respective minister (the political principal of the bureaucracy), or the minister does not have a gate for the respective policy because she has no preferences related to this policy,

[Substantiation: Bureaucracy has no formal status allowing it to advance a policy proposal. A proposal from the bureaucracy will always have to be tabled by the respective minister (or possibly though unlikely another politician). If the status quo is inside the gate of the minister ($gate_{Min}$) she is not likely to table a proposal in cabinet. Since bureaucrats are assumed to be rational actors who do only spent effort when there is a certain likelihood of success the above rule.

In the case of no preferences and hence no $gate_{Min}$ a minister is assumed to table a proposal from the bureaucracy because there is no cost for this action to the minister but she can demonstrate activity to the public and do something the bureaucracy will be pleased with. Since the minister has to rely on the bureaucracy for most activities the latter can be seen as a sufficiently high incentive for the minister to table the proposal.

There may, of course, be another minister or political player who is willing to sponsor a policy proposal from the bureaucracy into the policy process. This case is very unlikely on the other hand and will therefore not be explored further.]

c) and the status quo is outside gate$_{Bu}$ (or there is no gate$_{Bu}$ for reasons explained below).

Table 2 is a complete listing of the various constellations that result as a consequence of different levels of saliency and different positions of the status quo in relation to gate$_{minister}$, core, and gate$_{Bu}$. Note that according to Proposition 5 a policy proposal can be advanced by politicians in general or by the politician (minister) leading a particular bureaucracy (department). Whenever a politician does not take the initiative on a matter, the bureaucracy can move, as stated according to the rules in Proposition 6. This possibility to move is established independently of the reasons politicians had for not acting on a matter. Whether bureaucrats do actually want to advance a proposal depends on their relationship to the status quo and on the gate of their principal (minister).

Gate$_{Min}$ referred to at the top of Table 2 is the gate of the bureaucracy's principal. The core in the table is the majority core. In case of minority governments, this implies that opposition parties have their share in defining the core.

When saliency is high and a policy is outside the gate of the principal, then the principal will start herself to advance a policy proposal (and be it be by asking her bureaucrats to write it up). In this case, bureaucracy has no chance of becoming an effective agenda setter and can only use structures to co-define outcomes as outlined above. If saliency is high but status quo is inside gate$_{Min}$, the politician will not move. Even if no other politician is advancing a proposal, the bureaucracy, under these circumstances, does not have an incentive to become active because the principal is very unlikely to submit a proposal to the cabinet. When status quo is located inside the core, no politician has any incentive to advance a proposal. But, according to Hammond's and Knott's argument (1996) the bureaucracy has discretionary leeway, and is therefore likely to use discretion instead of advancing a new policy proposal.

The other extreme to the situation just described is that of Zero-Saliency. According to Table 1 and Proposition 5, politicians neither have preferences to guide their action nor do they have resources to act on these problems. The latter point implies that bureaucrats do always have the chance to move on issues with low saliency, the former point (no or extremely unclear preferences) implies that they will always advance proposals under these circumstances unless the status quo is very close to or at their own ideal point.

To summarise, it can be said that in the two extremes the bureaucracy has either no chance of becoming an agenda setter or has all the chances.

With the intermediate saliency levels things become more complicated. Politicians (either the minister or any other politician) become decreasingly likely to advance policy proposals with decreasing levels of saliency. This is signified by the "Move 2/3" and "Move 1/3" entries for saliency levels "2" and "1" in Table 2. This decreasing likelihood is

a function of the limited resources politicians have which forces them to concentrate their attention on matters of high importance to them. If the status quo is outside gate$_{Min}$ and none of the politicians move, the bureaucracy will advance a policy proposal if the status quo is not inside gate$_{Bu}$.

When the saliency decreases and a policy status quo is located inside gate$_{Min}$, it still holds that the bureaucracy is not likely to advance policy proposals because of the limited chances that the minister is taking the proposition to cabinet. Note, however, that with decreasing saliency, unclear preferences become more likely with consequences for the minister's gate. The gate of the minister disappears when her ideal range covers the whole core. A status quo that would be inside gate$_{Min}$ with clearer preferences (Table 2, column B) would move into column A (status quo outside gate$_{Min}$). This move stands for increased possibilities for the bureaucracy to influence policy with decreasing levels of preference clarity. In this situation a minister would be willing to advance a proposal from the ranks of the bureaucracy because it does hot harm her utility in the policy sphere, pleases the bureaucrats, and therefore earns her better standing with the bureaucrats.

Table 2: Room to Manoeuvre of Bureaucracy as a Function of Saliency Level of a Policy

Saliency		A - SQ $\notin$ gate$_{Min}$ *	B - SQ $\in$ gate$_{Min}$ **	C - SQ $\in$ core ***
3	Politicians	Move	do not move	do not move
	Bureaucrats	-	do not move	use discretion
2	Politicians	Move 2/3 as f(resources)	do not move	do not move
	Bureaucrats	Move if P does not and SQ $\notin$ gate$_{Bu}$	do not move	use discretion
1	Politicians	Move 1/3 as f(resources)	do not move	do not move
	Bureaucrats	Move if P does not and SQ $\notin$ gate$_{Bu}$	do not move	use discretion
0 ****	Politicians	does not move	-	-
	Bureaucrats	do not move if SQ = IP$_{Bu}$	do not move if SQ = IP$_{Bu}$	do not move if SQ = IP$_{Bu}$

*   Gate$_{Min}$ is the gate of the respective minister (the principal of the bureaucracy).
**   Principal does not move but some other politician may move. In the latter case bureaucracy can always try to use organisational structures to influence policy decisions.
***   None of the politicians will move.
****   According to the reasoning outlined above it is assumed that there is no core and no gate$_P$ in this constellation because preferences are unclear (which is here equated to non-existent preferences) and priority is low. Therefore, every SQ $\notin$ gate and every SQ $\notin$ core, and hence bureaucracy does always move (unless SQ = IP$_B$).

By being the prime mover, a bureaucracy can table a proposal that would move the policy towards its own ideal point. The smaller the saliency of the problem for any politician and the smaller the resources for the politicians the higher the bureaucracy's chances to actually get a policy decision according to the initial proposal. The resource argument is valid because politicians with already small resources can be assumed to put as many resources as possible into active policy-making themselves. After this is done, there are only few if any resources left to deal with additional projects such as writing up amendments to policy initiatives from other actors. It needs to be noted here, that according to Figure 2, it is increasingly likely that gate$_{Bu}$ becomes smaller when the saliency of a policy decreases. If the saliency is "1" then only one of the three conditions of priority, distance, and preference clarity can be present. Unclear preferences are very likely under this circumstances. It is these unclear preferences that can decrease the size of the bureaucratic gate because the risk goes down that politicians will effectively intervene with a bureaucratic policy proposal.

If the status quo policy is in the core, bureaucrats will again, as above, use discretion to influence policy.

The three types of bureaucratic impact on policy-making that were discussed in this chapter are implicitly structuring Table 2: whenever bureaucracy cannot (Cell A3) or does not move (cells B3-B1) or does only have a certain likelihood to move (cells A2-A1), and cannot use discretion, it is likely to use *organisational structures* to influence decision-making (cf. section 2.2.1). When the status quo is inside the majority core (cells C3–C1) bureaucracy will try to use its *discretion,* and in the remainder of combinations, (cells A0-C0, and with a certain likelihood A1, A2) is it likely that the bureaucracy will try to become a *stand-in agenda setter* if the status quo is not at its own ideal point.

2.3 *Summary of the theoretical discussion*

To this point a theoretical framework has been established within which the question of structural conditions of bureaucratic influence on policy-making can be further analysed. I have outlined three different types of bureaucratic influence on policy-making. The first was the structurally defined possibility of influencing the content of policy decisions that are already on their way through the organisational structures dealing with the law making process. The second was the chance to influence policies when politicians are not able to find majorities against what the bureaucracy is doing, i.e. bureaucracy is using the core of the preference configuration to exert discretion. The size of the core is defined by the number of veto players and the ideological spread of the veto players, especially the median

players. The third possibility, that was newly developed in this article, is the chance for the bureaucracy to effectively stand in as agenda setter. This chance is for the most part defined by the information processing resources of the political actors relative to those of the bureaucracy.

Table 3 is a summary of the discussion with the intention of providing a general overview of characteristics under which one can expect a strong national bureaucracy and under which this bureaucracy will be better checked by parliament as well as the cabinet.

The strength of the bureaucracy is positively related to its own resources and ability to act homogeneously. It is inversely related to the resources of the political players. The concept "resources" in this usage does not only count those resources that have an impact on the level of saliency (viz. resources needed to process information), but also includes chances to influence policy (e.g. amendment rights) and the unity of the political actors as well.

Table 3: Summary: Expected Strength of Bureaucratic Impact on Policy-Making as a Function of Resource Differences and Bureaucratic Structures

		Resources of parliament and cabinet in relation to the bureaucracy			
		poor (+)		rich (-)	
		Homogeneity of veto players			
		weak (+)	strong (-)	weak (+)	strong (-)
Ability to use org. structure to strengthen position	strong (+)	+ + + (3)	+ + - (2)	+ - + (2)	+ - - (1)
	weak (-)	- + + (2)	- + - (2)	- - + (1)	- - - (0)

(+) and (-) mark whether this value is enhancing (+) or decreasing (-) expected strength of the bureaucracy.

As an illustration of the meaning of the cells in Table 3 I take the two extreme points of the table. When the organisational structures of the bureaucracy support its ability to influence policy proposals, the veto and preference configuration leaves it much room to manoeuvre, and its resources are strong in comparison to parliament and cabinet, so that it will have many chances to stand in as agenda setter, then the bureaucracy is likely to have a strong position in national policy-making. This is symbolised by the three plus-signs in this cell. In the opposite extreme, bureaucracy will be in a comparatively weak position as symbolised by the three minus-signs.

Formal theorists do usually advance their topics by extensively modelling preference configurations and deriving conclusions from these models. The framework proposed here is slightly more complex in so far as it includes a number of additional traits that are to model the environment within which the preferences form and become effective.

Therefore, I am going to look at structural features that enhance or decrease a bureaucracies ability to become an effective agenda setter or a successful user of structures to influence policy. A number of organisational and institutional elements with such effects have already been pointed to in the above sections. In the next part of the text I will outline these characteristics in more detail to present a set of empirical indicators that can measure potential bureaucratic influence.

3 Operationalisation

It has been deplored time and again that bureaucracies do not lend themselves easily to comparative and quantitative analysis. Caveats have been expressed about the usability of putatively comparative information. Peters (1996: 23) writes of the "travelling problem" of concepts and data definitions across time and space that makes comparison so difficult in the field of public administration. Nevertheless, careful use of the available data has been accepted, because there is no better way of developing good comparative indicators than by simply starting somewhere and gradually improving on the initial quality of the data (McGregor and Solano 1996). The empirical data for comparison needs to be collected with the highest possible care, but with the recognition of the unavoidable risk of making inaccurate descriptions and comparisons.

One of the initial problems of every empirical analysis is the plausible operationalisation and measurement of indicators. Due to the situation of comparative quantitative administrative research just described, the problem is not yet well discussed in the literature. This chapter is therefore devoted to the task of a detailed description and substantiation of the indicators to be used, thus hopefully inviting a critical debate on the operationalisation put forward here.

The indicators will be presented in three groups. According to the structure of the theoretical argumentation, there will first be indicators describing the ability of bureaucracies to use organisational structures strategically to influence decision outcomes. Indicators in this group capture aspects of homogeneity of the bureaucratic personnel as well as the possibilities of politicians to define what decision proposals evolve through the ranks of the bureaucracy by placing people of their choice and trust into the ranks of the bureaucracy.

The indicators in the second group describe the institutional configuration that provides the framework within which preferences form a core and gates which in turn defines the room to manoeuvre for the bureaucracy.

The third group consists of indicators capturing the ability of the bureaucracy to stand in as agenda setter.

For each indicator a short explanation is given why this indicator is thought to be a reasonable construct, then the details of its construction and data source are reported.

When the relative ability of an actor is to be expressed, like the relative strength of the bureaucracy in relation to cabinet and parliament, one would expect symmetrical indicators, i.e. indicators of the same type for the administrative as well as political actors (see e.g. staff size). Yet, there are some indicators that are non-symmetrical. In this case, explicit mention is made why and how the characteristic thus indicated is thought to have an impact on the bureaucracies ability to influence policy decision-making nevertheless.

3.1 Indicators capturing the bureaucracy's ability to influence decision-making through the strategic use of organisational structures

The following list contains structural characteristics that define the chances of the bureaucracy to use organisational structures as devices to influence political decision-making. From the view point of the politicians, these characteristics do inversely indicate their chances to have their preferences heeded as early in the administrative process of decision preparation as possible.

3.1.1 Openness of the civil service recruitment and career system

Openness of the civil service recruitment and career system is included as a proxy for the homogeneity of the civil service bureaucracy. Homogeneity of the civil service is inversely related to the ministers ability to lead a department as will be argued below. Openness and homogeneity are related to each other via the process of socialisation into a civil service job. The more open the recruitment structures, that is the more there are chances for lateral entry, entrants from different educational backgrounds, etc., the worse are the chances for the development of and the socialisation into a common and homogenous civil service culture and understanding. Homogeneity is inversely related to the minister's ability to lead a department because:

1. It supports the maximisation of the knowledge differential between bureaucracies and their political superiors, because it provides structural elements supporting the transfer of expertise to and keeping it with the civil servants. Homogeneity enhances the potential for inner service co-ordination and informal exchange of information through long established networks between civil servants.

2. A homogenous service is more likely to develop a common interest that is clearly defined and understood by the members. The development of the civil service into a special interest group itself (Hojnacki 1996: 159) is thus made easier. Under such circumstances, a more homogenous civil service can be expected to lead not only to more group self-consciousness but to an increased potential to act collectively according to the perceived common interest on the basis of shared values and attitudes.

3. A homogenous civil service improves the conditions for bureaucrats to use organisational structures to influence the departmental decision process in their interest.

   The ability of civil servants to use structures in this way depends on their ability to act strategically. Strategic action is only possible with the ability to "predict" likely choices of other servants and politicians at the same or later stages of a decision process. A homogenous civil service does increase the chances to acquire this knowledge about the preferences of other players. Additionally, there are more chances for collegial interaction over time as well as an increased likelihood for more homogenous preferences among civil servants with a homogenous civil service. There is even the chance to develop relationships between civil servants that allow co-operative action in decision processes. As a result, civil servants will be able more often to advance consensual proposals to their minister. Since ministers do have only limited time resources to deal with departmental affairs, they will usually revert to Management by Exception (above p.8). Bringing consensual proposals before their ministers increases the chances of the bureaucracy to have their proposals passed by the minister without interference. This, in turn, means that a more homogenous civil service provides good conditions for bureaucrats to successfully use organisational structures as devices to influence decision outcomes.

Open career systems are characterised by good possibilities for lateral entry, a weak emphasis on career development, and no specific labour relations in the public sector through special civil service employment statutes. Data for this indicator is mainly based on Auer, Demmke, and Polet (1996).

The indicator is an additive index summarising a number of characteristics of the civil service career system. These characteristics are recruitment procedures (entry conditions, centrality/non-centrality, publicity of job advertisements etc.), remuneration schemes, the rules for internal job advancement, and the legal basis for public employment (public sector statutes or general labour law). Details are available from Table 15 in the Appendix.

3.1.2 Openness of the recruitment system for top positions in the administration (Senior Executive Service)

The general explanation for this indicator is as above. The top administrative levels need special mention because most countries do have or did recently develop an explicit senior executive service system (SES) with specific recruitment and career rules for this group that differ from those for the general civil service.

The major source of information here are two reports on SES-systems from the OECD (1997) and the European Institute for Public Administration (EIPA 1998). Details are available from Table 16 in the Appendix.

3.1.3 Formal politicisation of the SES

Formal politicisation of the SES means the possibility for the government of the day, or its ministers, to pick their top bureaucrats at will without major procedural obstacles. Formal politicisation can help to ensure that the ministerial apparatus is more closely responsive to the political ideas of the government and to tighten the grip of the minister on the ministerial apparatus (Derlien 1996; Mayntz and Derlien 1989; Bureau voor de Algemen Bestuursdienst 1998). Germany with its "politische Beamte" (political civil servants) in the top levels of the ministries is a good example for such a system. Because such a system can decrease the chances of the career civil service to influence policy decisions via strategic use of organisational structures, politicisation is included as a relevant indicator (see above p.7).

There is of course a trade-off between the necessary institutional memory and the wish of the minister to have as many political trustees as possible in the department. The discussion about the right amount of politically loyal ministerial servants is beset with many normative as well as empirical questions. They need not concern us here, however, because this article is only recording current conditions and not trying to give advice on how to structure civil service systems.

Formal politicisation of the SES measures the ability of the government or minister respectively to "hire and fire" senior servants at their discretion and the extent to which a minister is involved in picking her top servants. The data sources are OECD (1997) and EIPA (1998) as above. Details are available from Table 16 in the Appendix.

3.1.4 Amount of political activity allowed to civil servants

The amount of political activity allowed to civil servants can be seen as a proxy for the preparedness of civil service to use structures to strategically influence decision-making against the known preferences of the minister. The reasoning is as follows: Official prohibition of political activity supports the establishment of a culture of aversion towards politics in the service. At the same time a culture of neutrality of the service against political ambition may develop. The British civil service is a good example here. A liberal policy in contrast, makes it more likely for civil servants to actually have palpable political convictions and to perceive it as legitimate to carry these convictions with them to their administrative job (Peters 1995: 34). Under these latter circumstances civil servants may feel much more tempted to use the sequence of organisational decision-making to strategically influence final decision outcomes. This justifies the use of "allowed political" activity in the given context.

The political activity indicator is composed of four items making statements about the possibility of engaging in political activities from the party level to active participation in elections. The data sources are as above. Details are available from Table 16 in the Appendix.

3.2 Indicators to form expectations about the size of core and gates

3.2.1 Number of veto players

The number of veto players is the basic institutional variable for the definition of the bureaucratic room to manoeuvre as was argued above p. 9 ff.

To keep matters more simple I will in the interpretation differentiate between constellations with one veto player (and hence no core) and multiple veto players only. Even though, according to the model, there will be no core with any odd number of veto players as well, it can be expected that room to manoeuvre for the bureaucracy will increase with a combined principal nevertheless. The desirable more detailed differentiation of number of veto players will have to be left to later analysis, when closer attention can be paid to the characteristics of the specific situation in the countries.

The indicator counts partisan as well as institutional veto players if the latter do not fall under the absorption rule, which states, that institutional veto players are counted only when their ideological position differs significantly from the partisan veto players in par-

liament (Tsebelis 1995: 305-310). Data are from Tsebelis 2000. Data on the USA are by analogy of usage from Hammond and Knott 1996.

3.2.2   Organisation of cabinet decision-making (responsibility)

This indicator is intended to grasp cabinet's role in the policy game. Cabinet decision-making can be organised with collective and individual policy responsibility by the ministers. The type of organisation has consequences for the size of the cabinet core as was argued above.

The cabinet collectivity indicator combines information from several sources, comparative as well as single country descriptions. Data are from Andeweg and Galen 1993, Baylis 1989, Döring 1993, Müller 1992, and OECD 1992.

3.3   Indicators for the chances of the bureaucracy to become an effective agenda setter

3.3.1   The resource base of parliament

Size of parliamentary staff, ministerial staff, and its relation

Ministerial staff measures the major resource, civil service staff, of the ministerial administration. It is given in two figures, one only including core ministerial staff and the other covering core plus implementation agency staff. Because, from the OECD-data, it was not possible to differentiate between ministerial and non-ministerial, that is independent, implementation agencies information on existence or non-existence of independent implementation agencies is included. Ministerial resources are comparatively smaller with independent implementation agencies. To correct for this inaccuracy information on existence or non-existence of independent implementation agencies is included. There are, of course, special control problems with independent agencies (Hammond/Knott 1996, Polidano 1999), but these problems are not discussed here.

Defence administration and military personnel was generally excluded from the count because it proved difficult in a number of cases to distinguish personnel on active military duty from the staff of the defence administration. By completely leaving out the defence sector an undue inflation of the numbers for the ministerial administration was avoided.

The data are based on OECD (1992, 1993s and 1995s). Details are available from Table 15 and Table 17 in the Appendix.

The amount of parliamentary staff serves as an indicator of parliament's ability not only to process the information provided by the government bureaucracy but to develop its own basis of expertise. An adequate amount of staff can support parliament in the formation of preferences and the active development of its own policy proposals, so that less chances are left to the bureaucracy for agenda-setting activities. Without an adequate amount of support and research personnel there will be limited chances only for the parliament to keep up with the bureaucracies speed of bringing up and processing issues. Data on parliamentary staff are obtained from either OECD (1992, 1993s, and 1995s) or directly from the national parliaments. See Appendix Table 18[3]. Parliamentary and ministerial staff are reported in absolute as well as relative numbers.

It is not clear yet, whether the absolute or the relative size indicators are the more appropriate ones. An unambiguous theoretic derivation has not succeeded yet. Whereas the former give an impression of the absolute size of the central government machinery the later seem to be more appropriate to judge the difference in resources between parliament and the executive. But these relative numbers do still need the comparative context to become meaningful, because there is no standard informing us how much parliamentary staff is needed as an equivalent for a given number of government bureaucrats. The statements that are possible with these data are therefore statements about the relative wealth of parliamentary resources in the observed countries in relation to each other.

Eventually, whether absolute or relative numbers are taken does only make a serious difference to the rank order of countries in the case of Japan. Japan has a very big parliamentary apparatus and is therefore second in the rank order of absolute staff numbers (cf. Table 7). But this high absolute number of parliamentary staff is heavily outnumbered by an even bigger ministerial administration such that Japan ranks among the bottom quarter in relative numbers.

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3   A research group at the Social Science Research Center Berlin, consisting of Achim Kielhorn, Bernhard Wessels and the author was carrying out a research project "Parliamentary Structures and Parliamentary Resources" including a mail questionnaire that was sent to the speakers or presidents of the EU-member states, Australia, Japan, New Zealand, Norway, Switzerland, and the USA in July 1999. It contained questions about the committee system, committee staff, and general parliamentary staff. The questions covered the period from 1970 to date. 16 of the 21 parliaments have answered to the questionnaire.

System of permanent parliamentary committees

The differentiation of parliament into permanent committees is not in the strict sense a resource but its effects are similar. Committee differentiation clearly designates areas of policy responsibility to individual parliamentarians. This division of labour can support the development of clear preferences on the limited number of issues a particular committee has to deal with. In the end this can help to increase the average level of saliency that policies have for parliamentary politicians. A similar argument for the effect of committees on the ability of parliament to control the executive and be an effective part of the national polity can be found in Mattson and Strøm (1995) and Strøm (1998a). In addition, if committees are structured along ministerial jurisdictions it is less likely that there will be uncovered policy space left, where bureaucrats may feel a need to step in because nobody else is going to deal with an issue.

The indicator is provided as the average number of committees per decade. Information is taken from the research project "Parliamentary Structures and Parliamentary Resources" mentioned above.

Time to process information

Another important resource for parliament is its time to process government information. Parliament does only have limited chances to digest government proposals and substantively act upon them without a sufficient amount of time to do this job.

Because it is difficult, if not impossible, to gather comparative information about the time the parliament gets to deal with policy proposals in general, time to deal with the government's budget is taken as general representation for parliamentary reaction time. Budget time seems to be an appropriate indicator, because differences in budgeting time for the government administration and the parliament are not only clearly visible but formally fixed as well. Additionally, this information is available on a comparative basis.

Data sources for time to process the budget proposal are OECD (1987) and Hagen and Harden (1992). For details see Table 18 in the Appendix.

Formal rights of parliament in the legislative process

There are a number of formal rights that have an impact on the chances of the various actors in a national polity to become agenda setters.

The first indicator describes the distribution of rights to initiate legislation between parliament and the executive. The indicator summarises which parliamentary actors (members, groups, committees) have the right to initiate legislation. In addition it is considered whether the electorate has the right to initiate legislation, because popular initiative as well takes chances to initiate from the executive and thus the bureaucracy. As elements positively influencing the executive's rights to initiation are included whether there is a budget prerogative for the government, and whether there is a quorum on initiatives from members of the house. Details on indicator construction can be obtained from Table 18 in the Appendix. The data are based on IPU (1986: Table 29, p.859 ff.).

The second indicator describes to what extent the executive is able to legislate without parliament. The indicator has two elements. The first captures how restrictive the possibilities are to delegate legislative authority to the cabinet, and the second element captures to what extent parliamentary approval of executive legislation is needed. The data is based on IPU (1986: Table 35, p.1027 ff.). Details on the operationalisation are given in Table 18 in the Appendix.

The third indicator with regard to the organisation of the legislative process describes the role of committees in the way parliaments deal with government drafts of legislation. It was said above that strong committees are expected to strengthen the general position of parliament. Committees, however, can only have a positive effect for parliament, when they are formally granted standing in the legislative process. This indicator captures therefore, whether the committee stage is compulsory on the way of a government proposal to the final vote, in which way the committee amendments are considered during the readings of the whole house, and whether government or single ministers have a right to interfere into the way committees deal with their proposals. Especially the last right strengthens the position of a minister and the bureaucracy behind her. When the consent of the minister is required, before committee amendments are allowed to be put before the whole house, the minister has ultimate agenda and outcome control. When there is close rapport between the bureaucracy in a given department and the minister this implies, that the chances for the bureaucracy to effectively set the agenda are considerably increased. Data for this indicator is based on IPU (1986: Table 33, p.961 ff.). Details on the operationalisation are given in Table 18 in the Appendix.

Parliamentary information rights towards the executive

The ability of parliament to limit the room to manoeuvre for the bureaucracy does in addition to the availability of resources and its formal rights in the legislative process depend on parliamentary rights of information, that is parliament's rights of access to official documents, its ability to summon witness, and its right to interrogate ministers and other officials (Peters 1991). Open access to information supports the development of clear preferences in parliament. Without proper knowledge of problems and possible solutions, which often is only available through government bureaucracies, it will often be very difficult, or even impossible, for politicians to develop clear preferences on an issue. By increasing the likelihood of the existence of clear preferences, an open access to government information decreases the room to manoeuvre that parliaments have to leave to bureaucracies.

The indicator "information rights of parliament" is constructed as a summary indicator on a number of information rights as described in IPU (1986; Peters 1991 used a very similar approach with the IPU-data to capture parliament's ability in relation to the bureaucracy). The index cannot be carried over to other time periods. There is no reliable data source providing comparative information against which to check for changes in the rules over time. Neither are changes reported in the IPU report itself. The IPU-data is therefore taken as valid for the 1980s only. Details on indicator composition are available from Table 18 in the Appendix.

A direct mirror of parliamentary information rights at the side of the bureaucracy would be an indicator on the extent to which it is allowed administrations to actively conceal information from parliament (through devices like the former British Official Secrets Act). Since this information is captured ex negativo in the IPU-Data it was not collected and presented here separately.

3.3.2 The resource base of cabinet

Formal resources of the cabinet have been described in the above section already with rights to initiate legislation and legislate without parliament in certain circumstances. These formal resources describe the relationship between parliament and cabinet that has an effect on the chances for the bureaucracy to become an agenda setter. But, the same question of human resources in relation to the bureaucracy, that provided the rational for the inclusion of the size of parliamentary staff, applies to the size of cabinet and supportive positions as well. By supportive positions I mean any kind of additional partisan posts in

the vicinity of cabinet like the British junior ministers or the German "Parlamentarische Staatssekretäre" (parliamentary state secretaries). The larger the so defined resources of cabinet the higher its chances to keep bureaucrats from setting the agenda. Indicators describing this relationship are introduced here.

The rational for this indicator is similar to that for parliaments work capacity in relation to the bureaucracy. Additional political personal increases the work capacity of non-bureaucratic actors (Olson 1983: 97-99), so that there are less chances for the bureaucracy to step in as an agenda setter. In the language of chapter 2.2 this means that the saliency level for a number of policies can be raised, because the total span of attention of political executive personal is increased. It plays an important role for the effects of additional partisan posts whether these enjoy policy responsibility of their own because such a spread of responsibility does especially serve the function of putting more eyes into the task of monitoring and guiding bureaucratic activities.

Note that preference configurations are not affected by these structural traits. The effect can at most be a change in saliency levels of certain policy problems as said above.

Data for cabinet size is taken from Woldendorp et al. (1993 and 1998). Information on existence and responsibilities of junior ministers and functional equivalents are from OECD (1992).

The size measures for cabinet are set in relation to the size measures for the SES-group as the direct opposite numbers of the executive leaders in the ranks of the bureaucracy. Information on the size of the SES-group is from EIPA (1998) and OECD (1997). Details are available from Table 16 and Table 18 in the Appendix.

3.4 Other indicators

Link between interest groups and political as well as administrative actors

The last item used to describe availability of information as a resource is access to third party information, especially to interest groups. It is an indicator that describes a resource that can either belong to parliament, the executive and the bureaucracy, or both.

It is known that good governance is not possible without at least some co-operation with and information from interest groups (Wilson 1990, chapter. 1; Page 1992, chapter 5). Those actors in parliament or government to which interest groups mainly turn possess an information advantage over other actors on societal problems as well as possible solutions to these problems. This indicator therefore presents information on the main contact of

interest groups in the political-administrative system. This main contact can be the ministers, the bureaucracy, parliament or a combination thereof.

The complete coding scheme is outlined in Table 19 in the Appendix. The various sources of data used for this indicator are listed there as well.

Parliamentary support of the incumbent government via Type of Government

Type of government gives information about the reliability of parliamentary support for the government. It can be called a resource in relation to government as well, because the reliability of the parliamentary support of government establishes the terms of interaction between government and parliament. The reliability of parliamentary support goes down with the increase in the number of coalition partners and as coalition size moves away from a close majority to either side, oversized majority or minority. The less reliable parliamentary support the more likely it is that parliament will step in and try to amend policy proposals from the government. This means for an initiative coming from the bureaucracy that it is the more likely to pass the parliamentary stage without significant changes the higher the reliability of the parliamentary majority. Under conditions of a high reliability of parliament therefore, bureaucracy's chances for effective agenda setting are increased. Bureaucrats can be assumed to know when this is the case and when it is not and behave as agenda setters accordingly.

Parliamentary support of the government is described with the indicator "Type of Government" that was published by Woldendorp et al. (1993 and 1998) and has since been used in a number of comparative analyses. "Type of Government" captures the parliamentary basis of government by coding it into six categories from single party majority to minority coalition government. Single party majorities provide the highest chance for reliable parliamentary support whereas minority coalitions provide the least chance for reliable parliamentary support. Coding details are available from Table 19 in the Appendix.

After this discussion of the operationalisation I shall turn to a presentation of the data itself, and to the development of a quantitatively grounded taxonomy of the position of ministerial bureaucracies in national policy-making.

4   Presentation of the Data

4.1   The bureaucracy's ability to use organisational structures strategically

The first set of indicators to be presented are those describing the prerequisites for the strategic use of organisational structures to influence policy-making. Table 4 displays the openness or closeness of the general civil service recruitment and job advancement system. It can be seen that countries are divided into one group with open and another group with closed career systems with Japan and Norway being intermediary cases.

Table 4: Openness of the Civil Service Career System
(in descending order of values for the 1990s)

Country N=17	Average 1970s	Average 1980s	Average 1990s	Country Average
Greece	6.0	6.0	6.0	6.0
Belgium	5.6	5.6	5.6	5.6
France	5.6	5.6	5.6	5.6
Ireland	5.2	5.2	5.2	5.2
Austria	5.2	5.2	4.9	5.1
Spain	4.7	4.7	4.7	4.7
Portugal	4.7	4.7	4.7	4.7
Germany	4.7	4.7	4.7	4.7
Norway *	n.a.	n.a.	3.9	3.9
Japan *	n.a.	n.a.	3.4	3.4
Denmark	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3
Switzerland *	n.a.	3.0	1.3	2.1
Italy	2.6	2.6	0.9	2.0
UK	2.1	2.1	0.9	1.7
Finland	1.3	1.3	0.6	1.1
Netherlands	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4
Sweden	0.9	0.8	0.0	0.5

Data from Auer, Demmke, and Polet 1996 passim. Data from a 14-item additive scale originally using 0-14 scale points. Data has been re-scaled to 0-6 scale points to facilitate comparability with SES-data (Table 5).
* Additional information on these countries from personal communication (see acknowledgements).

The open group includes most Scandinavian countries (except Norway, which is still close to this group as an intermediary case), the Netherlands, the UK, and Italy. The closed group is made up of continental European countries with Roman or German administrative tradition. The exception is Ireland with a British tradition but a rather closed career system as well.

It is remarkable that the countries with rather closed career systems demonstrate a considerable amount of stability in the character of their career systems, whereas the countries who did already start out with rather open systems in the 1970s moved on to even more open systems in the 1990s. Although it is not yet the time for causal conclusions, the reader should keep in mind this circumstance when reading on. It could be seen as a first hint that even if bureaucracy might not be capable of anything else it can at least defend its own interests effectively.

The same criteria of openness and closeness can be looked at for the Senior Executive Service (SES) as well. They need to be described separately, because for most countries the recruitment system for the SES differs from the recruitment system generally applied in the civil service (above p. 29). It can be seen from Table 5 that there is not as clear a division between open and closed recruitment systems for the SES as there was for the civil service in general. And whereas the possible spectrum of openness/closeness scores for the civil service is exhausted (Table 4), the scores are all gathered towards the closed end of the spectrum for the SES (Table 5). New Zealand which generally has a strong record of civil service reform is the country with the most open civil service recruitment system. This does also apply to its SES system. Comparatively open as well are the SES recruitment systems in Norway, Belgium, Portugal, Austria, and Switzerland. Almost strictly closed are, on the other hand, the SES recruitment systems in the Netherlands, Canada, Australia, and the UK. Comparing this enumeration with the position of countries in Table 4 shows that for most countries where both information is available open SES recruitment systems are coupled with closed civil service systems and vice versa. Switzerland where both systems are rather open is an exception here.

Because the SES works so closely with the government minister it is not sufficient to look just at the career systems, to be able to evaluate the potential influence senior civil servants have when interacting with politicians. It is rather necessary to look at additional features.

A very important aspect for the character of the minister–department relationship is the question, whether ministers or the government have significant impact on choosing people for top-SES positions as was argued above (p. 29). France, Germany, and Portugal are those countries in the sample, where the political executive has the highest potential to fill these top posts in their administration with like-minded people. There are still formal restrictions as the high recruitment scores for France and Germany indicate, but from the group of people who formally qualify through education and prior service for top positions these three governments can most freely choose their civil service managers. The most restricted systems are on the other hand found in Denmark, the UK, Austria, Belgium, and the USA. These four countries have the lowest degree of formal politicisation of the higher

ranks of the administration. Independent action possibilities of the civil service are likely to be higher there as a consequence.

Table 5: Openness, Formal Politicisation, and Feasibility of Political Activity of Senior Executive Service (SES)
(in descending order of summary score)

Country N=18	recruitment	formal politicisation	political activity score	Summary Score
	6 = closed recruitment system	6 = low degree of formal politicisation	6 = no limits on political activity	6 = strong position in policy-making.
Belgium	4.0	4	6	4.7
Austria	4.0	4	6	4.7
Netherlands	5.9	2	6	4.6
Sweden	5.0	2	6	4.3
Finland	5.0	2	6	4.3
Denmark	5.0	6	1.5	4.2
Norway *	4.0	4	4.5	4.2
Australia	5.8	3	3	3.9
Japan *	4.0	6	1.5	3.8
France	5.0	0	6	3.7
Germany	5.0	0	6	3.7
USA	4.9	4	1.5	3.5
New Zealand	3.7	2	4.5	3.4
Canada	5.9	1	3	3.3
UK	5.6	4	0	3.2
Switzerland *	4.0	1	4.5	3.2
Portugal	4.0	0	4.5	2.8
Ireland	5.0	2	0	2.3

Data from EIPA (1998) and OECD (1997). Minimum value of all scales "0", maximum value "6".
* Additional information on these countries see acknowledgements.

Again, the USA are a special case because of the large amount of outright political appointees across the federal administration, filling positions that are not considered as belonging to the civil service, yet form the top ranks in the federal departments (Heclo 1977). But, in the group actually belonging to the civil service, the ministers in the USA have less flexibility of choosing their top staff than most of their colleagues in other countries.

Information about formal politicisation is complemented by information about the rights to individual political activity for senior civil servants which, as argued above, may influence the willingness to use an administrative position politically. In the UK and Ireland followed by Denmark, the United States, Japan, Canada, and Australia top civil servants

are strongly restricted in these rights. These restrictions go along with only limited possibilities for the government to choose and fire top civil servants. It seems that the strict policy on political activity is intended to ascertain that senior servants serve their political master without regard to political beliefs and convictions in the absence of a chance for the minister to hire political trustees for these top positions. Belgium and Austria differ sharply in this respect. Even though the government has only limited impact on the selection of top civil servants they are allowed great freedom of political activity.

Most other countries are rather non-restrictive with regard to the political rights of their top civil servants as well. But their ministers have better chances to influence the selection into top positions. This opens the door for the development or sustenance of more strongly held political convictions and implies that politically active civil servants are more likely to take a considerable amount of political beliefs and convictions into their jobs. That in turn is likely to influence the way they are dealing with policy problems. It can be assumed that independently of any oath of office, a program in accordance with once convictions will be carried through with more vigour and enthusiasm by most bureaucrats than a program to which a civil servant feels ideologically opposed (cf. Peters 1995: 32). Hence the assumption that fewer restrictions on the political activities of (top) civil servants will potentially decrease the chances for politicians to impose their preferences onto the bureaucracy.

In Figure 4 information on the general civil service system is drawn together with the data on the Senior Executive Service. The countries in the figure are located according to their CS- and SES-score while the diameter of the circles symbolises the combined CS-SES score. It can clearly be seen from the figure that the differences in the scores between the countries are dominated by the CS-Score because all countries with small diameters are grouped to the left (small CS scores) and those with bigger diameters are grouped to the right (higher CS scores) but there is no differentiation of diameter in the vertical dimension. This is not amazing, however, because the CS-Scores had much more variance than the SES-Scores.

Overall, one can discern three groups. Countries in the first group have high scores in both SES and CS (Japan to Belgium and France) and countries in the second group have low CS but high SES scores (Sweden to the United States). The third rather small group includes only Portugal and Ireland with the characteristic of having high CS but rather low SES scores. Except for Japan, where both scores tend toward a medium position I find that at least one of the civil service related scores is high if not both. Turning back to the question of this section, that means that in all countries surveyed the civil service does retain potential to influence decision-making by strategic use of organisational structures. Bureaucracies have the best chances to influence policy-making this way in Belgium, Austria, France, Germany. Here both the civil service in general as well as the senior group

in the civil service appear to be well positioned because recruitment and career structures are prone to increase coherence of the civil service and similarly decrease the chances to steer the service politically.

Figure 4: CS/SES Compound Score
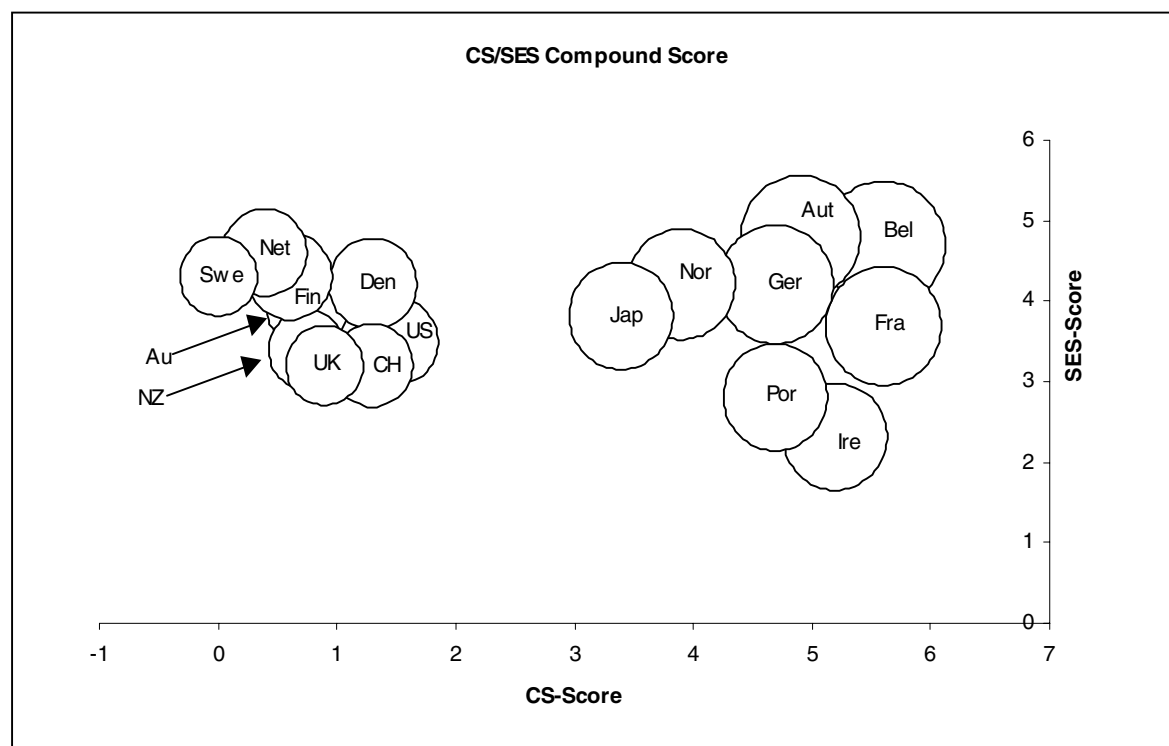
Incomplete data for Canada, Greece, Italy, and Spain.
In order not to lose Australia, New Zealand, and the USA for the concluding analysis, data has been estimated because, for these countries the CS-indicator was the only information substantively missing. Estimation was done using adjacent cases and verifying the result against qualitative descriptions in OECD 1992 and 1995s.
For the other countries, more information was lacking, so that estimation would have been necessary for more than one indicator. Additionally, Greece, Italy, and Spain do all belong to the same group of countries. This means that it would have been difficult to obtain good estimators because of an insufficient number of similar cases.

4.2 Potential size of core and gate

The theoretical discussion described three sources of bureaucratic impact on policy-making. After a description of the chances to strategically use organisational structures to influence policy-making I turn now to the second point, the room to manoeuvre for the bureaucracy that is described as a function of the number of veto players and decision rules in cabinet.

It was demonstrated above that the number of veto players is related to the potential room to manoeuvre for the bureaucracy because it has defining influence on the potential size of the core. It can be seen from Table 6 that the potential room to manoeuvre varies strongly among the observed countries.

On one end of the spectrum are Spain, the UK, Canada, Greece, and New Zealand with only one veto player. This implies by the mechanism described earlier, that there is no core in these countries. Hence, there are no or only very few chances for bureaucracies to use discretionary freedom without political interference. On the other end of the spectrum we find Finland, Switzerland, Belgium, Japan (in the 1990s only), and Italy where there are four to five veto players indicating much potential for the existence of a large core with the respective room to manoeuvre for the bureaucracy.

Table 6: Number of Veto Players and Cabinet Collectivity
(in ascending number of veto players for 1990s)

Country N = 19	Mean N Veto Players		Mean	Cabinet deciding collectively
	1980s	1990s		
Spain	1.0	1.0	1.0	n.a.
UK	1.0	1.0	1.0	Yes
Canada	1.0	1.0	1.0	n.a.
New Zealand	1.0	1.1	1.0	n.a.
Greece	1.0	1.0	1.0	n.a.
Norway	1.6	1.3	1.5	Yes
Australia	2.2	1.4	1.8	n.a.
France	1.6	1.5	1.5	No
Austria	1.7	2.0	1.8	No
Portugal	2.6	2.0	2.3	n.a.
Germany	2.3	2.1	2.2	Yes
Ireland	1.5	2.2	1.9	n.a.
Netherlands	2.1	2.2	2.1	Yes
Sweden	1.4	2.5	2.0	n.a.
Denmark	2.5	2.9	2.7	No
USA	3.0	3.0	3.0	No
Finland	4.0	3.9	3.9	n.a.
Switzerland	4.0	4.0	4.0	Yes
Belgium	4.2	4.4	4.3	n.a.
Japan	1.4	4.6	3.0	Yes
Italy	4.6	4.9	4.7	No

Data on number of veto players is from Tsebelis (http://www.polisci.ucla.edu/ tsebelis/vpdata.html). Data on the USA by analogy of usage from Hammond and Knott 1996.
Data on cabinet collectivity is from Andeweg and Galen 1993, Baylis 1989, Döring 1993, Müller 1992, and OECD 1992.

There are a number of countries with significant changes in the average number of veto players from the 1980s to the 1990s. Namely, these are Ireland, Sweden, and Japan where the number increased, thus putting the bureaucracy into a potentially better position than before. On the other hand, there is Portugal where the average number of veto players decreased over time which decreases the room to manoeuvre for the bureaucracy as well.

The second aspect defining potential bureaucratic influence is the organisation of cabinet decision-making because, so I argued, collectively acting cabinets can be expected to have larger gates than cabinets with individual ministerial responsibility. Empirical information on this issue is presented in the last column of Table 6.

Taking the effects of both indicators together, there seems to be an important potential for bureaucratic room to manoeuvre in Japan and Switzerland which have both collective cabinet responsibility and a number of veto players far higher than two (in the 1990s). Denmark has a high number of veto players as well, but individual policy responsibility by the ministers is likely to decrease the effect of the great number of veto players on administrative discretion. Germany and the Netherlands have about two veto players with collective cabinet responsibility which is likely to increase the room to manoeuvre for the bureaucracy. The other end of the spectrum is marked by the United Kingdom and Norway where room to manoeuvre is strongly restricted through the veto constellation although it may be partly reopened due to the existence of collective cabinet decision-making.

4.3 Bureaucracies as stand-in agenda setters

As outlined in section 2.2.3, the bureaucracy's chances of becoming an effective agenda setter depend to a large extent on the resources available to parliament and the cabinet to form preferences and to advance and process policy proposals. The most obvious resource indicator for parliament is the size of the parliamentary staff in relation to the ministerial staff that is outlined below (Table 7).

The huge differences in parliamentary resources between the observed countries are obvious. On the one hand, there are countries like Germany and Norway with as little as about seven and eight ministerial bureaucrats per parliamentary staff in the early 1990s. On the other end of the spectrum is Portugal with 844 bureaucrats per parliamentary staff in 1994. Whereas the first two parliaments are almost at pair with their ministerial bureaucracies as far as work capacity is concerned, the Portuguese parliament seems to have only the barest chance to keep up with the workings of the ministries. Please note for interpretation of the figures that all defence staff, ministerial and personal on active military duty, have been deducted from ministerial personal for reasons outlined in section 3.3.

To correctly read these numbers it is necessary to take into account that in some countries part of the implementation tasks are delegated to non-ministerial agencies. This implies that the ratios of ministerial to parliamentary staff can be somewhat inflated in countries without agencies. Therefore, whenever possible separate figures for core ministerial staff (MinStaffCiv) and staff in ministries plus implementation agencies and organisations (MinAggStaff) are provided. As it was not always possible to neatly differentiate between policy-making and implementation staff, additional information on the existence of independent implementation agencies is given to make up for this shortcoming.

A second fact that has to be kept in mind when interpreting these figures is that federal countries with strong states (Länder) do also regularly have a very small ratio of parliamentary to core plus implementation staff. Implementation of policy in these systems is in large part delegated to the state-administrations. Therefore, much of the implementation staff doesn't show up in any category of staff figures for the central government, letting the central government apparatus look comparatively small with and without inclusion of implementation agencies.

According to column 13 and 14 of Table 7, countries can roughly be grouped into three classes. The first includes countries with less than 30 (core) ministerial bureaucrats per parliamentary staff. Taking up the arguments about differences in resource availability, it can be assumed that in these countries parliament is rather well equipped to keep up with the bureaucracy and proactively pursue policy-making. The same countries do on the other hand exhibit a wide range of ratios between parliamentary staff and ministerial plus agency staff from 53 to almost 650 bureaucrats per parliamentary staff. But this should not affect the chances for bureaucratic agenda setting to the same extent as the ratio between core staff and parliament.

In the second group there are countries with between 40 and about 80 bureaucrats per parliamentary staff. These countries have a much smaller range in the second ratio which ranges from 49 to about 350 (including two countries, Italy and the Netherlands where only the latter figures are available).

The third group has core staff ratios from over 100 (Ireland) up to more than 800 bureaucrats per parliamentary staff (Portugal). At the same time, this last group exhibits extended staff ratios well above the higher values of the first group. The implication is that parliaments in these countries do have rather limited chances to keep bureaucracies from active policy-making when it is attempted.

Absolute size of parliamentary staff varies considerably within all three groups but most in the last group with a parliamentary staff of not more than 115 in Switzerland and more than 4,000 in Japan. But as absolute staff sizes differ so do sizes of the chambers and,

Table 7: Comparison of Parliamentary, Ministerial, and Agency Staff Sizes
(in ascending order of parliamentary staff to core ministerial staff ratio)

Column	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
Country N = 20	first year	EA[a]	Min.-staff Civ[b]	Min.-Agg. Staff[c]	Parl. Staff	col. 3/ col. 5	col. 4/ col. 5	last year	EA[a]	MinStaff Civ[b]	MinAg StaffCiv[c]	Parl. Staff	col. 10/ col. 12	col. 11/ col. 12	diff. time	diff. core ratio	diff. ext. ratio
Germany	1980	Y[d]	22,179	n.a.	1,982	11	-	1993	Y[d]	16,944	122,770	2,300	7	53	13	-4	53
Norway		n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	-	-	1991	Y	3,195	140,986	410	8	344	-	-	-
Finland	1980	Y	2,354	n.a.	300	8	-	1991	Y	4,190	187,091	379	11	494	11	3	-
Sweden		n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	-	-	1991	Y	3,670	194,170	300	12	647	-	-	-
Denmark	1980	Y	4,692	151,000	330	14	458	1991	Y	4,879	157,013	330	15	476	11	1	18
Austria	-	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	-	-	1991	Y	8,801	178,899	310	28	577	-	-	-
USA	1980	e	756,854	1,191,976	24,272	31	49	1993	e	1,000,900	1,150,722	23,452	43	49	13	11	-
Australia	-	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	-	-	1991	N	72,187	125,181	1,300	56	96	-	-	-
UK	1980	N	486,900	n.a.	1,000	487	-	1994	Y	58,900	353,000	1,000	59	353	14	-428	-
NZ	1980	N	80,846	n.a.	560	144	-	1994	Y	40,094	n.a.	562	71	-	14	-73	-
Greece	1990	n.a.	81,948	209,948	671	122	313	1994	n.a.	79,567	212,567	1,048	76	203	4	-46	-110
Belgium	-	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	-	-	1991	N	52,824	n.a.	650	81	-	-	-	-
Italy		n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	-	-	1991	Y	n.a.	443,129	1,900	-	233	-	-	-
Netherlands		n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	-	-	1991	Y	n.a.	120,327	400	-	301	-	-	-301
France	1980	n.a.	n.a.	764,165	1,220	-	626	1992	n.a.	n.a.	833,810	1,200	-	695	12	-	68
Ireland	1985	N	28,157	168,978	202	139	837	1994	N	27,420	167,056	225	122	742	9	-18	-94
Japan	1980	N	515,465	n.a.	4,068	127	-	1994	N	499,075	n.a.	4,066	123	-	14	-4	-
Switzerland	1987	N	19,093	n.a.	47	406	-	1994	N	20,859	n.a.	115	181	-	7	-225	-
Portugal	1986	N	268,211	446,337	300	894	1488	1994	N	276,064	433,673	327	844	1326	8	-50	-162
Spain	1992	N	204,835	785,242	n.a.	-	-	1994	N	206,153	805,365	n.a.	-	-	2	-	-

a - Do implementation agencies (executive agencies) exist in the country?

b - Total staff of non-defence ministries. All staff occupied with implementation tasks has been deducted if possible.

c - Total staff of non-defence ministries and implementation agencies.

d - The division of labour between federal ministries, who are mainly responsible for policy development and Länder ministries responsible for implementation is taken as a functional equivalent to the existence of implementation agencies. However, Länder administrations are not included in the staff figures.

e - This cell is left blank because the agencies in the USA are not only implementation agencies, but are policy-making as well.

Data sources for column 5 and 12: Ornstein et al. 1997 (USA); OECD 1992, 1993s, 1995s (Finland, Ireland, Japan, Switzerland); WZB project "Parliamentary Structures and Parliamentary Resources" (all other countries). Data for column 3/4 and 10/11are from OECD 1992, 1993s, 1995s. Not all data identical to figures in the OECD-publications. Adjustments have been made e.g. for teachers included in ministry of education, persons in the postal services etc. Data sources on the existence of agencies see Appendix.

underlying all this, of population. It seems therefore plausible to stick with the number of ministerial bureaucrats per parliamentary staff as a form of standardisation of the data.

We can conclude that from the parliamentary resources point of view the parliaments in Germany, the Scandinavian countries, Austria, and the United States seem to be in the best position to establish their own preferences, develop policy proposals, and keep up with the flow of material from the permanent executive. From this perspective the chances of the ministerial bureaucracy to stand-in as agenda setter should be more limited in these countries than in those, where the ratios are less favourable to parliament. With a look at the time dimension one can also conclude that parliaments did either maintain or improve their relative position towards the bureaucracy.

In addition to the spatial dimension, the reported data allows us to look at developments over time. Column 15 shows that up to 14 years of development are covered by the data and column 16 and 17 reveal that the ratio of parliamentary to ministerial staff either remained largely constant or moved towards a ratio more favourable for parliament over time. The two most outstanding cases in this respect are the United Kingdom where the establishment of the Next Steps agencies over the course of the 1980s led to a remarkable decrease in core ministerial staff (from 486,000 in 1980 to 58,900 in 1994) and Switzerland where ministerial staff remained rather constant but parliamentary staff did increase by a factor of almost 2.5. This put the Swiss parliament in a much better position versus the bureaucracy in the 1990s than in the 1980s and before. From a resource point of view, it can be summarised that the chances for the bureaucracy to stand-in as agenda setter remained stable or decreased over time.

The second resource defining parliamentary ability to restrain room for bureaucratic discretion and agenda setting was argued to be the existence and organisation of the committee system in the parliament. As Table 8 clearly shows, there is a committee system in place in all surveyed countries in the 1990s and there was only one country, the UK, that did not have permanent committees in the 1970s.

The number of committees has generally gone up or at least remained stable except for the Netherlands where there was a major structural realignment in the committee system. A number of countries where committee jurisdictions did not parallel those of ministries in the 1970s moved towards a system where this congruence was established (Finland, the Netherlands, and Australia). This means for the Netherlands that the reduction in the number of committees (from 35 to 16, which is still a rather high number) is offset by this structural change. Therefore it does not seem to be reasonable to conclude a weakening of the position of Dutch parliamentary committees in the process of policy-making.

As Table 8 shows, the number of committees is usually low in countries where jurisdictions do not parallel those of the ministries (in the 1990s these are Belgium, France, Portu-

gal, Switzerland, and New Zealand). That leaves parliaments in these countries in a comparatively weaker position towards their ministerial bureaucracies than in the rest of the countries where jurisdictions are parallel and the number of committees is usually larger. Austria is exceptional here because it has an average of 31 committees in the 1990s but jurisdictions do not parallel those of the ministerial departments.

Table 8: Average Number of Committees and Congruence of Jurisdictions between Ministries and Parliamentary Committees
(in ascending order of 1990s number of committees)

Country N = 18	Decade	N Committees	Committees parallel to Ministries	Decade	N Committees	Committees parallel to Ministries
USA	n.a.	-	-	1990s	39	Yes
Austria	1970s	22.5	No	1990s	31.4	No
Denmark	1970s	21.2	Yes	1990s	24	Yes
Germany	1970s	19.4	Yes	1990s	24	Yes
Sweden	1970s	16	Yes	1990s	16.6	Yes
Finland	1970s	12	No	1990s	12.9	Yes
UK	1970s	1.4		1990s	15.6	Yes
New Zealand	1983-89	13	No	1990s	12.6	No
Netherlands	1970s	35	No	1990s	16	Yes
Italy	n.a.	-	-	1990s	16	n.a.
Norway	1970s	12	Yes	1990s	12	Yes
Portugal	1976-79	12	No	1990s	12	No
Switzerland	1970s	12	No	1990s	12	No
Australia	1973-79	4	No	1990s	8.4	Yes
Belgium	1970s	10	No	1990s	10	No
France	1985-89	6	No	1990s	6	No
Greece	1970s	10	Yes	1990s	6	Yes
Ireland	1970s	6	No	1990s	6	No

Data from WZB project "Parliamentary Structures and Parliamentary Resources" and Ornstein et al. 1997. No data available for Canada, Japan, and Spain.

Summarising the descriptions, we find first that there is differentiation between the countries with regard to the committee system as a resource of parliament versus the bureaucracy and second that if at all, parliaments moved towards a structure that increased their resources. As a consequence, they can become more active agenda setters and better controllers of the ministries. The well developed committee systems help to clear preferences and enable parliament to keep saliency levels high for more policies than before. Stating this the other way round, i.e. from the viewpoint of the bureaucracies, this means that the chances for bureaucracies to become active as agenda setters have been stable or decreased

over the course of the last three decades. This finding is in line with recent research on the role of parliaments in industrial democracies. It was discovered that parliaments do regain the importance in policy-making that one believed they had lost in the 1960s and 1970s (cf. Copeland and Patterson 1994, Döring 1995, Norton 1998).

Taking the evidence from Table 7 and Table 8 together we find that, with the exception of Austria, countries with a weaker committee system tend to be weaker in general resources as well. Furthermore, the Scandinavian countries, Germany, and the United States have parliaments with a comparatively higher ability to restrain chances for bureaucratic agenda setting whereas especially France, Switzerland, Portugal, and, to a slightly lesser degree, Ireland and Japan have comparatively weaker parliaments.

After having dealt with parliamentary resources to process information and form preferences, I shall now turn to indexes describing the rights of executive and parliament in the legislative process, availability of information to parliament, and the time parliament has to deal with the cabinet budget proposal in relation to the time the cabinet and the bureaucracy have to prepare the budget. The qualitative indicators define to what extent the formal rights of parliament allow it to play an active part in political agenda setting whereas the time factor is another resource indicator describing parliament's chances to put its formal rights and manpower to any effect.

The indexes in Table 9 are coded "0" to "2" (except time for budgeting). A value of "0" does always stand for a comparatively weak position of the executive and the bureaucracy whereas "2" denotes a comparatively strong position of the executive. Details of the coding scheme are available from Table 18 in the Appendix.

Executive initiative describes the rights of cabinet to initiate legislation relative to the rights of parliament and other actors (e.g. the electorate) to initiate legislation. A high score indicates a situation where several actors in parliament (single members, parliamentary groups, and committees) and sometimes even the electorate have rights to initiate legislation. This decreases the possibilities for cabinet and bureaucratic agenda setting. The low scores indicate that few parliamentary actors have the right to initiate legislation, that there is a quorum if members want to initiate legislation, and that the budget bill is required to have the approval of the government before being submitted to parliamentary debate. As can be seen from the table, the rights of the executive to initiate legislation are rather strong in Ireland, the Netherlands, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom whereas they are comparatively weak in Finland, Italy, Sweden, and Switzerland.

The second dimension is called delegation of legislative authority to the executive. In this dimension high scores indicate that authority to legislate without parliament is transferred to cabinet regularly with few restrictions and in rather broad areas of policy. Low scores mean that parliament does always keep a close eye on executive law making and

does usually retain the right of final approval of those measures. High scores imply better chances for bureaucratic policy-making than lower scores. Portugal, followed by Italy and Japan, exhibits a strong position for the executive. On the other hand, the amount of chances to legislate without parliament, that is delegated to the executive, is rather limited in Belgium, Finland, France, Greece, the Netherlands, Spain, Switzerland, the United States, and the United Kingdom.

The next two indicators describe the rights of parliament in the legislative process and are thus "inverse" indicators of the chances of the bureaucracy to stand-in as agenda setters. "Role of parliamentary committees in the legislative process" describes whether the committee stage is a mandatory stage in the parliamentary process, what role the committee reports play in the final parliamentary decision procedure, and whether the government or the respective minister can interfere with the committee amendments. Parliamentary committees have a comparatively strong standing in Ireland, Italy, Portugal, Sweden, and Switzerland (indicated by the "0" entries in Table 9). This increases the chances of the parliament to curb active bureaucratic policy-making according to the model. The country with the smallest acting possibilities for committees is Denmark, leaving much more room to bureaucratic agenda setting as indicated by a score of 1.6.

"Parliamentary information rights" is an indicator summarising to what extent parliament is allowed to acquire information from government and non-government sources (for details see Table 18 in the Appendix). This supports parliament in developing preferences and thus increases saliency levels of policies. High scores do indicate extensive rights for parliament to gather information. The US congress is the clear "winner" in this "discipline" with almost unlimited formal information rights for parliament, but the British parliament has almost as strong a position. The two parliaments with the most limited formal rights of information according to this indicator are the Danish and the French parliament. Ireland, Belgium, and Portugal are also rather weak on this count, the rest of the countries can be said to have moderate to strong information rights.

Aggregating these four indicators into a summary score, we find the strongest positions for the executive in the legislative process in Japan (1.2), Denmark, Portugal (both 1.1), and New Zealand (1.0). Note that the highest scale value of 2.0 is reached in no country. In fact, the highest empirical value is only slightly above the median value of the scale. This means that there is no single country where the possibilities of the executive branch to determine the legislative process are so strong that they completely dominate the parliament. This can be seen in Portugal, for example, where on the one hand the executive has very strong rights to autonomously legislate but on the other hand committees play a very important role in the legislative process that can restrict the executive's chances to dominate the parliament.

Table 9: Strength of Executive in Legislative Process
        (in descending order of "summary score")

Country N = 21	Executive Initiative	Deleg. of Leg. to Executive	Role of Comm. in Leg. Process	Info Rights of Parlia-ment	Summary Score	Time in month allotted for budgeting to		Factor[a] of bureau-cratic advantage
						Exec.	Parl.	
Japan	1	1.5	1.00	0.8	1.2	7	3	2.3
Denmark	1	0.5	1.67	1.4	1.1	8	5	1.6
Portugal	1	2.0	0.00	1.2	1.1	3	3	1
New Zealand	2	1.0	0.67	0.8	1.0	n.a.	n.a.	-
Ireland	2	0.5	0.00	1.2	0.9	4	2	2
Norway	1	0.5	1.00	0.6	0.9	9	3	3
France	1	0.0	0.67	1.6	0.8	9	3	3
UK	2	0.0	0.67	0.2	0.7	10	1	10
Australia	1	0.5	1.00	0.4	0.7	6	1	6
Spain	1	0.0	1.33	0.6	0.7	7	3	2.33
Austria	1	0.5	0.67	0.8	0.7	5	3	1.67
Netherlands	2	0.0	0.33	0.4	0.7	9	4	2.25
Belgium	1	0.0	0.67	1.2	0.7	7	4	1.75
Germany	1	0.5	0.33	0.8	0.7	8	5	1.6
Canada	1	1.0	0.33	0.6	0.7	n.a.	n.a.	-
Greece	1	0.0	1.00	0.4	0.6	5	2	2.5
Italy	0	1.5	0.00	0.8	0.6	7	4	1.75
USA	1	0.0	0.67	0	0.4	7	9	0.78
Finland	0	0.0	0.33	0.8	0.3	8	4	2
Sweden	0	0.5	0.00	0.4	0.2	11	6	1.83
Switzerland	0	0.0	0.00	0.4	0.1	9	3	3

a - Factor of advantage of executive over parliament. This factor is executive time over parliamentary time for budgeting.
A description of index construction and data sources is given in Table 18 of the Appendix.

Taking all the evidence from Table 7 to Table 9 together, we find a group of countries always ranking among the top ten. These are Sweden, Germany, the United States, and Finland. Another group ranks 10 or higher in all tables, namely France, Ireland, Portugal, and Japan, though the latter has to be seen with reservations due to lack of data in Table 8. Spain does probably belong in this second group as well. This cannot be said for sure because of lacking data in Table 7. But in order to rank lower than 10 in this table, Spain would need parliamentary staff of more than 3,000 people. Comparing its resource struc-ture with the other countries, this seems very unlikely.

It can be concluded that the parliamentary position in the first group of countries (Swe-den to Finland) is comparatively strong. Parliaments have a high amount of personal and

informational resources in order to form preferences and to deal with policies even of lower levels of saliency. In addition they have an extensive amount of formal rights, enabling them to effectively amend government proposals which is an important tool in keeping the bureaucracy from effective agenda setting. The comparatively good endowment with resources gives these parliaments also the chance to be more active in setting the legislative agenda so that the bureaucracy gets fewer chances to become an agenda setter at all.

The position of parliament is comparatively weak in the latter group of countries (France to Japan) with the consequence that there are much higher chances for bureaucratic agenda setting in these countries. For the rest of the countries the record is more mixed so that no unequivocal propositions as to the chances for bureaucratic agenda setting seem reasonable.

Before considering those characteristics that allow a description of chances for bureaucratic agenda setting inside the executive, I turn to the role of interest groups as a source of problem and information input into the politico-administrative system. Interest groups are stake holders in many political processes and are therefore interested in policy-making as well. The two basic inputs (problems and information) that interest groups bring into the political system can be directed towards different players inside this system. It is not of concern here to ask what is defining to whom interest groups turn first. The interesting point for this analysis is the empirical question to which political-administrative actors interest groups in a given country are usually turning.

When civil servants are the main contact of interest groups, as is the case in France, Germany, or Japan (Table 10), this puts administrators in a favourable position compared to cabinet and the parliament, because their knowledge about societal problems and possible remedies can be increased once more through this information channel. Bureaucratic agenda setting is more likely under these circumstances because ministerial bureaucracies may be informed of new or emerging problems, when no other actor in the political system does yet know about them. Bureaucracies can thus go ahead and prepare legislation before other actors get a chance to become active in this respect or even form preferences.

The opposite position to these countries is taken by the USA and New Zealand. Both are countries where parliament is reported to be the most important contact of organised interests in the political system. Ministerial administrators are stripped of an information advantage here which they posses in most other countries.

In order to get a clearer picture, I group countries according to the criterion of preferred parliamentary inclusion in the network, equal parliamentary inclusion, and network concentration on the executive (with parliament having only a marginal importance). This classification can be made plausible with the argument that in countries where ministers

are named first as contacts, it is highly likely that most of the requests and information from interest groups to ministers is immediately turned over to the departmental bureaucracy and hence adding to bureaucratic knowledge and expertise.

Table 10: Main Contacts of Interest Groups
(in alphabetical order of countries)

Country N=18	To whom do interest groups usually turn?	Information advantage score[a]
Austria	CS and Minister	2
Australia	Minister and CS	2
Belgium	Minister an CS	2
Canada	Parliament and CS	0
Denmark	CS and Parliament	1
Finland	CS and Minister	2
France	CS	2
Germany	CS	2
Greece	Minister and CS	2
Ireland	CS and Minister	2
Italy	Minister and CS	2
Japan	CS	2
Netherlands	Minister and CS	2
New Zealand	Parliament	0
Norway	Minister and CS	2
Portugal	n.a.	2
Spain	n.a.	2
Sweden	CS and Parliament	1
Switzerland	Minister and CS	2
UK	CS and Minister	2
USA	Parliament and CS	0

a - 0 - advantage is with parliament, 1 - parliament and executive are equally contacts of interest groups, 2 - advantage is with executive
Data is from Andeweg and Galen 1993, Christiansen and Rommetvedt 1999, Coleman and Grant 1988, Hartmann 1985, Müller 1992, Page 1992, Wilson 1990, and Lavdas 2000.

When grouping countries in this way we find five, namely Canada, the United States, New Zealand, Sweden, and Denmark, where parliament does play a central role as contact for interest groups in policy-making matters. For all other countries this source of information is basically a resource for the executive and the bureaucracy and hence adding to the bureaucracy's ability to stand in as agenda setter.

The next group of indicators to be looked at describes the relation between cabinet and the ministerial administration. Here we also look for evidence that can be interpreted as

either enhancing or diminishing bureaucratic chances to influence the political agenda effectively. The first item on the list of indicators compares, as above for parliament, the resources of the (top) civil service with those of the cabinet, that is I compare size of the SES group with the size of cabinet and in the follow-up table with additional resources cabinet can muster.

Table 11: Cabinet Size, Size of SES-Group, and Cabinet-SES-Ratio[a]
(in ascending order of Ratio SES/Cabinet for 1990s)

Country N=16	Year	Cabinet size	Size SES-Group	Ratio SES/ Cabinet	Year	Cabinet size	Size SES-Group	Ratio SES/ Cabinet
New Zealand	1985	20	123	6.2	1994	20	154	8
Sweden	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	1991	21	396	19
Ireland	1985	17	449	26.4	1994	15	448	30
Japan	1985	22	689	31.3	1994	21	697	33
Netherlands	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	1991	14	473	34
Belgium	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	1991	18	631	35
Finland	1985	17	656	38.6	1991	17	655	38
Denmark	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	1991	19	736	39
Norway	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	1991	19	811	21
France	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	1991	20	1121	56
Australia	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	1991	17	1676	99
Germany	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	1993	25	2643	106
Austria	n.a.	-	-	-	1995	13	1386	107
Switzerland	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	1994	7	804	115
UK	1985	21	3551	169.1	1994	23	3878	169
USA	1985	13	6818	524.5	1993	14	7432	531
Portugal	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	1994	17	n.a.	n.a.

Data for cabinet size from Woldendorp et al. (1993 and 1998), Size of SES group from EIPA 1998, OECD 1997.
a - If figures for points in time more than five years apart have been available, two data points per country are reported.

The size of the SES group varies strongly between countries. The smallest senior service group can be found in New Zealand with about 120 people in 1985 and about 150 in 1994. On the other end of the spectrum are very sizeable groups of more than 7000 senior servants in the USA (1993) and more than 3800 in the UK (1994). The inclusion of the United States in this comparison is difficult, however, because of the large amount of political appointees in Washington whose number does about equal that of people in the American top civil service. This peculiarity of the American system cannot easily be reflected within

this empirical framework so that for this indicator Britain seems to be a better standard for the maximum value.

Cabinet size ranges from 7 to 25, or from 14 to 25 if Switzerland is left out of this comparison because of its peculiar institutional set-up. Cabinet size has much smaller variance than SES-size. The smallest and the largest cabinet differ by a factor of 3.6 (or 1.8 if Switzerland is excluded) whereas this factor is about 30 for SES-size (with the United States excluded). It is clear that ministers have a good chance of closely dealing with all or most members in their SES-group only in a limited number of countries. Taking the gap between a factor of 56 for France and a factor of 99 for Australia as a "natural" cut-off point we could say that in Australia, Germany, Switzerland, the UK, and the USA we find a considerable size advantage of the SES. Switzerland is again special here, because of its very small cabinet. If it had just the cabinet size of the next ranking country—the Netherlands—its SES to cabinet ratio would be at pair with that of France.

Looking at the data over time, we see that for all cases where two data points are available the SES to cabinet ratio remains largely constant.

The size comparison is only complete, however, when we take into account that there are countries where the cabinet is supported by additional political executives like junior ministers (Table 12). Junior ministers and their functional equivalents are counted here as additional political people dealing with the bureaucracy and sometimes even leading parts of it. The existence of the post of junior minister therefore increases the amount of political man-power vis-à-vis the bureaucrats (see Olson 1983: 97-9 for a similar argument). For the quantitative aggregation the existence of junior ministers is taken as doubling the size of cabinet. Looking at the examples of the United Kingdom, Germany, and Norway, this seems to be a conservative evaluation of the size effect because in all these countries the number of cabinet ministers plus junior ministers or equivalent posts is considerably higher than twice the size of cabinet.

The support of cabinet ministers through junior ministers seems to be most strongly developed in countries with British influenced political systems (UK, Australia, and Ireland). There junior ministers do not only exist but have policy responsibility of their own. Although having strong British influence, New Zealand does not have the position of junior ministers. But given the population size of the country which is less than the population of Greater London, and the very small size of its SES-group it is hardly surprising not to find such a differentiation here.

For countries with junior ministers SES to cabinet ratio is substantially decreased. SES to extended cabinet ratio is for example close to 40 for the UK, if the whole government comprising about 100 people is taken into consideration instead of cabinet rank ministers only. Ireland and the Netherlands are special insofar as they do have junior ministers along

with an already small SES to cabinet ratio, thus giving the political executive an even better access to the ministerial apparatus. Nothing specific can be said about Greece where we know that there are junior ministers but no information about the size of the SES was available.

Table 12: Existence and Responsibilities of Junior Ministers

Country N=20	Are there junior ministers?	Do junior ministers	
		have policy responsibility?	possess staff of their own?
Australia	Yes	Yes	Yes
Austria	No	not app.	not app.
Belgium	No	not app.	not app.
Denmark	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Finland	No	not app.	not app.
France	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Germany	Yes	No	Yes
UK	Yes	Yes	Yes
Greece	Yes	No	Yes
Ireland	Yes	Yes	n.a.
Italy	No	not app.	not app.
Japan	No	not app.	not app.
Netherlands	Yes	No	No
New Zealand	No	not app.	not app.
Norway	Yes	No	n.a.
Portugal	No	not app.	not app.
Spain	No	not app.	not app.
Sweden	No	not app.	not app.
Switzerland	No	not app.	not app.
USA	No	not app.	not app.

Data are from OECD 1992.

Taking junior ministers into account, only the USA and Switzerland are left with an SES to cabinet ratio of well above 100, and no additional support in sight. However, for both countries this disadvantage must be discounted to some extent as well. In the USA the cabinet is not a central policy-making body anyway (OECD 1992), and the main political counterpart of the ministerial bureaucracy is the US Congress not the political executive. Switzerland has to be treated separately because of its institutional structure, first and

foremost the strong position of the sovereign in political decision-making which generally puts the ministerial bureaucracy into a less powerful position than in other countries.

The implications for the ability of the bureaucracy to stand-in as agenda setter are as straightforward as they were for the problem of parliamentary staff. The more politicians there are to steer the bureaucracy the smaller its chances to independently start setting political problems on the agenda and predefining decision results in its own interest. Hence, I assume that in Sweden as well as in New Zealand ministers should be able to keep a close eye on the workings of their administrative leaders and be able, by way of having clear preferences and high levels of saliency for many policies, to make up their own mind on policy proposals coming up the ranks of the bureaucracy.

It is more difficult to tell, how the infamous Sir Humphrey Appleby (Lynn and Jay 1984) would actually be able to instruct his minister what initiative to take when and how. On the one hand, there is a high number of senior civil servants in the British system but on the other hand there is quite a large number of politicians in the government so that the ratios of politicians to top servants are effectively much smaller than they initially appear. The same holds true for Germany and Australia where the cabinet to SES ratios are rather large but cabinet is supported by junior ministers, who even share the policy responsibility of the minister in the case of Australia. The situation seems to be least favourable for France, and Switzerland (the USA is left out here for the above mentioned reasons) where the SES to cabinet ratio is rather large but there are no junior ministers to support the minister in steering her large bureaucracy and watching the political process in order to be ahead of the bureaucracy in putting problems on the political agenda.

The chances of parliament and cabinet to restrain bureaucratic agenda setting as a function of their respective endowment with resources have now been described. There is a last point from the theoretical discussion that has not yet been taken up in this section—the parliamentary support base of the incumbent government. It was argued above that a strong parliamentary support base of the government increases the chances for effective bureaucratic agenda setting and vice versa because the chances of parliamentary approval of government proposals are different with different types of parliamentary support. Table 13 gives an impression of the actual parliamentary support that cabinets had in the various countries.

There are a number of countries that stand out as having a high share of single party majority governments, namely the UK, New Zealand, and Spain, where there was a single party majority government more than 90% of the time, and Greece coming close to 90%. Note that these four countries are the same countries that were noted in Table 6 as having one veto player. From a type of government point of view, there are good chances for bureaucratic agenda setting in the above countries. In contrast, Denmark, Sweden, and

Norway exhibit parliamentary support structures that seem to strongly disfavour bureaucratic agenda setting because there is no reliable base of parliamentary support for the government which in turn could support a strong position for bureaucratic agenda setting.

Table 13: Types of Government for the Period from 1960 to 1995

Country N=20	Single Party Majority	Majority Coalition Government	Minority Government	Caretaker Government
UK	**99**	-	1	-
New Zealand	**97**	3	-	-
Spain	**92**	1	7	-
Greece	**89**	9	-	2
Japan	**76**	14	10	-
Portugal	**65**	27	3	4
Australia	44	**56**	-	-
Ireland	38	**42**	20	-
Austria	33	**60**	7	-
Switzerland	-	**100**	-	-
Germany	-	**98**	-	2
Netherlands	-	**97**	-	3
Belgium	-	**94**	1	5
France	5	**81**	14	-
Finland	-	**85**	10	6
Italy	-	**71**	26	3
USA	39	-	**61**	-
Norway	5	22	**73**	-
Denmark	-	25	**78**	-
Sweden	6	10	**83**	-

Data from Woldendorp et al. (1993 and 1998). Data for Spain, Portugal, Greece, and the USA from Perotti and Kontopoulos 1998. The years 1967-73 for Greece, 1960-74 for Portugal, and 1960-75 for Spain are not included. The US-Government was coded as minority government when the majority party in Congress was not the same as the party of the incumbent President.

Similar things can be said about the United States that experienced shared government (coded here as minority government according to Perotti and Kontopoulos 1998) for about 60 percent of the period from 1960 to 1995. We have already seen in the above descriptions that the position of the ministerial bureaucracy is comparatively weak in the United States in general. Turning back to the point of bureaucratic agenda setting, we would not expect to find much of this in the United States.

For countries with majority coalitions (instead of single party majorities) matters are more complicated, but we can, nevertheless, expect more stable support than for minority

governments. This means that the chances for bureaucratic agenda setting in the countries from Australia to Italy in Table 13 are likely to be better than in the Scandinavian countries or the United States but not as good as in the United Kingdom, Greece, etc.

I have now provided many details on the position of bureaucracies in national polities across the OECD world. The task to be accomplished in the last section of this paper is to wrap up the discussion and to develop some tentative conclusions from the material presented.

5   Concluding remarks

This paper started with three questions:

1) Can the potential ability of ministerial bureaucracies to influence policy-making be theoretically conceptualised in a meaningful way?
2) Is it possible to find quantitative indicators that capture elements of such a theoretical concept?
3) How do different countries compare with regard to the potential of their national level bureaucracies to influence policy-making?

I shall take up these three questions in turn in this concluding section.

In order to answer the first one, a theoretical framework has been established within which the question of structural conditions of bureaucratic influence on policy-making can be further analysed. I have outlined three different ways how ministerial bureaucracies may influence policy-making.

The first way is the strategic use of organisational structures within the bureaucracy to influence the content of policy decisions when the decision-making process has already been started. It was argued that bureaucracies with a classical or closed organisational structure (one could also qualify them as Weberian bureaucracies) are more likely to provide ample chances for the strategic use of these structures than more open or businesslike structures.

The second possibility of bureaucratic influence on policy-making was described as the exploitation of sets in the policy space that are left as room to manoeuvre to the bureaucracy as a function of the number of actors (veto players) and their preference configurations. It was demonstrated that there may be sets of policies which are superior to all policies outside this set but which cannot defeat or be defeated by other policies from this set. This set was called the "core." This core can be seen as room to manoeuvre for the bureaucracy where it can change policies according to its preferences without political inter-

ference as long as the changes stay inside this core. The available room to manoeuvre for the bureaucracy was then extended through the introduction of the "gate." The gate is defined as a set of policies within which a player with decisive influence on the political agenda will not propose policy changes for fear of ending with a final decision further away from her ideal point than the status quo.

Third, I introduced as a way of bureaucratic influence on policy-making the chance for the bureaucracy to effectively stand in as agenda setter. An effective agenda setter was defined as one who by setting the agenda does already have decisive influence on the decision outcome. Using a concept of saliency I integrated the different resource strengths of the bureaucracy, cabinet, and parliament into a framework where as a function of resources and preference configurations bureaucracies may get the chance to bring issues and solutions onto the political agenda with a high chance of moving policy to a point close to their own ideal point.

Summarising this discussion I provided in Table 3 a framework where the chances for bureaucracies to influence policy-making were described as the aggregated chances that accrue from a three-dimensional framework. These dimensions are the structural strength of the bureaucracy itself, the ability of parliament to actively pursue policy-making, and the ability of cabinet to pit itself against the bureaucracy. As this theoretical aggregation shows, it seems feasible to conceptualise bureaucratic influence on policy-making beyond abstract constructs and with an orientation towards empirical application.

This takes us to the second question about the feasibility of an empirical evaluation of the model. In section 3 I put forward a rather extensive operationalisation of the theoretical constructs. Because there is not yet an agreed upon set of variables in the field of comparative administrative research, detailed justifications for the indicators were given. It was thus possible to demonstrate that an empirical application of the above theory is feasible.

That leaves us with the last question of how different countries compare with regard to the potential impact of their national level bureaucracies on policy-making.

In chapter 4 a quantitative empirical description of 21 OECD-countries (with some dropouts due to unavailability of data) was presented with the aim of comparing the relative strengths of their national ministerial bureaucracies. The results are summarised in the following paragraphs.

Table 14 is a uni-dimensional classification with regard to the relative strength of the national bureaucracies in relation to those of the other inspected countries. It is a comparative quantitative evaluation of these systems across the OECD-world.

The summary ranks in Table 14 are an aggregation of the rank positions the countries occupied in the several tables in section 4. When there were less countries with sufficient information than 21 ranks have been standardised as to always span the whole range from

1 to 21. This was done in order to be able to aggregate the rank positions into a summary rank. The summary rank is the sum of the individual ranks in the various categories divided by the number of available rank positions for each country. The position of Canada, Greece, Italy, and Spain could not have been completely evaluated due to lack of more than one indicator in which case aggregation seemed to be to insecure. These countries are therefore listed in the bottom of Table 14 in smaller print.

Table 14: Summary: Combined Rank of Strength of Bureaucracy across Countries
(in descending order of summary rank)

Country N = 17 (21)	Structural Strength of Bureaucracy	Strength of Parliament (Resources)	Strength of Parliament. (TOG)	Strength of Cabinet (N-Vetoplayers)	Strength of Cabinet (Resources)	Contact Interest Groups	Summary Rank
	Rank[a]	Rank	Rank[a]	Rank	Rank[a]	Rank	
Japan	9.8	3.2	5.3	2	14.4	1	5.94
Portugal	7.4	7.3	6.3	12	n.a.	1	6.80
France	3.7	3.9	11.6	14	7.9	1	7.00
Belgium	1.2	8.5	15.8	3	13.1	1	7.09
Austria	2.5	15.3	10.5	12	3.9	1	7.53
Switzerland	17.2	10.1	12.6	4	2.6	1	7.91
Ireland	7.4	4.2	9.5	9	19.7	1	8.46
UK	20.9	8.6	1.1	18	5.2	1	9.14
Germany	4.9	18.2	13.7	11	6.6	1	9.22
Australia[b]	16.0	7.8	7.4	15	9.2	1	9.38
Netherlands	12.3	9.8	14.7	9	15.7	1	10.43
Norway	6.2	4.8	18.9	16	17.0	1	10.66
USA[b]	12.3	18.4	8.4	6	1.3	19	10.90
Finland	14.8	16.1	16.8	5	11.8	1	10.92
Denmark	11.1	14.0	20.0	7	10.5	17	13.26
New Zealand[b]	19.7	12.3	2.1	17	21.0	19	15.17
Sweden	18.5	17.6	21.0	7	18.3	17	16.58
Canada[c]	n.a.	17.0	n.a.	18	n.a.	19	n.a.
Greece[c]	n.a.	7.8	4.2	18	n.a.	1	n.a.
Italy[c]	n.a.	12.9	17.9	1	n.a.	1	n.a.
Spain[c]	n.a.	8.0	3.2	18	n.a.	1	n.a.

a - Ranks are adjusted to fill the range 1 to 21 even though data was available for less than 21 countries.
b - Rank position of CS-structure estimated for this country (see Figure 4).
c - For this country more than one index is missing. Summary rank position for this country therefore not available.

The empirical classification demonstrates that the attempt to empirically differentiate the administrative systems of the OECD-countries was successful. Japan stands out as the country with the strongest position of the bureaucracy in national policy-making. It is

followed in rank by a number of continental European countries, namely France, Portugal, Belgium, and Austria. At the other end of the spectrum, where bureaucracy is comparatively weak in relation to the other countries, are Finland, Denmark, and Sweden as Scandinavian as well as the United States and New Zealand as countries with British Heritage. The mere quantitative results do not seem sufficient, however, for a useful interpretation of the results. Therefore I provide in Figure 5 a more qualitatively oriented grouping of the countries along the three theoretical dimensions outlined above and in Table 3.

Instead of just aggregating ranks, countries are here categorised into groups with different combinations of chances to effect policy-making for the bureaucracy, the cabinet, and parliament. The three dimensions in Figure 5 are meant to represent the three theoretically discussed dimensions of bureaucratic influence. The "structural position of the bureaucracy" resembles the chances of the bureaucracy to influence policy-making by the strategic use of organisational structures and "resources of parliament" resembles the dimension of administrative agenda setting. "Resources of cabinet" captures the room to manoeuvre that bureaucracy can use without political interference but covers aspects of administrative agenda setting as well because the indicators for cabinet resources do enter into this summary measure.

All countries inhabiting the four cells in the foreground are countries with strong or moderately strong parliaments whereas those in the background have weak or moderately weak parliaments. The top half of the three-dimensional space is inhabited by countries with structurally strong bureaucracies, the bottom half with countries with structurally rather weak bureaucracies. The right half of the space is filled by countries who exhibit rather strong cabinets with the opposite being true for the left half.

In order to place countries in this space, their rank positions on the various dimensions were transformed into the dichotomous categories high and low and placed in the space accordingly. Not for all countries was this classification unequivocal because parliament as well as cabinet are represented by two ranks in Table 14. When the two indicators for cabinet strength did not point in the same direction the number of veto players was used as the decisive indicator. The reason for this is that number of veto players covers the dimension of bureaucratic room to manoeuvre whereas the cabinet resource level has elements of the agenda setting dimension as well. Giving number of veto players priority over the other indicator in aggregation secures a more appropriate interpretation of the data.

Parliamentary indicators were used similarly. Here the indicator on parliamentary resources was taken as decisive indicator because it summarises the information from Table 7 to Table 9 and is therefore much "heavier" than the type of government indicator. In addition, the resource indicator covers conceptual elements, the level of saliency as well as the action possibilities of parliament, whereas type of government does only cover the

latter aspect. This is reason enough to make it the decisive part in case of unequal grouping.

Figure 5: Summary: Strength of Bureaucratic Impact on Policy-Making as a Function of Resource Differences and Bureaucratic Structures
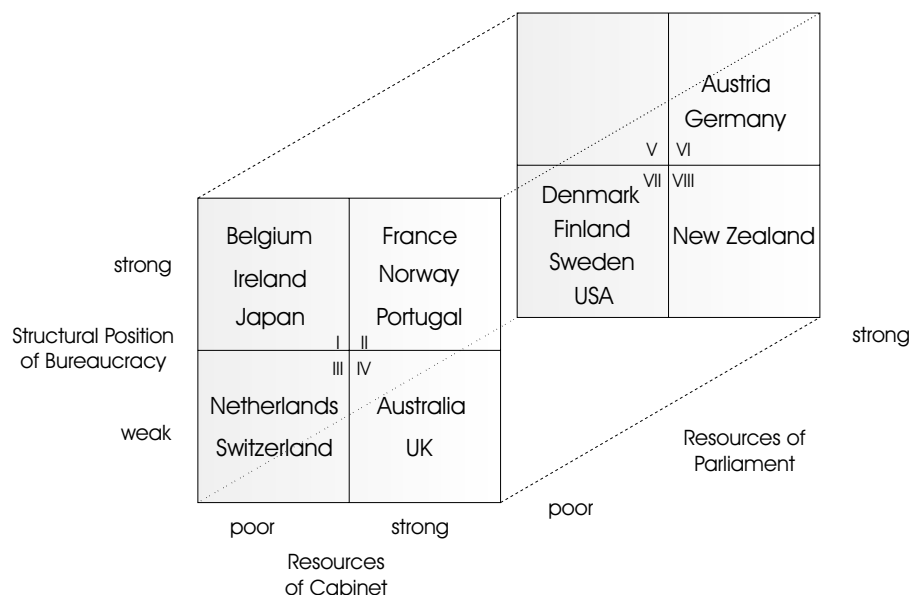
There is another "problem" with the way results are presented in Figure 5: the placement of median cases. A good example is Japan that missed by a small margin the third quadrant because it belongs in the "strong bureaucracies" group just by a narrow margin of one rank position. The groupings can be called empirically meaningful, nevertheless, because it was possible to almost exactly reproduce them by way of cluster analysis on the rank positions from Table 14[4]. The only deviating case was Finland which was grouped together with the Netherlands and Switzerland both located in an adjacent quadrant of the figure.

The pure types—all dimensions pointing towards a strong (quadrant I) and a weak bureaucracy respectively (quadrant VIII)—in the table are inhabited by Japan, Belgium, and Ireland for the all strong and New Zealand for the all weak type.

Quadrants I and II are filled with countries ranking in the top positions in Table 14 with the exception of Norway, which is located here as well but has only a middle rank in the table. Quadrants VII and VIII are filled with the low rankers. This is by and large in line with interpretations from Table 3. There it was said that the equivalent cell of quadrant I represents the strongest position of the bureaucracy followed by quadrants II, III, and V

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4   The application of different clustering algorithms did not or only marginally change the results. A two-dimensional scaling of the data with different distance measures did reproduce the above groupings as well with an acceptable stress value.

where only one source of bureaucratic strength is lacking. Then there are quadrants VII, VI, and IV where bureaucracy does only gain potential strength in one dimension and last quadrant VIII where bureaucracy is in a comparatively weak position on all three dimensions.

To turn this into a more substantial interpretation, we can say that the Japanese, Belgian, and Irish bureaucrats seem to have good chances to influence policy-making through all three channels of influence, i.e. strategic action, exploitation of the room to manoeuvre, and effective agenda setting. For the French, Norwegian, and Portuguese administrators the chances to use bureaucratic room to manoeuvre are somewhat limited by a rather strong cabinet whereas the Swiss and Dutch bureaucracies are weakened by their own structure that decreases the chances to strategically use organisational structures to influence decision-making. In Australia and the UK only the comparatively weak parliament leaves the bureaucracy some influence whereas in Germany and Austria the bureaucratic structure itself the bureaucracy to retain influence. In the three Scandinavian countries and the USA in quadrant VII a rather weak cabinet leaves some room to manoeuvre to the bureaucracy and last not least, in New Zealand there is no single dimension where bureaucracy can really be called strong.

We have now, as an answer to the third question a quantitative empirical classification of administrative systems that did not exist in the same fashion before. Whether the potential of the bureaucracy is actually put into effect will have to be tested against measures of policy output and the actual results of national policy-making, i.e. policy outcomes. Likewise, will it have to be tested whether the different dimensions aggregated into bureaucratic strength in Table 14 do really carry the same weight or whether one is more important for the impact of bureaucracies on national policy-making than the others. But these tasks must be left to future research.

Appendix: Data Sources and Coding Schemes

Table 15: Indicators Describing the Civil Service (CS)—Data Sources and Coding Schemes[a]

Variable Name	Variable Description	Variable Coding
MinStaff	Data based on OECD 1992, OECD 1993s, OECD 1995s.	-
MinAggStaff	Data based on OECD 1992, OECD 1993s, OECD 1995s.	-
	Data for this and the following indicators from Auer, Demmke and Polet 1996 except for Data on Japan, Norway, and Switzerland which are from Kikuti Masao, Meji University, Tokio, Japan; Tom Christensen, University of Oslo, Norway; and Ulrich Kloeti, University of Zurich, Switzerland respectively.	
CompTr	Compulsory training/training compulsory for promotion?	Yes - 1, No - 0
FormPro	Are there formal recruitment procedures?	Yes - 1, No - 0
NoProfE	Is prior experience in private sector recognised for job classification?	Yes - 0, No - 1
PerfRelP	Is pay performance related?	Yes - 0, No - 1
PermTen	Is employment for life/ is the employment system a tenure system?	Yes - 1, No - 0
ProgrPay	Is there a set progression in pay?	Yes - 1, No - 0
PublAdJ	Are jobs advertised in public?	Yes - 0, No - 1
Recruitm	Does recruitment occur only to entry level positions?	Yes - 1, No - 0
RekrutZ	Is recruitment centralised?	Yes - 1, No - 0
Seniority	Is the promotion system a seniority system?	Yes - 1, No - 0
SpecEdu	Are specific diplomas needed for a specific career?	Yes - 1, No - 0
SpefLab	Is there specific legislation to regulate labour relations in the public sector (or is it the general labour law, that governs employment in the public sector)?	Yes - 1, No - 0
StateRemun	Is there a statutory remuneration scheme in place?	Yes - 1, No - 0
CompTrain	Is there a training/probationary period for beginners?	Yes - 1, No - 0

a - A value of "1" stands for a closed tendency of the item, "0" stands for an open tendency of the item. For a justification of the coding and aggregation of the index see Auer, Demmke and Polet 1996 passim.

Table 16: Indicators Describing the Senior Executive Service (SES)—Data Sources and Coding Schemes[a]

Index	Variable Name	Variable Description	Variable Coding
SES size	NoSes	Size of the SES according to EIPA 1998 and OECD 1997.	
SES recruitment system		Data for this and the following indicators based on OECD 1997 except for Data on Japan and Switzerland which are from Kikuti Masao, Meiji University, Tokio, Japan, and Ulrich Kloeti, University of Zurich, Switzerland respectively.	
	Recruit1	Is there a central agency involved in SES recruitment?	Yes - 1, No - 0
	Recruit2	Are there standard selection criteria?	Yes - 1, No - 0
	Recruit3	Is there open advertisement of positions ?	Yes - 0, No - 1
	Recruit4	Are there formal access conditions for senior positions?	Yes - 1, No - 0
	Recruit5	Is there a formal selection process?	Yes - 1, No - 0
	FixOpen	Are employment contracts for senior servants for a fixed period or open ended?	Fix - 0, Open ended - 1
	ExistSpe	Is there a separate senior civil service group in the civil service (or do all servants belong under the same regulations)?	Yes - 0, No - 1
	Contract	Are senior servants employed under general labour law (contract) or under a special civil service statue?	majority employed on contract basis - 0, majority employed on civil service statue - 1
Formal Politicisation	FireT	Can senior servants be laid of at the will of the current government/current minister?	Yes - 0, No - 1
	ExchWG	Is there a turnover in SES posts, when government changes?	Yes - 0, Yes, but used rarely - 0.5, No - 1
	MinAppt	Does the minister of the day have a say in the appointment of senior civil servants?	Yes - 0, No - 1
Political Acitivity of Senior Servants	PolAct1	Participation in public debate on political issues.	Allowed - 1, Forbidden/ Restricted - 0
	PolAct2	Membership in political parties.	Allowed - 1, Forbidden/ Restricted - 0
	PolAct3	Contesting national elections while still a public servant.	Allowed - 1, Forbidden - 0
	PolAct4	Holding a seat in the national legislature while still a public servant.	Allowed - 1, Forbidden - 0

a - The coding for the recruitment system follows the same reasoning as the coding for the civil service system in general (Auer, Demmke and Polet 1996: passim).

Table 17: Indicators Describing Cabinet Activities—Data Sources and Coding Schemes

Variable Name	Variable Description	Variable Coding
NoCabi	Size of the cabinet. Data based on Woldendorp et al. (1993 and 1998).	-
CollCab	Is cabinet collectively policy responsible expressis verbis? Data based on Andeweg and Galen 1993, Baylis 1989, Döring 1993, Müller 1992, OECD 1992.	Yes/No
ExtAgen	Are there independent (implementation) agencies? Data based on OECD 1992.	Yes/No
JunMin	Are there junior ministers? Data based on OECD 1992.	Yes/No
JunMinP	Do junior ministers have policy responsibility of their own? Data based on OECD 1992.	Yes/No
JunMinS	Do junior ministers have personal staff? Data based on OECD 1992.	Yes/No

Table 18: Indicators Describing Characteristics of Parliament—Data Sources and Coding Schemes

Index	Variable	Variable description	Variable Coding
	ParlStaff	Number of parliamentary support personnel. Data based on OECD 1992, OECD 1995s and WZB Project on Parliamentary Resources.	-
Executive Initiative		Index aggregated from the 6 items below according to the following formula: 2 - ((MemIni + ParlGrIni + ComIni + ElectIni) - (BudgetGovt + MemQuorum)) Index is set to 0 if the term is smaller then 0. Index is standardised to a value range from 0-2.	
	MemIni	Do members of the House have the right to initiate legislation? Data based on IPU 1986: table 29, p. 859 ff.	1 - Yes, 0 - No
	ParlGrIni	Do parliamentary groups have the right to initiate legislation? Data based on IPU 1986: table 29, p. 859 ff.	1 - Yes, 0 - No
	ComIni	Do committees have the right to initiate legislation? Data based on IPU 1986: table 29, p. 859 ff.	1 - Yes, 0 - No
	ElectIni	Does the electorate have the right to initiate legislation? Data based on IPU 1986: table 29, p. 859 ff.	1 - Yes, 0 - No
	BudgetGovt	Is there a budget prerogative for the government? Data based on IPU 1986: table 29, p. 859 ff.	1 - Yes, 0 – No

Index	Variable	Variable description	Variable Coding
	MemQuorum	Is there a quorum for members initiative? Data based on IPU 1986: table 29, p. 859 ff.	1 - Yes, 0 – No
Delegation of Legislation to Executive		Index is the following difference: ExpLeg – ParlApprov Index is set to 0 if the term is smaller then 0. Index is standardised to a value range from 0-2.	
	ExpLeg	Constitutional rules regulating delegation of legislation to Executive. Data based on IPU 1986: Table 35, p. 1027 ff.	4 - permanent delegation of broad policy fields 3 - temporary delegation of broad policy fields 2 - delegation as part of statutory regulation of policy problem 1 - delegation only in exceptional circumstances with immediate parliamentary approval
	ParlApprov	Sovereignty of parliament on delegated legislation. Data from IPU 1986: Table 35, p. 1027 ff.	3 - approval always needed, 2 - approval not needed but parliament may annul exec. legislation, 1 - parliamentary scrutiny possible
Role of Comm		Index is the sum of the three items below that is standardised to a value range from 0-2.	
	CommStComp	Is committee stage compulsory? Data based on IPU 1986: Table 33, p. 961 ff.	0 - No, 1 - Sometimes, 2 - always
	DisBill	How are bills discussed in parliament? Data based on IPU 1986: Table 33, p. 961 ff.	2 - as redraftet by committee, 1 - as drafted by government with committee amendments added, 0 - committee amendments discussed in parliament only with consent of government/ minister
	AddExp	May committees muster additional expertise? Data based on IPU 1986: Table 33, p. 961 ff.	yes without limitations - 2, yes, but only govt. sources - 1, no - 0
Information Rights of Parliament		Index constructed as sum of the 9 items below. Index is standardised to a value range from 0-2.	
	CommCorMin	Do committees roughly correspond with ministerial departments? Data based on IPU 1986, Table 20.3.	1 - Yes or broadly yes, 0 - No
	DisCommChair	How is position of committee chairmen distributed between parties? Data based on IPU 1986, Table 21.2.	1 - proportional between all parl. parties, 0 - most or all chairs to governing party/parties
	FunctStaff	What are the functions of a committee secretariat? Data based on IPU 1986, table 21.4.	0 - only administrative functions, 1 - both, research and administrative functions, 2 - only research functions
	DocBefComm	Do committees have the right to call for documents? Data based on IPU 1986, Table 23.5.	1 - Yes, 0 - No

Index	Variable	Variable description	Variable Coding
	OffBefCcomm	Can government officials be summoned before committee? Data based on IPU 1986, table 23.1a.	1 - Yes, 0 - No
	WitBefComm	Do committees have the right to summon witnesses? Data based on IPU 1986, table 23.4.	1 - Yes, 0 - No
	MinBefComm	Do committees have the right to call minister before committee? Data based on IPU 1986, Table 23.6.	1 - Yes, 0 - No
	MinResp	Are ministers individually or collectively responsible to parliament? Data based on IPU 1986, table 40.1.	2 - individually, 1 - both, 0 - collectively
	AdminAcc	Is administration accountable to parliament? Data based on IPU 1986, Table 42.1.	2 - yes directly, 1 - yes, through minister, 0 - no
budget time for executive		Time in month that the executive has to deal with developing the budget proposal. Data from OECD 1987, OECD 1995, Harden and Hagen 1994.	
budget time for parliament		Time in month that parliament has to deal with the budget proposal. Data from OECD 1987, OECD 1995, Harden and Hagen 1994.	

Table 19: Type of Government and Main Contact of Interest Groups

Variable Name	Variable Description	Variable Coding
TOG	Type of Government. Data from Woldendorp et al. (1993 and 1998).	1 - Single Party Majority Government 2 - Multiple Party Majority Government 3 - Oversized Coalition Government 4 - Single Party Minority Government 5 - Minority Coalition Government 6 - Caretaker Government
ExtInt	Who is main contact of interest groups? Data based on Andeweg and Galen 1993, Christiansen and Rommetvedt 1999, Coleman and Grant 1988, Hartmann 1985, Müller 1992, Page 1992, Wilson 1990. Data on the following countries from private conversation: - Australia with Mark Considine, University of Melbourne, Australia, - Greece with Kostas.A. Lavdas, University of the West England, UK, - Switzerland with Ulrich Kloeti, University of Zurich, Switzerland.	1 - PM 2 - Ministers 3 - Ministers and civil service 4 - Civil service and Ministers 5 - Parliament 6 - Parliament and civil service 7 - civil service and Parliament

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