

B3.17 Patterns of Law-making in Germany's Multilevel System



Director/ Christian Stecker
Researcher/ Jana Paasch
Funding/ DFG

Project Outline

The project aims to investigate the patterns of legislation in all 16 German states (*Länder*) with a special focus on effects resulting from the multilevel structure of the polity. The main research questions are:

- How does preference heterogeneity within the government and between government and opposition influence the patterns of legislation?
- How inclusive (consensual) are law-making coalitions and which conflicts do they reflect?
- How do different government compositions between federal and state level influence legislation on the state level?
- Do the states differ in how they transpose EU regulations and which factors explain this difference?

Why study the legislation of the German *Länder*?

- Maximizing experimental variance & minimizing external variance
- The *Länder* have a most similar institutional set-up and similar party systems but offer a fruitful variance with regard to government-opposition configurations

Data and Methods

- Comprehensive Individual-level bill data (e.g. title of bill, policy area, legislative stimulus, initiator, dates of introduction, readings, votes, and adoption) *combined with*
- Comprehensive data on party positions and behaviour (policy position in the respective policy area, voting behaviour)
- Data will be collected by using web-scraping and text-mining computer scripts and manual coding

Related Publications

- Stecker, C. (2015). Parties on the chain of federalism. Position-taking and multi-level party competition in Germany. *West European Politics* 38(6): 1305-1326.
- Bräuninger, T., Müller, J. & Stecker, C. (2016). Modeling Preferences Using Roll Call Votes in Parliamentary Systems. *Political Analysis* 24(2): 189-210.
- Ganghof, S., Stecker, C., Eppner, S. & Heeß, K. (2012). Flexible und inklusive Mehrheiten? Eine Analyse der Gesetzgebung der Minderheitsregierung in NRW. *Zeitschrift für Parlamentsfragen* 43(4): 887-900.

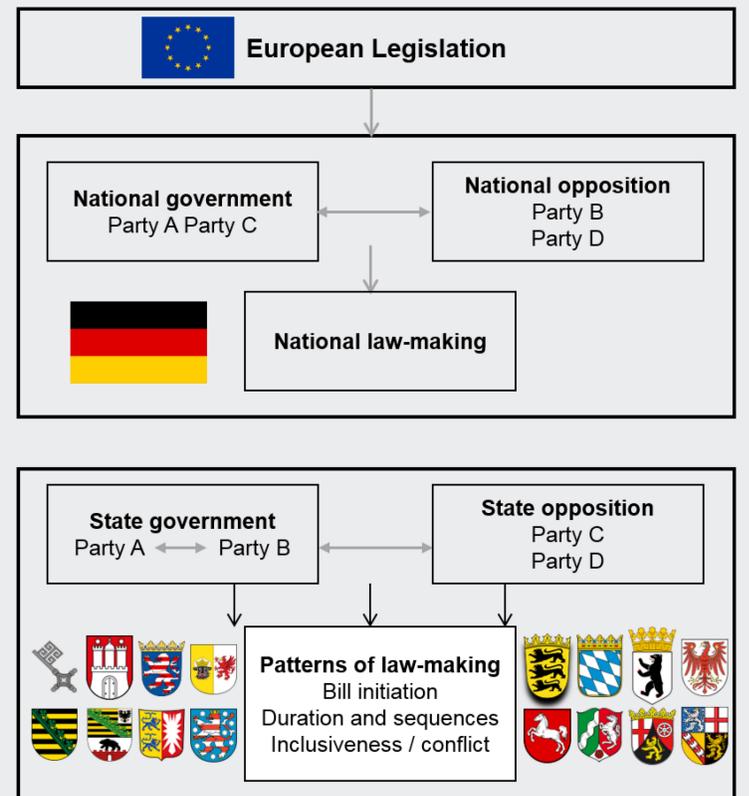
Research Focus

This project looks at three types of interactions that are crucial to modern democracies:

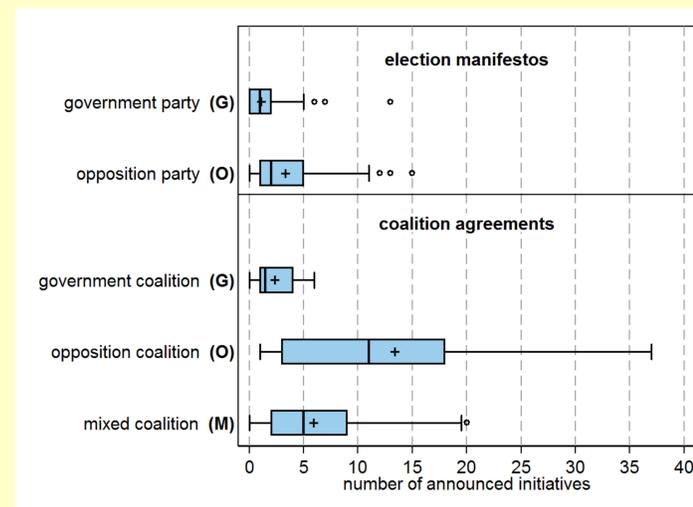
- Within the government (coalition governance)
- Between government and opposition
- Between EU level, national level and state level

Normative implications

- Is Germany's federalism a liability to the speedy and consistent transposition of European Legislation?
- Does the administrative implementation of national law at the state level create a political bias?



Multilevel Effects (from previous research)



- We analysed 410 election manifestos and 65 coalition agreements during all 92 regional elections (1990-2013) and identified 1715 announcements of legislative initiatives referring to the national level.
- We found that regional parties refer more often to the national level, when they are in opposition at the national level.

- We analysed all 1619 bills that were submitted to Germany's second chamber, the Bundesrat, by a Land government (1972-2013)
- We found that Land governments that are in opposition at the national level announce and submit significantly more legislative initiatives aiming to change federal policies

