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Citizen-Administration Relations as a perpetual challenging interdependence. Observations of citizen perspectives in Germany.

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This paper draws conclusions from many years of research and practice concerning “responsive public administration” in Germany.

(1) It starts with a short review of the development by showing the establishment and persistence of “responsiveness” as a quality measure of administrative performance - besides legality, effectiveness and economy. Over time it has enlarged its scope beyond the central starting references to welfare state developments, local embedding and its growing concern about “output- legitimacy”. It has reached all levels of the public sector and all kinds of policy fields - including service functions as well as encroaching functions.

(2) The second part summarizes the empirical evidence concerning the citizen perspectives on public administration (in Germany). It starts with data on “trust” of the population in the public sector institutions: the trend analyses show a middle level “trust-position” of public administration while the judicial system (especially the supreme court in Germany) ranks high. Over time there are variations but there is no sustainable trend. By taking these findings as a generalized valuation of public sector institutions, in the next part of the paper a more detailed analysis of survey data is used to specify various components, which aggregate towards a general attitude vis-à-vis public administration: personal experience with staff behaviour, procedures, rules and organization; comparisons between different policy fields and levels of administration. One of the enduring (empirical) results is the contradiction between comparatively positive judgements about the behaviour/performance of the staff on one side and more general criticism of bureaucratic administrative agencies on the other side.

This long term observation suggests (at least) three basic explanatory factors: (a) the personal experiences and observations by citizens; (b) the coverage of “administrative topics” in the mass media; (c) the exchanges of experiences and opinions in peer communication. Although (so far) there is only little evidence available, it can be shown that media and peer communication have strong impact on judgements about (trust in) public administration. They enhance/exaggerate negative stereotypes and bad experiences with administrative encounters.

(3) Taking up a proposition formulated in an article of 2008, the criticism – being it substantive and justified or not – is seen as an important and necessary perpetual challenge for the reflexion and review of administrative architectures and performance on behalf of the public interest. The final part, therefore, analyses (selected) new developments in the German public administration – which relate to the three factors described above. (a) With regard to practical arrangements of encounters: the Bürgeramt (citizens office) and similar formats, the complaint management and staff diversity as a response to a growing heterogeneity of the population; (b) with regard to media: the new rules for freedom of information and transparency (f. e. via www); (c) with regard to peer communication: new forms of inclusion, co-production and participation on the local level (“Bürgerkommune”; “Bürgerhaushalt”).

(4) The conclusion of the paper is drawn with regard to two questions (a) whether these measures can help to enlarge the trust of the public into public administration; and (b) whether the experiences in Germany could offer some suggestions for other countries.

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(Subtheme 1 //Trust of citizens in public administration//)

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0. Introduction

The explication of the conference topic as well as the subthemes indicates not only the relevance of the theme but also the complexity of its object under study and the presumed difficulty of its effective practical rearrangement (reform). Especially in an international conference this starts already with the question whether we are approaching the same or at least comparable phenomena. Although we nowadays speak about a world society – which in a systemic perspective means that almost everybody can be reached by communication from anybody else – this should not obscure the differences between the living conditions of “everybody”. What does the word “trust” mean in a specific cultural context? What kind of citizen role do we address in a specific (national) setting? How can the context – the political administrative system (PAS) or “governance system” - be described¹? And in more general terms: what is or can be the role of scientific research? How valid can international comparative data be - for example on “trust in institutions”?² Are there wide spread similarities concerning the phenomena which are addressed by the conference theme – even in spite of the clearly visible differences? One of the references brought up quite often is “globalization” – especially when connected with the notion of the “end of history” (Fukuyama 1992). However, the global co-evolution of capitalism and democracy has been critically debated since then – not only with reference to the rapid development in China. The world wide concern with global climate change might be seen as another example of the difficulties to develop comparable perceptions and reactions of a world society. Whatever is chosen as the key issue, the debate necessarily seems to be quite general (abstract) – for example: as the conflict between freedom and equality or between democracy and autocracy; economic growth or sustainability etc. etc. Although all this might be seen as important background dimensions which help to understand more specific PAS-variations between countries, this will not be

¹ Such a question is even relevant in the EU context: nowadays the difficulties of the new Greek government and public administration (PA) to organize effective governance procedures are often cited examples. (

<http://www.spiegel.de/politik/ausland/griechenland-regierungen-verfolgten-steuerflucht-nicht-a-1032847.html>)

² The internet is a kind of help and a kind of problem at the same time: the more messages we get the more, the more difficulties we have to understand and trust them.

the level of scientific observation which is chosen for the following analysis. Instead, I shall formulate some insights which can be drawn from observations in Germany during the last decades – especially of today: what are the phenomena behind the notion of “trust in government/public administration (PA)” in Germany? In the final part (conclusion) I will come back to some background issues just mentioned.

1. The development of the German political-administrative system (PAS) and Citizen-PAS relations

The more general historical background of the development under study is twofold: a. it is the long-term tradition of welfare-state functions which emerged in the phase of nation building and which was continued in the post world war II period as a concept of a social market economy (“soziale Marktwirtschaft”). It is a model, in which major actors have constituted a so-called neo-corporatist structure – especially based on the representation of politics, business and labour (“Tripartismus”). b. After World War II the PAS structure in Germany was changed from a centralized Nazi-dictatorship to a multilevel (federal) model; it was built up from lower levels to upper levels (subsidiary principle) – with all levels having a democratic representation (divided sovereignty). Today it is estimated that 80% of all laws and regulations – originating from any of the PAS-levels - are implemented on the local (communal) level – which evermore develops towards the most important policy (implementation) coordinator³.

It should be also noted, that these and other principles of the PAS have been formulated in the German constitution (“Grundgesetz”), and their adequate applications are closely watched by the Supreme Court (“Bundesverfassungsgericht”) – a court which can be appealed to even by individual citizens. After the post war period of economic recovery in the late 1960ies, a phase of more PAS interventions started. This also implied the provision of more public services – which had to be administered on the

³ This is the main reason for concentrating the following analysis on the implementation functions of the PA. Thereby, the focus lies on the perspectives of the “general population” and not on representatives of large/powerful organizations or lobby institutions.

local level. This shift from predominant control functions to an increase of service functions was accompanied by a new emphasis on *output* legitimation of the PAS – in contrast or in addition to *input* legitimation by parliamentary decisions (Kraus 2004). Effective implementation of welfare programs demanded for a different kind of (local) public administration.

Therefore, in the late 1960ies we observed the emergence of the “**responsive** public administration” (“bürgernahe Verwaltung”). “Responsiveness” is defined by the following quality criteria (Grunow 1988a: 26):

- Are the needs and demands of citizens acknowledged in the context of administrative decisions?
- Are the communicative and interactive abilities of citizens recognized when designing procedures for interaction and the respective communication channels?
- Are abilities and interests of participation (or coproduction) by the citizens productively included?
- Are the (dis)abilities of citizens, to understand the functioning of the overall PAS, considered?⁴

As Bogumil and Jann (2005: 198) have noted, this development has established “responsiveness” as *an addition* to previously defined quality indicators of public administration: legality, effectiveness, cost-effectiveness.

It is easy to see, that there are some similarities with the criteria of “good governance” defined after 2000 by some international institutions (EU-Commission, OECD, World Bank etc.) (Ahrends et al. 2011). However, this initiative does not just mean an involvement of other (global) actors – a little later. The world had changed since the beginning of the German “responsiveness-debate”: it was the end of the “cold war” and – especially – “the victory of capitalism” – especially in the sense of

⁴It started in the field of social services, expanded to other local task (like policing), went up to state and national administration and “ended” in the OECD (1987). In another context of discussion I have described this shift as a “sustainable innovation” (Grunow 2014: 215-18), in combination with organizational modernization and e-administration.

globalization, the rise of neoliberalism with its (partial) withdrawal of political institutions and administrative interventions – in many areas of the world. “Deregulation” was on the schedule – also in Germany, especially in the sector of finance: with its well known partly disastrous results.

How about trust in government?

At the beginning of the new century we were confronted in Germany with the “agenda 2010” (Hüther and Scharnagel 2005) by the social-liberal coalition (“Kanzler Gerhard Schröder”). A saying became quite popular - under the headline of “employability”: “you have to prepare yourself for the world market, which means: be ready to join the cue of jobseekers in India”⁵.

With regard to our more specific concern in this conference it should be emphasized that the late 1990 have seen the wave of New Public Management (NPM) sweeping over many countries and their administrative systems. Also in Germany – but with a kind of brake built within. When British colleagues (in the midst of the 1990ies) were suggesting that Germany should try to “save local democracy” – which was seen to be already widely lost in the UK – we could refer to the unification process after 1989, and the fact that during this process local democracy was strengthened by installing formal participation rights of citizens: “Bürgerbegehren” (citizens’ request) and “Bürgerentscheid” (citizens’ decision) (Kost 1999) all over Germany⁶. In addition, in Germany a so-called “new steering” model was introduced which strengthened the role of local politics and, therefore, could also be seen as a kind of setback – against strategies of economization and privatization of local public services.

Although the German reaction to the NPM could be named “intelligent compliance AND non-compliance” (Grunow 2014: 218-23) there have been some changes in local administration - with regard to organization (flat hierarchies), procedures (management by objectives), performance

⁵ This process is still under way: see f.e. the conflict in UK about the 0/7 hour contract: work on hourly demand.

(http://www.Wahlkampf in Großbritannien Streit um die 'Null-Stunden-Verträge' _ tagesschau.de.html).

⁶ Before unification only few German states (“Länder”) had introduced these rights (as part of state-legislation!) (Kost 2005).

evaluation (benchmarking), budgeting (product-based), privatization and cut-back management – and more elements of economic thinking and evaluation.

How about trust in government?

This, of course, is influenced by these long term trends and various small scale developments. The example of Germany just illustrates some very specific conditions of the design and modernization of PA as well as the influence of international trends on these conditions. Even if some of the trends of the last two decades seem quite universal it is not self-evident that it has lead to similar judgements of the population about “its” government. The basic architecture, the situation before the end of the “cold war period”, the changes in the realm of the NPM or other general trends (during the last two decades) should be seen as influential factors. They constitute a unique background for the development and understanding of our topic.

The next part of the paper describes some empirical details about *citizens’ perspectives* on the German PAS. It is also a part of the specifics of the developments, that there is differentiated material available: from world value survey and Euro-Barometer “down” to local investigations into the relationship between public administration and its public (clients, customers).

2. Trust of the general population in the German PAS

The concept of “trust” is multi-fold – even if it is used for interpersonal relations: the larger the group of reference (from partner, family, friends and colleagues, neighbours, fellow city inhabitants, Facebook -followers) the more ambiguous will be the comments on the question “do you trust ...?”. This is much more so if a large societal institution is judged about. There are so many elements which

can be addressed by the evaluation⁷. When we start with some of the data on “Trust in...” these observations or even objections should be kept in mind.

2.1 Government and other institutions

The highest level of abstraction or generality is chosen when the population is “plainly” asked about “trust in government”. This is mainly used for international comparisons - because more specific question might address an institution, which does not at all exist in another country.

“Trust in government fell globally four points to an historic low (44 percent) making it the least trusted institution for the third consecutive year. The drop in government trust among informed publics was even more dramatic on a country level, plummeting in the U.S. (16 points to 37 percent), France (17 points to 32 percent) and Hong Kong (18 points to 45 percent). Populist sentiment is evident in the fact that among the general population trust in government is below 50 percent in 22 of the 27 countries surveyed, with strikingly low levels in Western Europe, particularly in Spain (14 percent), Italy (18 percent) and France (20 percent).” (Edelman 2014)

In this “Edelman Trust Barometer” – concerning government - Germany scored a little higher: 48% (2013) and 49% (2014) – but also with a difference between the more informed public (57%) and the general public (44%) in 2014. It should not be ignored, that the general aim of the study is an analysis of the economic sphere (including trust in different business branches) – which might have some influence on the answers of the interviewed persons with regard to the public sector.

Another element of ambiguity could be the term “government” itself, which in Germany often is interpreted as political and administrative system (PAS) or public sector – whereas in other countries it

⁷ Frequent surveys on party preferences indicate that judgements about these preferences might differ quite a lot from the basic assessment (school grades) for politicians as a group of professional.

might be confined to the executive branch only (in German: “Regierung”). This can be illustrated by data about “trust in institutions” – in which institutions (organizations) of various sectors are included⁸.

The GFK-survey from 2013 (GFK 2014) comes up with quite common results for Germany: Trust in Police 81%; **Judiciary** 65% (whereby in other studies the supreme court scores even higher than police); army 57%; mass media 43%; church 39%; **government** (“Regierung”) 34%; **political parties** 16%.

The overall trust score concerning the public administration in Germany is about 10% higher than for the central government (“Regierung”).

The longer the time period which is covered by this type of trend analysis the more variations – ups and downs – are found⁹ : from 1997 to 2014 the trust in government (“Regierung”) varied in Germany between 25% and almost 50%, the last three years being clearly above 40%.¹⁰ In summarizing these research results it can be concluded, that their relevance stems from the comparative perspective: international and inter-temporal. They might initiate some interpretations and explanations, as well concerning changing results as also stable low level responses - like the *constantly* low trust in political parties in Germany.

⁸ A factor-analytic analysis ([http://www.Vertrauen in Institutionen in Deutschland mit Faktoranalyse und anderen Verfahren - Teachwiki.htm](http://www.Vertrauen%20in%20Institutionen%20in%20Deutschland%20mit%20Faktoranalyse%20und%20anderen%20Verfahren%20-%20Teachwiki.htm)) has shown that out of the often cited list of institution 5 groups can be identified: PAS, EU, Churches, Social Security, mass media. It is worth noting that only the public sector institutions show a high factor loading. This indicates a higher coherence of these institutions than those assembled in the other groups.

⁹ In Germany there is a special problematic complication: to compare data before and after the unification.

¹⁰ Data on EU-institutions (parliament, council, commission) show less differences: they all have declining scores over time which concentrate around 40% (2011) – which is about 10% less than the top scores from 2007: Grunow (2012: 340-41).

2.2 Professions

With another empirical approach the underlying diversity of summarizing scores can be shown even better by addressing different (semi-)professions ([http://www.Vertrauen in verschiedene Berufsgruppen _ Umfrage.htm](http://www.Vertrauen_in_verschiedene_Berufsgruppen_Umfrage.htm)): how about the trust in different groups of employees or professionals?

Fire workers: 96,6% ; Ambulance men: 95,8% ; Nurses: 94,6% ; Pilots: 90,7% ; Doctors 88% ; Pharmacists: 87,5% ; Engine drivers: 87,1% ; **Policemen: 81,4%** ; Farmers: 80,5%; Engineers, technicians: 80,3%;

Teachers: 79,2%; Architects: 74,2%; Craftsmen: 74,1%; **Judges: 73,9%**; Taxi drivers: 71%;

Lawyers: 69,7%; Soldiers: 66,5%; Priests: 61,3%; **Public Servants 61%**;

Computer- & Software-Specialists 57,7%; **Majors: 54,9%**; Entrepreneurs: 51,1% ;

TV-Moderators: 47,7%;

Comedians: 44%; Bank Managers: 39,1%; Professional Sportsmen/-Soccer players: 38,8%;

Journalists: 37%;

Advertising Experts: 26,6%; Insurance Agents: 19,4%; **Politicians: 15,1%**.

This list has the advantage that it includes professions from various sectors of society – showing that there is no systematic difference between score levels of these sectors. Remarkable (again) is the low level of trust in politicians – a result which is stable in German surveys since many decades. The data also show that staff of public administration (PA - as a large collective) has a much higher score than politicians – not to mention some of the subgroups: fire workers, rescue staff, police, public transport staff, teachers etc. It indicates that trust is influenced by the degree of public dependence: - be it an exclusive responsibility (public monopoly) or a special qualification. In such a setting trust might just mean: we have not much of a choice. However, this does not automatically mean that trust equals satisfaction with service quality or similar valuations. Nevertheless, PA-institutions and –staff-groups contribute much more to the overall trust in the PAS than politicians, the national government (“Regierung”) and the parliament in all – not a very satisfactory situation for a democratic political

system. However, the acceptance of (satisfaction with) democracy in the overall German population is about 60%; even a little higher is the acceptance level of young people (12-25) with almost 2/3 (2012) ([http://www. Umfrage in Deutschland - Nur 60 Prozent haben Vertrauen in Demokratie - Politik - Süddeutsche.de.htm](http://www.Umfrage_in_Deutschland_-_Nur_60_Prozent_haben_Vertrauen_in_Demokratie_-_Politik_-_Sueddeutsche.de.htm)).

It can be concluded that, as soon as more details of the institutional public setting of a country (here: Germany) are introduced, the research data show a complex and heterogeneous picture. The generalizing indicators – like “trust” – hide a diversity of observations and judgements¹¹. To reach a better understanding of the citizen-PA- relations it is necessary to concentrate on more specific objects and issues for research¹².

2.3 Civil servants (“Beamte”) and administrative agencies

Another typical source of information in Germany stems from surveys which are more specifically concerned with the role of *Civil servants* and their organizational context (all levels of PA) in the perception and evaluation by the general population¹³. Some details of a recent study (Forsa 2014) will be presented in the following. This study has the advantage, that it addresses different types of indicators, and that there are some comparisons possible with similar studies since 2007.

¹¹ Even if it is tried to integrate many variables (indicators) in one model (as Rölle (2009) did), the „explaining power” – here: *How can trust in democracy can be “explained”* – is very low: 8% (!) explained variance. He reached about 25% by including more details about the responsiveness of public administration into the set of variables.

¹² One of the price probably will be that we’ll have to confine many arguments to a special setting in one country (state).

¹³ It should be acknowledged that this approach has also some fallacies: it might not be always clear what kind of topics or objects the interview questions are addressing. In our own study (from 2007) we found that about 60% was the maximum for a correct attribution of organizations to the PA (like police, tax office or youth welfare office) – the highest score of wrong attribution was (with 36,5%) local PUBLIC transport systems (Grunow and Strüngmann 2008).

a. Traits of public servants

Concerning the performance of civil servants the respondents were asked to judge about various characteristic traits. In the 2014 survey (Forsa 2014) a majority of the population qualifies the public servants in Germany as dutiful, responsive, reliable, honest and competent. About 2/3 describe them as helpful, (only!) about half of them see the public servants as incorruptible. Only 1/3 of the respondents see civil servants as flexible persons. With regard to negative typifying the qualification as “stubborn” is chosen most often: by 45% of the respondents. Only very few are saying, that public servants are unfair, fearful or even dispensable.

In comparison with the results from 2013 the „positive“ comments are chosen more often, the „negative“ ones less often. A comparison with the first survey of this type (from 2007) shows even more improvement of the characteristic traits – especially with regard to the features competent, helpful and incorruptible.

Survey from 2014 in comparison with 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013, 2014, (rate of change 2007-2014):

dutiful: 75 78 80 79 78 (+3)

responsive: 70 72 77 76 77 (+7)

reliable 66 70 74 72 73 (+7)

honest 67 70 71 68 71 (+4)

competent 59 64 66 68 70 (+11)

helpful 57 66 67 65 67 (+10)

incorrupt 37 45 46 46 48 (+11)

flexibel 28 34 31 34 32 (+4)

+++++

stubborn 54 48 47 46 45 (-9)

arrogant 41 33 36 36 31 (-10)

unfair 26 20 19 17 17 (-9)

fearful 20 20 21 17 16 (-4)

poorly - - 8 6 5 -

dispensable 24 20 19 16 16 (-8)

b. Recent contacts with different types of administration and the experiences of the citizens

The data – covering the years 2008 to 2014 – show differing contact frequencies – whereby most contacts take place with local administration:

Local (self) Administration: 88% 80% 93% 81% 74% 64% 68%

Financial Administration: 36% 35% 37% 49% 46% 50% 43%

Law and Order: 17% 16% 16% 16% 13% 15% 13%

Labour Administration: 10% 9% 11% 12% 12% 12% 11%

With regard to the *performance related judgements*, during the years of observation there had not been much of a change; most answers – of the citizens which reported contacts - were positive:

Two thirds reported fast reactions/completions concerning their business/concern –, only 31% reported long waiting times; 83% said that the staff was well qualified for the tasks which had to be done; 84% said that the staff was friendly.

c. Comparisons between public and private sector (privatization?)

On a more general level of evaluation the interview also covered questions about preferences concerning public or private (for profit) service delivery. According to the judgement of the citizens, most of the listed functions/services should be kept in the public sector. When comparing recent data (2014) with those of 2007 we can see an increase of this preference of the population.

„...should be kept in the public sector“(2007- 2014):

Police: 97% - 98%; Judicature: 96% - 96%; Penal system: 92% - 90%;

Tax-administration: 85% - 88%; Fire service: 83% - 88%; Schools: 76% - 83%;

Old age insurance 70% - 78%; Universities: 66% - 74%; Hospitals: 61% - 71%

Employment offices: 40% - 55%; Energy supply: 40% - 55%; Garbage collection: 41% - 54%;

Local Transport: 39% - 47%;

Theatres, Museums: 33% - 34%;

One important reason for these answers could be seen in the result of another question: when asked whether lately privatized services had constituted an improvement the answers were mostly “no”. With the exception of postal services all other services were described to be without improvement or as getting worse and more costly by the majority of the respondents.

d. General image of PA

The following set of statements brings us back to a more generalized public view on PA – somehow corresponding with the starting point of “characteristics” of public servants. Even if we compare 2008 and 2014 again we see an ambivalent if not antagonistic set of judgements:

1. „Die öffentliche Verwaltung ist viel zu stark aufgebläht und kostet zu viel.“ (PA is too much bloated and therefore too expensive) (Agree: 78% (2008) -70% (2014))
2. „Die öffentliche Verwaltung ist heute viel bürgerfreundlicher als früher.“ (PA shows more responsiveness than in former times) (Agree: 58%-63%)
3. „Heutzutage wird viel zuviel verwaltet. Es sollte mehr der eigenen Initiative der Bürger überlassen werden.“ (Nowadays too many tasks are administered; more of them should be left to the initiative of the citizens) (Agree: 75%-70%)
4. „In einem Staat, der viel für seine Bürger tun will, ist eine starke öffentliche Verwaltung unerlässlich.“ (Within a state/government that wants to fulfil many tasks for its citizens a strong PA is indispensable) (Agree: 76%-85%)
5. „Die öffentliche Verwaltung ist im Vergleich zur freien Wirtschaft viel zu schwerfällig.“ (In comparison with private economy, PA is too ponderous) (Agree: 81%-76%)
6. „Weil es heute immer mehr Bürokratie und bürokratische Vorschriften gibt, wird die Freiheit des einzelnen Bürgers immer stärker eingeschränkt.“ (The freedom of the individual citizen is ever more restricted by the increase of bureaucracy and more regulations.) (Agree: 80%-75%)

7. „Der öffentliche Dienst garantiert, dass alle Bürger in gleichem Maße mit öffentlichen Dienstleistungen versorgt werden.“ (Public servants guarantee that all citizens have equal/fair access to public services) (Agree: 54%-63%)

8. „Öffentliche Verwaltungen sind heute genauso leistungsfähig wie große Wirtschaftsunternehmen.“ (Today public agencies are as efficient as large corporations) (Agree: 28%-38%)

Items 4 and 7 indicate again the necessity of public sector activity. All others are related to the performance of PA – which is partially in contrast to reported personal experiences and to the judgements about the (missing) advantage of privatization. For the further analysis a differentiation should be made between (reported) experiences with, expectations towards and public images/narratives of PA.

2.4 Paradox appraisals

To explore the last point in more detail, another study can be used, in which *open* interview questions were included (Allensbach 2007). The respondents were asked to write down their *associations* with the term government agency and with the term bureaucracy. The results were quite similar in the high scores: complicated forms (89%:94%), work to rule (70%:81%), sleepy public officials (58%:65%) – and also in some low scores: corruption (45%:47%); justice/fairness (24%:15%). The results of the closed questions concerning “the” bureaucracy were quite similar (84%: “too much bureaucracy in Germany”). However, the results with regard to *personal* experiences were much more differentiated: only 35% complained about bureaucratic procedures, only 6% complained about waiting time, *nobody* complained about complicated forms (!); 35% mentioned that staff was especially helpful and competent.

The most important conclusion from these research results is not the variation *between* the interviewed persons – but the variation *within* many of the interviewed persons: in our own study (2006/7; Grunow

and Strüngmann 2008:125) only 46% of those who have felt as “petitioner” (in the PA-encounter) are dissatisfied with PA office; only 23% of those who saw themselves been treated as “customers” were satisfied with the PA-output; 60% of the persons who have witnessed “harassment” in the interaction notwithstanding manifested trust in PA. Or in another formulation: from persons who have reported *good experiences* during their last PA-contacts 11% said to have felt as “petitioner”, 36% complained about a low competence level of administrative staff, 51% articulated dissatisfaction with PA on the whole.

This kind of contradictory reaction to public sector institutions and staff has been observed since many years or even decades (Grunow 1988). In the first place this is a consequence of the high number of different objects which are elements of “the” PA. They might be observed differently – f.e. more or less closely – and with different „evaluative“ results, because they differ in procedure and performance. However, it is necessary to acknowledge, that the “picture” of PA is not only produced by personal experiences but also by mass media and/or face to face communications. Especially the media might transport critical “images” of PA into the public/population – leading to contradictory judgements side by side within each person. In contrast to the propositions of the theory of cognitive dissonance (Festinger 1957) it has become evident, that these judgements are *not* “harmonized”.

2.5 Images of PA transported by mass media and interpersonal exchange

This observation leads us to the question what kinds of messages the media and interpersonal communication “are transporting” with regard to PA (and/or “bureaucracy”). When we are speaking about “media” in this paragraph, we will be referring primarily to newspapers. Our analysis covers the years 2001 and 2006¹⁴– and fit to the period of the interview-results¹⁵. The results of the newspaper

¹⁴ The quantitative basis from various national and regional newspapers: 735974 articles with 67715 (~9%) of them about PA topics; detailed analysis of 305 articles. There were no qualitative differences found between the articles of 2001 and 2006 (Strüngmann 2007).

¹⁵ The situation might be changing now with the new media (www, facebook etc.). However, our expectation is that today the overall results and effects would not be very different.

analysis can be summarized in two dimensions: media are transporting negative stereotypes¹⁶ about bureaucratic PA and they report on negative cases (mistakes, general deficiencies) more often than about positive cases (success, good practice). This can be explained by the permanent fight of mass media for a scarce resource: the *attention* (and interest) of the audience.¹⁷

About half of the articles (N=305) which had reported about PA included a value judgement: 49% of which were very negative/critical, 20% were negative/critical. Critical comments reported about specific decisions, about “little responsiveness”, about tendencies towards corruption etc. Positive examples were often tied to cooperative and motivated staff. With regard to stereotypes over-bureaucratization (hierarchy, red tape) and under-bureaucratization (corruption, arbitrariness) played the dominant role. With regard to citizen-relations lack of transparency, estrangement, and imbalance of power were mentioned. In one third of all articles negative stereotypes have been found (in the articles of “popular” newspapers the proportion was up to 2/3). Over-bureaucratization was formulated in 33%, under-bureaucratization in 44% of the articles. 30% of the articles with negative stereotypes included them already in the title. Counter-stereotypes (positive valuation) were found in 5 % of the articles.

It is not possible to describe the “exposure” of the citizens to those articles in detail. From the study mentioned above (Forsa 2014), we know that during the last years between 50 and 70% of the respondents have taken up information about public sector and public servant issues from mass media¹⁸. This proportion is almost as high as the 78% who had personal contact to an administrative office.

Interpersonal communications are another source of information, valuation and reported experiences. Often this communication is held as more trustworthy than any mass media story. Therefore, here

¹⁶ Stereotypes are persisting generalized views on a specific object – which are not related to recent experiences.

¹⁷ The competition between the various media is much stronger today than 10 years ago. Even the public TV stations in Germany measure the attendance of the broadcast audience continuously every 5 minutes (at least).

¹⁸ The content that they have selected for reading was not asked for.

again the question is to be raised, what kind of message would be of “outstanding” interest. Besides the negative stories, which might even escalate into a competition - who can report the strangest story? -, there might also sceptical questions or a search for advice be articulated.

Unfortunately, there are too few studies which explore these issues. Best known are the interactions between PA clients in the waiting zones – where they exchange information and valuations (Koci 2005). Studies about the interpersonal communication concerning public (political) affairs support the hypothesis of important influences on opinions and dispositions for citizen-PA relations (Faas and Schmidt-Beck 2009).

By summarizing the preceding review of research about the perspectives of citizens on PA it can be concluded, that the generalizing category “trust” has to be interpreted as a mixture of different objects, of different ways in which they are observed (personal, peers, mass media) and of differing assessments. If a *feedback* of citizens (in all) or specific groups of PA-clients/customers is sought, it has to be based on very specific issues (questions). In Germany, this is often done by surveys of the local population and specific groups “in contact” or as an evaluation of a special reform program, which is organized (paid for) by the local PA. Most of the questions are concerned with staff behaviour, procedures and structures of (local) offices. Only few of them generate negative comments: space, opening hours, and accessibility (Grunow 2003). If these very specific judgements are used as starting points for practical improvements, not only changes in daily practices but also changes in the valuation by the citizens can be expected¹⁹.

This expectation is not endorsed with regard to complex changes or general administrative reforms. Thereby, we can expect a multiplicity of info-transfers etc. – as described above - and respective

¹⁹ A relevant omission is normally the assessment of the effect of the administrative activity/decision: does it solve a problem, lead to an improvement; was it fair in comparison to other cases ?? etc.

varying or even contradicting reactions. This will be illustrated with regard to a reform strategy of the last two and a half decades: the introduction of the “New Public Management” (NPM).

2.6 Citizens’ reactions to PA-reforms (NPM)

There is no doubt, that NPM ideas, concepts and recipes have determined reform strategies in public administration – worldwide! – during the last 20 years (Blanke et al. 2010). However, a general cross-country review is almost impossible, because the context of reforms and the scope of practical NPM applications are varying too much. Even in a highly generalized format comparative research (in the EU/OECD-context) shows (different) dominating perspectives and key elements (Pollitt and Bouckaert 2004): Maintain, Modernize, Marketize, Minimize. Therefore, the following argumentation again concentrates on the experiences in Germany.

The results of evaluation studies which have been launched in Germany show the expected result: the partially embedded character of the reform initiatives leads to many variations in scope and intensity – referring to territories (sub-national units), contents (policy fields) and functions (regulation/control; service, infrastructure, coordination). As NPM lacks a coherent concept and a fixed set of instruments - concerning organization structures (f. e. flat hierarchies), personal management (assessment, short term contracts, lower pay), finance management (cut-back, benchmark) and privatization (contracting out, PPP) – the application of reform strategies differs even within one region²⁰. The survey results of Bogumil et al. (2007:37-96), therefore, are concentrating on the local level – which has seen the first and most extended implementation of NPM modernization. The existing data show in the following trends:

a. Although almost all communes reported “some” action, only very few communes have implemented a broad spectrum of reform measures.

²⁰ This cannot be understood without reference to the multilevel (federal) structure of the German PAS and the right of self government of local communes (concerning organization, staff and budget).

- b. The most important reform elements – new forms of budgeting and accounting - are not even implemented yet on a large scale (they are scheduled for 2009 pp).
- c. Even the most often realized tools (citizen office – organized according to a one window principle; citizen surveys; appraisal interviews in the civil service) have only sharply passed the 50% range.
- d. Many of the reported “successes” have not been on the NPM-reform-agenda

In detail this looks like the following table 1.

In an earlier survey of cities only (DIFU 2005), in addition, it was found, that 54% of the cities reported “completed actions” with regard to outsourcing, contracting out, privatization etc. - while only 16% (!) did not consider to apply these reform tools at all.

The overall result of NPM reforms in German public administration seems to be quite un-spectacular: there is a selective implementation and an assessment which includes strengths and weaknesses.

This is also reflected in the response of the citizens.

In our regional study (in the Ruhr District) (Grunow and Strüngmann 2008), we asked the respondents about their perception of the reform measures during the preceding years. The degree of a respective awareness was low: only about 25 % of the respondents confirmed that they had observed changes in structures and procedures of local administration. In an open question they have difficulties to describe these changes: re-organization, more use of digital communication, and privatization of services have been some of those spontaneous responses. When asked for some reform features in the format of closed questions the responses were more differentiated. 35% reported about cut-back in staff capacity; 78% of this segment of respondents described the effect of cutback as a deterioration of performance and output-quality. When asked to compare service quality of public administration and private for profit providers 32% of the respondents saw the latter as the better performer, only 6% saw PA in a better position; the rest did not see differences or could not make judgements about the issue.

Here again we can identify differences between the (performative) image of the public vs. the private sector and the experiences following rationalizing or outsourcing activities²¹.

3. Three factors for constituting the public perception of the PA

The review of empirical studies (surveys) concerning the perception and valuation of the public sector – especially the PA – by the (German) population has reconstructed a complex and in part contradictory picture. This is not surprising. PA is a complex multilevel, multicenter system. From the population point of view PA has a monopolistic status (no choices available); from the PA point of view the services have to serve lots of heterogeneous needs and demands (no client selection allowed)²². It is much easier – for example - to sell high cost BMW cars to rich Chinese customers. Whereas BMW gets a fast feed back via reduced numbers of sales, if its products do not meet/satisfy the demands of the potential customers, the reaction of the population with regard to PA is multi-fold, contradictory – not easy to aggregate or summarize. As the data have shown, this is not just the consequence of many “meeting points” and different problems/demands which have to be considered - although this explains some of the failures of “generalized reform strategies” (like NPM). Besides the conclusions drawn from own observations and personal experiences with PA, influences from mass-media communication and peer interaction also have to be considered as sources for the assessment of PA for society and/or one’s own situation. PA, therefore, has to acknowledge these different sources of evaluative input– especially if they transport *criticism*. PA must be able to accept and to deal with citizens’ critical comments, which constitute a “never ending process” within PA-citizen relationships. This does not say that reactions are not necessary, because they might have little or no effect on citizens’ perceptions. However, these reactions have to take note of the different origins and enhancing factors of this criticism: various problems and unfulfilled expectations; ideas of overall fairness in

²¹ See again the results of the survey (2014) in part 2.3 of this paper.

²² This does not mean that there are no – more or less illegal – deviations from these (normative) principles.

public affairs; comparisons with the private for profit sector – as well in staff behaviour as in effectiveness; being the scapegoat for political failures (f. e. lack of policy coordination); being the object of persisting negative stereotypes by mass media (beyond any empirical evidence). Strategies for improvement have to be sensible with regard to these “inputs” – not only into the image/thinking of the population but also into the dispositions for (inter)action.

What kinds of actions have been started in Germany with regard to these three fields of criticism?

3.1 Strategies for the improvement of interaction and performance

It has been mentioned already that elements of the NPM – concept have dominated reform initiatives during the last two decades – also in Germany. However, as described above, not all instruments have been used in all segments of the German PA. How about the effects on the *responsiveness* of PA – especially on the local/regional level?

There are two lines of NPM-development which are of interest here. On one hand we have observed measures of “customer”-orientation, on the other hand there have been steps towards cutback of public spending – including PPP projects and privatization (“Gewährleistungsverwaltung”). As one of the earlier surveys (among city representatives – DIFU 2005:20) describes, these are conflicting directions of change/reform. This is illustrated by rather positive reaction of citizens concerning the first and criticism towards the second direction.

One of the problems addressed by reform measures is the complexity of administrative responsibilities – f.e. in the context of service delivery. On the structural dimension this has led us to the “invention” of citizen offices (“Bürgeramt”) (Klages 2006)- as one of the important reform elements. Such an office aggregates different types of services – like registration of address, registration of car ownership, provision of identity cards and passports (etc.). This concept has similarities with “one window principle” and “one stop shops”, which have also been installed for the implementation of the EU-services directive (“Dienstleistungsrichtlinie”: Grunow et al. 2012). A similar aim is included in

the role of personal “pilots” (“Lotsen”)²³. Here the customer/client is individually guided through the more complicated procedures of controls and/or service applications. This instrument has been quite common in the field of local business development (“Wirtschaftsförderung” by “creaming the potential investor”), and it is now applied in the field of welfare services and payments, nowadays also for immigrants/refugees. The new waves of immigration do not only increase the number of persons with “migration background” but also their diversity. One of the reactions of local administration is the increase of the (ethnic/cultural) diversity of the staff²⁴. (Uske et.al 2014)

Another field of innovation is the introduction of E-administration, using the possibilities of online communication (and transactions) (Rödl and Nadjafi 2005). However, this does not mean to abolish other communication channels - like face to face interaction, telephone use or writing letters: they are all still needed (West 2004).

Different channels are also used for another instrument: *complaint management* – which does not only deal with the substance of PA decisions (which might end in a court of justice). It aims at problems with access, procedures, fairness, staff behaviour etc. A special element is a complaint channel for the observation of corruptive behaviour. These observations might be addressed to a police agency. As described above, not all of these changes/reforms are recognized by the citizens. But if they are, the assessment is mostly positive.

Somehow, these positive developments are restricted by cut-back strategies. Typical examples are the Citizen Offices (“Bürgerämter”): nowadays they “suffer” from staff reductions which lead to many citizen complaints. Another critical observation of citizens have been cited above: contracting out of public services is not at all reducing the costs for customers. This is accompanied and verified by control-reports of the “Bundesrechnungshof” (Federal court of auditors). Public Private Partnership (PPP) and other reform elements of NPM (cross border leasing, currency speculations) – concerning cut-back aims – are described very critical: they are much more expensive than the previous public

²³ Kreis Recklinghausen: Haus der sozialen Leistungen (2015).

²⁴ This strategy is well known since decades as „representative administration“ (f.e. in the US).

sector solutions. One of the most critical features of NPM implementation, however, is the increase of corruption – by abolishing the four-eye principle or by enlarging the field of public procurement. (Moravic 2007)

3.2 Strategies for the improvement of mass-media based PA-images

The previous examples already overlap with the second issue of our discussion: the constitution of the PA image. If the example of PPP is taken: the critical reports often are transported via the mass media. It is not yet clear how these reports influence the image of PA (Holtkamp 2010). It could be positive – better results with public responsibilities – or negative – the PA is not able to negotiate cost efficient solutions in PPP projects (Berlin Airport). This example indicates again that the image of (trust in) PA also reflects a comparison with the performance of the private for profit sector alternatives. In spite of the limited evidence it can be concluded, that the economization of public agencies – with NPM-instruments - as well as the outsourcing strategies did not find lots of applause by the German public. But this scepticism against NPM does not automatically “lift” the valuation of “traditional” PA in all. The use of the internet to provide more information about PA tasks and services and their legal and fiscal background leads us to a similar conclusion. These presentations often come late – compared with the overall internet development – and are not as perfect and “fancy” as homepages of private providers which are driven by elaborated advertisements.

Our regional study from 2007 has shown that only 44% of the respondents have had a look at the homepage of their city administration. For those who had used the homepage already the motives included „to get general information” (address, contact information), “download of forms”, information about services and entitlements”, “seeking communication contact” and others. When asked about the format of their last encounter with local PA, no respondent mentioned a contact via internet. This is surprising because almost all respondent had – in general – experience with the use of the internet.

Nevertheless, the use of the internet to provide general and special (applicable) information is a very important element for achieving more transparency. It will increase in the future. This is backed up by one of the latest developments: “freedom of information acts” (“Informationsfreiheitsgesetz”) (Piotrowski 2008). It is a way to get many more information about administrative data, decision making processes and impact on personal affairs. However, here sometimes conflicts arise with political actors who might want to hide that information which they expect to hamper their re-election. In another context PA-images are linked to politics systematically: it seems to be difficult to convince citizens that the notion of “bureaucracy” is first of all a question of detailed and complex (politically installed) regulation. The respective German “commissions for de-bureaucratization” are primarily addressing the work of legislators²⁵.

Whereas informational access to rules and regulations is not a principle problem, this is different with the political and administrative disposition of public (financial) resources. The NPM installed a new budgeting system (following the models of the private for profit sector), in which a reference is made to “products”. For these products a certain amount of resources is prescribed. With the proposition that those products are qualitatively identical everywhere, a benchmark test could be installed to compare the costs in different (local) institutions²⁶.

The usefulness of this NPM-project is still under debate (Glück 2007). However, there is no doubt, that transparency of budgeting processes and results are important elements of the image of the PAS. Therefore, experiments with so-called “Citizen Budgeting” (“Bürgerhaushalt”) takes place in many German communes (Franzke and Kleger 2010). It is trendsetting in demonstrating how government works and might help to enhance trust in its structures, procedures and decisions.

²⁵ It was interesting to observe that the “Normen Kontrollrat” (established 2006) had problems to identify who was responsible for the formulation of the rules.

²⁶ However, this is only seldom the case: in the PA-practice “products” are defined on various levels of aggregation and detail: an encounter with a taxpayer; a homepage of an administrative office; taking a pre-school child to the toilet; a ministry; a city administration etc. etc.

3.3 Strategies to enhance citizen involvement by improving co—production and participation

Peer communication – our third issue under discussion – cannot be promoted in a direct sense. Therefore, it seems to be appropriate to include this topic in a more general category: *citizen involvement*. Especially with regard to local administration an involvement does not only refer to the necessary interaction with PA in obligatory situations. It includes mutual assistance of family members, friends or neighbours. It might mean cooperation or co-production in a situation which is new to everybody or which includes high degrees of discretion in the implementation process. Often, this depends on the type of steering strategy applied: rules, positive or negative incentives, transfer payments, personal services, planning, control, enforcement etc.

Participation in the processes of administrative reform as well as in the development of substantive projects is another, much more demanding involvement. Thereby, citizens meet administrators at eye level (Bovaird 2007) and get to know each other in a different way. There are traditional ways of citizen participation in Germany – f.e. in the context of planning the infrastructure-development: participation on demand. Initiating participation has also a formal basis in German communes: “Bürgerbegehren” (citizen request/demand) and “Bürgerentscheid” (citizen decision). And beyond the formal entitlements and procedures: today evermore projects in the PAS-context are including (informal) modes of citizen participation (Kost 2005). If this is not the case, NGOs or neighbourhood-groups might take an initiative to raise their voice in a controversial issue. Of course, there is always a tendency that certain groups of citizens like the well educated middle class, or those who are directly (negatively) affected by a project²⁷ - might dominate the participation. But there are also other concepts available – like the planning cell concept (Dienel 1978), which uses a random sample for selecting the participants. Nowadays the participation via “social” networks (of the internet) offers new options to include more citizens with various experiences and interests.

Although many of those projects might be described as political “affairs”, the processes of concept development and implementation are normally a task of PA-actors. The encounters and experiences

²⁷ NIMBY (Not in my backyard) is a shortcut for these groups.

citizens undergo in such a context will influence the overall image and perception of the PA. The NPM strategies – especially with regard to cut back measures – also have “contributed” to this issue: contracting out the task to the citizens: “do it yourself” (“Bürgerkommune”). The “Commune of citizens” (Bogumil et.al. 2003) is firstly a kind of “fill-in” for abolished PA responsibilities and services: especially in those fields which are defined as “voluntary local tasks” and for which the necessary resources might be missing (Schwalb and Walk 2007): examples stem from cultural events and organizations (theatres, galleries) as well as from sports facilities (like open air or indoor swimming pool). It might also include voluntary help in social and health service organization – which suffer from austerity strategies (hospitals, kindergarten, public playing grounds etc.).

Secondly, these or other activities might have long traditions in the so-called third (informal) sector in Germany which has been also initiator and organizer of local infrastructure and services development. The “commune of citizens” is an approach towards a more inclusive self-organization strategy ((Lorig 2008): starting from a small scale situational participation and developing towards a broad and systematic architecture of local participation roles and responsibilities. This development will not only be pushed by the deficiencies of PA capacities but also by future challenges of local developments – which affect the whole population: climate change, demographic developments, traffic in the city, decentralized energy supply etc.

A few results of recent studies (2010, 2012, 2013) (Grunow 2014a) concerning the *adaptation* to climate change in the Ruhr-District can illustrate a few implications of this type of issues for the perception of the citizens (from this region).

- about 80% of the citizens think that climate change and its implications is an important public issue;
- almost 50% agree that they are already affected by climate change implications (storm, heavy rain, heat);

- the respondents use various media for information; more than 80% are following the discussions in the mass media; even more are discussing the issues in the context of peers/family;
- many citizens (40%) feel uninformed – especially with regard to strategies of adaptation (to climate change) and about the implications and side-effects of these strategies;
- more information is demanded especially from mass-media, NGO (environment) and public administration (all about 80%);
- only 15% see local politics and administration making a “good” job on behalf of environmental protection; 60% see local politics too little engaged in adaptation initiatives (concerning climate change);
- more than $\frac{3}{4}$ of the respondents *agree* with the following statement: *whether some progress is made in the context of environmental issues depends on the initiative and pressure of the citizens;*
- between 30 and 50% of the respondents are willing to engage in various forms of public participation (with regard to environmental projects/programs);
- in answering a special question about a project (sub-surface pump storage) which is part of the energy-turn (“Energiewende”) in Germany, the respondents articulated clearly their demand for transparency – by asking for early and detailed information about goals, costs (and why they often rise far beyond the projection), side-effects and how to deal with them, participation strategies etc. If such a procedure is not installed a protest initiative is seen as necessary and legitimized (see “Stuttgart 21”).

4. Conclusion

The conclusions will remain closely connected with the empirical evidence that has been described in the previous part of the paper: it is the perspective of the citizens²⁸ (in Germany) with regard to government, public sector and (especially) towards PA. As has been expected from the beginning, this perspective is in fact a multi fold phenomenon, because it addresses views on a complex – multilevel, multi-branch – phenomenon. As it has been shown, the citizens collect quite different observations of objects, tasks and performance quality – each year and especially during life time. Only for very specific issues and situations a somehow homogeneous group of citizens – concerning their perspectives and interests - might be expected²⁹.

The most important consequence of the findings is that even *contradictory* perspectives, expectations and assessments of PA *within* single persons are possible and quite often existing. This has led us to identify three central sources for the formation of perspectives: personal experiences in encounters with PA, images (stereotypes) about PA invented and distributed by mass-media, and involvement of citizens in public affairs (discussions among peers, participation).

The data show variations between the different objects of assessment, but rather little changes over time. But this is only true for the collective (general population). Individuals might change their perspectives quite often. Also the context of PA assessments might change. One very important example is the development of the “image” of PA, which is somehow determined by a comparison with the private economy. Even if the performance of PA remains stable, changes in the business world – like the internet driven individualization of marketing – might leave the public sector as a freshwater institution. Whereas the commercial products are optimized for each individual the public services are standardized and homogeneous.

(a) The general conclusion, therefore, was that there will be *no ending of the critical public debate* about the role, architectures and performance of PA. To the contrary, it is a necessary prerequisite for a

²⁸ In the analysis the citizens have been the “general population” – not the representatives of large organizations or big money (and their lobbyists). The question, whether these individualistic observations and perspectives by “the people” are “correct” in any normative or scientific sense has not been raised and discussed.

²⁹ This might be organized by movements or NGOs, but this topic was not included in the paper.

continuous effort to improve the PA³⁰: no “solution” for a responsive PA will be permanently and for everybody perfect. By drawing from the empirical materials it can also be emphasized, that all three areas of observation and assessment should be used as starting points for change processes. The examples from recent developments in Germany have described some of the options: improving architectures and procedures of citizen-PA encounters; to justify the difference between market structures with its inequalities on one side and PA with its equity on the other side; the quest for participation and co-production, which forms PA somehow as a project not only for but also by the citizens. The changes of the context – local, national, international – makes it quite likely that the “helpful” options of today may be under critical review tomorrow. In general, it seems to be necessary for PA to speed up with reform processes – and to comply with a very challenging demand (in Germany): “Reifenwechsel bei voller Fahrt” (changing wheels at full speed).

Does all of this guarantee a high level of trust in government? The data indicate that first of all it might help to stabilize or enhance the trust in PA. High levels of trust in the judiciary are supportive, low levels of trust in politicians are restricting the trust in the public sector in all. All sub-segments of the public sector have their own challenges, but they are also influencing each other element (like PA). In such a situation it is not advisable to try to “improve” one sub-segment at the cost of the others.

(b) Is it possible to deduce some suggestions from German experiences – for other countries? The comment to this question is much more a departure for discussion than an answer. With regard to the “trust” issue – from the perspective of citizens – the variation of PAS-arrangements and the terminology used leaves us basically with one “proposal”: to sort out the comparable dimensions of trust for the reconstruction of a comparable complex picture. It can be expected, that in many countries the three issues of image-building (personal encounters; stories and pictures presented by mass-media reports; involvement/participation) play an important role. It is worth while to identify the challenges included in these three issues in almost every country. With regard to more specific reform strategies

³⁰ In part it substitutes the market competition in the commercial world.

for improving citizen-PA relations – be it within or outside the context of NPM – all available practical examples can be checked for usability. This will be easier if the section under review is comparatively small/restricted: It is easier to move the chair of the citizen/client closer to the desk of the public official³¹ than to decentralize a centralized PA (like in Turkey, France, China or UK) – both actions in order to make PA more responsive to citizens` expectations.

Table 1

Modernization activity	Realized (by % of 870 responding communes)
Centralized controlling	25,9%
Decentralized Controlling	10,9%
Decentralized responsibility for resource allocation	33,1%
Budgeting	33,1%
Product description	29,0%
Cost- Benefit Calculation	12,7%
Reporting	22,1%
Contracts between Politics and Administration	14,8%
Target agreement between top level administrators and their staff	24,3%
Bonus Payments	22,4%
Appraisal Interview (staff related)	62,0%
Recruitment of staff trained in accounting practices	36,1%
Citizen office as one-window organization	57,5%
Quality Management	13,9%
Surveys on citizen/customer opinions	54,7%
Service Guaranties	7,1%

³¹ This was one of the „tiny“ lessons, that we received from our *systematic observations* of tax-payer and tax officials interaction (in the 1970ies): taxpayers wanted the chair close to the place of the public servant to be able to watch his/her writing activities.

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