



Organizational Reform Report

Self-monitoring, Institutional Reform

Sustainable Governance
Indicators 2022

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Indicator

Self-monitoring

Question

To what extent do actors within the government monitor whether institutional arrangements of governing are appropriate?

41 OECD and EU countries are sorted according to their performance on a scale from 10 (best) to 1 (lowest). This scale is tied to four qualitative evaluation levels.

- 10-9 = The institutional arrangements of governing are monitored regularly and effectively.
- 8-6 = The institutional arrangements of governing are monitored regularly.
- 5-3 = The institutional arrangements of governing are selectively and sporadically monitored.
- 2-1 = There is no monitoring.

Finland

Score 10

The monitoring and evaluation of existing institutional models forms an important element of the Finnish political and administrative system. Earlier attempts to improve the proportionality of the electoral system and alter constituency sizes are examples of how evaluation and monitoring processes in Finland mainly focus on administrative and steering issues. A system of program management that introduced new measures for monitoring the government plan was implemented several years ago. This monitoring system has been adopted as well as improved by subsequent governments. The Stubb cabinet (2014 – 2015) made monitoring data publicly available. The same policy was followed by the Sipilä cabinet. For example, progress toward realization of the 26 main goals and five main reforms listed in the government plan were reported online and updated monthly. The Rinne government launched a joint communication model for its major reform projects, managed by the Government Communications Department. One of this body's central tasks is to provide an overview of the implementation of reforms.

However, the pandemic has disrupted many government plans. The Marin government has not made any changes to its program, but the pandemic has clearly weakened the government's capacity to implement its stated goals.

Citation:

<http://valtioneuvosto.fi/en/implementation-of-the-government-programme/information>;

“Government Programme Monitoring Data,” <https://www.avoindata.fi/data/fi/dataset/hallitusohjelman-seurantadata>;
Valtioneuvoston kanslia, “Jyrki Kataisen ja Alexander Stubbin hallitusohjelmien loppuseuranta 2015,”
<http://valtioneuvosto.fi/documents/10184/321857/Hallitusohjelmien+loppuseuranta+032015.pdf/44d7de02-958c-4b1c-8633-201038a0f2f5>;

Toimintasuunnitelma strategisen hallitusohjelman kärkihankkeiden ja reformien toimeenpanemiseksi 2015-2019. Päivitys 2016. Hallituksen julkaisusarja 2/2016.

“Government Communications Strategy.” Publications of the Finnish Government 2019:30

New Zealand

Score 9 While New Zealand's political system does not provide codified mechanisms for routine reviews of its institutional arrangements, both National Party and Labour governments have repeatedly surveyed the system's performance in the past – through a number of different devices. For example, governments have used referendums to consult citizens directly on institutional issues, including on the electoral system (1993 and 2011), and established expert/stakeholder advisory groups in a number of areas, such as Open Government Partnership (OGP) processes (2016-) and data ethics (2019-). However, governments have routinely ignored expert advisory groups' recommendations in the past, for instance in the case of recommendations made by the Tax Working Group and the Welfare Expert Advisory Group.

Sweden

Score 9 Institutional arrangements of governing obviously cover a wide array of arrangements. As indicated earlier, it is astounding in many ways to think that Sweden has transformed politically from a pre-democratic system to a democratic state, embedded in an international union such as the EU, with only a minimum amount of institutional and constitutional reform. Such a transformation testifies to the capacity of institutions to accommodate change. Given their institutional capacity to adapt to external change, institutional arrangements as such are rarely assessed.

The cabinet and government departments were reformed (i.e., merged and/or abolished) during the 1980s and 1990s, but today most observers seem to agree that this type of reform rarely solves any problems. Instead, the main institutional monitoring and reform takes place at the agency level. The number of agencies has been reduced dramatically over the past two decades, from just over 1,300 in 2000 to 343 as of January 2022. Two more agencies will be established in 2022: the Agency for Psychological Defense and the Agency for Human Rights (Statskontoret, 2021).

While some agencies have been abolished, the bulk of the reduction has come from mergers. This reduction in the number of agencies says very little about the extent of regulation; in some ways it is a numbers game aiming to communicate the message to voters that the government is trimming the central bureaucracy. However, there is more or less continuous assessment of the agency system and of the performance of agencies with regard to service delivery and policy implementation.

Agencies are monitored fairly closely, so much so that a couple of recent commissions have recommended that agencies should not have to provide data on their performance with the same frequency as they do today and that the system should allow for more variation among agencies in this respect. The red-green government that came into power in 2014 has launched a process of reducing the

number of performance indicators that agencies are requested to provide data on. These efforts are part of a larger project to replace New Public Management models of public sector management with a more trust-based model of management, as advised by the results of commissions of inquiry in 2018 and 2019, which are sure to result in reforms in the future (Regeringskansliet, 2018; 2019).

Citation:

Statskontoret (The Swedish Agency for Public Management). 2021. "Myndigheterna Under Regeringen." <https://www.statskontoret.se/fokusomraden/fakta-om-statsforvaltningen/fakta-om-statsforvaltningen/>

Regeringskansliet. (Government Offices of Sweden). 2019. "Med Tillit Följer Bättre Resultat – Tillitsbaserad Styrning och Ledning i Staten." SOU 2019:43 <https://www.regeringen.se/rattsliga-dokument/statens-offentliga-utredningar/2019/10/sou-201943/>

Regeringskansliet. (Government Offices of Sweden). 2018. "Med Tillit Växer Handlingsutrymmet – Tillitsbaserad Styrning och Ledning av Vårdssektorn." SOU 2018: 47. <https://www.regeringen.se/rattsliga-dokument/statens-offentliga-utredningar/2018/06/sou-201847/>

Canada

Score 8

Government structures are constantly changing in Canada, but there are few procedural structures in place to (self-) monitor whether current arrangements are appropriate or whether change has resulted in improvement. Instead, changes are initiated at the will of the government in power, with little ex post evaluation. In the case of the recent merger of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade with the Canadian International Development Agency, for example, the government offered no details about the nature of the amalgamation, nor about the cost savings it was intended to realize.

The current government, which won its previous mandate in part based on the promise of transparency and fairness, has since established a number of independent committees tasked with monitoring certain government processes. For example, in an effort to reduce partisanship in lawmaking, it created an independent advisory board that will aid in the selection of senators, and created the Independent Advisory Board to oversee appointments to the Supreme Court. While the government has acted upon such advice as in recent appointments to the Senate, it remains too early to gauge the long-term impact of these committees.

Citation:

David Zussmann (2013), Mergers and successful transitions, Canadian Government Executive, Volume 19 Issue 5.

Prime Minister of Canada, "The Prime Minister announces the appointment of Senators," 29 July 2021, <https://pm.gc.ca/en/news/news-releases/2021/07/29/prime-minister-announces-appointment-senators>.

Denmark

Score 8

Given the size of the country's public sector, monitoring and management within it is crucial. Tight public finances have placed additional focus on efficiency and productivity in the public sector. This has fueled a public management and

governance strategy that includes the use of contracts, results-oriented salaries, measurements, evaluations and efficiency reports.

Significant efforts have been undertaken to digitalize public administration, including those services involving direct interaction with citizens. Annual tax reporting is digitalized and most communication utilizes the e-boks system. Denmark ranked first in the United Nation's 2021 e-Government Development Index.

There is an ongoing debate on the need to reduce bureaucracy. Efforts to simplify labor market and social policies have been proposed recently, though this is likely a cyclical phenomenon, as policymakers often respond to specific cases of bloated bureaucracy that are reported in the media.

Citation:

Niels Ejersbo og Carsten Greve, *Moderniseringen af den offentlige sektor*. Copenhagen: Børsens Forlag, 2005.

"90-årig mand taber sag: Glemte at tjekke sin e-Boks – og så faldt hammeren," <http://www.bt.dk/danmark/90-aarig-mand-taber-sag-glemte-at-tjekke-sin-e-boks-og-saa-faldt-hammeren> (Accessed 17 October 2016).

UN E-government development index, <https://publicadministration.un.org/egovkb/en-us/Reports/UN-E-Government-Survey-2016>, Accessed December 1st 2016. (Re-accessed 17 October 2017).

United Nations E-Government Survey 2018, <https://publicadministration.un.org/en/Research/UN-e-Government-Surveys> (Accessed 7 October 2018).

Statsminister Mette Frederiksens tale ved Folketingets åbning 2019, <https://dansketaaler.dk/tale/statsminister-mette-frederiksens-tale-ved-folketingets-aabning-2019/> (Accessed 18 October 2019).

Greece

Score 8

During the period under review, the monitoring of institutional governance arrangements was improved. In the past, monitoring was inefficient as it was often delegated to governing party officials with little administrative experience. After the change in government in 2019, the new government reorganized governance structures and appointed highly skilled experts with job experience in the private sector to various management posts across the public sector. All governance monitoring was executed from the top, namely by the Prime Minister's Office (recently renamed, the Presidency of the Government). In 2020–2021, the prime minister was aided by the skilled staff of that office and by two government ministers without a portfolio, as well as technocrats responsible for monitoring institutional arrangements.

Latvia

Score 8

The government office has an annual monitoring procedure under which cabinet decision-making processes are reviewed. This results in frequent improvements to the process. In 2013, major revisions to the regulatory impact assessment system were made, along with the introduction of a green-paper system that will move

public consultations on new policy initiatives to an earlier phase of the policy-planning process.

The management of relations with parliament, governing parties, and ministries is not regularly reviewed. This is considered by civil servants to be the purview of politicians and therefore not an appropriate topic for initiatives emanating from the civil service level.

Research on how to improve governance is commissioned sporadically. The last report of this kind was commissioned in 2015, focusing on strengthening human resource policies within the government's core. However, it had no appreciable impact.

Citation:

1. PKC (2015) Report on the Center of Government in Latvia, its Strengthening and the Implemented Human Resource Policy, Available (in Latvian) at: <http://petijumi.mk.gov.lv/node/2797>, Last accessed: 10.01.2022.

Lithuania

Score 8

Lithuania's policymakers monitor institutional governing arrangements (both institutions and rules of procedure) regularly and effectively. The Ministry of the Interior has established a committee to monitor the implementation of the Public Government Improvement Program, which includes representatives from that ministry, the Office of the Government, and other key ministries and state institutions. However, these monitoring and review processes do not include representatives of the business community or civil society, or individual experts. Non-governmental actors used to participate in the activities of the Sunset Commission, but its mandate was not extended through the 2016 – 2020 government term. Also, the rules of procedure and business processes are frequently reviewed using quality-management instruments, the application of which is becoming increasingly widespread in the country's public administration. A uniform project-management standard introduced by the Skvernelis government for the governmental and ministerial levels provides for the establishment of a project monitoring group and the application of monitoring procedures during the implementation of projects.

However, the results of these monitoring processes are not sufficiently used in making decisions, and some changes to institutional arrangements remain motivated by governments' short-term political needs. The country's OECD accession has offered new possibilities for benchmarking Lithuanian's public sector performance against other OECD members, thus creating opportunities to draw political attention to the need to monitor governance arrangements. The OECD study presented in late 2021 is a case in point.

Citation:

OECD, Mobilising Evidence at the Centre of Government in Lithuania. Strengthening decision-making and policy evaluation for long-term development, Paris: OECD, 2021.

Norway

Score 8 Self-monitoring takes place both informally and formally. On a formal level, there is a parliamentary committee devoted to monitoring whether government and parliamentary activity adheres to the constitutional framework and proper procedures. In addition, the Office of the Auditor General, which reports to parliament, has gradually made itself more assertive while expanding its policy focus. There is also a ministry and an executive agency in charge of administrative policy questions, both of which monitor institutional arrangements. Informally, there is substantial monitoring of the way institutional arrangements affect government functions. For example, ministerial portfolios are shuffled when change is deemed necessary, notably each time there is a change of government.

Switzerland

Score 8 Self-monitoring takes place as a part of the political process, which includes numerous private and public actors. It is not institutionalized outside the context of the evaluation of policies (as by implication, policy evaluation leads indirectly to the monitoring of the institutional framework for these policies). The major actor in self-monitoring is the Parliamentary Control of the Administration (PCA), an evaluation service of the Federal Assembly which, on behalf of the Control Committees (“Geschäftsprüfungskommissionen”), conducts studies on the legality, expediency and effectiveness of federal authorities’ activities. When commissioned to do so, the PCA can also scrutinize the effectiveness of federal government measures on behalf of other parliamentary committees. In addition, the various federal offices conduct internal evaluations that they trigger themselves. The nature of these self-evaluations varies and depends on the activity of the respective evaluation unit. In general, according to Sager et al., evaluation activity in Switzerland is high and evaluations form an important part of political life in Switzerland.

Citation:

Sager, Fritz, Thomas Widmer und Andreas Balthasar (Hg.) (2017). Evaluation im politischen System der Schweiz – Entwicklung, Bedeutung und Wechselwirkungen. Zürich: NZZ Verlag, Reihe „Politik und Gesellschaft in der Schweiz“.

<https://www.parlament.ch/en/organe/committees/parliamentary-control-administration-pca>

United Kingdom

Score 8 Flexibility and informal meetings are a key feature of the government system, enabling it to respond in a way uniquely tailored to the situation at hand that has always been valued highly and is an essential constituent of prime ministerial government in the United Kingdom. Nevertheless, the Cabinet Office in particular has a remit to monitor the government’s functioning and does so through a range of mechanisms, which have been reinforced by recent civil service reforms, particularly

civil service management procedures. A key change introduced in 2016 was the introduction of wide-ranging “single departmental plans,” replacing the use of business plans. After a spending review in 2020, a new instrument – outcome delivery plans (ODPs) – was introduced. ODPs set out each government department’s revised priority outcomes, the department’s strategy for achieving them and the metrics that will be used to track performance. In addition, the recasting of cabinet committees saw the creation of “operations” as well as policy groupings, replacing the implementation task forces set up in 2015 innovation. Regular assessments of progress are undertaken by the Civil Service Board chaired by the cabinet secretary and there is a so-called shadow civil service board composed of less senior civil servants. The latter is charged with assessing specific projects and advising senior management, and is also expected to provide different perspectives and views on papers that are forwarded to the Civil Service Board.

In response to critiques from select committees and the Institute for Government (IfG), the government revised its guidance on the machinery of government, placing greater emphasis on the importance of senior leadership and accountability, although the IfG’s 2022 Whitehall Monitor raises concerns about the ambiguity over whether ministers or civil servants are ultimately accountable.

This self-monitoring has been bolstered by a renewed commitment to open government and the public release of data. Executive monitoring is complemented by media scrutiny, parliamentary committees, various policy-specific statutory bodies and independent organizations, such as the Institute for Government. The Institute of Government stated that its task of monitoring central government was facilitated by the availability of data, “the fact we can produce this report supports that.” The dissemination of good audit practices has been encouraged by the publication of internal audit standards and there are periodic reviews of areas of governance concern, recent examples being an audit of race disparities and a review of national security capabilities.

Citation:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/civil-service/about/our-governance#civil-service-board>

<https://civilservice.blog.gov.uk/2015/07/29/clarifying-our-priorities-single-departmental-plans/>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/cabinet-committees-and-implementation-taskforces-membership-list>

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/641252/PSAIS_1_April_2017.pdf

Hungary

Score 7

Under the Orbán governments, there has been no regular formal monitoring of the institutional arrangements of governing. However, there is strong and rather comprehensive oversight of the working of the state apparatus from the top down, measured against the political will of the leadership, and the government has been quick to change any institutional arrangements it has deemed to be politically dangerous.

Ireland

Score 7 The present government has a mandate for institutional reform and has made some progress in implementing its program. Specific examples have been discussed in relation to other SGI criteria.

Israel

Score 7 The Israeli government has installed various executive-branch institutions, both internally and externally, tasked with monitoring its activities and performance in areas such as procedures, financial transfers and human resources. For example, the Accountant General regularly audits financial decisions in ministries. The Civil Service Commission ensures that internal due processes are followed, and oversees human resources. However, in recent Knesset discussion regarding reforms to the Commission's work, critics have asserted that the Commission's work is inefficient. The PMO monitors implementation of the State Comptroller's recommendations as well as the internal accounting units in each ministry. Supplementary mechanisms for self-regulation include protocols and guidelines governing daily practice.

Citation:

"About: the Accountant General," Ministry of finance website (Hebrew): <http://mof.gov.il/AG/About/Pages/About.aspx>

"About the Inspection General for State Comptroller Affairs," PMO website (Hebrew): <http://www.pmo.gov.il/BikoretHamedina/Pages/Default.aspx>

Government Decision 482: adoption of the recommendations of the governability committee, 30.6.213, <http://www.pmo.gov.il/Secretary/GovDecisions/2013/Pages/des482.aspx>

"Notice number 3," Civil service commission website (Hebrew) "About: Civil Service Commission," Civil service commission website (Hebrew): <http://www.csc.gov.il/About/Pages/Roles.aspx>

Protocol – The Special Committee – Reforms in the Civil Service Commission: <https://oknesset.org/committee/meeting/11826/>

"Rules, procedures and guidelines for CEOs in the civil service," Civil service commission 2013: <http://www.csc.gov.il/DataBases/Rules/Documents/BrochureCEOs.pdf> (Hebrew)

"The internal audit law 1992," Official legislation (Hebrew)

Italy

Score 7 Traditionally, the attention paid to the internal organization of the government machine has been selective and sporadic. No systematic monitoring was accomplished on a regular basis. The spending review initiated under the Monti government, and continued by the Letta, Renzi and Gentiloni governments, reformed this field somewhat. Reforms have focused mainly on financial issues, but have also

involved the monitoring of institutional arrangements of government (with particular attention given to the structures of local government). However, many of these review exercises' proposals for a deeper restructuring of government have not been seriously implemented. After limited past reforms that increased the ability to monitor the government program, little attention has been paid to a serious restructuring of the Prime Minister's Office. Reforms introduced under the Conte government only marginally affected the state bureaucracy's low level of productivity. The Draghi government – because of its specific mission and as a consequence of the rules imposed by the Next Generation EU program – has developed more effective instruments for monitoring the activities of ministries, administrative units and local governments, and to measure their effectiveness in implementing the actions prescribed by the Resilience and Recovery Plan (PNRR). From this point of view, 2021 has been a very positive year.

Citation:

http://www.funzionepubblica.gov.it/sites/funzionepubblica.gov.it/files/Valutazione_DLgs_25_maggio_2017_n74.pdf

<https://www.normattiva.it/uri-res/N2Ls?urn:nir:stato:decreto.legge:2021-05-31;77!vig=>

Japan

Score 7

Reform of the executive has been a major topic in Japan for two decades. During Prime Minister Abe's second administration (2012-2020), the LDP-led government sought to readjust institutional arrangements by establishing and/or reinvigorating a number of councils and committees. To some extent, the Abe government was able to bring back the leadership framework that characterized the government under Prime Minister Koizumi (2001–2006), for instance through a strong Cabinet Office. Whether these institutional changes will result in more effective self-monitoring of the government or whether these new institutional arrangements will become more permanent under the current Prime Minister Kishida's administration remains to be seen.

United States

Score 7

On the one hand, presidential advisory and administrative arrangements in and around the White House are reconfigured in important respects by each president. As a result of this fluidity, presidents, their staffs and commentators discuss the effectiveness of the given arrangements of the president's senior aides almost constantly. By contrast, most other organizational structures – including the basic separation-of-powers system; the structure of Congress; and the structure of departments and major agencies of the executive branch – are rigid. None of these units are subject to change by executive decision or ordinary legislative majority, and they are evaluated only in extreme circumstances.

The executive structures of the Trump presidency proved to be exceptionally casual and unstable, with a president who appeared to have no appreciation for the benefits of systematic deliberation and the division of labor. In many important agencies, such as the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the State Department, and parts of the Department of Justice, mid-tier and lower-level professionals also left in large numbers. Through its expert-friendly appointment process, the Biden administration is seeking to repair the damage done by the Trump administration.

Chile

Score 6 Ministries are required to establish sectoral goals that are evaluated annually. Reports are presented on a quarterly basis but do not focus directly on the adequacy of institutional arrangements. For example, while the accomplishment of ministerial goals is evaluated, the overall adequacy of the ministry is not. Although the Ministry of Finance assesses the adequacy of institutional arrangements in the case of new law proposals, there is no specific institution assigned to monitor pre-existing institutional arrangements. Furthermore, to a certain degree, changes in institutional arrangements tend to be influenced by personnel criteria and are not driven by an effort to introduce long-run strategic structural change. Ministry portfolios are subject to sporadic monitoring while procedures and work formats are subject to regular monitoring.

Estonia

Score 6 Based on the amount of amended or adopted regulations that deal with institutional arrangements, the government's monitoring activities certainly exist and inform policymaking. Since March 2014, the Act on National Government has furnished the ministerial nomination processes with a new flexibility; it no longer lists ministers, but only sets a maximum number for the government as a whole. This enables nominations to better reflect current needs. Since 2015, a minister of public administration has been nominated. The minister is responsible for monitoring the institutional arrangements of the government sector and proposing reforms if necessary.

Luxembourg

Score 6 In the absence of systematic monitoring of institutional arrangements, the government relies mainly on international expertise. EU and OECD data significantly affects the political agenda, and the implementation of social and economic policies. However, in line with the coalition agreement for the 2018-2023 period, the Grand Duchy embarked on a series of administrative and organizational

reforms – the so-called “state modernization.” Public services were encouraged to implement customer/citizen-focused-quality management systems.

The European Commission’s 2018 report entitled “Public administration characteristics and performance in EU28” confirmed the Luxembourg status-quo-oriented administrative tradition. The country scores high on the Uncertainty Avoidance dimension (thus reflecting a certain resistance to new methods and ideas), but also on the Long-term Orientation dimension (which expresses the pragmatism of the public administration and the ability to adapt to change). A comparative review of the Power Distance dimension indicates that Luxembourg’s traditions, like those in Germany and France, retain considerable respect for authorities and hierarchies.

The Grand Duchy is a member of the Open Government Partnership (OGP), which is a multilateral initiative aiming to stimulate governments around the world to make concrete commitments to promote good governance through the use of new technologies. The 2019-2021 National Plan was prepared by a horizontal group (facilitated by the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs and the “Digital Lëtzebuerg” platform), with the participation of various stakeholders (ministries, administrations, civil society, academia, media). Luxembourg articulates its action around six goals: transparent and open administration, promotion of open data, promoting the use of clear administrative language, information on climate action, establishment of a European center for CiviTech, and establishment of a support program for human rights defenders.

Within the ongoing “Digital Lëtzebuerg” strategy, many actions have already been accomplished. However, due to country’s high-quality technological structure, it should still be possible to further streamline the administrative formalities and procedures that affect users (citizens, businesses, administrations).

Citation:

“Open Government Partnership. Luxembourg National Action Plan 2019-2021.” The Government of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg/Open Government Partnership Lëtzebuerg (10 March 2020). https://www.opengovpartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/Luxembourg_Action-Plan_2019-2021_EN.pdf. Accessed 14 January 2022.

“Public administration characteristics and performance in EU28: Luxembourg.” European Commission. Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion Support for developing better country knowledge on public administration and institutional capacity-building” (VC/2016/0492) (2018).

“Einfach Lëtzebuerg.” The Government of Grand Duchy of Luxembourg. <https://einfach.public.lu/fr.html>. Accessed 14 January 2022.

Malta

Score 6

The government has stepped up its efforts to monitor wide-ranging aspects of government work, especially from within the PMO. The Office of the Principal Permanent Secretary bears primary responsibility for this and has been carrying out

its responsibilities in an appropriate manner. Unfortunately, most ministers seek, aided by their staff, to avoid such monitoring. This is evident from cases that come to light and which raise serious questions about good governance. Nevertheless, responding to EU supervision has helped. The NAO and the ombudsman also continue to provide essential monitoring functions. Over the last two years, Malta has been working to improve this aspect of governance. Currently, it has resolved many of its outstanding issues with the European Commission. In 2019, the government announced the creation of a new entity to monitor public-private partnerships. The PMO is currently overseeing an overhaul of procedures in a number of ministries and public organizations, following recommendations made by MONEYVAL, the Venice Commission and GRECO.

Citation:

Government to set up entity overseeing and monitoring public private partnerships Maltachamber.org.mt 28/01/19
Times of Malta 17/01/2020 Venice Commission Reforms without delay, Robert Abela
https://www.maltatoday.com.mt/news/national/113875/fearne_blames_konrad_mizzi_sideletter_for_41_million_extra_spend_for_steward#.YbxOVpenWko
https://www.maltatoday.com.mt/news/court_and_police/112032/mandatory_hotel_quarantine_for_returning_maltese_residents_challenged_in_court#.YbxO-Zdruko

Mexico

Score 6

Historically, Mexico has often found ways of dealing with the so-called agency problem in policy implementation, which explains why institutional arrangements need constant monitoring. Traditionally this agency problem was dealt with by a high degree of corporatist authoritarianism, which came at a high cost for controlling agents. In today's Mexico, democracy – even if sometimes insufficiently implemented – requires new models of overcoming this agency problem in an increasingly diversified and complex state structure. Particularly policymakers at the central level and in the more advanced states are becoming aware that effectively governing complexity requires different principles, including monitoring institutional governance arrangements. In July 2018, Mexico launched an online platform to track progress toward achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Yet, especially at the subnational level, pockets of authoritarianism, weak state capacity and widespread corruption result in uneven capacity for monitoring institutional arrangements and regulatory reforms. At the top of the political pyramid, the quality of self-monitoring still depends much on the personal engagement of the president. Mexican policymakers have tended to engage quite frequently in administrative reorganization, possibly to excess. President Peña Nieto was an ambitious, and perhaps excessive, but largely unsuccessful reformer. President López Obrador is even more ambitious, and is attempting to radically transform Mexico with his so-called fourth transformation agenda. López Obrador's new social programs and plans to revive the Mexican oil industry are intended to transform Mexico's socioeconomic structure. However, this socioeconomic transformation has been hindered and interrupted by numerous problems associated

with the COVID-19 pandemic. Another element of President López Obrador's reform agenda, the demilitarization of the war on drugs, has failed completely. After the passage of half of López Obrador's term, his approval ratings remain very high, despite several failures.

Institutional governing arrangements are centralized in the presidency. President López Obrador makes his own decisions on policies, and also determines whether and when governance is to be monitored, which is done sporadically when such activities conform with the president's plans.

Citation:

SDG 2018. Mexico's SDG Portal Brings Functionality to Reporting. <http://sdg.iisd.org/news/mexicos-sdg-portal-brings-functionality-to-reporting/>

South Korea

Score 6 The president's office monitors institutional governance arrangements. The president frequently reorganizes ministries and government agencies when inefficiencies are detected. At the same time, institutional reforms are often driven by individual high-ranking government officials rather than being part of a comprehensive plan. For example, the recent controversy over the creation of a new government agency tasked with investigating and prosecuting high-level government officials was primarily driven by former Justice Minister Cho Kuk. However, the initiative did not provide adequate assessment as to how this new institution would be more independent than the existing public prosecutor's office from political meddling, or how it would improve investigations of high-level officials overall.

Australia

Score 5 There is little in the way of formal processes to indicate that institutional arrangements are monitored regularly, but such monitoring does occur occasionally. Institutional arrangements do periodically change, often manifesting as rearrangements and renaming of departments. Ad hoc reviews are also conducted, such as the 2004 Review of the Corporate Governance of Statutory Authorities and Office Holders. In some key areas such as migration, Australian authorities carefully monitor the impact of policies, and rapidly change policy direction if appropriate.

Austria

Score 5 There is no regular monitoring within the executive branch of the government. Due to the fragmented structure of the government and comparatively weak position of the chancellor, the ability to engage in oversight from within the central government is rather limited.

Core government actors are first and foremost legitimized by the political parties. Though officially appointed by the president, the cabinet consists of individuals chosen by the political parties on the basis of post-electoral coalition agreements. Civil service personnel are in many cases also indirectly linked to one of the political parties. In recent years, short-term appointments within the civil service have bolstered this latter trend, undermining the principle of a professionalized civil service. Individual cabinet members (federal ministers, including the chancellor and vice-chancellor) have increased the size of their personal staffs. This has created a mixed system, partially echoing the model of the British civil service, in which civil servants work under ministers irrespective of their own political links, and partially following the U.S. model of a politicized civil service with party-political links between cabinet members and their staff. This blend of two contradictory principles undermines the reform capacity of the Austrian system. The government and its individual cabinet members can neither depend on the full loyalty of a partisan civil service nor be sure of complete civil service impartiality.

In an attempt to strengthen political control over the civil service, the ÖVP-FPÖ government (2017–2019) established a system of secretary-generals in all ministries, which has been continued under the ÖVP-Green government, which formed in early 2020. This system has had a centralizing effect by guaranteeing the loyalty of the civil service to the specific minister who appoints the secretary-general. However, it indirectly contradicts the non-partisan status of the Austrian civil service. Rather than following suggestions by the Court of Audit, the primary motivation for these changes has been to achieve more (political) control over the ministry and its staff. This new system was assessed in great detail by the Austrian Court of Audit in 2021, which made quite a few suggestions for improving these arrangements.

The Austrian Court of Audit also played a major role in initiating a major reform of the Austrian administration, which is ongoing. The latest chapter focused on issues of digitalization, for which the government committed €160 million (for more on the Court of Audit, see “Audit Office”).

Citation:

https://www.rechnungshof.gv.at/rh/home/home/2021_12_Generalsekretariate.pdf

<https://www.derstandard.at/story/2000124441441/oesterreich-investiert-160-millionen-euro-in-digitale-verwaltung>

France

Score 5

Numerous reports on the reform of rules, procedures and structures are prepared at the request of governmental authorities. The Court of Accounts plays a very active and stimulating role in this regard. However, few of these recommendations are implemented. Resistance by the ministries or agencies affected is usually fierce, and is often supported by opposition parties or even by part of the majority coalition. The

issue is complicated by the fact that ministerial structures can be set up and changed by the government in charge. President Macron has launched an important but not yet completed reform, starting with the abolition of the famous ENA (National School of Administration) and replacing it by a new Civil Service Institute (Institut du Service Public) for the training of top-level civil servants. All successful applicants including future magistrates are to here spend one training year together before later attending more specialized programs. Several of the traditional “grands corps” – that is, the powerful specialized segments of each administration – are to be eliminated and replaced by more horizontal and open structures. It remains to see how much of these radical intentions will survive given fierce resistance by conservative corporatist groups.

The local government administrations have proven to be among the systems least adaptable to structural change. This system is multilayered, complex and no longer in line with the challenges of the modern economy and society. Most serious attempts at reform have failed. However, some elements of the 2015 territorial reorganization may trigger more change (new powers to metropolitan areas, organized cooperation/fusion of the numerous and often too small municipalities). The initial measures taken by President Macron seem to indicate that he has chosen the indirect but powerful instrument of state subsidies to force local governments to make changes. However, the government’s ambitious changes concerning the metropolitan areas and Paris have not materialized, as they face (as usual) fierce resistance from the powerful local-government lobby. From de Gaulle to Macron, all governments have had to limit themselves to partial and ad hoc reforms, making the overall system complex and costly.

Germany

Score 5

There is neither a particular institution nor a commission that independently and impartially operates as an oversight body with respect to governmental activities. In addition, institutional self-monitoring capacities are still low. However, the creation of the Better Regulation Unit in the Chancellery and the extension of the competences of the National Regulatory Control Council (Normenkontrollrat, NKR) – an independent advisory body – have strengthened self-monitoring capacities. In its most recent report, published in September 2021, the NKR pointed to increasing legislative compliance costs within public administration, not just in the private sector. However, the NKR has no mandate to advise the government on its institutional arrangements.

Citation:

Nationaler Normenkontrollrat (2021): *Zukunftsfester Staate - weniger Bürokratie, praxistaugliche Gesetze und leistungsfähige Verwaltung*, Jahresbericht 2021.

Iceland

- Score 5** Iceland has no formal political or administrative system of self-monitoring organizational reform. Monitoring of institutional arrangements is irregular. Institutional arrangements are occasionally reviewed.

Netherlands

- Score 5** There have only been two visible changes in the institutional practices of the Dutch government at the national level. One is that the monarch was stripped of participation in cabinet-formation processes in 2012; the second chamber or senate now formally directs that process; in practice it is in the hands of the largest political party after elections. The effect on government formation was mixed, with a historically rapid formation in 2012 and two coalition formation processes of record-setting length in 2017 and 2021. The second change was the informal adaptation to lower levels of parliamentary support on the part of the Rutte I and II governments. Informal coordination processes between government ministers, and all members of the senate and second chamber have become crucial for governing at the national level. Following provincial elections in 2019, this also applied to the Rutte III and will apply to the Rutte IV cabinet. However, in 2019, the Council of State warned that there was a risk of subjecting parliamentary legislation to the outcomes of poldering practices that effectively give too much power to organized and vested stakeholder interests (e.g., in the context of the big agreements on housing, pensions and climate).

Two open organizational-reform crises have emerged in recent times that threaten citizens' well-being in the long run. The first is the underfunded, understaffed and ill-considered transfer of policy responsibility to municipal and local governments within important domains such as youth care, healthcare and senior-citizen care. Strikingly, in 2020-21, many critical studies and reports signaled strong "peripheral discontents" in the northern, eastern and southern areas of the country; many citizens living in those parts of the country feel unheard, unseen and neglected. They frequently organize demonstrations in the political capital, The Hague. A task-driven (as opposed to a problem-driven) national politics and policy hampers the development of more appropriate regional and local policy responses. Regional and local governments now demand a long-overdue overhaul of interadministrative relations between national, provincial and local government and water boards. Practical problems and tensions crystallize in the now often politically contested role of mayors.

Second, there is a looming reform crisis in the justice and policing system, which undermines the government's task of protecting citizens' security. The reform of the policing system from regional or local bodies into a single big national organization

is stagnating; police officers have mounted strikes based on wage and working-condition issues; and the top echelon of the police leadership is in disarray. The digitalization of the justice system and the reduction in the number of courts, in addition to imposed cutbacks, has wreaked havoc within the judicial branch of government. There is a crisis in the relations between the political and the bureaucratic elements, given that the Department of Justice and Security, later renamed according to its true order of priorities, Security and Justice, is supposed to provide political guidance to both of these reform movements. The subordination and instrumentalization of law to policy and the securitization of the judiciary is evident in the fact that under the Rutte IV cabinet, the top echelon of the department no longer consists of top-level legal specialists; instead, the department is run by specialists in political science and public administration.

Citation:

NRC-Handelsblad, 11 April 2019. Raad van State: parlement maakt zichzelf machteloos door akkoorden.

NOS Nieuws, September 1, 2021. Vorige informateur (Tjeenk Eillink) voelt 'plaatsvervangende schaamte' voor impasse formatie

Raad van State, 25 November 2021, Verzoek om voorlichting over interbestuurlijke verhoudingen

Van den Berg and Kok, 14 September 2021. Regionaal Maatschappelijk Onbehagen. Naar een rechtsstatelijk antwoord op perifeer ressentiment. (in opdracht van LNV)

Boogers et al., January 2021. Teveel van het goede? De staat van het burgemeesterambt anno 2020.

Portugal

Score 5

During the period under review, no substantial measures have been introduced concerning the monitoring of institutional arrangements and there is little evidence of de facto monitoring of institutional governance arrangements. What little monitoring occurs appears to be reactive to political crises or challenges. The rules of procedure for the Council of Ministers under the government that took office in 2019 were changed only minimally relative to those used by the preceding executive, and continued to make no reference to self-monitoring mechanisms.

Citation:

Regimento do Conselho de Ministros do XXII Governo Constitucional – Resolução do Conselho de Ministros n.º 49/2019, Diário da República, 1.ª série—N.º 44—4 de março de 2019, available online at: https://www.sg.pcm.gov.pt/media/36241/regimento-cm_1ª-alteração_2019.pdf

Spain

Score 5

The executive actors do not monitor institutional arrangements of governing in a regular basis. On the one hand, such monitoring is highly centralized. The prime minister has the power (both constitutionally and politically) to reformulate the institutional organization of the government. Without any legal constraint, he personally decides on the structure of portfolios and other governing arrangements

every time he appoints new ministers. In 2021 Prime Minister Sánchez introduced several changes with regard to ministries' names and jurisdictions, without a prior impact assessment. On the other hand, this task is not performed regularly, in spite of laws 19/2013 on transparency, access to public information and good governance, and 39/2015 on general administrative procedure, which state that the Government Office must engage in planning, evaluation, and comprehensive monitoring of general legislation and, where appropriate, must promote revision and simplification. In December 2020, the government approved a royal decree on the oversight structures and the frameworks necessary for domestic oversight control, the ex ante monitoring of expenditures by independent bodies, and ex post monitoring by national audit authorities. In order to detect and correct fraud, corruption and conflicts of interest as well as to increase the effectiveness of the implementation of the RRP, the government created several temporary structures and gave new responsibilities to a number of existing administrative departments.

Citation:

Gobierno de España (2021), Plan de Recuperación, Transformación y Resiliencia https://www.lamoncloa.gob.es/temas/fondos-recuperacion/Documents/160621-Plan_Recuperacion_Transformacion_Resiliencia.pdf

Turkey

Score 5

With the April 2017 referendum and the subsequent incremental introduction of the presidential system of government, Turkey has undergone an organizational change involving the creation of new institutions, the merging or splitting of ministerial bodies, legal changes, and rapid personnel shifts. These developments make monitoring exceedingly difficult.

The organization of the new presidential system was regulated by Presidential Decree No. 703 in July 2018. In addition to a vice-president, the head of administrative affairs was established under the General Directorate of Law and Legislation. Its main task as the head of administrative affairs is to coordinate between public institutions and organizations and examine the congruity of laws adopted by the parliament and draft legislation prepared by government institutions with the constitution, current legislation, presidential decrees, and government program. The policy councils of the president are expected to monitor and report the implementation of governmental policies to the president.

Several units contribute to the monitoring process directly or indirectly. These units include the State Supervisory Council, the Directorate General of Law and Legislation of the Presidency of the Republic, the Directorate General of Laws and Decrees of the TBMM, the General Directorate of Laws of the Ministry of Justice, and the Council of State. Each administrative institution has its internal control unit for monitoring compliance with financial rules. However, these units are not fully effective.

Citation:

European Commission. "Turkey Report 2021. Commission Staff Working Document." October 19, 2021. https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/turkey-report-2021_en

Gözler, K. (2018). Mahalli İdareler Hukuku. Ekin Kitabevi: Bursa.

Bulgaria

Score 4

During the period under review, there were no formal ex ante mechanisms for monitoring whether institutional arrangements of governing are appropriate. Efforts to reflect on the structure of governance and institutional arrangements take place only after the fact, that is, when a problem becomes serious enough or a crisis emerges and are generally driven by public pressure or pressure from some other government body.

Coordination within the government and amendments to the parliamentary rules of procedure are likely to correct this deficiencies.

The governing coalition formed at the end of 2021 committed itself to reforming the anti-corruption agency. On January 14, 2022, the chairman of the agency (the former prosecutor general) resigned, thus making way for a reform of this institution.

The improved access to public information and restored independence of the media are forcing the government to better organize the monitoring process.

Croatia

Score 4

There is no regular self-monitoring of the institutional arrangements of Croatian governments. Monitoring occurs only on an ad hoc, selective basis. Public organizations are supposed to prepare annual reports, but often fail to do so, and do not use these reports to examine deficiencies.

Cyprus

Score 4

The main structures and institutions of 1960 remain largely unchanged. Reform efforts usually commence when systemic dysfunction reaches a critical level and progress moves forward at a very slow pace. This is due to the rigidity of the constitution and the absence of institutional monitoring. A centralized unit for reform, operative between 2014 and 2019, produced some results, mostly in improving procedures. The reassignment of tasks from the centralized unit for reform back to line ministries followed. Meanwhile, the absence of a coordination body makes reforms harder to implement, given that self-monitoring in line ministries is weak or absent.

Several outsourced studies and surveys have been conducted since 2012, which have identified problems and proposed reforms. However, this has not compensated for the absence of self-monitoring mechanisms.

Czechia

- Score 4 There is no systematic monitoring of the institutional arrangements of governing. Governments must issue annual reports and a final report at the end of their term in office, as Prime Minister Babiš did in December 2021. However, these reports tend to focus on policies rather than institutions and are normally self-congratulatory. Also, there are sporadic audits within particular ministries.

Poland

- Score 4 The PiS government has not monitored the institutional arrangements of government in a systematic and regular way. Its goal is not to improve or professionalize institutions but to increase political power and employ personnel that follow the party line.

Romania

- Score 4 There is no systematic and regular monitoring of institutional arrangements. Occasionally, the OECD and World Bank have been involved in governance reviews, but the effects of the latter have been negligible. The European Commission also participates in country reviews, though governance and monitoring of institutional arrangements is not identified as a priority area for Romania in light of more pressing reform priorities.

Slovenia

- Score 4 There is no regular self-monitoring of institutional arrangements in Slovenia. The monitoring that takes place is ad hoc and limited. The annual reports of state organizations are formal and self-congratulatory. Under both the Šarec and Janša governments, the number of audits performed by private sector organizations remained low.

Belgium

- Score 3 In 1993, Belgium became a federal state with one federal government, three regional governments (Flanders, Brussels Capital, Wallonia), three communities (Dutch-, French- and German-speaking, each with a parliament and a government), 10 provinces, and 589 municipalities (following a merger in 1975). The absence of a hierarchy of decision-making powers between the federal and regional/community

institutions means that self-monitoring efforts within administrative organizations is limited in practice. It takes a constitutional crisis to trigger a comprehensive process of reflection on institutional functionality. Resulting revisions are typically motivated by pre-existing political agendas rather than by a sound impact evaluation.

There have been six such state reforms from 1970 onwards; the 6th state reform was agreed upon in 2011 and led to the transfer of multiple further competences to the regional and community levels. The federal and regional/community governments nevertheless maintained overlapping competences (as evinced by the fact that there are nine public health ministers) because each state reform was the result of a difficult compromise between those pushing for more devolution and those pushing for reinforced federal competences.

As a consequence, Belgian institutions are far from efficient. The responsibility split between municipalities and regions has not been reoptimized appropriately, particularly in Brussels. Many decisions require interministerial coordination between the federal, regional and community authorities, which makes Belgium almost as complex as Europe. A formal body – the “concertation committee” (comité de concertation/overlegcomité) – has been developed for such coordination. The committee includes federal, regional and community ministers and is supposed to prevent conflicts of interest between the three levels. Very frequently, however, no rational solution emerges.

It is also often the case that major policy initiatives requiring coordination are not even initiated because of a local government acting as a veto player that blocks the entire initiative. There are several examples of this in all policy fields with shared competences, most notably with regard to environmental/climate change and health policies. The unprecedented collaboration observed throughout the COVID-19 crisis, during which the concertation committee took a central decision-making role, could nonetheless give hope that coordination and collaboration will improve in the future. For these hopes to be realized, parties will have to stop instrumentalizing this body as described under “Constitutional Discretion.”

Citation:

https://www.standaard.be/cnt/dmf20191108_04707701

https://www.standaard.be/cnt/dmf20191104_04699282

<https://plus.lesoir.be/130823/article/2017-12-23/francois-bellot-et-alexander-de-croo-pour-une-refederalisation-de-la-mobilite>

https://www.rtf.be/info/belgique/detail_climat-tendu-au-comite-de-concertation-pour-l-organisation-de-la-cop26-en-belgique?id=10181671

https://www.rtf.be/info/belgique/detail_etat-federal-et-regions-se-disputent-le-gateau-financier-des-licences-5g?id=10181618

Slovakia

Score 3

There is no regular and systematic self-monitoring of institutional arrangements in Slovakia. Governments and governmental bodies (such as the parliament, Government Office) must issue annual reports and a final report at the end of their

term in office, however, these documents focus more on policies and formal financial accounting rather than institutional design. In addition, there are sporadic audits within particular ministries. The institutions and processes of governing are analyzed only infrequently and selectively. Shortcomings in audit procedures persist.

Indicator

Institutional Reform

Question

To what extent does the government improve its strategic capacity by changing the institutional arrangements of governing?

41 OECD and EU countries are sorted according to their performance on a scale from 10 (best) to 1 (lowest). This scale is tied to four qualitative evaluation levels.

- 10-9 = The government improves its strategic capacity considerably by changing its institutional arrangements.
- 8-6 = The government improves its strategic capacity by changing its institutional arrangements.
- 5-3 = The government does not improve its strategic capacity by changing its institutional arrangements.
- 2-1 = The government loses strategic capacity by changing its institutional arrangements.

Lithuania

Score 9

Lithuania's government has in some cases improved its strategic capacity considerably by changing its institutional arrangements. The Skvernelis government developed a new concept paper on the institutional setup of public administration, which proposed reducing the number of institutions by 15%. The number of public sector institutions fell by 23% (by 1,000 in absolute numbers) between 2016 and 2019. Although there was more rationalization activity at the central level in 2018, the process of optimization has been very sluggish at the local level.

At the end of 2018, the Skvernelis government (2016 – 2020) approved a set of reform guidelines for ministerial and agency administrations, which led to organizational restructuring in 2019. Skvernelis' government also decided to rename two government ministries: the Ministry of National Economy became the Ministry of Economy and Innovation after it took over responsibility for innovation (digital economy and IT infrastructure), while the Ministry of Education and Science added "Sport" to its name after gaining control over this policy field. The Šimonytė government (in office since late 2020) has begun a reform of the innovation sector involving the merger of several institutions (Enterprise Lithuania; the Agency for Science, Innovation and Technology; and the Lithuanian Business Support Agency). The goal is to "create the foundations for an effective (and high quality) expansion of the innovation ecosystem and the development of priority economic sectors at the international level" (Enterprise Lithuania). Preparations for a broad reform of the public administration are being made, with adoption planned for 2022.

Citation:

Vidaus reikalų ministerija ir Strata, "Viešojo sektoriaus ataskaita, 2016-2019 metai." Vilnius, 2020

[https://vrm.lrv.lt/uploads/vrm/documents/files/LT_versija/Veiklos%20ataskaitos/Vie%C5%A1ojo%20sektorius%20ataskaita_galutin%C4%97%20\(002\).pdf](https://vrm.lrv.lt/uploads/vrm/documents/files/LT_versija/Veiklos%20ataskaitos/Vie%C5%A1ojo%20sektorius%20ataskaita_galutin%C4%97%20(002).pdf)

Enterprise Lithuania, “Inovacijų agentūros koncepcija.”
<https://www.versilietuva.lt/apie-mus/apie-inovaciju-agentura/inovaciju-agenturos-koncepcija/>

New Zealand

Score 9

New Zealand’s strategic-planning capacity is already relatively high. There is thus little space for further improvement. Nevertheless, governments have shown commitment to coordinate and streamline the relations between different institutional actors at the core of government. In particular, the Cabinet Manual – the primary authority on regulating the conduct of ministers and their offices – has served as a framework through which to improve strategic capacity. For example, The Manual includes a “no surprises” convention, whereby departments are required to inform ministers promptly of matters of significance within their portfolio responsibilities, particularly where matters may be controversial or may become the subject of public debate. In February 2021, the new Public Service Act came into force, replacing the 1988 State Services Act. The stated objective of the new legislation is to create a “unified public service.” While government departments and agencies previously had a tendency to work in “silos,” the Public Service Act puts more emphasis on working together (New Zealand Government 2020; Walls 2019).

Citation:

New Zealand Government (2020) Parliament passes Bill to reform public service.
<https://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/parliament-passes-bill-reform-public-service>

Walls (2019) “Government will repeal and replace the State Sector Act with a new, modern law.” New Zealand Herald. <https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/government-will-repeal-and-replace-the-state-sector-act-with-a-new-modern-law/WOPOSGPUHCODCM2YOBSXURBCFY/>

Sweden

Score 9

While the structural design of the Swedish system looks almost identical to how it did a century ago, there have been substantive changes in the modus operandi of institutions at all levels of government, particularly concerning the relationship between institutions. Perhaps most importantly, coordination among government departments has increased. Furthermore, the agency system is continuously reviewed, and the structure of the system is reformed (e.g., through mergers of agencies). Finally, department steering of the agency has increased, formally and informally.

It is fair to say that the design and functionality of the system is continuously assessed. Over the past decade, issues related to steering and central control have dominated reform ambitions. Again, governments have not hesitated to alter the configuration of departments or agencies when deemed necessary to reflect the changing agenda of the government.

Denmark

Score 8

The last major reforms within the public sector were the structural reform of 2007 and the 2012 Budget Law, which became effective in 2014. The key element for the government's effort to make the public sector more efficient has been the 2% across-the-board budget reduction (omprioriteringsbidrag), with the savings being reallocated to new initiatives. It is unclear whether this has actually resulted in improved efficiency and productivity.

While the structure and role of municipalities, and especially the regions, is a subject of ongoing debate, there is no indication that major structural reforms will be undertaken in the near future. The current Social Democratic government is focused on improving performance within the existing structure and has dropped the annual 2% across-the-board budget reduction target. It has also increased funding for municipalities and regions.

Citation:

Ejersbo og Greve, *Modernisering af den offentlige sektor*, Børsens forlag, 2005.

The Danish Government, *Denmark's National Reform Programme*, May 2011. http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/nrp/nrp_denmark_en.pdf (accessed 27 April 2013).

Lene Dalsgaard and Henning Jørgensen, *Kvaliteten der blev væk: Kvalitetsreform og modernisering af den offentlige sektor*. Copenhagen: Frydenlund, 2010.

Carsten Greve and Niels Ejersbo, *Udviklingen i styringen af den offentlige sektor*. Baggrundspapir til Produktivitetskommissionen. <http://produktivitetskommissionen.dk/media/142136/Baggrundsnotat%20af%20Greve%20og%20Ejersbo.pdf> (Accessed 22 October 2014).

Statsministerens tale ved Folketingets åbning, 2. oktober 2018, http://fo.stm.dk/_p_14739.html (Accessed 7 October 2018).

Statsminister Mette Frederiksens tale ved Folketingets åbning 2019, <https://dansketaler.dk/tale/statsminister-mette-frederiksens-tale-ved-folketingets-aabning-2019/> (Accessed 18 October 2019).

Germany

Score 8

As pointed out above ("Strategic Capacity"), the government has expanded its strategic capacities in recent years. The Federal Ministry of Education and Research acts as coordinator within the Foresight process. It remains to be seen if this process helps improve while creating a shared understanding of strategic planning across the ministries. The new government has adjusted the responsibilities of some ministries. In this context, climate policy has been strategically upgraded. With regard to the cross-cutting issue of digital policies, effective coordination in Germany is still lacking (see Hess/Egle 2022).

As in other countries, strategic capacities and reform efforts are heavily influenced by constitutional and public-governance structures and traditions. The federal system

assigns considerable independent authority to the states. In turn, the states are crucial to implementing federal legislation. This creates a complex environment with many institutional veto players across different levels. Institutional and organizational inertia spells for low levels of strategic capacity.

German federalism reforms, which constitute some of the more far-reaching institutional changes of recent years, have started to have an impact on the adaptability of the federal politics. In the last years, several reforms relating to the financial relations between the federal level and the states were adopted.

Citation:

Hess, Thomas and Christoph Egle (2022): Digital Governance in Regierungen: Die Chance von Dotted Lines, in: ifo Schnelldienst 2/2022, p. 16-20

Latvia

Score 8

The regular review of decision-making procedures results in frequent reforms aimed at improving the system. Changes in institutional arrangements, such as the establishment of the PKC planning center in 2010, have significantly improved the government's strategic capacity and ability to undertake long-term strategic planning. In 2023, the PKC will be merged into the State Chancellery, again with the goal of improving capacities.

Citation:

1. LSM (2021) Kariņš instructs to add the Interdepartmental Coordination Center to the State Chancellery from 2023, Available (in Latvian) at: <https://www.lsm.lv/raksts/zinas/latvija/karins-uzdod-no-2023-gada-parresoru-koordinacijas-centru-pievienot-valsts-kancelejai.a432958/>, Last accessed: 10.01.2022.

Norway

Score 8

Institutional reform is an ongoing process, with frequent reorganizations aimed at improving strategic capacity taking place. This includes changes in ministerial responsibilities and portfolios.

United Kingdom

Score 8

As mentioned above, the organizational flexibility of both the core executive and the distribution of tasks to specific ministries is a core characteristic of the UK system of government. Cabinet reorganizations and new institutional arrangements have often been the prime minister's weapon of choice to improve government performance. However, such reorganization can also be motivated by intra-party politics or public pressure, and it is difficult to evaluate the success of specific measures in enhancing the strategic capacity of the government. Recent civil service reforms have also served to enhance strategic capacity, while various open data initiatives have increased government transparency. More generally, the government is exploiting digital technology opportunities right across the functions of government.

Very substantial changes in governance do occur. Recent examples include the restoration of the Bank of England's lead role in financial supervision and an alteration to the basis of financial regulation. Both of these examples followed evidence of the ineffectiveness of the preceding model, and shifts in the balance between state, market and external agencies in the delivery of public goods.

Changes in institutional arrangements, such as ministries or the focus of cabinet committees, were among the approaches taken to try to resolve the many difficulties in implementing Brexit. After the 2019 general election victory and the return of majority government, institutional flexibility was demonstrated by, for example, merging the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, and the Department of International Development. A key manifesto commitment – “leveling-up” – is expected to be fleshed out in 2022 and was already given impetus by broadening the remit of the Ministry for Housing into the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. Cross-departmental coordination will be part of this development.

Australia

Score 7

Australia largely accepts and implements recommendations from formal government reviews. Past investigations have covered all aspects of government including finance, taxation, social welfare, defense, security and the environment. There have been frequent structural changes to the main federal government departments, sometimes in response to changing demands and responsibilities, but sometimes simply for political reasons that serve no strategic purpose and may indeed be strategically detrimental. For example, the main department that is responsible for healthcare has changed its name at least five times in the past two decades in response to changes in its responsibilities. Of course, the change of name alone is insufficient. For instance, there has also been a long debate on the need to improve the country's infrastructure, but implementation in this area has been lackluster.

Canada

Score 7

There is little public evidence that changes in institutional arrangements have significantly improved the strategic-governance capacity of Canada's federal government. For example, there has been no comprehensive evaluation of Service Canada, a delivery platform for government services established in the 2000s.

The frequency of departmental reorganizations has diminished in recent years. However, in 2017, the Liberal government split Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada into two departments, the Department of Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs, and the Department of Indigenous Services. The two departments respectively focus on renewing a nation-to-nation relationship and improving the quality of services available.

Recently, there has been progress made on certain aspects of Indigenous services, including the lifting of boil water advisories in Indigenous communities and investment in water infrastructure. However, given the ongoing challenges in basic infrastructural needs of Indigenous peoples (water, housing, environmental protection) and slow progress on reconciliation issues, it is unclear how these institutional changes have served these larger needs.

Citation:

Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada. Highlights from the Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, posted at <http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1100100014597/1100100014637>

Chile

Score 7

In recent years, some improvements in strategic capacity have been made by modifying institutional arrangements. For example, in 2012 the erstwhile Ministry for Planning and Co-operation (Ministerio de Planificación y Cooperación, Mideplan) was transformed into the Ministry of Social Development and Family (Ministerio de Desarrollo Social y Familia, MDS), with some minor institutional changes that increased its strategic capacity, and the Ministry of Science, Technology, Knowledge and Innovation was created in 2018. In September 2021, President Piñera signed a law creating the Ministry of Public Security (Ministerio de Seguridad Pública), including the Agency for Cybersecurity, as part of the modernization of the country's state security and citizen protection apparatus. Furthermore, the reorganization of complementary institutions such as environmental tribunals (Tribunales Ambientales) and the reconfiguration of supervisory boards (Superintendencias) over the past decade has improved capacity in these areas. However, in general terms, attempts to alter institutional arrangements tend to encounter substantial bureaucratic obstacles.

Citation:

Chilean Government on the creation of the Ministry of Public Security, <https://www.gob.cl/noticias/presidente-pinera-firma-proyecto-de-ley-que-crea-el-ministerio-de-seguridad-publica-este-sistema-debe-poner-las-personas-sus-libertades-y-sus-derechos-en-el-centro-de-sus-prioridades>, last accessed: 13 January 2022.

Finland

Score 7

While institutional arrangements have not changed much, the Marin government has continuously considered plans to promote and implement strategic aims within government. The government initially appointed six strategic ministerial working groups, in which ministers from different departments guided and directed the implementation of government-program items within specific policy areas. The pandemic disrupted efforts to develop institutional arrangements further. Three additional ministerial working groups have since been appointed to deal with the issues of sustainable growth; the digital transformation, the data economy and public administration; and coordination of the COVID-19 response.

<https://valtioneuvosto.fi/en/marin/ministerial-working-groups>

France

Score 7

French governments are usually reactive to the need to adapt and adjust to new challenges and pressures. These adaptations are not always based on a thorough evaluation of the benefits and drawbacks of the foreseen changes, however. A case in point is the reluctance of most governments to take seriously into consideration the recommendations of international organizations, if they do not fit with the views and short-term interests of the governing coalition. Resistance from vested interests also limits the quality and depth of reforms. Too often the changes, even if initially ambitious, become merely cosmetic or messy adjustments (when not dropped altogether). This triggers hostility to change, while in fact very little has been done. The new Macron administration is reminiscent of the Gaullist period at the beginning of the Fifth Republic, with its strong commitment to radical reforms (“heroic” rather than “incremental” style). The initial months of the presidency have already attained considerable achievements, but one has to be aware of French society’s deep-rooted reluctance to change. For example, the violent Yellow Vest protest movement starting in November 2018 put a brake on this “bonapartist” storm. The weak capacity of the organized opposition to the Macron administration’s reforms (e.g., by the trade unions, social organizations and vested interests) has given rise to spontaneous and violent grass-roots protests. Protesters have criticized the president’s top-down methods and policies. This situation has forced the government to adopt a more cautious approach and/or to drop the most ambitious or encompassing reforms. For instance, the planned constitutional reform has been blocked by the Senate, whose agreement is necessary, while the pension reform was postponed until after the presidential elections of spring 2022. The distractions of the pandemic have served as another factor slowing the pace of reform, even though some reformist activity has been kept alive (for instance the reform of unemployment benefits).

Greece

Score 7

After the elections of July 2019, the new government devised plans to reform central-government institutions in a variety of policy sectors. Emphasizing the need to improve the long-term planning, programming and monitoring of public policies, the new government passed and implemented legislation that reorganized the Prime Minister’s Office (the PMO). The new PMO was renamed as the Presidency of the Government in a new law adopted in 2019. Thereafter, the Presidency of the Government designed procedures to strengthen the state’s strategic capacity, which were quickly rolled out across different policy sectors. These included, for example, a long-term strategy for the digitalization of public services traditionally provided in person and on-site. The government also developed a long-term strategy designed to

promote economic development, after the European Union launched the Recovery and Resilience Fund. The government devised the Recovery and Resilience Plan, which the European Commission approved in 2021. It also developed a strategy to manage migration inflows and to facilitate the transfer of migrants from overcrowded islands in the Aegean Sea to the Greek mainland. Finally, the government established the new National Security Council and the new National Authority on Transparency. Overall, strategic capacity that draws on scientific knowledge and long-term planning has vastly improved.

Citation:

The law reorganizing the Prime Minister's Office was Law 4622/2019

Iceland

Score 7

Iceland's recent governments have sought to improve the central government's strategic capacity by reviewing ministerial structures. The 2007 – 2009 cabinet of Haarde initiated this process, while the 2009 – 2013 cabinet of Sigurðardóttir continued this process by reducing the number of ministries from 12 to eight and reshuffling ministerial responsibilities. Some of the ministries were administratively weak because of their small size. The capacity of these small ministries to cope with complex policy issues, such as international negotiations, was inefficient and ineffective. Further, the informality of small ministries was a disadvantage. The three cabinets since 2013, however, have more or less reversed these reforms by again increasing the number of ministers by four.

The government has not chosen to build on the reforms implemented under IMF supervision after the financial collapse of 2008 or to honor its own unanimous resolution from 2010. The resolution stated that “criticism of Iceland's political culture must be taken seriously and [parliament] stresses the need for lessons to be learned from it” (authors' translation). Related to this, strategic capacity has decreased as the government has been immersed in one political scandal after another, which has weakened governance. This is evidenced by the fact that Iceland's per capita GDP (i.e., purchasing power) was lower in 2020 than in 2007 (World Bank, World Development Indicators).

Ireland

Score 7

Radical change was called for in the wake of the dramatic policy and governance failures that contributed to the severity of the post-2008 economic and social crisis. However, the specific reforms implemented have been relatively limited. Nonetheless, some improvements in strategic capacity introduced during the period of the Troika agreement have been retained. Reform of the legal system was strongly recommended by the Troika, but little has happened in this sphere in the decade or more since.

Institutional arrangements for supervising and regulating the financial-services sector have been overhauled to address shortcomings that contributed to the crisis. The Department of Finance has been restructured and strengthened, a Fiscal Advisory Council was established, and a parliamentary inquiry into the banking crisis was established in 2014 and reported in early 2016.

Since 2016, following a recommendation from the Constitutional Convention, members of Dáil Éireann elected the ceann comhairle (speaker of the house) directly by secret ballot for the first time. All parliamentary committees have been established and committee chairs appointed using the D'Hondt system. Under the system, four of the 13 current core Oireachtas committees are chaired by opposition members (Eolas, 2020).

Israel

Score 7

In 2018, the Basic Law: the Government and the Government Act of 2001 were slightly amended to formulate and delineate the cabinet's authorities. This was done following State Comptroller reports that suggested that the cabinet's authorities and jurisdictions are not legally specified, and that there are serious deficiencies regarding the extent and the quality of information being transferred to the cabinet. And yet, it is still unclear if the lack of an obligation to transfer information to the cabinet, any other deficiencies related to this, and other questions of decision-making authority, had been resolved.

Citation:

Arlozerov, Merav, "Israeli government; The reform that will end the Treasury's single rule; Will lose a major part of its authorities," *TheMarker* 13.2.2013 (Hebrew)

Azulai, Moran. "The Ministerial Committee for Legislation to Vote on the Cabinet Act." In *Ynet*. June 10th, 2017. (Hebrew). <https://www.ynet.co.il/articles/0,7340,L-4973923,00.html>.

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Nuri, Dalya Gabrieli. "The Kitchen that Changed the Middle East." In Ha'aretz website. October 22nd, 2012. (Hebrew). <https://www.haaretz.co.il/opinions/1.1847556>.

"The CEO of the social-economic cabinet approved the establishment of an authority for technological innovation," Minister of the Economy website 15.9.2014: <http://economy.gov.il/Publications/PressReleases/Pages/CabinetForTechnologicalInnovation.aspx> (Hebrew)

The Government Act, 2001 (Hebrew) (Full text: https://www.nevo.co.il/law_html/law01/999_006.htm)
Vigoda, Eran and Penny, Yuval, "Public sector performance in Israel" (October 2001), (Hebrew)

OECD, "Multi level Governance Reforms. Overview of OECD country experiences," 2017, <https://bit.ly/2AfHNdR>

Italy

Score 7

Despite several years of public debate, successive governments have been unable to significantly improve the effectiveness and efficiency of central government. The attempt of the Renzi government to introduce a broad constitutional reform was strongly rejected in the referendum held in December 2016. The reform had aimed to reduce the delays caused by veto powers originating from the perfect bicameralism, and redistribute powers between regional and central governments to make the responsibilities of each level clearer. The rejection of the reform demonstrated the difficulties of introducing broad reforms.

While the previous path toward constitutional reform was abandoned after several failed attempts, the current Draghi government has adopted a softer strategy to improve its policy capacities. A greater concentration of decision-making powers in the hands of the prime minister and of the prime minister's staff has been coupled with a regular and more effective mechanism of consultation with the leaders of the parties supporting the government. It remains to be seen if such arrangements will continue under a new government.

Japan

Score 7

The failure of the reform initiatives led by the short-lived DPJ governments (2009-2012) demonstrated the difficulties of transplanting elements from Westminster-style cabinet-centered policymaking into a political environment with a tradition of parallel party-centered policy deliberation. Reverting to the traditional system coupled with strong central leadership, the Abe-led government (2012-2020) was quite successful in getting at least parts of its policy agenda implemented. The passage of the security laws in 2015 – a major success from the government's perspective – may seem to provide evidence of more robust institutional arrangements than in earlier years. However, problems in moving the government's economic-reform agenda decisively forward, particularly in fields such as labor market reform, suggest that the Abe-led government also struggled to overcome resistance to change in a number of policy areas. This also applies to the slow progress of plans to change the constitution.

Luxembourg

Score 7

In 2021, the government launched its Electronic Governance 2021-2025 strategy, which was drawn up jointly by the Ministry for Digitalization and the Government IT Centre (CTIE), with the aim of enhancing e-government mechanisms and enabling the transition to digital government. To achieve this, the government's IT center is currently bolstering its digital services infrastructures, thus achieving very high levels of security and reliability. Due to the fact that all services provided the Luxembourg public authorities have now been digitized, the application procedure for the various COVID-19 aid schemes was streamlined for citizens and companies alike via the MyGuichet.lu portal.

As a new step related to the administrative reform and simplification process, the national portal for public inquiries, www.enquetes-publiques.lu, which was launched in 2021, provides information about various procedures. Public inquiries are formal and mandatory prior to certain administrative decisions.

Another ambitious reform ongoing since 2010 has been the general opening of the civil service to citizens of the European Union, with the exception of some positions relating to national sovereignty. The change is expected to gradually improve the quality of government administration.

Citation:

"Electronic Governance 2021-2025' strategy." The Luxembourg Government (2021). https://ctie.gouvernement.lu/en/dossiers/strategie_gouvernance_electronique_2021_2025/strategie_gouvernance_electronique_2021_2025.html. Accessed 14 January 2022.

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Malta

Score 7

There can be little doubt that the government's determination to ensure that Malta retains a strong position within EU structures has had an impact on institutional reform. But the actual force behind the improvements has been public services, not the cabinet. Unfortunately, ministers remain constrained by the demands of their constituencies and without electoral change this will remain so. The administrative service's strategic capacity has improved greatly, and the continued focus on training and development in collaboration with tertiary institutions is paying dividends. This collaboration has helped place greater focus on what the service needs in terms of human resources and capacity-building.

Citation:

<https://publicservice.gov.mt/en/institute/Pages/About/abouttips.aspx>

https://publicservice.gov.mt/en/institute/Documents/IPS_PROSPECTUS.pdf

<https://investinginyourfuture.gov.mt/project/public-administration/developing-the-maltese-public-sector-capacity-to-implement-better-regulation-37060628>

Malta Today 17/01/2020 Rule of Law and good governance are at the top of the country's agenda, Malta PM tells

ambassadors

F. Bezzina, E. Camilleri & V. Marmara, (2021), *Public Service Reforms in a Small Island State: the case of Malta*, Springer Publications.

https://www.maltatoday.com.mt/news/national/93924/auditor_general_flags_interference_by_government_officials_in_mount_carmel_hospital_recruitment_#.YbxSJJeGNBc

Spain

Score 7

In 2020 and 2021, several important changes were introduced with regard to policy portfolios and associated ministries, in line with the coalition government's policy priorities and requirements for implementing the RRP. This included the creation of several new departments (including the Ministry for the Ecological Transition and the Demographic challenge and Ministry of Social Rights and Agenda 2030), and changes in the names and responsibilities of others. However, these changes did not significantly alter strategic capacities or policymaking structures.

Citation:

Oficina Nacional de Prospectiva y Estrategia del Gobierno de España (2021), *España 2050*, https://www.lamoncloa.gob.es/presidente/actividades/Documents/2021/200521-Estrategia_Espana_2050.pdf

Real Decreto 507/2021, de 10 de julio, por el que se modifica el Real Decreto 2/2020, de 12 de enero, por el que se reestructuran los departamentos ministeriales.

Austria

Score 6

The basic institutional arrangements of governing have remained largely stable for many years. The creation of secretary-generals in the departments and the regime of “message control” at the level of government communication, introduced by the ÖVP-FPÖ government (2017–2019) and continued under the successive ÖVP-Green government, were designed to increase the government's strategic capacity. The overall effects of these reforms have, however, remained uncertain. Apparently, the key ambition was to better sell government policies rather than to fundamentally expand the government's policymaking capacity.

Regarding public policymaking, governments tend to promise more innovation at the beginning of a legislative period than they can actually deliver. Desired improvements are often prevented by constitutional limitations (e.g., the collective character of the Austrian cabinet) and, no less often, by internal rivalries within coalition governments. The parties may agree in principle on what needs to be done, but veto powers are able to block meaningful reforms during the legislative period. This is particularly true in the legislative arena, as many major bills require a two-thirds majority in parliament.

Some recent efforts to improve the state of play can, however, be identified. The Austrian Youth Strategy, coordinated by the Federal Chancellery, is designed to strengthen and develop youth policy throughout Austria. The goal of this strategy is to bring together policies and measures for young people in order to make them systematic and to optimize their effectiveness.

Citation:

<https://www.bundeskanzleramt.gv.at/agenda/jugend/oesterreichische-jugendstrategie/jugendstrategie-grundlagen.html>

Czechia

- Score 6 Under the second Babiš government, the institutional arrangements of governing remained mostly unchanged. Babiš cultivated his technocratic image by making several career civil servants ministers, and sought to increase the strategic capacity of his government primarily by exploiting his strong position as ANO leader and his grip on the media. At the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, the government created a new advisory body, the Central Emergency Task Force (ÚKŠ), and reactivated the dormant National Economic Council of the Government (NERV). However, both bodies soon lost importance.

Estonia

- Score 6 Senior politicians and executive officials understand the problem of fragmented policymaking. The overall purpose of these efforts is to increase GDP and improve the quality of governance. In 2019, large-scale government reform (riigireform) was made a top priority. The consolidation of executive offices and government bureaucracy, and increased use of e-government tools are key aims for this ambitious reform. Yet, at the time of writing, the only progress visible has been in the consolidation of various government agencies. In 2020–2021, nine studies of institutional reform were commissioned and several institutional mergers were implemented.

South Korea

- Score 6 The Moon administration was expected to carry out some institutional reforms during his term. Most importantly, President Moon pledged to decentralize the political system by transferring previously centralized powers to national ministries and agencies as well as to regional and local governments. While the broader effort to achieve regionally balanced development was delayed, the Moon administration did push through some reforms via amendments to the Local Autonomy Act (e.g., autonomous local police, increased local fiscal authority, enhanced local councils). Moon also took concrete steps to reform national institutions including the National Intelligence Service (NIS), the police and the Supreme Prosecutor's Office. In 2019, proposed reforms of the public prosecutor's office triggered a major political struggle. While prosecutorial reform will require greater and more politically strategic efforts by the president and his allies, the launch of the new Corruption Investigation Office in 2021 is a first step in curtailing the power of the prosecutor's office.

Citation:

Korea Herald. What Moon Jae-in pledged to do as president. May 10, 2017. <http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20170509000521>

"Moon: Constitutional Amendment Needed for Decentralization." KBS World, January 17, 2022. http://world.kbs.co.kr/service/news_view.htm?lang=e&Seq_Code=166948.

"Remarks by President Moon Jae-in at 1st Central and Local Government Cooperation Meeting." The Republic of Korea Cheong Wa Dae, January 13, 2022. <https://english1.president.go.kr/BriefingSpeeches/Speeches/1136>.

Bulgaria

- Score 5** Bulgarian government bodies do have the capacity to reform, both in the case of reforms initiated from within and reforms originating externally. It is becoming customary for ministries to publish their medium-term plans as a part of the annual budget procedure. However, even when reforms in different spheres are seriously contemplated, reform proposals are still rarely connected with strategic thinking about changes in the institutional arrangements of governance.

Croatia

- Score 5** Upon taking office, each of the two Plenković governments slightly changed the cabinet structure. In April 2017, the first created a new expert council, the Council for Demographic Revival. The change in the governing coalition in mid-2017 has led to changes in ministers but has left the cabinet structure untouched. In the period under review, little progress was made in reforming public administration. It remains to be seen whether the ambitious goals of the Mechanism for Recovery and Resilience, which emphasize a strong focus on reforms and investments that encourage green and digital transition, will drive the institutional reforms implemented by the second Plenković government in the 2022-2024 period.

Citation:

Koprić, I. (2018): Croatia, in: N. Thijs, G. Hammerschmid (eds.), *Public Administration Characteristics and Performance in EU28*. Luxembourg: European Union, 100-140 (<https://publications.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/97f87f51-9608-11e8-8bc1-01aa75ed71a1>).

Cyprus

- Score 5** Efforts to improve the efficiency of the administration, stalled for years, resumed in fall 2019 and reform plans were again promoted. In addition to pursuing goals to improve the selection and promotion of personnel, and speed up procedures, four new deputy ministries have been established. The long-standing local government reform seems to be nearing adoption by the parliament.

The challenge of expanding strategic planning capacities shows some progress beyond that of the required training of professional personnel; most ministries have drafted a three-year strategic plan.

Mexico

Score 5

While Mexican policy elites are often receptive to new ideas and open to administrative reform, many of these reforms remain unimplemented and are abandoned before they can take root. This is especially true with regard to domestic security and law enforcement. Too often, the re-drawing of organizational diagrams has taken precedence over the implementation of desperately needed, but difficult structural reforms to strengthen the rule of law. Moreover, the most important challenge currently consists of improving the effectiveness of existing institutions.

The current Mexican president has an extraordinarily high level of legitimacy. Elected by more than 53% of Mexicans, with a majority in Congress and a high approval rating (65% in November 2021), he has initiated a transformation of Mexico in various policy fields, which he calls the “fourth transformation.” A central element of this shift has been the concentration of power within the presidency. The first half of President López Obrador’s term was characterized not by sustainable institutionalization, but rather by personalization and populist, anti-institutionalist approaches, with the judiciary, media and autonomous bodies coming under particular pressure.

Netherlands

Score 5

No major changes have taken place in strategic arrangements or capacities beyond what has already been mentioned regarding externally driven policy coordination in fiscal and economic matters. Generally, strategic capacity is rather weak. Due to the long period of austerity, which came to an end only in 2019, strategic capacities have not been strengthened. This became clear for all to see following the government’s steering problems during the pandemic. Experiments in participatory budgeting and local democracy may to some extent harness citizen knowledge and expertise, and serve as a countervailing power to local government bodies. A hesitantly more pro-EU policy mood may also result in some institutional reform over the mid-term.

But this is going to take a lot of effort and, probably, time. Although institutional arrangements are monitored regularly (for instance, by the Scientific Council of the Government on citizen self-reliance, the Council for Public Administration on local democracy and administrative effectiveness, annual reports by the national Council of State on politically salient issues, and regular reports on citizens’ perceptions of well-being by the Socio-Cultural Planning Agency), recommendations and plans often receive little follow-up due to a lack of political will. It has been plausibly argued that the weak link between critical self-monitoring and political action is due to a systematically biased self-image among the country’s leading politicians, civil servants and intellectuals: Every failure is disparaged as an “incident” or “accident” in a normally smoothly run, exemplary country. In the typically pragmatic and technocratic style of policymaking characteristic for the country since the 1990s, this

leads to muddling through rather than reform and institutional change. Policymakers routinely ask: “How can we do things better?” instead of “Are we doing the right things?”

Citation:

VPRO, 26 December 2021. Mathieu Segers: de voorbeeldrol die Nederland zich aanmeet, is heel vaak misplaatst

De Correspondent, Chavannes, 27 December 2020. De overheid werd een bedrijf mensen onverdiend wantrouwt. Alleen Kamer en kabinet kunnen die denkfout herstellen.

Portugal

Score 5 There is no evidence that the new Costa government changed institutional arrangements significantly in such a way as to improve strategic capacity during the period under review. Moreover, the pressures of the pandemic made any such reform more difficult.

Slovakia

Score 5 The center-right government has initiated some smaller institutional reforms. It has created the new position of a deputy prime minister for legislation and strategic planning and has set up a new Government Council for the European New Deal. Most importantly, it has transformed the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister for Investments and Informatization into a full-blown ministry, the Ministry of Investments, Regional Development and Informatization, with a view to improving the absorption of EU funds and strengthening regional development. However, the resulting improvements in the government’s strategic capacity have been limited.

Slovenia

Score 5 At the beginning of its term, the Cerar government increased the number of ministries from 13 to 16 and changed ministerial portfolios. By establishing separate ministries for public administration, infrastructure and environment/spatial planning, as well as by creating a ministry without a portfolio responsible for development, strategic projects and cohesion, the Cerar government improved its strategic capacity. The strengthening of the Government Office for Development and European Cohesion Policy and the changing procedures associated with the creation of a new ministry for development, strategic projects and cohesion have helped to substantially increase the absorption rate. The Šarec government has kept the structure of ministries intact and had paid no attention to institutional reform. The only significant development in 2019 was the preparation of the legislative package for the regionalization of Slovenia, which was prepared by a large expert group on the initiative of the National Council. However, this stalled in 2020 following the

outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic. In July 2021, the Janša government added a new minister responsible for digital transformation, but – given the lack of support in parliament and the outbreak of coronavirus – paid little attention to institutional reform.

Switzerland

Score 5

The federal government has sought to improve its institutional arrangements through the adoption of new administrative techniques (specifically, new public management practices) and a number of other organizational changes. However, whenever the central government has sought to engage in substantial change through institutional reform (e.g., through reorganization of the Federal Council and the collegiate system), it has met with resistance on the part of the public and the cantons, which do not want more resources or powers to go to the federal level. This has limited the range of feasible institutional reforms.

While the basic structures of federalism and direct democracy are very robust, and direct democracy provides incentives for political parties to cooperate within the context of power-sharing structures, lower-level government structures are subject to constant change. Recent examples of such change have affected parliamentary practices, fiscal federalism and the judicial system, canton- and communal-level electoral systems, communal organization and public management. Nevertheless, one of the most important reforms, the reorganization of the Federal Council and its collegiate system, has failed despite several attempts. While the Federal Council is not prone to institutional reforms, the administrative body undertakes reforms quite frequently, not least as a substitute for a lack of government reforms.

The subnational units are more open to reform and display great variation in their administrative and institutional forms.

Citation:

Ritz, M., Neumann, O. and Sager, F. (2019), Senkt New Public Management die Verwaltungsausgaben in den Schweizer Kantonen? Eine empirische Analyse über zwei Dekaden. *Swiss Polit Sci Rev.* 25(3): 226–252 doi:10.1111/spsr.12381

Turkey

Score 5

According to Law 5018 on Public Financial Management and Control, all public institutions, including municipalities and special provincial administrations, must prepare strategic plans. All public bodies have designated a separate department for developing strategy and coordination efforts; however, these departments are not yet completely functional. Maximizing strategic capacity requires resources, expert knowledge, an adequate budget, and a participatory approach. The government lacks sufficient personnel to meet the requirements of strategic planning, performance-based programs, and activity reports. In this respect, several training and internship programs have been established.

Turkey still lacks a strategic framework for public administration reform, including public financial management. There are various planning documents and sectoral policy documents on different aspects of public administration reform, but the lack of political support hinders comprehensive reform efforts. An administrative unit with a legal mandate to coordinate, design, implement and monitor public administration reform has not yet been established. Within the scope of IPA funds, Turkey attempts to ensure effective strategic planning and risk management at the program level.

Citation:

Gözler, K. (2018). *Mahalli İdareler Hukuku*. Baskı, Ekin Kitabevi: Bursa.

Poland

Score 4

Upon entering office, the PiS government has changed the institutional arrangements of governing. It has changed the portfolios of ministries several times, set up new cabinet committees, overhauled the Civil Service Act and strengthened the position of central government vis-à-vis subnational governments. However, the strategic capacity of the PiS government has primarily rested on its political power: its majority in parliament, its strong party discipline and the uncontested role of party leader Jarosław Kaczyński. No reforms have been introduced to improve strategic capacity through an open involvement of, for example, scientific expertise.

United States

Score 4

The U.S. government is exceptionally resistant to constructive institutional reform. There are several major sources of rigidity. First, the requirements for amending the Constitution to change core institutions are virtually impossible to meet. Second, statutory institutional change requires agreement between the president, the Senate and the House, all of which may have conflicting interests on institutional matters. Third, the committee system in Congress gives members significant personal career stakes in the existing division of jurisdictions, a barrier to change not only in congressional committees themselves but in the organization of the executive branch agencies that the committees oversee. Fourth, the Senate operates with a supermajority requirement (the requirement of 60 votes, a three-fifths majority, to invoke “cloture” and end a filibuster), and (except at the beginning of each Congress) changes in Senate procedures themselves are normally subject to the same procedures. Fifth, elected politicians, such as members of Congress, are rarely willing to alter the electoral arrangements and practices that enabled them to win office.

Belgium

Score 3

Most reforms are the consequence of bargaining between power levels, with successive political tensions between Flemish, Walloon, Brussels, and francophone interests. Eventually, protracted negotiations typically end up with some type of compromise that rarely improves overall efficiency. Each one of the six successive state reforms from 1970 to 2011 followed this logic.

The main bone of contention is the Brussels capital region (which is restricted to about one-fourth the actual Brussels agglomeration in terms of socioeconomic base, and one-half in terms of population). Its restricted boundaries result in numerous overlapping jurisdictions with Flanders and Wallonia. Moreover, within the Brussels region, competences are split between the 19 municipalities (communes/gemeeten) and the region. This creates another layer of overlaps and gridlocks, particularly with regard to city planning. The creation of a pedestrian zone in the city center, without sufficient coordination with the other municipalities or the region, created major traffic jams. Questions regarding the Brussels airport or the highway “ring” around Brussels are managed by Flanders. The building of a rapid train service to the south (to provide alternative transportation to Walloons commuting to Brussels) requires close administrative follow-up from the Walloon region, which has priorities beyond reducing traffic in Brussels. The large forest in the south of Brussels spans across the Brussels, Flemish and Walloon regions, which makes its management quite cumbersome. As part of the 6th state reform, a bill passed in 2012 created the “Brussels metropolitan community” which in principle would cover the greater Brussels basin (>2 million inhabitants) and would facilitate policy coordination. Due to staunch resistance by some mayors in Flemish communes around Brussels and the reluctance of the N-VA (Flemish nationalists) to engage in such a logic, this legislation has yet to be implemented.

However, as the general process has trended toward decentralization, local efforts have had positive effects and can be seen as an improvement in strategic capacity.

Romania

Score 3

Institutional reforms under the Tudose and Dăncilă governments were confined to changes in the portfolios of ministries. Most notably, the Dăncilă government split the Ministry for Regional Development, Public Administration and European Funds into two separate ministries and abolished the Ministry of Public Consultation and Social Dialogue. However, these changes have failed to improve the government’s strategic capacity. The absorption of EU funds has remained low, and public consultation has further lost importance. There have been no institutional reforms to address long-standing problems such as limited planning capacities or the low quality of RIA. The pledged reforms of subnational administration have not been adopted.

Former Prime Minister Orban reduced the number of deputy prime ministers and cut the number of ministers from 27 to 18 by merging some portfolios. Under the most recent government led by Prime Minister Ciuca (a coalition of PNL, PSD and UDMR), 21 ministers and deputy ministers were sworn into cabinet. The dual crises of the COVID-19 pandemic and the collapse of coalition governments through 2020–2021 have prevented progress on additional institutional reforms, which are not high on the new government’s list of priorities in light of the continued COVID-19 crisis.

Hungary

Score 2

From time to time, Prime Minister Orbán has reorganized the functioning of his government with an open effort to get rid of managing smaller issues and promoting rivalry in the top elite to weaken them, but without improving the strategic capacity of government. The institutional reforms introduced since the 2018 parliamentary elections have not been concerned with government effectiveness but with increasing its concentration of power and managing the fourth Orbán government’s new technocratic modernization project. By creating the new Supervisory Authority for Regulated Activities (SARA), the Orbán government has tried to limit the strategic capacity of a possible opposition-led successor government.

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