Administrative reforms, politicization and the selection of heads of state agencies in Norway

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Introduction

Any incoming minister will quickly realize that she has to rely on permanent bureaucrats to draft and implement policy. This creates a delegation problem: the minister cannot be sure that permanent bureaucrats are aware of her policy preferences and act accordingly. The appointment of top officials by politicians is a potentially powerful instrument to gain political control over the permanent bureaucracy. The exercise of political influence on the selection of top officials in Europe (and beyond) has allegedly increased substantially over the past decades (Aucoin 2012; Dahlström et al. 2011; Suleiman 2003). Most observers describe this development in terms of an increasing politicization of the civil service or “the substitution of political criteria for merit-based criteria in the selection, retention, promotion, rewards and disciplining of members of the public service” (Peters & Pierre 2004, p. 2). The problem is that (de)selecting officials based on political rather than meritocratic criteria has clearly negative effects on the government’s problem-solving capacity, as illustrated by scholars of political appointments in the US (Lewis 2007; Moynihan & Roberts 2010). This begs the question whether loyalty has replaced competence in the appointment of top officials in Europe, too. However, existing research on politicization in Europe largely fails to answer this question, as it is characterized by a narrow focus on party political loyalty and a disregard of how politicians’ incentives and capabilities to influence (de)selection varies across public organizations.
This paper contributes to moving forward the research agenda on the politics of appointing top officials in Europe by systematically investigating the drivers of the selection of top officials. First, we expand the dependent variable to include not only partisan loyalty but also political craft (Goetz 1997) and subject area expertise (Lewis & Waterman 2013). Much of the existing literature has equated “political criteria” with “partisan loyalty” while disregarding other criteria of selection. Put differently, political criteria of selection are potentially unlimited, and may include aspects usually associated with meritocratic appointments. Empirical research from the US suggests that executive politicians also consider professional competencies when making appointment decisions (Hollibaugh et al. 2014; Ouyang et al. 2017). Likewise, scholars of administrative selection in Germany show that partisan loyalty is important for being promoted to top administrative positions, but that holding other competencies further increases the chances of promotion (Bach & Veit 2017). In short, research suggests that partisan loyalty is an important, but clearly not the sole criterion for making appointment decisions. This paper also considers other professional competencies which are deemed important to top officials’ effective performance (Hood & Lodge 2006).

Second, this paper includes organizational-level explanations for the selection of top officials. It seems hardly plausible that ministers’ incentives to appoint top officials to agencies are the same across a heterogeneous landscape of government organizations. There is strong empirical evidence that agencies operating at arm’s length of ministerial departments display significant variation in terms of political control over their operations (Bach 2014). However, except for research on regulatory agencies (Ennser-Jedenastik 2016b), organizational characteristics have not been systematically considered in studies of top official appointments in Europe. The situation is different in the US, where scholars of presidential appointees have shown that presidents select appointees depending on agency characteristics such as political salience and task complexity (Hollibaugh et al. 2014; Lewis 2012). This paper will look into patterns of selection to agencies with regulatory and non-regulatory tasks. Another aspect that hitherto has not been studied systematically is the connection between organizational change and the appointment of agency chief executives. Our conjecture is that organizational change increases uncertainty among political executives about the future performance of the organization, while at the same time indicating high levels of political interest in the organization. Both of these aspects suggest that (different types of) political criteria will prevail in the selection of top officials.
Finally, we are interested in the effects of the formal institutional context on patterns of selecting top officials. The most common and most intuitive way of studying institutional effects is through country comparisons. There is an increasingly elaborated body of literature studying the behavioral effects of different rules in the selection of top officials or the number of political advisers in a given country (Christiansen et al. 2016; Hustedt & Salomonsen 2014). That said, we know little about the effects of selection rules on actual patterns of recruitment. Moreover, other aspects of politico-administrative relations may also drive the selection of top officials. Arguably, the introduction of performance contracting in the wake of New Public Management (NPM) reforms has been an important change to those relations (Askim 2015). According to several scholars, NPM reforms have been used by politicians to increase their control over the bureaucracy in ways not intended by those reforms (Maor 1999; Suleiman 2003). Another argument is that control over personnel has been used to compensate for a loss of other means of influence (Bach et al. 2015; Ennser-Jedenastik 2016b). The research design of this paper allows us to study whether the introduction of performance contracting has affected patterns of selection to top administrative positions.

This paper is part of a larger research agenda that aims to enhance advance scholarly knowledge about the exercise of political control over the permanent bureaucracy. The broader project studies both the selection and de-selection of top officials over time, across countries, and across the two most prominent types of government organizations in Europe, ministerial departments and arm’s length agencies. Over the past decades, we can observe major changes in the environment of national-level bureaucracies: a substantial increase in media pressure, the revolution of communication technologies, the multiplication of complex policy problems, private-sector oriented administrative reforms, and the transformation of established party systems. Yet we know surprisingly little about whether and how top officials’ careers have changed over time, and what the determinants of stability and change are. To study whether and how career backgrounds of top officials have changed over time, the project relies on biographical analysis as the main source of information. The present paper uses a new and unique dataset covering biographical and career information for heads of state agencies in Norway spanning several decades, which is combined with existing data on structural changes in the Norwegian state administration.
The argument proceeds as follows: First, we briefly review the literature on the selection of top officials and point out what we consider as the key gaps in this literature. Second, we elaborate our theoretical argument about how organizational characteristics and changes in the institutional context affect patterns of top official selection. Third, we provide an account of the phenomenon under study: agencies and their chief executives in Norway. Fourth, we describe the paper’s methodological approach and the operationalization of the dependent and independent variables. Finally, we present and discuss our findings and conclude by sketching the next steps on this research agenda.

**Literature review**

A key argument in the contemporary literature is that the delicate balance between safeguarding the bureaucracy’s professional autonomy and ensuring its responsiveness vis-à-vis elected politicians has tipped towards the latter as a result of increasing levels of political influence on the (de)selection of top officials (Aucoin 2012; Dahlström et al. 2011; Peters & Pierre 2004; Suleiman 2003). Yet the overall claim of an increase in civil service politicization stands on shaky empirical ground. First, most attention has been paid to increasing numbers of special advisers who come and go with the ministers (Askim et al. 2016; Eichbaum & Shaw 2010; Yong & Hazell 2014). However, it is evident that even with a number of special advisers, ministers are highly dependent on the advice and services from a professional civil service. Yet permanent officials’ careers do not seem to be immune to political influence either. For instance, Christensen et al. (2014) demonstrate that the length of tenure of Danish top officials has been constantly declining since the 1970s, which they attribute to a greater willingness of ministers to replace meritocratically recruited officials. This suggests that ministers actually put an increasing emphasis on getting effective advice and support – but what are their strategies and how do these strategies vary over time and between countries? To answer this question we need to look more closely at the top civil servants, the procedures for (de)selection, and their career backgrounds.

Second, the literature largely relies on quasi-longitudinal and cross-sectional data. Dahlström (2009) uses country experts’ estimates of (changes in) the numbers of political appointees over time. More qualitative accounts of politicization tend to rely on expert interviews, though occasionally in combination with descriptive data on staff numbers at different points of time.
Other studies rely on survey data, expert interviews, or mixed methods to track politicization (Bach et al. 2015; Christiansen et al. 2016; Hustedt & Salomonsen 2014; Kopecký et al. 2016). While providing important insights, cross-sectional studies face obvious limitations in tracking developments over time.

Third, the public sectors in many countries have also witnessed increasing levels of delegation to executive and regulatory agencies operating at a distance from ministerial departments (Bach & Jann 2010; Pollitt et al. 2004; van Thiel 2012). Agencies perform important societal functions, which may prompt ministers to politicize the (de)selection of agency top officials. To date, only a handful of studies have examined the politicization of chief executives’ (de)selection, providing mixed results (Dahlström & Holmgren 2015; Dahlström & Niklasson 2013; Ennser-Jedenastik 2016b; Petrovsky et al. 2017). This is different in the US, where scholars have extensively studied political appointments across the government apparatus. Importantly, this literature show how differences between organizations affect patterns of top official (de)selection (Hollibaugh et al. 2014; Lewis 2012). It provides evidence that agencies ideologically opposed to the president and those ranking high on the president’s agenda are more likely to be staffed with loyal appointees (Lewis 2012). However, there is also evidence that presidents emphasize the competence of appointees in combination with loyalty to exercise control over agencies ranking high on their agenda (Lewis & Waterman 2013). As of now, the European literature has largely ignored organizational level explanations for patterns of top official (de)selection.

Finally, the existing literature on top officials essentially considers partisan loyalty as the core political criterion for (de)selecting top officials in ministries and agencies (Dahlström & Holmgren 2015; Dahlström & Niklasson 2013; Ennser-Jedenastik 2016a, 2016b). This narrow focus curiously disregards that the (de)selection of top officials may also be driven by competency concerns (Hood & Lodge 2006). There are only few studies that explicitly consider the importance of other types of competences (such as public management experience) in studies of (de)selection (Bach & Veit 2017; Fleischer 2016). Again, the situation is different in the US, where scholars have studied how presidents balance loyalty and competence when selecting top officials (Lewis 2012; Ouyang et al. 2017). For instance, US scholars show that competence rather than loyalty may be the reason why appointees are selected (Hollibaugh et al. 2014). Likewise, studies outside
the US-context emphasize the importance of professional qualifications for top level appointments (Bach & Veit 2017; Kopecký et al. 2016).

This paper contributes to filling several of the gaps identified in the literature. Most importantly, it investigates how organizational characteristics influence patterns of recruitment, thereby bringing together two hitherto separate literatures. In addition to broadening the universe of independent variables, we also broaden the universe of dependent variables by including diverse competencies of top officials into our research.

**Theoretical approach and hypotheses**

Our theoretical starting point is that ministers have a preference for a responsive bureaucracy, whereas bureaucrats are motivated by professionalism and concerns for their own career (Christensen 2004). However, as explained above, we are using a broad concept of responsiveness, which does not only include partisan loyalty, but also other qualities of top officials that executive politicians consider important for exercising political control over the bureaucracy. Yet there is clear variation in terms executive politicians’ capacities and incentives to select responsive top officials: First, the desire of ministers to recruit loyalists is constrained by formal institutions such as recruitment and dismissal procedures, but also by the absence or presence of other instruments of political control over the bureaucracy, such as performance contracts between ministries and agencies. In the present paper, we will focus on the latter aspect. Another set of explanations for patterns of selection are political factors. For instance, ministers’ incentives and capacities to recruit loyalists (and to dismiss or reshuffle non-loyalists) may depend on their ideological leaning or the type of parliamentary support for the government (Dahlström & Niklasson 2013). In the present paper, we do not consider those types of explanations, but will do so in future versions of the paper. Finally, politicians’ incentives to recruit responsive officials will vary across organizations. To illustrate, public organizations vary in terms of their political salience and task complexity, and both aspects are considered by executive politicians when selecting top officials (Lewis 2012). In this paper, we consider organizations’ main task and reform history as explanatory factors for differential patterns of selection of top officials.

The dependent variables of interest are distinct professional profiles of agency chief executives: Partisan loyalists, (general) political craftsmen, and subject-matter experts (see below for more
details on the operationalization). We expect variation in executive politicians’ preferences and constraints for recruiting top officials with those characteristics according to institutional and organizational conditions. The conceptualization and measurement of professional profiles follows the idea that individuals are socialized into distinct roles and sets of skills through their employment history (Christensen & Lægreid 2009). This means that we have to make plausible assumptions about the kinds of qualities or skills that individuals acquire through distinct types of employment (see methods section for more details).

Our first set of hypotheses concerns organizational content, namely what the agency does – its core task. State executive agencies cover many different core tasks, and it is not obvious which isolated effect agency-level core tasks could have on the parent ministry and its minister’s preferences for agency chief executive’s professional profiles. Regulatory agencies stand out though. The legitimacy and therefore effectiveness of regulatory agencies, whether they control financial markets, network industries or consumer markets, is particularly dependent upon being perceived as professional, politically neutral and impartial institutions. Therefore, regulatory agencies are often granted high levels of formal independence by politicians who thereby credibly commit themselves to long-term policy objectives (Gilardi 2008). The implications for the selection of top officials to regulatory agencies are less clear, though. On the one hand, politicians may be formally restrained in their powers to appoint top officials (Ennser-Jedenastik 2016b), or they risk to incur a loss of credibility for both themselves and the agency by unduly interfering in the activities of an organization that is supposed to take impartial decisions (Bach 2014). On the other hand, politicians may wish to appoint loyalists to (highly independent) regulatory agencies to compensate for their lack of influence over agencies’ policy decisions (Bach et al. 2015; Dahlström et al. 2011; Ennser-Jedenastik 2016b). These diverging expectations make it difficult to formulate consistent hypotheses. That said, a first hypothesis is that we would expect more chief executives with a political craftsmanship profile (H1) in regulatory agencies compared to non-regulatory agencies. Regulatory agencies usually have to weigh competing interests in their decision-making, which makes their decisions prone to (public) contestation by corporate actors and politicians. To avoid problems in the agency’s handling of conflicts, ministers may wish to

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1 The literature on regulatory agencies has an important blind spot: it does usually not compare regulatory to non-regulatory agencies in terms of its key phenomena of interest: formal and actual autonomy. In the present paper, we compare regulatory to non-regulatory agencies. However, we do not control for agencies’ formal autonomy.
appoint candidates with political skills who are able to assess potentially conflict-laden issues. In terms of political loyalty, we formulate two competing hypotheses: Assuming the primacy of credible commitment, we would expect fewer loyalists among regulatory agencies’ chief executives compared to agencies with other primary tasks (H2a). In contrast, assuming that politicians compensate agency autonomy in single-case decisions by appointing loyalists, we would expect the opposite pattern (H2b). We have no a priori expectations regarding differences in officials’ subject expertise across agency tasks, the main reason being that both regulatory and non-regulatory agencies may be highly technical in nature.

Our second set of hypotheses concerns organizational change, for example merger and demerger, and expansion and reduction in task portfolios (Rolland & Roness 2011). There is to our knowledge no literature that establishes a link between organizational change and patterns of chief executive selection. Organizational change represents departure from the status quo, not only for the agency in question but also for the parent ministry. This leads to uncertainty. Operational and political risks increase, at least temporarily, and the parent ministry and its political leadership may see this as a window of opportunity to reconsider the suitability of the present agency leadership. The political leadership may argue for the discontinuation of the incumbent and recruitment of a new agency chief executive – one who understands how to reduce political risks for the minister and the cabinet, and who is responsive, loyal even, to the political leadership. Moreover, since organizational change often signals political ambitions for change and improvement, an agency subjected to organizational change can be considered high on the minister’s agenda, and as mentioned above, agencies high on the politician’s agenda are more likely to be staffed with loyalists (Lewis 2012). Both lines of reasoning – risk and importance – underlie the expectation that when organizational change occurs in conjunction with a change of the agency’s chief executive, we will see a strengthening of the political craftsmanship (H3) and political loyalty profile of the agency’s chief executive (H4).

Our third set of hypotheses concern the institutional and not the organizational level. We expect that increased formalization of ministry-agency relationships will affect what professional profiles are sought for agency chief executives. A case in point is the introduction of quasi-contractual regimes with emphasis on management by objectives and results (Askim 2015). Such regimes install an increased distance between the ministry and the agency, more organizational autonomy,
but also a more stringent regime for exercising control, with formal meetings with set intervals and largely pre-set agendas, etc. When the room for informal and direct control over agencies is reduced, it becomes more important to have agency chief executives that understand the craft of politics (H5). Granting more autonomy to an agency does not take it out of its genuinely political context, and to navigate that context autonomously, a decent understanding of its functioning is required. At the same time, we would expect agency chief executives to be more politically loyal to the minister (H6). This is a variation of the compensation hypothesis outlined above: we would expect ministers to appoint partisan loyalists to compensate for a loss of more direct hierarchical influence over agency operations.

**Research setting: Agencies and selection of agency chief executives in Norway**

Norway has 178 state agencies (executive agencies) that are part of national government in legal terms but are structurally disaggregated from their parent ministries and face less hierarchical and political influence than ministerial departments do. Each agency performs one or more of the following functions (in order of declining frequency): service provision, public authority execution, regulation and control, policy development, conflict resolution, and for-profit activities (NSD 2017). Each state agency sits politically under one ministry (the parent ministry), and the principle of ministerial responsibility is strong (Bach 2014).

According to the Norwegian Constitution (§ 21), the King – i.e. the Council of State – formally chooses and appoints all senior civil servants of the Crown (*embedsmenn*), including those on fixed-term contracts (*åremålsstillinger*). Unlike other civil servants, agency chief executive positions are usually fixed-term, normally for six years. A person can be re-appointed once, limiting maximum time of service on one agency chief executive position to 12 years (Civil Service Act § 5, *tjenestemannsloven*). Agency chief executives that are part of the Executive Pay System (most are) are obligated to accept a move to another, non-executive position in or outside the agency if contracted performance objectives are not achieved (Civil Service Act § 12 A). Agency chief executives, like other senior civil servants, must retire when they reach an age limit, usually set to 70 years.

A number of laws and codes generally aim to keep out of the selection process any considerations of party political and personal loyalties to the governing party and minister. They give preference
instead to selection based on the “qualification principle”, which emphasizes formal education, work experience, and personal suitability. Political and societal support is strong for upholding the ideal of administrators as neutral and removed from politics, since future political leaderships, potentially originating from a competing political party, have to inherit the existing personnel (Strøm & Narud 2006, p. 545). Like for other positions in government, agency chief executive positions shall be openly announced and filled after an open competition (Rules for personnel management in ministries, reglement for personalforvaltningen i departementene § 3). The Freedom of Information Act (offentlighetsloven) requires that lists of applicants are made publically available. Exceptions are made, but pleas for anonymity are usually rejected. A selection committee, usually lead by the Secretary General of the ministry in question, considers the applicants (Rules for personnel management in ministries § 6). Pay levels have since 1991 been regulated by the Executive Pay System, which contains five levels for ordinary salary, each with a range, and a performance-based bonus up to 30 percent of the ordinary salary. Pay levels are generally lower than for comparable jobs in the private sector.

The most recent analysis of how agency chief executives are recruited was published in 2004, by Statskonsult, a government-owned management consultancy firm. Their data included interviews with Secretary Generals and Director Generals (the two top civil service leadership positions) from all ministries (except the Prime Minister’s Office) and representatives from recruitment consulting firms. Statskonsult’s (2004) report shows that recruitment processes, although run by individual ministries, are highly similar across the central administration apparatus. Recruitment consulting firms are often used to announce positions and pre-screen applicants. Director Generals are the main actors in the recruitment of agency chief executives. Political leaders in the ministry (cabinet ministers and state secretaries) are “kept informed”, say the interviewees, but they almost never “overturn proposals or decisions” (Statskonsult 2004, p. 17). In only one out of 17 specific agency chief executive recruitments covered by the report, did political leaders “go heavy and directly into the process of selecting an agency chief executive” (p. 17). When asked to rank three key qualifications, Director Generals put the highest emphasis on management competence, the second highest on general public sector competence and the third highest on subject-matter expertise. The emphasis on subject-matter expertise was higher for recruiting heads to smaller agencies than to larger agencies. When asked to rank the relevance of a list of prior employments, experience from the agency in question was ranked high, but not higher than experience from other agencies, the
hiring ministry or other ministries. Experience from the private or non-profit sector was ranked lower (Statskonsult 2004).

The main implications of these observations for our paper are the following: We have a setting where ministers refrain from exercising direct influence on recruitment processes. This does not have to be a major problem, though, as this simply reflects institutional variation in terms of how and when executive politicians are involved in appointments to top positions. Most importantly, if we find support for our hypotheses in our empirical material, this will mean that Secretary Generals anticipate those “political” considerations we expect to be in place in those selection processes.

**Methodology**

The methodological approach consists of the creation of a unique database based on a standardized coding protocol for biographical, institutional, political and organizational information. The main pillar is a systematic mapping of biographical information on top officials in agencies (chief executives). The biographical mapping consists of the identification of present and former office-holders and the collection and systematic coding of biographical information (see codebook for professional positions in appendix). The period covered is 28 years, from 1990 to 2017. Data on institutional, political and organizational variables have been collected from the registers of Norway’s State Administration Database (NSA) – a database that includes detailed information on anatomy of the state and structural changes from 1947 until today (see Rolland & Roness 2011).

This paper covers one Norwegian ministerial portfolio – that of the Ministry of Transport and Communications. This is the pilot stage of a project that will eventually cover more ministerial portfolios and more countries (see conclusion). Our unit of observation is appointment of an agency chief executive. Therefore, the number of observations covered by this paper is 37, which is the number of such appointments that occurred in agencies sorting under the Ministry of Transport and Communications in the period 1990 to 2017. Due to the relatively low number of observations, the analysis consists of only univariate and bivariate analyses.

**Dependent variables**

In line with existing research on top officials in European countries, our measurement of partisan loyalty combines different proxies for partisan loyalty into a single variable (Dahlström &
Niklasson 2013; Ennser-Jedenastik 2016a, 2016b; Veit & Scholz 2016). The selection of partisan loyalists – individuals who have shown their partisan allegiances through working for a political party or holding office within the party – is assumed to maximize overlap in terms of policy preferences. Partisan loyalty serves as an informational shortcut for executive politicians to make inferences on individuals’ policy preferences.

The most obvious measure of partisan loyalty is party membership. However, party membership is a private matter in Norway, in contrast to personal income and assets. That said, information about party membership is available for some chief executives in our sample. A second proxy for partisan loyalty is related to the kinds of professional positions an individual has had before being appointed to the position of chief executive. Most importantly, these include positions directly related to political parties, such as working in a party group secretariat in parliament, or being an employee of a political party (e.g. in the national headquarters or a regional office). Although it seems plausible that individuals holding such positions are party members, the latter kind of information is often not available. Nevertheless, by taking up such positions, individuals “nail their political colours to the mast” (Goetz 1997, p. 796) and can be clearly identified as partisan loyalists by potential employers. Finally, individuals holding political leadership positions in the executive are usually party members, though if they are not; it seems plausible to assume partisan loyalty. In the Norwegian context, this encompasses the positions of minister (“statsråd”), junior minister (“statssekretær”) and political adviser (“politiske rådgiver”).

Our measurement of partisan loyalty includes all of the abovementioned positions. As of now, the measurement of partisan loyalty does not distinguish between different parties. In the majority of the relevant cases, our measure of loyalty nonetheless does capture a match with the party “colour” of the cabinet. Among the 37 appointments studied, eight were cases of a person with a clear party profile being appointed agency chief executive. In six of these eight cases, there is a match between the chief executives’ partisan affiliation and the colour of the government. Labour governments (that appointed five party-profiled chief executives altogether) made matching appointments only. Conservative governments (that appointed two party-profiled executives) made one of the non-matching appointments; a purely centrist government made the other.

The second dependent variable or professional profile to be considered is political craft. An official with this type of qualification is able to exercise political judgement, such as assessing the chances
of obtaining political support for a policy proposal, and to anticipating issues that might cause trouble for their minister (Hood & Lodge 2006). These types of skills are typically acquired though working experience at the interface of politics and administration (Bach & Veit 2017). A major methodological challenge related to the measurement of political craft concerns the overlap with measures of partisan loyalty (Goetz 1997). Those positions which are most clearly at the interface of politics and administration are often filled with partisan loyalists. This is certainly true for ministers, junior ministers, and political advisers, but also for members of parliament, parliamentary party group staff, and political parties’ staff members. These are partisan loyalists, but at the same time, we would assume that they have acquired political management skills in their positions.

The problem of how to conceptually disentangle loyalty and political craft resonates with recent efforts in US scholarship to disentangle empirical measurements of political appointees’ loyalty and competence (Hollibaugh et al. 2014; Ouyang et al. 2017). We have no perfect solution to this problem here and use the categorization outlined in table 1 below. The proxies that are included in the measurement of political craft are based on existing literature and our knowledge about politics and administration in Norway. Whether and how these proxy measures are also linked empirically will be one of the next analytical steps in our project, see Ouyang et al. (2017) for such an analysis.

The positions included cover three levels of administrative leadership positions in the ministries. Empirical research provides a wealth of evidence that ministry officials, and especially those in leadership positions, are fully aware of (and usually enjoy) their closeness to the world of politics (Christensen et al. 2014; Egeberg & Trondal 2009). In contrast, agency officials are more isolated from politics, which is the reason why we do not include positions in agencies among those conferring the craft of politics. We also include Ministry of Finance and Prime Minister’s Office (PMO) experience in the measurement of political craft (there is empirical overlap, if one adds these two variables to the measurement of political craft, no real changes are made to the data, which means that people in the top positions and/or people with experience from interest organizations have Ministry of Finance/PMO experience).
Table 1: Measurements of partisan loyalty, political craft, and subject expertise

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Measurement</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Partisan loyalty</td>
<td>- publicly known party membership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- party office (e.g. member of party council)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- minister, junior minister, political adviser</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- member of parliament</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- employee in party group secretariat in parliament</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- employee of political party (e.g. national headquarters, regional office)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political craft</td>
<td>- secretary general (departementsråd)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- deputy secretary general (assisterende departementsråd)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- special advisor (spesialrådgiver)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- director general (ekspedisjonssjef)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- leadership position in interest organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- work experience in Ministry of Finance or Prime Minister’s office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject expertise</td>
<td>- experience in same organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- experience in Ministry of Transport and Communications</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

As to subject expertise of chief executives, we are relying on a coarse measure, namely work experience in the same organization, and experience in the ministry that oversees the agency. Ideally, we would also include subject expertise from positions outside the state apparatus. For instance, the chief executive of the civil aviation authority may have gained experience through working for an airline or for the air force, which is at present not considered. A detailed coding of this kind of information is planned but was not possible at the present stage of the project. The methodological challenge related to coding this type of information is to design a categorization of policy areas that is neither too detailed (which tends to increase the time needed for coding) nor too broad (and thus providing little added value).

We have operationalized the dependent variables as dummies, so that each individual scores “1” on each of the dependents if he or she has any experience corresponding with the measurement items mentioned in table 1. Each individual appointed as agency chief executive can therefore in theory score “1” on all three dependents, or “0” on all, and all combinations in between.
Independent variables

Our first independent variable, corresponding with H1, is whether the agency in question is a regulatory agency or not. Data for measuring this variable was collected from Norway’s State Administration Database (NSA), which includes information on the core task, or main function, of each agency. The following codes are used: policy formulation; regulation/scrutiny/control (used to measure regulatory agency); other kind of exercising public authority; general public services; and business and industrial services. In the sample of organizations covered, the authors added information on the main task of four organizations. These organizations either were successors or predecessors of organizations for which a coding was available. All of them were coded “general public services” (NSB, Teledirektoratet, Postens sentralledelse, AVINOR AS). Even if some of them have a commercial component, none of them qualifies as primarily regulatory organizations.

Our second independent variable, corresponding with H2 and H3, is organizational change. Again we use data from NSA, which include data on a number of more and less fundamental changes. In this paper, we include all kinds of changes recorded in the database (for an overview, see Rolland & Roness 2011). We record onset of organizational change in conjunction with an appointment of an agency’s chief executive if the change occurred up to five years before or one year after the appointment. The assumption is that organizational changes usually do not happen overnight, and that intended organizational changes in a not too distant future influence selection processes.

Our third independent variable, corresponding with H4 and H5, is an institutional-level variable concerning the introduction of a performance contracting regime as mandatory for all state organizations in Norway. This regime was introduced in several steps, but with 1997 as the main before-after year (Askim 2015). Appointments that occurred before 1997 are coded as zero, meaning in a context with lower formalization of ministry-agency relationships. Appointments that occurred in 1997 or later are coded as one. Descriptive statistics for all dependent and independent variables are included in table 2. As shown by variation in mean scores among the dependent variables, the most common professional profile element among those appointed as agency chief executive is the subject expertise one, followed by political craft, which is far less common, and partisan loyalty as the least common profile element.
Table 2: Descriptive statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Dev.</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dependent variables</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partisan loyalty (0=no, 1=yes)</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>.216</td>
<td>.417</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political craft (0=no, 1=yes)</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>.270</td>
<td>.450</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject expertise (0=no, 1=yes)</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>.432</td>
<td>.502</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Independent variables</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational change (0=no, 1=yes)</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>.486</td>
<td>.506</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance contracting (0= until 1996; 1=from 1997)</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>.432</td>
<td>.502</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regulation as main function (0=no, 1=yes)</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>.378</td>
<td>.491</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are individuals who score 1 on only one of the dependents, indicating a relatively clear professional profile (38% of all cases), and there are individuals that score 1 on two (11%) or three (11%), indicating a hybrid profile. Pairwise correlations between the dependents (see table 3) show a clear and significant overlap between partisan loyalty and political craft profile elements. The overlap between expertise and political loyalty is smaller and statistically insignificant. Subject expertise and political craft hardly overlap at all.

Table 3. Pairwise correlations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Partisan loyalty</th>
<th>Political craft</th>
<th>Subject expertise</th>
<th>Regulation</th>
<th>Organizational change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Partisan loyalty</td>
<td>1.0000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political craft</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.5674**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject expertise</td>
<td>0.2042</td>
<td>0.0830</td>
<td>1.0000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regulation as main function</td>
<td>-0.4098*</td>
<td>-0.3493*</td>
<td>-0.0061</td>
<td>1.0000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational change</td>
<td>-0.2485</td>
<td>-0.2271</td>
<td>-0.1947</td>
<td>0.1326</td>
<td>1.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance contracting</td>
<td>-0.1934</td>
<td>-0.0398</td>
<td>0.0089</td>
<td>0.5564**</td>
<td>0.0236</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: **p<0.01, *p<0.05

Interestingly, 41% of all cases score “0” on all three dimensions, which possibly implies that our categories of competencies need further refinement.
Results

Organizational tasks and selection of agency executives

Fourteen of the 37 chief executive appointments in the material occurred in regulatory agencies, 23 occurred in non-regulatory agencies. We see from table 4 that the frequency of political craft being part of the professional profile of those appointed is far lower in regulatory agencies (7%) than in non-regulatory agencies (39%). Table 3 also shows a significant negative correlation between regulation and political craft. Thus, H1 is rejected. Next, we see that the frequency of political loyalty being part of the profile of those appointed also is far lower in regulatory agencies (none) than in non-regulatory agencies (35%). The bivariate correlation (Table 3) is also negative and statistically significant. Thus, H2a is supported and H2b is rejected. It appears that the doctrine of credible commitment is dominating the selection of chief executives of regulatory agencies. The frequency of subject expertise being part of the professional profile of those appointed is equal across the two types of agencies – about 40 percent. The majority is therefore recruited from outside the agency or ministry in question, and from outside the circle of top ministerial positions (cf. the measurement of political craft), and none have had known ties to political parties, neither the party in government nor other parties (cf. the measurement of political loyalty).

Table 4: Cross-tabulation task and chief executive profiles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Regulation=0</th>
<th>Regulation=1</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Loyalty=0</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>65.22%</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
<td>78.38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loyalty=1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>34.78%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>21.62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pearson chi2(1) = 6.2129  Pr = 0.013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Regulation=0</th>
<th>Regulation=1</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Political craft=0</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>60.87%</td>
<td>92.86%</td>
<td>72.97%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political craft=1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>39.13%</td>
<td>7.14%</td>
<td>27.03%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pearson chi2(1) = 4.5150  Pr = 0.034
Organizational change and selection of agency executives

Eighteen of the 37 chief executive appointments in the material occurred in conjunction with organizational change in the agency in question. We see from figure X and table 3 that the frequency of political craft and political loyalty being part of the professional profile of those appointed is slightly lower in agencies that experienced organizational change than in agencies that did not. The differences are not statistically significant, though. Hence, H3 and H4 are rejected. There are therefore no signs in our material to support the idea that ministries and ministers reduce political and operational risks associated with organizational change by appointing chief executives that know politics or are politically loyal. The frequency of subject expertise being part of the new chiefs’ profile is also slightly lower in agencies that were experiencing organizational change. It appears that organizational change does not affect the logics involved in selecting chief executives.

Table 5: Cross-tabulation organizational change and chief executive profiles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Loyalty=0</th>
<th>Change=0</th>
<th>Change=1</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>68.42%</td>
<td>88.89%</td>
<td>78.38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loyalty=1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>31.58%</td>
<td>11.11%</td>
<td>21.62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pearson chi2(1) = 2.2850 Pr = 0.131
Sixteen of the 37 chief executive appointments in the material occurred in the period since 1997. In contrast to the 21 that occurred earlier, these 16 appointments took place in a context of performance contracting and more formalized relationships between ministry and agency. We see from table 6 that the frequency of political craft and political loyalty being part of the professional profile of those appointed is slightly lower in the later period than in the earlier area. Hence, H5 and H6 are rejected. Since our measure of institutional difference coincides with time periods, it is obviously possible that the isolated effect of institutional difference is unobservable. The frequency of subject expertise being part of the new chiefs’ profile is also equal across appointments made before and after 1997.

Table 6: Cross-tabulation institutional context change and chief executive profiles
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>After 1996=0</th>
<th>After 1996=1</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Political craft=0</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>71.43%</td>
<td>75.00%</td>
<td>72.97%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political craft =1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>28.57%</td>
<td>25.00%</td>
<td>27.03%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pearson chi2(1) = 0.0587  Pr = 0.809

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>After 1996=0</th>
<th>After 1996=1</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Expertise=0</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>57.14%</td>
<td>56.25%</td>
<td>56.76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expertise=1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>42.86%</td>
<td>43.75%</td>
<td>43.24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pearson chi2(1) = 0.0029  Pr = 0.957

**Conclusion**

In this paper we aim to make a contribution to scholarship on the importance of loyalty versus competency in the selection of top officials in Europe. The empirical focus of the paper was on the appointment of agency chief executives in a parliamentary system, namely that of Norway. Has loyalty replaced competence in the appointment of top officials? The answer is clearly “no”: Overall, we find that a majority of chief executives have no (publicly known) party political affiliation. Also, our findings regarding changes before/after 1997 suggest that appointments of loyalists have declined. To be sure, this is a very preliminary result based on observations for one policy sector only.

More importantly, though, the paper introduces the notion of organizational level variation in patterns of recruitment of top officials, inspired by the recent US literature (Hollibaugh et al. 2014; Lewis 2012). Again, while our findings are only based on one policy sector, we find that agency task makes an important difference for the selection of top officials. Our findings support the notion of credible commitment playing a more important role in top level appointments as opposed to a “logic of compensation” according to which loyalists are appointed to otherwise autonomous organizations. Importantly, we are comparing regulatory to non-regulatory agencies, while research investigating the compensation thesis hitherto has only focused on regulatory agencies (Ennser-Jedenastik 2016b).
Based on our preliminary empirical material, we could not find any evidence for a connection between appointment patterns and organizational changes. However, discarding this research angle seems premature. In our empirical strategy, we did not differentiate between different types of organizational changes. Arguably, some types of changes will create more uncertainty than others, which suggests that a more differentiated operationalization of changes may be needed. For instance, patterns of compensation may well take place after a formal autonomization of an organization. In our sample, we only included one type of organizations, though, which means that an agency will not be part of the sample any more once it is granted more formal autonomy.

We also see potential for further elaboration of our dependent variables. In future versions of the analysis, other specifications will be tested as well. One could, for example, have indexes instead of dummies for each dependent variable, to allow for more detailed analysis. Also, one could consider each person’s longest career step as the “formative” one, or the latest step before being appointed as agency executive as the “instrumental” one, and designate each person to one dimension or profile only.

The paper is part of a larger research enterprise that aims to study the selection and de-selection of top officials over time and across countries. The project’s methodological approach consists of the creation of a unique database based on a standardized coding protocol for biographical, institutional, political and organizational information. Its main theoretical ambition is to push the research agenda both in terms of the determinants of (de)selection processes by including organizational level explanations and in terms of the criteria for selecting top officials. The (de)selection of top officials is about much more than a simple choice between loyalists and non-loyalists, but that has been the dominant perspective in the European literature until now.

References


Appendix: codebook for employment spells

ID Project ID of individual

POSITION Position number

CARSTEPS Does position cover several career steps?
1 no
2 yes
3 unclear

CURPOS Is this the individual's current position?
1 no
2 yes
3 unclear

YENTRY YEAR of ENTRY

MENTRY MONTH of ENTRY
**YEXIT**  YEAR of EXIT

**MEXIT**  MONTH of EXIT

**REASEXIT**  REASON for exit

1. moving to another position (including periods of unemployment, parental leave etc)
2. contract period expired (if explicitly mentioned, takes precedence over moving to another position)
3. retirement
4. on personal request (if explicitly mentioned)
5. death
6. other
7. unknown

**REASEXITOTHER**  Other - reason for exit

**EMPLOYTYPE**  Type of employment

1. State administration (political and administrative level, and including state-owned enterprises and fylkesmenn)
2. Local administration (including fylkeskommune, political and administrative level)
3. International organization, EU (including “borrowed” national experts)
4. Politics (members of parliament, people working in parliament and for political parties)
5. Media (television, print, radio, online)
6. Private business (including banks, consultancies, major companies, public relation firms)
7. Organized interests (Trade Unions, Business Association, other interest associations)
8. Academia (universities, høyskoler, forskningsinstitutter)
9. Non-profit organization, charity (e.g. Red Cross)
10. Other

**IDNSD**  ID of state organization (NSD ID number) (9999=unknown)

**STATEPOS**  Position in state administration

1. minister (statsråd)
2. state secretary (statssekretær)
3. political adviser (politisk rådgiver)
4. secretary general (departementsråd)
5. deputy secretary general (assisterende departementsråd)
6. special advisor (spesialrådgiver)
7. director general (ekspedisjonssjef)
8. agency head (etatsleder, direktør)
9. deputy agency head (assisterende direktør, nestleder)
10. deputy director general (avdelingsdirektør, seksjonsleder)
11. assistant director general (underdirektør)
12. principal officer (byråsjef)
13. adviser (seniornårdgiver, rådgiver, fagdirektør)
14. executive officer (førstekonsulent, konsulent)
15. fylkesmann, sysselmann
16. ambassador (ambassadør)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State/Local Position</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>administrative top manager (rådmann)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>political top management (bystyre)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mayor or deputy mayor (ordfører, vara-ordfører)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>administrative leadership position (e.g. utdanningsdirektør, finansdirektør, rektor på skole, sjef for barnevernet)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>executive, street level position (e.g. lærer, sykepleier)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other</td>
<td></td>
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<td>unknown</td>
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**POLPOS**  
Position in politics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>member of parliament</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>employee in party group secretariat in parliament</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>employee of political party (e.g. national headquarters, regional office)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>employee of parliament administration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other</td>
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<td>PARTY</td>
<td>Political Party</td>
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<tr>
<td>-------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Arbeiderpartiet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Høyre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Senterpartiet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Kristelig Folkeparti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Fremskrittpartiet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Venstre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Sosialistisk Venstreparti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Norges kommunistiske parti / Rødt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Arbeiderdemokratene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Det Moderate Venstre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Det Frisinnede Venstre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Samlingspartiet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Det Liberale Parti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Uavhengige</td>
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<th>MEDIAORG</th>
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<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>head of organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>other leadership position (including vice head)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>other</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BUSINESSOTHER</th>
<th>other position in private business</th>
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<table>
<thead>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INTERESTPOS</th>
<th>Organized interests - position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>head of organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>other leadership position (including vice head)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>other</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INTERESTOTHER</th>
<th>other position in organized interests</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INTERESTORG</th>
<th>Organized interests - organization (ø-&gt;oe, å-&gt;aa, æ-&gt;ae)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACADEMIAPOS</th>
<th>Type of position (academia)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>head of organization (rektor, leder av forskningsinstitutt)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>other leadership position (f.eks. dekan)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>professor, (første)amanuensis, (første)lektor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>researcher (forsker)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Position Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>PhD student (stipendiat)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>research assistant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>administrative position (e.g. konsulent, rådgiver)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>other</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ACADEMICAOTHER: other type of position in academia

ACADEMIAORGID: Academic employment - ID of state organization (NSD ID number) (9999=unknown)

ACADEMIAORG: Academic employment - name of organization (ø->oe, â->aa, æ->ae)

NONPROFPOS: Non-profit organization - position

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Position Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>head of organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>other leadership position (including vice head)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>other</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NONPROFOTHER: other position in non-profit organization

NONPROFNAME: Name of non-profit organization (ø->oe, â->aa, æ->ae)

EMPLOYTYPEOTHER: Type of employment, other

ORGOTHER: Employer / organization, other type of employment (ø->oe, â->aa, æ->ae)

QUALITY: Quality of data: how reliable is the above information?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>high reliability, trustworthy source(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>limited reliability, doubtful source(s)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>