Patterns of the Engagement of Social Scientists in Policy Research and Policy-Consulting
- Some Cross-National Considerations

Peter Wagner*, Hellmut Wollmann**

*Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin für Sozialforschung
**Freie Universität Berlin

For publication in: International Social Science Journal.

An earlier version of this paper was presented at the XIIIth World Congress of the International Political Science Association, Paris, July 15-20, 1985. The analysis draws on a research project, still in progress, on the development of policy-oriented social science research, which is jointly pursued by the Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin für Sozialforschung and the Freie Universität Berlin in cooperation with the Swedish Collegium for Advanced Study in the Social Sciences. The findings of this project are intended to be published in 1987, an interim report was presented at a workshop in Berlin in November 1984: Georg Thurn, Peter Wagner, Björn Wittrock, Hellmut Wollmann, The Development and Present State of Policy Research, mimeo, Berlin 1984. As the entire report can be consulted soon, we keep references to a minimum in this paper.
Zusammenfassung


Summary

The era after the Second World War was one of unprecedented growth for social science research all over Western Europe and North America, reflecting new societal roles for the social sciences and a new set of demands on them. This paper attempts to outline some of the basic features of this growth of economic and social research and of the new forms of interaction between the social sciences and politics. An analysis of the rapid growth of the involvement of social scientists in policy research and policy-consulting in terms of responses to requirements for economic and societal modernization is followed by a comparative view on various forms of organisation and production of social knowledge in different national and political contexts. Concludingly it is argued that these changes in the relation between politics and the social sciences had considerable impact on both the concept of "scientification" of politics and the concept of autonomy of the social sciences.
The era after the Second World War was one of unprecedented growth for the social sciences all over Western Europe and North America. Funding has increased, new institutions have sprung up and professionalization has set in. These developments reflected new societal roles for the social sciences and a new set of demands on them. Most of the institutional changes in Western political systems in the post-war-time have been accompanied by social science advice, sometimes even prepared by the advisors. This paper takes a look at those political developments during which social scientists' advice has been institutionalized in different politico-administrative systems. The setting up of permanent advisory councils, the establishment of specific institutions for policy-oriented social science research, the creation of intra-ministerial policy analysis units, the commissioning of social research on specific policy problems, the setting up of ad hoc advisory bodies etc. will be conceived of as processes of institutional change, by which the regular working of the politico-administrative apparatus is altered in a more or less significant way. Without discussing in detail the nature of these changes and their impact on policy-making and on the social sciences, this paper attempts to outline some of the factors shaping this growth of economic and social research in the post-war-period and of the interaction between the social sciences and government, involving increasing efforts to link up research to governments and to policy-making. In the first section an attempt will be made to sketch the rapid growth of the involvement of social scientists in policy consultancy, mainly during the 1960s and the 1970s, and to analyse these processes in terms of economic and societal challenges to the different political systems to which they were incapable to respond without enlarging their knowledge-providing capacities. From this point of view, one might expect to observe basically similar processes occurring in all industrial capitalist nations, depending probably mainly on the level of economic development. We try to differentiate this analysis in our second section by focussing on the characteristics of national patterns of the emergence and evolution of the policy-oriented social sciences. The recent conceptual debate in cross-national policy research on "policy styles" is exploited with a view to tentatively systematizing our findings on determinants for social science policies residing in the politico-administrative system. In the third section an attempt is made to assess the present state of social science policy and of problem-oriented social science research,
after the period of high expectations from the interaction of politics and social sciences has passed and widespread disillusionment has set in as about the future role of social knowledge for societal development.

1. Emergence and evolution of problem-oriented social science research in the post-World War II period

There can be no doubt that the period after the Second World War is to be considered as the phase of rapid expansion and high institutionalization of problem-oriented social science research brought about by the increasing demand emanating from politics and administration as well as from various organised social groups. A cross-national analysis of this development, which tries to relate the increasing demand for social knowledge to processes of social change, however, also has to devote some remarks to pre-World War II predecessors of policy-oriented research. Vis-à-vis an increasingly integrated world economy, which at the same time showed a considerable lack of stability and of long-term security of terms of trade, the 1920s and 1930s were in many countries characterized by political attempts to, first, gain a more profound knowledge of economic cycles and fluctuations and, second, to design domestic economic policies and organisational forms which might compensate for or counterbalance the international instability.

The market for agricultural products showed extreme fluctuations and profound long-term changes in the interwar time which endangered the financial situation of large parts of the rural population. Agricultural economics and rural sociology, which tried to analyse the economic prospects of farming in the industrialized countries and the future social change in rural areas, were early favourite disciplines for the political demand for social science advice. Rural sociology was the most flourishing discipline in American sociology in the first decades of this century and in many countries, e.g. France (Institut national de la recherche agronomique, INRA, founded 1921) and Italy (Istituto Nazionale di Economia Agraria, INEA 1928) or the USA (Bureau of Agricultural Economics, 1921), sectorally oriented agro-economic research institutes were founded to provide scientific support for agricultural policy-making.
But agroeconomics only was a fore-runner to the policy-oriented development of economics in these years. Partly modelled after the Harvard Committee on Economic Research (1917), economic survey research institutes were created in all advanced capitalist countries to monitor the movements of economic indicators, which were still seen as almost completely uncontrollable (Deutsches Institut für Wirtschaftsforschung (DIW), Institut für Weltwirtschaft (IWW) and others in West Germany, Österreichisches Institut für Wirtschaftsforschung (ÖIW) in Austria, Institut de conjoncture in France, Konjunkturinstitutet in Sweden). In the United Kingdom and in Sweden these research efforts culminated in the theoretical achievements, which later were to be named the Keynesian doctrine after one of its originators and which gave way for the systematic intervention of the state to avoid unemployment and secure long-term economic growth. Whereas the Keynesian paradigm allowed for economic steering on a macro-economic level, other countries tried to find their way out of the world economic crisis of the late 1920s and 1930s by increasingly organizing the economy politically. In the French Vichy regime and in German and Italian fascism these political changes required an increased amount of socio-economic information and supported the enlargement of economic and statistical research capacities.

Another type of political intervention on the micro-level of economic activities was the political support for labour-sociological and psychological research which aimed at analysing the importance of work satisfaction for individual work performance with a view to improving the organisation of labour processes at the factory level. Research of this orientation was increasingly pursued in liberal capitalist countries like the USA as well as under corporatist or fascist regimes like Germany and Italy.

A first peak in the political demand for social science advice was probably reached when US-President Hoover established the Research Committee on Social Trends whose report, coming out in 1932, included a penetrating analysis of almost every aspect of American life. The incoming Roosevelt administration brought social scientists into government on an unprecedented scale and gave large numbers of social scientists a first-hand-experience of the interaction between research and policy-making. In this respect the years of World War II came to be
formative for the generation of social scientists which in the post-war period were to play a leading role in the full blown expansion of the social sciences. Among these scholars was e.g. Harold Lasswell who came to draw heavily on his war time experiences in outlining the project of the "policy sciences" (1951) as an encompassing term denoting problem-oriented and multi-disciplinary scholarship.¹

Two different patterns marked the early post-war years. In those countries where social scientists could draw on experiences of an intense interaction with policy-making in a situation of political continuity, the building up of a policy research capacity could be connected to previous developments and could be based on fairly consolidated social science disciplines. This holds true for the USA², Sweden, the United Kingdom and partly even for France where the new apparatus for short- and medium-term planning in the ministry of finance and in le Plan could be built on and enlarge the previously established economic and statistical research institutes. Those countries, however, which experienced political breaks and in which the most important social research efforts had been suppressed because of their critical orientation - like the Frankfurt School in Germany, Lazarsfeld's institute in Vienna or the work of Gramsci in Italy - had a weaker empirical basis to build on. Shaped by the overwhelming advances of American social science and also by the ideological and political domination of the "American model" in post-war European societies the "mythical promise of societal renewal through the social sciences"³ was even stronger in these countries than in the afore-mentioned. But the lack of resources and experiences in research organisation and the pronounced disinterest of most of the influential post-war politicians could not be made up even by the strong financial support of American foundations and international organisations for European social research. The almost complete absence of initiatives from within the politico-administrative system is illustrated best by the fact that interest groups and organisations such as the Catholic church and


² See e.g. the establishment of the Council of Economic Advisors in 1946

³ Orlando Lentini, L'analisi sociale durante il fascismo, Naples (Liguori) 1974, p. 21
private industry were more influential in funding social research - in the sociology of religion and labour sociology, not surprisingly - than national governments. In particular, the interest, shared by many employers and trade unions, to use technological progress for rebuilding a modern European industry with high productivity and acceptable working conditions lay at the roots of the early emergence of industrial sociology in Europe, mainly based on the paradigms of modernization theory.

Broadly speaking, the lacking readiness of continental European governments to profit from the American, Swedish and British experience with social science advice may be accounted for by the rather favourable world economic conditions which allowed for quick economic recovery and societal reconstruction after the war. The policy of gradual liberalization of internal and world markets succeeded in promoting economic growth without making too great demands on governments' capacities to foresee and steer economic activities. This policy of low economic intervention was accompanied by a revival of liberal economic thought providing for its ideological underpinnings. It does not seem to be accidental that the governments which most pronouncedly adhered to this economic policy model, the German and the Italian one, seemed to show the weakest interest in social scientific support for policy-making. Their need for expertise was fulfilled by more or less regular hearings of experts' committees - a politics-science interaction model most frequent in these countries.4

The basic argument is further supported by the exceptions to the rule. Already in the 1950s and early 1960s despite of an overall satisfactory development some policy problem areas appeared in which a liberalist non-interventionism quite obviously would lead to an aggravation of problem constellations. In these policy fields, urban developments in France, the Southern Question in Italy, spatial developments in Germany, to name some examples, the politico-administrative system more systematically tried to tap the scientific expertise available. First sectoral research contracts were commissioned on urban problems in France, policy

4 The West German government funded economic survey research and forecasting since the early 1950s, but it was only after the creation of a Council of Economic Advisors in 1963 that more systematic use was made of economic policy research.
research institutes were set up in Italy to work out solutions for the Mezzogiorno and a permanent advisory body was established on spatial imbalances in Germany.

The underlying structure that basically shaped the development of public policy research has already before the full-blown expansion been prospectively described by Edward Shils as follows: "As governments incline more and more toward intervention in the economy and comprehensive economic planning and as the welfare state progresses, a more specific knowledge of the human beings over whom authority plays appears desirable." What Shils at the time of writing still conceived of as a process in being, which he nevertheless dared to call a "trend unlikely to be reversed" proved to be an adequate characterization of the following one and a half decades in most of the countries under study here. There is a clear link between the demand on the part of the policy-makers and administrators for policy-relevant research and the evolution of research responding to such signals and stimuli. This link became particularly conspicuous and powerful in "reform periods" in which the political system entered upon a new level of policy intervention and, as it was the case during the 1960s, social science was hailed in the role of guiding the formulation and implementation of such policies.

In this period of increasing international economic competition, but also of increasing material wealth in the Western capitalist nations, reform programmes for a multitude of policy problems were started. Emerging and aggravating problems like urban and regional disparities, insufficient standards in the education system, environmental degradation, and poverty still residing in the niches of the welfare state were conceived of as negative side effects of technological and economic development, which required active political intervention through a reformed and modernized politico-administrative apparatus.

---


6 ibid.
The underlying perception was that these planned interventions into complex social processes could and would be based on scientific analyses. A rather commonly shared conviction stated that the coming "end of ideology" in a technologically and economically determined process of social development would allow for basing policy-making on "objective" scientific information. With assumedly no room left for ideological struggle, the challenge was to analyse in detail social change - to achieve a "cognitive mastery of society"\(^7\), as one French observer put it - and to devote all analytical efforts to finding solutions which would allow society to adopt smoothly and without unrest to change.

The task of policy-oriented social science defined in this manner, it was expected that the other disciplines would follow the example of economics and develop a "hard" disciplinary core with unambiguous basic concepts, methodological rigor and a high esteem for quantification\(^8\). Economics not only was the first social science discipline whose knowledge was systematically tapped for political use, it also was considered as ranking first in the hierarchy of the social sciences and as being a model for their further development. The use of economic indicators and the elaboration of national accounting systems, which spread in the early post-war years, was to be followed by conceptualizing social indicators to win prognostic power not only with regard to economic, but also to social change. The development of sociology was thus measured against its ability to reach the level of methodological sophistication prevalent in economics.\(^9\) Social forecasting was seen as the logical next step after the system of economic forecasting had, as one thought, proved to be of high utility and validity.\(^10\)


\(^8\) See Harold Lasswell, op. cit., p. 5f


\(^10\) See e.g. Claude Gruson, "Planification économique et recherches sociologiques", in: Revue francaise de sociologie, Vol. 5, 1964, No. 3
The reform moves, however, did not only intend to strengthen the scientific basis for political decision-making, but also recognized the need to adapt the traditional political system to the requirements of "scientific politics", namely to increase the ability of political actors and institutions to demand scientific advice, to deal with research findings and to transform them into policy decisions. Therefore, major reform efforts were devoted to reorganise political and administrative institutions and processes, and it was here, that finally also the non-quantitative approaches in political science, the sociology of organisation, and the administrative sciences became to be of value for policy-makers. Some brief examples may be given:

In the USA, the full break-through of a policy orientation in the social sciences can be associated with the increasing demand by the reform-oriented administrations of Kennedy and Johnson. Reform policies, such as e.g. in the areas of civil rights and education, were to be accompanied by social science research and for many of the goals to be achieved in the War on Poverty of the Great Society adequate policies were to be designed and formulated by social scientists. In later years, evaluation research in terms of ex-post social science research meant to monitor and to keep track of the results and outcomes of policies and programmes became part and parcel of federal interventionist policies, having been made, in many cases, mandatory by federal legislation.

In West Germany, it was the interaction between an intra-disciplinary shift in the political science research agenda and the change in the intellectual and political climate of the "reform period" since the late 1960s that finally broke the ground for policy research. The assumption of some of the most prominent policy researchers, who also served in several of the then established government advisory committees, that policy research should concentrate on the political and administrative arenas in order to probe and possibly enhance the feasibility of "active policy-making" led to a research emphasis on the empirical study of policy processes. In the course of the 1970s, policy research developed

---

See e.g. Erhard Friedberg/Pierre Gremion, La recherche administrative et le réformisme politique, mimeo, Paris 1974, for France and Germany, and the account by Ettore Rotelli, "Gli studi sull'amministrazione pubblica: le strutture", in: Antonella Arculeo et al., La scienza politica in Italia: Materiali per un bilancio, Milan: AngelT 1984
consizable momentum propelled both by some intra- and inter-disciplinary initiatives, supported by science funding organisations, and by governmental and administrative demand for policy-related research, in particular on topics of "meta policy-making" (constitutional reform e.g.) and of long-term economic and social change.

The establishment of the Heyworth committee in 1963, whose report pointed to a long list of social problems to whose solutions the social sciences could contribute, and the creation of the Social Science Research Council, a coordinating body mediating the demand for policy-relevant knowledge in government and the academic, mainly disciplinary, interests in the social science community, can be considered as two events signalling a highly increased role of social science knowledge in the United Kingdom. In the following years the social science research capacity was strongly enlarged both by increasing university funding and by direct departmental research funding on a contractual basis. This period went parallel to a political phase of expansion of the "welfare state" and to a strong societal consensus on social engineering and rational government.

Similarly, but probably in an even much more pronounced way, Sweden witnessed a kind of rationalistic revolution by the mid-1960s. New techniques for systems analysis, programme budgeting, social indicators, commissioned sectoral research and futures studies were applied to policy problems across the board. On an institutional level, new bodies for policy analysis, research, evaluation and assessment were created in the central ministries, in a large number of government agencies as well as in the form of government commissions. Though the interventionist welfare state emerged and developed in Sweden much earlier and in a more continuous way than in most other Western nations, one might also qualify this period as a "reform period" taking for instance the election results of the Social Democratic Party, which were some of its best ever, as indicators.

The slowing down of economic growth and emerging constraints on labour supply and the qualification structure of the labour force brought about a shift in Austrian political balances in favour of the modernization-oriented forces in the mid-1960s. The use of social science advice to
promote economic growth and to design social reforms and the pursuance of an "active science policy" were central items on the agenda of modernization and were strongly advocated by the Socialist Party in particular. After its gaining one-party government majority in 1970, the amount of policy research commissioned by government ministries increased drastically, accompanied by a strong move to create in-house research and planning units in public administration.

Modernization of economy and society was also the central topic of Gaullist reform policies in the early years of the Fifth Republic in France. Organisational reforms inside the administrative system, which aimed at rationalizing decision-making processes, went parallel to an increase in commissioning research contracts from ministries to social scientists and to a conceptual enlargement of the scope of "planification". Whereas, on the one hand, an epistemological optimism on the possibility to obtain exhaustive scientific knowledge on social developments was the ideological core of a technocratically conceived modernization project, sociologists working on government contracts, on the other hand, started to analyse critically administrative processes and policy outcomes and thus had their part in disillusioning reform-oriented policy-makers.

A rather similar process accompanied the historical "opening to the left" in Italian politics in the early 1960s. The creation of policy-oriented social science research institutes on the regional and, later, on the central level and the introduction of economic planning were seen as symbols of a new politics basing itself on social and economic research. Aggravating social and economic problems such as sectoral imbalances, regional disparities and internal migration were to be dealt with in a much more efficient and "rational" way drawing on policy-oriented research.

Though changes are much more difficult to perceive in Spain under the seemingly immobile and rigid Franco-regime, even there moderate economic reforms in the mid-1960s increased the demand for policy-analytical capacities. Steps to integrate the Spanish economy into the Western capitalist system were accompanied by the introduction of a concept and some machinery of economic planning. In-house research units were founded
in some departments of the government apparatus and the National Statistical Institute was strengthened to allow for an effective monitoring of economic and social developments.

Summarizing these observations, a common trend can be discerned starting in the late 1950s and lasting into the early 1970s to lower the distance between the politico-administrative apparatus and the social science community and to integrate economic and social science advice into the processes of designing, formulating, implementing and evaluating policies. At the beginning of this period in particular, "reform coalitions"\(^{12}\) of scientists and policy-makers were formed on several occasions with members from both communities jointly heading for modernization and comprehensive reform of politics and society. In many countries these reform coalitions were instrumental in expanding the welfare state and increasing the level of political intervention. These efforts were strongly pushed by a widespread ideology of the superiority of scientific policy-making and of rational approaches to problem solving in the long-term interests of all social groups involved.

Rather soon it became obvious that at least these high-reaching expectations could not be fulfilled. The "honeymoon" (Guido Martinotti) of social science and politics ended soon when the relative failure of scientifically supported policies became evident and disillusionment set in. More recent developments in policy-oriented social science research will be considered in the third section of this paper. Before, however, it is necessary to try to account for the greatly varying intensity and the great variety of forms of interactions between social scientists and policy-makers which emerge in cross-national comparison, the general common trend notwithstanding.

2. Problem-oriented social science research in different politico-administrative systems

Some of the national differences in the demand for an institutionalization of policy research could rather convincingly be accounted for by different levels of economic development. Others could be related to the point in time and the circumstances under which reform-oriented political majorities came to government power in different countries. But even if it could be claimed that such factors accounted mainly for the level of demand for policy research and consultancy, they could not elucidate why very different "profiles" emerged in the national systems of production and organisation of policy-oriented social science knowledge.

In some countries, for instance, almost all policy-analytical capacities are situated inside the administrative apparatus, in others the administrations show a tendency to "contract out" the demand for expertise to social scientists from universities or other public or private research institutions. Or, central government in some political systems is the actor which dominates the demand for policy research in an almost monopsonistic way, in others regional administrations, interest groups or parliament perform important analytical functions through own research institutions. The visibility of policy-oriented research, to give a final example of high importance, varies greatly between countries, in some cases it serves mainly for use in public debate, in others it is kept secret and is exclusively used for intra-administrative purposes.

Our findings lead us to the conclusion that most of these differences have to be accounted for by certain characteristics of the workings of national political systems, of some "inherited" features which, though they undergo changes when adapting to new demands and requirements, are relatively stable over time and shape the way politico-administrative systems deal with policy issues. It is thus required to combine historical, cultural and institutional analysis to trace origins and

---

13 For a discussion of such a hypothesis with regard to evaluation research, see: Peter Wagner, Hellmut Wollmann, "Fluctuations in the Development of Evaluation Research. Do 'Regime Shifts' Matter?" International Social Science Journal, No. 108, June 1986
background of present policy constellations. As a result, one might end up with specific national features in policy-making which have already been called "policy styles" or "politico-administrative cultures".

Without discussing here in detail the merits and deficiencies of these concepts, we subsequently use the notions of "policy style" and "administrative style" as abbreviations for rather stable, historically fixed standard procedures in the political sphere, on the one hand, and the administrative apparatus, on the other, based on institutional arrangements and traditions of political behaviour. The contention is that these sets of factors taken together contribute to elucidate how the demand for problem-oriented social science research in different countries emerges and, in particular, how it is translated into specific forms of political organisation of research.

In this understanding Figure 1 is meant to relate features of politico-administrative styles to the characteristics of the policy research scenery. In the two left columns a brief characterization of the "typical" features of politico-administrative systems is given, partly drawn from existent comparative policy analyses, partly derived from our own findings; in columns a.-d. the activities of different actors in

---


16 See e.g. Werner Jann, Staatliche Programme und "Verwaltungskultur", Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag 1983

politics and in science are briefly indicated, in column e. an attempt is made to name summarizingly a dominant policy research "profile" and column f. indicates typical institutional linkages between social science and politics.

Such an attempt to reduce complex interrelationships to a rather simple scheme is obviously open to a number of criticisms, some of which may be avoided by three cautionary remarks.

First, this figure should not be read as indicating independent variables on the left and dependent ones on the right. Though there is supposed to be a sort of influencing relationship between politico-administrative styles and policy research, the analysis does not allow to talk about causal determinations, it seems more appropriate to discern national constellations into which the different aspects enter.

Second, one might doubt the usefulness of distinguishing national styles in the face of seemingly similar sectoral developments in some cases. For instance, a number of European governments set up external, semi-autonomous education research institutes in the 1960s to provide for a social scientific underpinning of education policy. Such a sector-specific influence beyond the national styles on the development of policy research is not to be denied here, further research is, however, necessary to discern sectoral patterns and their relation to national characteristics.

Third, the scheme given in Figure 1 should not be considered as static. Some hints at a dynamics of policy research and consulting are given in the matrix, others are taken up in section three below.

\[\text{---}\]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy styles</th>
<th>Administrative style</th>
<th>Policy research and consulting</th>
<th>Institutional linkages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>adverisal (Congress-President, federal-state)</td>
<td>concept of administration as part of the political process, resulting in social science information as a resource, both in-house and commissioned research</td>
<td>in-house units in federal departments, congressional units, private sector research, moderate university engagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>consensual, rationalistic-planning, active interventionist</td>
<td>administrative agencies separate from government, important role in policy initiation, legalistic tradition has loosened, open to social science information</td>
<td>more oriented towards basic research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>corporatist &quot;social partnership&quot;, government activities mainly in compliance with expressed interests of main social actors, consensual, moderately active-interventionist</td>
<td>supportively intervening administration with patron-centrist traditions, client-oriented, participatory, legalist tradition gradually loosening</td>
<td>mainly oriented towards basic research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>moderately adversarial (government/opposition, federalization/centralization)</td>
<td>traditionally powerful, traditionally relying on (legal) expertise, drawing on policy consultancy through advisory boards, more recently opening up to social science information</td>
<td>hardly any research capacities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1: Policy styles, administrative styles and their influence on policy research and consulting.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy style</th>
<th>Administrative style</th>
<th>Policy research and consulting</th>
<th>Institutional linkages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>JPN</strong></td>
<td>powerful administrative guidance</td>
<td>weak in-house base, mainly drawing on commercial research institutes (think tanks), predominantly for ex-ante analyses</td>
<td>business and employers' associations (partly also labour) running own research institutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>UK</strong></td>
<td>&quot;bureaucratic accommodation&quot;, reactive consensual, recent tendency towards voluntarism and higher conflictuality</td>
<td>customer-contractor principle, dominated by departments; comparatively low interest in external advice</td>
<td>weak role, occasional commissions of inquiry into specific fields</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>F</strong></td>
<td>active-interventionist, technologically planning, impositonal, rationalist closed political-administrative system, weak parliamentary control functions</td>
<td>strong in-house analytical functions, hardly any recourse to external experts except for recent changes and except for a period of &quot;contractualization policy&quot; in some policy fields in the 1960s</td>
<td>weak role, recent debates on strengthening parliametary analytical functions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>E</strong></td>
<td>interventionist, voluntarism, since return to full democracy (1982) moderately conflictual (between parties and between central and regional governments)</td>
<td>low level of commitments to outside research, intramunicipal analytical units since the late 1950</td>
<td>no analytical units or contractual research money of its own</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>I</strong></td>
<td>weak central government and administration, reactive policy style, conflictual, partisan, argumentative</td>
<td>some ministry-subordinated research institutes with rather low performance (lack of resources, clientalistic practices), traditionally high consultancy through committees; &quot;substitutive&quot; activities in some regions with more success</td>
<td>no analytical units or funds of its own</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In the following some points already raised in Figure 1 are made more explicit by identifying the most relevant factors and discussing them by use of characteristic examples. The first one relates to the institutional structure of different political systems, the second one to the various "policy styles" and the third one is concerned with the specifics of "administrative styles".

The power positions of different actors in the political system, the centrality of power, which predetermines at which stage in the policy process, with which means and with which relative influence actors participate in political decision-making, structures the demand for and the location of policy-relevant social science knowledge. As set out in Figure 1, government and administration (executive power), parliament (legislative power), and interest groups are the three main actors which might be interested in disposing of analytical capacities. Inside the executive two further distinctions have to be made as to who takes the initiatives in policy-making, the president, prime minister or the ministerial bureaucracy, and as to the distribution of powers between central and regional governments.

In France, where central government clearly seems to dominate the policy-making processes, almost all research capacities are subordinated to government needs. The situation is rather similar in Spain and in Japan with the important qualification in the latter case that it is in the administrative apparatus where policies are first designed, whereas the politicians themselves join in only at a later state. The most important analytical units, therefore, are located in the Ministry of Finance and other key ministries.

In the USA, federal government heavily draws on social science knowledge, but it is important to see that in the working of the system of "checks and balances" the federal parliament and the state governments retained important roles. The US Congress, therefore, is the only parliament in cross-national comparison, which disposes of major policy research capacities. Many of the parliamentary research facilities have been set

---

up with the explicit goal of supporting the countervailing function of Congress as opposed to the President. A similarly strong role of parliament does not exist in other countries. That is why the recent attempts of the parliaments in France and Germany to increase their research capacities, in particular in the field of technology-related issues, have to be viewed with a certain scepticism\textsuperscript{20}.

Again, the US case is the prime example of a political system, in which considerable powers of policy design are at the regional, here: state, level and where, consequently, the need for policy analysis is rather high for state governments. Similarly, some of the Länder governments in the federal political system in West Germany show a considerable - and increasing - demand for policy research and have set up or funded own research institutions. In the Italian case, where the regions do not dispose of as much autonomy as the American and the West German states, some of them, notably the Northern ones, have taken the initiatives in creating policy research institutions thus compensating for the weakness and reluctance of government at the central level (see also below).

In the Austrian political system, neither the executive nor the legislative power can be said to determine demand and orientation of policy research. In the institutionalized system of "social partnership" the major interest group associations control policy-making, and government hardly ever comes out with policy proposals on purely own initiative. The production of policy-relevant knowledge - in formally independent institutes and in dozens of advisory committees - is thoroughly integrated into these "technocorporatist" processes\textsuperscript{21}. In Sweden, which also ranks high as a corporatist country in recent debates, policy-making and policy research are similarly integrated into a network of mutual consultation and cooperation between government, central administrative agencies, parliament and interest group associations. But compared to the Austrian case, the influence of actors involved seems to be much more pluralistically distributed and the need for legitimatory rational arguments seems to be higher.

\textsuperscript{20} At least as long as the overall political situation does not change, which, however, is not impossible after the 1986 elections in France.

\textsuperscript{21} see Bernd Marin, Die Paritätische Kommission, Vienna: Internationale Publikationen 1982, and on the impacts on the social sciences Helga Nowotny, "Marienthal and after", in: Knowledge, 1984, No. 1
One additional observation has to be made with regard to actors demanding policy-relevant knowledge. If, as argued before, the level of economic development and of political interventionism basically shapes the emergence of policy research capacities, one might state a certain "research gap" in some countries such as Italy, Spain, partly probably also Japan, where the potential demand for knowledge is supposed to be higher than actual performance in the political system. On the one hand, this can be accounted for by the existence of substitutive political mechanisms, such as clientelism in Italy, reducing the need for analytical capacities (see below). On the other hand, however, it can also be observed that actors other than central government and administration take "substitutive" research-initiating roles and thus try to compensate for lack of activity elsewhere. This is or was true for parts of private industry in Japan and Italy, for private foundations in Italy and Spain, partly also in the UK 22, and for regional governments in Northern Italy.

These "substitutive" activities seem to appear whenever relevant social actors deem the research performance of the politico-administrative system unsatisfactory and dispose of the means to start own initiatives. Why some political systems in a comparable social and political environment show a smaller inclination to make recourse to social science knowledge than others, is the underlying question, which we tried to approach by exploiting the concept of "policy styles" and by framing it for our purposes, as shown in Figure 2.

---

22 In the USA, private foundations have taken this role in the first decades of this century, see e.g. Martin Bulmer, "Support for Sociology in the 1920s", in: The American Sociologist, Vol. 17, 1982, No. 4, pp.185ff.
The statement implicit in the first line of Figure 2 says that nations which adhere to a more reactive policy style, such as in general the UK and Italy, will show a lower demand for social science advice in the politico-administrative system, because the need for medium- or long-term forecasting as well as the need for ex-post policy evaluation would remain basically restricted by the prevalent politics of "muddling through". On the other hand, an interventionist and activist approach to social problems, such as is generally granted to e.g. Sweden, France, Spain or Japan, is a necessary precondition for the emergence of a research demand. This condition, however, is not yet sufficient, because the activism might limit itself to a sort of voluntaristic policy model, in which political actors would make decisions on the basis of general convictions, on their view of power constellations, after concertation with relevant societal actors etc., but not supported by social science analyses of the policy arena and the issues to be dealt with. In this
respect, Spain and Japan, for instance, seem to differ from Sweden and France and seem to rely to a much lesser degree on systematically provided analytical knowledge.

Another distinction has to be made with regard to the underlying conception about the functions of social science research findings. For reasons of conceptual clarity, one might draw a caricature of the American and the French policy style and state that, rooted in an interventionist technocratic tradition, the French public administration has a tendency to regard "objective" scientific information as the decisive component of rational policy-making and to behave according to such a technocratic model, whereas in the USA policy research findings are used by all social actors as arguments to strengthen one's own position in political struggles, but without the contention that a scientifically correct solution could be found for policy problems. Though overdrawn, this two-country comparison is not completely inadequate, and other countries could be introduced into such a spectrum, where e.g. West Germany and Austria would be closer to the pole of the model of rational decision making and Sweden, but also Italy closer to the model of partisan argumentation.

A more interesting observation, however, is that in the process of "social-scientification" of politics a shift from the rationalization model to the model of partisan argumentation is taking place. During the "rationalistic revolution" (Björn Wittrock) of the 1960s, the involved policy-makers and social scientists in all countries shared the conviction that policy-making could be made more rational and scientific in the sense that one might get closer to the objectively best problem solution than before. There are, however, always potential losers also in "scientific" policy-making and as these groups get to know how policies are legitimated, they themselves learn to use social research findings in their favour and try to produce scientific "counter-expertise" to the official policy advice.23

23 see e.g. Peter Wagner, "De la 'scientification' de la politique à la pluralisation de l'expertise", in: Centre de Recherches et d'Etudes sociologiques appliquées de la Loire (CRESAL) (ed.), Situations d'expertise et socialisation des savoirs, Saint Etienne: Dumas. We return to this point in the following section.
Even within the model of partisan argumentation another differentiation has to be made. In those countries, such as Sweden, which are characterized by a policy style oriented towards an all-societal consensus, mostly supported by corporatist institutions of interest mediation, social science advice may be used to support the arguments of the different interested participants, but this strategy is contained within the limits of reaching a consensual solution. In countries with weaker bodies for interest mediation, such as the USA, the conflictual style may thoroughly shape the way policy research is produced and used - or not used.

Turning now from these more "political" components of national politico-administrative traditions to the administrative ones, the demand for and, in particular, the organisation of social science policy-consulting are significantly shaped by the "administrative styles" influencing the bureaucracies' readiness and capacity to deal with social scientific information. A general typology is given in Figure 3 and an attempt towards a brief historical-institutional interpretation is made below.

---

See Aaron Wildavsky, "Doing more and using less", in: Dierkes et al, op. cit.. The thesis that corporatist interest mediation enhances the opportunities for high quality policy research is discussed elsewhere, see Wagner and Wollmann op. cit.
Figure 3: "Administrative Style" as a Determinant for the Organization of Social Science Policy-Consulting

- administration
  - open towards "scientific" consultancy
    - consultancy keeps outside administrative bodies ("out")
  - in-house consultancy ("in")
    - research institutions dependent on administration ("quasi in-house")
    - research institutions commissioned on contract basis
- institutions
  - permanent
    - councils of advisors
    - advisory committees
  - ad hoc
    - task forces
    - ad hoc commissions ("study groups")
- sticking to "administrative" seclusion and secrecy, due to ideology of "self-sufficiency", supported by
  - strong legalist traditions and/or
  - elitism, based on education and recruitment patterns, and/or
  - consciousness about key positions in political processes
The basic distinction in Figure 3 between administrations which show an openness towards "scientification" and those which continue to rely on traditional procedural rules—which, of course, is a very crude one—may serve to elucidate the factors which impede a faster growth of the administrative demand for social science policy advice. In fact, traditionally it is only the exceptional case of the USA, where the political conception of the role of administrators very much eased the way for the use of scientific research results. A traditional legalist orientation of the civil service in Sweden has considerably loosened over time, perhaps stimulated by the rather autonomous position of government agencies whose role in policy-making became more and more important with enlarging state interventionism. A similar, though much weaker, tendency can be observed in West Germany in the last one and a half decades and in Austria. Other countries sharing the typical Continental European legalism in public administration, such as Italy and Spain, seem to resist much more to the changed role of administration in the interventionist welfare state. This resistance is strengthened by rigid corps traditions, as are still dominant in Spanish civil service, or by clientelist practices rooted in the political history of the nation, as in Italy. In both cases, public administration officials share a rather clear consciousness of their power positions in society and show no inclination to risk this position by opening up to social change. French public administration is also very much shaped by a corps tradition which is perpetuated by persistent patterns of recruitment from the various elite schools. But the existence of this high quality education system for civil servants in a deep-rooted tradition of technocratic interventionism also leads to a high competence of French administrators in technical and economic matters and an ability to deal with scientific knowledge. The development of economics in France has even been shaped by its integration into the politico-administrative apparatus, but sociological knowledge, on the other hand, is systematically excluded from the concerns of administrators. The stability of these "inherited" barriers allows only for slow change which has set in in the 1960s and seems to accelerate somewhat in these years. In the UK, the traditionally strong and self-confident civil service shows only weak inclinations to rely on externally provided knowledge.

---

If we now turn from the broad analytical distinction between "open" and "self-sufficiency-oriented" administrative styles, to a more detailed analysis, a useful typology of different organisational forms for social science advice may start out from distinguishing consultancy procedures which are kept outside and those which are integrated into the administrative bodies. Among the latter ones the typical intra-ministerial analytical units, which are fully integrated in the administrative organisation, have to be considered as controlled by the agency, whereas research institutions, which are tied to ministries, but dispose of own organisational bodies, such as the German Bundesforschungsanstalten or the French Statistical Institute INSEE, have a limited degree of institutional autonomy. A real process of interaction and not only of subordination sets in only where a certain distance is kept between scientists and bureaucrats. This cannot, however, be guaranteed simply by keeping consultancy outside administration. During the period of "contractualization" in French social science policy, for instance, it was, on the contrary, the goal of science policy administrators to direct the social scientists, which in majority had no secure university position, more towards administrative demands by making them dependent on continuous renewal of contracts, which was not possible with regard to researchers in administrative research institutions. The provision of a material basis for research at universities or extra-university institutions is thus an essential precondition for the maintenance of intellectual autonomy in science-politics interaction. Under this condition, the various forms of ad hoc and probably even more of permanent advisory bodies can be considered as a potentially highly valuable organisational form of social science policy consultancy. Keeping the afore-mentioned qualifications in mind, one might thus read Figure 3 from left to right as showing a decreasing degree of scientists' independence and autonomy and a similarly decreasing degree of administrative openness. Details about the "research profiles" in different countries in this respect can be taken from Figure 1.


27 Talking here of potentiality means that we explicitly do not deal with further restrictions to the use (as opposed to production and organization) of policy research as analysed in the utilization literature.
3. "Scientification" of politics and the development of the social sciences

The sketch of the historical evolution of policy-oriented social science in the first section of this paper stopped in the early or mid-1970s. Since then, the expectations concerning the contribution of the social sciences to the improvement of policy-making have undergone considerable changes. High hopes raised in the 1960s were dashed and gave way to disillusionment in the late 1970s and 1980s. The reactions were manifold: some social scientists continued along the same path by moving from policy design to analyses of policy implementation and to evaluation research, after policy outcomes had proved to differ from the intentions, others withdrew from the orientation towards national policy-making and turned to local administration, interest groups, or social movements. Some policy-makers concluded that the tasks for social scientists had to be formulated more clearly and developed a sectoral social science policy applying the customer-contractor principle, other considered the whole approach a failure, moreover a politically biased one, and devised cuts in social science research funding.

No new dominant model of social science-politics interaction has yet emerged in practice, and also the conceptual debate is still open, as can be seen from a continuing flow of publications on the relation of the social sciences to policy-making. Different from a recurrent concern amongst social scientists a withdrawal of policy-makers from demanding social science advice and social science funding is not a likely outcome of the present reorientations in our view. It is more important, however, to devote closer attention to changes in the social science-politics relationship. These changes which might have considerable impact on the further development of the social sciences can be discerned on two levels at least: changes in the idea of "scientification" of politics and changes in the idea of autonomy of the social sciences.

The rapidly increasing demand for social science policy-consulting in the post-World War II period assigned societal relevance to previously marginal scientific disciplines and provided for strong external legitimation. The prior peripheric position of the social sciences in academia can best be illustrated by the scarcity of chairs at the
universities carrying sociology or political science or other social science titles in their name and by the complete absence of specific curricula or doctoral programs in these disciplines in many European countries. Social science studies still were integrated into the philosophy, law, or other faculties. In the 1950s and 1960s, parallel to the increased demand for social knowledge, the social sciences gained their academic recognition and a rapid expansion of social science teaching at the universities set in. These developments were crucial for the consolidation of the disciplines in two respects. On the one hand, with a small but firm university base, the building of a disciplinary community could begin, involving the search for a disciplinary identity, the identification of key interests in theory and empirical research, and the agreement on a core of disciplinary knowledge to be taught to students. On the other hand, the increasing number of students seemed to guarantee the continuity and further expansion of research work in the fields of the social sciences.

At a somewhat later stage and even more directly influenced by the political demand for social science knowledge, a process of mainly extra-universitarian institutionalization of problem-oriented social science research set in. In the context of the science policy debate in the 1960's it was argued more and more strongly that the university structure with its orientation on the individual researcher might not be appropriate for large-scale empirical research which was seen as increasingly necessary to provide a more detailed knowledge of processes of social and economic change. As discussed in the previous section, these newly created research institutions varied greatly with regard to their financial and intellectual autonomy, some were almost totally subordinated to administrative needs, others very much resembled universities in their capacity to set their own research priorities. Quite a few of these institutes lived through different phases developing from a more directly policy-oriented conception of research to a broader understanding of problem-oriented research including links to disciplinary basic research. This observation leads to a double conclusion. On the one hand, this is rightly to be seen as an indicator for a revision of the political role of social science knowledge, as a turn from a concept of instrumental utility in problem-solving, which did not materialize to the extent expected, to a problem-analysis type of knowledge, which will
enter policy processes, but not predetermine solutions, which can only be found in political power struggles. On the other hand, the survival of these institutes in a changed environment also shows that the reorientations did not imply that there would be no further use for social research-based consultancy. The conclusion which some might have been ready to draw that the support for the social sciences could be phased out, did not prove to be valid in an already "scientificated" political context.

The term "scientification" originally was used in the context of the model of rational policy-making, as we have named it above. The contention was that a scientific analysis of economic and social developments could provide for a single, scientifically founded policy proposal and that the increasing insight of political and social actors into the "objective" reality of contemporary society and their evolution would decrease the recourse to ideology and power struggles and increase the chances for non-ideological consensus built on social-scientific expertise. After the "end of ideology", "social science was to harness its technical know-how to the practical programmes and institutional reforms that might be realized between the poles of permanent welfare benefits, capitalist and Keynesian economic practices, and a politics of contest among a more-or-less set number of recognized interest groups."28 The supporters of this "end of ideology"-theorem in fact were right in that the use of social science in political debates steadily increased since the early 1960s in all Western capitalist countries, but their basic assumption proved to be false that the superiority of scientific knowledge would displace ideological and other justifications in policy-making. The social sciences, deeply rooted in and not detached from social reality, were able to provide different interpretations of problem constellations and legitimation for different policy proposals in a given situation. Opposing political actors learned to use research findings in their favour in public political debates which increasingly demanded rational justifications for political positions taken.29 The


history of the "scientification" of politics is thus not one of an increasing rationality in policy-making, but first of all one of the "pluralisation" in the production and use of social-scientific expertise.

This inevitably deep involvement of social scientists in political struggles has implications for the future perspectives of the social science disciplines, and the nature of these implications is centrally determined by the predominance of government and administration in the demand for social science research in most countries. In their own research institutions, governments employ a large number of social researchers and through contractual funding they direct a great amount of non-governmental research also towards their knowledge and information needs. In many cases, to be differentiated according to issues or research, the number of administration-oriented researchers exceeds that of academically oriented social scientists. The share of total research, which is more or less directly politically targeted, reaches levels as to seriously influencing and, it might be said, endangering the development of the social sciences. Without entering here in the debate on internal and external influences of scientific development, the threat to the social sciences might be conceived of as twofold: On the one hand, the traditional system of reputational control may be eroded to the detriment of research quality, on the other hand, the critical function of social science was put into question when major parts of available research funds were subjected to criteria defined and interpreted by actors in the politico-administrative system. In the most extreme cases the instrumentalization of the social sciences may be called "a colonization process whereby the bureaucracies' perspective and conceptual framework are established as the valid epistemological framework for scientific research as well." 

To summarize in a few words, the trend towards an increasing integration of social science advice into policy processes, in fact, still proves to be "unlikely to be reversed", as Shils said, a great variety of national differences due to politico-administrative styles notwithstanding. "Scientification" of politics did not signal increased rationality in

---

policy-making, but an increased need of all political actors to legitimize their positions by use of research findings. The predominance of the administrative perspective poses threats to future social research developments, but the tendency of the political process to generate a "pluralisation" of expertise may outweigh this imbalance in future, under the condition that a strong basis for non-administrative research is maintained or created.