

Civil Service Organizations in Norway: Organizational Features and Tasks

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Preface¹

This paper is written as a part of the research project «Regulation, Control and Auditing», funded by the Norwegian Research Foundation. The paper is based on Kristin Rubecksens' master thesis at the Department of Administration and Organization Theory, University of Bergen. An earlier version of the paper was presented at the workshop on «Organizational forms, autonomy and control in public sector», Bergen December 1–2, 2003. We wish to thank Paul G. Roness and the other participants at the workshop for helpful comments.

Per Lægveid
Prosjektleder

¹ The paper is based on a study (Rubecksen 2003) in which civil service organizations were mapped for the years 1989 and 1999 according to organizational structure, types of tasks, financial structures and organizational income.

Summary

The paper focuses on civil service organizations in Norway – of particular relevance is central organizational features and structure, task portfolio and how organizational characteristics vary according to type of task.

During the last 20–25 years, important processes of change have taken place within the public sector and modified the surrounding conditions for civil service organizations in Norway. The changes within central government are linked to *active, conscious reform attempts*, and can be said to have focused on: a) changes in the general regulative frameworks encompassing state organizations, b) development of more independent organizational forms within government, and c) principles for how the state is to select the appropriate organizational forms when reorganizing existing organizations or establishing new governmental organizations (Sand 1996: 187). The results have been a moderation in the government's general regulative frameworks, and a greater variety in governmental organizational forms as well as change in work procedures and steering structures. Administrative reform in recent years has been characterized by a gradual development from an integrated to disintegrated state (Christensen and Lægreid 2004), as well as a transition from *multi-purpose* to *single-purpose* organizations. To what extent has role refinement and reform attempts led to a change in civil service organizations' defining characteristics – in tasks and organizational structures?

The aim of this paper is to give a brief introduction to distinct features of Norwegian state organizations at two points in time. Data has been gathered for the years 1989 and 1999. The basis for comparison is thus two «snapshots» in time. This enables us to detect stability or change over time, both in distinct features and in relevant patterns or relations between features, task portfolio and policy area.

Sammendrag

Tema for notatet er sentrale kjennetegn ved statlige forvaltningsorganer langs dimensjonene a) organisatoriske trekk og b) oppgaveportefølje – og c) om sentrale kjennetegn varierer med ulike typer av oppgaver.

Storparten av statens virksomheter er i dag organisert innenfor forvaltningsorganmodellen som tilknytningsform, og står dermed for hovedparten av statens engasjement og aktivitet. Forvaltningsorganmodellen har siden midten av 1980-tallet gått gjennom viktige endringsprosesser som gjør at forvaltningsorganene i dag står overfor andre rammevilkår enn tidligere. Større lokal institusjonell autonomi og økte frihetsgrader har vært nøkkelbegreper i utviklingen. Forvaltningspolitisk reform i nyere tid har i tillegg vært kjennetegnet av en gradvis overgang fra en integrert stat – til en i større grad fragmentert stat (Christensen and Læg Reid 2004), og en overgang fra multifunksjonelle (*multi-purpose*) til rollespesialiserte (*single-purpose*) organisasjoner. I hvilken grad har rollespesialisering og reformforsøk ledet til en endring i sentrale kjennetegn ved statlige forvaltningsorganer?

I lys av dette ser notatet nærmere på trekk og kjennetegn i alle statlige virksomheter som ved inngangen til 1989 og 1999 var å regne for egne forvaltningsorganer, om det fremkommer mønstre eller sammenhenger mellom bestemte trekk, og om dette har endret seg over tid som følge av forvaltningspolitisk reform og omstilling. Notatet bygger på en bred kartlegging av alle statlige virksomheter, gjennom bruk av hovedsakelig offentlige tilgjengelige kilder som statsbudsjett, statsregnskap og Norges Statskalender. Opplysningene har blitt systematisert og lagt inn i en database. Det legges til grunn et instrumentelt og et institusjonelt teoretisk perspektiv, og foretas en sammenligning av forvaltningsorganene langs en synkron og diakron dimensjon, både av trekk og mønstre i det enkelte år og mellom de to årene undersøkelsen gjelder. På denne måten er det to «øyeblikksbilder» i tid som danner utgangspunktet for sammenligningen.

Et hovedfunn i notatet er at forvaltningsorganmodellen som tilknytningsform preges av stort mangfold og diversitet både i organisatoriske trekk og oppgaver de ivaretar. Over tid har det vært ytterligere *differensieringstendenser* innenfor forvaltningsorganformen, slik at den i dag fremstår som mer variert enn tidligere – både organisatorisk og oppgavemessig sett.

Introduction

This paper focuses on the following questions:

What characterizes the civil service organizations in 1989 and 1999 with regards to: (a) organizational features and structure; and (b) task portfolio?; (c) How do organizational characteristics vary according to type of task?

Since 1985 Norwegian civil service organizations have undergone several changes as a result of planned reform activity within government. What is meant by the «agency» term and what characterizes organizations organized as agencies – vary broadly, to such a degree that it is difficult to discern a specific meaning of the term or a particular organizational form (Pollitt 2005, Thynne 2003). Current interest in the questions raised above should therefore be clear.

The aim of this paper is to give a brief introduction to distinct features of Norwegian state organizations at two points in time. Data has been gathered for the years 1989 and 1999. The basis for comparison is thus two «snapshots» in time. This enables us to detect stability or change over time, both in distinct features and in relevant patterns or relations between features, task portfolio and policy area. Motivating questions are: Do civil service organizations with specific types of tasks or combination of tasks show a tendency towards having certain organizational characteristics? What is most characteristic when considering the time frame – stability, or change in central features and relations within the population?

An *instrumental* and an *institutional* perspective provide the wider theoretical framework for different expectations regarding change and stability in organizational structures and tasks over time, and relevant relations between these. In this context applied theory will serve to illustrate the wide range between different approaches in explaining organizations and organizational features. Thus, theory will be used as a general framework for assessing and evaluating the empirical observations. An *instrumental* approach has been chosen due to the heightened degree of planned reform activity within public sector and state organizations in Norway since 1980. Reform activity and documents have been largely instrumental in character, and in recent years Norwegian political authorities have had great faith in using organizational form as an instrument to achieve increased efficiency and effectiveness in governmental agencies. The report of the Hermansen Commission in 1989 (NOU 1989:5) represents one of the most influential public reform documents in Norway, and stressed the necessity of a corresponding relationship between values and functions of state organizations and their organizational structure. The form of affiliation should be made on the basis of an evaluation of prevailing values and primary tasks in the singular state organization. An instrumental standpoint in this context will stress the importance of types of tasks, organizational form, and changes between 1989 and 1999 to be in accordance with conscious political efforts towards administrative reform. Primary tasks are seen as the vital criteria for the political authorities in opting between different organizational forms. On this basis we may expect to find broader differences in the task portfolio

between civil service organizations having *different* organizational affiliation than among organizations having the *same* organizational form (Rubecksen 2003). With reference to the time dimension in the paper, we expect to find greater conformity between type of primary task and organizational form in 1999 than in 1989. This expectation is in part based on the report from the Hermansen Commission in 1989, and also the view of history as being «efficient» (Pollitt 2005, March and Olsen 1998). The most effective organizational structure for maintaining a specific primary task or reaching a certain goal will be chosen.

An *institutional* perspective emphasizes internal factors in explaining organizations and organizational behaviour (Selznick 1957, March and Olsen 1989, Brunsson and Olsen 1993). Internal values and norms serve as guidelines for action, and individuals are oriented by «logic of appropriateness» rather than «logic of consequences». Over time, institutional identities and capabilities evolve within organizations which do not necessarily conform to the formal structure. In addition, history is seen as «ineffective» – in so far as to bring forward the most effective organizational form in order to reach specific goals (Pollitt 2005). Thus, organizational features and characteristics could be traced back to elements other than anticipation of a specific formal structure's relative efficiency in reaching official goals or suitability in maintaining certain types of tasks. The organisational environment might also be of importance when explaining the emergence or existence of certain organizational characteristics and features (Meyer and Rowan 1977, Powell and DiMaggio 1991, Scott 1992, Røvik 1992, 1998, Brunsson and Olsen 1993). Within this perspective, factors contributing towards the shaping of internal values and norms in central agencies, i.e. affiliation to *parent ministries* and connections to specific *policy areas*, are expected to influence features and relations between features found in the state organizations. In addition, an institutional approach can be perceived to favour stability over time rather than change. This approach also opens up for a considerable variety in central features and characteristics among organizations having the same organizational subtype, and that those differences could be greater *within* the singular subtype than *between* the sub types.

The first section of the paper describes the population according to various organizational features and structures found in 1989 and 1999. Attention will be drawn to form of affiliation, parent ministries and organizational form. State organizations' connections to specific policy areas will be looked upon as an intake to organizations' environments. The paper will further address task portfolio in civil service organizations in 1989 and 1999. *Task portfolio* comprises possible combinations of primary (main) tasks and secondary (additional) tasks of various kinds of the state organizations. The final section of the paper examines relevant patterns or relations between organizational features and task portfolio.

Data and method

When reviewing agency literature, it is evident that many different categorizations of state agencies or state organizations have been made. However, it is not always clear

what is meant by the term «agency», or even what characterizes different types of state organizations (Pollitt 2005, Pollitt and Talbot 2003).

In this context, a *state organization* is considered to be a state organization which:

- is located *within* the state as a legal person/entity
- is instructible in principle
- executes state activities and tasks (which means that the organization in question is considered to be the «state» within its field of function)
- is financed in full or in large by governmental funds channelled through the state budget.

According to this, ministries constitute agencies. However, for the purpose of this paper ministries are not included as units of analysis. The ministries have a particularly strong connection to the political leadership, and maintain a dual role as political steering instruments in addition to their executive tasks. Units of analysis have thus been defined for all civil service organizations in 1989 and 1999 located directly beneath a ministry.²

The paper employs a qualitative and a quantitative approach as well as an extensive and explorative design in order to assess the questions raised. Civil service organizations have been «mapped» to include a broad range of variables for 1989 and 1999 relying on analysis mainly of public budget documents (annual state budgets and accounts, annexes to the state budget, annual outlines of Norwegian central government administration: The Norwegian State Calendar). A corresponding set of documents has been employed for both years. The Government's annual budget proposal is submitted to the *Storting* in the autumn of each year, and consists of several documents. *Report to the Storting* No. 1 is the National Budget, in which the Government states reasons for its priorities and budget proposals, and in which the central government budget is presented in the context of trends in the national economy. A parliamentary bill, *Proposition to the Storting* No. 1, (the «Yellow Book»), outlines the Government's proposals for the national budget. The total government budget is set out, showing how funds are proposed to be allocated to the various budget posts and items for each ministry. A more detailed description of the budget proposal is found in annexes to *Proposition to the Storting* No 1. Each ministry is responsible for preparing these annexes.

The validity and reliability of using public budget documents is considered to be high. Public budget documents follow prefixed, mandatory standards for information and reporting that applies to all state organizations, and budget documents therefore give similar information for all relevant units. Even though there has been some

² The delineation of the population – or «who's in and who's out» – also involves decisions on specific organizational units. Whether the courts of appeal should be considered to be «civil service organizations» is debateable. The Supreme Court is not an instructible state organization, and it has its own budget independent of the Ministry of Justice. It is therefore excluded from the population. Lower levels of the courts of appeal maintain certain administrative functions as well and receive funding through their parent ministry – and are therefore included. According to the same criteria, military operative units are excluded as well as the Royalty. Residing military units and the royal administration is included however. Due to the time frame in question, civil service units established after 1999 are not included.

development in the extent of detail in budget documents over time towards more extensive reporting on civil service organizations' activities, and fewer specifications on the use of civil service organizations' resources (St.prp. nr. 87 (1989–90), St.prp. nr. 65 (1990–91)), it has been possible to extract comparable data for 1989 and 1999. Mandatory standards and type of information presented have essentially remained the same. The formal, cognitive character of public budget documents also limits the occurrence of subjective references; however, some elements of subjectivity cannot be eliminated entirely. The mapping of civil service organizations' primary and supplementary tasks mainly builds on the detailed description of the state organizations given in annexes to *Proposition to the Storting* No 1 for 1989 and 1999. For the majority of units the information in these official documents has been sufficient to establish the task portfolio with some certainty. For other organizations, the name of the organization itself clearly indicates the nature of its tasks and functions. It has been necessary for some organizations to supplement the information given in annexes with other sources (*Norges Statskalender* for 1999, homepages on the Internet) due to the lack of or incomplete information of the relevant tasks and functions. The occurrence of subjective judgement and uncertainty is therefore somewhat greater for organizations where scarce information is given in annexes to the National budget. The paper also relies on information available in the database on the organization of the Norwegian state administration, developed at the LOS-centre (now the Stein Rokkan Centre for Social Studies) in collaboration with Norwegian Social Science Data Services. Originally, this database contained information on organizational structure and organizational change in ministries and central agencies from 1947 onwards (Rolland, Roness and Ågotnes 1998). It has been subsequently extended to include similar information on all state organizations in Norway, and made accessible through the Internet.³

The mapping of state organizations has been made according to a *set* of categories (types of tasks, organizational characteristics, policy areas) to which the specific state organizations have been assigned according to whether they satisfy the various criteria or not, as opposed to using a single category, i.e. tasks or organizational form. This method is intended to provide a more detailed picture as to what constitutes the different *types* of civil service organizations.

Administrative reform and role purification

During the last 20–25 years, important processes of change have taken place within the public sector and modified the surrounding conditions for civil service organizations in Norway. The changes within central government are linked to *active, conscious reform attempts*, and can be said to have focused on: a) changes in the general regulative frameworks encompassing state organizations, b) development of more independent organizational forms within government, and c) principles for how the state is to select the appropriate organizational forms when reorganizing existing organizations or

³ (<http://www.nsd.uib.no/data/polsys/>).

establishing new governmental organizations (Sand 1996: 187). The results have been a moderation in the government's general regulative frameworks and a greater variety in governmental organizational forms as well as change in work procedures and steering structures. Norwegian reform attempts have largely focused on the internal structure and organization of central government, its function and tasks, work procedures, decision-making, and steering structures. The pace of change within central government heightened during the nineties in the aftermath of the Hermansen Report on «A better organized state» (NOU 1989:5). This report represents one of the most influential public reform documents in Norway, and stresses that there should be a corresponding relationship between values and function of state organizations and organizational structure. The report also calls for the political leadership to be more deliberative and consistent in their choice of organizational forms in channelling different types of state activities (Wik 2001).

More recently, administrative reform has been characterized by a gradual development from an integrated to disintegrated state (Christensen and Læg Reid 2004), as well as a transition from *multi-purpose* to *single-purpose* organizations. There has also been a gradually greater scope and intensity of the NMP movement from 1990 onwards (Læg Reid et al. 2003). Attempts at separating the various functions and tasks into different administrative bodies, imply a change from a unified central administration with mixed roles to a more specialized and fragmented state administration with specific roles. To what extent has role refinement and reform attempts led to a change in civil service organizations' defining characteristics – in tasks and organizational structures?

Structural features

Form of affiliation

State organizations differ in their form of affiliation to the political authorities and to parliament. Based on an instrumental perspective and guidelines given the Hermansen Report, «A better organized state», it was expected that primary tasks and functions would influence the choice of organizational form for the civil service organizations.

The classification of units as being *ordinary* civil service organizations, civil service organizations with *extended authority*, or governmental administrative *enterprises*, builds to some extent on previous accounts (in particular Statskonsult 1997, 1998).⁴ In addition, public documents such as the annual state budget and accounts provide information on what form of organization the singular organization is considered to possess. Thus, budgetary disposition and budgetary principles indicate affiliation. In the state budget, ordinary civil service organizations are positioned under the section of «the states own debit and revenue», they are gross budgeted and have separate budget chapters relating

⁴ In this respect, «form of affiliation» represents a judicial term, and as such grants different sets of formal constraints or freedom of action in the interplay with general governmental regulative frameworks. The level of local autonomy and political control to a certain degree (at least formally), follows as a consequence of affiliation. For a central agency to have a different organizational form than that of an ordinary civil service agency, a distinct political resolution has to be made.

to a debit side and a revenue side. They receive governmental grants/subsidies mainly through customary budget entries, and are tightly coupled to the main principles of the governmental budget system. In comparison, the other two sub-categories of civil service organizations have enhanced budgetary leeway, emphasized through the use of particular budget entries. Organizations with extended authorities are budgeted with a net amount as an overall solution, and as such receive a non-specified governmental subsidy or grant, thus emphasizing their particularly free and independent position towards their parent ministry and the political authorities (Finansdepartementet, Finansavdelingen 1999).⁵ Governmental administrative enterprises are kept separate in the budget system from the other two sub-categories of civil service organizations, not as «the state's own debit and revenue», but as part of «the business management of the state». In contrast to organizations with extended authority which are fully net budgeted, government enterprises are only part net budgeted. This applies to their day-to-day funding while investments are budgeted gross. In this way, the debit and revenue side are seen in relation to each other, and the enterprises at the end of a budget term may either break even, experience a surplus, or a deficit.

Table 1 displays the state organizations by sub-category of affiliation within the model of civil service organizations in 1989 and 1999:

Table 1. Form of affiliation in 1989 and 1999. Absolute figures and percent

Form of affiliation	1989		1999	
	Number of units	% (N=249)	Number of units	% (N=193)
Ordinary civil service organizations	234	94	174	90
Civil service organizations with extended authority	6	2	11	6
Governmental administrative enterprises	9	4	8	4
Total	249	100	193	100

Sources: Proposition to the Storting Report No. 1 (1988–89 and 1998–99), St.meld. nr. 3 (1989–90 and 1999–2000), Norges Statskalender 1989 and 1999

Based on criteria of what constitutes a state organization within this form of affiliation, there were 249 such state organizations in 1989. 94% of these were ordinary civil service organizations and as such represented the most common organizational sub-category. Governmental administrative enterprises were less common, and there were even fewer in the category of civil service organizations with extended authority.

⁵ Organizations with extended authority and governmental administrative enterprise are given broad authority of different kinds due to their particular organizational form. In these instances, authorities go hand-in-hand with organizational form. Ordinary civil service organizations are not exempted from general governmental rules and regulations in principle but can be delegated special authority by the parent ministry or parliament if needed. Special authority can be of a financial kind (e.g. budgetary) or administrative (concerning personnel, terms of employment, level of salaries etc.). Special authorities is delegated on the basis of the particular circumstances experienced by an agency or group of state organizations, and do not follow the organizational form *per se* as is the case for organizations with extended authority and governmental administrative enterprises.

In 1999, 193 state organizations were identified as civil service units. Similar to 1989, ordinary civil service organizations constituted the most widespread organizational sub-category: 174 organizations, equivalent to 90% of the population, were of this organizational sub-type this year. There were only eight government administrative enterprises, and eleven civil service organizations with extended authority.

Three main observations can be made in Table 1. First of all, the table shows the significant decline in the number of civil service organizations during the time-period in question. There was a decrease of 56 organizations from 1989 to 1999, representing a 23% decline in the size of the population. Secondly, the reduction is most prominent among ordinary civil service organizations. Nevertheless, this sub-type appears to be relatively stable across time considering the proportion of the total population constituted by this type. A third observation is that there has been an increase in state organizations organized as civil service organizations with extended authority. This is the only sub-type that experienced a growth in numbers from 1989 until 1999, something which could be perceived as support for an instrumental perspective. It indicates that central authorities have had a desire to follow-up on recommendations made in the Hermansen Report regarding an extended use of this particular type of state organization.

The decline in the size of the population needs further comment. One wonders if the Norwegian government has been «rolling back the state» as part of a conscious attempt to reduce public spending (Parker and Burton 1991, Rhodes 1997). 153 of the 249 civil service organizations identified in 1989 form comparable units in 1999 (Rubecksen 2003).⁶ For the remaining 96 units forming state organizations in 1989, there has been some type of organizational «ending events» (i.e. organizational dissolution, merging, complex restructuring, absorption, dividing). Most of the organizations (73%) experienced ending events which led to the end of the organization as such, but allowed for the activity to be continued through new organizational structures. Only a small part has actually ceased to exist in the meaning of pure organizational dissolution (13 organizations).⁷ For instance, the Norwegian college reform during the 1990s resulted in the merger of 98 regional and specialized colleges into 26 «new» state colleges, thereby reducing their numbers by 75 percent.

27% of the organizations experienced *continuation events* (organizational maintenance), which in turn led to a removal from relevant units of analysis in 1999. Most of the continuation events involved horizontal changes (moving units to a different hierarchal level), but there were also vertical changes (change in form of affiliation for units, including change of legal statute).^{8 9}

⁶ Approximately 40 organizations represent «new» organizational units in 1999.

⁷ <http://www.nsd.uib.no/data/polsys/>

⁸ Exact numbers relating to the different organizational *ending events* for the 96 organizations are as follows: 28 organizations ending by *complex restructuring* (among others the Colleges), 17 organizations ending by *equal status merger*, 13 organizations ending by *pure dissolution*, 7 organizations ending by *absorption*, 1 organization ending by *dividing*. *Continuing events* (organizational maintenance): 17 organizations *horizontally moved*, 10 organizations vertically changed, 3 privatized (Rubecksen 2003, Database on the organization of the Norwegian state administration).

Parent ministries

All state organizations organized as central agencies are subordinate to a ministry. In principle the ministries can instruct and control all aspects of their activities and functions unless a specific resolution exists which makes an exception to this. The theoretical perspectives outlined give rise to different expectations with regards to the significance of ministries. An institutional perspective would view ministries as a relevant and important variable. For example, there may be ministerial differences in delegating financial authority to subordinate units. From an instrumental standpoint major differences will not be expected based on affiliation to ministries. From this perspective, differences between central agencies are more likely to stem from differences in primary tasks and organizational form rather than ministerial differences.

It was relative unproblematic to establish a parent ministry for the greater part of the civil service organizations. Official budget documents facilitated information on this matter. In the national budget, the state organizations are positioned under their parent ministry, and specific chapters are used for the singular ministry and its subordinate units. The disposition in the national budget and the chapter number used for the singular state organization thus indicate which ministry is considered as the parent ministry. However, it is not uncommon for civil service organizations to be listed several places in the budget and to receive funds from different ministries. In 1989 the regional *Chief Administrative Officer* (Fylkesmannen) received funds from the Department of Environment, the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Consumer Affairs and Administration. Another example is The Norwegian Research Council which received funds from more than six ministries in 1989. A common feature of many of the organizations receiving funds from several ministries is that they attend to tasks that can be said to cross ministerial boundaries. For such organizations, the point of departure has been set to the ministry allocating their main funding. There are an equal number of ministries in both years of the study (16), with some minor name changes.

The dispersion of units according to ministry for the year 1989 is shown in Table 2. Here we can see variations between ministries in the number of subordinate organizations and organizational sub-types.

⁹ 153 of 193 state organizations in 1999, formed comparable organizations in 1989. In addition, the population for 1999 includes 40 organizational units of more recent data, thus established after 1989.

Table 2. Parent ministry and forms of affiliation in 1989. Absolute figures and percent

Ministry	Civil service organizations with extended authority	Government administrative enterprises	Ordinary civil service organizations	Total	%
The Ministry of Development Aid	-	-	3	3	1
The Ministry of Treasure and Customs	-	-	7	7	3
The Ministry of Fisheries	1	-	2	3	1
The Ministry of Consumer Affairs and Administration	-	-	12	12	5
The Ministry of Defence	-	1	11	12	5
The Ministry of Justice and Police	-	-	24	24	10
The Ministry of Church Affairs and Education	-	-	28	28	11
The Ministry of Local Government and Labour	-	-	10	10	4
The Ministry of Culture and Scientific Affairs	2	1	57	60	24
The Ministry of Agriculture	1	2	26	29	12
The Ministry of the Environment	-	-	5	5	2
The Ministry of Industry	2	-	5	7	3
The Ministry of Petroleum and Energy	-	1	3	4	1
The Ministry of Transport and Communications	-	3	4	7	3
The Ministry of Social Affairs	-	1	31	32	13
The Ministry of Foreign Affairs	-	-	6	6	2
Total	6	9	234	249	100

Source: Proposition to the Storting Report No. 1 (1988-89) and Norges Statskalender 1989

The Ministry of Culture and Scientific Affairs distinguishes itself by having the majority of subordinate organizations in 1989, close to 24% of all civil service organizations this year. There were also many units under the Ministry of Social Affairs, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Church Affairs and Education, and the Ministry of Justice and Police. The Ministry of Development Aid and the Ministry of Fisheries had the fewest of all, with only three subordinate organizations each in 1989. We also found few organizations under the Ministry of Oil and Energy and Department of Environment. All of the ministries had ordinary civil service organizations as subordinate organizations in 1989. Civil service organizations with extended authority were more concentrated and only relevant for four ministries (Department of Industry and Trade, The Ministry of

Culture and Scientific Affairs, the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Fisheries). Six ministries had governmental administrative enterprises in 1989. Three were subordinate to the Ministry of Transport and Communications (Norwegian Telecommunications Services, Norwegian State Railways and the Postal Services), and two to the Ministry of Agriculture. The ministries of Culture and Scientific Affairs (Norwegian Film Institute), Defence, Social Affairs, and Petroleum and Energy (the Statkraft Group) each had one unit with this particular organizational sub-type in 1989.

Table 3 shows many of the same variations between ministries in 1999, both in numbers and types. Four ministries can be considered as «large» by having many subordinate state organizations. The largest numbers of units were located under the Ministry of Church -, Education- and Research Affairs and the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, closely followed by the ministries of Justice and Police, and the Ministry of Cultural Affairs. The number of state organizations under these ministries constituted more than 60% of all state organizations in 1999. There were fewest organizations under the Ministry of Oil and Energy, Ministry of Fisheries and Ministry of Foreign Affairs. For six of the ministries only ordinary civil service organizations were relevant to their functions, while five ministries had organizations with extended authority and seven had governmental administrative enterprises. The Ministry of Agriculture distinguishes itself as the ministry with the majority of organizations with extended authority in 1999, as does the Ministry of Church-, Education- and Research Affairs. As shown in Table 3, government administrative enterprises were to a larger degree spread throughout different ministries in 1999.

Table 3. Parent ministry and forms of affiliation in 1999. Absolute figures and percent

Ministry	Civil service organizations with extended authority	Government administrative enterprises	Ordinary civil service organizations	Total	%
Ministry of Labour and Administration	-	1	7	8	4
Ministry of Children and Family affairs	2	-	6	8	4
Ministry of Treasure and Customs	-	-	5	5	3
Ministry of Fisheries	-	-	3	3	1
Ministry of Defence	1	1	3	5	3
The Ministry of Justice and the Police	-	-	26	26	14
Ministry of Church-, Education and Research Affairs	3	-	35	38	20
Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development	1	-	11	12	6
Ministry of Cultural Affairs	-	-	24	24	12
Ministry of Agriculture	4	1	6	11	6
Ministry of Environment	-	1	4	5	3
Ministry of Trade and Industry	-	1	7	8	4
Ministry of Petroleum and Energy	-	-	2	2	1
Ministry of Transport and Communications	-	1	4	5	3
Ministry of Social Affairs and Health	-	2	28	30	15
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	-	-	3	3	1
Total	11	8	174	193	

Source: Proposition to the Storting Report No. 1 (1998–99) and Norges Statskalender 1999.

Policy area

In the prolongation of organizational characteristics, tasks and functions can be perceived as having ties to certain policy areas or show different sector connections. Policy area is more relevant from an institutional point of view, and several studies emphasise organizations' environments as vital and influential for organizational features and activity (among others Meyer and Rowan 1977, Powell and DiMaggio 1991, Scott 1992, Røvik 1992, 1998, Brunsson and Olsen 1993). An instrumental perspective will not attribute the same relevance to the environments of organizations.

A *policy area* largely corresponds to purpose and state activity (Roness 2003) In this study we have chosen the following categorization:

- Finance
- Foreign affairs
- Research/education
- Environment/health/social affairs
- Economic affairs
- Culture
- Law/justice
- Communication
- Defence
- Municipal/county
- Other

The division between different policy areas mainly builds on what is considered to be «national affairs» in the Norwegian Constitution (Mauland and Mellemvik 1998: 146–47). In practical life, affiliation to the parent ministry and connection to policy area are very much the same, although some organizations may have purposes or activities that cross such relations (e.g. policy areas like research/education and communications). In the study (Rubecksen 2003) tasks and functions of civil service organizations were related to certain policy areas. Thus, an organization may have primary tasks within one policy area (called main policy area), but also secondary tasks in the same or a different policy area (then referred to as additional policy area).

The state organizations connection to different main policy areas in 1989 and 1999, are shown in Table 4:

Table 4. Main policy areas for state organizations in 1989 and 1999. Absolute figures and percent

Main policy area	1989		1999	
	Number of organizations	% (N=249)	Number of organizations	% (N=193)
Finance	5	2	4	2
Foreign Affairs	3	1	3	2
Research/education	98	39	46	24
Environment/health/social affairs	50	20	51	26
Economic affairs	27	11	17	9
Culture	18	7	24	12
Law/justice	22	9	24	12
Communications	10	4	8	4
Defence	10	4	5	3
Municipal/regional	1	1	5	3
Other	5	2	6	3
Total	249	100	193	100

Source: Proposition to the Storting Report No. 1 (1989–90, 1998–99) and Norges Statskalender 1989 and 1999

In 1989, 39% of civil service organizations had research/education as their relevant policy area. These were mostly research institutes, training facilities and colleges. Many of the organizations had environment/health/social affairs as their main policy area (20% of the population) and where state hospitals serve as an example. Fewest organizations had municipal/regional affairs as the main policy area; in 1989 this was only relevant for the Chief Administrative Officer. Not many organizations had the main policy area finance or foreign affairs.¹⁰

The policy areas environment/health/social affairs and research/education were also most widespread in 1999, however with some differences in the portion of units from 1989. Especially within the policy area research/education we can see a reduction in number of organizations during the ten-year period. The decline in numbers can partly be ascribed to the college reform in Norway during the 1990s. There were also relatively few organizations having finance, foreign affairs, defence and municipal/regional as their main policy area this year.

¹⁰ Five of the state organizations were registered as having «other» as main policy area in 1989, i.e. the Church Council, the Episcopate Offices, and the Governor of Svalbard.

Type of organizational form

State organizations may differ with regard to the type of organizational form they constitute, whether they themselves have subordinate units or not, if the organization comprises several more or less equal organizations and equal functions, or form a singular and unique organization. Thus, three types of organizational form may be distinguished. *National organizations* are singular organizations with unique tasks which have no subordinate unit, and form the only state organization of its kind in the country. State organizations that constitute national organizations with a central unit and one or more subordinate units have been classified as *integrated organizations*. *Group organizations* consist of more or less equivalent organizations spread throughout the country, with similar tasks. In the study such organizations are handled as a single unit.

Based on the criteria for what constitutes different types of organizational form, there were 168 national organizations in 1989 (thus 68% of the population this year), 43 integrated organizations (17%), and 38 group organizations (15%). Table 5 shows type of organizational form according to parent ministry in 1989.

Table 5. Organizational form and parent ministry in 1989. Absolute figures

Ministry	National organizations	Integrated organizations	Group organizations	Total
The Ministry of Development Aid	2	1	-	3
The Ministry of Treasure and Customs	4	2	1	7
The Ministry of Fisheries	1	2	-	3
The Ministry of Consumer Affairs and Administration	8	3	1	12
The Ministry of Defence	8	3	1	12
The Ministry of Justice and Police	13	3	8	24
The Ministry of Church Affairs and Education	21	-	7	28
The Ministry of Local Government and Labour	5	4	1	10
The Ministry of Culture and Scientific Affairs	46	3	11	60
The Ministry of Agriculture	15	8	6	29
The Ministry of the Environment	3	2	-	5
The Ministry of Industry	4	3	-	7
The Ministry of Petroleum and Energy	3	1	-	4
The Ministry of Transport and Communications	1	6	-	7
The Ministry of Social Affairs	30	1	1	32
The Ministry of Foreign Affairs	4	1	1	6
Total	168	43	38	249

Source: Proposition to the Storting Report No. 1 (1988–89) and Norges Statskalender 1989.

From Table 5 we find the majority of national organizations in 1989 under the Ministry of Culture and Scientific Affairs (77% of all subordinate organizations affiliated to this ministry – 46 organizations). All ministries had national organizations as subordinate organizations in 1989, and most ministries had integrated organizations (with the exception of the Ministry of Church Affairs and Education). The majority of integrated organizations were located under the Ministry of Transport and Communications, and half of these were government administrative enterprises (the Postal Service, Norwegian State Railways, and Norwegian Telecommunications Services). A large part of the ministries also had group organizations as subordinate units (10 ministries). The Ministry of Culture and Scientific Affairs had the majority of these, i.e. the engineering colleges and the regional colleges.

The corresponding distribution of state organizations on organizational form in 1999 shows 131 national organizations (65% of this years population), 47 integrated organizations (24%) and 15 group organizations (11%).

Table 6. Dispersion of units according to organizational form, distributed by parent ministry for 1999. Absolute figures

Ministry	National organizations	Integrated Organizations	Group Organizations	Total
Ministry of Labour and Administration	4	3	1	8
Ministry of Children and Family Affairs	6	1	1	8
Ministry of Treasure and Customs	2	3	-	5
Ministry of Fisheries	-	3	-	3
Ministry of Defence	2	3	-	5
The Ministry of Justice and the Police	15	4	7	26
Ministry of Church-, Education- and Research Affairs	33	1	4	38
Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development	7	5	-	12
Ministry of Cultural Affairs	21	3	-	24
Ministry of Agriculture	3	7	1	11
Ministry of Environment	2	3	-	5
Ministry of Trade and Industry	4	4	-	8
Ministry of Petroleum and Energy	1	1	-	2
Ministry of Transport and Communications	2	3	-	5
Ministry of Health and Social Affairs	28	2	-	30
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	1	1	1	3
Total	131	47	15	193

Source: Proposition to the Storting Report No. 1 (1998–99) and Norges Statskalender 1999.

While all ministries in 1999 had integrated organizations, and all but one (the Ministry of Fisheries) had national organizations, group organizations were much less common. Only six ministries had such organizations this year. Group organizations were particularly relevant for the Ministry of Justice and Police (47% of all group organizations in 1999). Examples of such organizations were the county courts, the courts of appeal and the prison administration. The Ministry of Church-, Education- and Research Affairs also had a large proportion of the group organizations in 1999 (27%), among others the state colleges, the episcopate offices and the national education offices.

Tables 5 and 6 show there has been an increase over time in the proportion of integrated organizations within the population, while there has been a decrease in the

proportion of group organizations and national organizations from 1989 to 1999.¹¹ The reduction from 1989 to 1999 in the number of state organizations (from 249 to 193 organizations) has thus been most extensive among national organizations (36), and subsequently group organizations (23). The college reform during the 1990s accounts for some of this, resulting in fewer national organizations as well as reorganization into larger and fewer group units. Moreover, various types of organizational form distribute themselves in certain patterns within the organizational sub types.

Table 7 shows the type of organizational form according to ordinary civil service organizations, civil service organizations with extended authority and government administrative enterprises in 1989:

Table 7. Organizational form according to form of affiliation in 1989. Absolute figures

Form of affiliation	National organizations	Integrated organizations	Group organizations	Total
Ordinary civil service organizations	156	40	38	234
Civil service units with extended authority	6	-	-	6
Government administrative enterprises	6	3	-	9
Total	168	43	38	249

Source: Proposition to the Storting No. 1, 1988–89 and Norges Statskalender 1989.

National organizations were the most common type of organizational form for ordinary civil service organizations, but integrated organizations and group organizations were also widespread. All civil service organizations with extended authority had the form of national organizations. This was also the case for the majority of the government administrative enterprises; however integrated organizations were also represented among these units.

Table 8. Organizational form according to form of affiliation in 1999. Absolute figures

Form of affiliation	National Organizations	Integrated organizations	Group organizations	Total
Ordinary civil service organizations	119	40	15	174
Civil service units with extended authority	8	3	-	11
Government administrative enterprises	4	4	-	8
Total	131	47	15	193

Source: Proposition to the Storting No. 1, 1998–99 and Norges Statskalender 1999.

¹¹ In the years 1989–1999 4 integrated organizations experienced organizational *ending* events of various types (the Postal Services, Norwegian State Railways, Norwegian Telecommunications Services, and the Nautical Government Services). During 1989–99, 8 integrated organizations were *established* (e.g. The National Library and the Norwegian Mapping Authority) <http://www.nsd.uib.no/data/polSys/>.

As Table 8 shows, the majority of national organizations in 1999 were ordinary civil service organizations. It is also only within this organizational sub-type that we found group organizations this year. None of the civil service organizations with extended authority were organized as group organizations in 1999, and most of these were national organizations. Among the eight units organized as government administrative enterprises there were four national organizations and four integrated organizations.

Task portfolio in state organizations

In addition to organizational features, state organizations can be described according to task portfolio, functions or roles. In the study, *task portfolio* was perceived to be a decisive variable from an instrumental point of view. The reason for this was the strong emphasis on values and functions prominent in the Hermansen Report. The Hermansen commission strongly recommended that the political authorities consider civil service organizations' specific functions and values as the natural point of departure when selecting the appropriate organizational form. Based on an instrumental perspective, differences in task portfolio are expected to be more prominent between organizations with *different* organizational sub-types than among organizations sharing the same organizational form.

Task portfolio in state organizations comprises a combination of primary (main) and secondary (additional) tasks of various kinds that an organization can attend to. A state organization can maintain pure and restricted tasks or functions, or a combination of different functions and tasks. In classifying types of tasks and functions, the main distinction has been set between functions that comprise the *exercise of public authority* and *service delivery/production*. This division has previously been used in other settings (e.g. St.meld. nr. 40 (1949), Rolland, Roness and Ågotnes 1998). In the study some additional adjustments have been made. Further differentiations rely mainly on the report from the Hermansen Commission and a report from The Swedish State Office (SOU 1999:15A).

Regulation and scrutiny has been singled out as a separate category from other kinds of exercising public authority due to the specific and circumscribed nature of these functions. For service delivery and production, a distinction is made between tasks which are primarily carried out on a non-profit basis, and those which are subject to market conditions. *General Public Services* refer to the production and delivery of collective goods/products and services, e.g. services procured by the Prison Administration, but also services and goods that are partly financed by the consumer (and not solely by the state), i.e. services provided by institutions such as state hospitals. *Business and Industrial services* are more frequently directed towards market demand, and are largely financed commercially rather than by the state over the national budget. This type of service delivery/production thus operates within a different set of conditions and claims concerning their performance and execution. Nevertheless, the political authorities may have interest in steering these functions. In addition, such services may take place in situations varying from monopoly to full-scale competition. This will, of course, be of consequence in real life for the singular organization, but has been excluded from the study due to limitations in the sources utilized.

In addition to tasks involving *exercising public authority* (regulation, scrutiny and other means of control), and *service and production* (general public services, business and industrial services), the organizations have been classified according to a final category of *policy formulation* (policy shaping and advice). Thus, the state organizations have been mapped according to their possible engagement in the following five categories of tasks in 1989 and 1999:

- Regulation and scrutiny
- Other kinds of exercising authority
- General public services
- Business and industrial services
- Policy formulation (policy shaping and -advice).

The state organizations have been registered as having one main task and up to two secondary tasks. By separating and combining these five types of tasks, it has been possible to give a more detailed picture of task portfolio in state organizations compared to what would have been the case by registering only one task (Roness 2003).

Types of tasks

Exercising public authority refers to tasks performed in accordance with or based on law, regulations or precepts. As a main rule such functions are subject to general government rules, laws and regulations. The division between tasks involving *exercising public authority* and other types of tasks can occasionally be somewhat ambiguous and is therefore partly constructed on subjective perception. Typical functions considered to be examples of exercising public authority are administration of government grants and subsidies, administration and evaluation of precepts, administrative processing, distribution and allocation of resources (monetary/tax redistribution), administration of government insurance systems, arbitration and conflict-resolving, and upholding government contract law.

The administration of government grants/subsidies usually operates within specific regulations or precepts. Examples of state organizations handling these types of tasks in 1999 were the Directorate for Development Aid (administration of funds within relief work), the Norwegian Research Council (grants and funds for research) and the Norwegian Film Institute (administration of funds aiming at supporting the production of films). Administration of subsidies or grants is perhaps most common for organizations resembling directorates, or national organizations with a particular responsibility for a specific policy area. The same is the case for administrative functions like production and revision of precepts and regulations, various forms of processing and decision-making. Some tasks represent more ambiguous instances of exercising public authority. They might be performed in accordance with regulations or laws, but simultaneously have the character of service delivery or production. For example this

was relevant for the National Office for Social Insurance, and the Norwegian Public Service Pension Fund in 1999. The National Office for Social Insurance has thus been classified as having «exercising public authority» as its primary task, while the Norwegian Public Service Pension Fund is registered as having «general public services» as the primary task, and «exercising public authority» as a secondary task. These respective classifications are based on the first-mentioned authority's importance in a wider social context, while the latter represents a limited and specialized service for government employees.

The district courts and courts of appeal are examples of civil service organizations whose primary task is exercising public authority, where arbitration, conflict-solving and processing in accordance to law are central tasks. In addition, the courts have the *authority to enforce* laws, regulations and decisions through provisions of penalty. Other central agencies with primary tasks involving arbitration and conflict solving do not necessarily have the right to enforce their decisions. Functions in these organizations have the character of counselling and guidance (e.g. the National Arbitration Tribunal and arbitration institutions, The National Insurance Court, The County Committees for Social Affairs), rather than processing in accordance to law.

Regulation and scrutiny is normally perceived as a sub-type of exercising public authority, but is treated here as a specialized function and is therefore singled out as a separate category of tasks. These functions may cover various forms of tasks, and also be qualitatively different from each other. Inspection, supervision and control all represent instances of regulation and scrutiny. In the study, regulation and scrutiny are closely related to the follow-up of regulations, laws and regulations or control by – or pursuant to these. It is also a central feature that the functions of scrutiny and regulation are directed towards other agents or institutions than the organization performing these functions. Whether organizations considered as being supervisory authorities have the right of enforcement does not form a relevant criterion in the study. For some units it seems obvious that these should be regarded as supervisory authorities. This refers among others to the Norwegian Post and Telecommunications Authority and the Norwegian Agricultural Inspection Service, which comprise units of analysis in 1999. Also for other organizations the name of the organization gives a clear indication of main tasks of regulation and scrutiny, although in a somewhat different manner than the above mentioned (e.g. the Gender Equality Ombudsman and The Consumer Ombudsman). Even though it may seem obvious that functions within scrutiny and regulation are central to many of the state organizations, ambiguous cases can also be found. As an example, the Office of the Ombudsman for Children is registered as having regulation and scrutiny as primary task in 1999, even though this organization is not normally perceived as a supervisory authority. The background for this seemingly odd classification is the Ombudsman's role as the national authority for supervision of Norwegian law to be in accordance with UN Children's Convention.

General Public Services refers to certain types of service supply or productions as previously mentioned, and are services of a public character carried out on a non-profit basis. This could be the production of free collective goods (e.g. the Prison Administration), or services and goods that are partly financed by the consumer (e.g. services provided by the state hospitals). Functions like counselling or advisory tasks

(e.g. the Parental Compulsory School Committee), informative and guidance tasks, administrative services of different kinds (e.g. the Institute for Population-based Cancer Research, the Product Register), equipment and delivery services (e.g. The National Police Equipment Service), production and administration of knowledge and research (e.g. universities, research institutes), and training and competence building (e.g. Correctional Service of Norway Staff Academy, C, Statskonsult, – the Directorate of Public Management, Norwegian Support System for Special Education) are also included in *general public services*.

Business and Industrial Services include service delivery and production in a form of market, where primarily the level of demand regulates the level of the organization's activity. This mainly applies to government administrative enterprises, i.e. in 1999 Statsbygg – the Directorate of Public Management, The Norwegian Mapping Authority and the Norwegian Guarantee Institute for Export Credits (GIEK), but also ordinary civil service organizations are registered with such functions as secondary tasks in 1999 (e.g. the Norwegian Meteorological Institute, the production units of the Norwegian Public Roads Administration, parts of the Norwegian Coastal Administration, Norwegian Metrology and Accreditation Service, and Norwegian National Rail Administration).

Policy formulation (and advice) refers to processes and functions of a more political character, directed towards the political authorities (cabinet and parliament) in the form of preparation and/or implementation of sector policies, arrangements and instruments (Statskonsult 2000b). Since, through the hierarchal structure of government, all civil service organizations contribute towards policy formulation to some extent, a restrictive approach has been chosen in the classification of such tasks for the state organizations in the study. Instances where such functions have been registered as primary or additional tasks are organizations responsible for the development and/or adjustments of general regulations and policies within particular policy areas, professional counselling and the role as an advisor to parent ministry and/or within certain policy areas, role as a vital implementer of sector policies (e.g. the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation – NORAD), and the function of an active agent and «lobbying» (e.g. the Office of The Ombudsman for Children and The Centre for Gender Equality). Other examples are law preparing activities and organizations functioning as bodies entitled to comment.

Table 9 show the distribution of state organizations according to primary and secondary tasks in 1989 based on the criteria earlier specified. Each unit has been registered with one main task, and up to two secondary tasks (thus the number of additional tasks does not correspond to number of organizations).

Table 9. Task portfolio in state organizations in 1989. Absolute figures and percent¹²

Type of task/function	Primary task		Secondary task		Total	
	Number of organizations	% (N=249)	Number of organizations	% (N=249)	Number of organizations	% (N=249)
Regulation and Scrutiny	27	11	13	5	40	16
Other exercising of authority	79	32	25	10	104	42
General Public Services	134	54	56	23	190	76
Business and Industrial Services	7	2	8	3	15	6
Policy formulation and advice	2	1	33	13	35	14
Total	249	100	-	-	-	-

Source: Proposition to the Storting Report No. 1 (1988–89) and Norges Statskalender 1989.

Most civil service organizations had *general public services* as their primary task in 1989. *Other kinds of exercising authority* were widespread, and 27 organizations were classified as having *regulation and scrutiny* as their primary task. When we consider secondary tasks, «general public services» were most common. Very few civil service organizations had primary tasks within *policy formulation*, but *business and industrial services* were not too common either. If we look at additional tasks, close to 6% of the population maintained business and industrial functions as primary or secondary task this year. In 1999, *general public services* were still the most widespread primary task among civil service organizations.

¹² Table 9 and 10: The number of *additional tasks* does not correspond to number of organizations (each unit has been registered with one main task and up to two secondary tasks).

Table 10. Task portfolio in state organizations in 1999. Absolute figures and percent

Type of task/function	Primary task		Secondary task		Total	
	Number of organizations	% (N=193)	Number of organizations	% (N=193)	Number of organizations	% (N=193)
Regulation and scrutiny	30	16	22	11	52	27
Other kinds of exercising authority	52	27	31	16	83	43
General Public Services	102	53	38	20	140	73
Business and Industrial Services	5	3	12	6	17	9
Policy formulation and advice	4	2	25	13	29	15
Total	193	100	-	-	-	-

Source: Proposition to the Storting Report No. 1 (1998–99) and Norges Statskalender 1909.

Based on the above-mentioned criteria, more than half of the units in 1999 had *general public services* as their primary task (53%). If we include additional tasks, 73% of the population maintained this type of function. Approximately 16% had primary tasks within *regulation and scrutiny* while 27% had *other kinds of exercising public authority*. Relatively few organizations had *business and industrial services* as main tasks, but if we include those organizations that had these as a secondary task we find that this applied to 9% of the population in 1999. The proportional distribution of types of primary tasks in state organizations is almost identical in both years, even though the size of the population has been reduced by approximately 23%. Some differences are nevertheless more apparent than others:

- There has been an increase in the proportion of units having *regulation and scrutiny* as their primary task from 1989 to 1999 (from 11% to 16%)
- There has been a decrease in the proportion of units having *other kinds of exercising public authority* as their primary task from 1989 to 1999 (from 32% to 27%).

Combinations of primary and secondary tasks

From a theoretical standpoint it has been interesting to look more closely at types of combinations between primary and secondary tasks that existed within state organizations in 1989 and 1999. Based on an instrumental perspective, it was not expected that a significant number of organizations would be found with a task portfolio implying internal conflicting roles. This particularly applied to combinations of *regulation and scrutiny* and *business and industrial services* within the one and same

organization. It was anticipated that more such combinations would be found in 1989 than in 1999 considering that the Hermansen Report (published in 1989), had presented guidelines for usage of forms of affiliation. It was also expected that support would be found for a transition from *multi-purpose* organizations with many tasks to *single-purpose* organizations with specialised and purified task portfolio.

Tables 11 and 12 show how many of the organizations with particular types of primary tasks also had secondary tasks of various kinds. As mentioned earlier, all units are classified with one primary task and up to two additional tasks. The following combinations of primary and secondary tasks were identified for 1989:

107 of 249 civil service organizations have been registered as having one or two additional tasks in 1989. The most common combination was organizations with *exercising public authority* as their primary task and «general public services» as a secondary task. Several units also had this type of primary task in combination with «policy formulation».

Table 11. Combinations of primary and secondary tasks in state organizations in 1989. Absolute figures

Primary task	SECONDARY TASKS				
	Regulation and scrutiny	Other kinds of exercising authority	General public services	Business and industrial services	Policy formulation (shaping- and advice)
Regulation and scrutiny (27)		13	12	-	1
Other kinds of exercising public authority (79)	12		26	3	19
General Public Services (134)	1	10		5	13
Business and Industrial Services (7)	-	4	3		-
Policy formulation (shaping- and advice) (2)	-	1	2	-	

Source: Proposition to the Storting Report No. 1 (1988–89) and Norges Statskalender 1989.

State organizations with *regulation and scrutiny* as their main function either had «other kinds of exercising public authority» or «general public services» as supplementary tasks (with the exception of one unit which had «policy formulation» as a secondary task). Among organizations with *general public services* as a primary task, the majority had «policy formulation» as additional task, but several organizations also had «other kinds of exercising public authority».

Approximately half of the organizations with primary tasks of the type *business and industrial services* had additional tasks within «exercising public authority» (e.g. Norwegian Rail Administration, the Postal Services, Norwegian Telecommunications Services, and the Directorate of Civil Aviation Authority). None of the organizations classified with *business and industrial services* or *policy formulation* as their primary task had secondary tasks within «regulation and scrutiny» in 1989. The combinations of *business and industrial services* as a main function, and «policy formulation» as additional function – or the

converse – were not found at all for this year. Very few organizations with the primary task *general public services*, had «regulation and scrutiny» as a secondary task. In 1989 this only applied to a single unit (The National Council on Tobacco and Health). Neither is it common to have «policy formulation» as a secondary task if the primary task was *regulation and scrutiny*; this was also true for just one unit (The Gender Equality Ombudsman). We find that only three state organizations had the combination of *exercising public authority* as primary task and «business and industrial services» as secondary task (The Norwegian Mapping Authority, the Statkraft Group, and Norwegian Public Roads Administration). There was also a higher portion of organizations with primary functions within *exercising public authority* or *regulation and scrutiny* with additional tasks of various kinds, compared to organizations with *general public services* as primary function. The corresponding distribution of different combinations of *task portfolio* in 1999 is shown in Table 12.

Table 12. Combinations of primary and secondary tasks in state organizations in 1999. Absolute figures

Primary task	Secondary tasks				
	Regulation and scrutiny	Other kinds of exercising public authority	General public services	Business and industrial services	Policy formulation (shaping- and advice)
Regulation and scrutiny (30)		16	13	2	5
Other kinds of exercising public authority (52)	17		22	4	9
General Public Services (102)	4	14		6	10
Business and industrial services (5)	-	1	-		1
Policy formulation (shaping- and advice) (4)	-	-	3	-	

Source: Proposition to the Storting Report No. 1 (1998–99) and Norges Statskalender 1999.

Table 12 shows that organizations having *regulation and scrutiny* as their primary function had different types of secondary tasks. It was most common to have this primary task in combination with «exercising public authority» or «general public services». However, some organizations are registered as having this in combination with «business and industrial services» (e.g. the Directorate for Civil Protection and Emergency Planning, and Norwegian Metrology and Accreditation Service). Five of the organizations with primary tasks within *regulation and scrutiny* had this in combination with «policy formulation» (e.g. the Office of the Children Ombudsman, the Gender Equality Ombudsman and the Norwegian Pollution Control Authority).

Several organizations with the primary function of *exercising public authority* had additional tasks of «business and industrial services» in 1999 (e.g. the Norwegian Coastal Administration, Norwegian Public Roads Administration). However, only one organization with *business and industrial services* as primary task had «exercising public authority» as additional task this year (Statsbygg – the Directorate of Public Con-

struction and Property). This represents a reduction in the number of civil service organizations with this particular combination of primary and additional tasks over time (in 1989 four units had this combination, see Table 11). Similar to 1989, it was less common in 1999 for organizations having *general public services* as primary task to have additional tasks compared to supervisory organizations or civil service organizations dealing with the exercise of public authority. Four of these organizations are registered as having additional tasks of the type «regulation and scrutiny» in 1999 (including the National Council on Tobacco and Health, The Centre for Combating Ethnic Discrimination, and the Civil Aviation Authority). Nevertheless, there has been an increase in the proportion of organizations with primary tasks of *general public services* having additional tasks of various kinds since 1989. Thus, 28% of such organizations had additional tasks in 1989 (37 of 134 organizations) while in 1999, 44% of these had secondary tasks (44 organizations of 102).

There has been greater stability over time in additional tasks for organizations having the primary task *other kinds of exercising public authority* (34 of 52 organizations in 1999) or *regulation and scrutiny* (21 of 30 organizations). However, some trends for these types of state organizations are worthy of notice:

- While none of the organizations having *regulation and scrutiny* as primary task in 1989 were registered with «business and industrial services» as additional tasks, this was the case for two such organizations in 1999.
- While four of the organizations with the primary function of *business and industrial services* were registered with additional tasks of the type «other kinds of exercising public authority» in 1989, only one organization had the same combination in 1999.
- There has been an increase in organizations with the primary task *other kinds of exercising public authority* and additional tasks «business and industrial services» from 1989 (three organizations) to 1999 (6 organizations).

Considering the development from 1989 to 1999, there appears to be a few examples of task portfolios with apparently internal conflicting roles in civil service organizations. Expectations of role refinement and a transition from multipurpose to single-purpose organizations find little empirical support in the data. The number of civil service organizations registered as having additional tasks is almost identical in 1989 (107 units) and 1999 (103 units).

Nevertheless, there has been an increase in additional tasks in the population – and so it has become more common for public organizations to have a complex task portfolio.

Table 13. Secondary tasks in civil service organizations in 1989 and 1999. Percent

Secondary tasks	1989		1999	
	Number of organizations	% (N=249)	Number of organizations	% (N=193)
No additional tasks	142	57	90	47
One secondary task	79	32	77	39
Two secondary tasks	28	11	26	13
Total	249	100	193	100

Source: Proposition to the Storting Report No. 1 (1988–89, 1998–99) and Norges Statskalender (1989, 1999).

From Table 13 we see that while 43% of the civil service organizations had one or two secondary tasks in 1989, this was true for 54% of the organizations in 1999.

Combinations of task portfolio and organizational characteristics

For combinations of tasks portfolio and organizational characteristics, the following presentation will be limited to primary tasks as the point of departure. In the Hermansen Report, the relation between primary tasks and organizational characteristics is particularly emphasized. According to recommendations given in the report, organizational form and characteristics should be chosen and adjusted according to specific values and tasks in the relevant organization.

Table 14 shows the distribution of units concerning *forms of affiliation* according to types of primary function in 1989. From an instrumental point of view, greater differences were expected to be found between organizations having different forms of affiliation than between organizations within the same form of affiliation. Further, this was expected to be more apparent in 1999 compared to 1989, considering that the Commission's report first was published in 1989.

Table 14. Form of affiliation and primary tasks in state organizations in 1989. Percent

Primary tasks	Form of affiliation			
	Ordinary civil Service organizations	Civil service organizations with extended authority	Government administrative enterprises	Total (N=100)
Regulation/Scrutiny	100	-	-	27
Other kinds of exercising public authority	91	5	4	79
General public services	98	1	1	134
Business and industrial services	29	-	71	7
Policy formulation (shaping- and advice)	100	-	-	2

Source: Proposition to the Storting Report No. 1 (1988–89) and Norges Statskalender 1989.

All types of primary tasks were found within ordinary civil service organizations in 1989, but the vast majority of organizations included *general public services* (134 organizations). For civil service organizations with extended authority, four had *other kinds of exercising public authority* as their primary task, and two had *general public services*. None of these organizations, however, had *regulation and scrutiny*, *business and industrial services* or *policy formulation* as a primary task. Among government administrative enterprises, there was a greater dispersion of various types of main tasks. Most had *business and industrial services* as the primary task (5 organizations), while a few had *other kinds of exercising public authority* (3 organizations). Primary task of the type *regulation and scrutiny* or *policy formulation* was not relevant within this form of affiliation. Everything considered it would seem that an instrumental approach finds some support in the data for 1989, and that there *are* differences in primary tasks between organizations with different forms of affiliation. Yet, the differences might not be as apparent as an instrumental perspective would predict especially regarding ordinary civil service organizations. It will, however, be of greater interest to see if differences are more prevalent in 1999, something which could be expected based on the Hermansen Commission and their encouragement to political authorities to strive for greater conformity between organizational form and functions.

Table 15 shows the corresponding distribution in 1999:

Table 15. Form of affiliation and primary tasks in state organizations in 1999. Percent

Primary tasks	Form of affiliation			Total (N=100)
	Ordinary civil Service organizations	Civil service organizations with extended authority	Government administrative enterprises	
Regulation/Scrutiny	100	-	-	30
Other kinds of exercising public authority	94	2	4	52
General public services	89	10	1	102
Business and industrial services	-	-	100	5
Policy formulation (shaping- and advice)	100	-	-	4

Source: Proposition to the Storting Report No. 1 (1998–99) and Norges Statskalender 1999.

According to the criteria used, ten of the eleven civil service organizations with extended authority in 1999 had *general public services* as a primary task in 1999, while five of the eight government administrative enterprises had *business and industrial services* as primary task. Compared to 1989, there has been a change for civil service organizations with extended authority, while stability seems to be more prominent for the government administrative enterprises. More than half of ordinary civil service organizations had *general public services* as their main task, and somewhat less than half of these had *regulation and scrutiny* or *other kinds of exercising public authority*. All organizations with the primary task *business and industrial services* were government enterprises, and all organizations having *regulation and scrutiny* or *policy formulation* were ordinary civil service organizations. The data thus seems to confirm expectations deduced from the instrumental perspective. It was expected that differences in primary tasks between different forms of affiliation would be found, and that these differences would be more evident over time. This is true firstly for civil service organizations with extended authority. However, considering the organizations' distribution according to primary and secondary tasks, and that for nearly all types of primary task there were several examples of organizations having different additional tasks (with the exception of organizations having *policy formulation* as primary task), the instrumental understanding of *affiliation* as a sharp and suitable policy instrument for the political authorities, is somewhat modified.

Table 16 combines primary tasks and *types of organizational form* in 1989. Around 61% of all national organizations this year (168 organizations) had *general public services* as primary function (102 organizations). This constituted 76 % of all civil service organizations maintaining «general public service» tasks in 1989. 2/3 of the integrated organizations (30 of 43 organizations) had primary tasks involving *the exercise of public authority* («regulation and scrutiny» or «other kinds of exercising of public authority»), while approximately 63% of the group organizations had *general public services* (24 of 38 organizations).

Table 16. *Organizational form and primary task in 1989. Percent*

Primary tasks	Organizational form			Total (N=100)
	National organizations	Integrated organizations	Group organizations	
Regulation/scrutiny	52	41	7	27
Other kinds of exercising public authority	62	24	14	79
General public services	76	6	18	134
Business and industrial services	29	57	14	7
Policy formulation (shaping- and advice)	50	50	-	2
Total	168	43	38	249

Source: Proposition to the Storting Report no. 1 (1988–89) and Norges Statskalender 1989.

Primary tasks of the type *regulation and scrutiny*, *other kinds of exercising public authority* and *general public services* show a somewhat stronger connection to national organizations than the other two organizational forms – however this might be due to the sheer outnumbering by national organizations in the population altogether. The category *business and industrial services* seems to be more closely linked to the organizational form of integrated organizations; 57% of all civil service organizations with this primary task had this organizational form. Table 17 for 1999 shows some the same main tendencies:

Table 17. *Organizational form and primary task in 1999. Percent*

Primary tasks	National organizations	Integrated organizations	Group organizations	Total (N=100)
Regulation/Scrutiny	57	43	-	30
Other kinds of exercising public authority	50	33	17	52
General public services	80	14	6	102
Business and industrial services	60	40	-	5
Policy formulation (shaping- and advice)	100	-	-	4
Total	132	46	15	193

Source: Proposition to the Storting Report no. 1 (1998–99) and Norges Statskalender 1999.

Over time it would seem that *policy formulation* has been more closely linked to the organizational form of national organizations, while *regulation and scrutiny* is no longer a relevant primary task for group organizations. It has also become more common for organizations with *business and industrial services* as primary task to be organized as national organizations, contributing to a more even distribution of this primary task between two

organizational forms – national and integrated organizations. While in 1989 we could identify three of the organizations with this primary task as being group organizations, none of the organizations had this organizational form in 1999. There is also no link between *policy formulation* as primary task and the organizational form of group organizations in either year. The main trends between organizational form and primary tasks in civil service organizations that prevail over time can be summarized as follows:

- There was a clear tendency for organizations with *regulation and scrutiny* as primary task to be organized as national organizations, while fewer group organizations had such functions (and none in 1999).
- The relation between *exercising public authority* and national organizations were stronger in 1989 than in 1999.
- Over time it has become more common for organizations with the primary task *policy formulation* to be organized as national organizations.
- There is no apparent tendency for any covariation between *business and industrial services* as primary task, and types of organizational form.
- The majority of organizations with *general public services* as primary task were organized as national organizations in both 1989 and 1999.

The distribution of primary tasks according to *parent ministry* in 1989 is shown in Table 18:

Table 18. Parent ministry and types of primary tasks in state organizations in 1989. Absolute figures

Ministry	Regulation/Scrutiny	Other kinds of exercising public authority	General Public Services	Business and industrial services	Policy formulation (shaping- and advice)	Total
Ministry of Development Aid	-	2	1	-	-	3
Ministry of Consumer Affairs and Administration	3	1	6	-	2	12
Ministry of Defence	-	5	5	2	-	12
Ministry of Fisheries	-	3	-	-	-	3
Ministry of Treasure and Customs	1	4	2	-	-	7
Ministry of Justice and the Police	4	12	8	-	-	24
Ministry of Local Government and Labour	2	5	3	-	-	10
Ministry of Church Affairs and Education	1	5	22	-	-	28
Ministry of Culture and Scientific Affairs	2	15	43	-	-	60
Ministry of Agriculture	6	5	18	-	-	29
Ministry of Environment	1	3	1	-	-	5
Ministry of Trade and Industry	2	4	1	-	-	7
Ministry of Petroleum and Energy	1	3	-	-	-	4
Ministry of Transport and Communications	-	2	1	4	-	7
Ministry of Social Affairs	3	6	22	1	-	32
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	1	4	1	-	-	6
Total	27	79	134	7	2	249

Source: Proposition to the Storting Report No. 1 (1988–89) and Norges Statskalender 1989

The Ministry of Culture and Science Affairs had approximately 24% of all subordinate organizations in 1989, and the majority of those had *general public services* as primary task (72% of the subordinate organizations under the ministry, thus 43 organizations. 17%

of the total population this year). If we view *regulation and scrutiny* and *other kinds of exercising public authority* as one category, 17 organizations under the Ministry of Culture and Science Affairs maintained such tasks, while this was also relevant for 16 organizations under the Ministry of Justice and the Police. We find the majority of units having primary tasks of the type *business and industrial services* under the Ministry of Transport and Communications (80% of all state organizations registered with this as a primary task in 1989). There were only two civil service organizations, the Consumer Council and The Office of The Children Ombudsman, with *policy formulation* as primary task in 1989, and these were under the Ministry of Consumer Affairs and Administration.

Table 19 displays the relation between parent ministry and primary tasks in state organizations in 1999. Like 1989, there were differences between ministries.

Table 19. Parent ministry and types of primary tasks in state organizations in 1999. Absolute figures.

Ministry	Regulation/Scrutiny	Other kinds of exercising public authority	General Public Services	Business and industrial services	Policy formulation (shaping- and advice)	Total
Ministry of Labour and Administration	1	2	4	1	-	8
The Ministry of Children and Family Affairs	3	2	3	-	-	8
Ministry of Defence	-	3	2	-	-	5
Ministry of Fisheries	-	2	1	-	-	3
Ministry of Treasure and Customs	2	1	2	-	-	5
Ministry of Justice and Police	4	12	11	-	-	27
Ministry of Cultural Affairs	4	8	12	-	-	24
Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development	4	3	4	-	-	11
Ministry of Church-, Education – and Research Affairs	-	4	33	-	1	38
Ministry of Agriculture	3	3	5	-	-	11
Department of Environment	1	2	1	1	-	5
Ministry of Industry and Trade	2	3	2	1	-	8
Ministry of Oil and Energy	1	1	-	-	-	2
Ministry of Transport and Communications	2	1	2	-	-	5
Ministry of Social Affairs and Health	3	3	19	2	3	3
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	-	2	1	-	-	3
Total	30	52	102	5	4	193

Source: Proposition to the Storting Report No. 1 (1998–99) and Norges Statskalender 1999

The majority of civil service organizations having *general public services* as primary task were subordinate to the Ministry of Church-, Education- and Research Affairs, and more than half of the subordinate organizations to the Ministry of Justice and the Police

had *regulation and scrutiny* or other *kinds of exercising public authority* as a primary task. We find that all ministries in 1999 had one or more subordinate organizations with *other kinds of exercising public authority* as primary task, and all ministries (with the exception of the Ministry of Petroleum and Energy) had subordinate units with *general public services*. Twelve of sixteen ministries also had organizations with *regulation and scrutiny* as primary task. In addition, three of four state organizations in 1999 with the primary task *policy formulation* were under the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, while organizations with *business and industrial services* as primary task displayed greater dispersion this year.

In Tables 20 and 21, some relations between main *policy area* and primary task become apparent: 83% of civil service organizations having *general public services* as primary tasks in 1989 had research/education as the main policy area; 50% of the organizations with the main policy area environment/health/social affairs also had *general public services* as a primary task. Civil service organizations with the primary task *business and industrial services* or *policy formulation* were limited to four main policy areas (communication, defence, environment/health/social and economic affairs), while organizations with the main policy area finance or municipal/regional, had *exercising public authority* as an exclusive primary task (*regulation/scrutiny* and other kinds of *exercising public authority* presented as a single category).

Table 20. Primary tasks and main policy area in 1989. Absolute figures

Main policy area	Regulation/Scrutiny	Other kinds of exercising public authority	General Public Services	Business and industrial services	Policy formulation (shaping-and advice)	Total
Finance	1	4	-	-	-	5
Foreign Affairs	-	2	1	-	-	3
Research/education	1	16	81	-	-	98
Environment/health/social affairs	13	10	25	1	1	50
Economic affairs	6	16	4	-	1	27
Culture	2	7	9	-	-	18
Law/justice	3	14	5	-	-	22
Communication	-	3	1	4	-	8
Defence	1	5	4	2	-	12
Municipal/county	-	1	-	-	-	1
Other	-	1	4	-	-	5
Total	27	79	134	7	2	249

Source: Proposition to the Storting Report No. 1 (1989–90) and Norges Statskalender 1989

Table 21 shows some of the same patterns between main policy area and primary task in state organizations in 1999. Nearly all organizations with the main policy area research/education had *general public services* as the primary task, while organizations with the main policy area finance had *regulation/scrutiny* or *other kinds of exercising public authority* as primary function.

Table 21. Primary tasks and main policy area in 1999. Absolute figures

Main policy area	Regulation/Scrutiny	Other kinds of exercising public authority	General Public Services	Business and industrial services	Policy formulation (shaping- and advice)	Total
Finance	3	1	-	-	-	4
Foreign Affairs	-	2	1	-	-	3
Research/education	-	3	42	-	1	46
Environment/health/social affairs	12	7	26	3	3	51
Economic affairs	4	7	4	2	-	17
Culture	3	9	12	-	-	24
Law/justice	4	12	8	-	-	24
Communication	3	2	3	-	-	8
Defence	-	3	2	-	-	5
Municipal/county	1	4	-	-	-	5
Other	-	2	4	-	-	6
Total	30	52	102	5	4	193

Source: Proposition to the Storting Report No. 1 (1998–99) and Norges Statskalender 1999

This possibly favours an institutional rather than an instrumental approach, and the notion of organizations environments as significant and influential.

Summary and concluding comments

This paper has aimed at giving a brief introduction to central features in the organizational structure and task portfolio in civil service organizations in 1989 and 1999 based on a study (Rubecksen 2003). Overall, the description of state organizations according to organizational characteristics, task portfolio and policy areas, shows great variation and diversity for organizations within the civil service model. Even though they all belong to the same organizational model and the vast majority of the organizations are ordinary civil service organizations – there seems to be little that is «ordinary» about them. The units are distributed according to different organizational

sub-types and display different types of organizational form, task portfolio and connection to policy areas.

Three questions were outlined at the beginning of the paper, providing the guidelines of presentation and rapprochement. The *first* question concerned distinctive organizational features and structure in state organizations (a). The data showed a significant reduction in the size of the population of state organizations during the ten-year period. However, considering horizontal and vertical specializations and changes in the time period in question, and the relatively small number of organizations that were in fact subject to organizational disbanding, the phrase of «rolling back the state» finds little support in the data. It seems to be more a case of organizational restructuring of public activity than diminishing the range of government activity.

The most widespread organizational sub-type in both years occurred in ordinary civil service organizations. There has been an increase in the number of civil service organizations with extended authority from 1989 to 1999 which could be perceived as a political follow-up of recommendations given by the Hermansen Commission. The distribution of subordinate organizations according to parent ministry showed that ordinary civil service organizations were found under all ministries, while organizations with extended authority and government administrative enterprises were more concentrated under just a few ministries. The state organizations had different types of organizational form; most common in both years were national organizations. Integrated organizations and group organizations were less common. During the period group organizations have experienced the most significant decline in numbers. There were differences between state organizations in connection to policy area. In both 1989 and 1999 there was a high frequency of the policy areas of environment/health/social affairs and research/education. The lowest numbers of organizations were connected to the policy areas finance, foreign affairs and municipal/regional. This was seen to be relatively stable from 1989 to 1999.

Regarding *task portfolio* in state organizations (b), *general public services* were most widespread as primary task in both years. However, many organizations also had *other types of exercising public authority* or *regulation and scrutiny* as primary task. Fewest organizations had *business and industrial services* or *policy formulation*. The main trend from 1989 to 1999 was for a larger proportion of civil services organizations to have *regulation and scrutiny* as their primary task. This was the only type of primary task that over time shows a clear tendency to increase (from 11% to 16%). If we include secondary tasks, the increase is even more pronounced (from 16% in 1989, to 26% in 1999).

The most common combination of tasks was *other kinds of exercising public authority* as main task and *general public services* as additional tasks. Few organizations had a task portfolio indicating internal conflicting roles. Yet, while none of the state organizations had the combination of *regulation/scrutiny* and *business and industrial services* in 1989, we found this to be true for some organizations in 1999. During the period the development of a more complex task portfolio consisting of primary *and* secondary tasks seems to be a trend among the organizations, thus challenging the notion of a transition from multipurpose to single-purpose organizations and role purification.

The third and final section of the paper looked more closely at how *task portfolio* varies with organizational characteristics (c). Based on the data it is possible to point at

some relevant patterns between organizational features and task portfolio. There *were* differences between the organizational sub-types of civil service organizations (ordinary civil service organizations, civil service organizations with extended authority, government administrative enterprises), particularly regarding types of primary tasks. This showed stability over time and could be perceived to support an instrumental approach and the notion of organizational form as a suitable instrument for channelling different types of state activity. Thus, organizations with the primary task *general public services* or *regulation/scrutiny* were organized as ordinary civil service organizations, and the majority of organizations with *business and industrial* main functions were organized as government administrative enterprises. In civil service organizations with extended authority it was only relevant with the primary tasks *other kinds of exercising public authority* or *general public services*. However, when considering additional tasks in state organizations in 1989 and 1999 the picture is somewhat modified, and differences in types of task between forms of affiliation are reduced. We also found great variation in *task portfolio* among organizations of the same sub-type. Thus, organizational form might not be the sharp instrument assumed by political authorities and reform planners. There also seems to be some relation between task portfolio and connection to policy area, in particular between organizations with *general public services* as primary task and the policy areas of research/education and environment/health/social affairs. This characteristic has remained fairly stable from 1989 to 1999, and with regards to research/education been somewhat strengthened. This possibly supports an institutional better than an instrumental approach.

Thus, it would seem that a combination of categories and theoretical perspectives provide a better explanation of the characteristics and complexity of state organizations in Norway, rather than applying one category or a singular theoretical approach. Over time, civil service organizations have also been subjected to additional differentiating processes (devolution, increased autonomy), and consequently appear to be an even more complex organization model than ever before, requiring more complex approaches to research.

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