THE DETERMINANTS OF PROMOTION TO HIGH PUBLIC OFFICE IN GERMANY: PARTISAN LOYALTY, POLITICAL CRAFT, OR MANAGERIAL COMPETENCIES?

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Abstract:

The politicization of bureaucracy is a widespread strategy to increase the political control of ministerial departments in parliamentary democracies. It is, however, largely unknown why executive politicians promote some officials rather than others to high public office. Based on a unique dataset of all senior officials in German federal ministries and agencies that held office in the period 1997-2015, this article investigates whether partisan loyalty, political craft, and managerial competencies influence the chance of promotion to the highest civil service position in Germany (state secretary). We apply event history modelling to draw inferences on the relative importance of different selection criteria used by ministers when recruiting state secretaries from a candidate pool of senior officials. A key finding is that ministers consistently prefer politically loyal to non-loyal candidates. Although ministers also consider candidates' political craft and selected managerial competencies, they are likely to trade-off partisan loyalty against those qualifications. The article contributes to the literature on politicization in the public sector by comparing potential and actual office holders and by including a broad set of selection criteria, moving beyond the literature's dominating focus on partisan loyalty. The methodological approach developed in this article may well be transferred to other institutional contexts and used for comparative studies in this area.

INTRODUCTION

The exercise of democratic government depends on ministerial bureaucracies for the development and implementation of public policies. A key challenge for ministers is to ensure that civil servants respond to their policy preferences. The politicization of senior officials is a widespread strategy to increase the political responsiveness of ministerial bureaucracies, and according to the literature, this strategy has become more important in recent years (Christensen, Klemmensen, and Opstrup 2014, Dahlström, Peters, and Pierre 2011, Page and Wright 1999b, Peters and Pierre 2004b). Peters and Pierre (2004b, 2) define politicization as “the substitution of political criteria for merit-based criteria in the selection, retention, promotion, rewards, and disciplining of members of the public service”. As to the purpose of politicization, research suggests that the desire to control the bureaucracy seems to outweigh patronage as the dominating motive for political appointments (Kopecký and Mair 2012, Kopecký et al. 2016, Page and Wright 1999b, Peters and Pierre 2004b).

The literature on the politicization of bureaucracy in parliamentary democracies has generated important insights into the relevance of partisan loyalty for personnel decisions (Dahlström and Niklasson 2013, Ennser-Jedenastik 2014, Fleischer 2016, Kopecký and Mair 2012), while paying only limited attention to other criteria for the selection (or deselection) of top officials. Thus, empirical knowledge about the complex criteria ministers use to select their closest subordinates still is very limited for parliamentary systems. In this respect, research on politicization in parliamentary democracies can benefit from the literature on presidential appointees in the US, which investigates the relevance of various criteria for the selection of top officials (Hollibaugh, Horton, and Lewis 2014, Lewis and Waterman 2013, Ouyang, Haglund, and Waterman 2017).

Taking this research gap as a starting point, this article sets out to investigate which political and meritocratic criteria influence promotion decisions in the German federal ministerial bureaucracy. We examine how ministers weigh political selection criteria (partisan loyalty) against meritocratic selection criteria (political craft, managerial competencies) when promoting individuals from a pool of candidates to the highest public office. This also requires that meritocratic criteria are specified in more detail than in most scholarly work on this topic so far, at least in a parliamentary context (see Ouyang, Haglund, and Waterman 2017, for the US), considering a substantial diversity of competencies that top officials can be expected to possess (Hood and Lodge 2006, Van Wart, Hondeghem, and Schwella 2015).

This article aims at answering these research questions by empirically testing the relative importance of theoretically and empirically salient characteristics of senior officials at the aggregate level (such as partisan loyalty and political craft) for promotion to the highest administrative position in the German federal bureaucracy (state secretary). State secretaries in federal ministries in Germany (as well as Directors General, DG) are so-called “political civil servants”, i.e. “politically recruited civil servants who hold administrative responsibilities” (Christiansen, Niklasson, and Öhberg 2016, 1232). They can be dismissed at any time according to the Federal Civil Service Law, whereas civil servants in lower hierarchical ranks have tenured positions. Thus, ministers have a high level of discretion when selecting state secretaries, since civil service regulations that define suitability, aptitude and professional performance as the main criteria for personnel decisions in the public sector do not apply to these positions. Although appointment decisions must be formally approved by the cabinet, the latter usually confirms the minister’s decision (Fleischer 2016).

This article also takes issue with the focus of existing politicization research on actual office holders (Christensen, Klemmensen, and Opstrup 2014, Dahlström and Niklasson 2013, Derlien and Mayntz 1989, Ennser-Jedenastik 2014, 2016b, Fleischer 2016, Kopecký and Mair

2012). These studies are extremely relevant, yet they cannot answer on what grounds senior officials were selected in the first place, as office holders' characteristics relative to unsuccessful candidates for top-level positions are unknown. A focus on office holders bears the risk of an ecological fallacy by drawing inferences on individuals based on group characteristics. The share of party loyalists among top officials simply cannot tell us whether their partisan loyalty (or any other individual characteristic) was decisive for the minister's appointment decision. This study therefore considers both actual and potential office holders to investigate the determinants of promotion to administrative top-level positions.

The next section develops the article's theoretical framework and hypotheses. After that, we outline the research design and the data material, which consists of a unique dataset of almost 500 senior officials that were in office between 1997 and 2015. The subsequent analysis uses event history modelling (Box-Steffensmeier and Jones 2004) to draw inferences on the selection criteria of ministers when recruiting state secretaries from a pool of senior officials. Finally, we discuss the findings and their implications for further research.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND HYPOTHESES

This article's topic – the selection of office holders among a pool of candidates – has been largely ignored by the public administration literature so far but is a core feature of recent scholarship on parliamentary careers and ministerial selection (Allen 2013, Fleischer and Seyfried 2015, Kam et al. 2010, Kerby 2009). Earlier studies on political élites, however, parallel the research on senior officials' careers in many ways. In the 1980s and early 1990s, mainly descriptive studies of ministerial careers were interested in career patterns in different institutional contexts and the effects of the skills acquired prior to appointment for cabinet life, ministerial behavior and individual performance (see the contributions in Blondel and

Thiébaud 1991 for an overview). In contrast, recent studies explore the selection criteria of executive politicians out of a group of suitable candidates, for instance among members of parliament (Allen 2013, Kam et al. 2010, Kerby 2009) or among publicly known candidates for a ministerial office (Fleischer and Seyfried 2015). The obvious rationale for scholarly interest in ministerial careers is “that governments (cabinets) are at the center of the political processes in democratic countries and that they are the most visible ‘locus’ of political power“ (Cotta 1991, 174). The same can be argued for senior officials who lead departments together with the minister and who are deeply involved in political bargaining processes (Christensen, Klemmensen, and Opstrup 2014).

Traditionally, scholarship on senior officials’ careers aims at identifying typical career patterns and to compare them to executive politicians, to senior officials in other countries, or over time, using aggregated, cross-sectional data and/or anecdotal evidence (Derlien 2003, Page and Wright 1999a, Peters and Pierre 2004a). More recently, scholars have started to systematically investigate the drivers of executive politicians’ decisions to hire or fire senior officials in parliamentary contexts (Boyne et al. 2010, Christensen, Klemmensen, and Opstrup 2014, Kopecký and Mair 2012, Kopecký et al. 2016, Petrovsky et al. 2017) as well as in the US (Hollibaugh, Horton, and Lewis 2014, Lewis and Waterman 2013, Ouyang, Haglund, and Waterman 2017). However, this research has two blind spots: First, as elaborated above, most scholars of parliamentary systems focus on partisan loyalty as dominating criterion for the (de)selection of officials (Dahlström and Niklasson 2013, Dahlström and Holmgren 2017, Ennsner-Jedenastik 2014, 2016a, b), whereas only few authors consider other criteria such as professional qualifications or intra-governmental mobility (Fleischer 2016, Skans and Brösamle 2011, Veit and Scholz 2016).

Second, virtually all studies of politicization concentrate on incumbent office holders, for instance to gauge (changes in) party politicization (Ennsner-Jedenastik 2016a), to investigate

the drivers of selecting top officials (Dahlström and Niklasson 2013), or to study why appointees are placed in some organizations rather than others (Hollibaugh, Horton, and Lewis 2014). As a matter of research design, these studies draw post-hoc inferences on career success factors of actual office holders, while neglecting potential office holders. For instance, partisan loyalty might be widespread among senior officials below the level of top officials as well; yet we simply do not know whether this characteristic makes a difference for individual career success. The ideal research design for studying the selection of top officials includes both actual and potential office holders (see also Ouyang, Haglund, and Waterman 2017, 67), yet obtaining information on the latter is inherently problematic.

This article sets out to shed light on these blind spots, drawing on research designs applied in scholarship on ministerial selection and parliamentary careers. Our starting point is that ministers motivated by exercising control over the bureaucracy will also consider professional qualifications when using their discretion to (de)select officials (Hustedt 2013, John and Poguntke 2012, Kopecký et al. 2016). Indeed, selecting senior officials on the basis of partisan loyalty without considering professional qualifications may lead to adverse effects and weaken the government's capacity to deliver sound policies (Dahlström and Niklasson 2013, Lewis 2007, Moynihan and Roberts 2010). A convenient way for ministers to ensure that candidates have relevant professional qualifications is to promote senior officials already employed in a federal ministry or agency to the highest administrative position (Hustedt 2013, 196). The literature suggests that most federal senior officials are promoted internally from positions within the bureaucracy (Derlien 2003, Hustedt 2013, Veit and Scholz 2016). This mode of internal recruitment of top officials has been labelled “bounded politicization”, in contrast to “open politicization” (the replacement of top officials by candidates from outside the governmental bureaucracy, as in the US) and “partisan politicization” (the recruitment of legislative and executive politicians and other partisan activists, as in Hungary) (Meyer-Sahling

2008). To test the empirical relevance of different criteria for promotion to the position of state secretary, we focus on the internal candidate pool of senior officials (DGs and agency heads) (see data and methods section for more details).

The remainder of this paragraph develops our theoretical framework for analyzing how ministers use their discretion to promote senior officials to high public office. Although some elements of our analytical framework draw upon analyses of the German context, our model (and research design) is applicable across contexts and lays a methodological foundation for future comparative research on cross-country variation in civil service politicization in parliamentary democracies.

Partisan Loyalty

The party political and ideological proximity to government has been widely discussed as an important prerequisite for the close collaboration of ministers and senior officials. The bottom line is that a minister cannot be sure that the permanent bureaucracy is responsive to her policy preferences, given that it has served previous governments and may also pursue idiosyncratic goals. Against this backdrop, the appointment of loyalists in senior positions may serve as a means to enhance political control over the permanent bureaucracy (Peters and Pierre 2004b).

Many existing studies find empirical support for the ally principle according to which executive politicians will prefer to work with bureaucrats with similar ideological preferences as they can delegate more discretion to them (Dahlström and Holmgren 2017, Huber and Shipan 2006): For instance, affiliation with a governing party significantly increases the tenure of managers in Austrian state-owned enterprises (Ennser-Jedenastik 2014). An analysis of top-level appointments in 16 West European countries revealed that politicians use partisan

appointments to gain control over independent regulators (Ennser-Jedenastik 2016b). Another study shows that the signaling of partisan loyalty increases the speed of promotion to senior level positions in federal ministries in Germany (Veit and Scholz 2016). Likewise, scholarship on Germany based on expert interviews suggests that “in all federal ministries the selection of top-level personnel is at all times based on partisan considerations” and that “appointments of secretaries of state are clearly party political” (John and Poguntke 2012, 131). An analysis of the party-affiliation of top civil servants in Dutch ministries confirms the ally principle and underlines the demand for ideological agreement as an important factor for top official selection (Ennser-Jedenastik 2016a). The turnover of ministry officials after changes in government has also been shown to be driven by party-political considerations in different European countries, especially after wholesale government changes (Derlien 2003, Meyer-Sahling 2008, Nakrošis 2015). In Sweden, heads of executive agencies are more likely to lose their job after an ideological change in government (Dahlström and Holmgren 2017). Boyne et al. (2010) find that changes in party control in UK local governments increase the likelihood of turnover of chief executives under the condition of poor administrative performance.

Those findings about the prevalence of the ally principle are by no means universal, though. For instance, a recent study on Denmark shows that party political factors cannot explain the pattern of replacement of top officials (Christensen, Klemmensen, and Opstrup 2014). However, these authors find that ministers from all ideological camps have increasingly used their discretion to replace senior officials they consider unresponsive to their political demands with officials recruited on meritocratic grounds. In the German context, Fleischer (2016) finds that partisan loyalists among state secretaries are more likely to lose office compared to those not affiliated to the minister’s party. A plausible explanation is that selecting candidates based on the ally principle may lead to a sub-optimal selection from a minister’s point of view, as evidenced by the higher chance of de-selection. Ministers possibly screen

non-loyalists more thoroughly to avoid adverse selection (Kam et al. 2010), while relying on partisan loyalty as information shortcut for the latter (John and Poguntke 2012).

The comparative literature also suggests that the ally principle is more important for career advancement in some contexts than in others (Kopecký et al. 2016, Page and Wright 1999b). From a cross-country perspective, Germany occupies a middle position between the US-system with its substantial turnover of senior positions after government changes and meritocratic systems (such as those in the UK or Scandinavia) where formal political appointments are usually restricted to a limited number of special adviser positions (Askim, Karlsen, and Kolltveit 2017, Christiansen, Niklasson, and Öhberg 2016, Derlien 1996, Lewis 2009, Page and Wright 1999b). Whereas recruitment and promotion in Germany's bureaucracy is generally based on merit principles, ministers enjoy high degrees of discretion to appoint top officials, and party membership is widespread among officials at the commanding heights of the federal administration.

A review of senior official surveys in Germany indicates a high but declining level of self-reported party membership over time and a positive relationship between hierarchical level and partisan loyalty (Bogumil, Ebinger, and Jochheim 2012). A comprehensive biographical analysis shows that at least 45 percent of all state secretaries (1949-1999) were party members (Derlien 2003). A more recent biographical study finds that 46 percent of all state secretaries between 1949 and 2013 were loyal to their minister's party, 13 percent were loyal to another government party, and the remaining 40 percent were non-partisans at the time of appointment (Fleischer 2016). And although a state secretary may continue to serve an incoming minister despite being loyal to a "hostile" party, appointments of individuals with an outspoken loyalty to an opposition party are extremely rare (Fleischer 2016). However, descriptive data about the prevalence of partisan loyalty among top officials does not allow us to gauge the importance of partisan loyalty for promotion to the highest administrative office.

The ally principle suggests a positive effect of partisan loyalty on career success. All else being equal, ministers will prefer candidates with a proven loyalty to their own party compared to non-loyalists, and are likely to refrain from appointing candidates loyal to an opposition party. However, as federal governments are usually composed of a coalition of several parties, we relax this assumption to convergence with one of the governing parties, which results in the following hypotheses:

H1: Individuals who are loyal to a governing party are more likely to be promoted than non-loyalists.

H2: Individuals who are loyal to an opposition party are less likely to be promoted than non-loyalists.

Political Craft

The promotion of senior officials based on the ally principle may be effective in ensuring their responsiveness to the political leadership, yet (partisan) loyalty alone is unlikely to generate political control over the bureaucracy. The literature suggests that political sensitivity is both a core aspect of bureaucrats' self-perception (Aberbach, Putnam, and Rockman 1981, Derlien and Mayntz 1989) and a key competency of senior officials to carry out their job effectively (Goetz 1997, 't Hart and Wille 2006, Hood and Lodge 2006). In the literature, the relevance of political aspects in the work of senior officials in parliamentary systems is described as functional politicization: ministry officials, particularly at the top levels, are deeply involved in political decision-making and bargaining processes; they need to know the realities of the political process and take political implications into account when providing advice to

ministers (Christiansen, Niklasson, and Öhberg 2016, Derlien and Mayntz 1989, Hustedt and Salomonsen 2014).

In particular, ministers expect officials to consider the ramifications of policy proposals and problems in parliament and the media, with a special focus on the avoidance of problems for the minister ('t Hart and Wille 2006). Hood and Lodge (2006) argue that this type of competency includes the ability to assess the situation from the viewpoint of political leadership, to anticipate political risks and the potential for failure, and to spot political coalitions or ways to overcome existing cleavages to create coalitions supporting government policies. In a study of political appointees in Norway, Askim, Karlsen, and Kolltveit (2017) identify three distinct task profiles, namely stand-in for the minister, media communicator, and political coordinator, each emphasizing a different aspect of political craft. In short, senior officials need the qualities of “statespersons in disguise” (Hood and Lodge 2006, 100), or “political craft” (Goetz 1997) to perform their job effectively.

A minister that seeks to control the policy-making process will therefore be careful to select individuals that possess these competencies. But how do officials acquire those skills, and how do ministers get to know about them? Following Christensen and Lægreid (2009), this article takes a cumulative perspective on civil servant careers.¹ Accordingly, the different steps in an individual’s career represent a socialization process into distinct values, norms, and skills associated with different types of positions. For the case of Germany, Goetz (1997) argues that individuals may acquire skills of political craft in three types of positions: working in support units for the political leadership (such as the office for parliamentary and cabinet affairs), working in the chancellery (the office of the head of government), and working for a parliamentary group (while on leave from the ministry) (see also Schröter 2004). Whereas the

¹ In personnel economics, a similar theoretical perspective exists which highlights the relevance of specific on-the-job experiences for career success (see Skans and Brösamle 2011 for an overview)

first two types of positions are placed within the executive and are not directly connected to a political party or a party politician, an employment spell in a parliamentary group clearly implies that “officials nail their political colours to the mast” (Goetz 1997, 769). Thus, officials working for a parliamentary group will not only learn the skills of political management, but also reveal their partisan loyalty, sending a signal of their ideological compatibility to ministers looking for loyal candidates (Veit and Scholz 2016). Likewise, Lewis and Waterman (2013) point out that working experience for a political party or on an electoral campaign is likely to indicate both loyalty and competence (in the sense of political craft). Therefore, we only use the first two positions for testing the influence of political craft whereas for instance working for a parliamentary group or as private assistant of single MPs are included in the measurement of partisan loyalty (see data and methods section for more details).

H3: Individuals having acquired political craft – through work experience in a leadership support unit or the chancellery – are more likely to be promoted than individuals without such work experience.

According to Goetz (1997, 770), the socialization of officials in positions close to politics “can facilitate and, in some cases, accelerate the careers of ambitious young officials” in the federal bureaucracy.² However, the jury is still out on whether career success is primarily driven by individuals’ political craft skills or by their signaling of partisan loyalty to the political leadership, with career advancement being “the prize for party-political and personal loyalty rather than political craft” (Goetz 1997, 771, see also Hustedt 2013, 196). Thus, we also address what is perhaps the most crucial question in politicization research: Does partisan loyalty drive out meritocratic criteria of recruitment, as suggested by Peters and Pierre’s

² Likewise, research on career success of members of the House of Commons indicates that working experience in politics (e.g. as a political advisor or party staffer) prior to entering parliament increases the chances of reaching high executive office (Allen 2013).

(2004b) definition of politicization, or do ministers consider both aspects when they exercise discretion over the promotion of senior officials? In addition, do ministers consider both aspects equally, or are they more likely to promote loyalists rather than candidates with relevant professional qualifications? Assuming that partisan loyalty eventually trumps political craft, we expect that loyalty to a government party has a stronger effect on the “hazard” of promotion than having acquired political craft in the executive. Although the term “hazard” might sound odd for describing a positively connoted event in common language use, this is the methodologically correct term in event history modelling (see data and methods section).

H4: The effect of loyalty to a governing party on the hazard of promotion is stronger than the effect of having acquired political craft.

Managerial Competencies

As elaborated above, political craft is essential for senior officials to accomplish the political goals of their minister and to protect her from policy fiascos and blame. At the same time, an important part of top officials’ job is to effectively manage their department. Ministers motivated to control the bureaucracy will arguably look for candidates with management and leadership competencies when recruiting senior officials (Kopecký et al. 2016). The study of Kopecký et al. (2016) generally confirms this expectation of a connection between control as motive for political appointments and the professional qualifications of candidates. Another aspect is that ministers and their departments are under constant media attention, which means that “no minister wants to run the risk of negative media exposure resulting from unprofessional work by his department because personnel recruitment disregarded professionalism on political grounds” (John and Poguntke 2012, 138). Ministers simply cannot afford to appoint party loyalists while disregarding other qualifications (Derlien 2003). To

effectively manage their department internally and to assert their department's position vis-à-vis other departments, state secretaries need substantial policy knowledge as well as familiarity with ministerial decision-making procedures (Hustedt 2013, 193).

The relative importance of competency (in terms of policy expertise, management experience, education etc.) and loyalty has been studied extensively in the US-literature on presidential appointments, pointing out problematic effects of appointments based on loyalty rather than competency concerns (Lewis 2009, Moynihan and Roberts 2010). Likewise, US-scholars have studied how presidents strategically place appointees with distinct profiles in different positions and agencies (Hollibaugh, Horton, and Lewis 2014, Lewis and Waterman 2013). In contrast, scholarship on the selection of senior officials in parliamentary democracies has only paid scant attention to these professional competencies so far. A recent exception is Fleischer (2016) who found that state secretaries with experience from a senior official position are less likely to be ousted from office compared to their colleagues without such experience. But was their office experience decisive for the minister's decision to appoint them in the first place?

As the politicization literature is mostly silent on the relative importance professional qualifications of senior officials in parliamentary democracies, we draw upon other sources to identify relevant qualifications and to generate expectations about their effects on career success. Management and leadership competencies are considered increasingly important for high public offices in many jurisdictions since New Public Management (NPM) reforms started in the 1980s (Van Wart, Hondeghem, and Schwella 2015). We define these competencies quite broadly as a senior official's ability to efficiently orchestrate complex tasks in the specific context of a ministerial department characterized by distinct formal and informal procedures and structures. These competencies reflect the idea of administrative generalists (rather than policy specialists) which is deeply anchored within the German administrative culture. From

the generalist perspective, the professional qualification of civil servants is not primarily based on specific policy expertise, but on well-rounded competencies that are required in all domains of the federal administration (Jann and Veit 2015).

Traditionally, fully-qualified lawyers with a long, step-by-step career in the civil service have been the prototype of the administrative generalist in Germany (Veit and Scholz 2016). However, for the highest administrative position, we suggest that leadership experience in a federal ministry, rather than an educational background in law, should provide candidates with relevant managerial competencies and thus make them more attractive candidates for top level positions (Fleischer 2016). When selecting state secretaries, ministers are likely to look for candidates with federal ministry leadership experience, which is particularly relevant for effectively navigating decision processes in federal departments:

H5: Individuals with leadership experience in a federal ministry are more likely to be promoted than individuals without this experience.

Moreover, the job profile of state secretaries arguably requires competencies that Hood and Lodge (2006, 96-98) describe as boundary-spanning similar to those needed in the field of diplomacy, such as the ability to bargain between different actors with diverging worldviews. These types of skills are certainly crucial for interactions with organized interests and other actors outside government, but they are also extremely important in the German governing system that constantly requires finding compromises among autonomous ministerial departments and across different levels of government (Goetz 1997). A typical way to obtain boundary-spanning skills is working experience in different ministries and other government organizations (Hood and Lodge 2006). Those employment patterns allegedly avoid the development of a narrow “silo mentality” and repeatedly confront senior civil servants with new territory, thereby nurturing a sense of government-wide responsibility.

Consequently, the tradition of administrative domain experts has become increasingly contested as appropriate for the development of administrative leadership competencies. Nevertheless, in most countries inter-ministerial mobility issues for senior civil servants are not regulated or systematically addressed (Van Wart, Hondeghem, and Schwella 2015). An exemption is the Netherlands, where the lack of mobility was perceived as enhancing compartmentalization and hindering coherent decision-making in government (Steen, Van den Berg, and Leisink 2015).³ Similar to inter-ministerial mobility, also inter-sectoral mobility is associated with a broader horizon, human capital acquisition and thus a better preparation for management and leadership tasks in public administration. As part of the NPM movement private sector (management) experience is particularly valued for senior executives, leading to changing competency profiles and to an increase in external recruitments in different parts of the public sector in many countries (e.g., Emery, Giaque, and Rebmann 2014, Maor and Stevens 1997). There is reason to believe that inter-ministerial mobility as well as inter-sectoral mobility indeed contribute to a higher “employability” of senior officials, based on a cumulative career perspective (Christensen and Lægreid 2009). In a study of Swedish government employees, Skans and Brösamle (2011) found that both inter-ministerial and inter-sectoral mobility are positively related to the appointment to senior official positions.⁴ We propose the following hypotheses:

H6: The higher the inter-minister mobility of an individual, the larger the chance of promotion.

³ Members of the Dutch Top Management Group are obliged to change positions at least every seven years.

⁴ To be sure, this research faces methodological obstacles in disentangling a “cumulative career” interpretation emphasizing learning and skills acquisition (Christensen and Lægreid 2009) and an “ability signalling” interpretation emphasizing an individual’s deliberate career choice to distinguish themselves from other candidates (Skans and Brösamle 2011, Veit and Scholz 2016). Skans and Brösamle (2011) provide tentative evidence for a signaling interpretation of the effects of mobility on career success.

H7: The higher the inter-sectoral mobility of an individual, the larger the chance of promotion.

Finally, analogous to our theoretical expectations about the relative importance of partisan loyalty and political craft (H4), we also investigate the relative weight attached by ministers to partisan loyalty in comparison to managerial competencies. Again, drawing on the definition of politicization as the replacement of political by meritocratic criteria (Peters and Pierre 2004b), we assume partisan loyalty to have a stronger effect on the hazard of promotion than different types of managerial competencies. To be sure, as we are studying a setting of “bounded politicization” where top officials are primarily recruited from within the ministerial bureaucracy (Meyer-Sahling 2008), our hypothesis reflects the idea that meritocratic criteria are supplemented (rather than completely replaced) by political criteria.

H8: The effect of loyalty to a governing party on the hazard of promotion is stronger than the effect of leadership experience, inter-ministerial and inter-sectoral mobility.

DATA AND METHODS

The empirical analysis is based on a unique dataset comprising career information for the complete population of DGs in federal ministries and heads of federal agencies in office between September 1997 (one year before the end of the 13th election term) and September 2015 (two years after the beginning of the 18th election term). We also collected data on all 95 state secretaries that held office between September 2002 and September 2015 and analyze the hazard of promotion for this period. While considering promotion in the time period 2002-2015, the candidate pool consists of office holders in a larger time span (1997-2015) since also those DGs and agency heads who left office for other positions or were sent to temporary

retirement before September 2002 can be considered part of the risk population.⁵ All 52 state secretaries that never held a position as federal DG or agency head prior to their appointment are excluded from the analysis. Although there are other positions from which individuals are recruited to state secretary positions, which we will describe at the end of the results section, we restrict the candidate pool to DGs and agency heads since our research focusses on the determinants of promotion, rather than on selection of state secretaries in general. The dataset thus represents the complete internal candidate pool of individuals that are at ‘risk’ of promotion to the highest civil service position. In total, the dataset we used for analyzing the hazard of promotion covers 477 cases.

The period of our analysis of promotions to state secretary positions spans four election terms, which corresponds to four federal governments. In the first election term under observation (2002-2005), Germany – like in the period before – was governed by a coalition of the Social Democratic Party and the Green Party (led by chancellor Gerhard Schröder), followed by a “Grand Coalition” of the Social Democratic Party and the Christian Democratic Union 2005-2009 (led by chancellor Angela Merkel). From 2009-2013 the Christian Democratic Union formed a government coalition with the Liberal Party (again led by Merkel), and in the last two years of our observation period again a “Grand Coalition” with the same chancellor took office. Thus, there were three partial changes in government in which one of the coalition partners changed while the other stayed in office. For our research design, this means that incoming ministers are likely to find a substantial number of partisan loyalists among individuals in the candidate pool.

The first phase of data collection consisted of a mapping of the office holders for which we used various issues of the federal government handbook, organizational charts, ministry

⁵ State secretaries who reached the age of retirement before September 2002 were excluded from the analysis.

and agency websites, annual reports, and research literature. For the agency heads, this required a complete mapping of the change history of all federal agencies. To obtain biographical information, we also scrutinized the biographical archive ‘Munzinger Online’, press releases, CVs from ministry and agency websites, personal websites, and media coverage. Whenever relevant information was not readily available, we contacted the respective organizations or individuals.

Since there are many types of organizations that could be labelled “agency” (van Thiel 2012), a short clarification is necessary. There are two main legal types of agencies in Germany (Bach and Jann 2010): Semi-autonomous agencies (*Bundesoberbehörden*) have a statutory basis and dominate the agency landscape in terms of total numbers and staff size (Döhler 2007). Legally independent agencies (*Anstalten* and *Körperschaften des öffentlichen Rechts*) also have a statutory basis, yet they differ in terms of their governing structures. The criterion for inclusion is the mode of selection of the agency head: All agency heads selected by the federal government or the parent minister are included, whereas agency heads appointed by a governing board are excluded. For reasons of restricted data access, heads of military and civilian authorities of the armed forces are excluded. Most agencies have a single chief executive, yet for agencies with a managing board, only the board’s spokesperson is included.

The dataset contains information on the duration of all employment spells, including start and end date of employment, a detailed coding of the position (e.g. head of unit, desk officer), the employer (e.g. the federal government), and the ministry in charge (e.g. the Federal Ministry of the Interior) as well as the employment sector. The data hence constitutes the equivalent of a retrospective survey of all individuals in the candidate pool regarding their employment history. Table 1 provides a detailed account of how we constructed the different covariates in our analysis. In particular, our coding of partisan loyalty, for which we used different proxy measures such as having held a political office, having worked for a

parliamentary group or within the party headquarters follows similar approaches in studies of politicization in parliamentary systems (Dahlström and Niklasson 2013, Dahlström and Holmgren 2017, Ennser-Jedenastik 2016a, b, Fleischer 2016, Meyer-Sahling 2008, Veit and Scholz 2016). These proxies are functional equivalents of measures of loyalty and patronage of presidential appointees in the US context (Lewis and Waterman 2013). A key difference, though, is that measures of personal loyalty (such as experience in the presidential transition team, see Ouyang, Haglund, and Waterman 2017) are less relevant in parliamentary contexts, where the power to select top officials usually rests with individual ministers.⁶ As for demographic characteristics, we collected information on gender, age, and education.

*** Table 1 ***

We use event history modelling to assess the effects of different proxies for partisan loyalty, political craft, and departmental management competencies on the hazard of promotion to the rank of state secretary. Event history analysis is particularly suitable to study right-censored data (Box-Steffensmeier and Jones 2004), i.e. individuals who have never been promoted to state secretary, who dropped out of the candidate pool for various reasons, or who may be promoted to this position later in their career. In our analysis, individuals drop out (right-censoring) at the age of 67 at the latest, slightly above the usual age of retirement, or upon (early) retirement, death, and at the end of the observation period. Due to the time-varying nature of several covariates, individuals' careers were split into distinct episodes. For instance, the political craft covariate is coded "0" unless an individual has had at least 12 months of experience in a leadership support unit. Then, a new episode with the value "1" on this covariate

⁶ This obviously implies that personal loyalty to the minister could drive the selection of top officials. However, our data and the research design do not allow us to test this assumption. For Germany, research suggests that personal loyalty to a minister plays an important role for the recruitment of private secretaries etc., whereas partisan rather than personal loyalty has been found to drive the recruitment of state secretaries (John and Poguntke 2012).

is created. The threshold of 12 months is used for all types of job experience included in the analysis. The dependent variable in our models is the time until promotion to the highest administrative position after entering the candidate pool. Table 2 lists descriptive statistics for all individuals in the candidate pool.

*** Table 2 ***

RESULTS

The analysis uses Cox proportional hazards regressions, which are particularly suitable for analyses without strong theoretical assumptions about the shape of the baseline hazard (Box-Steffensmeier and Jones 2004). In event history models, hazard ratios above 1 indicate a positive effect of the covariate on the hazard of the occurrence of the event (here: promotion to state secretary), whereas hazard ratios below 1 indicate a negative effect (Box-Steffensmeier and Jones 2004, 59-63). The coefficients in the models are expressed as hazard ratios. Furthermore, Cox models build on the assumption of proportional hazards throughout the observation period (Box-Steffensmeier and Jones 2004). This assumption holds for all models.⁷ We first report a base model that only includes the control covariates, and then report models for the different covariates to avoid over-specification, given the rather small number of events in the sample.

*** Table 3 ***

Table 3 reports the findings of the regression analyses. Model 1 includes the control covariates only, and shows that age upon entering the candidate pool has a statistically significant negative effect on the hazard of promotion. The hazard ratio of male candidates is

⁷ We tested the proportionality assumption using the “estat phtest” command in STATA.

larger than one, but not statistically significant. Individuals entering the candidate pool as agency head are less likely to be promoted than those entering the candidate pool as DG, but again this effect is not statistically significant.

Model 2 shows that partisan loyalty to a government party (H1) increases the hazard of promotion by 276 percent compared to candidates whose career trajectory does not indicate partisan loyalty. Likewise, we find that loyalty to an opposition party decreases the hazard of promotion relative to non-loyalists (H2), yet this effect is not statistically significant. These findings provide empirical support for the ally principle: Among a pool of internal candidates for the highest administrative positions, ministers evidently prefer to promote partisan loyalists rather than non-loyalists. To illustrate these findings, we plotted the survival function for these different groups over time (figure 1). The estimates are based on model 2, with all covariates held at their mean (age at entering candidate pool) or mode (all remaining covariates). These survival functions indicate the proportion of individuals in the different groups who are promoted to the position of state secretary at a specific point in time after entering the candidate pool.

Figure 1

Moreover, we theorized that ministers would also consider candidates' political craft when selecting top officials. How do professional experiences conferring political craft affect the hazard of promotion? Model 3 shows that candidates with work experience in positions conferring political craft are more than twice as likely to be promoted relative to individuals without such experience, which confirms H3. To assess the relative importance of political craft compared to partisan loyalty, the next model simultaneously compares the effect of partisan loyalty and political craft on the hazard of promotion to the position of state secretary. Model 4 shows that both partisan loyalty and political craft have a statistically significant effect

on the hazard of promotion, corroborating our previous findings. Moreover, model 4 indicates that loyalists to a governing party are (more than) two times more likely to become promoted (compared to non-loyalists), whereas candidates with professional experience conferring political craft are about 1.8 times more likely to become promoted (compared to candidates without such experience). The analysis thus provides evidence that, all else being equal, ministers value partisan loyalty more than political craft, corroborating H4.

Model 5 tests the effect of different types of managerial competencies (H5-H7) on the hazard of promotion. We find no support for H5 and H6: The effects of leadership experience in a federal ministry (below the level of DG) and inter-ministerial mobility on the hazard of promotion are not statistically significant. The latter contrasts with the findings of Skans and Brösamle (2011) on promotion patterns in Sweden, who use a broader definition of senior positions which is not limited to the highest administrative position. Hence, a potential explanation for our finding is that inter-ministerial mobility matters for promotion to senior positions more generally, but we cannot test this proposition with our data. Another explanation would be country-specific: The departmental principle in Germany is much stronger than in Sweden and civil service careers, therefore, mostly occur within one ministry. Moreover, in Germany inter-ministerial mobility of civil servants is not encouraged as part of personnel management policies. In Sweden, however, there have been political attempts seeking to increase interchange between departments (Pierre and Ehn 1999), although with limited success (Skans and Brösamle 2011).

Model 5 provides full support for H7, indicating that the degree of professional experience in different sectors, more specifically outside politics and generalist administration (such as ministries or local governments), has a significant and positive effect on the hazard of promotion. Taken together, our findings suggest that ministers value professional experience outside politics and the ministerial bureaucracy, whereas they “punish” inter-ministerial

mobility. Although we lack a systematic analysis, anecdotal evidence from the data material suggest that successful candidates usually have gained subject area expertise outside politics and administration that falls within their minister's policy portfolio. This observation underlines that ministers consider both competency and partisan loyalty when promoting senior officials.

Finally, we simultaneously estimated the effect of partisan loyalty and managerial competencies on the hazard of promotion (H8). The observations reported in model 6 correspond to our previous empirical findings, with statistically significant and positive effects of loyalty to a governing party and inter-sectoral mobility on the hazard of promotion. We find that candidates who are loyal to a governing party are almost three times more likely to become promoted compared to non-loyalists. Moreover, we find that each additional sector change doubles the hazard of promotion. However, because change of sector is a continuous variable, we cannot directly compare the effect size for a one-unit change in inter-sectoral mobility to our measure of partisan loyalty. Therefore, we also estimated a model including a dummy variable measuring whether an individual has changed between sectors in her professional career instead of the total number of sectoral changes.⁸ This model is slightly more complex than the one reported in this article, as the effect of the sectoral changes dummy is time-dependent and thus violates the proportional hazards assumption (Box-Steffensmeier and Jones 2004). A model including an interaction term with the dummy covariate and $\log(\text{time})$ (which is the most common approach to address non-proportionality) suggests that inter-sectoral mobility has no significant effect on the hazard of promotion at the time of entering the candidate pool, yet this effect becomes positive and statistically significant over time. In substantial terms, this observation suggests that candidates who have not spent their entire career in politics or generalist administration first have to obtain job experience in a senior

⁸ This is also meaningful in a substantive sense, as "1" is the mode value for the number of sectoral changes.

administrative position before being considered as candidates for moving to the top of the career ladder.

Taken together, our findings provide tentative support for our theoretical expectation that ministers value partisan loyalty more than managerial competencies when taking a promotion decision (H8). We find that partisan loyalty has a robust effect on the hazard of promotion, whereas two out of three covariates measuring managerial competencies have no significant effect. Moreover, the model using a dummy variable interacted with time shows that inter-sectoral mobility does not significantly affect the hazard of promotion throughout the entire period during which individuals may experience a promotion.

We estimated a number of additional models to test the robustness of our findings, in particular with regard to the omission of influential covariates. The candidates' formal educational background is an obvious candidate for such concerns. In the federal administration, an educational background in law is widespread (Derlien 2003) and has been found to increase the speed of moving up the career ladder to senior ministry positions (Veit and Scholz 2016). Almost half of the individuals in the candidate pool (47 percent) hold a degree in law, followed by economists (17 percent). Moreover, senior officials have been found to be highly educated, with a majority holding a PhD degree (Derlien 2003). This might have changed, though, as “merely” 45 percent of the individuals in the candidate pool in our sample hold a PhD. Yet educational background (law, economics, other) has no effect on the hazard of promotion, nor could we find an effect of holding a PhD on the hazard of promotion. We also replicated all models with these educational covariates as controls, which did not substantially change our key findings.

The analyses reported above consider the internal candidate pool for the position of state secretary, investigating the drivers of promotion to the highest administrative office.

However, ministers may also recruit state secretaries from other positions, both inside and outside the federal administration. Although this article cannot answer the question of what drives the selection of state secretaries more generally, we can provide a brief analysis of the recruitment pool to the position of state secretary, as well as regarding differences between state secretaries recruited from our candidate pool and from other positions. Most instructive for our analysis, we find that federal DGs and agency heads constitute the most important recruitment pool for the position of state secretary in relative terms (45 percent). Another relevant recruitment pool are state level state secretaries (16 percent), whereas the remaining group is more heterogeneous, consisting of former members of parliament, party and parliamentary staffers, and interest group employees, among others. In addition, some of them have worked as federal officials before their appointment, albeit in other positions (ambassador, minister's private office) than those included in the candidate pool.

*** Table 4 ***

Table 4 provides descriptive statistics for professional experience, personal characteristics, and educational background for both groups – the state secretaries recruited from our candidate pool and those not recruited from this pool – at the time of appointment. These observations suggest that state secretaries who were not recruited from the candidate pool are, on average, younger, have a different educational profile (fewer lawyers, more individuals with a background in humanities, social sciences or science and engineering, fewer individuals holding a PhD), and, little surprisingly, have less working experience in positions conferring political craft and ministries more generally, than state secretaries from the pool. Another noteworthy observation is that we find no differences in terms of partisan loyalty between both groups, suggesting that ministers do not use a different yardstick in terms of partisan loyalty for both groups. Hence, state secretaries who were not recruited from the candidate pool clearly have different professional and educational profiles compared to the

individuals in the candidate pool, whereas the data suggest that ministers value partisan loyalty equally for both groups. Another noteworthy finding is that the majority of state secretaries, irrespective of their recruitment pool, are non-loyalists according to our measurement. In other words, even though ministers could appoint partisan loyalists, they do not fully use their discretionary powers to maximize loyalty among top officials. Thus, even though our findings clearly show that partisan loyalists are more likely to move to high public office, ministers obviously also consider other criteria when selecting top officials.

CONCLUSION

In this article, we considered both actual and potential office holders to investigate the determinants of promotions to the highest administrative position in the German federal ministerial bureaucracy. This allowed us to systematically assess the relevance of different criteria for promotion. Three findings deserve special attention: First, both partisan loyalty, political craft and managerial competencies have a statistically significant effect on the chance of promotion. This finding is broadly in line with the theoretical expectation that ministers motivated by controlling policy-making and implementation use their discretion to promote individuals that are both loyal and competent (Dahlström, Peters, and Pierre 2011, Kopecký et al. 2016). That said, our analytical approach does not allow us to empirically assess ministers' motives for selecting one candidate rather than another, which would require a different research design.⁹

Second, comparing the relevance of different criteria, we provide evidence that partisan loyalty eventually trumps political craft and managerial competencies. More specifically, we

⁹ For instance, Lewis (2009) examines selection motives by linking appointee profiles to agency characteristics.

find the effect of partisan loyalty on the chance of promotion to be stronger than other theoretically relevant criteria, suggesting that ministers are likely to trade-off political loyalty against other qualifications. To be sure, this does not imply a “triumph of loyalty over competence” selection pattern which has been observed in the US (Moynihan and Roberts 2010). The pattern of “bounded politicization” observed in Germany, where top officials are predominantly recruited among career officials (Meyer-Sahling 2008), ensures a generally high level of professional competencies among candidates for high public office. That said, a probable implication is that political selection criteria “trickle down” the hierarchy and guide career choices and the weight given to political considerations among ambitious officials (see Christiansen, Niklasson, and Öhberg 2016 for a similar argument).

Third, the results regarding the influence of managerial competencies are mixed: Leadership experience in departments below the level of DG and inter-ministerial mobility has no statistically significant effect on the chance of promotion whereas inter-sectoral mobility has a positive effect. The findings also reveal that traditional patterns of promotion in the German civil service have to be critically examined: On the one hand, the traditional career ladder via the departmental hierarchy does not seem to be the dominant way to the administrative top position (any more) since the majority of all state secretaries in the observation period were not recruited from a position as DG or agency head. On the other hand, moving between different ministries – an approach highlighted in the public management literature – is not a relevant criterion either. This finding may be related to the limited implementation of managerial reforms in the federal bureaucracy (Bach and Jann 2010). To assess the generalizability of our findings, similar studies in contexts where managerial reforms have been more prevalent are needed. In Germany, the professional competency needed for reaching a top position is first and foremost political craft.

This article has attempted to broaden the universe of explanatory factors for the (de)selection of senior officials in parliamentary democracies, which hitherto was mainly focused on partisan loyalty (Dahlström and Niklasson 2013, Ennser-Jedenastik 2014, Kopecký et al. 2016), by considering both actual and potential office holders, rather than merely considering the former. Future research needs to explore other factors that are likely to influence the chance of promotion to high public office. Whereas this article focused on characteristics of office holders and assumed similar preferences for the selection of senior officials for all ministers, future research could consider the effects of a minister's characteristics on candidate selection. Fleischer (2016) suggests that ministers with office experience are better equipped to control the bureaucracy and hence are more likely to deselect non-responsive senior officials, yet she finds no such effects in her analysis. John and Poguntke (2012) argue that strong ministers tend to prefer weak state secretaries, whereas weak ministers who came into office as a result of intra-party bargaining between different regional party groups are likely to have strong state secretaries. Also, the logic of selection based on geographical representation (or other characteristics, such as gender) as part of an intra-party bargain about the allocation of executive positions may well spill over to include state secretaries as well. To be sure, studying these issues will require a somewhat different approach than the one used in this article as well as non-trivial methodological choices: for instance, what constitutes a “weak” or a “strong” minister or state secretary?

The methodological approach developed in this article may well be transferred to other institutional contexts. We consider our analysis as a first step towards quantitative comparative studies on civil service politicization and the selection of senior officials more generally. This is a genuine area for comparative research, considering substantial variation in candidate pools for high public office (Meyer-Sahling 2008) and dominant criteria that executive politicians apply when selecting senior officials across country contexts (Kopecký et al. 2016).

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Table 1: Operationalization of partisan loyalty and career-related covariates

loyal to government	This time-varying covariate builds upon on a measurement of an individual's loyalty to a political party, as indicated by employment spells connected to the same political party. An individual is coded as partisan loyalist if she has worked in at least two different positions for a political party (e.g., at the party headquarters) or a party member (e.g., as a private assistant to an MP) with a total duration of at least two years. In addition, we also coded elected politicians (MPs) as loyalists. Likewise, we coded an individual as partisan loyalist if she has been seconded to a party group in the federal or a state parliament for at least 6 months. The covariate takes on the value "1" if an individual is loyal to one of the parties in government.
loyal to opposition	This time-varying covariate builds upon on a measurement of an individual's loyalty to a political party, as indicated by employment spells connected to the same political party (see above). The covariate takes on the value "1" if an individual is loyal to a party that is not in government. In the analyses, the reference category for "loyal to government" and "loyal to opposition" are those individuals who have not been coded as partisan loyalists.
political craft	This time-varying covariate takes on the value "1" if an individual has worked in a leadership support unit within the federal or a state executive for at least 12 months. We include employment spells as (deputy) head of the minister's private office or leadership support unit, other positions in staff units (e.g., communications, cabinet and parliamentary affairs), private assistant to a minister, junior minister, state secretary, or director general, as well as similar positions at state level. We also include all employment spells in the prime minister's office (the Chancellery).
leadership experience in ministry	This time-varying covariate takes on the value "1" if an individual has worked as head of sub-division (<i>Unterabteilungsleiter</i>) or as head of section (<i>Referatsleiter</i>) in a federal ministry for at least 12 months. These positions are part of the career civil service, and office holders cannot be easily removed.
inter-ministerial mobility	This time-varying covariate takes on the value "0" if an individual has always stayed in the same federal ministry for her entire career. It increases by "1" every time an individual moves to a different federal ministry. This covariate also considers employment spells in semi-autonomous agencies, which are always connected to a specific ministry.
inter-sectoral mobility	This time-varying covariate takes on the value "0" if an individual has always worked in the same sector. It increases by "1" every time an individual moves to a different sector, including politics and general administration, academia, private sector, churches, military, education, health, media, culture, interest groups, and judicial system.

Table 2: Descriptive statistics for entire candidate pool

	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Standard Deviation</i>	<i>Minimum</i>	<i>Maximum</i>
<i>Covariates</i>				
loyal to government	0.17	0.38	0	1
loyal to opposition	0.06	0.24	0	1
political craft experience	0.42	0.49	0	1
leadership experience in ministry	0.50	0.50	0	1
inter-ministerial mobility	0.53	0.89	0	5
inter-sectoral mobility	0.83	1.06	0	7
<i>Control covariates</i>				
gender (0=female, 1=male)	0.88	0.33	0	1
age at entering candidate pool	52.13	5.88	30.92	66
elite group (0=DG, 1= agency head)	0.26	0.44	0	1

Notes: n=1,346 (covariates, time-varying), n=477 (control covariates, time-constant)

Table 3: Cox proportional hazards regressions for promotion to state secretary

	Model 1: control covariates		Model 2: partisan loyalty		Model 3: political craft	
loyal to government	-	-	2.76***	(0.95)	-	-
loyal to opposition	-	-	0.34	(0.35)	-	-
political craft experience	-	-	-	-	2.13**	(0.70)
leadership experience in ministry	-	-	-	-	-	-
inter-ministerial mobility	-	-	-	-	-	-
inter-sectoral mobility	-	-	-	-	-	-
gender (1=male)	1.68	(1.02)	1.49	(0.90)	1.37	(0.82)
age at entering candidate pool	0.96*	(0.02)	0.98	(0.02)	0.97*	(0.02)
elite group (1=agency head)	0.54	(0.22)	0.63	(0.27)	0.71	(0.32)
Log likelihood	-244.96		-239.19		-242.27	

	Model 4: partisan loyalty and political craft		Model 5: managerial competencies		Model 6: partisan loyalty and managerial competencies	
loyal to government	2.32**	(0.79)	-	-	2.93***	(1.08)
loyal to opposition	0.30	(0.30)	-	-	0.34	(0.35)
political craft experience	1.84*	(0.61)	-	-	-	-
leadership experience in ministry	-	-	1.40	(0.51)	1.63	(0.60)
inter-ministerial mobility	-	-	0.99	(0.18)	0.93	(0.19)
inter-sectoral mobility	-	-	1.28**	(0.15)	1.27**	(0.15)
gender (1=male)	1.34	(0.80)	1.63	(1.01)	1.41	(0.87)
age at entering candidate pool	0.98	(0.02)	0.96**	(0.02)	0.97	(0.02)
elite group (1=agency head)	0.76	(0.34)	0.53	(0.24)	0.63	(0.28)
Log likelihood	-237.60		-243.15		-236.94	

Notes: n=477, hazard ratios, robust standard errors in brackets, * $p < 0.1$ ** $p < 0.05$ *** $p < 0.01$

Table 4: Descriptive statistics for state secretaries recruited from inside and outside the candidate pool

	Candidate pool (n=43)		Outside candidate pool (n=52)		
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Sign.
loyal to government	0.40	0.49	0.35	0.48	n.s.
loyal to opposition	0.02	0.15	0.06	0.24	n.s.
political craft experience	0.63	0.49	0.31	0.47	***
leadership experience in ministry	0.56	0.50	0.23	0.43	***
inter-ministerial mobility	0.58	0.93	0.21	0.50	**
inter-sectoral mobility	1.02	1.08	0.94	0.94	n.s.
gender (1=male)	0.93	0.26	0.88	0.32	n.s.
Age upon appointment	54.88	4.56	49.49	6.21	***
PhD	0.49	0.51	0.31	0.47	*
Law	0.51	0.51	0.29	0.46	**
Economics	0.19	0.39	0.12	0.32	n.s.
Humanities and Social Sciences	0.19	0.39	0.35	0.48	*
Science, Engineering	0.05	0.21	0.15	0.36	*

Notes: significance levels based on χ^2 and t-statistics; * $p < 0.1$ ** $p < 0.05$ *** $p < 0.01$

Figure 1: Survival function contingent on partisan loyalty