

Mapping Careers in the Executive Triangle: The CoREx Dataset on Key Decision-Makers Across 30 Countries

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Abstract: While ministers hold formal authority, they operate within a dynamic framework where advisors and senior bureaucrats play essential roles, making the analysis of their careers crucial for understanding policymaking and co-ordination, state capacity, elite networks, and the distribution of power in modern political systems. Despite their importance, comprehensive career data for these executive actors—beyond ministers alone—has been scarce. This paper introduces a new dataset encompassing approximately 30 countries, primarily European, which includes information on appointment dates, functions, institutional affiliation, and, in particular, demographic and career attributes, such as age, gender, education, professional career pathways, and political experience as a novel indicator of politicization. The dataset addresses a significant gap in public administration and political science research by providing a holistic view of executive triangle members. It provides insights for debates on the (de-)separation of careers in modern executives, the politicization of public administration, bureaucratic autonomy, government effectiveness, and democratic resilience across models of executive governance.