Rediscovering top-down implementation: How Sabatier and Mazmanian's implementation framework helps to explain target group compliance in Swiss regional policy

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Abstract

Regional policy with the aim of influencing economic processes in rural and peripheral regions plays an important role in states facing the challenge of rural depopulation and changes in economic structures. In order to better react to these challenges, Switzerland adopted a New Regional Policy (NRP) in 2006 - a policy disbursing funds to innovative regional projects and implemented by the subnational entities (cantons). This paper examines the implementation of the policy regarding the varying success of the cantons in addressing private actors as target group by applying the implementation framework by Sabatier and Mazmanian (1980). We estimate a logistic multi-level model for 977 projects in 22 cantons including factors on the project- and cantonal-level. The results show that the variables of the implementation framework such as the tractability of the problems in a canton and their ability to structure the implementation process prove very helpful in explaining the success in addressing private actors even though the framework needs to be adapted to the characteristics of non-regulatory policies disbursing funds when studying regional policy.

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1   Introduction

Discrepancy between the objectives of a policy and the actual policy outcome is not an exceptional phenomenon when a policy has been implemented. Since the seminal study of a federal program of the US Economic Development Administration by Pressman and Wildavsky (1973), the understanding arose that implementation in a federalist setting, even "under the best of circumstances, is exceedingly difficult" (Pressman and Wildavsky 1973, xiii). The decentralized implementation of national policies which allows policy outputs and outcomes to vary in subnational entities is a main characteristic of decentralized member state implementation (Keman 2000) and enables to examine how different subnational implementation approaches and conditions lead to different policy outputs and outcomes. While Pressman and Wildavsky (1973) draw very pessimistic conclusions regarding the complexity of joint action in federalist states where the implementation process faces multiple decision points, practical evidence indicates a more optimistic view[1] and "success occurs much more frequently" (O'Toole 2004, 317).

This paper examines the implementation of a reform in regional policy in Switzerland, the New Regional Policy ("Neue Regionalpolitik" (NRP)). The policy disburses funds in order to economically foster marginalized regions in a highly federalized system and offers many resemblances with the program of the EDA studied by Pressman and Wildavsky (1973) – not only regarding the goal of promoting weak regions but also regarding the problems despite the highly favorable conditions of providing "cheap money, jobs, political credit" (p. 93).[2] It hence offers the possibility to assess problems in the implementation of a promising distributional policy in a federalist setting almost 45 years later and additionally, to go beyond the focus of the number of decision points (see O'Toole 2011, Hupe 2011). The analysis follows the conceptual top-down implementation framework by Sabatier and Mazmanian (1980). The implementation of the distributional federal program takes place at the cantonal level and hence has resulted in varying policy outputs and outcomes.

The aim of the NRP is to help rural, mountainous and border areas to implement their development programs in order to create and keep jobs in

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[1]see the "Pressman-Wildavsky paradox" by Bowen (1982).

[2]Even though the problems in the case of the NRP are not as severe as in the case of the EDA in Oakland as we will see later.

the areas by a direct financial promotion of initiatives, projects and programs. One specific and crucial policy goal is the promotion of initiatives by regional enterprises (policy outcome) in order to guarantee sustainable economic growth in the regions (policy impact) (Swiss Federal Council 2005, Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs 2014). However, as a comprehensive evaluation by Sager and Huegli (2013) and a report by the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO) (2008) pointed out, the majority of the supported initiatives were launched by public entities or associations (74%). Additionally, the variation between cantons varies considerably. The aim of this paper thus is to examine which factors lead to the difficulty of addressing regional enterprises and hence to the problems of achieving a crucial policy goal. Whether the policy impact of sustainable economic growth and innovation has been achieved is not a subject of this study and, as the evaluation by Sager and Huegli (2013) showed, difficult to measure in this short period. We therefore avoid the normative notion of policy "failure" (see Hupe 2011 and Hupe et al. 2014) but assume, in line with the idea of the NRP, that private actors need to be integrated in order to guarantee sustainable regional progress (see also Asheim et al. 2003, Tödtling and Kaufmann 2001. For the Swiss case, see Crevoisier et al. 2011 and Swiss Federal Council 2007). Therefore, we seek to find out which factors in the implementation process of the cantons explain the strongly varying cantonal outcomes regarding the inclusion of private actors and how the classic top-down implementation framework by Sabatier and Mazmanian (1980) can help to explain variance in redistributive policies such as the NRP.

With the help of data gathered in interviews with each implementation officer at the cantonal level in the course of the evaluation by Sager and Huegli (2013), the three categories of the implementation framework can be operationalized regarding the cantonal level of implementation. Additionally, data at the project level is available for 977 projects (collected by the Swiss monitoring system "CHMOS"). To test the implementation framework and examine whether the three categories explain the difficulty in addressing regional enterprises, logistic multi-level models will be estimated, testing which factors at the project- and cantonal-level contribute to the explanation whether a project is launched by an enterprise and not by public entities and associations.

The paper is structured as follows: The first section presents the New

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Regional Policy and its implementation in the Swiss federal system. The second section discusses the literature on top-down implementation and the topic of implementation in multi-level settings in order to derive the hypotheses. Subsequently, the data and the methodological approach of multi-level analysis will briefly be introduced before the results are presented. The next section then discusses the findings and link them to the theoretical literature.

2　The New Regional Policy in Switzerland

In 2006, Switzerland adopted a comprehensive reform of its regional policy, the "New Regional Policy", which is considered as a paradigm shift with far-reaching consequences for regional policy in Switzerland (Swiss Federal Council 2007). The goal of the NRP is to help rural, mountainous and border areas to implement their development programs in order to create and keep jobs in these areas (SECO 2008: 4). It is divided into three pillars:

- Pillar 1: Increasing the economic strength of the regions.

- Pillar 2: Coordination of regional policy with federal agencies.

- Pillar 3: Expertise for regional policy and the people involved in it.

The core of the policy lies in pillar 1. The goals of this pillar are to increase the competitiveness of the regions and help them to make the changes required by major changes in the economic situation such as globalization and urbanization (SECO 2008: 4 and Sager and Huegli 2013: 2f.). This is done by direct financial promotion of projects in the pre-competitive stage aiming at fostering innovation and growth in peripheral regions, while the financing equally split between the canton and the federation. The NRP thereby follows well-established regional innovation approaches such as the Economic base approach (see North 1955, Duesenberry 1950) and the proposition of Tödtling and Trippl (2005) to include the regional policy dimension of shaping regional innovation processes by providing resources to regional actors in order to formulate and implement innovative projects (p. 1205-1206). As this literature states, peripheral regions lack dynamic clusters, a weak specialised structure of knowledge suppliers and rare specialised qualifications (Tödtling and Trippl 2005, 1210). One approach to address this

problem hence is the strengthening of the regional economy by attracting innovative companies and new firm formation and by building up knowledge skills through a provision of financial resources (Tödtling and Trippl 2005, 1206 and 1213). The inclusion of private actors is supposed to "ensure that the goods and services promoted are commercially interesting – that there is really a demand for them" (Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs 2008, 5).

The NRP is a typical case of Swiss member state implementation. The control over pillar 1 lies with the cantons. They work together with the regions where innovative projects are aimed to be implemented. While the cantons and regions define detailed implementation programs, the federal government merely assesses the fundamental strategic orientation (SECO 2008: 4f.). To use the terminology of Sabatier and Mazmanian (1980), the cantons thus are the implementation officers and the target groups are the supported local actors who demand for funds for their projects (e.g. enterprises, associations or municipalities).

The NRP hence represents a special case of policies that does not aim at restricting individual or business behavior through regulations or legal obligations but by encouraging specific actions of local (private or public) actors through the disbursement of funds (see Weaver 2014, 245). The output of the NRP are the funds provided to the regional projects. Therefore, the goal of attracting private actors is regarded as policy outcome (see Sager and Huegli 2013). As suggested by O'Toole (2000, 266), the focus lies on the easy-to-measure outcome of the policy and not on the actual policy impact on the problem. By examining the causes for the varying cantonal success in addressing private actors, we go beyond a "conformance implementation" approach simply referring to the degree of compliance but focus on the explanation of the performance ("performance implementation") of the subnational entities and emphasize the role of policy implementers as problem-solver (see Thomann and Sager 2017a, 2017b, Barrett and Fudge 1981).

As the evaluation by Sager and Huegli (2013) and the report by the SECO (Crevoisier et al. 2011) showed, a reason for the problem of addressing private actors lies in the pre-competitive condition for projects. However, the cantons still perform very differently as Figures 1 and 2 in the Appendix shows. Hence, as a characteristic of decentralized implementation, other

factors on the cantonal level seem to play a role in the implementation as well (see also Sager 2003, Sager and Thomann 2017).

3 Top-down implementation in a federalist setting

Implementation studies are interested in explaining "what happens between policy expectations and (perceived) policy results" (Ferman 1990: 39) and can be distinguished into two approaches of a top-down and a bottom-up perspective. From a top-down perspective, implementation research is concerned with the degree to which the actions of implementing officials and target groups coincide with the goals embodied by central located actors (Matland 1995, 146). Bottom-uppers in contrast argue that central planners only indirectly influence factors which are located on the subnational level. From a bottom-up perspective, it hence is desirable that subnational entities and the local actors ("street-level bureaucrats") have discretion when implementing a policy; it is not considered problematic when the local policy output differs from the goals embodied by central actors (Matland 1995: 148, Thomann et al. 2017, Lipsky 1970).

The paper follows a top-down approach. Based on the model of Matland (1995) bringing together top-down and bottom-up research theoretically based on ambiguity and conflict, we argue that the NRP is a case of administrative implementation where both conflict and ambiguity are low and hence a top-down approach is appropriate. In the NRP, it is clear which actors are to be active at each stage and the goals and means for solving the problems regarding the inclusion of private actors as target groups are known and given (low ambiguity).[3] Additionally, there is a remunerative mechanism including incentives (financial resources) to make compliance attractive to the policy targets (low conflict, see Matland 1995, 160ff.).

In a federalist setting, the examination of the implementation process is interesting if the conditions regarding the problem and the implementation process vary. It offers a possibility to test conditions for a successful implementation studying only one policy and thereby holding many factors affecting usual cross-case comparisons constant. As Biela et al. (2012) have

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[3]The ambiguity regarding the kind of projects (in the tourism-sector, industry or education,...) and hence the means of reaching the goal of promoting peripheral regions is high (see Biela et al. 2012). However, the focus of this paper lies on the kind of management of the project, where the goal is clearly to ideally address private actors.

shown in a comparative study of regional policies in four European countries, a decentralized implementation is advantageous as the actors responsible for the implementation are closer to the problem (following Oates 1972). The multi-level structure hence is a general advantage for implementation regarding performance (see also Mavrot and Sager 2017, Mavrot 2012, Sager et al. 2015), the control over conformance referring to compliance is minimized. This goes in line with the argument of Pressman and Wildavsky that "the shorter the vertical chain, the higher the chance of congruent implementation" (Hupe 2011, 68).

Since studies on implementation were mainly based on specific programs in specific policies, Sabatier and Mazmanian (1980) constructed a comprehensive conceptual framework integrating findings and insights of preceding implementation studies, going beyond the approach by Pressman and Wildavsky who mainly focused on the stages of decision points (O'Toole 2011).[4] Even though their focus lies on traditional regulatory policies, they argue that the framework can also be applied to policies which attempt to change the behavior of local officials and private actors "through attaching conditions to the disbursement of funds" (Sabatier and Mazmanian 1980, 539) of which the NRP in Switzerland is an ideal-type example. They identify the crucial role of implementation analysis in the identification of the factors which affect the achievement of policy goals throughout the entire process of implementation and present a "minimum list of crucial conditions" (Sabatier and Mazmanian 1980, 554). The implementation of public policies hence is understood as a result of the manifestation of the following three main categories: (1) The tractability of the problem being addressed by a policy, (2) the ability of the policy to favourably structure the implementation process and (3) non-statutory variables affecting implementation. As the aim of this paper is to examine why the goal of addressing private actors as targets has had only limited success and varied substantively across cantons (see Figure 1 in the Appendix), we only consider factors varying on the project and the cantonal level. Factors on the national level of the policy affecting all projects and thus also all cantons similarly hence can not add information to the explanation of the variance on the project level (see Sager and Huegli

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[4]The applicability of the framework in analyzing policy implementation has been proven helpful in recent studies, see e.g. Hinterleitner et al. 2016 and Exadaktylos and Zahariadis 2014.

2013 and Biela et al. 2012 for a stronger focus on the national level).

Problem tractability   The first category takes into account the specific social problem which causes the requirement for a public policy. Sabatier and Mazmanian (1980) argue that the smaller and more definable the target group is, the easier it is to mobilize support for the policy and hence the compliance. Cantons with more sprawl and peripheral regions hence are supposed to face more problems concerning economic development (Tödtling and Trippl 2005, 1209, European Commission 2003). Hence, the denser a canton is populated, the less problems it faces in addressing private actors to comply. Additionally, successful preceding cantonal collaborations with private actors eases the inclusion of the target group.

If the problem is not completely new and some kind of instruments already existed prior to the implemented policy, the relevant actors are easier to identify and address, potential challenges are predictable and instruments addressing the problem might already exist in some way (Tödtling and Trippl 2005, 1213, Asheim et al. 2003). Hence, the amount of behavioral change required is lower (Sabatier and Mazmanian 1980, 544). If subcantonal regions with the purpose to foster the region in some way already are established, it is easier to implement a policy as it can rely on already consistent structures and collaborations.

Ability of the policy to structure the implementation process   Sufficient financial and personnel administrative resources are "necessary to hire the staff and to conduct the technical analyses" in order to address the target group, to monitor compliance and hence increase the capacity to comply (Sabatier and Mazmanian 1980, 545, Koontz and Newig 2014, Weaver 2015, 811, Alford and Speed 2006). Therefore, the higher the full-time equivalence of personal responsible for the implementation[5] and hence, the more personal resources per projects expanded for the implementation, the easier it is to successfully implement the policy.

Additionally, a successful implementation is simplified if it is delegated to institutions supportive and committed to the policy goals (Sabatier and Mazmanian 1980, 546-547). This can be seen as a clear advantage of distributive policies compared to regulatory agencies, where actors might not be

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[5]in relation to the number of projects to measure actual workforce.

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willing to constrain a prosperous development in their jurisdiction. Hence, we argue that where the responsible implementers see a clear advantage for their jurisdiction in addressing private actors, their enhanced willingness (or congruent beliefs) leads to a better implementation of the policy (Weaver 2015, 810, Alford and Speed 2006).

Non-statutory variables Non-statutory variables describe factors that may affect the policy directly whereas the policy itself has no influence on them. Such factors are the general party-political situation and initial public support for the policy. The greater the public and political support for the policy, the lesser the potential for conflict and opposition (Biela et al. 2012, Sabatier and Mazmanian 1980). Additionally, as the cantons bear half of the costs for each project, financially stronger cantons face less problems in finding private actors as policy targets (see Biela et al. 2012).

Another factor is the personal commitment and ability of the specific actors responsible for the implementation (not the cantonal entity as in the previous section). This factor can be regarded as managerial competence that may compensate for flaws in the implementation process (Hupe 2011, 77; see also O'Toole 2011, Koontz and Newig 2014, Hill 2006). Even in a federalist setting where the implementing entities profit from a successful implementation, low commitment and ability of the person in charge can limit the potential advantages.

In order to control for factors affecting all projects similarly, we also include variables on the project level. Thereby, we test for project specific aspects such as the project type (e.g. a project promoting tourism) and the regional and financial scope of the project.

4   Methodology

4.1   Data

In a comprehensive evaluation of the NRP in Switzerland, Sager and Huegli (2013) conducted standardized interviews (with open questions) with each cantonal actor (n=22) responsible for the implementation at the cantonal

level.[6] Additionally, data on the project-level is available for 977 projects (CHMOS).[7]

As the aim of this paper is to explain the kind of management on the project-level, we conduct a multi-level analysis where the projects (Level 1) investigated are nested within a cantonal context (Level 2) that exerts an influence on them (Steenbergen and Jones 2002). On the cantonal level, we use variables derived from the implementation framework by Sabatier and Mazmanian (1980). The data stems from the interviews conducted with the implementation officers of each canton and from other official cantonal sources (see Table 1 or Appendix 4 for detailed information). On the project-level, we use a dataset collecting information from each project since the beginning of the implementation (from 2006 to the beginning of 2013).

The dependent variable is measured as the kind of management of each project. If a project is operated by private actors (enterprises), it is coded as 1, if it is operated by public actors (municipalities, associations), it is coded as 0 (labelled as ptdum in the regression table). As the high intra-class correlation (ICC) of 0.219 shows (also see Figure 2 in the Appendix), the cantonal variation is considerable. Other project-level variables are used as control variables taking into account factors on the project level having an influence on the kind of management independent on the cantonal context. Table 1 presents the variables on both levels (see Appendix 4 for operationalizations).

4.2 Empirical model

As intraclass correlation (ICC) is very high with 0.219, a cantonal clustering of the error terms can be assumed (Steenbergen and Jones 2002). Therefore, and in order to examine variation at project- and cantonal-level regarding the kind of management in the projects, a varying-intercept model is applied (Steenbergen and Jones 2002, Gelman and Hill 2007). This allows to test the implementation framework by Sabatier and Mazmanian (1980) and takes into account the apparent cantonal variation in the dependent variable (see

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[6]Switzerland has 26 cantons, but Basle-Country and Basle-City count as one and Solothurn, Geneva and Zug did not individually implement the NRP

[7]We excluded projects where the organization of the implementation lied in the competence of cooperating cantons or cantons together with bordering regions because we are specifically interested in the cantonal context of the implementation process. The sample size thus dropped from 1248 to 977 projects.

Independent Variables

Cantonal level (Level 2)		
Problem Tractability	*problem*	Size of the problem
	inh	Problem inheritance
	contact	Experience with enterprises
Structuring process	*bureauc*	Resources for implementation
	commit	Cantonal commitment
Non-statutory	*gdp p.c.*	Cantonal GDP p.c.
	pol	Cantonal political majorities
	will	Willingness of implementing actor
Project-level (Level 1)		
Controls	*scope*	Scope of project
	tourism	Kind of program
	cost (log)	Cost of project (logged)

Table 1: Table of independent variables and abbreviations

O'Toole 2000, 270) by controlling for cantonal-clustered error terms.[8]

Because the dependent variable is dichotomous (private actor or not), the kind of management is transformed to a logit structure. The varying-intercept model is specified as follows. On Level 1, the control variables on the project-level x_{pc} are analysed, while the intercept α_c varies between cantons and ϵ is the error term. For Level 1, where pc is project p in canton c:

$$y_{pc} = \alpha_c + \beta * x_{pc} + \epsilon_{pc}$$

Level 2 analyses the varying intercept between cantons α_c by using the cantonal variables z_c derived from Sabatier and Mazmanian (1980), while η is the cantonal error term:

$$\alpha_c = \mu + \gamma * z_c + \eta_c$$

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[8]We use Maximum Likelihood estimators in this paper. As Stegmueller (2013) shows, however, Bayesian estimates tend to be more robust (and conservative), especially in samples with only few countries (or cantons) on Level 2 but also in samples with 20 to 25 units on Level 2. Additionally, as our sample contains all projects in a given period and thus can be treated as a full census, a Bayesian approach would ease interpretation. We therefore estimated Bayesian models using the same variables and found equal results. As this is a first draft however, we present the results with ML. It does not change the interpretation substantially.

We hence are interested in the β-coefficients at project-level and the γ-coefficients for cantonal variables. In order to assess the analytic weight of each of the four bundles of variables (see Table 1), four models are calculated, starting with only the variables on the project-level.

5   Results

Table 2 presents the result of the multi-level logistic regressions.[9] Model 1 includes only control variables on the project-level, Model 2 adds the first category of the implementation framework (problem tractability), Model 3 variables measuring the ability of the policy to structure implementation and Model 4 is the full model including non-statutory factors as well. The Table presents the coefficients as Odds Rations, meaning that a value below 1 is a negative effect and values above 1 are positive. As the aim of this paper is not only to analyze which factors explain the difficulty of addressing private actors but also to test whether the implementation framework by Sabatier and Mazmanian (1980) offers helpful guidelines, the focus not only lies on the contribution of the single variables but also on the added value of the three sets of implementation variables.

If we only look at variables on the project-level in Model 1, we see that projects that are in the tourist-sector and more cost-intensive projects have considerable and significant higher odds of being leaded by private actors while the scope of the project has no effect.

Model 2-4 include variables from the implementation framework. As the Akaike information criterion (AIC) on the bottom of the table shows, Model 4 fits best with the data.[10] Even though the non-statutory variables of the political situation in a canton and the willingness of the individual implementing actors in Model 4 show no significant effect, the financial strength increases the odds of addressing private actors. It consequently makes sense to focus on the results of Model 4.

The project-type remains to have an influence of the type of management: more cost-intensive projects and projects in the tourism-sector have significantly higher odds of being lead by private actors. Additionally,

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[9]Note that Stata reports the test of whether the Odds Ratios differ from 1, not from 0. The rule of thumb with $2 * std.error$ hence does not apply here.

[10]the lower the AIC, the better they fit the data. While BIC strongly punishes for additional variables, AIC does not.

	(1) ptdum	(2) ptdum	(3) ptdum	(4) ptdum
Project-Level				
scope cantonal	0.581 (0.202)	0.545 (0.187)	0.440* (0.150)	0.448* (0.148)
scope regional	0.639 (0.206)	0.592 (0.188)	0.544 (0.169)	0.472* (0.142)
tourism	1.449* (0.267)	1.421 (0.261)	1.392 (0.255)	1.461* (0.268)
cost (log)	1.612*** (0.0929)	1.589*** (0.0909)	1.588*** (0.0905)	1.584*** (0.0897)
Problem Tractability				
contact		0.271* (0.161)	0.251** (0.109)	0.344*** (0.101)
inheritance		0.548 (0.298)	0.546 (0.198)	0.603 (0.171)
problem		0.545** (0.124)	0.433*** (0.0823)	0.359*** (0.0663)
Structuring Process				
pers resources			0.242*** (0.0861)	0.218*** (0.0735)
pers resources^2			1.279*** (0.0739)	1.290*** (0.0628)
commit			2.882** (0.942)	3.658*** (0.992)
Non-Statutory factors				
gdp p.c.				1.067*** (0.0199)
pol				0.986 (0.729)
will				1.107 (0.219)
N	977	977	977	977
AIC	918.1	907.6	895.7	888.4

Odds Ratios; Standard errors in parentheses.
* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Table 2: Regression table

projects with a scope on the cantonal and regional level have lower odds than projects crossing cantonal borders to be leaded by private actors.

The variables measuring the cantonal-specific tractability of the problem show interesting patterns. The more difficult it is in a canton to contact private actors, the lower are the odds that private actors start projects. Additionally, cantons that are less densely populated have lower odds of addressing private actors, while cantons that already had established regions prior to the implementation of the policy did not vary significantly from cantons without priorly established regions.

The variables measuring the ability of structuring the implementation process also add significant information. The personal resources show a u-curve effect, as becomes visible with the exponential variable. As Figure 3 in the Appendix shows, the effect of the personal resources per project first decreases slightly. This is due to a canton with only very few personal resources at the cantonal level but comparatively many projects with private actors. From the point of two persons per project, the effect increases, meaning cantons with more than two persons per project have significantly higher odds of addressing private actors. Additionally, the commitment of the implementing canton to the goal of addressing private actors has a strong influence on the addressing of private actors.

Of the variables measuring non-statutory factors, only the cantonal GDP shows significant effects, meaning that cantons with a higher GDP have higher odds of addressing private actors, while the political situation and the willingness of the implementing officer at the cantonal level have no significant effect. In the following section, the results will be discussed and linked back to the theoretical considerations based on Sabatier and Mazmanian (1980).

6   Discussion

The aim of this paper was to analyze why the NRP faced problems addressing private actors and whether the implementation framework offers explanations for the fact that the NRP has not been implemented as planned by the cantonal implementation officers and hence to apply the framework to a non-regulatory policy disbursing funds.

6.1 The problem of addressing private actors as policy targets

How can these findings help to improve policy performance? First, project-level factors need to be considered. This additionally becomes clear if we take associations or public actors as the dependent variable (see Table 1 in Appendix). Projects in the tourism-sector are mainly lead by associations while the pattern remains that more expensive projects are managed by private actors. Despite these facts however, other "barriers of compliance" (Weaver 2014) can be found:

- In line with the assumptions by Sabatier and Mazmanian (1980), the commitment by the implementing canton is a crucial factor and simultaneously an advantage of member state implementation in the case of regional policy where the cantons as responsible actors for implementation are directly affected of the problem the policy tries to solve (see Biela et al. 2012). The incentive to comply hence is larger. However, where the problem is less urgent for the canton, subcantonal rural regions still would benefit from a more successful implementation. This holds true for sufficient personal and financial resources. Personal resources (except in the one outlier canton) facilitate the inclusion of private actors.[11]

- Contrary to the assumptions of the implementation framework, the size of the problem has a positive effect on the implementation. Cantons with more rural regions might already be used to deal with the problems addressed by the NRP and can use already established cooperation-networks (see Tödtling and Kaufmann 2001). Additionally, it can be argued that because less densely populated cantons with more rural regions suffer more from problems stemming from rural depopulation and changes in economic structures and they are more motivated to challenge the problem.

- Additionally, a good collaboration-culture with enterprises is essential.

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[11] As additional analyses have showed, the personal resources in a canton are higher if a canton has more rural regions, a higher GDP per capita and shows more commitment in including private actors and hence can be seen as a valid measurement for the importance of the problem for the cantons. The models in the regressions above however show no problems regarding multicollinearity.

The experience of the cantons in addressing enterprises facilitates the process of including them in the NRP.

6.2 The applicability of the implementation framework in policies disbursing funds

What does this mean for the benefit of the implementation framework by Sabatier and Mazmanian (1980) when analyzing policies disbursing funds? As the results of the regression show, the implementation framework helps to understand the different policy outcomes in the Swiss NRP, even though not all factors have proven helpful.

- Compliance by incentives: target group can not be forced to comply, even though it would be better if they would. But as regional actors have incentives to foster their enterprise or municipality, it is crucial that the implementing cantons provide good guidance and proactively motivate the actors to comply.

- The commitment of the implementing agency is more important than in regulatory policies, as there is no coercive mechanism. However, it is easier to commit subnational institutions as they rather profit from policies disbursing funds than in regulatory policies. The fact that private actors have been addressed more often in cantons where the problem of rural regions is larger points in to the same direction. If the policy approach to a problem is disbursing funds in order to finance innovative projects, a larger problem increases the commitment to the policy, while in regulatory policies, where behavior is restricted, a larger problem decreases the willingness of implementation.

- However, the willingness of the individual implementing officer has not shown any significant effect. Unfavourable conditions such as difficult contact with enterprises and few resources may have more influence on the implementation and can not be overcome by individual motivation.

- In contrast to Pressman and Wildavsky's (1973) case and to Sabatier and Mazmanian's (1980) assumptions, hierarchical decision points are helpful, if the cantons as "experts" use their advantage of being closer to the regions and being able set incentives easier, knowing the regions

better and having more managerial experience in dealing with regional actors (Mavrot and Sager 2017).

- generally: the three sets of factors still prove very helpful, also in non-regulatory policies. However, several aspects should be approached differently: even though the goal remains to ensure compliance of the target group, the success depends more on their proactive behavior than on sanctions and coercive mechanisms.

7 Conclusion

Regional policy with the aim of influencing economic processes in rural and peripheral regions plays an important role in states facing the challenge of rural depopulation and changes in economic structures. In order to better react to these challenges, Switzerland adopted a New Regional Policy in 2006 promoting the development of innovations and a market-oriented economy by a direct promotion of projects (Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs 2008). While an evaluation by Sager and Huegli (2013) has showed that the policy already resulted in large number of financed regional projects, it also becomes apparent that the goal of explicitly addressing private actors as target groups could not be achieved as planned. Given the fact that, in the Swiss system of member state implementation, the subnational entities of cantons play a key role in the implementation process, this paper aims at shedding light on the fact that the cantons performed very differently in addressing private actors as target groups. Therefore, we adopt the implementation framework by Sabatier and Mazmanian (1980) that provides a comprehensive set of factors which affect the achievement of policy goals throughout the entire process of implementation (Sabatier and Mazmanian 1980, 554).

To test the implementation framework and examine whether the three categories explain the difficulty in addressing regional enterprises, a logistic multi-level model has been conducted including variables on the project- and on the cantonal-level. The results help to shed light not only on factors helping to explain why some cantons faced problems in reaching the target group of private actors but also help to assess how the implementation framework proves useful in examining the success of non-regulatory policies disbursing funds such as the NRP. While on the project-level, projects in the tourism-

sector and projects with higher costs increase the odds of having included private actors, factors on the cantonal-level also add significant information. Cantons where the commitment to the goal of explicitly including private actors is higher, sufficient personal resources in order to implement the policy are provided and a good relation to regional enterprises has been established have significantly higher odds of addressing private actors as target groups. Additionally, cantons with less rural and peripheral regions and a denser population structure faced more problems in including private actors.

The results show that the implementation of regional policy not only profits from the willingness of the implementing cantons to comply according to the goals of the policy and also from financial and personal resources, but also from the increasing incentives for cantons where the problem is comparatively large. Additionally, the set of variables of the implementation framework still proves very helpful, although policies disbursing funds need have different characteristics compared to regulatory policies aiming at changing the behavior of the target group regarding several aspects. As the incentives for compliance differ, the hierarchical member state implementation and the size of the problem are rather promoting factors for a successful implementation.

To further examine the question of how the target group of private actors could be addressed more successfully in the implementation of regional policies disbursing funds for innovative regional projects and how the implementation framework by Sabatier and Mazmanian (1980) can be helpful, it would be interesting to compare the results of this study to the implementation of regional policies in other countries, especially in countries with member state implementation such as Denmark (see Biela et al. 2012). This study however provides first insights in to the applicability of the implementation framework in regional policy.

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Appendix

Table 1, Additional Regressions

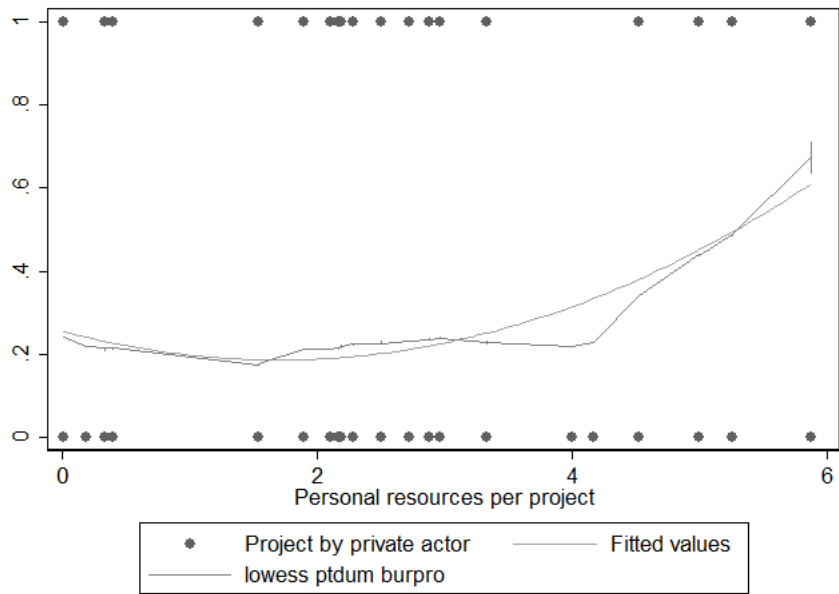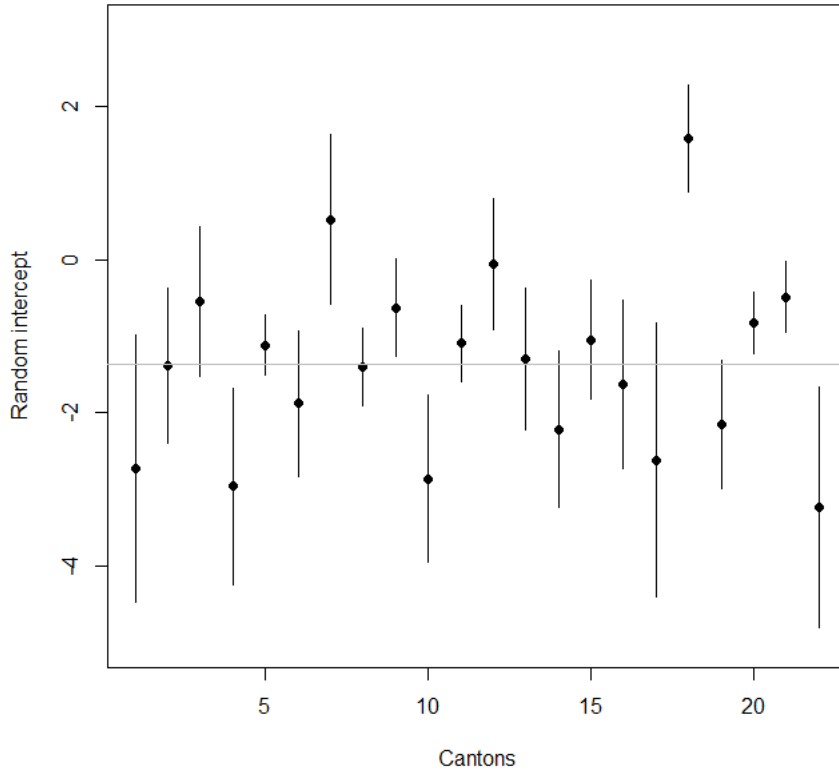|	(1) assoc	(2) assoc	(3) assoc	(4) assoc	(5) public	(6) public	(7) public	(8) public
scope cant	1.110 (0.341)	1.155 (0.354)	1.152 (0.349)	1.120 (0.340)	1.340 (0.411)	1.297 (0.398)	1.329 (0.407)	1.350 (0.410)
scope reg	1.227 (0.359)	1.248 (0.362)	1.136 (0.327)	1.113 (0.320)	1.094 (0.325)	1.123 (0.333)	1.200 (0.357)	1.235 (0.365)
tourism	2.007*** (0.331)	2.031*** (0.335)	2.071*** (0.341)	2.059*** (0.339)	0.376*** (0.0648)	0.373*** (0.0642)	0.370*** (0.0636)	0.367*** (0.0631)
logcost	0.838*** (0.0396)	0.841*** (0.0397)	0.838*** (0.0394)	0.841*** (0.0395)	0.809*** (0.0406)	0.809*** (0.0406)	0.811*** (0.0406)	0.808*** (0.0404)
contact		2.220 (1.690)	4.290* (2.673)	4.084* (2.599)		1.441 (0.993)	0.734 (0.535)	0.452 (0.303)
inh		1.012 (0.624)	1.464 (0.680)	1.753 (0.802)		2.605 (1.480)	2.007 (1.066)	1.256 (0.599)
problem		1.551* (0.287)	1.622** (0.261)	1.449 (0.297)		0.813 (0.134)	0.883 (0.153)	1.255 (0.255)
pers res			1.604 (0.805)	1.030 (0.567)			1.813 (1.024)	2.993* (1.673)
pers res2			0.924 (0.0779)	0.981 (0.0860)			0.884 (0.0837)	0.823* (0.0737)
commit			0.195*** (0.0855)	0.157*** (0.0747)			1.863 (0.897)	1.742 (0.816)
gdp p.c.				1.025 (0.0327)				0.918* (0.0305)
pol				7.975 (9.984)				0.0981 (0.127)
will				0.823 (0.254)				1.225 (0.359)
N	977	977	977	977	977	977	977	977
AIC	1117.9	1116.1	1110.2	1113.4	1081.8	1084.0	1086.4	1086.0

Exponentiated coefficients; Standard errors in parentheses
* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Additional Figures

Share of projects by private actors per canton

Each bar represents a canton
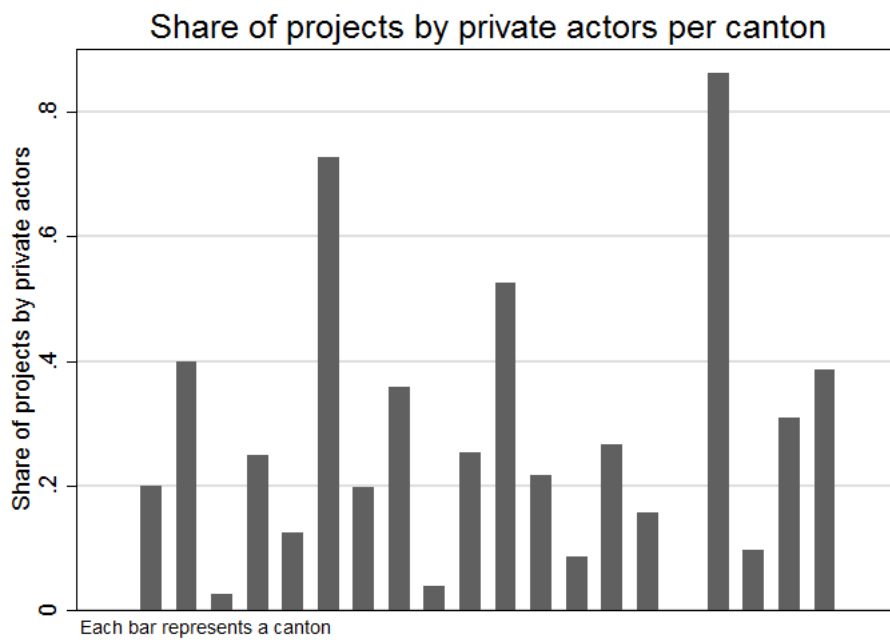
Random intercepts empty model

Operationalization Table

Variable	Operationalization	Source	N	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Dependent	**Variable**						
ptdum	Dummy variable: 1 if project by private actor, 0 if project by municipalities or associations	CHMOS	977	0.25	0.44	0	1
Independent	**Variables**						
scope	Nominal variable: Spatial scope of the project. 1 if cantonal scope, 2 if regional scope, 3 if inter-cantonal scope	CHMOS	977	1.87	0.62	1	3
tourism	Dummy variable: Kind of project. 1 if Tourism, 0 if technical help, general industry, natural resources, agricultural-industry, education and health and energy	CHMOS	977	0.44	0.49	0	1
logcost	Total cost of project, logarithmized in order to guarantee normal distribution	CHMOS	977	5.64	1.7	-1.51	11.18
problem	Continuous variable: density, person per km2 in a canton (divided by 100)	Federal Statistical Office	22	2.27	1.9	0.28	8.71
inh	Ordinal: Problem inheritance, experience in dealing with the problem: Answer to the question whether regions where established prior to the implementation of the NRP. Yes 1, no 2.	Interview	22	1.41	0.5	1	2
contact	Dummy: Answer to the question: is it difficult to address private actors in your canton? From 1 (very easy) to 4 (very difficult). Dummy variable: coded 0 if 1 or 2, coded 1 if 3 or 4.	Interview	22	0.76	0.43	0	1
bureau	Continuous: Full-time equivalence in personal for the cantonal implementation of the NRP (divided by 100 and centered). Divided by projects, hence, personal resources per project. Also exponential. Centered.*	Interview	22	2.44	1.56	0.01	5.88
commit	Index of the two following questions: Did your canton took measures to ensure a better inclusion of private actors and does your canton foster regional managements?	Interview	22	0.41	0.59	0	2
gdp p.c.	Cantonal gross domestic product per capita, divided by 1000. Centered.*	Federal Statistical Office	22	70	10	50	96
pol	Continuous: Percentage of non-leftist parties (SVP, FDP, CVP, Lega, MCR, BDP) in cantonal executive in 2011.	Federal Statistical Office	22	0.41	0.25	0	1
will	Ordinal: Answer to the question: how important is it in your opinion to include private actors? 1 to 4.	Interview	22	1.78	0.87	1	4

* The variables have been centered to prevent multicollinearity.