

## 7. (Gradual) Institutionalisation of the DWIH

Following the description of the DWIH as an instrument (chapter 6), this chapter turns to an analysis of the *long-term career* of the DWIH. The (gradual) institutionalisation and development of the DWIH are described by paying close attention to their inception phase (section 7.1) since it is assumed that this is where key design principles were laid out. In addition, critical junctures throughout the instrument's career that have led to changes in the instrument's composition are identified (section 7.3). In combination, this historical perspective serves as a lens to explain the current form of the DWIH and to generate insights into the wider rise of SICs, being distinct instruments of science diplomacy adopted by highly innovative countries.

### 7.1. *Genesis of the DWIH*

In line with the policy instrumentation approach, in the following section, the main aspects that contextualise and anchor the creation of the DWIH are presented (for an overview of the milestones, see Figure 6 on p. 130). In principle, the DWIH are conceived to be an instrument that would benefit the whole ecosystem, since they intend to showcase and strengthen Germany's position internationally. However, the design and inception phase of the DWIH marked a tug of war at various levels and between the actors involved. Furthermore, the DWIH's creation phase revealed political friction and struggles, as will be shown in the following section.

#### 7.1.1. Launch of the Initiative Außenwissenschaftspolitik

The development of the DWIH as a new and distinct policy instrument in the German context must be understood in light of the subordinate policy *Initiative Außenwissenschaftspolitik* (Auswärtiges Amt, 2009a) and cannot be disentangled from it. In January 2009, the *Initiative Außenwissenschaftspolitik* was publicly launched as a joint initiative of the *Auswärtiges Amt* (AA) and the sectoral ministry (BMBF) and introduced a set of associated

measures (tool mix) (Ammon, P., 2009; Auswärtiges Amt, 2009a; Steinmeier, 2009). The initiative was considered a milestone, setting them on the path of promoting international research and science cooperation towards conveying and reinforcing the realisation of Germany's wider foreign policy goals. Although some instruments that were subsumed under this initiative existed previously, they were subject to a renewed focus of attention and funding (cf. Erler, 2008). This newly devised initiative explicitly intended to draw on higher education and research as distinct, shaping elements of Germany's foreign policy (Auswärtiges Amt, 2009a, 2009b; Erler, 2008; Maaß, 2011, pp. 590–592). The package of policy instruments in the toolbox consisted of a range of instruments, such as scholarship programmes, initiatives to foster German language use (cf. Maaß, 2011) and the creation of a new position (*Außenwissenschaftsbeauftragter* (Götz, 2009)) in the AA that gave the new policy a political face, to name a few. Thus, the DWIH were just one instrument that was designed and launched in the governmental toolbox; however, they were a distinct, new institutional response (Erler, 2008).

### 7.1.2. Policy Entrepreneurs

The emergence of this initiative in January 2009 was, however, subject to intense debates and discussions among different actors in the (political) environment. The process of launching this new policy and the design of the DWIH started much earlier and seems to be strongly connected to the role and the ideas of individual policy entrepreneurs<sup>121</sup>. Back in 2006, Georg Schütte, secretary general of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation initiated and fed a public discourse on the role of science in/for diplomacy<sup>122</sup> (he later took the post of BMBF State Secretary). Publishing an article in the established German newspaper *Die Zeit* (Schütte, 2006), he called upon politicians to devise a coherent and systematic foreign science policy<sup>123</sup> in order to respond to challenges such as competing international science

121 Scholarly literature defines policy entrepreneurs as those “*who, from outside the formal positions of government, introduce, translate, and help implement new ideas into public practice*” (Roberts and King (1991, p. 147)). For more insights, see Gunn (2017).

122 Interview sources suggest that Georg Schütte got to know and was inspired by the idea of science diplomacy in the USA (interview GIS2).

123 Please note: Georg Schütte refers in his original text to the German term *Außenwissenschaftspolitik*, which translates as foreign science policy (this also reflects the

systems. Considering the fact that Germany is a country which lacks raw materials, he reasserted that Germany needs to stay competitive in times of globalisation and take an active role in shaping science internationally. To that end, a coherent strategy needed to be devised that would address the nexus of research, science and foreign policy more holistically than was the case at that time.

Schütte had found others who shared his views and they advanced the discourse on what became known as science diplomacy, as is evident from the different books he edited (Borgwardt, 2009; Schütte, 2007, 2008, 2009). Schütte's initiative was well received by the foreign minister, at the time, Frank-Walter Steinmeier, a social democrat (Steinmeier, 2008a, 2008b). There seemed to be a certain political momentum surrounding these developments: Steinmeier had just taken office in late 2005 and was generally open to the topic (in comparison to previous ministers in the foreign affairs department (interviews GIS2, GIW5, GIW15)). These developments culminated in the announcement by Steinmeier, early 2008, that the AA, together with the BMBF and in consultation with relevant science stakeholders, would launch a new internationalisation strategy for science and research in 2009, which would be the *Initiative Außenwissenschaftspolitik* (Steinmeier, 2008b). To contextualise this, the BMBF had just published a government-wide internationalisation strategy itself (BMBF, 2008). This political endeavour by the AA was clearly considered a response to increased global competition and was aimed at maintaining and strengthening Germany's reputation internationally, while also building bridges.

Hence, these measures were regarded as future investments (interviews GIS2, GIS4). Steinmeier further elaborated that the *Initiative Außenwissenschaftspolitik* would be firmly anchored in the third strong pillar of Germany's foreign policy (Steinmeier, 2008b): cultural relations and education policy<sup>124</sup>. Approximately, 90 million euros were made available annually for

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wording of the foreign ministry). Notably, the BMBF adheres to different wording: *Wissenschaftsaußenpolitik*. This translates as science/scientific foreign policy. The BMBF deliberately places emphasis on science (interviews GIS5, GIS6, GIW5, GIW9). The ongoing use of these two terms reflects the different focuses and understandings that prevail between the two ministries, ultimately culminating in the question: Who has the prerogative of interpretation?

- 124 Translates as *Auswärtige Kultur- und Bildungspolitik* (AKBP). Germany's AKBP dates back to the early 1950s and 1960s, when the institutional infrastructure was revised and consolidated. In the late 1960s, the role of cultural and education policy was strengthened and became the third pillar of a modern foreign policy (for a

the *Initiative Außenwissenschaftspolitik* (interview GIS2). The data reflects evidence that the political push for this initiative was clearly associated with AA (although in consultation with other actors)<sup>125</sup>. This was not uncontested in the BMBF and proved to be a source of conflict, as will be shown in the following section (interviews GIW5, GIW6, GIW14). The launch of the *Initiative Außenwissenschaftspolitik* came at a late stage of Steinmeier's term and could be considered a last-minute measure. After the 2009 election, the initiative was further pursued by the new minister, Guido Westerwelle, though—word has it—apparently less enthusiastically.

### 7.1.3. Early Deliberations

Against this background, the idea of creating a novel instrument, such as the DWIH, was born. In 2008, and seemingly for the first time, the concept of the DWIH, as a distinct institutional instrument, was publicly announced by minister Steinmeier (2008b). More specifically, during a meeting of the Committee on Cultural and Media Affairs (*Ausschuss für Kultur und Medien des Deutschen Bundestags*), Steinmeier presented the wish of research and science institutions to have a *one-stop-shop* solution

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reconstruction, see Singer (2003)). To this day, the other two pillars of Germany's strategic foreign policy are diplomacy and foreign trade policy (cf. Auswärtiges Amt (2019c)). For an overview of the (historical) development of this policy area, the work of Harnischfeger (2007) and Singer (2003) can be recommended. According to Maaß (2011), ever since then, the AKBP has gained ground and now represents a solid third pillar, if not the fundament, of Germany's foreign policy. Between 1998–2005, however, there were severe budget cuts for activities falling under the AKBP, and also some of the Goethe Institutes were closed (cf. Gauweiler (2018)). Hence, 2005 marked a low point, budget-wise, for the AKBP. Since then, the budget has steadily increased again, and also new structures, such as the DWIH, were established (cf. Deutscher Kulturrat e.V. (2018)). In addition, a paradigmatic shift in German foreign policy can be observed. In line with Steinmeier, the distinction between interior and exterior policy is outdated, as are national and international dichotomies. Instead, these concepts need to be considered together in order to deal with contemporary challenges (cf. Schaper (2016)).

- 125 The literature also argues that the boundaries between a country's internal and external affairs are increasingly permeable and have become blurred (cf. Weigel (2019)): cultural and educational policy is strongly linked to a successful foreign policy. In other words, foreign policy in fact starts from within a country. This is arguably an explanation for why ministries of foreign affairs approach new policy fields and partake in them in different ways than before (while this also provides new opportunities to redefine their work).

abroad, which would provide joint representation and bundle German activities abroad and would hence enable better networking. On a contextual note, apart from the DAAD, few key science actors had an institutional presence abroad at that time. The AvH had their international network of AvH-friends, and the DFG seemed to be in the process of setting up an office. Hence, the international institutional presence of German science actors abroad was scattered. In turn, it was proposed that *Deutsche Wissenschaftszentren* (German Science Centres, an earlier name for the DWIH) should be founded as a response to contemporary challenges and as part of a wider modernisation strategy (Borgwardt, 2009; Steinmeier, 2008b). The DWIH were conceived to serve as landmarks in the German science and innovation landscape. While Steinmeier clearly frames this as a wish from the key science organisations, interview data suggests otherwise and does not fully confirm this. Instead, sources suggest that the idea of creating the DWIHs was clearly politically motivated and initiated, while relevant organisations were consulted in a second step (interviews GIS2, GIW5, GIW6, GIW14):

*The initiative was, I have to think a bit since this is long ago, was started by the AA (interview GIW14)<sup>126</sup>.*

The data reveals that, behind the scenes, the AA approached key science and research stakeholders and enquired about the idea of developing the DWIH in 2008 (source: AA internal documents). Besides the AA's two intermediary organisations, the AvH and DAAD, high-level key stakeholders in the form of the Alliance of Science Organisations were consulted during the inception process through various formats, such as formal requests or chimney talks, etc. Interviews furthermore reveal that the DFG, a strong stakeholder, was also part of a small working group involved in the more detailed conceptualisation phase of the instrument. Besides the main key stakeholders (mentioned in section 6.1), initially two other stakeholders were consulted in this design process, as documents reveal. The *Stifterverband* and the German Federation of Industrial Research Associations (AiF) were contacted as potential partners in the process (source: AA internal document, 2008a). Both actors were, however, in their entirety never part of the network for reasons unknown (while some of the AiF's members

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126 "Also die Initiative ging, ich muss ein bisschen überlegen, die ist lange her, die Initiative ging ja vom Auswärtigen Amt aus" (GIW14\_2020-02-04, Pos. 15).

joined)<sup>127</sup>. In addition, a successor to that internal document reveals (AA internal document, 2008b) that other key actors in the German system, such as the *TU9*, *acatech* and *intech.net* were also considered as eligible participants (which would possibly have held a similar position in steering the DWIH)<sup>128</sup>.

In addition, the idea of establishing joint representative bodies of German science and research organisations abroad was similarly intensively discussed among a wider group of experts (Borgwardt, 2009). The interview data suggests that the idea of creating DWIHs did not develop in a vacuum, which provides further evidence of the political push of the instrument. The data points to the AA's deliberate focus on what other countries/competitors were doing. This suggests a case of policy learning/transfer<sup>129</sup> (cf. Borgwardt, 2009, interview SNX3):

*We looked at what other countries are doing, such as Switzerland; they had Swiss Houses and we looked at this; how are the French doing this? We looked at this to get ideas* (interview GIS2<sup>130</sup>).

127 The empirical data suggests that key stakeholders such as the *Stifterverband für die deutsche Wissenschaft e.V.* or the *Arbeitsgemeinschaft industrieller Forschungsvereinigungen* (AiF) (translates as German Federation of Industrial Research Associations) were officially consulted during the early stages of the DWIH. However, both organisations did not join and were also not engaged in discussions (while the BDI, the DIHK and the FhG are, in fact, members of the AiF and joined). The involvement of the AiF and *Stifterverband* was raised in the interviews; however, no insights into their (non-) participation could be gained.

128 Again, the condensed empirical material could not reveal insights into this initial idea.

129 In literature, this process is conceptualised as a policy transfer. A policy transfer is most prominently defined by Dolowitz and Marsh as “*the process by which knowledge about policies, administrative arrangements, institutions and ideas in one political system (past or present) is used in the development of policies, administrative arrangements, institutions and ideas in another political system*” (2000, p. 5). A more specific definition which relates to policy instruments sees this as follows: “*a policy transferred from elsewhere can bring with it not only particular policy instruments, but also the idea, sometimes erroneous, that it was successful in the original jurisdiction. Although some political actors may dispute this ‘stamp of approval’, the salient point here is that the policy makers can claim that it was a success elsewhere and will be when transferred*” (Marsh and McConnell (2008, p. 13)).

130 “Wir haben uns angeguckt, was machen denn so Länder wie die Schweiz, die so Swiss Houses hatten, also das haben wir uns angeguckt, wie machen es die Franzosen, da haben wir uns ja Ideen geholt” (GIS2\_2018-02-09, Pos. 85).

*“I know that Germany would be interested. I had a meeting with the ministry people at that time [...]. They came in [sic] Bern to see what was the model [sic] [referring to the Swissnex model]” (interview SIS4).*

*The intention was indeed to strengthen Germany’s bundle of existing manifold efforts, of the different research organisations, to bring offices together, and to orientate ourselves towards the Swiss model of Swissnex (interview GIW8)<sup>131</sup>.*

In this context, it should be mentioned that the data points to a similar approach which was encountered in the early 2000s. At that time, ministerial actors suggested creating a joint representative body of German research and science organisations linked to the diplomatic umbrella. However, this proposal did not resonate in overall approval among the targeted key stakeholders. Stakeholders were concerned about losing their own visibility if they were to be subsumed under the diplomacy umbrella. This idea was also accompanied by tensions between the AA and the BMBF (interviews GIW6, GIW15), which in combination caused the idea to be discarded at the time (although this initial impetus at the time seemed to come from the BMBF, rather than the AA). Apart from this idea, the data suggests that SHARE Boston was closely monitored by relevant key actors from the German science sector (cf. interview GIW15). In addition, the data reflects that members of the German parliament were eager to learn about SHARE Boston and addressed a request to the government to examine whether there is a need to set up a similar type of unit in Germany (von Arb, 2004, p. 2). This need was ultimately declined due to the fact that a) there were already other flanking measures in Germany in that realm and b) a comparable structure such as SHARE Boston was a rather cost-intensive set-up. This development is notable since this initial position seemed to have been modified over time in favour of installing similar units (this can hence be seen as a delayed policy transfer, see section 12.1.1.2).

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131 “Es ging tatsächlich darum, dass Deutschland die vielfältigen Anstrengungen, die es schon gab, von Seiten einzelner Forschungsorganisationen, ein bisschen mehr zu bündeln, Auftritte von Büros zusammen zu fassen und sich so ein bisschen an dem Schweizer Model der Swissnex, oder des Swissnex Netzwerks zu orientieren“ (GIW8\_2018-05-04, Pos. 15).

### 7.2. Struggles Over the Institutional Set-Up

The gradual institutionalisation of the DWIH was also impacted by actors' preferences and was shaped by the strategic interests of the various parties involved. Following this initial top-down push by the AA, the process of institutionalisation has been subject to conflictual interactions and been shaped by struggles occurring at different levels. Struggles became visible a) horizontally at a ministerial level, mainly focused on competence b) vertically between key (individual) stakeholders and the ministerial level and c) horizontally among the key stakeholders themselves. Furthermore, d) the data points to alliances that were forged between some of the key stakeholders against the ministerial level, pointing to a fourth set of conflictual interactions (however, the data also suggests the alliance organisations were supported by the BMBF on some issues). These interactions are expanded on in the following sections and seem to have impacted the form and institutionalisation of the DWIH.

#### 7.2.1. Ministerial Struggles Over Competence and Design

From the very beginning, the DWIH were firmly situated between the two ministries: the AA and the BMBF. The idea of launching this new policy was clearly initiated and pushed by the AA (section 7.1.1). For the AA, at that time, the creation of the DWIH under its auspices seemed most logical, given that the AA traditionally oversees Germany's external representation<sup>132</sup>. On the other hand, as the sectoral ministry for higher education and research, the BMBF is responsible for internationalisation activities and oversees most of the key stakeholders from the science sector. Despite the

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132 On a contextualising note, ministries of foreign affairs have a distinct role in governmental bureaucracy: they operate within the country, while also overseeing diplomatic and consular representation abroad. Scholarly literature assumes that, in comparison to other ministries, they have limited financial means (Balzacq, Charillon, and Ramel (2019)) and also diplomatic practices were subject to changing conditions in the past. Traditionally, diplomacy has been characterised by a rigid understanding in terms of actors, tasks and channels of communication, also known as club diplomacy (cf. Constantinou et al. (2016)). The aforementioned literature observes, however, a recent change towards opening up this closed tradition in favour of new forms, modes of interaction and the growing involvement of non-state actors (cf. Cooper et al. (2013, p. 6); Cooper (2013)), which is known as track two diplomacy (cf. P. L. Jones (2015)).



general principle of ministerial autonomy (*Ressortzuständigkeit*), both ministries considered themselves to be responsible for this kind of initiative, resulting in a struggle over competence. This (perceived) dual competence in certain policy fields is not uncommon<sup>133</sup> and instead calls for coordination between the departments involved. However, this coordination process proved to be challenging and there was disagreement between the participating ministries (the AA and the BMBF) on several issues, for instance on the general running of the organisation. The BMBF was irritated and upset by the AA's political push to launch the project (interviews GIS2, GIW6), as they sensed a certain rivalry (interview GIW9). This reflects jurisdictional egoism being at stake (Mai, 2016 and footnote 133):

*There were question marks on the part of the BMBF as to why the AA is suddenly strongly engaging in this area*<sup>134</sup> (interview GIS2).

Although the BMBF officially participated in the early deliberations that were initiated by the AA (Steinmeier, 2008b), the BMBF considered the DWIHs were originally falling into their policy domain, rather than the AA's; the AA, on the other hand, considered the DWIH to be their core business (interview GIS2)<sup>135</sup>. In addition, the BMBF had also prepared an internationalisation strategy for the whole government at around that same

133 The political system in Germany adheres to the principle of ministerial responsibility (*Ressortzuständigkeit*). Each ministry has clear competences, well-defined tasks and is responsible for its line of action. Political reality reflects, however, that often policy issues relate to more than one policy area given their nested character. Accordingly, several ministries need to be involved and coordination is required. This coordination process might, however, be hampered and friction can occur due to competition between ministries (cf. C. M. Jones (2010)). Mai (2016, p. 204) deploys the concept of jurisdictional egoism (*Ressortegoismus*), suggesting that ministries stand in competition with each other. This is even more the case when the government is formed by different parties and party-political profiling takes place. Jurisdictional egoism can take different forms, such as withholding information, refusing to cooperate on common projects or delaying processes, to name a few examples. The vision of a state as a unified actor with a distinct national interest has been discarded (Allison (1968); Bendor and Hammond (1992)).

134 "da gab es schon Fragezeichen von Seiten des BMBF, warum das Auswärtige Amt sich jetzt plötzlich so stark in dem Bereich engagiert" (GIS2\_2018-02-09, Pos. 75).

135 Conflicts over competence seem to have shaped the history of the AA. Historical reconstructions by Singer (2003, pp. 9–10) reveal that as early as in the phase of its reconstruction following the second World War, the AA encountered conflicts over competence with the Ministry of the Interior. More specifically, though anticipated by the AA, it was not possible to include all institutions which have a foreign cultural focus in the AA's departmental responsibility.

time—the first of its kind. While the strategy also acknowledged the need for a coordinated presence by the German research and science sector abroad (BMBF, 2008, p. 4), the combined interview data reveals that this did not necessarily mean the DWIH (interview GIS6). The fact that the AA was in the driver's seat was viewed as decisive and impacting on the general direction of the DWIH (interview GIW9).

Similarly, the unit in charge within the AA was also considered to have played a decisive role in shaping the instrument, while discontinuity among those responsible within the AA was also mentioned, as was the fact that the AA does not typically manage projects on such complex topics (interview GIW10). Another element of dispute at the ministerial level links to the financial support for projects like these. Generally, the BMBF is financially better equipped to run these kinds of initiatives, while the AA typically has limited financial means. The question of who should fund the DWIH emerged as another distinct issue throughout the instrument's development (interviews GIW2, GIW15). The data reveals that after the DWIH's inception, the AA enquired about supplementary funding from the BMBF; however, this request was declined due to the limited influence they would have on the DWIH and a different strategic focus on the part of the BMBF (interviews GIW5, GIS5).

*This happened in discord between the AA and the BMBF. The BMBF, who would have actually been responsible, was left behind when founding the DWIH. Later on, it was discussed whether it should take over given that it is financially better equipped than the AA. However, the BMBF declined; it was further not interested since it conducts science foreign policy rather than foreign science policy (cf. interview GIW5 and also GIS5, GIS6)*

*Normally, these things are done together with the respective departments. In this case, there was a very strong initiative from the Auswärtiges Amt, which informed about this, and I think with the opportunity to give money, but without having any influence<sup>136</sup> (interview GIS5).*

Hence, the AA took over the funding of the DWIH network; however, this was organised on an annual project basis. More specifically, this implied

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136 "Normalerweise macht man solche Dinge aber dann gemeinsam mit dem jeweiligen Ressort. In dem Fall kam es sehr stark, sozusagen als Initiative des Auswärtigen Amtes, die [...] damals mehr oder weniger mitgeteilt wurde und ich glaube mit der Möglichkeit verbunden war, Geld zu geben, aber auf Einfluss letztlich zu verzichten" (GIS5\_2020-01-14, Pos. 7).

submitting an annual renewal request for the project, which involved a significant administrative workload for DWIH locations. This furthermore proved to be a source of uncertainty and a constraint to the longer-term planning of activities on-site (interview GIW2). Inspired by the Swiss role model, which has the industry as paying clients on board, it was anticipated that, over time, the DWIH would also generate its own income and become self-financing. This was considered by the stakeholders to be a design error and a critical issue right from the start (interviews GIW5, GIW6, GIW14, GIW15<sup>137</sup>). This ultimately proved to be one of the main points of criticism in the subsequent audit (see section 7.3.2).

Furthermore, at that time, the AA was run by the Social Democrats (SPD) while the ministry for education and research was in the hands of the Christian Democrats (CDU)<sup>138</sup>, and this may have possibly impacted and reinforced these tensions (interviews GIS2, GIW15). This constellation of political parties was not perceived as advantageous to the development of this common project (interview GIW12). In fact, it proved to be another area of conflict related to party politics and profiling. Some of the DWIH locations had been opened multiple times by the two ministers, again indicating that there was some form of discord and the need to create a political profile (interviews GIS2, GIW5, Westerwelle, 2012a). In addition, the party who headed the AA until then, changed in autumn 2009, shortly following the DWIH's inception in early 2009. The data suggests that the AA's focus shifted towards other topics after then (interviews GIS2, GIS4).

Furthermore, the interviews assume that the design and shape of the DWIH would have presumably differed if the BMBF had been in the driver's seat instead (interviews GIS5, GIS6, GIW13, GIW15). A different approach to action would have prevailed and some of the difficulties and arguments encountered throughout the process would have probably been avoided. Interviewees further assumed that solid funding arrangements would also have been provided from the start. To draw on another example, the two ministries' underlying approaches to designing an instrument

137 More specifically, some actors were reluctant to invest their own financial means since they saw the ministerial actors as being in the driver's seat to secure and provide funding. On the other hand, there were those actors who wanted to use their financial means to participate, whilst this was (politically) permitted (signalling a certain paradoxical situation).

138 Even more so, the Federal Ministry of Finance was also in the hands of the SPD at the time. This was viewed as presenting favourable conditions in which to launch this overall policy initiative (interview GIS2).

differ: while the BMBF would have presumably taken a focus from within the system, i.e., what science and research need, and how this can be reflected in a potential instrument such as the DWIH; the AA, on the other hand, takes an outward approach in terms of marketing: how Germany can represent itself better (interview GIW9).

These two approaches also reflect different forms of logic. Some sources go so far as to assume that the DWIH would have presumably even worked better if the BMBF had been in charge (interviews GIS6, GIW15). Accordingly, the tensions between the AA and the BMBF were viewed as being omnipresent throughout the development of the DWIH; while stakeholders felt as though they were pawns in the ministerial battle (interview GIW6 and cf. Epping, 2020)<sup>139</sup>. What is more, the tensions between the two ministerial actors were viewed as creating unfavourable conditions for the development of the DWIH and as impacting the DWIH's gradual institutionalisation in their early inception phase and beyond.

## 7.2.2. Agreeing on a Model (Format, Themes and Goals)

Aside from the struggles over competence and direction between ministerial bureaucracythe establishment, and the gradual institutionalisation of the DWIH also led to heated discussions and disagreements between the ministries and the key stakeholders which were involved. To start with, a link to the diplomatic missions was one of the initial ideas concerning the institutional set-up of the DWIH. Discussions focused on whether the DWIH should operate under the diplomatic umbrella. Whilst politically, this was initially considered to be an option, the key science organisations opposed this idea since they did not want to be subsumed under the DWIH label or the diplomatic umbrella. Instead, they wished to maintain their own visibility and autonomy (interviews GIW5, GIW6, GIW8):

*Because we [...] are all interested in being visible on our own and not just as an organisation of the German embassy*<sup>140</sup> (interview GIW6).

139 Raev (2020, p. 317) observes similar patterns of ministerial struggles over competences and resources in the development of the *Transnationale Bildung* initiative, a sister policy instrument in the AA's *Initiative Außenwissenschaft*.

140 *“Weil wir allesamt, [...] wohl das Interesse daran haben auch selbst sichtbar zu sein und nicht nur als Organisation der deutschen Botschaft verstanden zu werden“* (GIW6-2018-03-27, Pos. 20).

This issue of the DWIH's specific role was closely linked to this and was also the subject of intense debate and heated discussions (the question of governance is explored in depth in section 7.2.4). Initial policy documents suggest that the DWIH had the potential to fulfil a coordinating function for key German actors abroad (presumably inspired by the Swiss case). However, this idea was opposed by some key stakeholders (pointing to the strong autonomy of key stakeholders in the German system):

*For us, it was fine to collaborate on certain aspects and coordinate these aspects; however, we did not want to be generally coordinated (in the sense of having overall coordination) (interview GIW5 and cf. GIW10).*

These two examples reflect the vertical disagreements between the ministries and stakeholders. The data suggests that, for instance, the alliance organisations regularly addressed issues of relevance in various exchange forums and discussed how to position themselves in relation to the ministries (interview GIW13). Such discussions also dealt with the specific themes, such as the DWIH's thematic coverage. Initially, the focus was purely on centres targeted towards research and science (cf. AA internal documents, Steinmeier, 2008b, 2009). This was also confirmed in Steinmeier's 2009 inauguration speech, while subsequent conference documentation refers to centres of science and innovation already (Auswärtiges Amt, 2009a). Although the DWIH's name includes the word innovation, this proved to be an issue of debate and mirrors another set of (ongoing) tensions. The interviews suggest that key science stakeholders were reticent and unhappy about the inclusion of innovation as a thematic focus (interviews GIW2, GIW7, GIW10, GIW13<sup>141</sup>), whilst the general connection between science and innovation was not questioned (see also section 8.1).

In a similar vein, the inclusion of business and innovation stakeholders in this project was viewed critically and at times contested and culminated in the question: What are the main objectives of the DWIH? This dissatisfaction is symbolic of another issue that shaped the negotiations: the DWIH's goals and mission and the highly relevant and sensitive issue of who determines such goals and sets the agenda. In other words: Which interests are at stake and which ones are most relevant and take precedence in discussions (and decisions)? To recall, several different stakeholders were involved in the process and their (at times) diverse interests needed to be

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141 The interviews further reveal that the relevance of innovation varies strongly across the DWIH's different locations.

reconciled: these diverse interests included the science community, which had diverse interests among themselves (interview GIW6), political/foreign policy objectives, and interests from science and research companies. In addition, these discussions were coupled and shaped by the different starting positions of the actors. The data reveals that some actors prioritised operating in particular locations and tended to act relatively independently, even in the light of this new instrument. This presented challenges in terms of establishing and activating this new instrument (interviews GIW6, GIW9).

### 7.2.3. The Network

Alongside and closely tied to the discussions on the exact model, deciding on potential locations where the DWIH should operate was a pressing issue. The data reflects that during early deliberations a key aspect for the locations was to rely on already existing structures. In other words, the DWIH should not start operating from scratch but instead should be able to use already existing infrastructures, such as the institutional presence of the DWIH's key actors, or Goethe Institutes or German Archaeological Institutes (interviews GIS2, GIW5). This motivation could be explained by the financial and administrative burden that is linked to creating such structures (interview GIS1). At the same, it was hoped that piggybacking on existing structures would enable the DWIH to benefit from their visibility and access. Accordingly, the following were considered key criteria: a) a certain institutional density should already exist in the target countries, b) the destinations should be attractive to the actors involved (interview GIS4) and c) they should offer potential in terms of emerging markets, talent and technological developments.

The data is unambiguous concerning the decision about the number of centres that should be opened. While initial internal documents mention the intention of setting up three offices in America, Asia and Europe (internal AA document, 2008), other sources refer to four initial locations (notably, New York was not one of them) (interview GIW15, Steinmeier, 2009). Yet other sources mention that five locations were identified at the start—São Paulo, Tokyo, New York<sup>142</sup>, Moscow and New Delhi—since they

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142 In the past, the New York location was often considered a forerunner to the DWIH brand (cf. Auswärtiges Amt (2014)) and as a sort of best practice case for how the

offered the greatest potential for the key stakeholders, while also reflecting an institutional agglomeration of German actors (interviews GIS2, GIW5). This choice of countries was also conveyed as a sign of the political importance of these countries, particularly when looking to the future (cf. Ammon, P., 2009).

The decision on the exact locations was, however, again influenced by individual actors' preferences. An initial idea was to open a DWIH in China, possibly Beijing. That option was, however, dropped soon given that the DAAD and DFG did not support this idea. In the case of the DFG, the Beijing office constituted a symbolic and special case (Borgwardt, 2009), while the DAAD also wanted to maintain its premises there (interview GIW5). Accordingly, that option was ruled out at that time and the DWIH network started operating in five locations. The discussions on the DWIH's locations also seemed to be a trigger for actors to launch their own initiatives. The data reveals that these general discussions also created momentum among certain actors to reconsider their own international presence. More specifically, in some cases actors also opened offices in these DWIH locations to take advantage of the synergy effects.

#### 7.2.4. Debates on the Governance Structure

Closely tied to the question of the network structure was the question of governance. This turned out to be a delicate issue since different perceptions prevailed (interview GIW6). More specifically, during the early conceptualisations of the DWIH (2008), one of the initial ideas was to involve a private body in the set-up and operation phase. However, key actors opposed the idea of central coordination of the joint instrument as previously discussed (see section 7.2.2). During these early deliberations, similarly, one actor stood out as having a particular interest in running the DWIH: the DAAD. The DWIH were regarded as operating in an area that originally strongly overlapped with the DAAD's self-concept (and were also possibly seen as threatening its position in the system), while the DAAD also had an unprecedented international outreach and network of offices around the world (interviews GIW9, GIW15). Accordingly, and in line with

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network ideally creates impact and conducts activities (interviews GIW10, DWIH4). However, this role model was also contested and seen as being a skewed comparison which neglects the distinct limits and opportunities of each location.



the DAAD's own ambitions (interviews GIW5, GIW8, GIW9, GIW15), it was initially proposed that the DAAD should oversee the network.

This was due to its (existing) international presence and its unparalleled know-how on the administrative issues involved in setting up an institutional infrastructure abroad. Furthermore, at the time, the DAAD already operated as an intermediary organisation for the AA. Nevertheless, this proposal was not approved (interviews GIS2, GIW5, GIW8, GIW9). Even stronger was the fact that there was disagreement and a sense of mistrust between some of the organisations (horizontal struggle between key stakeholders). Accordingly, although it seemed an obvious choice, the idea that the DAAD should take on a stronger coordinating role and oversee the network, this was opposed by other stakeholders (interviews GIW5, GIW8) and was explained by (institutional) mistrust. The DAAD itself considered it to be missed chance:

*And you can see in these locations, the DAAD was already there [...] the point is that possibly some of the actors did not like it that everything would be in the hands of the DAAD, and they naturally also wanted to participate, Humboldt and in particular the research organisations, yes<sup>143</sup> (interview GIS2).*

This quote points to some actors' deliberate strategic behaviour by opposing the DAAD, which was possibly also linked to protecting their own interests (it would have been perceived by other actors as an increase in power if the DAAD had taken on this role). Other sources point to a chain of unfortunate events that took place at a political level (interviews GIW9, GIW15). The AA's economic division, rather than its cultural division (which was in charge of the DAAD), were responsible for the DWIH. Accordingly, a certain dynamic developed where decisions about how to govern the DWIH locations was (re-)negotiated in a setting which largely excluded the DAAD (even though it was an intermediary organisation for the AA).

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143 "Und man sieht an diesen Stationen auch, eigentlich im Grunde der DAAD war überall da [...] aber der Punkt war, möglicherweise haben einige der Mitspieler es nicht so gerne gesehen, dass das alles beim DAAD läuft und die wollten natürlich auch mitmachen, Humboldt und vor allen Dingen die Forschungsorganisationen ja" (GIS2\_2018-02-09, Pos. 55).



Table 11 DWIH Network: Initial Composition and Leadership Arrangements (until 2016)<sup>144</sup>

Locations	Leadership Consortia (until 2016)
<b>Brazil</b> Sao Paulo (opened 2012)	AHK & DAAD
<b>India</b> New Delhi (opened 2012)	DFG (until 2015) DAAD (from 2016)
<b>Japan</b> Tokyo (opened 2010)	AHK & HRK
<b>Russia</b> Moscow (opened 2011)	DAAD
<b>United States</b> New York (opened 2010)	DAAD & DFG
<b>Egypt</b> Cairo (2012-2016), <i>Deutsches Wissenschaftszentrum</i> (DWZ)	DAAD

Source: created by the author.

The final decision on the leadership for each location was taken during a high-level breakfast with the presidents of the Alliance of Science Organisations (interviews GIW9, GIW10, GIW15). This resulted in the division of governance responsibility for the selected locations between various actors. Accordingly, it was agreed that the leadership of the DWIH locations should be put in the hands of consortia of key stakeholders (see Table 11). The consortia differed at each of the five locations and the main actors involved were the DAAD (in almost all locations), the DFG, the AHK

144 DWIH India: due the vacancies on the DFG side, the DFG and DAAD were both in charge (Deutsches Wissenschafts- und Innovationshaus Moskau (2013, p. 8). DWIH Russia: for more information, see Haber (2012); Auswärtiges Amt (2012). DWIH New York: the office was officially opened by the BMBF. For more information, see Schavan (2010).

(*Außenhandelskammer*) and the HRK. This process, though seemingly adhering to specific criteria, was viewed critically and the criteria were contested (interviews GIW8, GIW9, GIW10). With the exception of the DWIH India, this governance set-up was in place until a major reorganisation was implemented in 2017. The DWIH India was placed under the DAAD's leadership in early 2016, due to the vacancy of DFG project staff. The DAAD jumped in here, at first temporarily and then permanently (interviews DWIH3, GIW7). The discussion on the governance of the DWIH is symbolic of the horizontal-level struggles that accompanied the DWIH's institutionalisation. These ultimately raised the following questions: Who is in charge? Whose interests are (best) reflected? Which channels of influence are prevalent among actors?

### 7.3. Critical Junctures in the Instrument's Development

The previous sections reconstructed the set-up phase of the DWIH, its context and main discussions. This phase was characterised by intense and at times controversial discussions, mistrust, tugs of war and strong actor preferences. Following these (often long) negotiations (interview GIW15), all five locations started operating between 2010–2012 (see Table 11), although some data suggests that they developed quite independently and differently from each other (interviews GIW6, DWIH4). Following the inception phase, consolidation took place, where the locations started to operate while being subject to critical junctures (see section 4.2.3 for a definition). The data reveals three of these junctures, in the subsequent development of the instrument, which had a lasting impact and influenced the DWIH's form (as will be explained later in this chapter). Again, these events did not occur without struggles, although the data suggests that the struggles were less fundamental and severe in comparison to those during the inception phase. For instance, the horizontal struggles between key science actors were less pronounced at this stage, and there was a slight shift towards vertical struggles between the ministries and science actors (whereas the latter group became allies against the AA).

## 7.3.1. Closing the Cairo Office

In 2012, a sixth location was (semi-officially) added to the network (West-erwelle, 2012b) (see Table 11). In light of the Arab Spring, the German Science Centre Cairo (Egypt) became part of the DWIH network with the aim of strengthening German–Egyptian dialogue (interviews GIS4, GIW5). However, various sources stress that this marked a solo effort on the parts of the AA and the DAAD. This was not backed up by the support of the other key actors who viewed this location critically and did not share its (scientific) significance (interviews GIW4, GIW5, GIW7, GIW8, GIS3). This accordingly led to disagreement between the AA and some key stakeholders of the Alliance of Science Organisations, who were not happy with this proposal. What is more, they took it very badly since it was not intensively discussed previously with them. In effect, this is why certain key stakeholders eventually did not participate and supported the Cairo office (interview GIW5). In response, Cairo was not officially named as a DWIH but as the German Science Centre Cairo. Nevertheless, it was flagged on the network's official website<sup>145</sup> and mentioned in the same breath as the DWIH locations; thus, the AA effectively considered the centre to be a DWIH (interview GIW8). At the end of 2016, funding for the Cairo office was terminated and it was no longer listed with the DWIH (Auswärtiges Amt, 2017). The data suggests that this was linked to the results of an external evaluation by the federal audit office, which was preceded by severe criticism of the general workings of the DWIH network (Bundesrechnungshof, 2013). The closure of the Cairo office was regarded as sacrificing a pawn (interviews GIW5, GIW7, GIW8, GIS6) and as a demonstrative response to the criticisms raised in the audit report. In addition, since Cairo was not viewed as a DWIH by all stakeholders, there was little resistance to its closure among the key stakeholders (although it was also viewed as a potential (political) loss of face (interviews GIW5, GIW11)). On a political level, however, it was instead explained more diplomatically that the Cairo centre did not meet the relevant criteria for maintaining this structure, such as its significance to science organisations, business representation bodies and politics (interview GIS3).

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145 The DWIH's network website was updated at the end of 2017 and earlier versions cannot be accessed anymore.

### 7.3.2. The DWIH Revisited: Reorganisation in Response to an Audit

In 2014, the DWIH was faced with a major external shock regarding its operations and, accordingly, its institutionalisation. The DWIH were subject to criticism by the federal audit court, which questioned their legitimacy and general existence, mainly because of their failure to finance themselves (cf. Bundesrechnungshof, 2013; correspondence with *Rechnungsprüfungsausschuss* (RPA), 2017). The idea of operating in a self-funded way was initially a design principle (inspired by Swissnex); however, this was contested from the start and was perceived as unrealistic and flawed (interviews GIW5, GIW6, GIW15). This criticism, nevertheless, came as a surprise to some stakeholders since the inspection of the DWIH occurred soon after they had been launched and had begun working in 2012. This (unusually) early investigation by the financial auditors is hence considered to be an expression of the political tensions that surround this instrument (interview GIW15). Despite this, these criticisms were also viewed as a blessing (interview GIW6) since they initiated a process of reflection on the DWIH's varying and diverse structures, and the ongoing disagreements between stakeholders on the key objectives, direction and governance of the DWIH (interview DWIH1).

In the context of the 2014 evaluation, the RPA called on the AA to evaluate the DWIH's goals and their success by authorising an external agency to conduct an evaluation (to be submitted in 2015). While the AA viewed the evaluation report as generally providing positive feedback on the workings of the DWIH, it had to review the network's structure, governance and *modus operandi* to strengthen the network's impact. In this vein, the AA also announced the intended closure of the Cairo office (Auswärtiges Amt, 2017). Furthermore, the AA, in collaboration with the BMBF<sup>146</sup>, was called upon to prepare a report on the leverage potential and synergy effects of the DWIH, which was embedded in the larger governmental strategy. As the AA's intermediary organisation and 'think tank', the DAAD was also closely involved in this reorganisation process (interview GIW7). This joint report

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146 The data is unclear concerning the role of the BMBF. While the RPA refers to the BMBF's involvement in the formal coordination, other sources point to its supportive role; however, they also signal that the AA was solely responsible for the new set-up and reorganisation (cf. interview GIS3). Even others see the BMBF as having been awakened only after the reorganisation was completed (interview GIW7).

outlined the planned changes, which were ultimately accepted by the RPA, marking an end to that politically troublesome period.

The process underlined the added value of the DWIH for its ecosystem; the discussion on whether the DWIH should be kept in place was thus successfully overcome, also due to the AA's strong stake in the instrument. Following this close supervision, the adaptations related to reorganisation of the DWIH in terms of stronger top-down management with the aim of improving the efficiency of the centres (interview GIS3); furthermore, there were plans to revise the funding arrangements in favour of institutional funding, although this was to be coupled with target agreements (interviews GIW4, GIS3). The overall reorganisation, however, did not relate to the actual tasks of the DWIH; instead, a streamlined image and the coordination of activities was anticipated, which was anchored by a common governance structure. This process of revision struck the hour of the DAAD, again. What had long been anticipated and frequently been attempted by the DAAD became a reality: the responsibility and joint leadership of the DWIH network fell into the hands of the DAAD (cf. DAAD, 2017, 2018), however, this time it was in agreement with and even proposed by other key stakeholders (interviews GIW2, GIW5, GIW7, GIW12).

In close cooperation with the other stakeholders, the consortia-leadership model was replaced in favour of the current model, where the DAAD is officially in charge of the network and the DAAD branch office director in each region is also the DWIH's official director (this element is, however, not uncontested). Another major change for the DWIH was the transition from annual programme funding to institutional funding, through the DAAD. While, in general, the interviewees indicate that the reorganisation was useful in terms of creating a common, stronger character and ultimately also of increasing the impact of the network; on the other hand, the renewed structure is also considered to have a stronger bureaucratic approach and a top-down character (interviews GIW2, GIW6, GIW8, GIW10). This centralisation of the network is viewed critically, particularly with regard to the issue of the harmonisation vs. the individuality of activities for each node, in other words what decisions should be made centrally. The data refers to the example of defining common annual themes for all locations. While this seemed like a good idea to some actors (interview GIW5), it was also perceived as leading to a loss of vitality for individual locations and posing an obstacle in terms of catering to the demands of the hosting country (interviews DIWH4, GIW10). In other words, the limitations that result from a harmonisation of activities in comparison to responding

to country specific needs is an ongoing source of discussion. Generally, however, the data indicates that previously encountered tensions between key stakeholders were overcome and became less severe and omnipresent in this reorganisation phase. The process of reorganisation was less strongly driven by horizontal struggles between key stakeholders than the DWIH's inception phase.

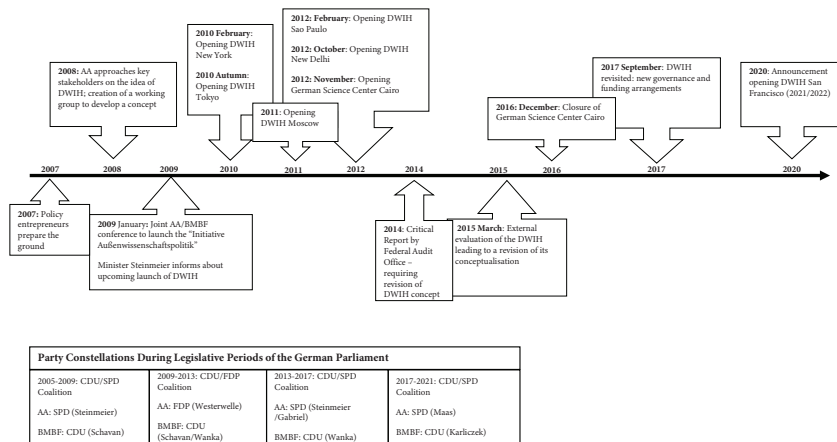
However, vertical disagreements, i.e., between key stakeholders and political bureaucracy continued; these generally focused on the issue of who should oversee the running of the network (ministerial actors vs. science organisations) and how a balanced situation could be achieved. As in the inception phase, key science organisations wished to maintain their independence (interview GIW7) and did not want to operate as intermediaries for the AA's political goals or find themselves in top-down driven situations. Instead, they once again emphasised their autonomy. These discussions found their way into the governance structures and centred on the question of who should chair the central governance bodies. As a result, the board of trustees is co-chaired by the president of the Alliance of Science Organisations, alongside the AA. This dual constellation is assumed to be a response to the tension between actors and is seen as a solution on equal footing that also allows for checks and balances (interview GIW7). The interviewees were uncertain, however, about how a situation would escalate in the case of severe disagreements between the AA and key science organisations.

### 7.3.3. Expanding the Network

The discussions on the expansion of the network taking place among the key stakeholders in the years 2019 and 2020 seemingly marked an end to the period of consolidation. Two options were discussed: opening a DWIH in China and an additional location in the USA, namely in San Francisco. Although the data reveals that there was initially reluctance to expand to San Francisco among some of the key stakeholders, it was eventually announced that a sixth network location would be opened in San Francisco as of 2021/2022 (DAAD, 2020), which was eventually supported by key stakeholders (DAAD, 2022). Opening a DWIH in China still remains a shared political and stakeholder goal (cf. DAAD, 2022). Doing so was already discussed in the inception phase; however, realistically it has proven

to be a longer-term goal on the agenda (Auswärtiges Amt, 2020c, p. 6)<sup>147</sup>. The discussions about the new locations led to a renewed debate about which criteria and indicators should be given priority in the discussions on opening new locations (interviews GIW10, GIS3): key innovation hotspots vs. the presence and density of higher education institutions as well as the goals of science actors vs. political goals. This example seems to sum up the omnipresent conflicts in the gradual institutionalisation of the DWIH, such as: Who is in charge? Who determines the goals, and the direction? And ultimately which interests are given priority—political objectives or scientific and innovation considerations?

Figure 6 Milestones in the Development of the DWIH



Source: created by the author.

147 Rather interestingly there is a German–Canadian Centre for Innovation and Research which has similarities to the DWIH and aims to tackle similar goals (see, <https://www.gccir.ca/de/start/> - accessed 30.07.21). To name a few, international exchanges should be promoted, as should a mutual awareness of Canada and Europe as centres of excellence. The Centre receives funding from the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy. Despite having a similar mission, it is not part of the DWIH network for reasons unknown. However, the data revealed that it collaborated with the DWIH New York in the past (interview DWIH4). To follow up on this, the issue was raised in an interview with a German state official; however, there was no awareness of such a structure, even though a *DWIH Canada* is listed in the AA's official files, which are, however, not publicly accessible, and thus could not be further analysed (this was identified through personal communication with the AA's archive, 29.03.2018).

7.4. Findings and Discussion

This chapter reconstructed the trajectory of the DWIH, which reflects the representational model, over time. In line with the heuristic framework, the focus was on the DWIH's emergence as well as its subsequent evolution and critical junctures (Lascoumes & Le Galès, 2007). The deconstruction of the instrument revealed the tensions and logic that spurred on and characterised the DWIH's development and explain its current model. The case study findings led to the following key observations, which can be regarded as explanatory for the DWIH's institutionalisation (see Table 12).

Table 12 Key Findings for the DWIH's Institutionalisation

DWIH - Germany	
Genesis	* Top-down logic driving the establishment (promoted by policy entrepreneurs)
	* The role of key stakeholders: tug of war and struggles over competence in a nested institutional environment
	* Strategic actors and organisational positioning
Critical Junctures & Evolution	* Development according to functional logic and by political will
	* Critique by auditors leading to major reorganisation (governance and funding)
	* Shift of competences/power within the actor structures
	* Closure of Cairo location (politically motivated)
	* Expansion in 2022
National Characteristics & Contingency	* The role of actors is reflective of the organisation of the German research and science system (replication)
	* Contingency: institutional responsibility at AA

Source: created by the author.

Firstly, it became clear that the DWIH were initiated by a top-down policy process that included relevant stakeholders early on. In particular, the role of (key) actors manifested itself as being of utmost importance throughout the institutionalisation of the DWIH due to their strong position in the German science system. The data indicates that, in the early institution-



alisation phase of the DWIH, the various actors involved each brought different (and at times conflicting) interests to the table. Discussions about governance and the exact format and functions of the DWIH were found to go hand in hand with decisions about the DWIH's key destinations. These aspects also proved to be a source of conflict between actors. In essence, points of dissent ultimately focused on the following two issues: Who is in the driver's seat? And how are actor preferences taken into account in the (gradual) institutionalisation process? (the latter issue will be addressed in the next chapter). To give an example, struggles could be observed on various levels: horizontally between the two main ministries, horizontally between key stakeholders in the science sector as well as vertically between key stakeholders in the science sector and the two ministries (science vs. ministerial/political actors). The latter level of dissent particularly led to the formation of alliances: science stakeholders found themselves united against ministerial actors (despite not being a homogenous group) on issues such as the coordination of the DWIH. Hence, the gradual institutionalisation of the DWIH can be described as taking place in a complex and nested institutional structure of actors (*Institutionengeflecht*) with their own preferences and perceptions, which are, to some extent, in competition with each other. However, this is reflective of distinct characteristics in the German system in relation to autonomy, fragmentation and self-control (Edler et al., 2010; Simon & Knie, 2010; Stucke, 2010) and hence not particularly surprising. The institutionalisation process of the DWIH can furthermore be described as a muddling through and tug of war between strategic actors, although these aspects appeared to be more dominant in the instrument's inception phase.

A second observation which accounts for the DWIH's development relates to functional logic. The criticism by the federal court of auditors can be seen as a major external shock regarding the workings of the DWIH and led to changes in governance and funding arrangements, while also placing the DAAD in a stronger position<sup>148</sup>. This critical juncture also paved the way for creating a unified structure, which also triggered identity formation processes. At the same time, interview partners revealed that this intervention led to (stronger) bureaucratic management of the DWIHs. Although the auditors' criticism was viewed as being severe, since it questioned the overall operations and legitimacy of the DWIH, the instrument successfully

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148 Evaluating the impact of these arrangements on the actual workings of the DWIH is subject to additional in-depth research.

remained in place (cf. Lascoumes & Simard, 2011 on “*inertia effects*”). Drawing on Powell, “*things that are institutionalized are relatively inert, that is, they resist efforts at change*” (1991, p. 197).

A third observation points to contingency (for a definition, see section 4.1.3) in the development of the DWIH, which also impacted the institutionalisation. This became visible in the case of which ministry was in the driver’s seat. The interview partners speculated that the model would probably have looked different if the BMBF had been in charge from the start, rather than the AA. This was explained by the better financial endowment and the general responsibility for these matters tied to the institutional funding of most partners. To give another example, the data refers to the DWIH’s organisational placement within the AA; its placement in its economic division, rather than its cultural one, was viewed as essential and presumably impacted aspects such as the governance arrangements in a lasting way.

Finally, tracing the gradual institutionalisation of the DWIH reveals that exogenous factors impacted the DWIH’s development, such as clear political will and an audit exercise. However, endogenous facts also impacted the development of the DWIH, such as discussions and tensions between the key stakeholders, which led the DWIH in particular directions (such as the governance of the locations in the early phases). Given that actors have played a strong role in the DWIH’s institutionalisation, it is essential to examine actors’ perspectives in more detail. The next chapter will analyse why actors choose to participate in the DWIH by revealing their sense-making and their rationales to use of the instrument. In combination, these two elements allow us to fully grasp and analyse the gradual institutionalisation of the DWIH over time. What is more, the following chapter will explore the political sense-making (i.e., the political objectives) that is associated with the DWIH.