

attempt to break down barriers between the EU policy-making process at domestic level and the implementation process of EU law. The same officials may be responsible for policy-making, negotiations in Brussels and policy implementation. There are often only one or two officials assuming primary responsibility for a series of directives within the small states. It is common for the same official to be involved in policy-making at domestic level, attend committee meetings in the Commission, attend working group meetings in the Council, advise the minister in the meetings of the Council of Ministers and subsequently be responsible for the implementation of the directive. Moreover, the same official may deal with grants and other payments relating to EU policies. The officials may also establish eligibility criteria in conformity with the Commission's guidelines and take part in the selection of projects to be funded by the Commission. This working procedure makes it much easier for small states to oversee EU affairs than if they had a structure where officials had clear separate tasks. They are able to respond more quickly to new developments in the EU and implement EU law without more difficulties than the large states. Officials of the EU and from other national administrations are also more likely to know the person responsible for a particular subject in a small state than in a large one. They may know that the person is responsible for the entire process from policy-making to implementation and can respond without much delay to their requests. This is an advantage for the small states in negotiations with the Commission and the Council, as demonstrated below. The Dutch administration, the biggest of the small administrations, has made particular efforts to lessen the clear-cut division between policy formation and implementation in order to shorten the implementation process. Officials who are traditionally solely responsible for implementation have additionally been given the task of participating in the early stages of EU policy-making at home. They also participate in the preparations for EU negotiations and negotiate in the Council.²³

23 Ibid. and *Thorhallsson*, 2000. *ibid.*