Acknowledgements

In completing this study I have received support from a large number of institutions and individuals. The most substantial source of funding came from the Volkswagen Foundation, which, between 1998 and 2004, funded a research group on 'Politik als Beruf' ('Politics as a Profession') directed by Jens Borchert. The work in this group provided not only the material basis but also the intellectual stimulus for this study. I am indebted to the research group members – Jens Borchert, Klaus Detterbeck, Susanne Koenen, Michael Koß, Jörg Lohse, Peter Matuschek, Marion Reiser, Dominik Schunk and Jürgen Zeiß – for their benevolent criticism and constant encouragement. The final stages of this project were generously supported by a grant from the German Research Foundation (*Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft*) allowing me to concentrate on writing up the manuscript. I am very grateful to both these funding institutions.

During my research visits to Catalonia and Scotland I enjoyed the hospitality of the Department of Social and Political Sciences at the University Pompeu Fabra, Barcelona, and the Institute of Governance at the University of Edinburgh, where I felt very welcome as a visiting scholar. My thanks go to Francesc Pallarés and David McCrone who were heading these institutions at that time, but also to Klaus-Jürgen Nagel and Paddy Bort who made sure that I felt at home in both these places. Special thanks go to my friend Liam McArthur and his family who were putting me up during my stays in Edinburgh, providing their German visitor with a couthie Scottish home and their enjoyable company.

There is one group of people without whose support this study would have been inconceivable: the politicians under investigation. I would like to thank all those who anonymously filled in my survey questionnaire and even more so all those who granted me an interview on their professional life and career, despite being not too keen to be portrayed as members of a political class.

Presenting different parts and versions of the study at international conferences and workshops I have received valuable comments from Heinrich

Best, Gary Copeland, David Docherty, William Downs, Stefaan Fiers, Mark Jones, André Kaiser, Michael Keating, David McCrone, James Mitchell, Niels Lange, Werner Patzelt, Fabiano Santos, Roland Sturm and Bernhard Weßels.

That the following text is a lot more readable and contains fewer mistakes than in its earlier versions is mainly due to the efforts of Jens Borchert, André Kaiser and Alan Lawson. Jens has not only inspired much of the conceptual thinking that set me on the way, he has also commented on many drafts in his innate constructive manner. André read through the whole text providing invaluable advice and criticism, always reminding me to bring the project to an end. He was a source of constant support. Alan has not only brushed up my English, but has also served as canny typesetter and handyman for last-minute questions. Further technical help was provided by Felix Lüther and Ute Kalbitzer. I am grateful to all of them, for giving their time and enthusiasm to this project. However, any remaining faults are of course my own responsibility.

I dedicate this book to two little persons whose arrival on this earth has most certainly prolonged this project, but who have enriched my life: to Anna and Oscar.

Cologne
Klaus Stolz