

Christine Mahoney
Syracuse University

Assessing Horizontal and Vertical Coordination

Andrew Jordan and Adriaan Schout, The Coordination of the European Union: Exploring the Capacities of Networked Governance (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007). 336 pp. \$110.00 (cloth), ISBN: 9780199286959.

The European Union (EU) is notoriously complicated, and so the broad title of this book matches the authors' ambitious undertaking: mapping and assessing the coordination of EU policy across layers of governance, across member states, across sectors, and across the policy process. Their aim is to understand better how the EU should manage policies that must be coordinated both hierarchically (or vertically) and horizontally. As globalization increases and societies become more interconnected, changes in one area of regulation have ramifications for other areas of regulation. Further, more and more policy makers are realizing that many policy problems simply cannot be dealt with by single departments or member states working alone. Jordan and Schout provide a framework to assess the capacity of the EU to accomplish this type of complex coordination, and they apply that framework to one large empirical case, that of environmental policy integration (EPI).

At a time when "networked governance" seems to be a buzzword solution for every complex problem, Jordan and Schout note that we still do not know the best way to implement it. Most fundamentally, there are collective action problems associated with networked governance: "The problem is that when everyone is responsible for delivering on a particular coordinating challenge, in practice no one is" (xi). To overcome collective action problems, network managers need a model to determine what capacities or mechanisms

exist to enhance coordination and to assess whether those mechanisms are indeed fostering coordination. Jordan and Schout provide network managers with that model and assess coordinating capacities at both the network and subnetwork levels.

This book is a must-read for researchers of EU environmental policy, as it provides a thorough history and detailed up-to-date policy analysis of the Cardiff process, which paved the way for integrated environmental policy in the EU. In addition, scholars and students of the European Union who are interested in other cross-cutting policy problems will also find value in this book. While the majority of the book focuses on the case of environmental policy, part I will be helpful to academics who are interested in questions of horizontal and vertical coordination, as the methodological approach to assessing coordinating capacities and outcomes could be applied to a range of policy areas.

The theoretical structure that the authors present includes three main aspects: a timeline of the policy-making process, a typology of coordinating capacities (or the input) that a network actor may have, a scale of assessing coordination outcomes (or the output) of the coordination process, and a timeline of the policy-making process. In presenting a timeline, Jordan and Schout take us beyond the official commission flow diagram of the traditional community method of policy making that all EU scholars know so well. They map a policy process that begins long before the commission's official proposal, and in their chapters on the coordination of environmental policy in each of the member states, they detail the precise national units, subunits, committees and teams that contribute to the policy process. This is a more detailed mapping of the

Christine Mahoney is an assistant professor in the Department of Political Science at Syracuse University. Her book *Brussels vs. the Beltway: Advocacy in the United States and the European Union* (2008) is the first large-scale empirical study of lobbying in the United States and the European Union. She has published in *European Union Politics*, the *Journal of Public Policy*, the *Journal of European Public Policy*, as well as a number of edited volumes. Her work has been supported by a Postdoctoral Fellowship at Syracuse University's European Union Center of Excellence, a Fulbright Fellowship to the European Union, a Martz Award and an RGSO Fellowship. She has held visiting scholar positions at the Free University of Brussels and Oxford University.
E-mail: chmahone@maxwell.syr.edu

policy-making process than found in most literature on the EU.

Jordan and Schout's model of coordinating capacities builds on the work of Mintzberg (1979) to develop a typology that includes hierarchical mechanisms, bureaucratic procedures, specifications of output and objectives, mission statements, and horizontal coordinating mechanisms. This last coordinating capacity includes a number of specific mechanisms that we often think of as necessary for effective coordination, including the appointment of liaisons, the formation of task forces and teams, and the appointment of leaders or "integrators" that can vary in their level of authority. These are the capacities on which a network, or an actor in a network, may draw.

Establishing whether a member state or supranational institution has a given set of capacities is not enough; it is also necessary to assess the level of coordination it achieves with those capacities. Jordan and Schout's model uses a Guttman scale, following on the work of Metcalfe (1994), which provides a method for measuring coordination outcomes. The scales moves from looser forms of coordination to much more institutionalized and integrated coordination systems. Level 1 considers the actors involved in a policy network and how interdependent they are; level 2 looks at the communication flows between actors in a policy network; level 3 considers the level of consultation between actors; level 4 measures the degree to which each actor can speak with one voice within the network; level 5 measures the degree of consensus building; level 6 considers whether outside mediation is sought to promote consensus building; level 7 considers whether arbitration is sought to achieve that end; level 8 looks at whether policy direction is agreed upon *ex ante*; and level 9 measures whether the overall objectives of a policy are defined at the outset. The level of coordination achieved by a network or an actor can then be assessed by consulting documentary evidence and conducting elite interviews with the policy makers in the network.

Jordan and Schout apply this methodological structure to assess the coordination of EU environmental policy, specifically the goal of EPI. To do this, they draw a distinction between the network level and the actor level and assess the coordinating capacities and coordinating outcomes of each of the five major actors: Germany, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, the European Commission, and the European Parliament. This approach, analyzing member states as "actors" alongside EU institutions as "actors," is novel and effective. It allows the authors to give equal weight to each of these important forces in the EU policy-making process. A great deal of the literature on the EU tends either to focus solely on the member states (especially those authors who write from a realist or intergovernmentalist perspective) or to leave

member states as such out of the picture, focusing entirely on policy-making decisions within and across the EU institutions. Jordan and Schout's approach could be emulated in other studies to better model the forces at play in EU policy making. Further, the authors do not make the mistake of seeing each member state as a unitary actor but rather recognize that member states can be internally divided, and they note that this can weaken coordinating capacities.

The empirical chapters describe the units and subunits involved in EPI in Germany, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, the European Commission, and the European Parliament, as well as the coordinating capacities and coordination outcomes of the five actors. Parts III and IV of the book, therefore, might be quite tedious for the scholar who is not environmentally focused, but they should be exceedingly useful for students of EU environmental policy or practitioners or environmental advocates who need to know every unit and committee involved at the national and EU levels in EU environmental policy coordination. Those not conducting research on environmental policy will better benefit from the authors' conclusions of their in-depth analysis. Their findings suggest that the broader policy network has failed to produce effective coordination because the composition of the network, its failure to include key actors, and value differences between actors and the absence of a strong central manager. Interestingly, these findings parallel the factors that Hojnacki (1998) found to lead to coordination failure in advocacy coalitions. Further, Jordan and Schout argue that the EU environmental policy network has failed to institute the bureaucratic procedures and horizontal coordination mechanisms needed to foster coordination (83).

At the actor level, they find the United Kingdom to be generally better coordinated when it comes to EPI than Germany or the Netherlands because it has streamlined reforms. The European Commission, while making a number of reforms to enhance coordination capacities, such as the impact assessment framework, continues to lack many of the critical coordination mechanisms that need to be present for effective coordination, including sharing information and workloads, identifying and setting priorities, resolving conflicts, and acting efficiently. The European Parliament scores even lower than the commission failing to effectively coordinate horizontally because of administrative and political barriers.

Some broader implications can be drawn from Jordan and Schout's analysis of the case of EPI: First, all members of the network must contribute to its coordination, not just the central body; second, if a network is to operate effectively and overcome the inevitable collective action problems associated with a network, a stronger manager must be appointed who will have the power to conduct audits and identify weak links; and

finally, networked governance should not be seen as a panacea—indeed, the establishment of a weak network, without the appropriate coordination capacities, appears doomed to fail. Thus, if systems of governance opt for a network approach to solving policy problems sufficient planning and resources are required.

It should be noted that the authors' case selection might be seen as a "hardest case" when it comes to horizontal policy coordination. While the authors are right that the history of the Cardiff process and EPI is long in the EU and thus provides an ideal study case, environmental policy is also one of the more contentious issues. Not only do environmental advocates (whether within or outside of government) face opposition from organized industry groups, but also the difficult fact is that environmental regulations are often still at odds with economic growth. As long as voters, and thus policy makers, continue to hold economic growth as a first priority (and we must imagine they will continue to do so), environmental policy faces hurdles even greater than organized industry lobby groups. One wonders whether Jordan and Schout had selected a case that was less contentious, in which there was a greater consensus in the goals, and less systematic barriers to its realization, if then the EU would emerge as an effective coordinator. Of course, the vast literature on the formation of the internal market would suggest this is so, but negative integration is always easier than positive integration.

Jordan and Schout's model should allow future researchers to assess whether coordination can be better achieved for positive integration in other policy areas. One interesting case would be EU crisis management, which, as a network, has made considerable advances in dealing with cross-sectoral threats like mad cow disease and avian flu. Another important area of coordination is on antiterrorism measures, which have been increasingly coordinated following the Madrid train bombings and the London bombings. In both of these areas, consensus on the goals (protecting Europe from threats) is likely higher, and opposition to coordination to achieve those goals is likely lower. In these and other policy areas, where cross-sectoral coordination is critical, policy makers in multilevel governance contexts could benefit from the network coordinating suggestions found in *The Coordination of the European Union*.

References

- Hojnacki, Marie. 1998. Organized Interests' Advocacy Behavior in Alliances. *Political Research Quarterly* 51(2): 437–59.
- Metcalf, Les. 1994. International Policy Coordination and Public Management Reform. *International Review of Administrative Sciences* 60(2): 271–90.
- Mintzberg, Henry. 1979. *The Structuring of Organizations: A Synthesis of the Research*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Copyright of *Public Administration Review* is the property of Blackwell Publishing Limited and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.