

# National EU Integration Policy Coordination in Georgia: Evolution of coordination models and contingent factors

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**Abstract:** The paper compiles a comprehensive single case study on the national EU integration policy coordination in Georgia since 1991 to date. Based on ‘socialization’ v. ‘conditionality’ phase of EU integration process the paper describes five distinct periods in the evolution of EU integration policy coordination formats: the first encounter (1991-1999); the silhouettes of coordination (1999-2004); the deliberate coordination (2004-2014); the pragmatic coordination (2014-2022) and the coordination limbo (2022 to date). The paper aims to ground Georgia’s case in the existing academic literature in two broad areas of knowledge: first, how coordination happens in the specific PA models - the Weberian and the New Public Management model and whether the existing findings test true in the case of Georgia; second, provides a thick review of the literature on EU coordination models and their evolution among aspirant and EU member states and tests Georgia’s semblance with the identified patterns in the PA literature. The paper finds that, unlike prevalent pattern in EU policy coordination, whereas the relative stagnation of EU coordination process happens after the accession, in Georgia this has occurred during the onset of the conditionality stage (2015-to date), which makes this an outlier case. In assessing the reasons for the weakening of the process of coordination, the paper draws on Dimitrova and Toshkov (2007) and Hafner (2013) findings that the actor-centric approach is vital to explaining the coordination efforts. Further, Georgia’s coordination models are compared with the Kassini classification (2003): EU policy coordination structures from 2004 to 2014 are likened to that of a comprehensive centralizer – with the centre being the driving force of the entire coordination process and all the issues/thematic areas being depicted in respective planning documents. Since 2015 the country’s approach is compared to that of a selective centralizer, as CoG has become rather selective in its ambitions to deliver on a nationally agreed EU policy outcome. The paper concludes that a significant improvement of existing EU coordination structures is needed towards building a comprehensive CoG approach, reinforced with horizontal coordination and networking, in order to construct an agreed and inclusive national EU policy position.

Key words: Georgia’s EU coordination structures, EU policy coordination, coordination models, horizontal coordination, vertical coordination.