

Policy-making coordination within the Core Executive of EU Member States

Eymeri-Douzans Michel

European Group for Public Administration EGPA, Brussels, Belgium

Abstract: This paper, which will be the first version of the general introduction to the future edited volume Jean-Michel Eymeri-Douzans, Marie Goransson, Hussein Kassim (Eds.), *Coordination at the Core? Executive decision-making in international organizations and the EU*, London, Palgrave macmillan, forthcoming December 2024, aims to explore from both a theoretical and a “pracademic” point of view the major issue of central policy coordination, in a comparative perspective between EU Member States and other allied or friendly States in the NISPAcee area. As observed and analysed from complementary standpoints by lawyers, public administration, and public policy scholars, the more complex policy issues become in a globalised/Europeanised world on the one hand, and the more our State apparatuses have been split into pieces by NPM-driven agencification reforms as well as rule-of-law driven inventions of autonomous regulatory authorities on the other, the greater becomes the need for more and more inter-ministerial and inter-institutional coordination. This has been the story in most countries over the last three or four decades, calling for more “joined-up government” or “whole-of-government”. Yet, case studies show lots of scientific evidence for the persistence of siloed and rival administrations, excessive institutional patriotisms amongst their staff, frequent non-cooperative games and even turf wars between them. While we have entered in the post-NPM era in front-running countries, even there, the prevalence of “bureaucratic politics” (as coined by Graham Allison) does not allow post-NPM states to become genuine “policy states” (in the sense of Karen Orren and Stephen Skowronek), while the popular, if not populist, citizen’s demand for more efficiency and effectiveness of our states is increasing, and the level of trust in government tends to decrease in many countries. Even though such phenomena are multifactorial, our paper will defend the thesis that the strengths and weaknesses, the (high or low) quality of the bodies and processes of central policymaking coordination “at the centre”, as well as the coordination and monitoring of policy implementation “on the ground”, are absolutely decisive to understand and explain the contemporary, and even future, common governmentality and governability problems of our states and polities, in their diversity of historic trajectories and actual sociopolitical contexts.