



# CALL FOR PAPERS

## 2<sup>nd</sup> IGCOORD Conference

“Vertical and Horizontal Coordination:  
Tools, Mechanisms and Barriers to  
Solving Complex Policy Issues”

in Darmstadt, Germany,

13–14 June 2024



Funded by  
the European Union



Many challenges in public policy today are multi-level in nature. From climate change and disaster management, migration and integration, to transport networks, agriculture, food security and public health, the policy responsibilities and policy levers lie with a complex network of governing institutions. In many cases, although each government may have its own responsibilities and mandate, policy challenges can only be confronted effectively through the coordination of executive and legislative action between governments. Understanding the challenges, opportunities and dynamics of intergovernmental coordination is thus crucial to understanding policy making and public problem solving.

Coordination can be horizontal, among governments of the same level (between regional or municipal governments). Or it can be vertical, between the central/federal government and different constituent units, territories, regions, or municipalities. Coordination may be bilateral, between two governments, or multilateral, between several or even all governing administrations. Intergovernmental coordination is not limited to governments or actors within the same country. Empirically, we find examples of cross-border coordination between local or regional governments to manage issues affecting people on either side of the border, just as neighbouring states often collaborate in key policy areas. Transnational city networks are another form of coordination on issues most pressing in urban agglomerations taking place between units that do not even share a border with each other.

Intergovernmental coordination may be not only beneficial, but even essential, to solving complex policy issues and so called “wicked problems”. These often reach beyond the constitutional allocation of powers across governmental tiers, with decisions taken by one government having direct consequences for others. Coordination also provides actors with more and different information from dispersed sources, thereby resulting in better decisions and solutions appropriate to those issues. In addition, by widening the number of actors involved in decision-making, the outcome of negotiations is expected to receive greater acceptance and legitimacy than decisions made by individual governments in isolation. Conversely, increasing the number of governments involved in policy development makes decision-making more time-consuming, cumbersome, and increases the risk of tension, conflict, and stalemate. Lines of accountability may also become blurred from the perspective of voters when decisions are taken by multiple governments jointly. Governments involved in coordination forums have an opportunity to engage in strategies of blame-shifting whenever a negotiation outcome is not fully in line with their own agenda or promises to their voters.

This conference will bring together established and early-career scholars, experts and practitioners to examine the opportunities and potential pitfalls of various forms of coordination, their normative basis and empirical operation, and questions of their effectiveness in providing solutions to complex policy issues. This includes forms of vertical and horizontal coordination by focusing on local, national, and international coordination in all regions of Europe, including countries outside of the European Union. We are open to contributions covering any policy area, as well as those focused on the mechanics and

dynamics of horizontal and/or vertical coordination between governments, as well as non-governmental bodies.

**Possible topics include but are not limited to:**

- Intergovernmental coordination: Types, processes, and implications for democratic governance
- Vertical coordination in mono- and pluri-national contexts
- Particularities of coordination in the European multi-level context
- Sustainability and climate change: coordination for future generations
- Opportunities and challenges of coordination at a global level
- Local and regional governments as crisis managers
- Public service delivery at the local and regional level: conditions of success and failure
- Regional and local intergovernmental lobbying at higher (national or EU) levels
- Cross-border coordination: Opportunities and barriers to managing transborder issues
- The party politics of intergovernmental coordination
- Local governments and their networks in centralised and decentralised contexts
- Smart, green cities: city networks and sustainability

We invite proposals for individual paper contributions and/or panels that engage empirically, conceptually, and/or normatively with these and related issues. We aim to feature the best of contemporary research, including new research by Young Researchers and innovators and participants from inclusiveness target countries (ITC). The working language of the conference is English.

**Proposals for papers** should include the title; an abstract of max. 300 words; 5–7 keywords; the identification of the main field of social science and humanities (Political Science; Law; Economics; Social Policy; Human Geography); and the contact details and affiliation of the author(s).

**Panel proposals** must include:

- A minimum of three papers and a maximum of four;
- Panel title and a short description of the panel (max. 200 words);
- Individual paper titles and short abstract (max. 100 words and 5–7 keywords for each);  
Contact details and affiliations for all paper-givers (and possibly the discussant and chair).

The deadline for the submission of an abstract and panel proposal is **30<sup>th</sup> January 2024**. Notices of acceptance will be sent out the week of **28<sup>th</sup> February 2024**. Proposals should be submitted to [conference@igcoord.eu](mailto:conference@igcoord.eu).

Registration: The conference is supported by COST. There is no conference fee, but registration is required.

**Authors whose abstract has been accepted are requested to join one of the Working Groups of IGCOORD COST Action (CA20123), which is free of charge.**

Authors are required to submit their papers by the 10<sup>th</sup> of May 2024. **Submitting a draft version of the paper on time is a condition for attending the conference as a presenter and receiving funding for the conference participation.**

Presented papers are expected to meet high quality to be publishable in quality journals but may also be published in the conference proceedings subject to quality review.

In order to be eligible for funding, presenters have to be / become members of the COST Action IGCOORD 20123. Reimbursement of travel costs is capped at €350 to which a fixed daily allowance is added. Reimbursement of travel and accommodation costs cannot be guaranteed for all participants and is dependent on the number of applicants and overall amount of available funding.

Priority in funding will be given to IGCOORD members who have submitted full papers of high quality and relevance to the conference topic. In the case of co-authored submissions, only one of the authors is eligible for reimbursement of travel and accommodation costs.

The conference will be held in Darmstadt at the Institute of Political Science of the TU Darmstadt, Karolinenplatz 5, 64289 Darmstadt.

Confirmed keynote speaker is Prof Sean Mueller, University of Lausanne.

Inquiries can be directed to the organizers at [conference@igcoord.eu](mailto:conference@igcoord.eu).

Organizing committee:

Prof Nathalie Behnke, Institute of Political Science, TU Darmstadt, Germany, WG 2 Co-Convenor

Prof Ivan Kopic, Faculty of Law, University of Zagreb, Croatia, WG 1 Co-Convenor

Prof Nicola McEwen, Centre for Public Policy, University of Glasgow, UK, WG 1 Co-Convenor

Dr Bettina Petersohn, School of Social Sciences, Swansea University, UK, WG 2 Co-Convenor

Dr Noemia Bessa Vilela, Institut Pravnih Znanosti, Raziskave in Razvoj na Področju Prava, Maribor, (OPHIZ), Slovenia, Action Chair

Prof Sean Mueller, Institute of Political Studies, University of Lausanne, Switzerland, Action Vice Chair