

**'Joined-up' Local Governments?
Restructuring and Reorganizing Internal Management**

1. Statement of the Theme/Focus/Topic

Joined up government (JUG) is an element of modernization programs and has been viewed as a mechanism for increased coordination in both thinking and action. JUG style approaches have been seen as a way to leverage resources and to capitalize on synergies, and a means to enhance efficiency, effectiveness and service quality and as the *modus operandi* for 21st century governance. JUG is seen as a method for tackling complex or wicked problems and the term is often used synonymous with post-NPM and “whole of government” reforms.

The proposed book *'Joined-up' Local Governments? Restructuring and Reorganizing Internal Management* aims to conduct a comparative analysis on both implementation and effects of joined-up reform initiatives on local government level in six countries. Broadly speaking, the research involves case studies conducted in selected municipalities in six countries. The research seeks to give answers to the following research questions:

What does the JUG measure consist of? What are the targeted problems, the planned activities/structures, and the expected outputs and outcomes?

What has triggered the program (i.e. what are the “forces at work”)?

What are the actual outputs and outcomes of the program? To what extent do they coincide with/contradict to the expected ones?

2. Rationale of importance of the Topic at the present Time

New Public Management (NPM) reforms raised, especially over the past one or two decades, many challenges to governments in various countries and on various levels, such as path dependencies, long time lags between implementation and results, co-ordination among different levels of government and mediocre support from public sector stakeholders. Negative effects such as fragmentation, disintegration, anomalies and paradoxes have been discussed extensively in the literature (Christensen/Lægveid 2007, Dunleavy et al. 2006, Hood 2005, Hood/Dixon 2015). It is frequently held that NPM reforms have weakened the political system, led to a loss of traditional incentives (e.g. classical promotion) and 'profit orientation' instead of 'public interest orientation'. In addition to these long-term processes singular events – most importantly those unfolding after the 2008 economic and financial crisis (Peters 2011) – shed a new and oftentimes critical light on previous reforms based on the assumption of the superiority of market type instruments to other (hierarchy or network type) ones.

Today we find that 'Joined-up government' (JUG) modernization measures and programs (as one strand of Post-New Public Management reforms) are increasingly implemented, and this idea can be seen to a large extent as a reaction to the effects of NPM

measures (6 2004). JUG involves paying attention to coordinating governmental activities, for example through partnerships and horizontal governing approaches (Lægreid et al. forthcoming, 2015, Lægreid et al. 2014). It is based on the wish to eliminate contradictions and tensions between different policies, to make better use of resources, to improve the flow of good ideas and cooperation between different stakeholders in a policy area, and to produce more integrated and seamless sets of services from a citizen's perspective (Pollitt 2003). It includes better instruments for communication, inter-administrative programs and a stronger structural attention (merging or reorganizing policy areas).

3. Novelty/Originality

A growing body of research analyses JUG-initiatives in multiple countries, but often with a central government focus (see for example the Special Issue "Prospects and Pitfalls: Experiences from International Joined-Up Government Experiments" in IJPA, edited by Talbot [Talbot 2011], or the EU/FP7-funded COCOPS-Project [Lægreid et al. 2014]). On municipal level, however, there is only a modest number of studies or hard evidence. Results available so far suggest that JUG experiences resulted in increased efficiency, more capacity to act for political and administrative leaders and more collaboration and integration among public organizations.

The proposed research is embedded within the EU COST Action "Local Public Sector Reforms: An International Comparison" (Chair: Prof. Kuhlmann, vice chair: Prof. Bouckaert). The chapters of the proposed book seek to identify what JUG initiatives have been discussed and implemented especially on the level of European local governments, and what the outcomes of the reforms are.

In order to enhance comparability between the reform activities in different countries, the JUG-topic is narrowed down by emphasising at how post-NPM/JUG style organizational landscapes are steered.

Case studies will analyse a selected municipality in each country with the aim to point at major reform trends and causalities. The JUG measures we look into are formalized organization and coordination of important municipal responsibilities. Our selection of cases are based on ex ante theoretical considerations; we sought to find cases, in which a (relatively) well-established JUG initiative can be found, which is at the same time already in a (relatively) advanced phase of implementation to that at least some of its effects can already be expected to be present (as Yin 2003 denotes: 'exemplary case').

4. Case selection

The JUG measures we study are examined because of the need to coordinate multiple more or less independent units. These units are not necessarily within the fold of the examined municipality- but the *municipality has the responsibility to steer the coordinating efforts*. They involve *formalized organization* and coordination of important municipality responsibilities and are within *city governments* (or large local governments) within the different countries.

They also involve some joint ICT arrangements. In addition to case relevant questions, we will all address the following questions:

- 1) What is the JUG initiative in this local government? What are the targeted problems? The planned activities/structures. What are the expected outputs and outcomes?
- 2) Why can they be seen JUG initiatives?
- 3) Which (if any) dysfunction of the NPM reforms are they addressing?
- 4) If possible to know: How widely is it used (mandatory for all municipalities/all municipal organizations?)
- 5) What has triggered the program(s)? (“forces at work”)
- 6) How was/were the reform program/s implemented? The use of ICT arrangements
- 7) What were the outcomes of the reform program/s? Do we find some positive result for the steering as effect of the JUG initiatives/reform changes on :
 - Faster response to citizen demands
 - Better cooperation between politicians and administration

The results of the case studies will be integrated in a summarizing chapter that analyses the theoretical, methodological and practical implications of the findings. The conclusion will address: what works where? Is there variety in JUG reform forms, initiatives and patterns? Comparison of the countries in terms of the “forces at work”. Implications on the politico-administrative relations and the response to citizen demands? We will also address explanations: To what extent can JUG reform initiatives be explained by: central-local relations/ central government (reform) policies, the administrative system, local pressures (political/citizen), previous reform paths. Do we find a move from earlier – particular NPM-reforms – to JUG reforms within as well as across countries?

5. Paper Titles of Cases , each with a very brief Abstract

Austria: *The plethora of semi-independent units in Vienna and how they are coordinated.* The organizational landscape of the city of Vienna comprises 180 organizations in the first and second generation (Leixnering/Meyer 2015). The majority of them either in the municipal holding company (Wien Holding branches are for example culture, real estate, logistics infrastructure, media and environmental issues) and the municipal utilities company (Wiener Stadtwerke, branches are for instance electricity, public transport, parking spaces, or cemeteries). Approaches to establish unity and cohesion within the City of Vienna and across different (semi-) independent units of public organizational landscapes is one of the current ‘hot topics’ which is another reason why Vienna is chosen as the Austrian case.

Norway: *The BIA coordination of children welfare - Pilot project.* The city of Tromsø is organised in 27 relatively autonomous units. This has led to a need to establish cohesion, especially within the ‘heavy’ health and social sector. The “Better interdisciplinary achievement” (BIA) pilot-project initiated by the Health Directorate in Norway. Eight municipalities have applied to and participate in BIA. The aim to safeguard and protect vulnerable children, youths and their parents. The project is a pilot where the main aim is to adjust the Danish BTI model to Norwegian local governments. It is set up with a person in

charge and an electronic log, different tools and guidelines for schools, kindergartens, youth clubs, health care stations, the police etc. The person in charge is responsible for being a contact person for the child or youngster that has an established case. The log is an established case, or at note regarding the child/youngster and what happens in the workings with the case. The aim is to coordinate efforts and to contribute to action and initiatives towards vulnerable children/youngsters and parents at an early stage.

Ireland: *Shared Services.* Shared services in the public sector are a material component of the Irish public sector reform agenda. Shared services have a critical emphasis on shared responsibility for end results and on service for a high level of client satisfaction. The Irish local government sector has implemented several shared services initiatives including payroll; issuing of permits; waste management licences. One of these initiatives will be explored. The drive for these initiatives comes from the Department of Expenditure and Reform. Three initial interviews have been held with staff there and in the Department of Environment and Local Government in addition to an interview with the Director of Finance in X local government unit.

Hungary: *The Case of the „Local Government ASP-1” Pilot Project.* The Application Service Provider (ASP) project was officially launched, after at least four years of stalemate and several consecutive rounds of project redesign, in 2012. It tackles the problem that local government use diverse ICT solutions procured from commercial suppliers to cover their needs for software applications used for such tasks as document handling, personnel administration and reporting, treasury administration and reporting, and local tax administration. These solutions are frequently low-quality, not interoperable, and they have to be purchased, installed and maintained in each local government office independently from one another, thus making the entire system very expensive (in terms of unit costs) and resource-consuming (in terms of equipment, expertise and personnel). The pilot project was implemented in April 2015; currently about 55 local governments participate on a voluntary basis. The government agency in charge plans to extend the project to the entire country in the near future.

Italy: *One stop shops for businesses.* The municipality of Siena is organized in 29 units that depend from 4 general directorates. Public sector modernization, innovation and digitalization, and the development of a relationship between the public administration, citizens and businesses have been the main trend directing internal reorganization. Within this latter discourse we identify the creation of one stop shops for businesses at a local level of government (Ongaro 2004). This offices have been created at a local level of government with the purpose of easing businesses of most of their administrative burden by identifying a single interface for issuing business licenses between the public administration and the entrepreneur and by increasing co-ordination among public entities involved in regulatory management.

Germany: *One Stop City Berlin.* The “One Stop City” is the most recent administration modernization strategy of the German capital Berlin. The whole approach was triggered by the aftereffects of the economic crisis, demographic change and the need for technological modernization. The main objective is to become internal administrative cooperation mechanisms more efficient and to consolidate jurisdictional borders. This is a great challenge but also a chance, since Berlin is a so-called “city-state”, i.e. it has to offer services belonging

into both jurisdictions, those of the state and those of the municipality. Needless to say that vertical as well as horizontal efforts to join up services are necessary. The efforts can be viewed in the light of “customer service delivery” out of one single hand (One Stop City). In order to achieve the related “front-office/back-office” optimization, process and infrastructure standards are defined to get the processes more efficient. One example is the process for citizens after childbirth. Instead of visiting several offices in different jurisdictions (e.g. registry office, health insurance, family insurance, youth welfare office) with different processes (e.g. birth certificate, parental payments/allowance, child benefit etc.) all tasks can be handled centrally with one streamlined process.

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7. Timetable for the Writing and Submission of the Papers

We are now in the stage where we do **case studies/interviews** and where the individual chapter/ problem statement is to be thought through. Interviews should be finished at first of November. (**November 2, 2015**).

The first draft of the chapter are written by **January 20, 2016** and put forward for first internal review. There will be two more reviews.

Deadline for final individual book chapter manuscripts are June 1, 2016.

Deadline for editorial/conclusions Oct 1, 2016

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