



EGPA/IIAS
European Group
for Public Administration

2019

Annual Conference of the

*European Group for Public
Administration*

11-13 September 2019

PhD Symposium

9-10 September 2019

*EGPA Permanent Study Group:
IV Local Governance and Democracy and
V Regional and Local Government*

Call-for-Papers

The Joint Call

In view of the proximity of our research subjects and the sometimes overlapping research questions, the Permanent EGPA Working Groups IV “Local Governance and Democracy” and V “Regional and Local Governance” have decided to publish a joint call for the Belfast conference in September 2019. It is intended to facilitate the assignment of the accepted papers of the different panels and to improve the cooperation between the two PSGs. For its thematic panels, the PSGs remain independently responsible.

Themes

The role and future of sub-national level institutions in Europe face serious uncertainties given the significant fiscal, political and social pressures facing government at all levels. This call is for papers which improve our understanding of these pressures and the policy and institutional response.

Recent waves of territorial reorganisation have reflected a new logic of territoriality and place-based approaches in local and regional governance. Some countries have seen a general, resurgent trend towards larger regional and local government units and/or a greater reliance on inter-municipal partnerships involving shared services and/or back office functions. In England and France, for example, the ‘regional’ or ‘meso’ levels of government have been recently reorganised, and Flanders, too, is presently undergoing a new wave of local government amalgamations after forty years of standstill. In contrast, in Germany major efforts at (county-level) amalgamations have come to a halt after intense resistance. Furthermore, in some countries central governments have accepted ‘place-shaping’ approaches for just part of their territories and have given some regional or sub-regional governments greater freedoms to adapt to their particular territorial circumstances despite increasing political, administrative and fiscal asymmetries across their countries (e.g. Spain and the UK).

At the same time, in other countries, place-transcending and boundary-spanning trends towards greater cooperation across traditional regional, local or even national borders are evident. Developments in major policy fields – such as migration and integration, regional planning, and climate change policies – provide good examples. The digitalisation of government, through new ICT tools and inter-institutional data-sharing, is also challenging traditional institutional, sectoral and territorial boundaries.

Finally, in many countries regional and local governments are enduring serious fiscal constraints on their capacity to embrace new place-shaping initiatives, and even deliver a coherent governing programme of services, as central governments have cut spending and burden-shifted services downwards.

Against this background, PSG IV and V will jointly focus on the role of local and regional governments from two interrelated perspectives:

Theme I: Borders and social cleavages versus transboundary cooperation in local governance.

Theme II: The future of regional and local government: a new era of place-shaping and boundary-spanning?

<p>Theme I: Borders and social cleavages versus transboundary cooperation in local governance</p> <p>Responsibility: PSG-IV</p>	<p>Theme II: The future of regional and local government: a new era of place-shaping and boundary-spanning?</p> <p>Responsibility: PSG-V</p>
<p>An increased number of networks, partnerships, new forms of stakeholder involvement etc. is changing the way local government works. Cooperation is taking place over traditional borders between municipalities and regions, even nation states, and also transcending divisions between the public sector and private companies as well as civil society organisations. Global problems like environmental sustainability and international migration makes cooperation necessary.</p> <p>At the same time, new borders and social cleavages are created based on religion, ethnicity, social injustices and tensions between city and countryside. Local governments as communities for all are challenged by parallel and separate societies. The study group would like to address the simultaneous, and to some degree contradictory, developments with questions like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What actions are taken to ensure that cooperation, not division, permeates local government activities? ➤ What are the experiences of co-production and shared decision-making? ➤ Are local governments increasingly adjusting to a more diverse "demos"? ➤ Are "taking care of local matters" redefined when borders become blurred and international/national issues left in the lap of local governments? ➤ Do citizens increasingly share the same territory but not local institutions for instance schools? 	<p>New modes of cross-sectoral, multi-level and/or trans-territorial governance are emerging. Yet these modes also raise new and pressing questions of transparency and democratic legitimacy, given that territory remains the basis of formal accountability.</p> <p>Against this background, the tensions between the pursuit of a logic of 'place-shaping' and re-strengthening territory, on the one hand, and the logic of 'boundary-spanning' and 'de-territorialization', on the other, have become more pronounced. Consequently, both PA scholars and practitioners are confronted with challenging questions of how to reconcile the search for greater effectiveness with democratic accountability.</p> <p>We are particularly interested in papers which address the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What new 'place-shaping' and/or 'boundary-spanning'/'de-territorialization' trends can be observed across countries, regions and sectors? ➤ How far are the roles of regional and local governments changing as a consequence of these trends? Are 'all in one' or 'inclusive' sub-national entities the new norm across Europe? Do larger 'place-based' collaborations arise sub-nationally? And do these territorial developments represent a new era of regional and local government reform? ➤ What types of cross-border arrangements are emerging? What role do formal cross-border organisations (e.g. British-Irish Council, the Nordic Council, Überregionale

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What strategies do local governments have to handle discontent with the distribution of services? ➤ The European Charter of Local Self-Government' (Council of Europe) departs from territorial governance and it monitors and assesses whether European countries respect its principles. How can countries do so, considering the developments mentioned here? 	<p>Partnerschaften) play?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Do new forms of trans-boundary administrative modernization – e.g. digital governance, use of ICT, e-administration and shared services – imply a new logic of place-transcending governance? What are the positive and negative implications and impacts? ➤ What drives current territorial and boundary-spanning changes? Is it austerity, external pressures (such global migration and climate change), a partisan drive to diminish the role of the state, the logic of a place-based territorial governance or a mix of these factors? ➤ To what extent do central/state governments and resurgent regional/sub-regional levels threaten to 'crowd-out' local government? And how are actors at the sub-central level responding strategically? How far can local governments exercise influence over the 'higher' tiers of government to retain or regain some discretion? Are 'higher' tiers of government willing to change in response to lobbying pressures from the 'lower tiers?' And are local government associations involved? <p>What does place-based leadership entail at the sub-regional and local levels? How much freedom of action do local authorities enjoy in practice? To what extent have local and/or regional governments sought to 'innovate' in response to greater freedoms, arising from the need to do 'more with less'?</p>
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We are particularly keen to welcome papers which seek to deliver empirical, research-based arguments and build a theoretical understanding of these issues; and papers which adopt a comparative approach, be it 'over time', 'cross-countries', or 'cross-service'. We are also particularly keen to include papers from Eastern and Southern Europe as well as Western Europe.

Abstracts should be submitted by **15th March 2019**. Abstracts should be uploaded through the EGPA submission website. Notification of acceptance will be no later than **15th May**. Those authors whose abstracts have been accepted should dispatch their completed paper to the convenors and upload it through the submission website by the **12th August**.

Please note that PSG IV on Local Governance and Democracy and PSG V on Regional and Local Government will be liaising with each other for the 2019 conference to ensure that papers are allocated to both groups in a coordinated manner.

Practicalities

Please submit your abstract online through the Conference Website: <https://www.egpa-conference2019.org/> or directly through Conference Management System: <https://www.conftool.org/egpa-conference2019/> More information on the 2019 EGPA conference can be found at: <https://www.egpa-conference2019.org/>

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