

Herwig C.H. Hofmann and Alexander Türk (eds). ***EU Administrative Governance***. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing, 2006. Pp. 662. \$160. ISBN: 1845422856.

Intergovernmental administrative cooperation has become a major topic in the discussion of European integration. Recent political science as well as administrative science contributions expect the emergence of a completely new administrative space. The respective theoretical discussions and empirical case studies are manifold, but dispersed, partly even talking at cross purposes – due to different disciplinary origins and terminologies.

Hofmann and Türk's book aims to provide an encompassing, systematic framework for taking stock of our knowledge on how the EU is governed administratively. They plead for an interdisciplinary approach which leaves behind the static view of administrative law focusing exclusively on administrative norms and laws for the implementation of political decisions: 'The use of the term governance allows us to address the open and dynamic development of steering tools and procedures, which often span the divide between political and legal structures' (at 5).

The book is divided into three parts: Policy Processes (I), Sectoral Areas (II), and Cross-Section Analysis (III). The first part discusses the problems of the involvement of multiple actors from various levels of supranational and national administrations in different phases of the policy cycle (agenda-setting, decision-making, implementation). Part two includes case studies in such different fields as environmental policy, food safety, state aid policy, antitrust enforcement, security regulation, immigration, police and judicial cooperation, and common foreign and security policy. Part three is conceived as a discussion of 'diagonal matters' (at 6) like 'role perception of officials', problems of legitimacy, impact assessment and control, etc.

It is not possible to do justice to all the chapters. Suffice it to say that they all combine interesting theoretical reasoning and provide

useful descriptions. Therefore, this book is a valuable compendium.

In this reviewer's opinion, the editors' final diagnosis of a fragmentation of administrative responsibilities and the resulting key problem of controlling 'heterarchic structures' (at 580, 588) puts the situation of the EU and, by the way, of any complex administrative governance structures, in a neat nutshell. Their proposed overall characterization of a differentiated 'integrated administration' – against the notion of an overall fusion – accentuates the policy field-specific differences in the quality and quantity of inter-organizational administrative collaboration. Their discussion of how to find scientific and practical solutions for these problems is tentative: executive, parliamentary, judicial, and mutual control together should be applied to guarantee the legality and the legitimacy of inter-administrative cooperation and 'shared sovereignty'.

A final critical observation should not downplay the relevance of this book. Administrative lawyers are in general rather sceptical about the usefulness of the concept of 'administrative networks' for the labelling of the self-organization of bureaucrats when preparing and implementing political decisions. The authors just recommend this (at 3): a metaphorical use of the network concept is proposed in order to capture the complex processes of non-hierarchical administrative cooperation between different types of actors and between different levels of hierarchies in the EU at different stages of the policy cycle: 'The term administrative network ... has the advantage of being all encompassing' (at 3). This will not attract unanimous approval. Administrative science and administrative law require precise terminology. Therefore, the advice to use the concept of administrative networks as a voluntarily vague metaphor will not prove to be excessively helpful for the legal and managerial governance of the inter-organizational relations of administrations. Social network analysis conceives non-hierarchical as well as hierarchical settings as networks of different structures. The analytical divide is therefore not between

hierarchies and networks, but between different structures of administrative hierarchy and self-organization. This book provides a useful starting point for future studies on administrative leadership and administrative self-organization – and, hopefully, for the application of social network analysis which has already proved to be a very useful analytical as well as supportive tool for the administration of private business companies.

Paul W. Thurner

*Professor (Temporary) Empirical Political
Research and Policy Analysis,
University of Munich, Germany*

Email: paul.thurner@mzes.uni-mannheim.de

doi: 10.1093/ejil/chn016