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Preface and Acknowledgments

This book examines the issue of policy and administrative coordination. Coordination is a problem in everyday life. The water company digs up the street in front of our house and patches the street, then the gas company comes the next day to dig up the same street. The schedules of trains and planes leave us with connection times of only a few minutes, or many hours. Busy friends struggle to find a time they can all meet because of conflicting schedules. In all these cases individuals or organizations are not taking into account adequately the activities and priorities of others, and as a consequence the outcomes for all the actors are less positive than they might otherwise be. As much as these coordination issues may frustrate us in our daily lives, the coordination problems faced by governments are larger and may affect the lives of thousands or even millions of citizens.

Since their inception governments have to contend with the issues of specialization and coordination. On the one hand governments require specialized organizations and programs to deliver services to the public using expertise. In the extreme of Franz Kafka working in his pension office, public servants would perform one specialized function repetitively, with specialization ensuring that the activity is performed as well as possible. On the other hand, however, those same governments have also attempted to coordinate the numerous specialized functions in order to produce more coherent and integrated services to the public, as well as to save money and irritation for those same citizens by eliminating duplication. The assumption has been, as Aaron Wildavsky once commented, that coordination is a "philosopher's stone" for the public sector, capable of transforming ordinary, flawed patterns of governing into more effective and efficient performance.

Governments have tended to concentrate expertise within specialized organizations. The typical collection of organizations within the public sector contains primarily agencies and departments focusing on particular functions or clienteles. This pattern of organization makes political sense by providing services and a clear target for lobbying for clients. It also fosters policy expertise and therefore can promote high-quality public policies.

Yet these specialized structures can also create problems for government. For example, many clients of social assistance programs also require health, labor market, and educational services. The segmentation of programs in most governments, however, makes it difficult to integrate the full range of services required for those clients. Those social service clients may also suffer from the failure to link eligibility criteria with the tax system, thereby creating "poverty traps" that make it more

difficult for individuals to work their way out of poverty. These problems are rife in social policy but appear in many other areas of public sector activity.

So, too, are businesses affected by the segmentation of public policies. Contradictory regulations can collide—for instance, back-up horns on construction equipment required for safety reasons may violate antinoise regulations. Entrepreneurs may face duplicative requirements for information if they want to start a new business, causing them to trek from office to office providing officials the same information again and again in order to receive the full array of licenses required. Thus, starting a business in some countries may take months, whereas when there is a "one-stop shop," with its more coordinated response, the process may take only a day or two.

The common reaction of governments to policy problems has been to specialize, and that tendency has been exacerbated by several tendencies in recent governance. Perhaps the most important of these tendencies has been the popularity of the "New Public Management" as a foundation for reform. This approach to public administration has emphasized breaking larger public organizations down into smaller, single-purpose organizations. Because they are expected to be more autonomous and entrepreneurial, they also are more difficult to coordinate. While these more autonomous organizations—usually described as agencies—are assumed to enhance efficiency and accountability, they also make putting programs together more difficult.

The emphasis on performance measurement and performance management in the New Public Management also has posed some challenges for coordination. While shifting the basis of public sector accountability to the actual delivery of services is in many ways positive, it also tends to narrow the vision of public officials. If the budget of an organization, or the salary of an official, is dependent on meeting certain performance targets then the actors involved will be less likely to cooperate with other organizations to reach broader public service goals. Thus, somewhat paradoxically, the performance of individual organizations will be improved while the performance of the public sector as a whole may be diminished.

In addition to the impact of the New Public Management, increased segmentation of government also has resulted from the so-called governance reforms in the public sector that have sought to link organizations more directly to networks of social actors. While these interactions with the private sector may help to improve the implementation of policy, and even in the development of policies, they also tend to segment the public sector. The connection with stakeholders means that those social actors will want to maintain what they consider as "their programs" whereas coordination and policy integration may weaken that attachment.

If coordination is such a problem for the public sector, why hasn't someone done something about it? The answer is that they have, but producing more effective coordination has proven to be difficult. Efforts to integrate policies and create more

coherent action within the public sector are likely to produce political opposition from organizations and their clients. Further, the professional training of members of public organizations and their commitments to particular ideas about public policies may limit their willingness to cooperate. Even if they are not committed to particular policy approaches, public organizations and their leaders may want to maintain their independence and power, which would be threatened.

While governments have become more segmented, they have also sought to fight back against these centrifugal tendencies. The New Public Management has emphasized the role of managers in the public sector and in turn has tended to denigrate the role of political leaders in governing. Political leaders have sought to restore the "primacy of politics" through a number of means, including developing more strategic approaches to policy that involve coordination around the major goals of governments. Beginning with the "joined-up government" in the United Kingdom, presidents and prime ministers have been using coordination and coherence as one means of reasserting their primary role in governing.

The typical response of governments to a perceived need for greater coordination is to use hierarchy and authority. Presidents and prime ministers and their staffs can be central to this process, but so, too, are central agencies such as ministries of finance. Further, assigning junior ministers responsible for clientele groups such as women and families, and even mandating simple information sharing among organizations, can enhance the capacity of the political system to act together in order to address public programs.

There are also increasing political pressures to provide more coordinated policies. In addition to the pressures for lower costs and lower taxes, clientele groups demanding cross-cutting services and a wider range of services have also begun to be more relevant politically. Women, children, the elderly, and families are all examples of client groups who require a broad array of public services and would be better served if services and programs were better coordinated. Children, for example, require services from most government departments, and if coherent packages of programs could be developed to serve them, the overall impact of government programs on their lives could be improved.

And finally, although I have been singing hymns of praise to coordination, we must also be conscious of the limits of coordination as a solution for the governance problems encountered in the public sector. The need for specialization is the most obvious of those limitations, but attempting to coordinate may also produce other problems within government. For example, coordinated policies pose problems for accountability because the blending of legal authority and financial resources makes it difficult to monitor those assets. Further, there are instances in which having multiple organizations and redundant programs may actually produce better outcomes for citizens, despite their apparent inefficiency.

My book will examine the concept of coordination, or horizontal management, in the public sector. This term is used in a variety of ways and I will examine not only its meaning but also various ways of achieving a goal of coordination. This conceptual discussion will be supplemented by several mini-cases to illustrate the difficulties of achieving coordination within governments. I hope that this discussion will make the importance, and the difficulties, of coordination clearer to students and practitioners of governance.

This book has been in preparation for a long time—much longer than either I or the University Press of Kansas would have preferred. An earlier version of the manuscript could not pass a careful review, so an almost complete revision was undertaken. Although a great deal of time has been lost in the process, I believe the time was well spent. I have had time to rethink the basic structure of the book, as well as to expand the theoretical and analytic perspectives utilized to attempt to understand coordination.

Governments have been attempting to create higher levels of coordination since there have been governments, but this task appears to have become more rather than less difficult. Governments themselves have become more internally complex, and therefore the demands placed on would-be coordinators (and would-be scholars of coordination) are even more pressing. Perhaps the greatest difference between this volume and the previous version of the book is that the complexity inherent in coordination and policy coherence is more clearly understood and I hope also more clearly explained. Also, the trade-offs between coordination and other important administrative and political values are now more apparent than they were in the earlier draft.

As well as being informed by the academic literature, this study of coordination has been informed by working with governments in the "real world" as they confront challenges to their own capacity to govern. I have been able to work as a consultant on issues of coordination in a number of countries, including Finland, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Canada, and Mexico. These consulting opportunities not only helped me understand the processes of coordination but also helped me understand the ways in which academic theories relate (or sometimes do not) to that real world. But practitioners interestingly also found that the theory illuminated what they did on a day-to-day basis and indeed could help them perform their tasks more effectively.

Several people deserve special thanks for helping me complete this book. A very special thank-you goes to Fred Woodward. Fred has been extremely patient and supportive during this long process. I enjoyed working with him on my first book with the University Press of Kansas and continue to have great respect for his professionalism and judgment. Although not directly involved in this project, my previous research with Geert Bouckaert and Koen Verhoest in Belgium helped

me in developing my understanding of coordination, especially in comparative context. And a word of thanks also for José Luis Mendez at El Colegio de México, who enabled me to rethink some of the points being raised in this manuscript.

Last, but certainly not least, my colleague and friend Jon Pierre continues to provide support and advice. It has been a blessing to have someone like him to turn to when the words do not come, and when some of the insanity of contemporary academic life threatens to overwhelm me.

PURSUING HORIZONTAL MANAGEMENT

1. Introduction: The Coordination Problem

Coordination is a common problem in everyday life. A plane has to wait for catering, or baggage handlers, before it can leave. The street in front of our house is dug up this week by the city water department, repaved, and then dug up again next week by the power company.[1] Two national organizations in the same field schedule their annual meetings at the same time. Citizens in Ghana have at least six identification numbers because government organizations do not coordinate their programs. Even the spate of serious railroad accidents in Europe has been blamed on the failure to coordinate older and newer equipment and technologies (Carvajal 2013). I am sure any reader could expand this list easily, understanding how much difficulty failures to coordinate can produce for us all (see Conklin 2005).

And it is not just national and subnational governments that encounter problems of fragmentation and an absence of coordination. As international regimes continue to proliferate and to gain increased power over a range of policies in the international arena, the fragmentation and overlap of these regimes has become a significant problem for effective governance (Biermann et al. 2009; Van de Graaf 2013). It seems that wherever there are governments, there will be conflicts between the specialization of organizations and programs and the coordination of all the programs in the policy area.

Coordination is also one of the oldest problems for the public sector. As soon as government was sufficiently differentiated to have several organizations providing different services, or providing the same basic service in different ways (an army and a navy, for example), coordination became an issue. So long as government remained relatively small and under the control of a monarch or other central figure, coordination could be handled relatively easily. A monarch such as Henry VIII, or his Wolsey, might be able to manage the affairs of state himself and might know what was happening in all the relevant policy areas and be able to ensure that there was some degree of coherence in policy.[2] Even in those primitive governing systems, however, there might be problems with coordination, and public offices were created to ensure that there was some common policy throughout the territory governed by the monarch.[3]

As government became involved in an increasing range of activities and attempted to impose its rule over larger geographical spaces, coordination quickly

evolved into a "philosopher's stone" for government (Seidman 1998; Jennings and Krane 1994; Webb 1991; Anderson 1996; 6 et al. 2002). That is, the more the public sector has evolved and expanded, the more incoherence and the failure to be capable of encouraging, or coercing, programs to work together have come to be seen as among the more crucial root causes of the numerous perceived failures of government. Governments are inherently multiorganizational. The specialization reflected in that multiorganizational nature is often positive for the quality of decisions (Bouckaert, Peters, and Verhoest 2010). Further, specialization is important politically for government because it provides a clear locus for the identification and activities of client groups within society.

Despite those virtues, the many organizations existing in government create problems of coordination and coherence, and those coordination problems are very troubling to political leaders. As Glyn Davis (1997, 131) argued, in government, "An elective official confronted with a state which simultaneously encompasses internal conflicts, competing external imperatives, contested boundaries, unclear jurisdictions, policy lacunae and interest capture is likely to desire some form of coordination."

Often one organization of the public sector does not appear even to have the most basic information about what other parts are doing, and the individuals involved appear to care little about the actions of their counterparts elsewhere. And even different regional offices of the same organization may not know what other offices are doing, and in their mutual ignorance may produce policy failure. For example, the Boston and New York regional offices of the Securities and Exchange Commission each had part of the needed information to stop the Bernard Madoff Ponzi scheme but neither knew what the other had learned. Therefore, Mr. Madoff was able to continue to cheat investors for another year at least (SEC 2009).

Further, coordination failures are particularly vexing to leaders in the public sector (and also to citizens) because they appear so fundamental (National Commission on Employment Policy 1991). No matter how numerous they may have become, the programs that are not coordinated adequately are all part of the same government and therefore should be capable of working together toward a common public purpose. Everyone appears to know that coordination is fundamental but yet no one appears to be capable of producing an effective working pattern that produces that coordination.

The search for the philosopher's stone was, as we are well aware now, a futile search. This source of inestimable wealth was never found, and never will be. The history of policy coordination in government provides only slightly more reason to be optimistic. There are instances of successful coordination of public programs. These successes, however, tend to arise in special circumstances or because of idiosyncratic factors. For example, despite the numerous and well-known failures

more successful coordination is likely to occur in crises such as wars or economic downturns. As another example, strong political leadership may be able to produce coherence even in the face of divisions within government.

Despite some successes, the stories of failure and the significant, and at times even amusing, consequences of those failures are by far more numerous. Governments have invested a great deal of time and energy in generating coordination (Challis et al. 1988; 6 et al. 2002; Bogdanor 2005), but in the end the outcomes are that programs have remained inconsistent, and few citizens actually have received the high-quality, integrated services they might feel entitled to receive. There are numerous very good political and administrative reasons for those failures in governing (see Chapter 2), but they are still very much failures. Indeed, some of the same factors that are argued to create coordination, e.g., crisis, may also produce failures (see Boston 1992).

To some extent the failure of coordination is, like the failure to find the philosopher's stone, made all the more disappointing because of the high expectations for the outcomes. There is some sense among practitioners (see Mountfield 2001, for example) as well as in academic writings about coordination, that if only we can create adequate coordination and coherence then many of our policy problems will be solved. This pursuit of coordination begs the question of whether well-integrated programs that are themselves poorly designed and underfunded can really make life better for citizens. Indeed, one might argue that good coordination among poor programs might only exacerbate the fundamental shortcomings of those programs, just as good coordination among well-designed programs should create some synergy among those same programs.[4] Still, everything else being equal, better coordination can be reasonably assumed to produce benefits for the public sector and for the public and is therefore a goal that continues to be worth pursuing.

THE MEANING OF COORDINATION

We have been discussing coordination as if we know what the term means, and as if there is a single definition and a single type of problem that is undermining the capacity of government to deliver an integrated and effective collection of services to the public. That is not the case, and although coordination has a common-sense meaning, it has a number of facets and complexities that need to be considered for academic investigations. For example, coordination is both a process through which decisions are brought together and an outcome of that process. In addition, a number of other terms are often used as virtual synonyms for coordination—words such as *cooperation, coherence, collaboration,* and *integration.* Therefore, before I can proceed any further I will need to define the term, and the problem, that is central

to the analysis, and then discuss the various types of failures in coordination and their possible consequences for government.

Although it is in many ways a common-sense term, there is a need for a clear definition of coordination. One of the most direct and most generally applicable definitions of coordination in the policy and administration literature is "the extent to which organizations attempt to ensure that their activities take into account those of other organizations" (Hall et al. 1976, 459). Another definition holds that "a set of decisions is coordinated if adjustments have been made in it such that the adverse consequences of any one decision for other decisions in the set are to a degree and in some frequency avoided, reduced, counterbalanced, or outweighed" (Lindblom 1965, 154). In many ways both Hall's and Lindblom's definitions are deceptively simple. All governments have to do is have their programs and organizations find means of taking into consideration the actions of other organizations and programs and consider in advance the consequences of decisions. That definition does not take into account explicitly, although it certainly does implicitly, the numerous different causes for coordination problems, and the barriers to effective coordination that exist in almost all political systems. Further, as Metcalfe (1994, see pages 22–23 below) has pointed out, there are various *levels* of coordination that can be achieved through different investments of resources, or simply because some programs are easier to coordinate than are others, and some civil service systems may promote coordination more explicitly than do others. The question then is what level of aspiration the participants in the process have for the coherence of the outcomes (see also Kassim, Peters, and Wright 1999).

Some scholars have focused on "policy integration" as another meaning of coordination, and one with somewhat stronger requirements of the participants. For example, Underdål (1980) argued that a perfectly integrated policy was one where "all significant consequences of policy decisions are recognized as decision premises, where policy options are evaluated on the basis of their effects on some aggregate measure of utility, and where the different policy elements are consistent with each other." In other words, integration requires that each policy choice take into account the effects of that choice on the full range of other organizations and programs, and that as much consistency among the choices as possible be achieved. This level of integration is a difficult standard to achieve but is facilitated by the development of comprehensive policy ideas—such as social inclusion, competitiveness, or sustainability (Lafferty and Hovden 2003)—to guide the actions of a range of policy actors (Hertin and Berkhout 2003).

The term *coherence* also has been used to describe the creation of more compatible forms of policy across organizations and policy areas. To some extent coherence implies greater attempts to write legislation and design interventions in ways that are

not inconsistent, rather than an *ex post* process of attempting to get programs and organizations to work today (May, Sapotichne, and Workman 2006; Persson 2004).

While this policy coherence may be more effective in the long run, given that policies would be designed to work together, achieving such coherence *ex ante* may be more difficult politically. Creating coherence involves understanding *ex ante* the possibilities of cooperation and the possible gains. Individuals and organizations may therefore be asked to alter or perhaps even eliminate their current programs in favor of some possible coordinated program in the future. And the legislative or executive officials responsible for designing the coordinated interventions may themselves be committed to particular policy stances.

Given the above somewhat generic definitions of coordination and integration and the various levels of coordination that may exist, there is a need to examine more analytically the conditions under which coordination problems arise in government. As noted, the basic root of coordination problems is specialization and the division of governments along both horizontal and vertical dimensions. Specialization, and the resulting organizational divisions, produces numerous benefits for government as well as many for the clients of government programs. It enables governments to concentrate expertise and gives public organizations, and public employees, clearer missions (see Goodsell 2010).

Specialization, however, is also the source of numerous problems within the public sector. At the same time that specialization focuses expertise on a public problem or the needs of clients, it tends to segment (often artificially) those problems and those clients rather than presenting a more integrated conception of the causes and possible remedies for the difficulties. The benefits of specialization in public tasks must be balanced against the benefits that could be obtained from a more unified and holistic approach to governing. This more unified conception of governing and of service delivery can provide services to the "whole client," while potentially also saving government money by eliminating redundant and conflicting programs.

More integrated conceptions of governing might also have a greater prospect of identifying, and even resolving, underlying program design difficulties in public programs. These design difficulties often arise in the classification and categorization of the targets of public programs. For example, means-tested social programs, or aids to small businesses, have arbitrary cutoff points for income or receipts above which the client is no longer eligible for assistance. These threshold values tend to create difficulties for clients in themselves, but their problems become even more apparent when several of them interact to place clients or potential clients in situations that are worse than either of them alone would have produced.

Coordination is a familiar term, but a number of other terms are being applied to the same general question in the literature on public management. One of the earliest differentiations made in the organizational literature (Schermerhorn 1975)

was between cooperation and coordination. The former was deemed to be a more temporary and informal means of creating relationships among organizations for mutual benefit, while the latter is conceptualized as creating more formal structures and procedures designed to impose greater coordination among individuals and organizations. Similarly, Janet Weiss (1989) argued that problem definition and framing enhance cooperative solutions to problems while formal methods and structures emphasize power and control over actions. Thus, in that view, coordination involves formalizing patterns of interactions among the organizations.

The literature on the management of social programs in particular has been discussing "collaboration" as a mode of positive interaction among organizations. For example, Eugene Bardach (1996; Bardach and Lesser 1996) has written a great deal on collaboration and the deceptively simple aspects of "managerial craftsmanship" required to get agencies to work together. More recently there has been a burgeoning literature on collaborative management in both the public and private sectors (Skelcher and Sullivan 2008; Agranoff and McGuire 2003). In the management literature on collaboration there is a greater emphasis on the role of boundary-spanning agents whose task—mandated or self-assigned—is to work across the boundaries of different organizations to generate greater cooperation (Davies 2009).

In this book I will be dealing with collaboration as a subset of coordination, in which the cooperation and "working together" is voluntary and based on normative agreements. This approach to collaboration is valuable but as noted above and as will become increasingly evident throughout this book, a good deal of coordination is not produced by agreement but rather is the result of either coercion[5] or the use of incentives. It is certainly more pleasant if the coordination can be based on common norms, but we do not have to wait for that agreement to coordinate.

Common norms can also be generated through political processes if there is not sufficient *ex ante* agreement. Bardach (1996) emphasizes the need to find common agreement among agencies in order to facilitate their working together. Schön and Rein (1994) consider how to resolve "intractable policy disputes" and argue for a process of reframing in which the participants develop a common frame for the policy issues from their competing frames. Earlier, Lindblom (1965) discussed this process as "partisan analysis," in which one actor attempts to define his or her policy preferences in a way that conforms with those of another actor. In all of these versions of collaboration the emphasis is on finding common definitions of the problem and common understandings about modes of intervention.

Jan Kooiman has discussed collaboration and cooperation in a somewhat different manner. He argued (2003) for a difference between these two terms, with the former representing something more fleeting in terms of agreements among organizations to work together, while the latter represented more enduring patterns of working together, and perhaps (although Kooiman is far from clear on this

point) something approaching the level of policy integration previously mentioned above. Thus, Kooiman's distinction between coordination and collaboration tends to mirror that of Weiss mentioned above.

Kooiman is interested in all these forms of interorganizational working as the means for achieving his more general goal of "governance." In that perspective governance means a substantial level of coordination not only within the public sector but also between the public and private sectors. Governance in this view is providing steering for the society through complex interactions of multiple actors across multiple areas of policy. This interactive conception of governing (see Torfing et al. 2012) assumes that hierarchical control through governments will be less effective in generating coordination than will more collaborative interactions among social actors, with or without the public sector being involved.

Practitioners, especially those in the United Kingdom, have also been using terms such as *joined-up government* and *holistic governance* to address the fundamental issue of coordination and coherence in governing (Mountfield 2001; 6 2003; 2004; Pollitt 2003; Bogdanor 2005). These terms were designed to be political terms as much as or more than they were intended to provide analytic leverage for scholars, but they do describe tasks and styles of coordination within the political system. The Blair government began early in its time in office to talk about creating joined-up government (Cabinet Office 2000), reflecting in part the fragmented government they had inherited from the previous Tory administration.[6] That government had decentralized government substantially, but even without that decentralization there would have been more general problems of coordination that are endemic to all governments. The Blair government's drive to create "joined-up government" was, however, superseded by a concern among at least some of the individuals involved with creating a "holistic" government, meaning that not only is there an attempt to get programs to work together effectively, there is a further ambition that programs have more consistent goals and that there be greater coherence across the public sector. Attaining that level of integration would, in turn, require reframing of policies and using common ideas about the causes of policy problems and the possible remedies for those problems (see Chapter 4).

When dealing with definitions and alternative meanings of coordination, we should be clear about some other terminology to be used. Throughout, I will have to discuss "policy areas" or "policy domains," meaning policies defined in terms of familiar functional categories such as agriculture, defense, or whatever. These are the familiar "silos" or "stovepipes" that for centuries have plagued people working in government when they confronted the need to create greater coordination. Despite the disdain that many public sector employees have expressed toward these policy structures, they have been able to perpetuate themselves in part because of the felt need for expertise and specialization (Bouckaert, Peters, and Verhoest 2010), and in part because of the

power of the clientele groups, and the professional groups of service providers who support them (Wilkinson and Appelbee 1999). At times the policy domain question becomes even more narrowly defined, as some types of social work programs find it difficult to coordinate with others presumably providing similar services.[7]

WHY WORRY ABOUT COORDINATION?

Why do governments worry about coordination, and especially why do they seemingly worry more about this issue in the first several decades of the new millennium than they have in the past? I have already argued that governments have been concerned about coordination virtually as long as there have been governments, but why more so now?

Cost. The first answer to the question of why worry about coordination is that poor coordination wastes public money, and does so now in an era in which the public budget has become a major political concern. In the clear cases of redundancy documenting and actually counting up those costs is possible, but in other cases the issue may be more opportunity costs than manifested costs. How much money have we wasted (in terms of future production, etc.) because education, labor market, and social policy programs are not more coherent?

Contradictions. As well as duplicating one another, poorly coordinated public programs may actually contradict one another. In the United States the federal government spends large sums of money to prevent smoking while it also spends large sums of money supporting tobacco farmers. While this is good politics—programs in different departments serving different constituents—it may be bad policy. And to some extent also bad politics because it gives the public an impression of a government that cannot decide on a single policy and one that is willing to squander resources.

Success of Vertical Management. During the era of the New Public Management the management of individual public programs improved. Much of this improvement was, however, bought at the expense of greater integrity within the public sector. The emphasis on single-purpose agencies and on performance management—emphasizing the success of individual programs and their managers—tended to disaggregate public action. As will be noted later, this movement in public management provoked reactions from governments (see pages 98–100) but there have been continuing effects of this movement on the public sector (Christensen and Laegreid 2007).

Legitimation. As well as being faced with financial problems, contemporary governments are also faced with significant problems of legitimation (Norris 2011). As the public sector has faced pressures from perceived poor performance, excessive taxes, and bureaucratization, the need to legitimate its existence has become more central to politics and policymaking. This has become true even for the countries of

Northern Europe that have enjoyed a great deal of trust and respect from their citizens. The seeming disorganization and lack of coordination within the public sector is one of numerous factors that have been undermining the legitimacy of government.

Availability of Means. Greater supply of the means for coordination to some extent has created greater demand. The development of information technology in particular has made coordination, information sharing, and collaborative working of all sorts more possible in the public sector (see Cabinet Office 2000). The question of why government cannot be better coordinated therefore becomes even more a question of the lack of will rather than the lack of readily available mechanisms.

Globalization and Regionalization. Finally, globalization has tended to force together policy areas that might otherwise be more separated. One clear example is the role of education in "competitiveness policies." As economic policy becomes more defined in terms of global competition in an information age, education policymakers are more driven to coordinate with their colleagues in the conventionally defined economic ministries. Likewise, as foreign trade is a larger component of economic well-being, other ministries such as agriculture also become connected more closely to economics. Although this discussion is in terms of the economic effects of transnational action, some of the same could be said for other policy domains, especially within the European Union.

DIMENSIONS OF COORDINATION

Having some sense of the meaning of coordination, it should be clear that this one term covers a number of different, if related, problems in the public sector. Each of these problems involves the interaction or absence of interaction of multiple public organizations. The roots of the problems we observe are political, administrative, and organizational. Individuals and organizations may be pursuing specific policy and political goals and may not want to cooperate for fear of reducing their chances of reaching those goals. Likewise, administrative routines and even legal mandates for implementation may be undermined by attempting to achieve greater coherence in governing; and finally, organizations (whether public or private) tend to maintain their own patterns and not to cooperate whether out of self-interest or simply routine. In short, there are any number of ways of thinking about the problem of coordination in government, and no shortage of villains for this story.

Positive and Negative

Implied in the definition of coordination given above is the notion that programs and organizations should work together to achieve ends that are not attainable

through their individual actions. That is a reasonable reading of ideas of coordination, but a minimalist version of coordination could be attained without even that very basic degree of collaboration. *Negative coordination* involves only the agreement, even if tacit, of the actors that they will not harm each other's programs or operations. Fritz Scharpf (1997), for example, has discussed negative coordination as one component of his discussion of governance, noting that it was a minimum condition of governing. This principle is often enshrined in law and practice, as in the *Ressortsprinzip* in German government that each minister has the right to control policy and administration in his or her own area.

Although this negative conception of coordination appears limited, it can actually be a significant contribution to governing in situations in which programs often bump into one another as they attempt to reach their goals. In particular, negative coordination is often crucial for nonhierarchical forms of coordination in which actors negotiate bilaterally to find ways of not affecting each other negatively— so-called "clearance negotiations" (Scharpf 1997, 39). Further, the bilateral nature of negative coordination reduces the complexity that often arises in multilateral negotiations characteristic of positive coordination.

The major focus of this book will be on the *positive* aspects of coordination, and how coordination can generate coherence, rather than just minimize conflict, across policies and organizations. This positive conception of coordination is much more difficult to achieve than is negative coordination. Positive coordination may require the actors involved to give up some of their own policy goals, and almost certainly some of their preferred ways of achieving those goals, in order to attain greater overall performance of government (Thomson, Stockman, and Torenvlied 2003).

Asking for that self-denial may be asking a great deal of organizations that have developed their goals and procedures in the sincere belief that what they are doing serves the public. If these organizations are correct in that belief, as they generally are, then expecting them to give up some aspects of those programs in favor of some vague benefits achieved through coordination is asking a great deal. This request for pursuing the greater good is all the more true given that contemporary managerialism in the public sector tends to focus on the performance of single organizations (see below) and perhaps more basically the need that organizations have to preserve themselves, their budgets, and their programs.

Process or Outcome

The discussion of positive and negative coordination leads to the question of whether we should consider coordination as a process or as an outcome. The answer is obviously that we need to consider both of these dimensions when we think of coordination. There is a political and administrative process directed toward improving

levels of coordination, and we need to assess the extent to which coordination has been achieved.[8] The answer to the above question is also that we will be concerned with different aspects of coordination and coherence depending upon whether we focus on process or outcomes.

The majority of the discussion within this book will be of the success or failure of political systems in generating coordination. But we will also be considering some aspects of the political process that may or may not be able to produce that level of desired coherence (Nowlin 2011). For example, the literature on collaboration emphasizes process and the means through which individuals and organizations work together (Bryson and Crosby 2006). Further, the processes of framing and reframing are central to understanding how policies can be made more coherent and consistent. We therefore need to consider how to design policy processes that can facilitate coordination and also understand the elements of those processes than can inhibit coordination.

Vertical and Horizontal

The bulk of the discussion of coordination in this book will be of the horizontal dimension of interaction among programs, but we should not forget that there is a crucial vertical dimension as well. Even in a government that intends to be highly centralized and unitary there must be some freedom for subnational governments to make decisions of their own (see Duran and Thoenig 1996; Desage 2013). This latitude, in turn, means that there must be some means of producing a desirable level of coherence among the decisions taken in these levels of government. The notion of a desirable level of coherence is important, because that level will vary among countries, and perhaps across different policy areas.

Federal political systems, for example, will generally permit greater diversity in programs as delivered than will unitary political systems. To a great extent the intention of a federal design is that local conditions and local preferences may be expressed more clearly in policy choices, and hence vertical coordination is less of a concern. Differences in local climates will require different standards for housing or road construction, and differences in religion may produce different styles of delivering education or social services. Even in a federal system there may attempts to create some uniformity across a country for fundamental rights and responsibilities of citizens, but the general reaction to policy questions will be to permit diversity. Further, some federal systems (Germany) will demand higher levels of coordination than will others (the United States or Canada [Hueglin and Fenna 2006]).

Although the vertical dimension of coordination is usually considered in terms of multilevel government and federalism, unitary regimes may have some of the same problems. Not only do some unitary regimes grant substantial autonomy to

their subnational governments, but even departments within national governments are not designed in ways that facilitate cooperation in delivering policies. Hogwood (1995), for example, found that regional structures of departments in England were not aligned, making cooperation less likely.

Also, some policies may require greater uniformity and coherence than do others. Policies that affect the basic civil rights of citizens should, everything else being equal, be uniform throughout a country, while policies about parks and recreation may vary considerably without creating any substantial injustice. Countries differ, however, in the range and types of services that they consider essential and therefore that must be provided equally. The French concept of *services publics,* for example, considers a range of social services, including education, to be essential to the citizen and therefore requiring uniformity (see Fauroux and Spitz 2002), with that uniformity being enforced by the central government. In contrast, however, education is the one service that citizens in the Anglo-Saxon world tend to consider the most important for local control and opportunities for innovation.

Issues of vertical coordination are becoming more important as "multi-level governance" (Szczerski 2005; Bolleyer and Börzel 2010) becomes a more common challenge for contemporary governments. This issue is most clearly defined in Europe as the addition of another tier of government within the European Union has increased problems of vertical coordination, and even horizontal coordination. This is perhaps especially so given that the more loosely structured pattern of decision making emerging as a result of multilevel governance has tended to enhance the capacities of some subnational governments to bargain directly with Brussels and escape vertical coordination at the national level. Some regions within Europe, such as Scotland and Catalonia, have been especially effective in making their own connections with Brussels and being able to maximize their own benefits through those connections.

In addition to the opportunities that multilevel governments create for subnational governments, segments of government (especially bureaucracies) can generate control over a policy area throughout several levels of government and create vertical integration. This capacity for integration is especially evident for bureaucratic actors such as the Directorates General in the European Union (Rhinard and Vaccari 2005). The policy integration created through these processes is perhaps even more resistant to horizontal coordination than is the sectoral politics within a single level of government.[9] These vertical "stovepipes" are the product of bargaining among the levels of government so that any attempt to alter their patterns of making and implementing policy would open up a new round of negotiation. Further, these structures tend to be supported by epistemic communities that shield them from external interference (Miller 2003).

The final point emerging from thinking about coordination through multilevel governance is that coordination as a process can be used to produce substantive

policy change. The Open Method of Coordination (Buchs 2007) has been used to produce greater uniformity in policy areas that the European Union might not otherwise be able to address. I will be examining this process as one of the principal examples of coordination in Chapter 5, but the possibilities of making policy through coordination in multilevel systems (Bolleyer and Börzel 2010) also demonstrate the general relevance of coordination for policymaking as well as for policy implementation.

Policy and Administration

One of the most fundamental issues in the analysis of coordination is the strategic question of whether the strategic policymaker should focus on policy or administration if coordination is the goal. Like most interesting and important questions about governing the answer to this question is not easy, and there are good reasons for choosing either answer. This debate to some extent mirrors the "top-down" versus "bottom-up" issues in implementation (Sabatier 1986; Linder and Peters 1987; Winter 2012). The fundamental question in that literature is whether it is possible to design policies sufficiently well at the top of government to produce the desired outcomes in the field or whether the policymaker needs to depend more upon the local knowledge of the implementers at the bottom to produce viable programs and coordination.

The first option is to coordinate from the top and be sure that the policy is coherent and integrated, with the assumption that if the underlying policies are consistent then their implementation will by necessity also be compatible. The argument supporting this view of coordination is that if policies are fundamentally compatible then administration can proceed along normal functional lines and still produce outcomes that will be coherent (De Jong 1996). Further, this style of coordination, if it can actually be achieved, is likely to be more efficient than one that depends upon local bargaining. This is especially true if there is a strong desire for uniformity of implementation in the field. Relying on coordination in the field means that there will be numerous local bargains and hence potentially broad differences in the policies as implemented.

The alternative approach would be to argue that so many aspects of policy can go amiss between the center of government and the field staff and that even the most compatible policies in the center may well diverge once they are implemented. Phrased in more economic language, there is a danger of loss of agency (Huber and Shipan 2002), with administrators making their own decisions about good policy and the intention of legislation that will be different from the intentions of the "formators" (see Lane 1981). Further, the investment of political effort and time in policymaking may not be an efficient means of producing coherence when

difficult issues, and individual cases, will still have to be worked out at the level of implementation. Therefore, in this view, the better approach is to focus on making the bottom of government, and the administrative process, better coordinated and then there will be a better chance of getting the policies right.

Attempts at preventing the abuse of children offer an important example of the contrast between top-down and bottom-up conceptions of coordination. In several fatal cases of child abuse in the United Kingdom there appeared to have been *ex ante* agreement among the organizations involved, such as police and social work. These arrangements failed, however, because the lower levels of the organizations did not know about them or did not follow through on them (Marinetto 2011; Laming 2009). In this view coordination at the top is likely to be relatively ineffective unless the "joining up" pervades the organizations.

The choice between those two strategies often is political, given that the design of policies may be the result of political decisions in a legislature or the political executive. At times those political leaders may not wish to face the political battles necessary to coordinate effectively (see below) and will simply leave it up to their officials to confront the problems in the field. That choice, in turn, provides the political leaders the opportunity to blame any resulting failures in coordination on the failings of the infamous "bureaucracy." This abdication of responsibility is by far the easiest political strategy, but it is one that obviously may produce suboptimal results for citizens and for the bureaucrats.

Political and Administrative

This dimension of coordination is closely related to the previous dimension of policy and administration. In both cases one option is to emphasize resolving coordination difficulties through the capacity to make programs work together once they have been adopted and begin to be implemented. This bottom-up approach to coordination obviously emphasizes the role that administrators can play in producing effective coordination. The alternative is to focus on the decisions of the political actors responsible for the formulation and management of programs, rather than to focus on the actions of the administrators who are involved in the day-to-day process of implementation.

The logic of approaching coordination as a political rather than an administrative activity is that the legitimacy and political power necessary to push and prod organizations out of their established patterns of delivering policies through "silos" or "stovepipes" may be vested in political leaders rather than in administrators. Producing effective, coordinated policy action requires making government go against many of their ingrained patterns of making decisions and managing programs, and most administrative officials will have few incentives to engage in that type of

battle with their fellow public servants. Therefore, it may be up to political leaders to utilize their legitimate power in government to change the ingrained patterns.

The political leadership will, however, almost certainly have to be at the very top of government (Peters 2004a; Dahlström, Peters, and Pierre 2010). Relying even on politicians with responsibilities for a particular ministry may not be effective in producing the type of horizontal coordination that may be required for effective governance. To be effective as the leaders of an individual ministry or agency the political officials will need to defend that organization and its programs against threats at the cabinet table, in budget hearings, and in other settings in which the resources and political power of organizations are tested against each other. Presidents and prime ministers, however, do have some incentive to produce coordination and more effective management of government as a whole.

Administrative officials also may be committed to their organizations, and perhaps even more strongly than are their ministers. Civil servants may have no place else to go, whereas political leaders' ambitions may be better served by being cooperative with their colleagues in cabinet. That having been said, however, senior civil servants are often professionals in governing, in addition to being members of a particular organization, and may have ideas and commitments that extend beyond the narrow interests of one ministry (see Wright and Page 1999). If indeed those civil servants are committed to the process of governance they may be more natural entrepreneurs for effective coordination than are politicians.

Administrative coordination can be brought about in a number of different ways. Perhaps the simplest way is to have a number of different programs administered through a single office—the "one-stop shop" that has become a common strategy for increasing efficiency and citizen satisfaction with government (Pollitt and Bouckaert 2004, 81–82). This administrative solution may be a relatively minimal form of coordination, given that the policies being administered may themselves not be compatible with one another. This places the onus of coordination on administrators involved to make decisions about which set of regulations to adhere to most closely when coping with citizens. But for those citizens this level of coordination may be the most important because it shapes the policies delivered to them.

Inside and Outside

The bulk of the discussion of coordination in public administration and public policy is concerned with the behaviors of multiple public sector organizations. This is reasonable, given that these organizations might be expected to be playing on the same team and cooperating to produce better services for citizens. That having been said, however, there is also a clear and growing need for organizations in the public sector to coordinate with organizations in society, whether those be for-profit or

not-for-profit organizations. This need for working across the boundary of state and society has always been there but is becoming more clearly defined as "governance" begins to become a paradigm for the public sector and public sector management (see Pierre and Peters 2000; Tiihonen 2004). As Salamon (2000) and others (Kettl 2002) have pointed out, many if not most major initiatives of government now involve some elements of partnerships between the public and private sectors, and therefore thinking about coordination across that permeable boundary between state and society becomes all the more important.

The same issues about collaboration that arise within government itself will arise between government and the private sector. Both sets of organizations (and their members) may have individual goals that they are pursuing and will find that they may have to give away something to achieve the possible gains through cooperation (see Stokman and Van Oosteen 1994). Likewise, when negotiations over collaboration begin the organizations may find that their goals are not as compatible as they may have appeared when the differences did not have to be confronted directly. In the area of social policy, for example, private sector organizations may now not be as anxious as public sector organizations to move clients into the workplace, whereas the orientation to "workfare" motivates the public sector to think primarily about employment options.

Further, as argued above concerning coordination through implementation, the public sector may be able to coordinate internally by going outside. That is, the potential conflicts between organizations within the public sector over resources, or their narrow vision of the needs of their clients, or the complexity of a policy area, may lead to lower levels of cooperation within government itself. The clients of various programs, or the participants in various policy networks, may understand better the interaction of programs. Thus, when those client groups can articulate their needs and goals effectively they may be able to generate more coordination among official actors.
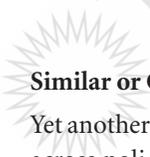
Similar or Complementary Goals

Yet another general issue to be raised about the politics of coordination, within and across policy sectors, is whether coordination is more feasible within individual policy domains or across those sectors. One could hypothesize that coordination is more likely to be effective within a single policy domain. The actors within that domain should share a common set of goals and values and should be able to communicate more effectively with their common professional language or organizational jargon. These numerous similarities among allied programs should make coordination a natural outcome of interaction among organizations and individuals.

On the other hand, however, when programs and organizations are operating within a single policy area they may think of themselves as competitors for the same clients and the same resources. While coordination might make a great deal of sense from the perspective of the client or the disinterested academic analyst, for the participants in the process that cooperation might be conceptualized as threatening to established resource bases and standard operating procedures. For public programs, and perhaps especially for social service programs, clients are a major resource; losing one's client base may be followed very quickly by losing budgets and other resources. Therefore, public organizations tend to be very protective of their clienteles and to be unwilling to engage in high levels of sharing and program consolidation.

Organizations with complementary goals may therefore have an easier time coordinating than those with more similar goals. For example, in the case of the Open Method of Coordination in the European Union (Chapter 5) labor market organizations and social policy organizations both have goals of improving the life chances of members of workers and the socially excluded. Those two sets of organizations would go about those tasks rather differently and would have different short-term goals, but they would not be in competition with one another and therefore may be able to work together effectively (see Maas 1951). On the other hand, organizations with very similar goals—for example, serving disabled populations—but who do it in rather different ways, may find coordination more challenging (USGAO 2004a).

Policy-Specific or Systemic Goals

Most of the discussion to this point has been about the coordination of specific policies and problems, but some coordination efforts are directed at the policies and behavior of the political system more broadly. Two of the more prominent of these coordination dimensions have been environmental and gender issues, but other issues such as the protection of aboriginal populations and energy also have been relevant (Malloy 2003). These dimensions of policies have supplemented the financial and budgetary considerations that have long been systemic issues that have guided policymaking in government. As mobilization around environmental issues became more important politically, governments attached environmental reviews to most policymaking and ministries of the environment and their equivalents became new versions of central agencies (Doern 1993; Nilsson and Persson 2003).[10] At the most extreme, environmental concerns can trump other considerations.

More recently gender issues have been treated much the same as have been environmental issues, at least in some countries with strong agendas for equality. That is, the implications of all policy decisions for gender equality, and in some cases racial

equality, are included as a part of the consideration of those issues. For example, in a survey of its member countries, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (2005) has shown that most of the countries now examine the gender implications of policy choices and attempt to implement programs in ways that will maximize the opportunities for women to receive equal treatment. Those reviews by no means assure equal treatment, but they do indicate some commitment to the issue and an attempt to make this meta-policy consistent across programs.

What these concerns with both environment and race and gender equality issues do is to impose additional cross-cutting criteria on programs, ensuring that they are coordinated not only among themselves but also with other government-wide priorities. While these criteria have obvious social benefits they also have internal decision-making costs for government. Decisions must take that many more steps, and must meet that many more criteria, when these criteria are included. Further, these social goals may interfere with other goals of programs, so that the decisions that ultimately must be made will require choosing to maximize one set of goals or another. Thus, as I will point out at much greater length below, as I assess the importance of coordination, coordination is important, but how important? Is it better to achieve the individual program goals, even if inconsistent, and to pay the price in redundancy or even conflicting outcomes, or is coordination a more important outcome of the policy process that should be emphasized?

Further, thinking about cross-cutting goals need not imply only pursuing social goals. For example, competitiveness has become a central goal for many governments (Oughton 1997). This term may be defined in a number of ways but it does tend to emphasize the integration of a range of educational, social policy, and labor market policy concerns with more traditional institutions and instruments of economic policy. In a contemporary knowledge-based economy, it is not sufficient to get the economics right to be competitive; a range of other policy areas must also be involved.

At some points the attempt to infuse policy concerns throughout the full range of public sector activity can only really be done through the use of information. For example, advocates for children have developed children's budgets in a number of settings to attempt to demonstrate what is being done, and what needs to be done, for children through the public budget (Tsegaye and Mekonen 2010; HAQ 2013). In these cases demonstrating the overall budgetary allocation for this segment of the society demonstrates the range of services required by this clientele group and the need to consider them across the policy process.

Short or Long Term?

Yet another consideration in thinking about the problems of coordination in the public sector is the length of time the cooperation is expected to occur. In many

cases the cooperation will be only for a specific project, or even for a specific problem that can be solved, and then the two organizations go back to being blissfully ignorant of each other. For example, organizations may coordinate around a construction project, or perhaps around a disaster, but once the work is completed they can return to their normal patterns of doing business in isolation from one another. Crisis situations, such as the hurricane disaster in the southern United States, produce short-term needs for massive levels of coordination vertically as well as horizontally, but those needs may become reduced significantly after the crisis has passed.

The more important cases for coordination, however, require continuing cooperation and the creation of some sort of institutionalized pattern of interaction. By *institutionalized* in this context I do not necessarily mean that formal structures have to be created and formal rules have to be written (see Chisholm 1989). Rather, I mean that there needs to be some routinization of the interactions and that common problem solving becomes valued by the individuals involved. Philip Selznick (1957, 27) defined institutionalization as "infusing a structure with value greater than that needed for the mechanical achievement of its tasks." In other words, being involved in a relationship with other organizations and individuals in order to provide better services has to come to mean something to the individuals involved if the structure is to persist and be effective.

IF COORDINATION IS EVERYTHING, THEN MAYBE IT'S NOTHING?

Aaron Wildavsky's (1973) famous question about planning has been paraphrased any number of times, but it continues to be a useful question. We have discussed a number of alternative dimensions of coordination that appear to capture questions about policymaking taken more generally. For example, I have pointed to the possibilities of the failure of programs to cover the range of needs for citizens in areas such as social policy as possibly a problem of coordination. It may well be, but it may also simply be a poor policy design, or a conscious acceptance that government cannot, or will not, solve all problems. The holes in this social safety net may be genuine policy choices rather than the somewhat more technical question of a failure to coordinate.

If coordination is to be useful analytically, and even practically, it will require some interpretation of both intentions and outcomes. The above discussion of alternative meanings has been concerned primarily with the outcomes of the process, but intentions are also important and need to be a part of the calculation when we attribute problems to a failure to coordinate. Some actors in government may not

have the ambition to coordinate their actions but prefer to maintain their dominance in a particular policy area, or not be willing to invest money and other resources in cooperating with other programs. That is, if there is an intention to address a broad problem area effectively, or to provide comprehensive services to a target population, and major gaps remain in those services, then there is indeed a failure to coordinate effectively. Likewise, some redundancy in public programs may be designed and desirable, so that these should not be considered coordination failures.

Multiple Meanings

The coordination problem is actually several problems, each resulting from failures to align one public program with others. Government programs sometimes overlap and duplicate, or even contradict, each other. Reporting, inspection, and licensing requirements are often cited as examples of public sector programs that overlap and duplicate each other. For example, the Canadian government in the late 1990s and early part of the twenty-first century engaged in an effort to eliminate the duplications found in food inspections and licensing. Prior to that time inspections were done by both the federal and provincial governments and by several organizations within each. The creation of the Canadian Food Inspection System has helped to minimize these duplications, and therefore has reduced costs to food producers and ultimately to consumers (see www.cfis.agr.ca for a description). Similarly, in the United States the General Accountability Office found there were twenty-three federal programs that had special provisions for the elderly, some of which almost inevitably duplicated one another (USGAO 2005).

Ordinary citizens also feel the impact of poor coordination when they must cope with government. The emphasis in management reforms on the "one-stop shop" for social services and for small businesses is one indication of the demands of the public for reduced duplication of requirements and forms (Hagen and Kubicel 2000). Even then, however, the individual may have to fill out multiple forms containing the same information to obtain the range of services desired—the only difference will be the ability to do so at a single location. The more desirable outcome of a coordination process would be to have common forms for a range of allied services or licenses so that so much redundancy would not be required.[11] Centrelink in Australia (Halligan and Wills 2008) is an attempt to produce coordination of that sort for the clients of social services and labor market programs, but this is but one of numerous attempts to produce institutions for integrated services.

Although the duplication of programs does demonstrate problems in coordination, coordination problems leading to direct contradictions are even more troublesome. One of the more commonly cited examples of programs that contradict each other is the tobacco policy, or policies, of the United States. On the one hand the

US Department of Health and Human Services spends millions of dollars attempting to reduce or eliminate smoking in the United States. At the same time the US Department of Agriculture spends millions of dollars subsidizing tobacco growers. Likewise, it spends money supporting the export of tobacco to many parts of the world. Even a more rationalist government such as that in France finds that on the one hand it is promoting the consumption of (French) wine but also extremely concerned about the level of drunk driving (Sciolino 2004). These different policy emphases are explicable from the commitment of different departments and ministries to particular constituencies and to their own policy missions, but the outcome is nonetheless inconsistent and wasteful of public money.

The above example of inconsistency and conflict among program goals is costly but produces little direct harm to citizens, except in their capacity as taxpayers. Other examples of inconsistency and incompatibility of programs may have more tangible negative consequences for citizens. One such set of inconsistencies has been the "poverty trap" that existed in the United Kingdom and other countries for years, as a result of the failure to coordinate means-tested social benefits and taxation (Harkness, Gregg, and MacMillan 2012; Barling 1984). This lack of effective coordination meant that as low-income individuals earned more money there would be points along the earnings scale at which their net income would reduce for the marginal pound earned, given that benefits were lost or taxes began to be charged.[12] While the most extreme cases of this problem have been eliminated, tax and benefit programs are rarely well coordinated and low-income families tend to bear the burden of those programmatic inconsistencies.

In other instances government programs may have major gaps so that necessary services are not available to the public, or to specific segments of the population. These service gaps often occur in social services where certain categories of people with particular characteristics are excluded from receiving services. For example, failures to coordinate Medicare programs for the elderly with public pensions and other services often produces the need for the elderly to become legally bankrupt in order to receive medical benefits available only to the indigent. And the services in question may be those most needed by the elderly, such as skilled nursing care. Some of the more egregious cases of coordination failures producing service gaps have come to light as a result of the events of September 11, 2001. It became clear as the causes of that disaster were considered that there were massive coordination failures that played no small part in permitting the disaster to occur (see Chapter 4). Each of the major security services in the United States—the Central Intelligence Agency, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the National Security Agency—as well as other organizations such as the Immigration and Naturalization Service and the Federal Aviation Administration, had a part of the picture, but no one had been able to "connect the dots."[13]

The lack of adequate policy coordination may also result in something as simple as lost opportunities for effective cooperation among programs and organizations charged with delivering public services. Very few public services can be as effective as they might be without the involvement of other services, but coordination is more often seen as a real cost to the organization rather than a potential benefit. The calculus in which organizations and their leaders engage is rather predictable. The benefits of cooperation and coordination are uncertain and remote while the costs are clear and immediate. Further, it is not clear to what extent each organization involved in a cooperative effort would be rewarded for their involvement. In such a situation the rational manager or political leader might well decline to participate.

Measurement and Degrees

Any concept in the social sciences must be able to be measured if it is to be useful in advancing our understanding of the phenomena in question, and coordination is no different. There is a tendency when discussing coordination to speak as if this were a simple dichotomy—coordination exists or it does not. The world of governing is, however, much more complex, and there are certainly degrees of coordination. Indeed, establishing the threshold at which coordination can be said to exist involves making judgments about where the policy area or areas in question stand relative to some underlying scale of coordination (see Sartori 1991 on "degreeism"). Saying that a policy area is "coordinated" usually means it is sufficiently coordinated in the mind of the evaluator, but that evaluation often varies among observers.

One way to think about the measurement of coordination is to consider the degrees of coordination that may be achieved. For example, Les Metcalfe (1994; see Table 1.1) has presented a scale of coordination that extends from independent decisions by organizations as the lowest level of coordination (or in this case almost total absence of coordination) of activities among public programs to a very high level of cooperation and coherence indicated by a coherent government

Table 1.1 Metcalfe's Policy Coordination Scale

9.	Government Strategy
8.	Establishing Central Priorities
7.	Setting Limits on Ministerial Action
6.	Arbitration of Policy Differences
5.	Search for Agreement among Ministers
4.	Avoiding Divergences among Ministers
3.	Consultation with Other Ministers (Feedback)
2.	Communication with Other Ministers (Information Exchange)
1.	Independent Decision Making by Ministers

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strategy encompassing all areas of the public sector. The nine levels of coordination presented in Metcalfe's analysis each will require greater specification, and some criteria for having been achieved, but they do represent the beginnings of a metric for coordination (see Matei and Gogaru 2012).

If we attempt to move beyond the ordinal measures presented by Metcalfe, attempting to measure coordination and the degree to which it has been achieved is substantially more difficult. One of the earliest efforts to assess coordination on a more continuous scale was developed by Ostrom, Parks, and Whitaker (1974). They were interested in the delivery of police services at the local level in fragmented jurisdictions and the extent to which there was joint use of facilities and joint patrolling. Their primary method of determining coordination was observation and interviewing, and they also looked at the levels of coordination relative to the opportunities for joint action.

The measures of coordination used by Ostrom, Parks, and Whitaker depended largely on evidence about attempts to coordinate and on formal patterns of linkage among organizations. The attempts of the OECD (2005) to understand building coherence in development policy employed a rather similar method. This study identified a number of institutional processes that are directed toward creating greater coherence but did not provide any clear measures of the success or failure of these efforts. Helen Briassoulis (2005) considered numerous dimensions of possibilities for measuring policy integration (especially in the context of the European Union) and also developed numerous possible measures, most depending upon efforts to achieve integration rather than actual levels of success (see Table 1.2).

Another of the important attempts to assess levels of coordination focused on social welfare and jobs training rather than on policing. Jennings and Krane (1994) were not able to assess actual levels of coordination in these policy areas in the American states but they focused more on the attempts of the actors involved to coordinate. They utilized a set of questions to the participants, asking both about their attempts to coordinate with other programs and to some extent about their success in doing so. The evidence on activity is more compelling than the

Table 1.2 Briassoulis's Dimensions of Policy Integration

Institutional Criteria
Legislative Criteria
Administrative Criteria
Financial Measures
Market Measures
Technical Measures
Communication Measures
Hybrid Measures

information on success and failure, but this constitutes more movement ahead in attempting to measure actual coordination in governing.

Finally, there have been a number of efforts to measure interaction in networks of organizations in general, and particularly in networks of actors responsible for public policies (Kriesi, Adam, and Jochum 2006). In one of the earliest studies of coordination in public administration Chisholm (1989) enumerated linkages among the many organizations responsible for public transportation. Although important for studying interactions, this literature is perhaps less useful for studying coordination per se. We know who talks to whom in these delivery systems, but not necessarily about what topics. Nor does it tell us much about whether these interactions actually produce effective policy coordination. Again, the emphasis is on measuring the *process* of coordination more than on the success or failure of that process.

In summary, while all these efforts at measurement do indeed help to advance the study of coordination, they do not provide definitive measures of coordination that would allow us to say that one policy area is coordinated and another is not. This failure is in part a result of lacking any meaningful standard of what is enough coordination, and in part a function of the weakness of indicators, other than process-based indicators, of the success of coordination efforts. We tend to be able to identify coordinated programs within the public sector but not to develop an effective metric for that coordination.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This chapter has provided an introduction to the study of policy coordination. This term, and its synonyms or near synonyms such as *coherence, collaboration,* and *integration,* has been a continuing concern for governments. Despite the long history of concern and attempts to coordinate, there has been very little success in generating effective coordination in most governments. And the search for coordination becomes increasingly difficult with the greater levels of involvement of nongovernmental actors in the policy process and the decentralization and disaggregation of contemporary political systems.

Academics, practitioners, and the informed public all tend to treat coordination as an undifferentiated whole. There are, however, a number of questions about what this concept means and the best ways of conceptualizing it. While these differences may appear academic, in the worst sense of the term, they actually have significance for both understanding and practice. Perhaps most importantly, understanding the alternatives for intervention can assist in strategic choices by governments.

Knowing that there is a problem with coordination is only the beginning of the political and administrative action necessary to address that problem. Therefore,

the remainder of this volume will attempt to expand the understanding of the causes and remedies for the coordination problem. This elaboration of the issues will involve detailing the reasons that coordination so often is wanting, and also something of the theoretical and analytical approaches to coordination. There is also a rather fully stocked tool chest of instruments that can be used to generate enhanced coordination, and I will detail and evaluate those. Finally, several short case studies will illustrate the ways in which governments have attempted, and often failed, to address coordination.