

Presentation
by

**Dr Laura
De Vito**

**Air Quality
Management
Resource
Centre**

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EU Multilevel governance and Air Quality Management in the UK

Laura De Vito (AQMRC, UWE), Duncan Russel (University of Exeter), Enda Hayes (AQMRC, UWE), Jo Barnes (AQMRC, UWE), Tim Chatterton (AQMRC, UWE), James Longhurst (AQMRC, UWE)

Structure of Presentation

Why is air quality management in the UK still worth studying?

Why is multilevel governance relevant to air quality management in the UK?

Theoretical framework and some discussion points

Twin-track: Local Air Quality Management and the European air quality legislation

- As a EU member the UK is required to implement the EU air quality legislation
- The UK has also maintained the pre-existing national legislation that engages more directly Local Authorities (Local Air Quality Management)

This twin-track approach in theory should reinforce the multilevel nature of air quality policies

Is MLG important for air quality?

Air Pollution Control vs Air Quality Management

Pollution Control = use of predominantly technical measures (cleaner technology/end-of-pipe) to control *emissions* from individual sources (e.g. exhaust pipes)

Air Quality Management = control of diffuse sources to achieve reductions in *ambient concentrations* of pollutants – tackling cumulative problems



Local knowledge of main pollutants and sources is key + LAs are also exposed to emissions generated outside their administrative boundaries → need for horizontal cooperation and higher-tiers' support → classic case of MLG!

Has multilevel governance driven AQM forward or has it disappointed expectations?

- Environmental problems cut across multiple political and geographical scales and policymaking in these areas need to be supported by a model of governance that integrates multiple decision-making scales
- But it can also raise new conflicts (Stephenson, 2013)
- Moreover, scarce evidence of MLG-based air quality policies working (Gollata and Newig, 2017)
- On-going debate... Let's shift the focus of the question to try to understand who and what influences MLG before understanding what makes it work for policy effectiveness

Local authorities did not have enough support from higher-tiers...

- Local Authorities have not had the responsibility to meet the EU AAQD but Defra's recent AQ proposal mandate selected local authorities to introduce a Clean Air Zones → **Policy Disconnect** (Barnes et al. 2018)
- Local Authorities were never given the powers to enforce Air Quality Objectives

The central government has acted as a gatekeeper between the local level and the EU level, thus undermining the very multilevel nature of air quality management

Breaking down MLG and AQM in the UK

- MLG is important for air quality management in the UK
- The problem with multilevel air quality policies is that they haven't been multilevel enough (Policy disconnect, lack of appropriate resources, etc...)
- What is the real-world impact of flawed MLG?
- Four case-study cities (Bristol, Cardiff, Edinburgh, Belfast) to explore the impact of MLG strengths/ flaws on street-level bureaucrats and what are their coping mechanisms
 - Objective: 1 to pinpoint flawed MLG effect on street-level bureaucrats (how)*
 - Objective 2: to explore their coping mechanisms and the impact that these have on policy outputs (who)*

Theoretical framework

Theoretical Perspective

Historical Institutionalism

Rational Choice Institutionalism

Sociological Institutionalism

Street-level bureaucracy

Aspects to investigate

Allocation of competencies, structures, regulation and critical junctions over time

Conflicts and powers based on interest-maximisation

Normative drive behind the policy implementation from the perspective of implementers

How do implementers act and make choices on a day-to-day basis within a MLG context and how do they cope with imbalances or issues with flawed MLG (e.g. what they prioritise in case of conflicts between local authorities, national governments, EU level; other emerging factors?)

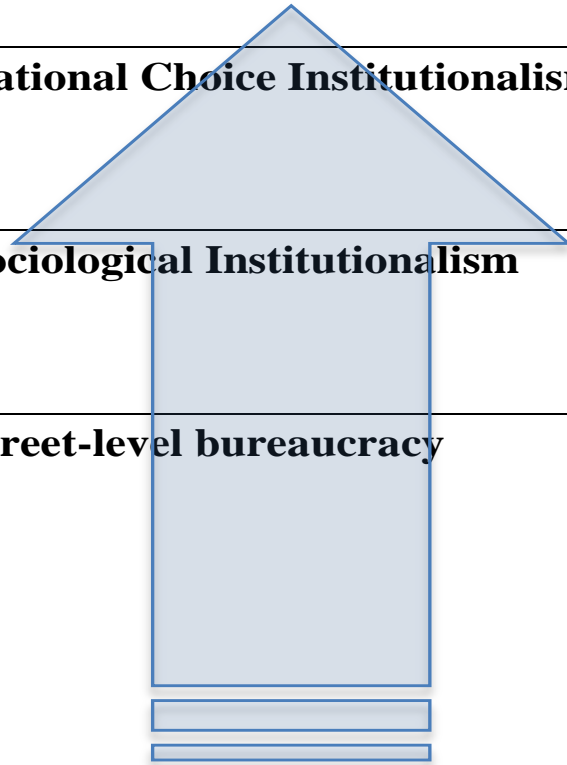
Source of data

Document analysis and secondary data

Document analysis/secondary data/interviews

Interviews

Interviews



Potential aspects to explore

- Are there other factors that are also important that SLB + NI can uncover?
- Is there an intervening role for devolved authorities?
- Are local implementers also affected by local-level political short-termism/contrasting priorities as the central government and what are their coping mechanisms?
- If so, how can these be explicitly acknowledged by the MLG literature?
- Other inputs..?

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