

Coordinating «Wicked Issues»: The County Governor's Role in Norwegian Internal Security

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Preface

This paper is part of the research project «Multi-level governance in the tension between functional and territorial specialization», which is funded by the Norwegian Research Council and the DEMOSREG programme. A previous version was presented at the EGPA Conference 2–5. September 2009, St-Julians, Malta: «The Public Service: Public Service Delivery in the Information Age», Study Group VI on the Governance of Public Sector Organizations: «Reforming Governance of Public Sector Organizations: How Administrative Reforms Affect Autonomy, Control and Coordination». Thanks to study group discussants and colleagues at the Department for Administration and Organization Theory for valuable comments.

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Summary

Internal security, civil protection and crisis management comprise an important, but challenging policy field. Crises can be framed as «wicked issues» or problems, inherently complex and difficult to solve. Efficient crisis management involves actors in distinct sectors as well as government levels. Coordination between relevant actors is a continuous challenge. Recent public policy efforts within the field, as well as in public policy and public administration in general, have emphasized the importance of horizontal coordination. Different organizational structures, specialization principles and mechanisms of coordination complicate crisis management and policymaking. The paper examines the Norwegian County Governor's role in internal security and civil protection, based on survey data from 2008. The County Governor has a unique position between central and local government, and is responsible for coordinating regional state offices as well as local authorities in crisis situations. The paper demonstrates that coordination is recognized as important, but difficult to assess. Coordination efforts largely match regional variation in existing threats, and correspond to previous crisis experience. Mutual trust between central actors within the field is generally considered as high, while mutual contact – with the exception of contact with local authorities – is low. The vertical and hierarchical dimension largely continues to be the dominant relation despite recent efforts to strengthen the horizontal dimension. Therefore, a main conclusion is that horizontal, cross-sector coordination remains a major challenge within the field. A lack of central, national and horizontal coordination can become a serious problem in the face of a major national crisis or disaster.

Sammendrag

Samfunnssikkerhet, beredskap og krisehåndtering er et komplisert, men viktig politikkområde. Kriser kan oppfattes som «wicked issues», det vil si særlig utfordrende og kompliserte problemer som er vanskelige å håndtere. Effektiv krisehåndtering involverer aktører fra ulike etater og sektorer, på forskjellige forvaltningsnivå, samtidig. Dette fører til viktige samordningsutfordringer. I den senere tid har myndighetene lagt særlig vekt på å styrke den horisontale samordningen innenfor samfunnssikkerhet. Den organisatoriske strukturen er preget av ulike spesialiseringsprinsipp og samordningsmekanismer, noe som kompliserer politikkformulering så vel som konkret krisehåndtering. Notatet ser nærmere på fylkesmannens samordningsrolle på samfunnssikkerhetsområdet, med bakgrunn i en spørreundersøkelse fra 2008. Fylkesmannen har en særegen posisjon mellom sentrale og lokale myndigheter, og et sentralt samordningsansvar i krisesituasjoner. Resultatene fra spørreundersøkelsen viser at samordning innenfor samfunnssikkerhet blir sett på som svært viktig. Samtidig er det mange som arbeider med samfunnssikkerhet og beredskap som synes det er vanskelig å karakterisere samordningen. Samordningen på bestemte risikoområder korresponderer i stor grad med regionale forskjeller i eksisterende trussel- eller risikobilde, og tidligere erfaring med konkrete kriser. Den gjensidige tilliten mellom ulike aktører innenfor feltet er høy, samtidig som kontakten mellom dem – med unntak av kontakten med kommunene – er lav. Det er den vertikale, hierarkiske dimensjonen som preger samordningen. Horisontal samordning, på tvers av sektor, er fremdeles en viktig utfordring. I møte med større nasjonale kriser kan manglende samordning med sentrale myndigheter og på tvers av sektor representere et stort problem.

Introduction

Internal security, civil protection and crisis management in the public sector are increasingly important in a time when we are faced with growing awareness of risk and vulnerability. Dramatic events like 9/11, the Madrid and London bombings or the Boxing Day Tsunami of 2004, threats related to climate change and extreme weather conditions (Hurricane Katrina in 2005) or pandemics (SARS, the avian flu, and presently the Swine flu), challenge public crisis management. These major catastrophes, disasters, accidents and threats may have far-reaching consequences, and demand coordinated efforts from actors in different sectors and government levels. Crisis management, civil protection and crisis management includes both preventive and reactive action. Moreover, it involves particular *organizational concerns*, related to issues of governance, coordination and specialization. Thus, relations between different actors, levels and sectors, become significant.

Joint efforts between actors in different sectors and at different levels of government are frequently called for in the field of civil protection or crisis management (Boin et al. 2005, Kettl 2003). This paper examines the Norwegian County Governor's coordinative role in civil protection and crisis management. Being an important regional representative, and a central link between local government and the central state, the County Governor has an important position.¹ S/he is responsible for implementing state policies at the regional level, but also advocates the interests of local authorities towards the central state (Torgersen 1997). The County Governor has paramount coordination responsibilities within the field of civil protection and emergency preparedness. However, s/he operates within a fragmented system, characterized by a mix of specialization principles and coordination mechanisms. The County Governor coordinates, inspects and advises emergency planning at County level, both assisting and controlling the local authorities. S/he also has coordinative responsibility towards other regional state offices and private/voluntary organizations within the County. Coordinating for civil protection means coordination between traditionally distinct sectors, such as area planning, health, environment protection, and farming, forestry and rescue services. Crisis management also involves non-state actors, private enterprise and voluntary organizations. The relations between horizontal and vertical dimensions of crisis management and civil protection will be investigated further in this paper.

Coordination efforts of the public administration are particularly relevant in a time when the public sector is changing, and new ideas and models for the public sector are discussed. The New Public Management (NPM) movement of the last 25 years has been characterized by a strategy of fragmentation, increased specialization and structural devolution (Hood 1991, Christensen and Lægreid 2001, Pollitt and Bouckaert 2004). Recently, new initiatives increasingly focus on coordination, control, and integration across levels and sectors (Power 1999, Fimreite and Lægreid 2004, Bogdanor 2005,

¹ The County Governor is both the title of the executive of the office, and the name of the office itself, and is often used interchangeably. Here, we use capital initial letters for the office (The County Governor), and lowercase letter (the governor) when speaking of a particular person/executive.

Verhoest and Bouckaert 2005, Christensen and Læg Reid 2008). This corresponds to a shift from «government» (traditional «command and control» public policy) to «governance» (networks crossing the traditional hierarchical relations) (Rhodes 1997). Supposedly, effective coordination results in shared responsibility among administrators at different agencies, at multiple levels of government, and among non-governmental partners, countering the fragmentation and specialization introduced by NPM-initiatives. The motivation is to escape problems of accountability in complex systems, where (in the extreme case) no one is fully in charge of anything and nearly everyone ultimately shares responsibility for results (Kettl 2002).

Our paper presents results from a survey sent to the 18 County Governor offices in Norway in 2008. The County Governor staff was asked to characterize coordination within their County according to different risk areas, and between different actors/stakeholders within the field of civil protection. The paper has a descriptive outlook, and centers on the following issues: 1) Is coordination recognized as a problem or not? 2) How do the respondents characterize mutual trust, contact and coordination within the field? And 3) What characterizes the coordination efforts in general, and across different regions?

The paper first gives an outline of the main theoretical starting points of the study, focusing on organizational theory in terms of specialization and coordination, as well as current research within the field of internal security, civil protection and crisis management. Second, the Norwegian county structure and the County Governor's responsibilities within the field of civil protection are portrayed. Third, the paper gives an overview of the data, and discusses the results of the survey according to characterizations of coordination within specific risk areas, and between different actors within the field. Finally, a concluding section summarizes the main findings and draws some important conclusions.

Crisis management and coordination

Our analytical focus is on organizations and organizing. A central question is how does government and the public administration's capacity to organize influence how risk and crises are dealt with? The general starting point is that organizations and organizational relations have a significant impact on perceptions, behavior, on how central issues are solved, and how major responsibilities carried out (March and Olsen 1989, Christensen, Læg Reid and Fimreite 2007). Organizations are seen as critical actors. They process and handle risk, but are also potential producers of risk (Power and Hutter 2005). Efforts to manage risk and major crises involve the creation of organizational networks, or specific regulation «regimes» with distinct characteristics (Hood et al. 2001). How the organizational boundaries are drawn influences the problems and solutions policy makers become aware of, and at which level and in what context various concerns are considered (Egeberg 2003). How organizations experience their capacity and competence to prevent and manage risk and crises is significant in order to understand how they handle them (Christensen et. al. 2007). The specialization principles and mechanisms of coordination that dominate the field will have a significant impact.

Internal security, civil protection and crisis management bears directly upon the lives of citizens and the wellbeing of societies. When crises are handled well, the damage is limited. When crisis management fails, crisis impact may increase. In extreme cases, efficient crisis management is a matter of life and death. There exists a multitude of different crisis definitions (Rykkja 2008). However, Boin et al. (2005) seem to capture some essentials:

[A crisis is] a serious threat to the basic structures or the fundamental values and norms of a system, which under time pressure and highly uncertain circumstances necessitates making vital decisions.

In this definition, governance and public leadership is significant. A crisis is seen as such only when it is a threat against existing systems, values and norms. This definition also emphasizes the constraints produced by high levels of uncertainty and the necessity to respond rapidly.

Emergencies, crises and risks or threats comprising uncertain outcome can further be portrayed as «wicked issues» or problems. The phrase was first used in social planning and describes certain ill-formulated social system problems: Problems that are difficult to solve because of incomplete, contradictory, and changing requirements which also are difficult to recognize (Churchman 1967). «Wicked problems» also refers to problems that are rooted in society but deeply resistant to traditional departmental approaches (Bogdanor 2005:6). Classic examples include economic, environmental, and political issues, global climate change, healthcare, epidemics, pandemic influenza, international drug trafficking, nuclear energy and waste, and internal security. Because of complex interdependencies, the effort to solve one aspect of a wicked problem may reveal or create other problems, and it typically requires large groups of individuals to change their mindsets and behaviors in order to be solved. The complexity, and often dramatic character of such issues or crises, makes them difficult to define and resolve. Most important, they cross the established boundaries of a traditionally sector-organized state, creating extraordinary management challenges.

Adding to this, the field of civil protection and internal security is frequently described as fragmented (NOU 2000, Serigstad 2003, Høydal 2007, Kettl 2003, 2007). Crisis management involves numerous stakeholders, different sectors, and levels of government with intersecting or even conflicting interests and priorities. Thus, issues of *multi level governance* become relevant (Bache and Flinders 2004, Rykkja 2008). A crisis typically demands efficient coordination, between different levels of government (vertically), and between actors within different organizations at the same level (horizontally).

The issue of coordination of complex actions through networks of actors and organizations is widely discussed within the social sciences, and within political science and public administration in particular (Six 2004). Coordination and cooperation efforts have encouraged «whole of government» or «joined up government» initiatives worldwide (Christensen and Lægveid 2007). It is frequently seen as a reaction to the increasing specialization and fragmentation following from the NPM reforms of the 1980s and 1990s. A main aim is to get a better grip on problems and issues reaching across sectors, administrative levels, and policy areas (Richards and Smith 2006). According to Pollitt

(2003: 35), the ultimate goal is to eliminate situations where different policies undermine each other, to make better use of scarce resources, to create synergies by bringing together key stakeholders, and to offer citizens «seamless» rather than fragmented access to public services. Critics point out that more emphasis on coordination could result in blurred lines of accountability. It also demands greater implementation capacity than more traditional sector approaches.

Issues of fragmentation, specialization, and coordination within the public sector, and the consequences for policy capacity, are central discussion topics within existing literature (Painter and Pierre 2004). Classical organizational theory (Gulick 1937) emphasizes the particular dynamic relationship between specialization and coordination. The more a public organization is specialized, the more pressure there is for increased coordination (and vice versa).

Gulick (Ibid.) identifies four fundamental ways in which tasks may be distributed, according to *territory*, *purpose (sector)*, *function (process)* or *clientele served*. The challenges of coordination will be different according to the type of structural specialization. In «real life», different organizations usually include a mix of the four specialization principles, resulting in corresponding coordination efforts and problems. Public administration in general is largely based on principles of purpose (sector) or process (function). The main coordinative challenge is to get different sectoral administrations to work together on cross-sector problems, and to get different professions and experts to join forces. More *vertical specialization* diminishes the potential (and the need) for political steering and control from the centre, but increases the need for horizontal coordination. *Territorial specialization*, or decentralization, simplifies coordination within a given geographical area, and the services or tasks delegated can be adapted to the needs of the areas served. Decentralization further reduces the work burden of central offices. However, an increased difficulty of maintaining a uniform, nation-wide or state-wide policy will follow.

The Norwegian state structure comprises specialization according to territory as well as specialization according to sector. It also includes elements of specialization by function and clientele. The County Governor is a regional state representative with coordinative responsibility, but is internally organized by sector. Specialization by function also exists, whereas most offices include specific units/departments responsible for emergency preparedness. A major goal behind organization by sector is to create policy standardization across territorial units. However, specialization according to territory creates difficulties for strong intra-sectoral or vertical coordination (Egeberg 2003). Crisis management and internal security make these central public policy and management discussions central. A major question is whether the coordination problems are recognized, and whether there is variation in how the responsibilities and state policies are carried out.

Civil protection and internal security in Norway

Norway is a small country in terms of population, but rather large in terms of area. It has an extensive coastline, counting about 4.5 million people and 380 000 square km,

stretching over 2700 km from the south end to the north. It is varied, both in terms of population density, geography, topography and climate, as well as in terms of government relations. This corresponds to different risk scenarios and crisis management concerns across the country. In the north, the climate is colder and the country less densely populated. In the west, high mountains and deep fjords dominate the landscape. In the south, the landscape is characterized by more fertile and open landscape.

Norway is a unitary state, though public sector responsibilities are divided between central government and local municipalities. Traditionally, the local government enjoys an important degree of autonomy. Norwegian local democratic values are considered strong in comparative perspective. Even so, the competence division between local and central government is continuously debated (Fimreite et al. 2002, Fimreite et al. 2007). Issues of centre versus periphery is a central political cleavage in Norway, creating different priorities in the more remote areas of the North compared to the southern parts of Norway closer to the political and administrative centre near the capital city of Oslo (Rokkan 1967).

The need for efficient coordination within the field of civil protection and internal security, within the vertical dimension and, increasingly, within the horizontal dimension, has been thoroughly emphasized in several recent policy documents (NOU 2000, St. meld 17 (2001–2002), NOU 2006, St. meld 22 (2007–2008), Riksrevisjonen 2008). However, the vertical (hierarchical) dimension remains strong. In general, Norway is characterized by strong sector ministries and weak overarching ministries. This is frequently explained as a result of ministerial rule, where the government ministers are accountable to Parliament for the activities of the underlying department(s) (Fimreite and Lægreid 2004). The Ministry of Justice and the Police has a central coordinating role in civil protection, but, according to the policy documents, it needs strengthening. The importance of reinforced coordination at regional level is also emphasized.

The coordination challenges within the field are closely related to four general guiding principles: *responsibility, subsidiarity, similarity and collaboration*. The principle of responsibility says that the authority responsible in a «normal» situation is also responsible for prevention, preparedness and implementation in a crisis situation. As a result, responsibility in a crisis generally follows established sector lines. Different actors will take the lead in different types of crises. According to the subsidiarity principle, a crisis should be handled at the lowest level of authority possible. This places important duties on local authorities. The similarity principle says that the organization dealing with a given crisis should be the as similar as possible to the ordinary organization. Competence should therefore be within the existing organization. The principle of collaboration guides major rescue operations. Here, relevant public as well as private/voluntary organizations take action. Several different organizations might be involved. Consequently, a crisis situation potentially involves many different actors, in different sectors and at different government levels. Specific crises might involve different sets of actors. Efficient leadership and coordination is thus a major challenge.

The County Governor has a unique position S/he is the main representative of central government at regional level, and ensures that nationally approved resolutions,

decisions, aims and targets are implemented at the regional level. A major responsibility in this respect is to supervise the local authorities within their area. A main task is also to coordinate the activities of other government bodies at the County level. Some regional state authorities, such as the Norwegian Roads Administration (Vegvesenet), The Tax Administration and the Regional Health Authorities have different and therefore intersecting boundaries. This creates additional coordination problems. Recent research suggests that there is a considerable resistance from the other regional government bodies towards being coordinated by the County Governor (Hansen et al. 2009). The County Governor further has a two-fold role, whereas s/he also speaks for her/his region towards the state, and in this respect represents the interests of the local authorities. Both roles are emphasized (Flo 2004, Hansen et al. 2009). The County Governor also has a relatively independent position, and to some extent, this results in policy variation.

There are 19 counties and 18 County Governors (Oslo and Akershus share a County Governor). The counties vary considerably according to size and population, resulting in significant differences in terms of staff and economic resources (Torgersen 1997). The County Governors are placed administratively under the Ministry of Government Administration and Reform (*Fornyings- og administrasjonsdepartementet*, FAD), but different sector ministries take the lead according to their respective subject areas. Coordination of internal security and crisis management within the County is one of the County Governor's main responsibilities, and is mainly carried out through supervision, guidance, training and emergency exercises (Kgl. res. 18 April 2008, Rykkja 2009).

The County Governor's responsibility for regional coordination in crisis situations (in peace) is defined by *The Coordination Regulation* (Kgl. res. 12. des 1997). S/he shall supervise crisis planning within the County (e.g. other regional state offices and local authorities), ensure adequate information sharing in a crisis situation, and is responsible for setting up a County Preparedness Board (which shall include members from the public, private and voluntary sector). The general responsibility for civil protection is further defined in *the Preparedness Regulation* that came in 2008 (Kgl. res. 18 April 2008). The regulation followed up several government initiatives aiming at a strengthening of the CGs role within the field (St. meld 17 (2001–2002), St. meld 39 (2003–2004)). Here, the CG is given responsibility for coordination, supervision, initiative and planning for civil protection.

The Norwegian County Governor structure unites specialization based on *geography*, and specialization based on *purpose or sector*. There is also an element of specialization according to *process*, whereas the County Governor incorporates separate emergency preparedness units. As envisaged by Gulick (1937), this structure creates important contradictions. In the face of major crises and particular «wicked issues», it might be unclear what principle or what part of the organization that should take the lead. In a crisis situation, such leadership is essential (Boin et al. 2005). Problems of coordination and operation are multiplied in a complex structure. In our case, the management principles (responsibility, subsidiarity, similarity and collaboration) might complicate the process further, leading to fragmentation, unclear responsibilities and lack of coordinated leadership. In the following sections, the relations between different actors

within the field of internal security and civil protection, as seen from the County Governor staff's perspective, is further investigated.

Data and method

In 2008, a survey was sent to the 18 County Governors. The questionnaire was targeted towards members of staff with specific responsibility for civil protection and internal security. It included demographic questions, questions on competence resources, practice, priorities, central aims and measures, and on horizontal and vertical relations within the office and between different actors within the field. The total number of respondents was 1136, with a response rate at 63 %. 50 % (568 respondents) reported that they had little or no responsibility for civil protection, and were therefore excluded from the data set (coded as «missing»)².

In this paper, we investigate the results on four specific questions. First, the staff was asked to characterize coordination within specific risk areas (q1): natural disasters (landslide, flood and hurricane), transport, food safety, drinking water, infection control, energy supply, information security, civil/military cooperation, fire and rescue, terrorism, and nuclear protection. They were then asked to characterize mutual trust (q2), contact (q3), and coordination (q4) between different actors within the field. This included assessment of *vertical relations* (upwards/downwards), defined as coordination with responsible departments at central level (ministries), with municipalities, and international/supranational authorities, and *horizontal relations* (sideways), defined as coordination with regional authorities in other sectors, with other CGs, with voluntary organizations and private enterprise, and other divisions within the relevant CG. The following sections will look further into the distribution and variation on these particular questions.

Further, we will look into regional variation of coordination, both within different risk areas and between various actors within the field. Traditionally, regional division in Norway is based on geographical and dialectical differences, and the County borders are largely historical. For comparative purposes, the country is often divided into five parts: the North, the Middle/Centre, the West, the South and the East.³ Here, we use a division based on how state regions are commonly defined in public administration.⁴ Differences in terms of population, infrastructure and geography may affect prioritization as well as considerations of how good or bad coordination efforts within different risk area are. It can further affect what kinds of threats are seen as important

² The number of missing is higher on some of the survey questions. This indicates that the respondents have found these particular questions difficult to answer.

³ The exact boundaries may differ. For instance, the Centre region sometimes includes the County *Møre og Romsdal*, and sometimes not. Some would argue that *Nordmøre* (the northern parts of the county) belongs to the middle/central region, while the southern part(s) belongs to the western region. Occasionally *Rogaland* or parts of it is considered a part of southern Norway, in other circumstances a part of western Norway. The exact border of eastern Norway also differs.

⁴ North: Finmark, Troms, Nordland. Central: Nord-Trøndelag, Sør-Trøndelag, Møre og Romsdal. West: Sogn og Fjordane, Hordaland, Rogaland. South: Vest-Agder, Aust-Agder, Telemark, Vestfold, Buskerud. East: Oslo, Akershus, Østfold, Hedmark, Oppland

or relevant. Also, earlier or recent experiences with major crises may be an influential factor.

Coordination within different risk areas

Table 1 demonstrates the respondents' characteristics of coordination within specific risk areas.

Table 1. *Coordination within different risk areas. Percentage.*

	Good	Average	Bad	Do not know/ not relevant	Total N = 100 %
Natural disasters	38	13	2	46	334
Transport	17	21	7	55	331
Food	22	21	6	52	332
Drinking water	26	20	5	49	333
Infection control	34	14	4	48	332
Power supply	29	14	5	53	333
Information security/data protection	30	17	4	50	333
Civil/military cooperation	28	11	1	60	332
Fire and rescue	33	13	1	54	333
Terrorism	12	14	5	70	330
Nuclear protection	25	14	3	58	332
<i>Mean</i>	<i>27</i>	<i>16</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>54</i>	

A great number of respondents answered «do not know/not relevant» when they were asked to characterize coordination within different risk areas (46–70 percent). However, very few considered coordination to be «bad» (1–7 percent). The relatively high «do not know» proportion might indicate that the attention to coordination within these areas is, or was, generally low. It could also be that civil protection and internal security generally is an under prioritized policy area. Those who have responsibilities within the field may have other (routine) tasks within other areas that tend to take priority (only roughly 10 percent of the respondents state that civil protection and crisis management is their chief occupation⁵). This is argued to be a persistent problem within the field of crisis management (Drennan and McConnell 2007). Crises are low probability events within any organization, and raising resources, whether human or economic, in the face of more routine responsibilities is always difficult. The relatively high «do not know/not relevant» score might also indicate that coordination within different risk areas is difficult to assess.

Coordination is considered *best* related to natural disasters (landslide/ flood / hurricane) (38 percent «good»), infection control (34 percent), fire and rescue (33 percent), and also within information security (30 percent) and civil/military cooperation (28). These risk areas represent some of the more traditional areas of civil protection and internal security. Coordination is judged *less good* related to drinking water (26 percent), nuclear protection (25 percent) and food (22 percent). *The least good* coordination is apparently within transport (17 percent) and terrorism (12 percent).

⁵ The respondents mainly work within Agriculture (20 percent), Environment (18 percent) and Health (14 percent).

The characterizations of the different risk areas as good or less good coordinated could reflect different degrees of controversy or politicization. Coordination is likely to be considered as good within non-controversial risk areas, and less good within risk areas that are more problematic or politicized. Controversy may arise where there has recently been a major crisis, and in particular a crisis that was not handled well. On the other hand, coordination may increase and be judged better in areas where crisis experience is high, and earlier crises have been handled well. Coordination in relation to natural disasters might be an example of a more non-controversial risk area. In areas where threats or risks are perceived as remote, for instance in relation to terrorism or nuclear protection, extensive coordination may not be seen as necessary.⁶ This could explain the lower «good» score on these measures.

Table 2 looks further into regional variation according to coordination within the different risk areas. The table presents the relative proportions of respondents within each region that considers coordination within the specific risk areas as «good». To highlight differences, extreme values are emphasized. Only the comparably highest and lowest scores within each risk area are considered. The blank areas indicate that the region in question did not have any extreme scores (compared to the other regions) within this category.

Table 2. Relative «good» coordination score within different risk areas. Regional variation.*

	North	Central	West	South	East
High relative «good» score	Civil/military (34 %, μ 28 %)	Natural disasters (52 %, μ 38 %) Power supply (39 %, μ 29 %)	Infection control (45 %, μ 34 %) Drinking water (31 %, μ 26 %)	Fire/rescue (38 %, μ 33 %) Nuclear protection (30 % μ 25 %)	
Low relative «good» score	Fire and rescue (18 %, μ 33 %) Drinking water (21 %, μ 26 %)	Infection control (26 %, μ 34 %)	Terrorism (7 %, μ 12%) Transport (11 %, μ 17 %)		Food (14 % μ 22 %)

* Extreme values are emphasized. In the regions there are more than one risk area checking out as extreme, only the top and bottom two are considered. μ = mean.

Although these issues should be further investigated, a major conclusion from Table 2 is that coordination efforts within different risk areas generally match regional variations in crisis management challenges and dominating threats. The North region stands out with the relative highest «good» score on civil/military cooperation. This might reflect the regions closeness, but also ambivalent relationship to Russia and the administration of the northern areas. Military presence has been dominant in the region for a long time. The North further stands out with the least good evaluation of coordination (compared to the other regions) within fire and rescue (18 percent «good»), and drinking water (21

⁶ Terrorism is largely seen as a remote threat in Norway. This is further elaborated on in Læg Reid, Fimreite and Rykkja (2009).

percent «good»). This could be taken to indicate that coordination in general is not prioritized within these areas. It could also indicate dissatisfaction with coordination efforts. Problems due to distance from central government, or because the threats in question are seen as remote, might also be relevant explanations.

The Central region is marked by a relatively high score in terms of evaluation of coordination within natural disasters. It also has the proportionally highest «good» score on coordination within power supply. The high score on natural disasters may reflect a greater focus on landslides due to the specific topography of the region (high mountains and deep crosscutting fjords). It might also reflect earlier disaster experiences. There has been continuously attention to landslide threats in the area, and the three most disastrous natural hazard events in the 20th century happened precisely here. All involved large rock slides into fjords or lakes that generated tsunamis (Loen 1905 and 1936, 61 and 73 people killed; Tafjord in 1934, 41 killed). An unexpected landslide in the city of Ålesund in 2008 demolished a house and killed five people. The area of Åkneset is under constant surveillance because of the risk of a new landslide. The high «good» score within the risk area of power supply might be related to the fact that power supply is a very resource demanding issue within this region due to its special topography.

The Western region has the highest relative score on coordination of infection control and drinking water. A relevant explanation would be the experience with the Giardia epidemic in Bergen in 2004, a crisis that affected both risk areas heavily (Dalheim 2009). The West turns out with the comparably lowest «good» score on terrorism and transport. Transport represents an important policy area within this region, especially within the county of Sogn and Fjordane. The low score on terrorism should not be overemphasized, whereas all other regions also have a rather low score within this risk area ($\mu=12\%$).

Overall, the respondents from the South are more positive towards coordination within all risk areas compared to the other regions. The South has the comparably highest score within the risk areas of fire and rescue, and nuclear protection. The high score on coordination within fire and rescue is also crisis related, there was a big forest fire within the region in 2008 (in the County of Aust-Agder), affecting about 30 square km. It lasted for more than five days and involved several hundred people in the rescue operation. The proportionally high score in coordination within nuclear protection in the South is more difficult to interpret without further investigation.

The East region scores comparatively low on coordination within all risk areas (as is also the case of the North region). As in the North, this might indicate that coordination is not prioritized, or not seen as necessary or very important. It could also indicate dissatisfaction with the coordination efforts in total. The East has a particularly low relative «good» score on coordination within the risk area of food. This could be explained by the fact that the region is largely an agricultural area, and food production is a major activity (especially in the counties of Hedmark and Oppland). One could also expect a relative high score on the coordination of natural disasters within this area. After a major flood in the area in 1995, a governmental commission gave several recommendations in order to reduce flood damage in the future. Flooding is a continuous threat in the area. However, the relative «good» score for the East on natural disasters is 37 %, just below average ($\mu = 38\%$).

One risk area does not appear in the table above: information security. Although there is regional variation within this area as well (24–37 % consider coordination within information security to be «good», $\mu = 30\%$), the variation within each region does not reach the extreme values. It could indicate that information security is considered a more remote threat. Coordination within information security may not be considered as controversial, or could be difficult for the respondents to assess. In the table above, terrorism turns out as a comparably relevant category in the West region, whereas coordination is considered comparably lowest here. However, the overall low «good» score on the question of coordination within this area ($\mu = 12\%$) indicates that it is considered a quite remote threat.

Vertical vs. horizontal relations

The survey included questions on coordination between the County Governor and other relevant actors within the field of internal security/civil protection. The respondents were asked to assess mutual trust, contact, and coordination. The relevant actors represent either the vertical (up–down) dimension or the horizontal (sideways or cross-sector) dimension.⁷

Mutual trust

First, the respondents were asked to characterize mutual trust. Table 3 presents the results.

Table 3. *Mutual trust between the CG and different actors within the field of civil protection. Percentage.*

		Low	Average	High	Do not know/ not relevant	Total N = 100 %
Vertical dimension	Responsible ministry	1	11	85	4	553
	Other central state authorities	2	13	78	8	547
	Municipalities	2	21	72	5	552
Horizontal dimension	Other regional state agencies	1	16	72	11	545
	Private/voluntary organizations	2	27	59	12	544
	Mean	2	18	67	8	

In general, the reported mutual trust was high. Between 59 and 85 % agreed that mutual trust was high. Table 3 reveals that the vertical dimension is relatively strong. The highest reported level of trust was between the CG and the responsible ministry (85 %). The trust between the CG and the municipalities was relatively lower (72 % high trust), although still above average ($\mu = 67\%$). The horizontal dimension is weaker. The lowest

⁷ The categories of the different survey questions only match roughly, whereas different labels were used for each question. This may create problems of exact definition or demarcation, but the differences are not so large as to justify an abandonment of the comparison of the responses.

reported level of high trust was between the CG and private/voluntary organizations (59 %). The trust between the CG and the municipalities is relatively speaking higher (72 % «high»), but not as high as mutual trust between the CG and other central state authorities.

Mutual contact

The respondents were then asked to characterize the level of *contact* with different relevant actors. The results are presented in table 4.

Table 4. *Mutual contact between the CG and different actors within the field of civil protection. Percentage.*

		Monthly or more	Yearly	Seldom	Total N = 100 %
Vertical dimension	Responsible ministry	7	27	67	454
	Other ministries	2	19	78	449
	DSB	5	23	71	450
	Other central state authorities	14	30	57	446
	Municipalities	36	26	38	450
	Authorities in other countries	2	7	92	443
Horizontal dimension	Other regional state agencies	15	36	49	450
	Other CGs	22	34	43	453
	Other divisions within CG	49	31	20	455
	Private/voluntary organizations	12	24	63	443
	Mean	16	26	59	

Table 4 indicates that the contact between the CG and other relevant actors is rather limited. Excluding contact within the CGs office, between 38 and 92 % respond that they seldom have contact with others. The most frequent contact is within the office, with other CGs and the local authorities. This apparently reflects an orientation towards normal routine work. The supervision of local authorities is one of the major responsibilities of the CG, and the relatively frequent contact between the CG and the local authorities (36 % monthly or more) confirms this.

Interestingly, the contact upwards with other actors in the vertical dimension is rather rare. The contact with the Ministry of Justice and the Police, and with the Directorate for Civil Defence and Emergency Planning (DSB), is rather low. Only 7 and 5 % report that they have contact with these offices monthly or more. On the one hand, this could indicate that the responsibility division between the central and the regional level is quite well defined. It could also reflect that Norway until now has not experienced any large-scale disasters that has demanded extensive national coordinative effort. The incidents that have been, have largely been dealt with at the regional or local level. On the other hand, infrequent contact might result in a stronger need for coordination when a major crisis hits. The current experience with the swine flu pandemic might potentially become such a test case.

Table 4 demonstrates that there with private/voluntary organizations is rather low. This could indicate that cross-sector relations are less well defined, and the need for contact and coordination is relatively greater.

Overall, the CG seems to be rather isolated in its work. The CG and staff seem content on fulfilling their designated tasks, at least as long as the situation is «normal». To a large extent, they trust others to concentrate on their own business. However, in a crisis situation, when those responsible for civil protection and overall crisis management have to work in a more «off routine» fashion, the mutual contact between the relevant parties will be more prominent. A major crisis could also affect the level of trust between the different actors within the field.

Coordination

A majority (57 %) of the survey respondents characterize the coordination challenges within the field of civil protection as *large or considerable* when asked directly. Table 6 shows how the respondents judge coordination between the different actors within the field.

Table 5. *Coordination between different actors within the field of civil protection. Percentage.*

		Good	Average	Bad	Do not know/not relevant	Total N= 100 %
Vertical dimension	<i>State authorities within the sector</i>	25	12	2	62	327
	<i>Municipalities</i>	26	16	4	55	328
	<i>International org.</i>	6	7	6	81	324
Horizontal dimension	<i>State authorities in other sectors</i>	21	17	3	58	327
	<i>Other CGs</i>	21	14	3	61	327
	<i>Other divisions within the CG</i>	30	18	2	50	324
	<i>Voluntary org.</i>	9	19	5	68	326
	<i>Private enterprise</i>	6	15	9	69	327
	<i>Mean</i>	18	15	4	63	

Table 5 demonstrates that most (50–69 %) answer «do not know/not relevant» when asked to characterize coordination between different actors within the field. This is somewhat intriguing, considering that a majority at the same time recognize large coordination challenges within the field. Very few (2–9 %) consider coordination as «bad». Coordination is judged *best* within the CG (30 % «good»), towards municipalities (26 %) and state authorities within the sector (25 %), *less good* with state authorities in other sectors and other CGs (21 %), and *the least good* towards private enterprise, international (6 %) and voluntary organizations (9 %).

Regional variation

Table 6 demonstrates regional variation in coordination within the field. The five regions are compared according to relative «good» score within each measure. Extremities are highlighted, whereas only the highest and lowest relative «good» scores

on each measure are considered. As in any technique designed to simplify results, the outcomes should be interpreted with care. However, by reducing complexity this way we can identify certain patterns that will be interesting to investigate further.

Table 6. *Coordination within the field of civil protection. Regional variation, percent relative «good» coordination.**

	North	Central	West	South	East
High relative «good» score	Supranational/ international organizations (9 %, $\mu=6$ %)	State auth within sector (32 %, $\mu=25$ %) State auth in other sectors (26 %, $\mu=21$ %)		Private enterprise (16 %, $\mu=6$ %) Voluntary org (13 %, $\mu=9$ %)	Other divisions within CG (37 %, $\mu=30$ %) Municipalities (33 %, $\mu=26$ %)
Low relative «good» score	State authorities in other sectors (15 %, $\mu=21$ %) Municipalities (15 %, $\mu=26$ %)		State auth within sector (12 %, $\mu=25$ %)		

* Extreme values are emphasized. Only the top and bottom two scores are considered. μ = mean.

The North is marked by the relatively highest «good» score when it comes to coordination with supranational and international organizations. Although the score is low in isolated terms (9 %), the fact that the Northern region turns out with the comparably best score on this particular measure is interesting. Cross-national issues are prominent in this area, and the current Norwegian Government focuses strongly on strategic development of the northern region (Utenriksdepartementet 2006). International relations towards Sweden, Finland, and Russia, and the administration of the Barents region have always been central policy issues in the North. Our data seems to reflect these relations.

The North is further marked by the relatively *lowest* «good» score in terms of characteristics of coordination with state authorities in other sectors, and on coordination with municipalities. Thus, both vertical and horizontal coordination seems poor within this area. This could be related to the region's relative distance from the centre (Oslo). In the North, central government is seen as more remote, and «the state» might have a different connotation in the northern region compared to areas that are more central.

The Central region stands out with a relatively positive evaluation of coordination between state authorities, both within and across sectors. This indicates that there is a close relationship between the state offices, both horizontally and vertically, within the region. The Western region is characterized by a comparably low «good» score in

relation to evaluation of coordination of state authorities within the sector. This indicates poorer vertical coordination and relation to central actors within the field such as the Ministry of Justice and DSB. This corresponds to Rokkan's characterization of the western parts of Norway as a «periphery» with a marked cultural resistance towards centralizing efforts (Rokkan 1967).

The South is marked by a relatively good evaluation of coordination with the private and voluntary sector compared to the other regions. Coordination within the horizontal dimension is apparently stronger here than in the other regions. The East is marked by the comparable best «good» score on coordination within the CG, and with the municipalities. This indicates that the East is the most integrated in terms of responsibilities towards local authorities within the field of civil protection.

Summing up

Despite important variations, the *vertical dimension* turns out to be considerably stronger than the horizontal dimension when the CG is asked to assess coordination towards different actors within the field of internal security and civil protection. This is further illustrated below in table 7.

Table 7 summarizes the results of the previous tables 3–5. The results on trust, contact and coordination are here ranged according to the categories «best», «less good» and «least good». Two variables have been extracted to represent each dimension. In the case of trust and contact, the relation between the CG and responsible ministry, and the CG and municipalities represent the vertical dimension. The relation between the CG and other regional state authorities, and the CG and the private/voluntary sector represent the horizontal dimension. In the case of coordination, this corresponds to «state authorities within the sector» and «municipalities» (the vertical dimension), and «state authorities in other sectors» and «voluntary organizations/private enterprise» (the horizontal dimension).

Table 7. *Vertical and horizontal relations between the CG and other central actors within the field of civil protection.*

Dimension	Trust	Contact	Coordination
VERTICAL	Best	Mixed (best/least good)	Best
HORIZONTAL	Least good	Least good	Mixed (less/least good)

Table 7 illustrates that the vertical relations between the different parties in the field (whether defined as mutual trust, contact, or coordination) are quite good. The characteristics lean towards the «best» category, although the results in terms of contact within the vertical dimension is somewhat mixed. As shown earlier, contact is less frequent towards central authorities and more frequent towards the local authorities. This indicates that the future coordinative challenges in particular will be in situations that demand coordination from central government. The least good relations are quite markedly found within the horizontal dimension. This further underlines the prominent cross-sector challenges within the field of civil protection.

Conclusion

Current research on public administration and public policy points towards a strengthening of regions and the state, for the most part at the expense of local authority and autonomy. Simultaneously, mainstream public policy literature emphasizes a turn from government to governance, characterized by a strengthening of horizontal coordination through increasing contact, activity and partnerships across sectors, and a corresponding new role for the private sector within policy areas that earlier were defined within the public sphere. Coordination, both vertically and horizontally, is a significant issue within the field of internal security, civil protection and crisis management in the public sector. The adversative relationship between different intersecting specialization principles, within sectors or across sectors, at the central government level or at the local level, affects public policy formation. Changes in the relationship between the different actors within the field can have profound impact on problem-solving and policy choices. The survey material presented in this paper focus on these issues.

The survey on coordination within the field of civil protection reveals *first*, that coordination problems within the field of internal security and civil protection is recognized and seen as serious. However, the County Governor's staff is at the same time very reluctant to acknowledge specific coordination problems, both within different risk areas, and in relation to other actors within the field. Many respond either that they do not know, or that the question is irrelevant. Correspondingly, very few characterize coordination as «bad». This indicates that coordination is difficult to assess and measure. It could also mean that there is little opposition to the way things are organized and handled. More routine responsibilities and other policy areas usually take priority in «normal» situations, and crisis management and civil protection becomes less prioritized. The large number of 'do not know/not relevant' responses might indicate that there have been few serious crises that demand coordination, and that other tasks than civil protection and crisis management dominate the work agenda.

Second, the paper reveals that coordination within different risk areas largely match regional variation and current crisis management challenges. Although this should be investigated further, geography, the general socio-political characteristics of the different regions and (recent) exposure to major crisis seem to be relevant explanatory factors.

Finally, the analysis demonstrates that the *vertical* (hierarchical) dimension is the strongest, indicating that the sector-based organization principle continues to have a strong standing within the field. The horizontal dimension is weaker. This is the case regardless of a continuous emphasis, both in general literature and within the internal security/civil protection field, on the increasing importance of cross-sector and public-private relations.

Contact between the County Governor and the local authorities is generally high, and coordination with the local level is considered well. Indeed, crisis management and civil protection is generally taken care of at a local or regional level, in accordance with the guiding principles of responsibility, subsidiarity, similarity and collaboration. However, the contact between the County Governor and central authorities is generally low. In major crises, this can become decisive. Major disasters demand central engagement and

leadership, and overall efficient coordination. Coordination between different actors within the field along the horizontal dimension is, according to the findings in this paper, a continuous challenge. Lacking central control and coordination across sectors can become serious obstacles when a major national crisis or disaster hits.

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