

Mini-Symposium: Institutional Collective Action in Comparative Perspective

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First developed by Richard Feiock and his team at the Local Governance Research Lab (<https://localgov.fsu.edu>) at Florida State University, the Institutional Collective Action (ICA) framework aims to understand and explain local and regional dilemmas of fragmented authority that characterize a federalist system. Since its initial installment in the mid 2000s, the ICA framework has gained significant traction in the United States. A large set of empirical studies investigated solutions to ICA dilemmas affecting metropolitan regions characterized by authority fragmented vertically among levels of government, horizontally among local governments, or functionally among agencies and bureaus. Recently, the ICA framework has been extended and adapted to study intermunicipal cooperation in several European countries, including France, The Netherlands, Switzerland, Portugal, Italy, and Poland.

This mini-symposium promoted by the Urban Affairs Review expands the breath of analysis of the ICA framework to other country settings. The articles were written independently and compiled by the editors on the basis of their common theme. Eric Zeemering explores the usefulness of the framework to address cross-border cooperation dilemmas and to compare responses to ICA dilemmas in two distinct systems of local governance, focusing on the comparative instance of use and performance of ICA mechanisms. Following Zeemering's call, Oliver Meza and colleagues investigate the factors affecting intermunicipal cooperation in metropolitan regions in Mexico and Brazil. They conclude that the role played by municipal level factors in promoting or hindering cooperation varies according to differences in federalist arrangements of both countries. Bin Chen and associates test part of the ICA framework in China's Pan Pearl River Delta. They focus on the determinants of interprovincial bilateral agreements across seven policy domains and find support for many of the factors predicted by the ICA framework. Jung, Sung and Feiock investigate the evolution of organizations playing a bridging role in emergency management networks before a natural disaster in South Korea. The authors find that bridges are often severed as a result of disasters, with organizations opting for direct ties to other organizations with valuable

resources to them rather than relying on existing bridges, which are more likely to involve significant collaboration risks.

Taken as a group, these articles highlight the important role played by the ICA framework in addressing policy problems associated with fragmented authority and help fulfill the framework's potential for comparative urban governance. The contributions put forth by the authors allow the expansion of the analyst's tool box by exploring alternative policy solutions to perennial institutional collective action problems.

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