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**Boekbespreking van: Governing by Numbers. Delegated Legislation and Everyday Policy-Making**  
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The three games metaphor helps Vos make some noteworthy observations. In her conclusions, she points out that the continuation of projects can be largely explained by determining whether "a project was still meaningful to players in the implementation game" (p. 227). These individuals were generally the most effective lobbyists for their projects. She adds that these individuals generally were effective because of their ties to policy networks (p. 231) and also that these same policy networks were often responsible for the initiation of the project as well (p. 234). In other words, Vos's look inside the implementation process raises the question of the relative significance of the three games and is an implicit critique of the prevalent focus on decision-making (the political and policy management games in her terminology).

In fact, Vos demonstrates that the political game is a poor predictor of whether or not a project would be continued after the diplomatic rupture between the Netherlands and Indonesia in 1992. The implementation game, on the other hand, provides important insights: whenever players at this level lobbied for the continuation of the project, it was continued in every case. Vos discusses the interactions between the three games in terms of policy networks and demonstrates the importance of the implementers in initiating policy, in policy change, and in policy continuation. She also recommends a greater research focus on the implementation game.

In her conclusion, Vos criticizes Putnam's two-level game metaphor, because his domestic game is an "imprecise entity" (p. 254) and does not allow for sufficient attention to policy implementation. While that may be so, her critique might have been more nuanced: her study concerns development cooperation between two states engaged in a post-colonial relationship. This entails some baggage, but also a domestic constituency, i.e., the domestic game is likely to involve more actors, especially non-governmental ones. In addition, development cooperation is a foreign policy issue area that many would characterize as 'low politics,' whereas the focus of Putnam (and his associates) has tended more towards security issues or 'high politics'. While this distinction is flawed, it is also useful: it recognizes that different issue areas may be characterized by different political incentives and, therefore, that different sets of actors may be significant in the policy-making process. Perhaps the relative importance of the implementation game is contingent upon the type of policy? Vos fails to recognize that policy-making regarding development cooperation may proceed differently from policy-making regarding, for example, defence policies. This does not diminish the value of her observations, but indicates that she might have qualified her conclusions a little better.

Notwithstanding the interesting question and subject matter, *International Cooperation Between Politics and Practice* is unlikely to reach the wider audience the author was probably hoping for when she decided to write in English. The language is often awkward. Confusion between 'from' and 'of' (p. 74), 'perspectives' and 'prospects' (p. 91), and switching between British and American spelling conventions

are just some of the problems that are easier to pinpoint. Frequently, the sentence structure only makes sense if one translates the words back into Dutch. Added to these problems is sloppy editing, resulting in a book that is quite difficult to read. This is a shame, because the question is interesting, the case studies are based on a substantial amount of original research, and the critique of the games approach deserves a wider audience.

Marijke Breuning

Edward C. Page, *Governing by Numbers. Delegated Legislation and Everyday Policy-Making*. Oxford/Portland: Hart Publishing, 2001, ISBN 1-84113-207-1, £ 22.50.

The bulk of policy analyses presented these days concentrate on policy networks and negotiated decision-making. The specific perspective of these studies results in a specific image of public governance: decisions are taken outside parliament, or any other representative body for that matter, during negotiations between all kinds of stakeholders. Naturally, this gives rise to questions concerning the legitimacy and economy of this practice. As this is the predominant kind of study in public administration, one is becoming a little suspicious. Are we not simply finding what we planned to look for in the first place? Is the broadly shared network perspective not in fact blocking our view on governmental reality?

In his latest study Edward C. Page hardly mentions networks. He actually ignores the abundant literature in this field. His attention, nevertheless, focuses on the way rules and regulations are formed outside parliament as well as on the part non-governmental actors play in the process. His approach provides us with an original and quite different image of the process of reaching authoritative decisions.

Rather than zooming in on a specific policy field or set of actors, Page focuses on delegated legislation. In the United Kingdom, as elsewhere, the acts passed in parliament show a growing number of regulation frameworks that need further specification. The power of legislation is delegated to the executive: the national government. This increase in delegation implies a shift in governance. And yet, the public administration literature has neglected this type of shift so far and focuses instead on the shifts to the European Union, to courts, to local authorities or to the private sector.

Page concentrates on the 'statutory instruments', as secondary legislation in the UK is called. Statutory instruments are drafted in the shade of *high politics*. That means their development is a matter of everyday politics, which does not involve the mobilization of party support. What is the impact of this type of drafting legislation on participants and on their strategies? Does it bias the result?

Page employs different methods in order to shed some light on this matter. He starts out by looking at the long list of statutory instruments that have been drafted over a

period of two years. A first glance suggests that the topics of most of these thousands of statutory instruments are tedious and everyday: they should correct previous errors, merely implement European Union regulations, or formally announce the outcome of processes conducted outside the process of drafting. In order to achieve a deeper insight into the matter other approaches are called for.

Next, Page selects 46 statutory instruments and interviews those involved: civil servants (administrators and lawyers) and members of interest groups who were consulted during the drafting process. The aim of these interviews is to determine who took the initiative, the nature of ministerial involvement, the role of civil servants, and the characteristics of the consultation process. Furthermore, a survey with data from hundreds of interest groups was compiled. Finally, Page looked into the role of parliament in the process of drafting statutory instruments.

Page concludes that civil servants at the lower level of governmental bureaucracy dominate the process of drafting statutory instruments. Junior Ministers, whose signature enacts them, are less involved. Yet, bureaucrats have to reckon with their blocking power. The Executive dominates the initiation of statutory instruments; the same is true for the process of consultation. Contacts with interest groups originate in the civil service, which, through the consultation process, seeks to obtain information and reassurance, promote fine-tuning, and obtain guidance. In short, it tries to avoid blundering. Thus, civil servants do not always dominate the substance of policies, not least because interest groups often have more issue-specific knowledge than civil servants. This is explained by the higher level of mobility amongst lower level bureaucrats compared to the functionaries of the interest groups they consult. The latter, incidentally, are mainly senior officials.

Page's study provides many remarkable insights into the world of everyday politics. Civil servants who are working on issues they hardly understand; issues that are of interest to only a few and of which even fewer have any expertise whatsoever; the implementation of European Union regulations that is sometimes delayed or only partly effectuated; how an apparently trivial statutory instrument can in fact be the manifestation of a major change (such as the statutory instrument that abolished the height requirement for members of a fire brigade, which enabled women to join the force).

However, the importance of Page's study lies in the manner in which he describes and highlights the relationship between the everyday politics of the drafting of statutory instruments and high politics. Page demonstrates that it is mistaken to believe that the influence of parliament on the process of delegated legislation is limited. Although parliamentary scrutiny of policy issues involved in statutory instruments is weak, interest groups can (re-) introduce an issue into the party political arena. Interest groups may use it as a crucial strategy. Consequently, an everyday political item can suddenly develop into an important political issue. Most lawyers, therefore, try to draft regulations as if parliament is looking over their shoulders.

The approach Page has chosen in this study resembles that of an archaeologist. He also starts from residues: starting off from a *prima facie* description of the artefacts he

tries to get a better understanding of the process and context in which they came into existence by combining different methods. In his conclusions – and maybe here we find a further similarity with archaeologists – Page presses his point more strongly than is warranted by his material.

More generally, more insight into several interesting issues, which Page discusses only cursorily, would have been preferable. In particular, the practice of effectively blocking the (correct) implementation of EU regulations; the functioning of lower level officials (who have not been studied as frequently as streetlevel bureaucrats, managers, or boys and girls at the top); the exchange of employees, and the relation of trust and dependency that exists between governmental bureaucracies and interest groups.

In sum, *Governing by Numbers* demonstrates that policy-making in a multi-actor setting and in the obscure does not in itself prove that democratic institutions have lost their importance. Their impact may have become more indirect, but it exists nevertheless. Bypassing the dominant perspectives and choosing an original point of view, as Page does here, pays off.

Berry Tholen

Jan Zielonka (ed.), *Democratic Consolidation in Eastern Europe. Volume I: Institutional Engineering*. Oxford University Press, Oxford 2001, ISBN 0-19-924167-8, £ 45.00

Jan Zielonka and Alex Pravda (eds.), *Democratic Consolidation in Eastern Europe. Volume II: International and Transnational Factors*. Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2001, ISBN 0-19-924168-6, £ 45.00

The explanation and understanding of the post-1989 change towards democracy in Eastern Europe is the main preoccupation of the two volumes on *Democratic Consolidation in Eastern Europe*. This timely contextualization of the 1990s within the twin developments of globalization and the fall of communism has resulted in a grand, lucid and extremely perceptive collection of essays detailing the East European experience. The two volumes provide a unique examination of the particular experience of the 'transition to democracy'. The post-cold war period saw a number of established social, political and economic structures not just being challenged but being completely dismantled. As communist regimes were being swept from power, the institutions of government fell with them, resulting in a fragmentation and breakdown of domestic, intra- and inter-regional order. These developments introduced contending projects for the redistribution of power, resources and authority, more often than not compounded by a whole host of other challenges to traditional values. Thus, the culture of totalitarian hegemony (east of the Iron Curtain) was confronted with the *expectations* from a culture of democratic norms projected by the West. However, was this a process of targeted conditioning of East