

ICRPS: Government and Governance

Part 1: levels of government

A.1 List the **levels of government** in your country

Whatever definition is used in your country

Country versus nation.

Note: Tend to look at elected and appointed and list branches of government

Activity notes: Allow work together, if from same country, but no more than 2 people in a group.

A.2 Explanation by a few chosen (always the host country last) and a discussion of differences.

- Differences among countries
- Differences within countries.

B. How to define government?

1. Legal status conferred from a higher level of government.

2. Some level of autonomy—upper can't just cancel actions of lower without some reason and process as defined by constitution or law.

- Upper level of government may have power to ex-ante limit some actions
- If upper can just cancel an action of lower it is just an administrative level of the central government. An administrative agency just does the bidding of others.

.3 Autonomy in what?

- Making laws
- Taxing
- Allocate budget, not just implement the budget they were sent
- How many of these are needed? Accept just one as sufficient.

Activity notes: We often talk about government as being a social contract, but can be a government without a social contract if uses violence.

International relations defines a country or a nation, but not a government as governments can be subnational

4. Go through and cross out the administrative levels and have discussion.

Unitary government versus one with levels: many words for it.

- US we call it federalism,
- in UK might call it devolution—such as the powers to Scotland
- EU subsidiarity In areas where the EU does not have exclusive competence, the principle of subsidiarity, laid down in the Treaty on the European Union, defines the circumstances in which it is preferable for action to be taken by the Union rather than the member states.

General idea of subsidiarity is an organizing **principle** that matters ought to be handled by the smallest, lowest or least centralized competent authority. Political decisions should be taken at a local level if possible, rather than by a central authority.

- In Thailand and Costa Rica call it decentralization.
- Meanings of devolution and decentralization vary by country.

C. Which level(s) is (are) responsible for rural policy?

- Sharing of responsibility
- Division of responsibilities One level may set policy and another may implement
- Implications if the responsibility changes to another level?

D. Summary of Session:

- Differences among countries, within countries.
- Meaning of words, such as government, country, nation. Federal, subsidiarity. Devolution, decentralization.
- Think about during the week and be aware of the assumptions you are making about who is responsible for rural policy, often based on what happens in your own country.
- There is variation within a country
- Some found out you were unsure of your own country

Part 2: Why have different levels of government? (We did not get to this)

1. Actions that are local and affect mainly the local population

Efficiency would suggest that those who receive the benefit pay the costs.

2. Differences across a country of resources, what people need or want. So getting it down as close to the people as possible to meet their needs rather than someone centrally trying to determine what is wanted and needed in each region.

3. Scale issues: provide at the level with the cheapest per/unit costs.

4. Equity: because of part of #2 above may need re-allocation.

- EU looks on this as a policy of equivalence
- In the US we more rely on people to move
- Tiebout hypothesis in political science that people vote with their feet. If a small government taxes to reallocate, the better off will move to a nearby jurisdiction so needs to be at a higher level so that people cannot move easily out of that jurisdiction.

5. Overlapping jurisdictions and jurisdictional spillovers.

- #1 above is not easy to implement as each item is likely to have a specific spread.
- History and boundaries outdated
- Jurisdictions need to cooperate. New governance is often an attempt to get at some of this need for cooperation. Quebec municipalities voluntarily started forming districts and are now part of the “system.”
- In US form special purpose districts and commissions.
- EU looks at regionalism.