

Book Review

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The Organization of European Security Governance: Internal and External Security in Transition

by Ursula Schroeder

Routledge, ISBN: 9780415601597 (hb)

This book analyses the impact of the increasingly complex security political environment on the EU's approach to security provision and its underlying organisational structures. The study shows that, while new modes aiming at a more comprehensive approach to security have been established, in practice the ultimate goal has proved elusive, despite organisational restructuring. The careful analysis of the EU's security governance framework in this volume provides insights in a solid and accessible way. Therein this book is a valuable source for researchers or students who seek to gain insights into the underlying organisational logics of EU security governance which, as the study shows, definitely determine its course.

To constitute a strong empirical base for her research, the author conducted an intensive qualitative study based on over 30 semi-structured interviews with policy experts, complemented by an in-depth document analysis. Schroeder treats the field of security holistically, considering both its internal and external dimensions, tracing the major institutional changes between 1999 and 2010. The two fields of counter terrorism and crisis management serve as case studies to illustrate the dominant features of the EU's security framework. This empirical study is complemented by a historical analysis of the former second and third pillar policies, their legal dimension and the actors involved. From a conceptual point of view, the analysis follows a governance approach and builds in particular on historical institutionalist perspectives.

With the collapse of the Soviet Union and the rise of new forms of security threats, the internal and external dimensions of security became increasingly difficult to separate. This led EU policy makers to demand a comprehensive approach to the provision of security. In this context, Schroeder questions the extent to which these complex security challenges and the rhetorical claim for comprehensive approaches to security have translated into a change in governance structures at EU level. The volume begins by identifying a need to analyse the evolution and transformation of organisational structures in the security environment. Subsequently, the increasingly overlapping nature of internal and external security challenges and the growing interdependence of threats is described. It then goes on to determine two major developments in EU security politics, namely the vertical Europeanisation of national security policies and horizontal convergence of internal and external security challenges bringing formerly separated actors closer together. In the following chapters, the book discusses the EU's security governance framework, identifying the strategies developed and the actors involved from a historical perspective. Schroeder concludes that administrative and operational capacities have been developed and competences acquired, however intergovernmentalism and inter-institutional conflicts remain crucial obstacles for a comprehensive security framework.

The cases show that, although the internal and external security strategies have generally been merged, the new bodies are predominantly merely symbolic and have not

substantially altered organisational behaviour. Hence, there remains a persistent gap between the EU's political rhetoric and the organisational and administrative dimensions of EU security policies. Moreover, boundaries between internal and external security actors largely remain in place, and organisational changes are initiated and pursued along pre-existing organisational or professional divides. In this context, actors continue to prefer more informal forms of coordination and cooperation. Summing up the findings of her research, the author concludes that the preferred informal mode of policy making and coordination in the sector of security provision raises substantial questions about accountability, transparency and hence the legitimacy of the actors involved and their activities in this field. She discusses the normative implications thereof and calls for more public visibility and political debates concerning this critical condition.

The volume is designed in a concise manner and provides many novel insights into the field. One of its evident strengths is its organisation and structure which ease processing of the information and the argumentation. The overall argument of the book is solidly developed throughout its seven well and logically arranged chapters which are equally balanced in length and composition. Another explicit strength of the work is that, despite the complex material treated therein, Schroeder has managed to produce a reader-friendly yet detailed illustration of the EU's security governance structures and the actors and bodies involved, as well as their historical and legal background. Further, the work succeeds in presenting the theoretical underpinnings and conceptual framework in a concise and clear manner.

The book represents a decidedly valuable and compelling source for students and scholars engaging in research related to the former second and third pillar policies of the EU. It is highly recommendable both to experts and novices in the field of EU security governance, as Schroeder not only succeeds in providing her readers with a thorough analysis of the field and its actors, but beyond that supplies original insights into the organisational structures which are essential to understand policy making and coordination in this policy area. Chapters 1 to 4 serve as an excellent introduction into the subject matter and are thus of particular use for those who are searching for a comprehensive yet concise and well-written basic text. Researchers well versed in the topic of EU security governance might also find these chapters helpful in refreshing and/or updating their knowledge on the changes introduced with the Lisbon Treaty. Beyond that, experts will find particular pleasure in the in-depth case studies presented in Chapter 5 and 6. They stand out as valuable and innovative analyses of the different actors and bodies involved and thus provide an excellent and detailed insight into the organisational structures that make up the EU's security architecture. One criticism of the presentation of the case studies is that the listing and naming of the various bodies, institutions and actors can at times be confusing if one is not too familiar with the existing structures. Thus, on behalf of the less-well versed, it would have been useful to introduce each case study with tables or graphs to provide an overview of the respective actors and bodies and how they interrelate. This would decisively enhance the tangibility of the analysis and would make the work more accessible to a broader audience.

The normative implications drawn from this analysis of governance structures which are dominated by informality are of essential value for students and researchers alike. The salience of the topic and the questions regarding accountability and transparency as well as its consequences for democratic legitimacy prompt a range of important questions to be discussed on any number of levels. Hence, this book will be eminently useful to both specialists and newcomers to the field of EU security governance.

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