THE CHALLENGES OF WORKING ACROSS INTER-REGIONAL BOUNDARIES AND POLICY SILOS: CURRENT EVIDENCE AND FUTURE RESEARCH

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ABSTRACT

While there is a long-standing strand of research on both international cross-boundary collaboration on the one hand, and inter-state coordination in federal systems on the other (e.g., Auel, 2014; Bolleyer, 2009; Sbragia, 2006; Swenden, 2006), there has been relatively little attention paid to similar activity in nations characterised by asymmetrical devolution. Similarly, there is a strong body of literature on coordination and integration of related policy domains (e.g., Gore, 2014; Macleod, 2005; Peters, 2018; Sullivan and Skelcher, 2002), but these tend to be 'state of the art' reviews or relate to self-contained contexts, rather than inter-regional territories. Yet these two types of 'boundary spanning' are not unconnected, especially given the increasingly fluid nexus of economic, social and environmental concerns. The aim of this scene-setting review paper is to examine relevant literature and associated evidence on both topics in order to identify insights about processes, procedures and relationships associated with all types of cross-boundary collaboration, both territorial and policy-related. The purpose is to extract key practical facets and influencing factors that can be brought together in a guiding research framework for application in contexts where collaborating policy-makers and practitioners on either side of a territorial and/or disciplinary border are grappling with how differentiated systems and approaches might be reconciled.