Discovering American Regions

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Discovering American Regionalism

- Available July 25

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- Project of the Center for Metropolitan Studies at the University of Pittsburgh
Regional Intergovernmental Organizations (RIGOs)

• Five traits of RIGOs:
  – Majority local-government membership
  – Broad policy agenda
  – Ambition to speak for the region
  – Federal or state legitimacy
  – Largest geographic footprint

• Creates a population of cross-boundary intergovernmental organizations with holistic regional purposes
Who are RIGOs? Who are not?

• RIGOs (more than 450 in total):
  – Strong overlap with NADO, NARC, and SERDI membership

• Not RIGOs:
  – Portland Metro / Twin Cities’ Met Council
  – Indianapolis / Buffalo MPO
  – Orange County Council of Governments (CA)

Full database available at: http://metrostudies.gspia.pitt.edu/RIGOData
In the RIGO Databases...

• FIPS and RIGO Codes for Relevant Geographies:
  – Counties (and County Equivalents) in 46 States
  – Municipalities/Independent Cities in a Few States
  – Tied to a 4 Digit Code (MI03)

• Organizational Information about RIGOs:
  – Staff Size
  – EDD / MPO Status
  – Other Activities in Which the RIGO Engages

• Allows for Aggregation to RIGO Boundaries for Any Census Information (Starter STATA Code Included)
RIGOs are Everywhere...

• More than 83% of Americans live somewhere where their local government belongs to a RIGO

• 47 States have at least one RIGO
Structure of the Book

• Introduction and the Origins of Regional Cross-Boundary Organizations
• State Approaches to Cross-Boundary Organizations
• Defining Regions and RIGOs
• RIGOs, MPOs, MSAs, and Smaller Cross-Boundary Organizations
• The Landscape and Roles of Local Governments on RIGO Boards
• The Role of the Civic, Private, and Other Public Sector Actors on RIGO Boards
• Conclusion: What a Framework for RIGOs Allows Us to Do
Reach Out with Questions and Ideas...

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How Do Local Governments Create Collective Choice Arrangements?

• Previous Literature Suggests One-Member, One-Vote Structures Dominate
  – Based on surveys of executive directors
  – This structure would disadvantage many large cities

• Instead, I code original governance documents by local government members:
  – More directly measures the governance
  – Allows for measurement of population (dis-)proportionality
Research Methods

• Random Sample of 150 RIGOs
  – Bylaws or Other Governance Documents Collected
  – 27 of these RIGOs Have at Least One City with a Population of 200,000+ (37 cities in total)

• Coded Chamber or Voting Rules with the Most Demographic, Geographic, or Political Criteria

• Coded by Local Government Member, Aggregated Using Cluster Sampling Methods
Calculating Values

• Institutional Membership Score (IMS – y axis):

\[
\frac{\text{Fewest Votes for Any One Member} \times \text{Number of Total Members}}{\text{Total Votes in RIGO}}
\]

• Population Proportionality Score (PPS – x axis):

\[
D = \frac{1}{2} | s_i \quad p_i |
\]

Based on Lewis & Sprague’s 1997 Deviation Index (D), Reflected and Slightly Modified

• IMS and PPS Generate Values Between 0 and 1
Scatter-plot of IMS and PPS (n=149)
Current and Future Research...

• Profiles of Southcentral Michigan Planning Council (Kalamazoo) and the Sacramento Area Council of Governments

• Survey of elected officials on RIGO boards to determine priorities and sources of input in decision-making (with Tom Skuzinski at Virginia Tech)