

THE ORGANIZATIONAL FRAMEWORK OF THE G7/G8

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Preliminary research project

Summary: 1. Introduction. The G8. – 2. The empirical puzzle. – 3. Methodology. – Bibliography.

1. Introduction – The G8

1.1. The G8 is the meeting of the heads of the 8 most industrialized countries (France, Usa, Uk, Germany, Japan, Italy, Canada, Russia) .

Representatives of different countries have been always meeting in the history of world diplomacy.

Nevertheless, since 1975, the heads of state or government of the richest democracies have been meeting annually (mainly in summer) and regularly, to talk about several questions of common relevance. Their partnership derives from the sharing of common values (the democratic ones) and economic situations and features.

1.2. The reason to meet and have a discussion together is mainly practical and consists in the advantage that leaders find in knowing the other players' movement and in coordinating their action and choices with it (in other words, this is primarily a way to solve the prisoners' dilemma).

The main issues of discussion usually deal with those economic and political problems that affect most the domestic debate such as the international one, both from a macroeconomic perspective than from a microeconomic one. Among them, there are issues such as the international trade, the relations with developing countries, East-West economic relations, energy, and terrorism that are of common concern not only for those who take part to the summit.

2. The empirical puzzle

2.1. There is a clear tendency to open the boundaries of the State, not only by signing treaties with other countries but as well as by cooperating through informal cooperative solutions¹. The G8 meetings held a central position in the global governance system how it is developing today worldwide.

2.2. Then the main question about the G8 is: is there a fixed organizational framework of the G8 and how does it involve national administrations? Which kind of role do they play in the global system?

The answers to these questions are important since they can give the idea of how much the old concept of "*the State as a unit*" is actually not valid anymore and whether – and eventually where - a new one must be searched².

2.3. The research is relevant, even though there is a consistent economics and public relations' literature about the G8, nevertheless, there is not an analytical study of the organizational framework from a juridical (mainly administrative law) perspective. The organizational framework has never been studied from this perspective, nor by the economists, since they usually stress the accent on the economic results of the meeting, neither by those who study international relations, since they usually take care on the

¹ Ferrarese M.R., *Le istituzioni della globalizzazione*, Bologna, il Mulino, 2000; Guy Peters B., *Globalization, Institutions and Governance*, Jean Monnet Chair Paper n. 51, Firenze, 1998.

² Cassese S., *Relations between international organizations and national administration*, in XIXth international Congress of Administrative Science. Actes-proceedings, Bruxelles, IISA, 1985, p. 159; Strange S., *The retreat of the State: the diffusion of power in the world economy*, Cambridge, Cambridge University press, 1996; Strange S., *Chi governa l'economia mondiale?*, Bologna, il Mulino, 1998.

diplomatic and political asset of the G8, neither by jurists, since they usually do not consider it as something that can have a juridical relevance (if there are some, its rules are not formal). Even if some jurists have been interested in the G8 they have been international law scholars and not administrative law ones.

3. Methodology

3. 1. The research will consist of three parts: after an introduction on the general problems of globalizations and the institutions involved in the process, the first part will develop an historical background of the evolution of the meetings of the G7/G8 (from G5 to G8).

The central body of the research will deal with the organization of the G8. This part of the work will analyze the nature of the participants, the rules of the meetings (places, time, issues, discussions), such as the organizations that is beyond it (especially from the point of view of the administrations actually involved in it).

The third part will consider the operational framework of the G8, meaning the procedures and the effects of the final declarations (in terms of compliance and results).

The conclusions will regard the role of the G8 in the world order and the nature of it - both from an organizational perspective than from an operational one - as part of the new global governance system, in order to achieve the result to draw the concept of State, sovereignty, global actors.

3.2. The first summit meeting (G6) was held in Rambouillet, in 1975 and it was highly informal. Year by year, the meeting has got more and more formal.

The starting idea was to create a chance for the leaders in order to develop their personal relations and to share ideas about complex issues affecting mainly the world economy.

The first question is: is it still like this?

Under this perspective two main changes have occurred: the first one in the number of states participating to the meetings; the second one in the kind of actors involved.

3.2.1. The original club meeting in Rambouillet was composed by six leaders from France, Usa, Uk, Germany, Japan and Italy. One year later, meeting in Puertorico, Canada was allowed to join the group. The European Community, represented both by the President of the Commission and by the President of the European Council joined the following year, in London. Russia was admitted only later, as a full member in Denver in 1997 (in Naples 1994, Russia was only allowed to take part to the political discussion of the meeting).

In order to answer to the last question, it will be appropriate to proceed to an historical analysis of the meetings of the G7/G8. Therefore, the research will develop according to an evolutionary perspective.

I will analyse the different periods of the history of G8. I'll examine all the meetings from 1975 to 2002, dividing them into periods of seven years – id est - summit cycles of presidency.

This kind of approach – more then others - will be useful to put in evidence – without a predetermined criterion, the progresses in the organizational framework.

In this way, I'll have to examine four periods (cycles) of summits:

- The first cycle: from the first meeting of the G6 in Rambouillet 1975 to the G7 (Puerto Rico 1976, London 1977, Bonn 1978, Tokyo 1979, Venice 1980, Ottawa 1981).
- The second cycle (Paris 1982, Williamsburg 1983, London 1984, Bonn 1985, Tokyo 1986, Venice 1987, Toronto 1988).
- The third cycle: from the G7 to the P8 (Paris 1989, Houston 1990, London 1991, Monaco 1992, Tokyo 1993, Naples 1994, Halifax 1995).
- The fourth cycle: from the G7/P8 to the G8 (Lyon 1996, Denver 1997, Birmingham 1998, Colonia 1999, Okinawa 2000, Genova 2001, Kananaskis 2002).

By this historical analysis, I'll try to underline the main changes in the organizational such as in the operational and functional framework of the meetings of the G8.

3.2.2. Apart from the States involved, the idea itself of a group of heads of the state and government meeting by the fireside to have a friendly chat (that was the 'Rambouillet's spirit'), has been developing into a more complex system, involving many different actors such as:

- Heads of state and government;
- Personal representatives (sherpa);
- Ministers of finance and foreign affairs;
- Personal representatives (sous-sherpa);
- Other ministers, according to a functional perspective (education, job, health, environment, trade etc.);
- Experts, officials, bureaucrats, civil servants etc.

3.3. At this point of the research, I'll point out what are the characters of the G8, both from the organizational point of view and from the operational one. This will require an

analysis of the annual meeting at the heads' level, such as of the G8 process and the G8 system themselves, both in the rules of their composition and functioning.

What is the G7/G8 now? Two paths of analysis must be followed.

3.3.1. The first one is the study of the organizational framework itself. From this perspective, the impression is that the starting idea of a fireside-chat among friends has broadened by time into something more complex, even if definitely not assessed yet.

Apparently, the G7/G8 has no secretariat, no treaty and no international bureaucratic body. In other words, it does not have the typical clues that usually define an international organization. Nevertheless, at a deeper insight, things are likely to appear differently: there is no secretariat, but its functions are regularly developed by the host country; there is no treaty, but there are certainly some binding rules (even if not written) to organize the meeting, regarding where to meet, who is speaking first, how to vote, what to vote, when meeting; there is no bureaucratic body but what is needed for the meeting to be held is usually provided by the civil servants of the host country, which – at the same time - holds the presidency. Actually, the group of the heads coordinate and addresses to the broader activity that takes its origin from the annual meeting but goes on all the time.

Even if the juridical methodology is partially different, the most fitting methodology for this kind of research is the modeling one.

Therefore, I will examine the theory of organization in administrative law, trying to set out principles and criteria in order to transfer the results to the G8 and deduce something from this.

I will also investigate the establishment of other institutions that are somehow similar to the G8: the case of Wto, for example, whose birth settles beyond a series of meeting

within the Gatt, could be useful to understand the evolutionary perspective of G8; an other interesting case as well is the one of the council of Europe.

In order to know if there is an organization and what is its juridical relevance, it will be necessary to answer to several questions, such as if there are civil servants working all the year for it, how the decision making process develops. From this perspective I have already come to some meaningful results. First, the annual meeting of the G8 heads of state and government is only the apex of a continuous stream of activity, called “the G8 process” – that goes on all the year and involves mainly the host country, which – as president of the summit – has to coordinate the action of all the participants to the G8. Second, the group of the heads of state and government is actually surrounded by other groups established at different levels (ministerial, experts, bureaucrats, civil servants) from a functional perspective, which meet regularly during the year time from one summit to the other. There are strong links between the different groups and the meeting of the heads. The last one often asks the first ones to report, delegate them tasks, address them questions . This is what is usually defined by scholars the G8 system.

3.3.2. The other field of investigations concerns more the operational framework of the G8.

The meetings of the G7/G8 produce a big quantity of documents, such as:

- final declarations,
- political declarations,
- chairman statements,
- declarations on specific subjects and so on.

The final declarations of the summit, for example, are getting each year more complex, sometimes they contain specific commitments in aims, goals, time, purposes and controls, some others they are likely to seem inconsistent at all.

A first interesting point is then to evaluate the nature of these documents, analyzing them structurally as from their contents' perspective, in order to say what kind of commitments one can find there. An other interesting point is concerning the consequences they produce. Do they have a follow up? How are they perceived or are they simply considered binding?

Even if it is extremely difficult to quote how binding the final declarations are, it is anyway easier to evaluate the results of compliance of G7/G8 commitments in some fields.

A final point of interest regards the kind of actors the final declaration involve in a broad sense. Do they affect only those who participate to the meetings? If not, it could be relevant to explain how they can affect actors that are other than the ones involved in the G8 meeting that agreed on that and how they can involve them. The main of the G8 in the next years, then, could be legitimacy and consensus of those who nor can pay an active role, neither can take part at all. Secondly, it will be important to evaluate the relevance of the final declaration, who implements it (if an implementation is needed). The next step could be to investigate if there are rules, written or not, and if they are formal and legal.

To follow this part of the analysis I'll take advantage from different compliance studies lead by other scholars.

3.4. Some case study and some theory of game applications could help to draft the context.

Moreover I'll study some cases in which I have found that the G8 mechanisms have worked properly:

- the G8 and the role of preventing conflicts
- the G8 and its contribution to the HIPC initiative
- the G8 and the resolution of conflicts: the case of the Kosovo war

From the study of this case, I'll get some interesting data:

- how is the G8 concretely working, how are taken the decisions and what kind of relationships are settle down among the groups part of the G8 system;
- how is concretely the G8 relating to other existing international organizations and which role is playing in those contexts.

Finally, the applications of game theory to the meetings of G8 could help in order to understand how the decision making process develops and why.

3.5. Apart from the tradition legal academic way of research, I will get information from the economic and international relations' sources first³ and, moreover, I will collect statistical data as well, such as from analysis of compliance led by other scholars who have studied mainly that field. Nevertheless, the main information will be taken from a number of interviews I will take, mainly with people who worked for the G8.

³ Bayne, Nicholas. *Hanging in There: The G7 and G8 Summit in Maturity and Renewal*. The G8 and Global Governance Series. Aldershot, UK, Ashgate Publishing, 2000; Hajnal, Peter, *The G7/G8 System: Evolution, Role and Documentation*. The G8 and Global Governance Series. Aldershot, UK, Ashgate Publishing, 1999; Hodges, Michael R., Kirton John J., Daniles, Joseph P., *The G8's role in the new millennium*, The G8 and Global Governance Series. Aldershot, UK, Ashgate Publishing, 1999; Putnam, Robert D., and Nicholas Bayne. *Hanging Together: Cooperation and Conflict in the Seven-Power Summits*. Rev. ed. Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1987.

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