Who's responsible for non-compliance? Multi-level politics and power dispersion in air quality policy.

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Introduction

In October 2019 the European Court of Justice (ECJ) issued a ruling to France for consistently exceeding the annual limit values of the pollutant nitrogen dioxide set by the Directive 2008/50/EC. The Court points out to Paris and eleven other regions where the standards were not met. This ruling is the last of various procedures and warnings undertaken by the European Commission since 2010, denouncing the French State for not doing enough to meet the emission standards. As a response to the Commission's early warnings, the State accelerated the publication of the Plan for the Protection of the Atmosphere for Île de France (PPA), recognized by the Court of Auditors of France as an insufficient tool set by the State to improve air quality (Cour des Comptes, 2015). Later, after a second warning, a second plan was developed, the Air Quality Emergency Plan. According to the audit institution, the lack of a monitoring system and incentives for their implementation, renders the plans ineffective to meet the European standards.

After the critiques from the Court of Auditors of France to the PPA, it would seem that local levels won't engage in any actions to improve air quality unless the State develops some kind of coercive measures. However, since the mid 90's, the city of Paris has engaged in several policies to improve air quality, such as the decision to build the tramway (jointly implemented with the Region and the State but with the city in a leading role), the restriction of parking spots, promoting cycling, and the transformation of the road use (Halpern & Le Galès, 2019; Zittoun, 2008). In some areas the atmospheric pollution has indeed showed a decrease (Font, Guiseppin, Blangiardo, Ghersi, & Fuller, 2019).

A closer look to the interactions between the actors of the Paris metropolitan area shows that the sole focus on the institutional design of a top-down instrument falls short to explain in a

comprehensive manner the air quality policy failures leading to national non-compliance of European directives. In fact, the literature exploring compliance with European regulations has moved from a focus on their legal or formal adoption by the national governments, to explore the countries' performance as a result of multi-level dynamics (Bondarouk, Liefferink, & Mastenbroek, 2020; Thomann, 2015; Thomann & Sager, 2017b; Versluis, 2007). Therefore, a more complete account would then take into consideration interactions between the multiple government levels that leading to sub-optimal outcomes in pollution control.

Drawing on an analysis of policy choices and institutional change, this paper explores how multi-level interactions affect pollution control in the Parisian Region. The main argument is that compliance with EU directives at the national level is affected by policy choices from each government level and the general distribution of power between them; that is, an interplay between preferences and institutions. Preferences of each government level are shaped by either their political orientation or priorities related to their scale, defining their policy choices. Conversely, the way competences are distributed opens opportunities for actors to exert such preferences. As the case shows, the divergence on policy choices and the way government levels exert their competences leads to sub-optimal outcomes in controlling pollution.

Compliance, preferences, and institutions

In the past few years, the literature on implementation in the European Union has moved from a mere emphasis on how directives are transposed to national laws to a more performance-oriented perspective in multi-level settings (Bondarouk & Mastenbroek, 2018; Heidbreder, 2017; Thomann & Sager, 2017a). This shift represents moving away from a strict focus on legal compliance, to the effects of multi-level structures on the adaptation and adoption responses to EU directives from the member states and subnational governments (Thomann, 2015; Thomann & Sager, 2017a). Implementation performance in these terms can be addressed by either a managerial or a political perspective, that is, whether compliance is explained by capacity development or politics (Bondarouk et al., 2020; Tallberg, 2002). As Bondarouk et al. (2020) conclude in their analysis of EU air quality directives of Dutch municipalities, the latter seems to provide a compelling explanation of the local dynamics leading to the adoption of EU regulations.

One of the political factors defining the adoption of EU directives are the policy preferences of local actors (Bondarouk et al., 2020). When looking at the interactions between different government scales, the preferences could be determined by their political orientation, their position in the institutional setting, or a combination of both. Regarding the former, party politics has shown to orient policy choice due to the type of voter's support (Jordan & Lenschow, 2010; Trein & Ansell, 2021). The actor's position, on the other hand, would be analogous to the maxim "where you stand is where you sit", used by Alison (1969) or Miles (1978) to stress how policy positions are in some part determined by the organizational role. In this case, the actors' positions in the wider institutional context would also explain their policy preferences. For example, a municipality could be more focused on choosing policies that improve its internal conditions whereas a regional or metropolitan perspective could be more concerned on how those policies could result on positive or negative externalities in a wider scale.

Preferences, however, only reveal orientations towards a particular choice. The extent to which actors can influence policy responds to institutional arrangements that define their opportunities for action. Institutions are in this sense "distributional instruments laden with power implications" (Mahoney & Thelen, 2010, p. 7). This means that when allocating competences, institutions distribute power. Their distributional consequences are then result of resource considerations regarding unequal implications of its allocation. It's about which resources are distributed to whom and in what conditions. Additionally, institutions have a dynamic character, they change, and when they do, they reallocate attributions, altering the power distribution (Mahoney & Thelen, 2010; Thelen, 2004). In that sense, a perspective focused on multi-level interactions explains how the compliance with EU directives at the national level is affected by policy choices from each government level and the general distribution of power between them; that is, an interplay between subnational preferences and institutions.

Case analysis

To depict this interplay the case analysis draws on the multi-level interactions between the actors inside the Parisian region that hold competences on transport and driving restrictions. That includes the State, the City of Paris, the Regional Council from Île de France, the Metropolitan Authority, and metropolitan municipalities (communes). A first section presents

both, the attributions from each government level and their policy preferences, highlighting their attitudes towards driving restrictions. If present, changes of the preferences are highlighted. The second section comprises three mini cases to show how the interplay between competences and preferences affects the interactions. Data collection comes from documental review of council meetings, plans, technical studies and interviews to government officials at all the government levels.

Competences and policy preferences

Decentralization of competences in France has led to a low-depth power dispersion of air quality policy. This means that power is not concentrated in a single level as several actors hold competences in the domain (Jensen, Koop, & Tatham, 2014, p. 1239). In this case such attributions refer to transport and driving restrictions. On the other hand, attitudes towards driving restrictions vary widely between the actors in the Parisian region. This has mostly to do with two factors. First, political orientation influences preferences regarding environmental policies. Left-wing and ecologist parties are more supportive for environmental measures than right-wing parties (Jordan & Lenschow, 2010). The second element is related to scale differences. The different views of the actors depend on their priorities, either due to internal characteristics, such as the case of the communes and the city of Paris, or to their concerns with territorial equality and integration, as in the case of the Region and the Metropolitan Authority. Table 1 presents a summary of the competences and preferences in that regard.

Table 1. Competences and preferences of the government levels

Government Level	Competences	Preferences
State	Driving restrictions during pollution peaks.	Mixed, mostly tries to avoid setting restrictions.
Region	Competences on public transport (in charge of the Île de France Transport Authority) and promote regional equilibrium.	Before 2015: Prone to driving restrictions and use of public transport (socialits/green coalition). After 2015: Against driving restrictions, promotion of car-use (right wing coalition).
Metropolitan Authority	No competences, but in charge of negotiating the implementation of restrictions in its territory.	Towards driving restrictions but with a focus on metropolitan equilibrium.

City of Paris	Driving Restrictions (Low Emission Zones). Pedestrianization of roads	Towards driving restrictions
Communes	Driving restrictions (Low emission zones).	Mixed, depending on their development levels and political priorities.

Source: Own elaboration

The State

It holds mainly competences related to set restrictions during pollution peaks, granted by an inter-ministerial decree. Since 1998 the decree sets the framework to elaborate pollution outbreaks protocols by determining the thresholds that trigger one of two phases (information/recommendation and emergency) and once they activate, the decree grants the Police Prefect the authority to define and implement the specific measures he considers necessary. The reason to allocate these competences in the Police Prefect is the "crisis status" of pollution peaks (Art. 3 inter-ministerial decree). The decision, falls exclusively under the Police Prefect competences, leaving at the State level the power to decide if and which measures to implement.

The preferences to set driving restrictions are mixed. Economic and even political considerations lay behind the decisions over such measures. According to an officer from the Prefecture it is about finding a balance between human health and the city's economic activity (Interviewed by the author). Additionally, the Police Prefect's strategic position also helps to preserve the State's interests, depending on whether it could have a political effect in the government in turn (Cour des Comptes, 2015).

The Region

In 2000 (loi SRU 13 du décembre 2000) the Region got some presence in the executive council of the State-controlled Regional Transport Authority (Syndicat des Transports d'Île de France-STIF, renamed in 2017 as Île de France Mobilités). By 2004 the State retreats completely from the organization's council and transfers its total control to the Region (loi du 13 juillet 2004). Whereas the City of Paris and the other Île de France departments are council members, the law attributes most seats to the Regional Council. This means that the Region's president

becomes also the Authority's president, giving it complete control of the transport network in Île de France.[1] This includes transport fees and road and transport infrastructure.

The MAPTAM act named the region *chef de file* (leader) of air quality policy. The law grants the region the responsibility "for organizing, in a leading position [*chef de file*], the arrangements for joint action by local authorities for the exercise of their competences on… climate change, air quality and energy" (Art. 3 MAPTAM). Without any further precisions on the term *chef de file* MAPTAM leaves room for interpretation, thus the region supports its actions under this faculty.

Political changes have altered the preferences at the regional level. Between 1998 and 2014 the socialist-green coalition ruled in Île de France. Their political orientation led them to support transport-related measures, shown in the Regional Urban Mobility Plan that sought to limit car-use and rather widen sidewalks, to promote the use of collective transport and eventually the build-up and enlargement of bicycle paths (Deroubaix & Leheis, 2011). The arrival of the right-wing Republican party (*Les Républicains*) to the Region's executive set a completely different course. The region's abrupt turn is evident in its 2016 Plan for Air Quality. Its main features are the reduction of traffic jams, developing polluting vehicles, a regional biking plan, aids to vehicle replacement and public transport, the implementation of experimental measures to confine bus lanes, replace diesel vehicles for hybrids and provide transitional parking facilities to ease public transport access (Art 6 deliberation of the Regional Council). In the view of a regional high-level officer on environmental affairs, with all these actions, the general idea is not to stop the car-use. Rather, it is about making travel more efficient (Interviewed by the author). In this sense, an action that emanates from the regional air quality plan, is the regional *Plan Anti-bouchon* (anti traffic-jam plan) that envisages to fight pollution by tracing and dissolving traffic jams through investments on road infrastructure.[2] (Plan Anti-bouchon 2018).

The City of Paris and metropolitan municipalities (communes)

The Energetic Transition for Green Growth Act of 2015 set the low emission zones, granting mayors with the attribution to define the type of restricted vehicles to improve air quality.

[1] Besides some the railroads controlled by SNCF.

[2] "Une action anti-bouchons, qui vise à traiter les principaux points noirs de dysfonctionnement du réseau, générateurs de congestions récurrentes et donc de pollution »

For the first time, municipalities, including Paris, have the power to set driving restrictions related to pollutant emission levels. Car pollutant emissions are identified by a sticker system called Crit'Air, ranging from number 1 assigned to less polluting cars to the number five for the most polluting. Municipalities can freely decide if they apply restrictions to Crit'Air 5 or go further. Additionally, they have the competence to restrict the car access or pedestrianize secondary roads (those that are not essential for security, which are controlled by the Police Prefect).

Preferences between all the communes are mixed. The city of Paris has a longtime history making air quality one of its top priorities, favoring public transport and biking over car-use. Political pressures on Mayor Tiberi (1995-2001) made him to act on the matter (Zittoun, 2008). During his term he conceived the tramway project and developed other rather incipient measures related to bikeways and the confinement of bus-lanes (Halpern & Le Galès, 2019). With the arrival of Betrand Delanoë (2001-2014), the city's role intensified as a consequence of the coalition between the Socialist and Green parties. Later on, Anne Hidalgo (2014-2020) put air quality as one of the city's top priorities. Due to the coalition with the green party, air quality key areas –deputy mayors of transport (*Transports, voirie, déplacements et espace public*) and environmental affairs (*Transition écologique, climat, environnement, eau et assainissement*), fell into the hands of green appointees. In addition to the *Greens'* presence, air pollution was a rising concern among Île de France inhabitants. In a citizen's perception study, they pointed air pollution as the most important environmental issue, even ahead climate change (AIRPARIF, 2014). According to the study, people considered transport as the main cause – due to vehicle emissions – and the main solution to the problem (AIRPARIF, 2014). Due to internal priorities, the preferences vary widely amongst the metropolitan communes. While some of them share Paris' attitudes, others claim that setting restrictions would affect their population that own older and more polluting cars. This attitudes are depicted in the case analysis of below (Low Emission Zones).

The Metropolitan Authority

The Greater Paris Metropolis is the youngest scale in the Parisian Region. Created by the MAPTAM act of 2014, the law also assigned it the competence to define and implement programs to fight atmospheric pollution (Art. 12, V). While the metropolis has no direct attribution to set driving restrictions, it is that scale the one in charge of seeking homogeneity

concerning the implementation of such measures. Metropolitan preferences are therefore supportive to driving restrictions and at the same time seek some sort of territorial integration. The Metropolitan Council adopted formally the Low Emission Zones in 2018 as part of the objectives set in its Climate, Air and Energy Plan (Deliberation Conseil Metropolitain, 2018).

Revealing the interactions

Pollution Peaks

During a pollution episode in 2014 the Police Prefect delayed the implementation of driving restrictions and ended up setting them once the outbreak was almost over. Pollutant emissions exceeded alert thresholds for four days in a row and by the time the decision to implement restrictions was taken, the outbreak was coming to an end without any previsions of another spike (AIRPARIF press release, 2014). According to the *Cour des Comptes* (2015), the General Audit Institution of the French Assembly, the outbreak's timing during elections period played a role on delaying the measures. This shows the discretionary use of this competence related to the State's political interests.

This also creates tensions between the governmental actors of the Parisian region during pollution peaks. While the region and many outer departments and communes generally oppose to the implementation of driving restrictions, the city of Paris demands immediate action right after pollutant emissions exceed the alert levels. This has to do with the different approaches to the problem and the political implications related to scale differences. Metropolitan communes argue affectations on their population's trips to the city where most of them work and to whom public transport is not a viable option due to long travel time. Conversely, Parisians are less concerned with the restrictions and even support them.[3]

Crisis episodes show the contingent character of the city-region relationship, revealing a political use of two competences: the coordinator role (chef de file) and the control over the Transport Authority. When similar party coalitions rule both entities, they will most likely share a common perspective on the actions to handle pollution peaks. An opposite scenario leads to breakups and conflict. This is the result of the evolution of competences affecting the

[3] In the words of and advisor to the Deputy Mayor of Transport: "quand on prend des mesures qui sont contre la voiture la majorité des parisiens sont pas concernés, sont plutôt heureux que nous travaillons pour baisser les émissions" (H. Lefvive)

city-region interactions in pollution peaks in two ways. The first one is indirect, by opening windows or ambiguities that the Region uses to manipulate their access on decision-making processes and try to impose its view. The decentralization process in the 80's granted the regions with the task of promoting territorial cohesion. For the specific case of Île de France, it means that the region should seek equilibrium in certain domains between all the *collectivités* and a powerful Paris, originally through its directly assigned competences on economic development and territorial planning. Gradual changes expanded the role of the region on air quality through transport and the responsibility to coordinate and organize territorial action by naming it as *chef de file* (MAPTAM Act). In second place, institutional changes also lead to the Region's direct participation on the crisis control process due to its competences on public transport. During the outbreaks, the region-controlled Transport Authority, Île de France Mobilités (formerly STIF) can modify the fees on public transport to incentivize its use and, to some extent, palliate the effects of driving restrictions. As mentioned before, this competence was in the hands of the State, until its transfer to the Regional Council in 2004.

In 2015, a series of pollution peaks joined up the Mayor of Paris, Anne Hidalgo and the Region's president, Jean-Paul Huchon, to issue a joint statement demanding the State's intervention to implement driving restrictions (Press Release). Additionally, the Region, through the Transport Authority, set free public transport during the outbreaks. Changes after the 2015 Regional elections modified the city-region's common approach. Initially, the incoming president seemed to follow her predecessor's stand on pollution peaks (Tweet, Pécresse, 3 dic 2016) but later changed its perspective. During an outbreak in early December 2016, Valèrie Pécresse argued that due to the State's underinvestment, a power outage in the Region's railroad network didn't set the conditions to implement driving restrictions and demanded its suspension (Tweet, Pécresse, 7 december 2016). Being air quality a flagship of Hidalgo's term, this change merited her reaction. The Mayor blamed the Region for not doing enough to improve public transport and decreasing its emissions.

The current regional administration's approach privileges the car-use, generally opposing to any type of driving restriction. Behind such view are arguments to maintain regional equality. According to regional officers from the air quality division, driving restrictions create inequalities between Parisians and the population located far from the city looking to get to

the city for their professional activities Even more so, they argue that such restrictions don't even do much to decrease emission levels, ending up in a negative cost-benefit analysis (Interviewed by the Author).

Regarding the region's direct competences, its control on transport fees as head of the Transport Authority gives it a formal participation during pollution peaks. Gratuity on transports was commonly used incentivize the use of public transport during pollution peaks and, to some extent, palliate the effects of driving restrictions. The State first introduced the measure in 1998 and continued after the relocation of the Transport Authority to the Region in 2004 (Pollution crisis protocols 1994-2016). In 2016, however, the region's executive demanded to change the protocol. Instead of ensuring gratuity of transports by IDF Mobilités (as mentioned in the 2014 document), the article 14 removed the mandatory gratuity clause, indicating that the Transport Authority must give incentives "facilitates access to public passenger transport networks through fare incentives" (Protocol 2016-01383). In consequence, the next year, IDF Mobilités replaced free transport by an *antipollution daily pass* for 3.80€. The arguments for this change are the low impact, unfairness and financial unfeasibility of the measure. From the point of view of the regional fonctionnaires from the transport and air quality divisions, the cost-benefit analysis has, once again, a negative perspective (Interviewed by the author).

The Region's changes in the transport fees fostered a reaction from the Paris City Council. The body called for the reestablishment of free transport during pollution peaks (see the below quote) while refuting the region's financial infeasibility argument. At the Green Party's initiative, the council urged the city's mayor to demand the president of IDF Mobilités, hence the region's president, to reinstate public transport gratuity (Conseil de Paris, may 4 2018).

Reaching emission standards during pollution peaks remains difficult when the State makes use of its discretionary competence according to its own economic and political preferences. Moreover, struggles between the subnational actors, notably the city and the region, prevent a common approach due to its divergent preferences resulting from party politics and scale differences.

The Seine Riverbank Roads Affair

In 2016 Mayor Hidalgo decided to ban car traffic along the Seine riverbanks (George Pompidou road) right after the Paris Council gave its green light by declaring it as a matter of public interest (Deliberation 2016 SG 29). Metropolitan communes and the region's executive actively criticized the city's unilateral actions, arguing spillover effects by relocating pollution and traffic jams outside its jurisdiction. For example, the Municipal Council and the Mayor of Saint-Maure des Fossés, a municipality located in the Department of Val de Marne, demanded to stop the closure and claimed that all the future decisions of such kind should be coordinated and concerted within the Urban Mobility Plan of Île de France (Session of 23 June of 2016, Conseil Municipal Ville Saint-Maur-des-Fossés).

The most energic response came from the regional authorities. In the absence of a shared perspective due to opposite political parties, the scale differences between the city and the region prevailed. The latter's arguments strive on keeping regional equality and, hence, the region considers the city's actions as egoistic. According to a high-level officer from the Division of territorial cohesion (in charge of energetic transition, air quality and climate), the Region's opposition has a wider view and has to look up for the whole territory (Interviewed by the author). Whereas the region demands territorial integration, from the city's perspective the decision to pedestrianize the riverbank roads falls within its competences and should be handled internally. When asked on the issue, a Green Party council member indicates that the decision is for the City Council to take and, that it was previously discussed in the municipal project. Therefore, the actors shouldn't be surprised when the roads were finally closed for circulation (Interviewed by the author).

These differences ended up unleashing a power struggle through technical studies – and even legal actions leaded by the Region to overturn the city's decision. The Region installed an evaluation committee (*Comité régional d'évaluation de la fermeture des voies sur berges*) integrated by various organizations (Airparif, Bruitparif, Paris Region Institute, Île de France Mobilités, the Observatoire Regional de la Santé and the NGO France Nature Environnement), without the city of Paris. According to the group's study, the measure had no visible positive effects: air quality remained unchanged due to higher traffic congestion; pollution got displaced to other sites; and the travel time for bus and emergency services increased (IAU îdF, 2017). The City, on the other hand, commissioned its own study to Airparif (the

organization in charge of pollution monitoring in the Parisian region), yielding mixed results: a decrease in pollution levels along the riverbank roads contrasted with an increase on the measurements in Eastern Paris. At the metropolitan scale AIRPARIF evidences small variations in higher nitrogen dioxide levels on some major roads, possibly related to the riverbank roads' pedestrianization (AIRPARIF, 2017). Overall, the study didn't find conclusive proof of a positive or negative impact (AIRPARIF, 2017, p. 3).

This short case shows, that unilateral actions may lead to some pollutant reductions inside the city but only displace the problem to the metropolitan area. In this case, any decrease on pollutant emissions inside Paris may not be reflected in the overall emission count at the regional level. Preferences exerted by the city of Paris by making use of its competences ended up creating conflict and not necessarily contributing to an overall decrease in car-related pollution.

Low Emission Zones

Once the Metropolitan Authority adopted the implementation of the low emission zones into its Climate, Air and Energy plan, it faced a twofold challenge: to persuade all the 79 communes located inside the A86 highway perimeter (Map 1, in red) to issue the restrictions and mediate between them and the city of Paris to agree on the terms under which the measure would be implemented. Before the adoption by the metropolitan council, the city of Paris placed its own restrictions. First, the municipality banned heavy duty trucks in 2015 and in 2017 imposed restrictions to the most polluting vehicles (rated 5 in the CRIt'Air system scale). By July 2019 – the release date of the metropolitan low emission zones – the communes were supposed to set restrictions to category five while Paris did for number four. All the communes are supposed to catch-up with Paris in 2021 on restrictions to Crit'Air 4. The calendar goes up to 2030, when the whole Greater Paris area aims to be completely fuel-free. To achieve such goal, it will be necessary to reconcile differences that are more related to scale than political affiliation. In other words, the fragmentations inside the metropolis pose a significant hindrance for a comprehensive low emission zone, less related to their political diversity, than to local constituencies.

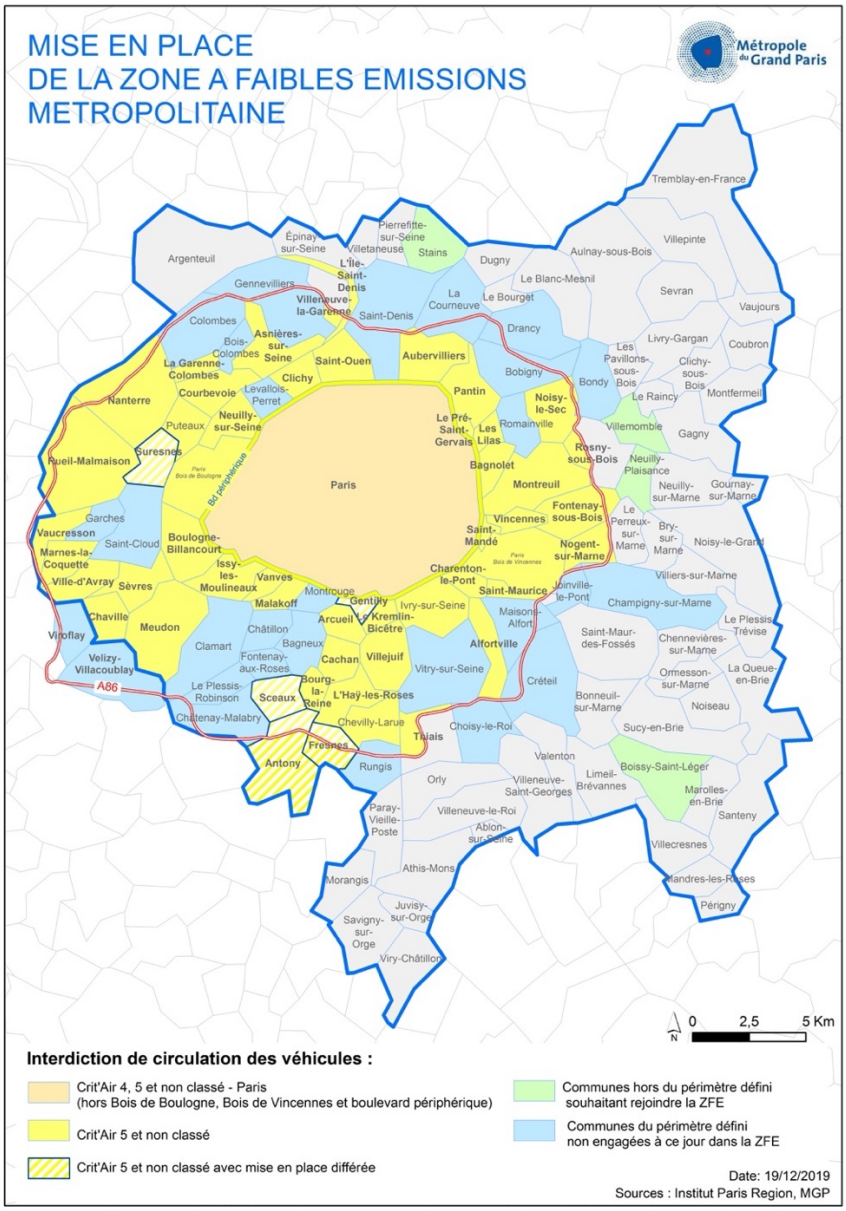
As Map 1 shows, not all the municipalities adopted the low emission zones. By July 2019, 49 out of 79 communes inside the perimeter of the A86 highway (in red) subscribed to the agreements and issued restrictions. The remaining *communes* portray different positions.

Some of them, as Montrouge in the south of Paris, held an ambiguous position claiming that its citizens support a low emission zone without enacting any restriction.[4] Other communes oppose to the measure in the grounds of inequality. When looking at the map, the less engaged communes are those located further in the perimeter, predominantly in the east and north-east area, and historically the less privileged localities. Such is the case of Bobigny, a northern municipality of the *petit couronne*, that openly rejects the measure. The commune is known as a "communist stronghold" after being ruled for over 100 years by the communist party. The current mayor, however, belongs to the center-right party *Union des democrats et indépendants*. The particularity is that both groups (the mayor's coalition and the communists), launched in unity the campaign "*Bobigny dit NON à la ZFE !"* (Bobigny says no to the LEZ!) to postpone the entry of the low emission zones. According to the mayor, their reluctance arises from an unfair, excluding measure towards the poorest families.

Institutional changes bringing new attributions to the *communes* enhanced preexistent differences associated to different municipal realities. This whole situation can create a deadlock. On the one hand, citizens from the poorest communes might not be able to drive into Paris and other neighboring municipalities that adopt the restrictions. On the other hand, if opposing communes such as Bobigny don't issue any restriction, it could have a negative effect in the metropolitan pollutant emission levels. Such deadlock hinders policy effectiveness while keeps the territories politically stable with their constituencies.

Map 1. Low emission zone landscape in the Greater Paris Metropolis to December 2019.

[4] La Zone à faibles émissions (ZFE). 75% des Montrougiens sont favorables à la mise en place de la Zone à faibles émissions: https://www.ville-montrouge.fr/1253-la-zone-a-faibles-emissions-zfe-.htm 12 june 2020.



Source: Métropole de Grand Paris

Conclusion

The European Union as an hybrid form of meta-regulation allows the states to determine their own rules (Levi-Faur, 2011) and implementation arrangements to comply with the regulations. Besides a concrete implementation arrangement (Heidbreder, 2017), the case studied here has shown how European directives clash with domestic practices and political and institutional changes, impacting policy outcomes. This leads to some questions regarding compliance: how is then possible to comply with the regulations if, by exerting its attributions

unilaterally, the city closes some roads and decreases internal pollution but displaces it to the neighboring communes? How would it be possible to comply if the region privileges car-use to public transport and devotes more resources to build roads? How would it be possible to meet the standards if there is a tradeoff between setting a low emission zone and social considerations linked to territorial differences? How to comply if restrictions are not timely implemented by the police prefect to end up pollution outbreaks?

Such questions don't have an easy answer and the purpose here was not to give one. Instead, they raise awareness of the multi-level interaction dynamics resulting from policy choices and power distribution. In that sense, it would be necessary to go further in comparative perspective to see the extent to which the interplay depicted in this paper develops in other European states. That way it would be possible to assign the proper weight of this processes in the more general picture of compliance.

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