

T02P11 / Policy Transfer and Diffusion: Looking at Policy Features and the Policy Process

Topic : T02 / Comparative Public Policy sponsored by Journal of Comparative Policy Analysis

Chair : Michelle Morais de Sa e Silva (The University of Oklahoma)

GENERAL OBJECTIVES, RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND SCIENTIFIC RELEVANCE

Global policy models have been increasingly celebrated, but what do we know, on a theory basis, about why and how they turn global? 'Best practices' are no longer understood as absolutely best, but policies keep being transferred from city to city, state to state, and country to country. Various actors have actively and purposefully engaged in policy transfer, and many hope that the more policies are transferred, the more development will be achieved. But is that so? Why do policymakers engage in policy transfer? Are all good policies transferrable? Is there such a thing as effective transfer?

Dolowitz and Marsh (2000, p. 3) define policy transfer as "a process in which knowledge about policies, administrative arrangements, institutions and ideas in one political setting (past or present) is used in the development of policies, administrative arrangements, institutions and ideas in another political setting". Since that seminal article, numerous other publications have tried to describe, characterize, classify and explain the policy transfer phenomenon.

Stone (2012) makes an extensive review of over 800 journal articles dedicated to the topic, revealing that several terms are used to name processes of these kinds, with slight conceptual differences: "diffusion", "transfer", "convergence", "translation". According to Stone, the policy transfer literature is especially interested in the motivations and the decision-making rationale of agents involved in policy transfer. The convergence literature, in turn, rather gives emphasis to the role of structures, institutions and other globalization processes as drivers of global policy isomorphism. Finally, scholars who have worked with the idea of translation are focused on studying the modifications, mutations and adaptations that these policies undergo when being exported/imported.

In the framework of these various existing terms and their slightly different connotations, the panel will address policy transfer and international policy diffusion, with a particular focus on the reasons, processes, and features of transfer and non-transfer. The panel will go beyond the 'best-practice' black box, presenting and debating cases that examine policy transfer and policy diffusion processes in detail. The goal is to gather scholars from different countries and policy fields and to create dialogue around the contribution of their research to building theory.

Dolowitz, D., Marsh, D. (2000). Learning from abroad: the role of policy transfer in contemporary policy-making. *Governance* 13: 5 – 24.

Stone, D. (2012). Transfer and translation of policy. *Policy Studies*, 33:6, 483-499.

CALL FOR PAPERS

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The panel welcomes presentations that examine cases of policy transfer/policy diffusion, as well as comparative research that further the theoretical debate around the competing explanations about whether and how policies travel globally. Comparative approaches are encouraged, but single-case studies will be also welcome. There is particular interest in policy transfer and diffusion experiences in the field of social policies, although works in other policy areas will be considered. Transfers happening South-South and South-North are of great interest, as well as cases of virtually global diffusion.

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Session 1

Friday, June 30th 10:30 to 12:30 (Block B 2 - 2)

Discussants

Michelle Morais de Sa e Silva (The University of Oklahoma)

Natalia Koga (Institute of Applied Economic Research (IPEA) and ENAP)

NEW PHILANTHROPIC AID AND SOCIAL POLICY TRANSFER. A Case study on the Gates Foundation in Tanzania

Roosa Jolkkonen (University of Oxford)

Participatory budgeting as an institutional innovation: a few hypothesis on PB expansion and difusion

Leonardo Avritzer (U.F.M.G)

Explaining the dynamics and outcomes of policy transfer – development and testing of an integrative framework

Ellen Minkman (Delft University of Technology)

Arwin van Buuren (Erasmus University Rotterdam)

Victor Bekkers (Erasmus University Dpt. of Public administration and sociology)

Policy diffusion and translation. The cas of Evidence Based Health Agencies in Europe

Benamouzig Daniel (CNRS / Sciences Po (CSO-LIEPP))

Patrick Hassenteufel (Université Paris-Saclay)

The Horizontal Diffusion of Policies for Urban Risk Reduction: Lessons on “Fungibility” from South-South International Municipal Cooperation

Kristoffer Berse (University of the Philippines Diliman)