

# T02P11 / Are Public Policies still Public? Questioning the Relationship between the Public and Private Sector in the Global South

**Topic :** T02 / COMPARATIVE PUBLIC POLICY

**Chair :** Clément Soriat (Center for European Research on Administration, Politics and Society (CERAPS) - University of Lille )

**Second Chair :** Olivier Provini (Université de La Réunion)

## GENERAL OBJECTIVES, RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND SCIENTIFIC RELEVANCE

Research in public policy analysis has shown a reconfiguration of the boundaries between the public and the private sector since the 1980s, which is due to the expansion of liberalization policies, the privatization of public companies or even the advent of management standards within public administrations. The “public” character of public policies has been questioned to the effect that the term “governance” has become a recurrent concept for describing the coproduction of policies by a heterogeneous set of public and private stakeholders (Hyden, 1992 ; Kooiman, 2003).

Yet, numerous scholars disprove the idea of the private sector “cannibalizing” the public (Hibou, 2013). The ongoing dynamics would reflect a redefinition of the role of the state rather than provoking its retreat. The decreasing scope of state intervention can instead be considered as a deliberate strategy of adaption to a number of constraints. As a result, new styles of government “by delegation” emerge, whereby the market and the private sector are used as an instrument of a state, whose functions are focused on regulation and incentives (Ansaloni and Smith, 2017). From this point of view, an opposition of the public and private dynamics would be scientifically misleading. Instead, it is crucial to study the intertwining relationships between both sectors.

The intention of this panel is to move the debate about transforming borders between the public and private sectors from empirical fields in the “Global North” to “Southern” contexts, where public stakeholders dispose a priori of fewer human, economic and knowledge-based resources. This empirical shift is even more important, as the limited capacities of states – compared to the North – have been interpreted by several scholars as a decline or even an absence of public policies (Chabal & Daloz, 1999 ; Carment et al., 2010). This intertwining between public management and private interests in Southern contexts has been analyzed by scholars dealing with state-building in Africa (Médard, 1990 ; Bayart, 1989). They tend to argue that these boundaries are even more blurred in African contexts (Ferguson, 2006 ; Hibou, 2012; Harrison, 2005 ; Kelsall, 2013).

Thus, shifting the focus on the Global South seems relevant to reconsider the frontiers between the private and the public sector, to discuss the results stemming from Northern contexts and to move the historical and sociological trajectory of the state at the center of public policy analysis. Whereas the literature on public policy analysis is tending towards an ever-greater hyperspecialization and to untie its approaches from state sociology (Smyrl, 2002 ; Bezes & Pierru, 2012), we argue that studying the public character of public policies in the Global South is crucial for understanding the long-term transformations of the state (Evans et al., 1985).

This panel proposal is part of the research program “Making policies in Africa”, backed by the research laboratory Les Afriques dans le Monde at Sciences Po Bordeaux. However, the panel aims to exceed the initial frame of the project in order to establish new scientific collaborations and to internationalize the exchange on this relevant research question.

## CALL FOR PAPERS

Research in public policy analysis has shown a reconfiguration of the boundaries between the public and the private sector since the 1980s. The intention of this panel is to move the debate about these transforming borders from empirical fields in the “Global North” to “Southern” contexts, where public stakeholders dispose a priori of fewer human, economic and knowledge-based resources. This analytical and empirical shift seems relevant to reconsider the frontiers between the private and the public sector, to discuss the results stemming from Northern contexts and to put the emphasis of public policy analysis on the historical and sociological trajectory of the state.

Paper proposals may address at least one of the following topics:

1) Circulation of norms and instruments stemming from the “private” sector and their appropriation (transfer,

translation, hybridization) in specific policy sectors in the Global South: to what extent do these forms of circulation inform about transforming frontiers between the public and private sector? Looking beyond the technical character of policy reform, how do they contribute to transforming power plays between stakeholders, their visions and representations? Concretely, how is this circulation and hybridization carried out?

2) Circulation of stakeholders between the public and the private sphere: is it possible to identify stakeholder networks at the intersections of these spheres, thereby questioning their separation? In a context of neo-liberal governance new stakeholder configurations are shaping the formulation and the implementation of public policies, whereby the collusion of the private and the public sector are more and more assumed and even promoted. To what extent do these dynamics invite us to reconsider the classical literature about the neo-patrimonial character of states in the Global South?

3) The role of the state in these new configurations. Questioning the traditional boundaries between the public and the private sphere brings us to the question of the changing nature of state intervention, without jumping to the conclusion about the breakdown or the retreat of the state. Given this competitive environment, what do state agents do to retain a predominant role in political and social regulation? How do these relations interact with private stakeholders? Do they derive from competition, partnership or other forms of interaction? Which objectives and common goals possibly bring them together?

4) The history of the relationships between the public and the private sector in the Global South. The aim is to trace back the intertwining of public-private relationships within public policy configurations in a long-term perspective. How have these relationships developed over time? Have they been shaped specifically under the colonial and the postcolonial period? And to what extent have the Structural Adjustment Programs transformed the Global South into a laboratory of neo-liberal reforms for the Global North?

The expected contributions should rely on qualitative and/or quantitative empirical data from a Global South context. Priority will be given to comparative research in order to diversify case studies and to encourage crossed discussions. This panel aims to create new research networks and to lay the ground for common publications.

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## Session 1T02P11 & T10P07

Friday, June 28th 14:00 to 16:00 (MB 2.265 )

### Discussants

Clément Soriât (Center for European Research on Administration, Politics and Society (CERAPS) - University of Lille )

Alain Dimitrius Izquierdo Reyes (Universidad de Guadalajara)

### **The promotion of public-private partnership in a neo-patrimonial context, comparison of two mixt policies in Madagascar**

Zoé Tinturier (Science po Bordeaux)

### **The interdependence of public policies and private interests. The case study of the social policy in the Ivory Coast**

Clément Soriât (Center for European Research on Administration, Politics and Society (CERAPS) - University of Lille )

### **Reflections about subnational public debt for financing metropolitan policies: In the context of the sharing economy**

Alain Dimitrius Izquierdo Reyes (Universidad de Guadalajara)

Juan Diego Omar Martínez Delgado (Universidad de Guadalajara)

### **Public Transit Governance in the Metropolitan Area of São Paulo: an analysis based on the 2010 Census data and the municipal budgets.**

Mauricio Fronzaglia ( Mackenzie Presbyterian University)

Vladimir Maciel (Universidade Presbiteriana Mackenzie)