P03 / Political Leadership in Interactive Governance

Topic : POLICY FORMULATION, ADMINISTRATION AND POLICYMAKERS

Chair : Eva Sørensen (Roskilde University)

Second Chair : Sarah Ayres (University of Bristol)

Third Chair : Tina Øllgaard Bentzen (Roskilde University)

GENERAL OBJECTIVES, RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND SCIENTIFIC RELEVANCE

As three decades of governance research has demonstrated, the context in which elected politicians perform political leadership is changing. We see a mushrooming of interactive forms of governance such as quasi-markets, partnerships, and networks that bring together political and social actors in a shared attempt to formulate, design and implement public policy and governance (Kooiman, 1993; Rhodes, 1997; Agranoff and McGuire, 2003; Koppenjan and Klijn, 2004; Torfing et al, 2012; Agger et al, 2015). Pluralist and corporatist political theory and research show that it is not a new thing for public authorities to involve relevant and affected actors at different stages in the policy process (Dahl, 1961; Echstein, 1969; Schmitter, 1974; Heclo, 1978; Kingdon, 1984). What is new is, first, that interaction between public and private actors increasingly takes the form of interactive governance rather than lobbyism and interest groups pressure and, second, that interactive forms of governance have become a systematic, required and prescribed activity for public authorities. Hence, interactive forms of governance are key ingredients in most of the governance reforms of last decades although researchers have used a variety of names to describe this phenomenon. Among the most prominent names are New Public Management (Hood, 1991; Osborne and Gaebler, 1993), Network Governance (Kickert, Klijn and Koppenjan, 1997), Joint Up Government (Perri 6, 2004; Hodges, 2012); Collaborative Governance (Agranoff and Mc Guire, 2003), New Public Governance (Osborne, 2010), Multi-level Governance (Bache and Flinders, 2004), and finally Interactive Governance (Torfing et al, 2012).

The surge of interactive forms of governances is path breaking because it changes the context in which politicians perform political leadership representative democracies. Hence, as illuminated in several studies, interactive governance tends to recast citizens and stakeholders from objects of government to active participants in policy-making and governance (Klijn and Koppenjan, 2000; Edelenbos, 2005; Sørensen, 2007). Very few studies have analysed the implications of interactive governance for the political leadership of elected politicians (Edelenbos, Klok, and Tatenhove, 2009; Agger and Sørensen, 2014; Ansell and Torfing, 2017; Hertting and Kugelberg, 2018). The metagovernance term developed by governance researchers to signify the role of public authorities in interactive governance holds some promise when it comes to characterizing emerging forms of public administration and governance (Kooiman, 1993; 2003; Jessop, 1998, 2002; Sørensen and Torfing, 2007). Meta-governance refers to leadership as a strategic effort to involve and guide relevant and affected members of society in processes of self-governance (Sørensen and Torfing, 2009). Governance researchers have almost exclusively discussed metagovernance from a managerial perspective, while paying scant attention to the implications of interactive governance for the performance of political leadership among elected politicians. Therefore, we lack a conceptual framework and language for categorizing and analysing the kinds of political leadership that emerge in a context of interactive governance, as well as empirical knowledge about how elected politicians perform political leadership in the age of interactive governance.

The scant attention to the role and function of political leadership in interactive governance research is among other things a result of a regretful disconnect between those who study public administration and governance and those who study political leadership. It is a specific purpose and goal of this panel to bring together researchers from these two disconnected research fields. Recent theories of political leadership can not only help to identify key generic features of political leadership (Burns, 2003; Nye, 2008; Kane, Patapan and ‘t Hart, 2009; Helms, 2012, 2016; Rosanvallon, 2011). They also provide important inspiration when it comes to classifying emerging forms of political leadership and current changes in party politics and role perceptions among citizens and politicians (Mair, 2013; Dalton and Welzel, 2014).

The panel aims to bring the question of the role of politicians in interactive governance onto the research agenda, and bring together papers that shed theoretical and/or empirical light on the conditions for exercising political leadership in the age of interactive governance. What barriers and dilemmas do politicians operating at different levels of governance face in their performance of political leadership? What leadership styles emerge in the context of interactive governance, and how does interactive governance

influence the way politicians operate and communicate with citizens and other societal actors? How do emerging political leadership styles affect the legitimacy and effectiveness of representative democracy, and to what extent and how do these political leadership styles affect the stability and robustness of representative democracy?

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CALL FOR PAPERS

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Session 1

Wednesday, June 26th 16:30 to 18:30 (MB S2.455)

Discussants

Tina Øllgaard Bentzen (Roskilde University)

Sarah Ayres (University of Bristol)

Bridging the gap between politicians and professions? A meta-governance perspective on the involvement of healthcare professionals in collaborative processes

Martin Qvist (Stockholm University)

Livia Johannesson (Stockholm University)

For politicians, collaborative governance can be seen both as a challenge to their traditional role in representative democracy, and as an opportunity for fostering policy innovation and strengthening relationships between state and society. In this paper, we are interested in a particular state-society-relation – the one between policy makers and the professions. In the healthcare sector in particular, this relationship is often marked by tensions, 'us-and-them'-thinking and a general skepticism towards political leadership. The high level of professionalization is also associated with considerable autonomy and delegation, where politicians govern health care provision at arm's length distance. Against this background, collaborative governance could offer possibilities for bridging the gap between politicians and professionals, with the potential of improving the responsiveness of political leadership and the legitimacy of decisions. At the same time, the complexity, heterogeneity, and power of the medical professions present considerable challenges. The purpose of this paper is therefore to develop a more in-depth understanding of the medical professions as a 'stakeholder category' and discuss its implications for the organization of interactive arenas, focusing in particular on the role of political leaders as 'meta-governors'. Our theoretical approach combines, in a novel way, insights from the sociology of professions with governance theory in order to capture not only the meta-governance strategies applied by public officials, but also the stratification and increasing hybridization of roles and identities within and between professional groups. Empirically, the paper draws on an in-depth case study of regional collaborative processes connected to the planning of a large and highly controversial hospital project, the New Karolinska Solna (NKS) in the Stockholm region. Policy makers in the Stockholm County Council (SCC) used this project as a driver for reforms of integrated care and health care system restructuring, with considerable implications for healthcare providers throughout the region. Our findings show that the roles and interests of healthcare professionals in collaborative governance are complex and multifaceted, which needs to be reflected in meta-governance strategies of facilitation and process design. Particularly important are questions about inclusion and exclusion, and striking a balance between representation based on expertise and representation based on position and organizational interests. With politicians taking a 'hands-off' approach, the collaborative process largely reflected power struggles and conflicts about legitimate knowledge claims within the healthcare community. This suggests, that there is a potential for political leaders to broaden their role as 'meta-goverors' by engaging in more hands-on support and direct interaction with the healthcare professions.

The dynamics of devolution – Political leadership and policy making in UK policing governance

Francesca Gains (University of Manchester)

Vivien Lowndes (University of Birmingham)

The organisation of political life is accepted as being key to understanding the dynamics of political action (March and Olsen, 1984). Institutionalists point to the logic of institutional arrangements as being both long lasting and well understood by political actors offering guidance to the 'rules in use' political actors draw on when taking policy action (Thelan and Mahoney, 2010; Olstrom, 1999, Lowndes and Roberts, 2013). In unitary political systems with parliamentary democracies, such as the UK, it is traditionally understood that the national constitutional arrangements will dominate political actions in other political venues and that local and subnational political authority is weak (Wilson and Game, 2011). But what happens when the rules of the game are disrupted at the subnational level and executive authority is ceded to localities?

In this paper we investigate the urban political dynamics in UK policing governance following the introduction of directly elected Police and Crime Commissioners in England and Wales. These new political actors, first elected in 2012, operate within the still dominant central state in the UK and alongside a diffuse landscape of networked local governance (Gains and Lowndes 2014; 2018). The executive authority of commissioners is nested (Mackay, 2014) within the existing institutional arrangements of the Westminster system at central government level and alongside local authorities which previously administered the police authorities which oversaw local policing.

We present findings from a comparative case study of six police and crime commissioner areas in England and Wales during their first term of office*. We draw on site visits and in depth interviews with commissioners and all the key elite actors in those localities during commissioners' first term of office. We explore the extent to which the new institutional arrangements reflect formal and informal institutional legacies to shape the 'rules in use' in policing governance (Lowndes, 2014). We examine how the commissioners interpreted and enacted the emerging rules in use to define and exert their political authority, how they set policing priorities and established the governing arrangements in their localities.

Our findings draw attention to the increasing importance of localities as key venues for agenda setting and policy prioritisation around policing governance even in unitary systems. We highlight the tensions which exist in ceding executive authority in a unitary system and how emergent rules in use were 'borrowed, remembered and shared' (Lowndes, 2005). We show how the newly elected commissioners sought to exploit the legitimacy their office provided and navigate the different governing logics of both national and local institutions. In concluding we point to the importance of informal 'rules in use' alongside the more formal powers assigned to the office.

*We acknowledge support of funding from the European Research Council (PI Georgina Waylen) see https://www.socialsciences.manchester.ac.uk/politics/research/projects-and-networks/uic/

A decentred assessment of the impact of 'informal governance' on democratic legitimacy

Sarah Ayres (University of Bristol)

The aim of this paper is to examine the impact of informal governance on democratic legitimacy. It draws on the literatures on informal governance and decentred theory to examine how governance mechanisms that are un-written, un-codified and non-institutional impact on democratic legitimacy in governance networks. Drawing on a case study of English devolution in the United Kingdom, this paper explores how informal governance impacts on different dimensions of legitimacy - input, throughout and output. It does so my drawing on the narratives and stories of political leaders directly involved in English devolution between 2015 and 2018. Findings reveal that even when formal structures are weak, democratic legitimacy can be secured, especially in promoting effective decision making and problem solving - throughput legitimacy. Nonetheless, a decentred analysis has shown a high level of selectivity and differentiation in central-local relationships that undermines legitimation based on input (inclusiveness) and outcome (results) legitimacy. This assessment provides important new insights into how political leaders can seek to ensure democratic legitimacy in interactive governance networks characterized by high levels of informality.

Improving public service production, administrative problem solving, and political leadership through co-creation?

Eva Sørensen (Roskilde University)

Jacob Torfing (Roskilde University)

Tina Øllgaard Bentzen (Roskilde University)

Eva Sørensen (Roskilde University)

This paper seeks to enhance our understanding of how local municipalities can benefit from their strategic commitment to co-creation. We are particularly interested in whether the use of co-creation is limited to resource mobilization in the field of public service production and administrative problemsolving, or whether it is also used as a tool for improving policy development and strengthening local political leadership. Answering this pertinent question enables us to assess whether local municipalities fully exploit the potential of their gravitational shift from being legal authorities and efficient service providers towards being platforms and arenas for the co-creation of public value outcomes.

Our hypothesis is that municipalities with a strategic commitment to co-creation, primarily, will use co-creation as a tool for service improvement and administrative problemsolving and be much more reluctant when it comes to co-creation of policymaking and the expansion of an interactive political leadership through which elected politicians define policy problems and design and implement solutions in a close, learning-based dialogue with relevant and affected actors. To test this hypothesis, we will look at and compare Scandinavian municipalities because the long tradition for public-private collaboration, the high degree of social capital and trust in government, and the extensive devolution of public tasks to the local municipalities together provide a fertile ground for the administrative and political use of co-creation in the production of public value outcomes. Within Scandinavia, we have chosen to focus on two Danish municipalities and one Norwegian municipality that are all strategically committed to co-creation and have recently reformed the working conditions for the local politicians. The purposive selection of three municipalities with a strong and broad-based commitment to co-creation provides the conditions for a tough test of our hypothesis.

The plan of the paper is as follows. We first define co-creation, reflect on the background for its recent emergence as a governance strategy in local municipalities and discuss the possible benefits that co-creation might yield in administrative service production and problemsolving and in the political development of new policy solutions. We then introduce the three cases, further motivate their selection and account for the data that we have collected and analyzed. In the next section, we analyze and compare the varying forms of administrative and political co-creation. This is done in order to test whether co-creation goes all the way from co-produced services via co-created problemsolving at the administrative level to co-created policymaking at the political level. The discussion reflects on the findings and aims to identify the drivers and barriers for a full-blown expansion of co-creation at the municipal level that will include co-created policymaking. The conclusion summarizes the findings and points to some future research avenues.