

# (Virtual) T07P22 / Institutions and Politics of Expert Advice and Policy Learning

**Topic :** T07 / POLICY DESIGN, POLICY ANALYSIS, EXPERTISE AND EVALUATION

**Chair :** Wei Li (Huazhong University of Science and Technology)

**Second Chair :** Hongmei Lu (Michigan Technological University)

**Third Chair :** Claire Dunlop (University of Exeter)

## GENERAL OBJECTIVES, RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND SCIENTIFIC RELEVANCE

The quality and public accountability of expert advice is important for effective government response to complex problems, as was already shown in recent pandemics. Smart institutional designs of producing and utilizing expert advice that can balance the public needs for transparent, inclusive and professionally independent advice are called for. The rhetoric of 'evidence-based policymaking' shall first and foremost be grounded on the understanding that 'evidence' is not norm-free nor politics-free. Instead, the scientific evidence itself has underlying beliefs and paradigms, which are shaped by the slowly evolving political, social and economic institutions. Similarly, policy learning of different actors in different contexts is also affected by institutional settings for evidence and expert advice, which may range from hierarchical learning to epidemic learning, from political learning to social learning.

This panel welcomes papers that investigate the following questions theoretically and/or empirically:

1. How to design the policy advisory institutions that can manage the tensions between scientific knowledge and value/interests?
2. How to design the policy advisory institutions that can cope with the potential clash between scientific knowledge and layperson's knowledge?
3. How to design the policy advisory institutions that will take into account the different preferences of policymakers, citizens and experts?
4. What are effective political strategies (e.g. inside and outside advocacy) for expert advisors from various organizations (e.g. think tanks, NGOs, government departments) to persuade policymakers to use the evidence?
5. What regime/country contexts account for variation in effective institutional design for producing and utilizing high quality expert advice and evidence?

### References:

Soss, Joe. 1999. Lessons of Welfare: Policy Design, Political Learning and Political Action. *American Political Science Review*, 93(2):363-380.

Li, Wei. 2019. A Comparative Analysis of Expert Advisors' Role Perceptions in Policymaking: The Case of Hong Kong, China.

Li, Wei. 2019. Setting the Stage for Expert Advice? An Analysis of National Expert and Advisory Committees in China. *China Policy Journal* 1(2): 81-112.

Dunlop, Claire A. 2017. The irony of epistemic learning: epistemic communities, policy learning and the case of Europe's hormones saga. *Policy and Society*, May: 1-18.

## CALL FOR PAPERS

This panel welcomes papers that investigate the following questions theoretically and/or empirically:

1. How to design the policy advisory institutions that can manage the tensions between scientific knowledge and value/interests?
2. How to design the policy advisory institutions that can cope with the potential clash between scientific knowledge and layperson's knowledge?
3. How to design the policy advisory institutions that will take into account the different preferences of

policymakers, citizens and experts?

4. What are effective political strategies (e.g. inside and outside advocacy) for expert advisors from various organizations (e.g. think tanks, NGOs, government departments) to persuade policymakers to use the evidence?

5. What regime/country contexts account for variation in effective institutional design for producing and utilizing high quality expert advice and evidence?

# **(Virtual) T07P22 / Institutions and Politics of Expert Advice and Policy Learning**

**Chair :** Wei Li (Huazhong University of Science and Technology)

**Second Chair :** Hongmei Lu (Michigan Technological University)

**Third Chair :** Claire Dunlop (University of Exeter)

## **Session 1 MORNING SESSION, VIRTUAL;**

Monday, July 5th 10:00 to 12:00 (Virtual 09)

### **(Virtual) AN ANALYSIS OF THE POLICY ALTERNATIVES TO CLOSE THE FISCAL GAP BETWEEN LOCAL GOVERNMENT RESOURCES AND EXPENDITURES**

CLAUDYN MARIE CAPARON (University of the Philippines Diliman)

While the Philippine Local Government Units (LGUs) are equal partners of the National Government in promoting the welfare and well-being of the people, most of them are lacking resources for development.

In terms of fiscal administration, LGUs' share in the National Budget consistently remains meager over the years. In fact, there is an evident vertical fiscal gap, a problem situation when the revenue capacity of LGUs fails to meet their expenditure responsibilities. The global pandemic and its accompanying economic challenges exacerbate the disparity in financial resources of the local communities.

Meanwhile, the National Government Agencies with huge annual appropriations have been remiss in their responsibilities of delivering basic services and contributing to national development due to massive underspending.

The study outlines the mismatch between revenue and expenditure assignments across different levels of governments with the scrutiny of annual national budgets and provides for a reform idea to clearly decentralize responsibilities and support fiscal autonomy of LGUs toward production efficiency, reduced corruption, and allocative efficiency.

It proposes a two-track policy that clarifies the assignment of functional responsibilities to the different levels of government and introduces a new transfer mechanism in the form of an equalization grant that shall take into account the disparities in the revenue-raising capacity of LGUs in fulfilling their devolved functions.

### **(Virtual) Design and Learning Effects of China's Expert Advisory Committees**

Wei Li (Huazhong University of Science and Technology)

Facing challenges of dealing with complex social and technical issues, Chinese government has sought to enhance social credibility of policy decisions by soliciting expert advice. One institutional approach to do so is to establish expert advisory committees (EACs). Based on an analysis of expert advisory committees established by China's national government agencies, this paper finds low but increasing degrees of transparency and formalization, high degree of government control and relevance, low but increasing degree of inclusiveness and contestability. With more diversification and contestation of the societal interests and values, rising public demand for participation in decision-making and growing technical complexity of policy issues in China, the EACs' advice has drawn upon more diverse types of knowledge, interests and values. The study provides one of many learning mechanisms that account for the rapid economic development and social-political stability of the country witnessed by the world.

### **(Virtual) Financialisation-induced economic inequality: synthesising heterodox traditions to inform policy formulation**

Kuat Akizhanov (CAREC Institute)

This study argues that unequal distribution of income needs to be seen as a complex phenomenon that has

different dimensions and multifaceted explanatory mechanisms. Traditionally social scientists and policy makers focus on poverty whereas studies on income inequality and distribution have been neglected. This negligence towards egalitarian redistribution in contrast to prioritising “poverty” reflects political and intellectual impotency inherited from the 1980s-1990s when neoliberalism became triumphant. As throughout history religion served to legitimate inequality so do nowadays secular ideologies which justify increasing economic inequality. With the rise of modern capitalism legitimization of income disparity has been provided in economic terms such as free-market competition. However, a number of studies on the relations between economic inequality and public sector reforms convincingly show that inequality is in the first place a political phenomenon, other explanations being secondary and proximate causes. Historically, the changes in distributional patterns and inequality were not caused by economic factors such as market and technological developments but politically generated.

The main purpose of this study is to develop an understanding of the impact of financialisation on income inequality in the context of neoliberalism in the last thirty-four years in Argentina, Sweden, South Korea and USA. The experience of these nations between circa 1980 and 2010 is analysed and compared. The conceptual hypothesis of this study is that financialisation as a neoliberal phase of the contemporary capitalism acts as a generative mechanism for increasing economic inequality.

This research employs the critical realist approach as a necessary prerequisite in the study of the political economy of income disparity and finance capitalism. Drawing on the philosophical underpinnings of critical realism, financialisation-induced income inequality hypothesis is developed to provide descriptive and interpretive explanations. The epistemological and ontological perspectives of the study based on the critique of neoclassical economics’ deductivist methods provide grounds for the pluralist approach to the study. This strategy includes developing three explanatory causal-processual analytical constructs derived from different heterodox schools of thought - neo-institutional, neo-Marxist, and post-Keynesian.

This study seeks to contribute to the understanding of the real causes of increasing socio-economic disparity in various countries in the era of finance capitalism. It informs policy-making through innovative approach to researching the gap between the haves and have-nots by creating and employing analytical constructs that describe: a) the processes of institutionalising neoliberal financialisation as a model of capital accumulation; b) the functioning and properties of its generative mechanism in facilitating and securing upward income distribution as well as how far these are affected by domestic institutions and process. In this research, heterodox-based methods provide an alternative means of investigating and conceptualising the financialisation phenomenon and how it relates to increasing economic inequality.

### **(Virtual) Thinking inside the box: Is there potential for causality between a venue-shift and policy change?**

Inke Torfs (Universiteit Gent)

Ellen Wayenberg (Universiteit Gent)

Despite the increasing value of public policy studies and the recognition of black boxes therein, there is still room for significant improvements in identifying causality underlying policy change. In this article, we elucidate the link between venue-shifts and policy change within the black box, using the Punctuated Equilibrium Theory (PET) as a lens of inquiry.

We employ the PET because of two main reasons: First, it goes beyond only one type of change. Second, it is sensitive to the interaction between many elements such as policy images and institutional venues. The reason we select the venue-shift is twofold: First, literature shows an agreement between several researchers that venues could have explanatory value for change. Second, it indicates potential links between the pattern of policy outputs and institutional structures.

We operationalize this research agenda by looking at an empirical case of policy change with considerable impact on the policy process within a framework of Digital-Era Governance. We do so by posing the question: *“How did a venue-shift affect the policy change in terms of creating a Belgian federal ICT-manager position?”* Based on previous research from Torfs, Wayenberg and Danneels (2021) we can confidently embrace the creation of this position as a policy change within a Belgian governance arrangement.

To answer the question, we first determine the venue-shift in our case by triangulating data from media reports, direct communication from relevant venues, and interviews. Second, we explore how the relationship between the venue-shift and creation of the function can be explained. Last, we identify what is inside the black box using ‘explaining outcome process tracing’ based on the data as collected in the first stage.

The aim of the research is not to create a generalizable mechanism, but to detect whether or not both elements can be (causally) linked and if a venue-shift can offer a potential explanation for policy change. In doing so, we gain knowledge in a technologically innovate domain with a growing impact on the

sustainability of a government's functioning. The added value is twofold: (1) Theoretically, the answer allows to extend our knowledge on the explanatory factors for policy change according to the PET and whether or not causality is plausible. (2) Empirically, the results answer to the signal from van der Heijden et al. (2019) calling for more empirical work on the application of the ideas behind causal mechanisms in policy change.

### **Sample supporting literature**

Baumgartner and Jones. 2009. *Agendas and Instability in American Politics*.

Beach and Pedersen. 2019. *Process-Tracing Methods*.

Capano and Howlett. 2019. *Causal Logics and Mechanisms in Policy Design*.

Capano and Howlett. 2020. *A Modern Guide to Public Policy*.

Heikkila et al. 2014. *Understanding a Period of Policy Change*.

van der Heijden et al. 2019. *Have Policy Process Scholars Embraced Causal Mechanisms?*

Weible and Sabatier. 2018. *Theories of the Policy Process*.

# (Virtual) T07P22 / Institutions and Politics of Expert Advice and Policy Learning

**Chair :** Wei Li (Huazhong University of Science and Technology)

**Second Chair :** Hongmei Lu (Michigan Technological University)

**Third Chair :** Claire Dunlop (University of Exeter)

## Session 2AFTERNOON SESSION

Tuesday, July 6th 16:30 to 18:30 (Virtual 09)

### (Virtual) Whither Policy Innovation? Lessons from Public Sector Innovation

Kidjie Saguin (University of Melbourne)

Mehmet Akif Demircioglu (Carleton University)

The study of public policy initially emerged to understand how administrators make a choice between varying degrees of policy change: incremental vs innovative change (Dror 1970, Hogwood and Peters 1982). Subsequent development various policy process theories have dismissed this dichotomous thinking about policy change in favour understanding the conditions that allow for change to happen. The different frameworks developed by Kingdon's (1984) and Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith's (1993) established processual conditions that allow for policy change to happen regardless of the degrees of change. Similar policy theories such as Baumgartner and Jones' (1993) punctuated Equilibrium Theory and Peter Halls' (1993) orders of policy change sought to establish the inherent inter-relationship between innovation and incrementalism, ultimately rendering irrelevant the dichotomous thinking about the forms of policy change.

However, the relationship between these two forms of policy change (incremental vs innovative) have been challenged in two ways. First, the tendency to stop at examining processes for innovation provides an incomplete understanding of the entire innovation process (Guo and Ba 2020). Innovative processes do not instantaneously lead to innovation (Rogers 2003). As Nair and Howlett (2015) had argued, for instance, not all policy pilots lend itself to scaling up, questioning the ability of pilots to actually spur innovation at a larger scale. The procedural rationalism assumed by advocates of innovative processes obfuscates the intention with the outcome, which reinforces the functionalist bias prevalent in policy studies (Pierson 2005). Second, innovative changes have been observed even in the absence of smaller changes in ideas and institutions (Cashore and Howlett 2007). This suggests the hypothetical relationship between incremental and innovative changes as advocated by many of these policy process theories could be misstated or misspecified. Missing is a more nuanced understanding of the mechanisms that link the processual discussions (what are the conditions for innovation to happen?) with the content of policies (to what extent is a policy considered an innovation?).

This paper seeks to provide a synoptic view of the relationship between the process ('how to innovate') and content ('degree of innovation') of policy innovation. The paper provides a fresh perspective to the historically important but largely neglected theorisation of what comprises policy innovation and how can it happen. It does so by synthesising the longstanding literature on public policy innovation and recently burgeoning research on public sector innovation (PSI).

Policy innovation is essentially a response to a policy problem and the extent to which the policy can be innovative is influenced by the tractability of the problem (Torfing and Ansell 2017). PSI literature, on the other hand, emphasised the source or driver of innovation – whether it is triggered within the government (Arundel, Bloch, and Ferguson 2019, Arundel, Casali, and Hollanders 2015, Demircioglu and Audretsch 2020) or externally through normative pressures (Damanpour, Walker, and Avellaneda 2009, Verhoest, Verschuere, and Bouckaert 2007). Based on these considerations, a typology of policy innovation that incorporates both processual and content-related dimension is developed. Four types of policy innovation were proposed– radical, isomorphic, absorptive, and bricolage. The typology's propositions about the process of policy innovations and its degree of change were tested using case studies of various development policies from the Philippines. The empirical cases provide implications on the ideal governance arrangements that can spur specific types of policy innovation.

## **(Virtual) Learning from the people: Policy feedback, behaviors, preferences and policy alternatives**

Lihi Lahat (Sapir Academic College, Israel/ Azrieli Institute of Israel Studies, Department of Political Science, Concordia University, Montreal. )

One way to improve policy advisory institutions' design is to incorporate citizen preferences into the institution's body of expert knowledge. While this suggestion is taken seriously in policymaking, there is still work to be done. Expert advice that considers people's perceptions and needs is a significant way to incorporate different voices into the policy process. However, it is challenging to integrate this type of knowledge into policy design and in a way that will guide the choice of policy tools (Dunlop and Radaelli, 2018; Howlett 2019).

Most studies in the area refer to public opinion, public mood, or general perceptions, but we are interested in people's perceptions of a specific policy issue. Moreover, studies dealing with people's perceptions and their effect on policies as a feedback mechanism usually do so ex-post; less attention has been given to ex-ante feedback mechanisms on the individual level. We are more interested in the latter effort, as connecting people's behavior, preferences, and support for policy alternatives in a specific policy field may guide policy design.

This study takes a step in this direction by exploring the question empirically in the context of how people use their time. We used a survey of 671 Israeli adults to examine the following questions. How do people divide their time into sleep, work, care time, and personal time? What are their preferences for the use of time in these four categories? What is their support for different policy alternatives that affect different uses of time? Are there connections between the uses of time, preferences for the uses of time, and policy alternatives? In five out of 11 policy alternatives we explored, we found a connection between the way people use their time or want to use their time and their policy preferences.

The study contributes to ideas on adopting policy and policy tools based on people's preferences. It suggests a path to policy learning that reinforces expert knowledge and organizational capabilities. Finally, it contributes to the theoretical literature on feedback mechanisms in public policies.

\* With Professor Itai Sened

Dunlop, C. A., & Radaelli, C. M. (2018). Policy learning and organizational capacity. In *The Palgrave handbook of public administration and management in Europe* (pp. 595-620). Palgrave Macmillan, London.

Howlett, M. (2019). Behavioural considerations in public policy: matching policy tools and their targets. In Straßheim, H., & Beck, S. (Eds.). *Handbook of Behavioural Change and Public Policy*. Edward Elgar Publishing. 78-88.

## **(Virtual) The effects of tourism flows in the Metropolitan Area of Barcelona**

Montserrat Crespi-Vallbona (Universitat de Barcelona)

The rise of the tourist phenomenon in the city of Barcelona has its momentum in the 1992 Olympic Games. At that time, it is placed on the map of potential visitors as a destination of interest, and then the number of international tourists increases year after year. One of the characteristics of tourism is that its effects expand on the immediate environment. In this sense, the purpose of this study is to analyze the evolution of the tourist houses in the city of Barcelona to forecast its expansion in the nearest cities and functional areas, specifically in the so-called AMB (Metropolitan Area of Barcelona). Specifically, this research aims to analyse first the type and the form of growth that this specific typology of accommodation follows. Secondly, which are the variables that explain this growth of tourist houses in Barcelona and its territorial boundaries, such as tourist attractions and communication hubs. Secondary data used in this research comes from official registered tourist houses (Catalunya Government), Open Data (Barcelona municipality) and from the Airbnb tourist platform. Results show how these variables must lead the future public policies of Barcelona and AMB to prevent tourism negative effects.

## **(Virtual) The Policy Learning Stream: Learning from experts during crises in multilevel governance settings**

Bishoy Zaki (Universiteit Gent)

Ellen Wayenberg (Universiteit Gent)

With technical complexity and ambiguity, fast-burning wicked crises such as COVID-19 mandate

governments to engage in an intensive process of epistemic policy learning. Naturally, the outcomes of such learning would then be used to inform life-saving policy responses. However, epistemic policy learning is no straightforward endeavour (particularly in such crises), and misdirected learning can have catastrophic consequences. In addition to endemic issues of accountability and representativeness, institutional design and governance of learning in such contexts can pose crippling challenges to learning the right lessons.

Next to epistemic policy learning being central to informing policy response, burgeoning COVID-19 literature emphasizes the importance of grid, collaborative and multi-level governance considerations. However, relatively little is known on how epistemic policy learning is leveraged within multi-level contexts in such crises. In this paper, we draw on policy learning and public policy literature to establish the potential value of leveraging localized clusters of expertise in multilevel governance settings as a driver for intra-crisis policy learning. We then empirically appraise: how is such expertise operationalized across the local, regional and central levels during fast-burning wicked crises? We also review whether (and how) institutional designs and governance arrangements are set in place to foster such utilization of expertise and the ensuing implications for the effectiveness of COVID-19 policy responses.

To do so, we use the Belgian COVID-19 policy response as an empirical case. With an established federal and multi-level governance setting, the Belgian case offers a fertile soil for analysis that can be replicable and extendable to other jurisdictions. Our contribution here is threefold: Theoretically, we extend the knowledge on epistemic policy learning in crises by factoring-in an omnipresent yet understudied lens of multi-level governance. Empirically, we offer a refined understanding of epistemic policy learning in fast-burning wicked crisis. In praxis, we offer insights and recommendations to policymakers and practitioners as to the refinement of policy advisory governance in crises.

We utilize a case study approach triangulating inputs from expert interviews, official interviews and analysis of public documents to offer thick descriptions commonly employed to account for the layering of multi-dimensional contexts salient in policy learning research.

### **Sample supporting literature (Reformatted for word limit)**

Baekkeskov, E. (2016). Explaining science-led policy-making: pandemic deaths, epistemic deliberation and ideational trajectories.

Daviter, F. (2018). The Rise and Demise of Epistemic Policy Learning: The Case of EU Biotechnology Regulation

Dunlop, C. (2009). Policy transfer as learning: capturing variation in what decision-makers learn from epistemic communities.

Dunlop, C. (2017). The irony of epistemic learning: epistemic communities, policy learning and the case of Europe's hormones saga.

Dunlop, C. A. (2017). Policy learning and policy failure: definitions, dimensions and intersections.

Dunlop, C. A., & Radaelli, C. M. (2013). Systematising policy learning: From monolith to dimensions.

Dunlop, C., James, S., & Radaelli, C. (2019). Can't get no learning: the Brexit fiasco through the lens of policy learning.

Dunlop, C., Ongaro, E., & Baker, K. (2020). Researching COVID-19: A research agenda for public policy and administration scholars.

Zaki, B. L., & Wayenberg, E. (2020). Shopping in the Scientific Marketplace: COVID-19 through a policy learning lens.

# (Virtual) T07P22 / Institutions and Politics of Expert Advice and Policy Learning

**Chair :** Wei Li (Huazhong University of Science and Technology)

**Second Chair :** Hongmei Lu (Michigan Technological University)

**Third Chair :** Claire Dunlop (University of Exeter)

## Session 3 MORNING SESSION

Wednesday, July 7th 10:00 to 12:00 (Virtual 09)

### (Virtual) Developing a new pluralism in participatory policy-making

Liz Richardson (University of Manchester)

Francesca Gains (University of Manchester)

Policy advice processes are faced with the challenge of taking account of multiple preferences and recommendations. Scientific and technical expertise is drawn into policy-making through commissioned work, ad-hoc advice, or closed policy advice spaces; policy advice based on experiential expertise of citizens and civil society groups often takes place through sectoral- and place-based consultation and participation initiatives. Participatory processes have been embedded in local governance decision-making for decades (Stoker and Wilson, 1991), through corporate pluralism, where representative democracy is supported by additional structures and processes to broker between competing interests. Advocates argue corporatism is necessary because 'insofar as electoral representation works, it does so in conjunction with a rich fabric of representative claimants and advocacy (Urbinati and Warren 2008, p. 402), and that interest groups 'have the potential to compensate for electoral inflexibilities - providing high levels of targeted, information-rich representation' (Disch 2011).

However, such practices have faced a number of challenges. Neo-pluralism and elite theory point to a hierarchy of expertise which privileges technocratic and political knowledge over citizen views, and often over scientific expertise. Interests have differential power and policy-makers can be captured by sectional interests. Some interests can make representations outside of the established but ineffectual corporatist structures. A combination of 'hyper-pluralism' and the undermining of the authority of (professional, scientific, technical) experts, has also resulted in a disordered situation with too many fragmented interests for the system to deal with effectively (Sirianni 2009).

There are theoretical and empirical problems with the premise that place, identity or interest-based groups are able to make effective claims to represent a wider constituency or a set of expertise (Mansbridge 2003, Saward, 2006). This includes technical and scientific experts as much as citizen and civil society groups. Claims around non-electoral representation raise questions about who ought to be included and on what basis their claims can be assessed.

A frequent criticism is an over-reliance on the 'usual suspects'. When applied to citizens or civil society groups, such individuals are often dismissed by elected representatives as lacking 'authenticity' (Richardson, Durose and Perry, 2019). Interest group representatives can be equally dissatisfied with corporatist arrangements they feel render them tokenistic (Lim et al 2011). Other forms of professional or scientific expertise are also dismissed in terms of legitimacy. So, what are the implications of widespread dysfunctions in corporate pluralist models for the design of institutional arrangements for participation in policy?

This paper offers a framework developed in an action research project with the Greater Manchester Combined Authority. It sets out an attempt to re-shape dysfunctional corporate pluralism into a new pluralism, in support of more participatory policy-making. The re-shaping was premised on a re-valuing of different kinds of expertise, clarifying the underpinning logics and purposes for different kinds of consultation and participation in local governance. In so doing we argue the case for a new pluralism which reconfirms the logic of representative politics but one which is open to participatory processes that are rigorous, porous and inclusive.

## **(Virtual) The interplay of vertical and horizontal dimensions of the European transnational think tank field as the way to gain influence upon EU policy-making**

Tatyana Bajenova (European University Institute)

This paper conceptualise European think tanks (TTs) as members of the transnational field in order to approach one of the main research puzzles related to the analysis of TTs: the issue of TT influence and the method for achieving it, which was not explicitly addressed in studies comparing TTs at both European and national levels. This comparative study analyses 24 European TTs working on EU policy, foreign affairs and domestic issues from Brussels, which function at supranational level, as well as from France, Slovenia and the United Kingdom. It is based on the empirical data collected from official EU and national documents, website materials of TTs and related organisations, as well as semi-structured interviews with representatives of TTs, their networks and EU institutions. The paper's conceptual framework builds upon Bourdieu's field theory and its recent developments. While acknowledging a horizontal dimension of the European TT field, reflected in its intermediary position between adjacent social fields, the paper identifies mechanisms which account for its vertical differentiation from national fields, such as a concentrated location in Brussels, a separate category in the EU Transparency register, specific rankings, funding schemes, transparency mechanisms and networks existing at the European level.

The study argues that both these dimensions of the transnational European TT field allow its members to accumulate and strategically use symbolic, political, academic, publicity, economic and network forms of capital built at the European level in order to enhance their legitimacy, policy-relevance, credibility and visibility in the Brussels policy-making scene and to gain political influence on the EU institutions. Drawing on this conceptual framework and on the analysis of quantitative and qualitative data, the paper examines the relations of European TTs with European institutions (as players in the EU political field), as well as their internal and external environments (other adjacent social fields). As a result, the study identifies specific factors determining their "insider" or "outsider" status in terms of access to EU policy-making which allow to map the structural topography of the positions of European TTs in their own field from the most "dominant" to the most "dominated" according to the volume and structure of their capital most recognised in the EU political field. Nevertheless, as the paper argues, the "insider" status of TTs rather represents their legitimising function than their real influence on the decision-making process.

This paper contributes to current scholarly debates related to the challenges of the EU's "democratic deficit" and legitimacy, by showing the more privileged access of "insider" TTs to the EU institutions, but also the insufficiency of transparency measures which regulate their relations. This study represents therefore the blend of theoretical and empirical insights into the complex and multiscalar processes of TT operation in Europe and their relations with the EU institutions.

## **(Virtual) What explains the diffusion of unpopular policies among Brazilian municipalities? An approach about the adoption of Special Zones of Social Interest (ZEIS) and the Public Concession of Building Rights (OODC).**

LETICIA KLUG (UNIVERSITY OF BRASILIA - BRAZIL)

DENILSON BANDEIRA COELHO (University of Brasília)

Political actors have different incentives to adopt innovations in public policies. Several studies carried out in Brazil sought to explain the adoption of public policies with low degree of conflict by Brazilian municipalities (COELHO, TURGEON AND CAVALCANTE, 2016; SUGIYAMA, 2008; COELHO, 2012; SUGIYAMA, 2011; OLIVEIRA, 2013; SPADA, 2010; SEGATTO, 2017). However, political innovations with low popular approval also spread among the units of the federation. How to explain the diffusion of these innovations? This research tries to provide answers studying the adoption of Special Zones of Social Interest (ZEIS) and the Public Concession of Building Rights (OODC) by Brazilian municipalities over 100.000 inhabitants. ZEIS are instruments for land regularization. It is applied areas illegally occupied by low-income populations. The zoning process generates conflicts in the territory, as it affects the interests of different social groups. It increases the risk and the costs for the political actors. The institution of the Public Concession of Building Rights generates a new contribution or fee for the land owner. Its objective is to regulate the land market. The policy of creating new taxes, fees or any type of contribution tends to be rejected by the voters (Berry and Berry, 1990). Hypotheses about the influence of political-electoral dynamics, political parties, institutional capacities and socioeconomic conditions and neighborhood aspects will be tested to explain the diffusion process of these two policies. The central hypothesis is that the electoral cycle and the political credit claiming are variables that explain the adoption of these instruments by most municipalities.

## **(Virtual) How to design foresight to achieve policy learning? Evidence from two Belgian cases**

Rafaël Ritondo (Université Catholique de Louvain)

Foresight is a participatory institution of policy advice. In foresight, policy actors with a diversity of backgrounds and beliefs are invited to explore together possible alternative futures to feed decision-making and actions (Da Costa et al., 2008). Yet, little is known about the mechanisms that lead to alterations of individual beliefs and collective representations, namely learning (Ritondo et al., 2020), which is one of the conditions for foresight to address policy issues effectively (Moyson et al., 2017; Swinkels, 2020). Based on interviews with the participating policy actors to two Belgian cases, we built a model of how learning occurs during foresight following a grounded theory method (Bryant & Charmaz, 2011). We found that participants' involvement to collectively shape the results and the creation of a sense of accountability for these results are central mechanisms for learning. These mechanisms are supported by methods designed to deal with controversies between experts, policymakers and stakeholders and by contextual factors like participants' expectations and the level of integration with decision-making processes. We conclude with several implications and an agenda for future research about the design of foresight as a participatory institution of policy advice.