# (Virtual) P11 / Urban policy analysis: Theoretical and empirical developments

**Topic :** COMPARATIVE PUBLIC POLICY

**Chair :** David Kaufmann (ETH Zürich)

**Second Chair :** Mara Sidney (Rutgers University)

## GENERAL OBJECTIVES, RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND SCIENTIFIC RELEVANCE

This panel will explore theoretical and empirical developments of urban policy analysis. We suggest that to understand contemporary societal transformation, and political and policy processes more generally, the policies that cities create and implement are essential objects of study. That is, an urban policy analysis is not relevant simply because of the high rate of policy activity happening in cities, but also because it highlights dimensions of political life that are more visible within cities but that also operate at other scales. Contemporary confrontations between public and private property, between power and justice, between participation and exclusion, wealth and poverty, and emerging technology and existing economic, social, and political structures take physical form in cities (Kaufmann and Sidney 2020). Such confrontations occur in the midst of the pandemic: “Essential workers” risk their lives to provide services to other workers who are able to stay at home; multiracial protests, led by Black and other racialized community members, rally against police brutality in U.S. cities and also around the world.

Clarence Stone (2015, 117) reminds us that “cities are not the nation state writ small”. Thus, urban political processes and the policies that emerge are likely to differ from processes and policies at other scales – international, national or subnational. Yet, the dominant policy theories and concepts mostly stem from analyses of national political processes (e.g. Advocacy Coalition Framework or Multiple Streams) and may not be automatically applicable to cities. We wonder whether and how these theories can be adapted to explicitly consider scale and dimensions of urban politics, including cross-level perspectives. And we wonder, in contrast, what ground-up urban policy analysis can take shape from empirical studies of urban policy processes.

Finally, and perhaps most pressing and speaking directly to our current moment: What can urban policy analysis reveal about strategies for resisting oppressive structures and institutions, and rebuilding or transforming urban life to reduce marginalization and increase justice. What are justice-producing urban policies?

We would therefore like to explore dimensions and frameworks for urban policy analysis, and empirical applications that contribute to theory development. We welcome interdisciplinary perspectives the build on theoretical developments in public policy, urban politics, urban studies, and social sciences.

- Kaufmann, David and Mara Sidney. 2020. Toward an Urban Policy Analysis: Incorporating Participation, Multilevel Governance, and ‘Seeing like a City, PS: Political Science & Politics 53(1): 1-5.

- Stone, Clarence. 2015. Reflections on Regime Politics: From Governing Coalition to Urban Political Order. Urban Affairs Review 51 (1): 101–137. Page 117.

## CALL FOR PAPERS

We welcome papers that explore and seek to build urban policy analysis, empirically and theoretically. We are specifically interested in papers that address current issues of health and racial justice, and calls for institutional transformation. In general, we seek papers that share a common purpose in deliberately building urban policy analysis and thus will set the stage for productive dialogue and perhaps result in collaborative work. In particular, we would like to explore the following dimensions of an urban policy analysis:

**How does urban policy analysis theorize the urban?** The city may be thought as a geographic material site and therefore an analysis should be attentive to how the context might exert influence on policy processes and outcomes. Yet, the city also is a political arena that transcends geography, speaking rather to a mode of politics and of daily life that is characterized by diversity, complexity, flexibility, and ongoing

change.

**Who are the diverse, shifting, or stable actors in urban policy?** How do race, class, gender, LGBTQ-subjugated identity groups resist oppressive policies, and forge change? The density of the urban political arena and the immediacy of policy problems can give rise to a diverse set of actors. The urban site allows – or demands – that urban policy research be attentive to the grassroots level and to everyday actions, as much as the business and elite actors.

**What is the role and the scale of the state?** Urban policy analysis should investigate the degree to which state actors and institutions are central, rather than assuming a state-centric situation. As well, analysis must investigate at which scales state and non-state actors interact, make decisions, implement policies, etc. Such an investigation also acknowledges that there are multiple state actors with varying and sometimes conflicting perspectives.

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## Session 1Urban Policy Analysis (Virtual Afternoon Session)

Thursday, July 8th 14:00 to 16:00 (Virtual 22)

### (Virtual) Police, Politics, Polis – Policing refugees in the city

Sybille Muench (Universität Hildesheim)

Marilena Geugjes (Hessische Hochschule für Polizei und Verwaltung )

**Police, Politics, Polis – Policing refugees in the city**

During the "long summer of migration" in 2015, the framing of refugee immigration in Germany was characterized by both an increasingly politicized understanding of integration and an intensifying security discourse. In addition to the problematization of refugees as a source of (perceived) insecurity on the one hand, the provision of security in shared refugee accommodation as well as the (regionally uneven) threat of hate crime against refugees, on the other, since then represent salient questions.

These ambiguous perceptions of insecurity in the context of migration require complex mechanisms of problem detection and management on behalf of the police at the local level, which have rarely been researched so far. Our research project (since January 2021) thus focuses on the policing of refugees in larger German cities, exploring the interconnections between three aspects: the role of local police as local state authority ("police"), the relevance of urban political strategies in the local governance of migration ("politics"), and the importance of urban civil society, its networks, and discourses ("polis"). The overarching question is how police action takes on a particular logic in a specific urban space through its embeddedness in a locally specific context. The paper links interpretive policy analysis and its interest in how practices and discourses are specific to a certain context with current intellectual developments in migration studies that have been labelled as “local turn”. If we can show that even police action is subject to such a shaping by the urban context, though generally considered to be strictly law-bound, under direct state responsibility, and embodying the state monopoly on the use of force, this would be a strong argument to pursue the local turn of migration policy research further. Conceptually, the project assumes, first, that cities, through their historically developed practices, internalized self-images, and discourses, suggest particular ways of practice to actors while letting other ways appear less appropriate. Cities offer spaces for certain kinds of cooperation and conflict articulation, for interpreting needs and problems, and for constructing commonalities and differences. Second, because of their specific logic of social integration, cities are also designed to link open borders and practices of dealing with heterogeneity. They differ from states in this respect but are in complementary relationships to them. Third, we assume that the mediation logic underlying police action in urban space is essentially shaped by a normative field of tension between the poles of "security" and "human dignity" that are negotiated in urban space.

### (Virtual) Contentious governance and the city. How urban alliances contest national authority over energy and migration policy

Imrat Verhoeven (University of Amsterdam)

Raffaele Bazurli (Queen Mary University of London)

This paper identifies and analyzes the phenomenon of “contentious governance” in processes of local energy and migration policy making. It draws upon a comparative case study of cities in the Netherlands and Spain to show that local government and civil society leaders develop collaborations to resist national policy mandates. These overlooked urban alliances challenge theories about social movements that view contestation as performed by non-state actors. Collaborative resistance becomes a mode of governance as these partnerships engage in multi-level policy contention both to oppose national mandates and to pursue alternatives of their own creation. Recognition of this cross-scale political work challenges static notions of

governmental hierarchies which posit local authorities at the bottom as “policy-takers.”

We theorize and empirically illustrate processes of contentious governance in two urban settings and across two policy areas: resistance against plans to store carbon dioxide from the nearby port of Rotterdam under the town of Barendrecht (the Netherlands), and the pursuit of sanctuary policy for undocumented and forced migrants in Barcelona, in opposition against national mandates (Spain). Across these different policy sectors and spatial settings, we identify similar patterns of strategic interaction. To contest the policies devised by national authorities, urban players engaged in 1) alliance-building through a division of ‘oppositional labor’; 2) attempts to upscale political mobilization to the regional or national levels to get things their way; and 3) dealing with strategic dilemmas related to which forms of collective action to use and how to frame their points of view.

Bridging literatures of contentious politics and multi-level governance, our work on contentious governance opens up a space to conceptualize and analyze governmental and non-governmental players collaborating in the contestation of policy-making initiated by other governmental players or their business partners. We argue that such forms of collaborative resistance are understudied and that we should theorize them as a routine part of contemporary politics at the city-level and beyond.

## (Virtual) NEW MUNICIPALISM LEARNING FROM (UN)EXPERIENCE: THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE PUBLIC PROCUREMENT POLICY IN BARCELONA

Yunailis Salazar (Universitat Autónoma de Barcelona)

Urban governance in Barcelona has placed special emphasis on public-private and public-community collaboration, thus becoming an essential part of the local management of public services. In this context, the outsourcing of public services and functions has significantly increased over the last decades. This, together with an acceleration of the neoliberalisation of the city, has aroused an important theoretical and political debate about the pros and cons of a higher involvement of the private sector in the local public administration. The austerity policies and successive budget cuts implemented since the economic crash of 2008 have meant an increase in the precariousness in the labour conditions of the employees of outsourced services as well as a fewer control of the information on the real costs of the services.

The current municipal government led by the political party Barcelona en Comú included in its electoral programme for the 2015 elections the objective of changing the city management model by conditioning municipal procurement to social and environmental criteria. Since then, the City Council has developed a socially responsible procurement policy that aims both to regulate the management of public services, and to act as a social and economic policy instrument.

Despite the recent European trend to transform public contracting, we still lack robust analytical frameworks that can underpin the study of the implementation of socially responsible procurement. In order to understand how this innovative policy has been implemented in the city of Barcelona, this article uses the Five thread (stream) model developed by Michael Howlett within the field of policy implementation theory. This framework allows us to analyse how different factors related with the process, problem, policy, politics, and programme streams have conditioned the implementation of socially responsible procurement in Barcelona, posing serious challenges that have to do with the management of the policy – rather than with its formulation.

The empirical analysis is based on a set of interviews with different state and non-state actors belonging to different streams of the implementation process such as politicians, public officers, trade unionists, scholars, activists, the private sector and social economy enterprises.

Ultimately, the article will show how the achievement of the radical changes that the New Municipalism wants to promote is conditioned and limited by a set of processes related with the implementation of urban policies, and how the lack of experience in public management constitutes one of the main political challenges of the New Municipalism. With these regards, it will be argued that the experience in government represents an opportunity to adopt new political perspectives more attentive to the complexities of local public management and its possible institutional transformation.

Keywords: socially responsible public procurement, new municipalism, outsourcing, implementation, urban governance.

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## Session 2

Thursday, July 8th 16:30 to 18:30 (Virtual 22)

### (Virtual) Urban conflicts in São Paulo and Medellín: devices, courses of action and regimes of engagement towards the right to the city

Morgana Krieger

This paper aims to understand how the actors involved in urban conflict situations interact in order to change urban practices, analyzing if these interactions have the potential of strengthening the right to the city, in its radical perspective. The focus lies on urban conflicts in Latin American cities, as the continent presents a challenging scenario of urban growth and inequalities, which increases the possibility of conflicts that emerge – amongst other reasons – from the imposition of urban policies.
Combining two theoretical lenses – the right to the city (Lefebvre, 2008; Marcuse, 2009) and the sociology of public problems (Cefaï, 2009, 2017), part of French pragmatism – an analytical framework is developed to help make sense of conflictual urban situations. Such framework sheds light on the following aspects: the problematic situation; its publicization; the publics that form the public arena; the courses of actions taken by them; and the different engagement regimes that coordinate the actions of such publics.
Having in-depth case studies as methodology (Stake, 1998), the displacement of two neighborhoods in Medellín and the displacement of three blocks in São Paulo are analyzed as urban conflict situations. Fieldwork was conducted in an 18-month period, resulting in two comprehensive corpora formed by interviews, observations and documents. An abductive coding process was undertaken, and critical hermeneutic principles guided the analysis (Lejano & Leong, 2012)
The paper advances in three contributions. The first is the development and application of the hybrid framework for the analysis of urban conflicts. The second is the identification of devices and courses of actions from the perspectives of different publics involved in urban production, which are: the urban project implementers (mainly government actors), the citizens affected by the project, and actors that intermediate the relation between government and citizens). It is from these devices and courses of actions that the interactions amongst the actors emerge. Some of these interactions strengthen the assumptions of the right to the city: the collective struggle, the political learning, the bottom-up idealization, and the relationships with the intermediary public. On the other hand, courses of action in the opposite direction were identified, such as the narrow view of participation; the individualization of rights; the exclusion of non-rational or legal modes of interaction; and the exclusion of the public arena, fostering the individualization and commodification of the problematic situations. The third contribution is the identification of the temporal and emotional dimensions of the problematic situation and how they constrain the development of the public arena around urban conflicts.

### (Virtual) Interactions between Economic Development, Housing and Transport Policies and the Mobility Experience of Workers in Greater Mexico City

David López-García (The New School)

Contemporary urban policy analysis is based on a sectorial approach that subdivides urban dynamics into individual silos. However, the silos approach has led researchers and practitioners to specialize in narrow areas of expertise which has led to a failure to link together important subfields of investigation. The purpose of this research is to contribute analytical and methodological tools for the empirical investigation of policy interactions in urban policy analysis. To do so, the Policy Interactions Framework is developed and applied, which constitutes an original approach to urban analysis designed to explore the possibility that urban outcomes are better understood as the result of the dynamics of interactions between policies from different policy areas, such as housing, economic development or transportation, than from any single policy area.

The Policy Interactions Framework is applied to study the mobility experience of workers in the Mexico City

Metropolitan Zone (MCMZ). It does so by exploring the relationship between the spatial location of the demand for labor, housing patterns, and transport policy. A mixed-methods approach was designed. The quantitative component included identification of employment subcenters to assess shifts in the demand for labor, the development of an indicator to map the spatial distribution of public and common mobility resources, and a study of average time and distance of the journey to work as relative accessibility to jobs. The qualitative component of the study included semi-structured interviews with 64 key informants and 4 focus groups with 30 residents from the eastern subregion of the MCMZ, a dormitory city with strikingly low accessibility to jobs.

The study demonstrates that the mobility experience is the result of the interaction between three urban policy areas: economic development policy, housing policy, and transport policy. Despite the MCMZ achieving to generate more employment subcenters, employment is concentrating in space and further away from Eastern-MCMZ. The distribution of public and common mobility resources across the metropolitan region is excruciatingly unequal, which increases the cost of commuting. The housing pathways available for the population locating in Eastern-MCMZ are operating to increase the physical distance between people and jobs. When interacting over time, these factors have contributed to produce the Eastern-MCMZ as a geography of low accessibility.

An outcome of studying accessibly to jobs through the policy interactions framework is to develop and put forward the Forced Mobility Hypothesis. By this concept, I refer to a situation in which the interaction between a) the spatial location of the demand for labor, b) the housing pathways available for the population, and c) the political economy of public transport operates to produce geographies of low accessibility to jobs that consistently increase the transportation costs associated with the journey to work. Inhabitants of these geographies do not just choose to live in geographies of low accessibility. Instead, they are forced to live in such territories due to the housing pathways available for them given the kind of economic activity in which they participate. The forced mobility hypothesis constitutes an original contribution to the literature on accessibility.

### (Virtual) From the problem of the city to the city's problem. Exploring the coupling of national and local agendas

Roberto Rodríguez (Institut d'Etudes Politiques de Paris (Sciences Po))

Theories and frameworks on agenda-setting have mostly been applied to national politics, leaving still a long way to understand local and multi-level dynamics (Eissler, Mortensen, & Russell, 2016). Such national level-oriented research may come into question if we try to understand national and local agenda coupling. Scholten (2013) identifies national-local agenda-setting patterns as the result of multi-level interactions. According to the author, the problems' agenda could have a centralist orientation considering only the national government's intervention or multi-level, when there is a differentiated perspective involving national and local aspects (Scholten, 2013). However, due to decentralization processes, new governance dynamics, and changes in the problem's framing, this orientation may change, leading to a transition between both perspectives.

This article seeks to explain this transition through a comparative historical analysis of the air quality policy in Mexico City and Paris. Both cities got involved when national and local agendas were coupled, and both levels recognized the problem as a multi-level matter. The article tests two hypotheses: local and national agendas couple when 1) the problem framing considers the city's involvement and 2) local levels receive direct competences on the policy domain.

For the comparative analysis, I distinguish three levels determining national and local agenda coupling. A macro-level that represents the general dynamics of the political system: major reforms in the national and supra-national context and major political events. The meso-level is related to the distribution of formal competences to each territorial level in a particular domain. Finally, a micro-level, where the changes and processes at the other two levels mix up with local institutions and politics.

In Mexico, the problem entered the local agenda due to social pressure and the activism of local bureaucrats in a context of political turmoil. Under fraud allegations of the 1988 electoral process, the government had to be more attentive to social demands. In addition, the appointed Mayor was motivated by personal political ambitions and took advantage of the politicization of the issue to gain some leverage. In Paris, agendas were coupled when the problem was redefined as an urban issue. This was the product of structural-level changes giving autonomy to territorial actors, in combination with new national and European approaches.

Consequently, the problem went from one phrased in technical, administrative terms to linking vehicle pollution to health hazards. Such framing turned the issue into an urban matter, opening the door to the city's involvement. In both cases, the adoption of the air pollution problem in the local agenda was not necessarily because the State granted specific attributions to the cities; it was more a consequence of local

politics and structural changes than the direct allocation of competences. That is, the macro and micro levels were determinant in the cities' adoption of the issue.