W08 / How moral emotions affect the policy process

Topic : Policy Process, Policy Making

Chair : Zsolt Boda (ELTE Centre for Social Sciences)

Second Chair : Claudio Radaelli (European University Institute)

CALL FOR PAPERS

Emotions play a significant role in the public policy process, influencing agenda setting, decision-making, policy formulation, and implementation. Emotions often shape public opinion, mobilize support or opposition, interact with policy advise, affect the acceptance of implementation, in short, impact the overall policy landscape. This is especially true for policies on abortion, end-of-life decisions, LGBTQ+ issues, immigration, genetic engineering, climate change, just to name a few, which raise serious moral questions and may trigger strong emotions. The link with moral questions makes some issues controversial because of moral emotions. By this we mean emotions that one feels about the other or about a decision because that position or decision is morally correct or wrong. These emotions contribute to identity formation, thus creating constituencies for or against policies.

The workshop invites empirical papers with both quantitative and qualitative methods that investigate the nexus between moral emotions and the different stages of the public policy process. Listed below are some questions to illustrate possible topics for papers. These questions are not exhaustive or comprehensive, and we welcome any other lines of investigations that address emotional aspects of public policies.

- How do moral emotions affect public support for policies? What kind of policies are supported by specific emotions?

- How to measure the moral emotional valence of certain policies?

- What is the role of policy entrepreneurs in (moral) emotional framing of policies? What makes emotional framing successful?

- What is the role of populist and radical politics in the emotionalization of policy issues?

- How are emotions integrated into policy discourses and policy narratives?

- What is the role of moral emotions in public consultations? How to deal with emotions in these settings?

- How to reconcile value laden and emotionally loaded discourses with expert knowledge?

- How do technocratic discourses that mute emotions affect policy design?

- What is the role of moral emotions in public acceptance of policies and the success of implementation?

ABSTRACT

Emotions play a significant role in the public policy process, influencing agenda setting, decision-making, policy formulation, and implementation. Emotions often shape public opinion, mobilize support or opposition, interact with policy advise, affect the acceptance of implementation, in short, impact the overall policy landscape. This is especially true for policies on abortion, end-of-life decisions, LGBTQ+ issues, immigration, genetic engineering, climate change, just to name a few, which raise serious moral questions and may trigger strong emotions. The link with moral questions makes some issues controversial because of moral emotions. By this we mean emotions that one feels about the other or about a decision because that position or decision is morally correct or wrong. These emotions contribute to identity formation, thus creating constituencies for or against policies.

It is a real challenge for democratic governance to pursue deliberation on these issues and elaborate evidence-informed policy solutions while dealing with the clash of values, identities and (moral) emotions. Also, some political actors may capitalise on these issues and use them to whip up emotions and reinforce political identities. The policy practice of populist politicians and illiberal governments provide abundant examples, but the role and political use of emotions has been recognized in liberal democracies as well. At the same time, technocratic discourse point to muting emotions, burying them under the surface of “rational” decision-making.

The workshop addresses the topic under a wide angle and invite both conceptual and empirical papers, with

preference for empirical project. We wish to discuss both quantitative and qualitative work, that deals with the effect of emotions on the different stages of the policy process addressing questions like: How do emotional frames affect the public support of policies? What is the role of emotions in public consultations? How to reconcile emotionally loaded discourses with expert knowledge? How emotions affect policy design? Can technocratic discourse mute emotions? What is the role of emotions in public acceptance of policies and the success of implementation? A planned outcome of the workshop is a special issue proposal or an edited volume.

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Session 1

Wednesday, June 26th 10:15 to 12:00 (AULA 17)

Discussants

Francesca Vaghi (University of Glasgow)

Salvatore Sberna (Università di Pisa)

(Virtual) The emotional turn in public policy: A systematic review

Jonathan Kamkhaji (European University Institute)

Claudio Radaelli (European University Institute)

(Virtual) Missing Areas in the Study of Emotional Entrepreneurs in Politics and Policy

Moshe Maor (Reichman University)

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Session 2Dominika Wojtowicz

Wednesday, June 26th 14:00 to 17:15 (AULA 17)

Discussants

Anna Baczy?ska (Kozminski University, Poland)

Hannah Absalom (University of Birmingham)

Perils and Policies: Investigating the Impact of Criminal Violence on Public Emotions and Support for Policy Change

Salvatore Sberna (Università di Pisa)

From Compassion to Contention: Emotional Dynamics in Polish Public Sentiment Towards Ukrainian Refugees

Dominika Wojtowicz (Kozminski University)

Igor Lyubashenko (SWPS University of Social Sciences and Humanities)

(Virtual) Emotional Intelligence: A Key Driver of Managerial Engagement in Public Municipalities in Poland

Anna Baczy?ska (Kozminski University, Poland)

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Session 3Magdalena Martinez, Zsolt Boda

Thursday, June 27th 09:00 to 12:15 (AULA 17)

Discussants

Francesca Vaghi (University of Glasgow)

Moshe Maor (Reichman University)

Charitable fundraising in the NHS: emotional appeals, crisis and scarcity in UK healthcare

Francesca Vaghi (University of Glasgow)

Ellen Stewart (University of Glasgow)

Imagining the home. the role of interdisciplinary insights in producing wellbeing in English social housing

Hannah Absalom (University of Birmingham)

Positive Emotions: A Working Framework on Intellectual Humility and Policy Making

Magdalena Martinez (Rowan University)

Moral emotions and disruptive policy making under populist governance: the case of the Hungarian “child protection law”

Zsolt Boda (ELTE Centre for Social Sciences)