

# T01P09 / Political Sociology of the Policy Process

**Topic :** T01 / Policy Process Theories

**Chair :** Patrick Hassenteufel (Université Paris-Saclay)

**Second Chair :** Philippe Zittoun (ENTPE - Ecole de l'aménagement durable des territoires)

**Third Chair :** Alexandre Faure (Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales (EHESS) - Paris)

## GENERAL OBJECTIVES, RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND SCIENTIFIC RELEVANCE

This panel is dedicated to the development of a political sociology approach of the policy process. Its aim is to discuss its main characteristics and its contribution to the understanding of the policy process.

Our starting point is the statement made by Hacker and Pierson (2009) stressing that policies are not only the core terrain of political competition but also its main prize: control over policy is the heart of politics, related to the issues of political power and political legitimacy. In order to grasp these political dimensions of policies we propose to develop an analytical framework combining a sociological analysis of policy actors and policy processes.

The sociological analysis of actors relies upon methods focused on the constitutive elements of policy actors: their social backgrounds, occupational careers and specializations, formal position-holding, reputations for policy influence, and not least shared ideas. In this perspective the methodological tools of the elite's sociology (socio-biographic analysis, positional analysis, network analysis...) are very useful, but they need to be combined with other sociological methods able to analyze what they actually do in the policy process, as the pragmatic approach does (Zittoun, 2014).

It is an empirical and comprehensive scientific approach, which considers as essential the inquiry work at the micro-level to observe, to describe and to understand the logic of the policymakers' concrete practices during the policy process. In that sense, it is an actor-centered approach with a specific attention to the role of "programmatic" actors structured around policy change proposals (Hassenteufel and al. 2010). Second, this approach gives a great importance to the cognitive, discursive and analytical skills of the actors to define concepts and situation, to argue, to develop strategies, to discuss, to persuade and to convince, to build agreement and disagreement with other, to give meaning to their purpose, to adapt themselves to the different contexts, etc. Third, this approach rejects the distinction between discourse and practice but also between idea and interest considering that ideas are a discourse which can't be separated from its enunciation. This perspective insists on ideas "in action" to challenge all analytical tools which propose an isolated analysis of ideas and practices. Last, this approach considers as essential the inquiry, the experiment, the learning and the test developed by the actors themselves confronted to uncertainty. To define a concept, to analyse situations, to make new proposals, to produce arguments, policy actors have to test them inside interactions which challenge with critiques. During this controversial process, their discourses need to "resist" which implies to strengthen arguments and to adapt them, in order to build discursive coalitions improving their influence on the policy process.

The main task of the panel consists to discuss the methods, the concepts, the hypotheses and the contribution of a political sociology perspective on the policy process. All papers which can contribute theoretically, methodologically or empirically to this approach are welcome.

## CALL FOR PAPERS

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The sociological analysis of actors relies upon the methodological tools of the elite's sociology (socio-biographic analysis, positional analysis, network analysis...). They need to be combined with the pragmatic approach, which considers as essential the inquiry work at the micro-level to understand the logic of the policymakers' concrete practices during the policy process (Zittoun, 2014). It is an actor-centered

approach with a specific attention to the role of “programmatic” actors structured around policy change proposals (Hassenteufel and al. 2010). Second, this approach gives a great importance to the cognitive, discursive and analytical skills of the actors. Third, this approach rejects the distinction between discourse and practice and insists on ideas “in action” to challenge all analytical tools which propose an isolated analysis of ideas and practices. Last, to make new proposals and to produce arguments, policy actors have to test them inside interactions, in order to build discursive coalitions improving their influence on the policy process.

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## Session 1

Thursday, June 29th 08:15 to 10:15 (Manasseh Meyer MM 3 - 2)

### **Discussants**

A Smith (Centre Emile Durkheim, Bordeaux University)

### **How do policy change proposals succeed? Programmatic actors and discursive strategies**

Patrick Hassenteufel (Université Paris-Saclay)

Philippe Zittoun (ENTPE - Ecole de l'aménagement durable des territoires)

### **AN ANALYSIS OF MICRO-LEVEL WATER POLICY IMPLEMENTATION IN NIGERIA: A POLITICAL SOCIOLOGY APPROACH**

Adegboyega Adeniran (Australia National University)

### **Bureaucratic Discretion and Behavioral Logics of Intermediate Agencies**

Xiao Shiyang

### **Understanding the pragmatics of parliamentary debates: a case study from Switzerland**

Benoit Renevey (HES-SO//University of Applied Sciences of Western Switzerland)

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## Session 2

Thursday, June 29th 10:30 to 12:30 (Manasseh Meyer MM 3 - 2)

### Discussants

A Smith (Centre Emile Durkheim, Bordeaux University)

### **Policy Process in an Authoritarian Developmental Regime: Politics of Bureaucracy in South Korea, 1961-79**

Yumi Horikane (Meiji University)

### **Ecological Modernization as Dispositive for Spatio-Temporal Restructuration. The Chilean Case between the 1990-2010**

Fernando Campos Medina (Núcleo Científico Tecnológico en Ciencias Sociales y Humanidades)

Pamela Ugalde (Universidad Central de Chile)

Maria Skivko (Bauhaus-University Weimar (Germany))

### **How to use the notion of « horizon of expectation » to analyse public policies ?**

Alexandre Faure (Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales (EHESS) - Paris)