



## Public Policy in Action

Public Policy Making (6 ects) (Tilburg University)



Scannen om te openen op Studeersnel

# Public Policy in Action

## Chapter 1: Politics and policies in a changing world

### 1.2 Politics, policies and governance

**Politics** = the way in which a community of people tries to deal with a number of questions and challenges with which the community is wrestling.

Decision-making is embedded in the **constitutional democracy** (= refers to specific institutions, rules, procedures and routines that have been developed to facilitate the process of collective decision-making) → based on the Rule of Law. In the Netherlands we have the Dutch Polder Model, that means that people collaborate with each other to establish a number of vital collective provisions.

But politics is:

- “Politics as the binding allocation of values for society as a whole.” – Easton
- Who gets what how and when? – Lasswell → Scarcity in context in which this question has to be answered
- “The way in which societies deal with the balancing and allocation of values that is necessary to deal with challenges that a society as a political community is confronted with”

Priorities and values have to be balanced in order to establish an order of importance. There is not an optimal balance.

#### Coordination arrangements

The state has no monopoly on the allocation of the values and there are a lot of opportunities to get those values from the private companies with the license from the government. There is a distinction between three allocation arrangements: the state, the market and the community. Each arrangement favors another coordination mechanism. There are a specific way of allocating values, making use of a specific coordination mechanism.

- The community → the coordination is based on the trust that the members of this community have in each other. Trust is the key to share resources
- Economic literature → making use of the state is legitimize by referring to the inherent weaknesses of the market, no one can be excluded. Thereby, the existence of market failure, due to the misuse of power is a reason too. The third reason is the existence of external effects that could either harm a society or that would help a society. The external effects argument not only focuses on the bad, but on the good too.
- Specific institution → values not only economic one, but ideological reasons may play a role in the way in which specific allocation arrangements and coordination mechanisms are preferred.

#### Policies and policy processes

Collective decision-making processes are mostly focused on more or less concrete ideas or plans that are being developed, that are the subject of decision-making or that are being implemented → policies and policy processes

**Policies** = a more or less structured set of means and resources that are used to influence specific societal developments and to solve problems in a desired or planned way.

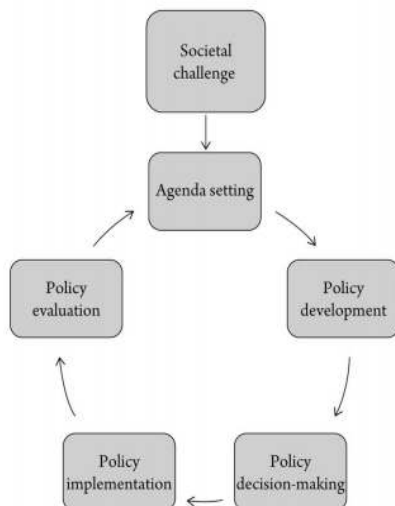
Political decision-making → on one hand focused on the formulation of policies which give direction on how to achieve specific but interrelated, *goals*. On the other hand, focused on the selection of *means and instruments*, the formulation of specific *measures* and the utilization of specific financial and other *resources* that are needed to achieve these goals.

In many cases, there is not one single political actor within the government that has the authority to take these decisions. Policies are the result of multiple decisions taken by *sets of actors* rather than a sole actor.

## Phases in the policy process

	Definition
Agenda setting	The identification and selection of those problems, among many, that need to receive the serious attention of public officials; considering that action is needed
Policy development	Development of a proposed course of action for dealing with a public problem; considering what kind of alternative actions/ options are possible; assessing possible effects of the options
Policy decision-making	Deciding politics on the possible courses of actions that are suitable by accepting the most appropriate proposal so that it becomes pertinent
Policy implementation	Application of the policy by one or more government organizations, thereby applying the measures and instruments that are set out in order to deal with the problem
Policy evaluation	To determine if the efforts that were made by the government in order to deal with the problem were effective, and why and why not (did policy work?)

## The policy cycle



If an issue draws enough political attention, it is said that it has become an issue on the political agenda. All the questions that are addressed when plans are developed to deal with the societal challenge, take place in the policy development phase. There are a lot of options that generate specific cost and benefits and this question of which option to choose is addressed in the decision-making phase. Then the implementation phase, when selected options will be further developed in terms of concreteness in order to be implemented.

After that, we're looking back on the process and the outstanding results. These are raised during the evaluation process and these outcomes may be an incentive to put the issue again on the political agenda.

## Governance

It draws attention to the shift from state-centric “*government*” in which state actors have a central role in societal steering, to more complex forms of “*governance*” which involves problem solving strategies in multi-actor networks (including but not limited to government institutions) and in multiple ways (including but not limited to “policy”)

Key assumptions behind governance:

- Government is not an entity but a conglomerate of actors.
- Government is not the only actor which tries to influence societal problems.
- Government interventions generate continuing interactions between all kinds of public, semipublic and private actors within several societal domains and at different levels that try to influence the shaping of policy processes.
- The governance capacity of each actor refers to the problem solving capacity of each actor, which depends on his ability to mobilize and combine relevant resources in a structured way to achieve specific policy goals or to address specific societal challenges

## 1.3 A variety of policy programs

- **Distributive policies** which aim at the distribution or allocation of new resources among actors. Redistributive policies aim at changing the existing distribution or allocation among actors. Resources may refer to the allocation of, for instance, budgets and tasks, competences and responsibilities.
- **Constitutional policies** refer to setting up new or reorganizing existing institutional arrangements or establishing new organizations with special tasks. For instance, the liberalization of the water supply and sanitation services in some countries, like Australia, can be seen as an example of constitutional policies. Another example, which is in line with the previous one, is the establishment of a Water Authority, as a supervisory agency that controls if these private water companies comply with specific water quality and service delivery norms.
- **Regulatory policies** deal with the regulation and control of specific activities through the establishment of specific (very often operational) norms that should be taken into account; norms which also deal with specific rights and obligations that should be taken into consideration. Examples of regulatory policies are the hygienic norms that water supply companies have to take into consideration in order to provide safe water. Regulatory policies might also address the rights and obligations and the conditions that have to be fulfilled in order to ensure that citizens have access to water and make use of these facilities.
- **Provisional policies** refer to policies that are focused on the creation of specific facilities, like dikes or the establishment of specific (service) infrastructure like the establishment of a sewerage system.
- **Stimulating policies** which aim at the creation of incentives that motivate actors to take specific decisions which are in line with the goals that policy makers had in mind. In doing so they try to stimulate a type of behavior that is considered as being desired without imposing it. An example is the use of subsidies to industrial firms so that they can take measures in order to improve the quality of their waste water or recycle their waste water. Also policies can be focused on presenting information in order to change the behavior of actors. For instance, information can be given to farmers so that they know how much water specific crops need in order to prevent water scarcity.

#### 1.4 Policy making in a changing world

Context in which policy processes take place à can be understood in terms of all kinds of changes. On the one hand these changes are closely related to a specific policy field or policy sector and each sector can be understood in terms of its own developments etc.

Sketching changes is important and based on our conviction that policies are not only grounded in politics but also in society. Because of the different perspectives, we are more aware of the needs, wishes and preferences that exist among citizens, companies, societal organizations and other actors. There are different concepts, but we will discuss four of them:

1. **Network society** = helps to understand the roles that interdependency, globalization and information technology play in modern society
2. **Liquid society** = different social and cultural changes that have come together during the last centuries have created a life that has been conceptualized as being fluid.
3. **Risk society** = helps us to understand the role that a modern, global and interdependent society creates with all kinds of risks that we have to address but often disregard.
4. **Hollow state** = refers to the idea that the central state as an important political governing principle has lost its significance

#### 1. Network society

- Vital role that information and communication play in modern society and the pervasiveness of the technologies that support the processing of information processing and communication à penetrated in all domains of human activity.
- The penetration of information and communication technologies have also stimulated another development after world war II à vital importance that information and knowledge play in our economic life. It refers to the fact that economic activities that are based on and make use of the production, collection, combination, upgrading, refinement, and exchange of knowledge and information have become a major and more influential economic sector.
- Another revolutionary development is the digitalization. Digital products are based on the ability to transform text, speech, images and communications or other symbols like numbers into bits and bytes. à knowledge spread on a global level in a speedy way and digital products

are flexible, for example to re-use. Thereby, it represents the capacity to integrate information and knowledge-based products.

- For governments the process of digitalization is more vital because policy processes are heavily information and knowledge-based: *Government is information. Its employees are nearly all information workers, its raw material is information inputs, its products is those inputs transformed into policies, which are simply an authoritative form of information. So in a narrow sense, to consider government information policy is not far from considering the essence of government itself.*
- Goods and services. Globalization specialization had radicalized the already existing process of structural differentiation. Five results can be witnessed:
  1. Led to increasing degree of interdependency which can be understood in terms of a network.
  2. This degree of specialization has become institutionalized, because we make use of highly specialized organizations (who are autonomous and probably are dependent on other organizations)
  3. Due to the complexity which emerges from these interdependencies, it is rather difficult to intellectually grasp this complexity.
  4. As result of this interdependency, exchange relationships exist à *“the material organization of time sharing practices that works through flows.”*
  5. These flows come together in specific nodes, in which the necessary resources that are vital for the operation of these flows are located à concentration of sophisticated knowledge and expertise that is necessary to operate and coordinate these flows.
- The network society has winners and losers, because there are people who can benefit from the chances and possibilities that the network offers, but some people can get excluded.
- Politics is challenged by the flows in the network society that cross borders and thus cross the jurisdiction of governments. It is also challenged by the nodes in this society, because these nodes not only have a local function, but a global function too.

## 2. The liquid society

- Besides the social and economic structure that changes, our culture changes too and these cultural changes challenge the role of politics in the way in which we develop and implement politics.
- Our institutions on which we have relied for centuries are losing their functions. People have liberated themselves from the socializing influences of these institutions.
- Diminishing role of institutions has a number of important consequences:
  1. People have been forced to develop their own life courses and find their own style
  2. Personal autonomy has increased through training and education of the mass population
  3. Freedom of choice à the western part of the world became wealthier and the emancipation and liberalization gave people more subjective freedom (like really feeling free)
- Worse things to mention; people form their own lives according to their own needs à higher expectations of the government. Thereby, the increased possibilities and chances also create uncertainty and anxiety. The third consequence is that in this world of unbridled but also anonymous opportunities and chances, there are chances to get lost.
- Two important consequences:
  1. The economic realm the so-called "experienced economy" (= Through the creation of unique experiences, marketing experts try to anticipate this process of individualization and construct possible new consumer groups in order to influence the process of choosing.) anticipates the socio-economic consequences --> ability to live a liquid and right life. --> commodities, goods and services as such have limited value.
  2. The world of politics. The diminishing role that ideology plays in political life – due to the fall of communism as well as the emancipation of citizens – has led to a development in which the visual aspect of politics has become more and more important. --> mediated politics and democracy. Media are more likely to report on surprising and unexpected occurrences than they are to pay attention to non-surprising

or expected occurrences. Second, the complexity and ambiguity of these occurrences can be reduced to simple, clear and consistent, almost binary occurrences, which tend to become personalized and dramatized. Third, the selective imaging created by the aforementioned mechanisms, increased by the tendency of the media to refer to each other in their coverage, creates a repetitive effect.

Politics is being portrayed as a theater and politicians seem to be the actors on stage, while citizens are defined as the watching, rather passive audience that needs to be entertained.

### 3. The risk society

- Refers to the changing nature of the risks that society is confronted with
- Modernization of society has created new risks. This type of risk is justified by the referring to the efficiency and efficacy gains that can be achieved when choosing a specific solution, choosing a specific way of producing or consuming. The modernization of society has been based on the calculus of risk, which has undermined the political nature of risk definition processes. When risks can be calculated, they also can be controlled, which leads to an illusion of control being fostered. This leads to new emergency and risk management industry has emerged. --> cherish the idea that risk management can be seen as a form and process of social engineering --> high expectations regarding the effectiveness of the policies that they ask government to make, while governments suggest that by taking these measures these risks are under control.

### 4. The hollow state

- The state as the dominant institution that primarily deals with challenges with which we as a modern society are wrestling, has lost its significance. → state has no longer the exclusive right to provide the platforms on which the authoritative allocation of values for society as a whole takes place and can no longer be viewed as having the monopoly. If they want to govern, it must rely on the plurality of interdependent organizations and other actors within and beyond the government.
- There are some shifts in governance that have taken place and challenge the governing monopoly of the state
  - Vertical upward shift → competences of the state have been transferred to international governing bodies, like the European Union.
  - Vertical downward shift → competences of the states have been transferred to lower local and regional authorities, due to a process of decentralization.
  - Horizontal shift in favor of the judiciary → become increasingly important in deciding how specific values have to be allocated toward society or toward societal groups
  - Horizontal shift in which specific policy implementation, public service delivery and policy enforcement activities are being transferred to specific agencies that operate at a distance from policy making units. Also known as agentification → strengthening of all kinds of forms of functional government
  - Horizontal shift towards companies that took over the production and distribution of services that in essence have a public nature but are organized in a private way.
  - Horizontal shift toward society and societal organizations → mobilize the self-organization capacity that is present in society and in societal groups
  - Horizontal shift toward the citizen as a co-producer of government policies or government services.
- The list above mentions some shifts and from these shifts we can derive four conclusions
  1. Central government has lost its significance, due to the upward, downward and horizontal shifts in governance that favor international government, local and regional government and functional government
  2. Shift from the public sector to the private sector, but private decision-making has increasingly become more public

3. Not only have the amount of involved organizations or actors increased, but also the interdependency between these organizations and actors has increased, which adds to the complexity of governing
4. As a result of these shifts “the state is being hollowed out” → this hollowing out of the state is also compensated for by the emergence of all kinds of new organizational but hybrid arrangements in which public and private organizations and actors collaborate

Number of vital transformations in society

- Government is just one of many actors, but at the same time government is not an entity but is also a variety of all kinds of organizations which act at different levels. → organizations are rather autonomous but on the other hand they are rather dependent and independent on each other → the organizations are also interdependent and closely interconnected → our present society can be seen as a collection of flows and nodes that operate at a local and global level
- Because of the institutions losing their significance and diminished role of ideolog, people have become freer to make their own choices → Cultural differentiation → also influences the way in which people attach added value to the role that politics play in modern society. Thereby, it is also strengthened by the fact that in a highly organized and specialized world, each organization and their representatives have rather narrow perspectives on how to handle challenges.
- Increased levels of structural and cultural complexity → governing capacity of government and the central role of politics in dealing with societal challenges. But people have higher expectations of the governance and governing.

## Chapter 2: Four perspectives on the policy process

### 2.2 Comparing policy perspectives: an analytical framework

Four different approaches to the policy process

1. **Rational perspective:** This perspective can be considered as a “primer” for the other approaches. It considers public policy as a means to solve societal problems. The scientific quest is to identify factors that contribute to effective and efficient problem solving. When these factors have been identified, policy makers can look for instruments and actions that help to tackle the problem. Information and knowledge play an important role in trying to understand what the problem at hand is and what kind of action would probably work. Practically, the application of scientific information and rational methods of decision-making are considered as a means for effective and efficient policies. This perspective is also described in the literature as the objectivist or the positivist perspective, as it involves a positive approach in terms of societal engineering based on sound knowledge and information
2. **Political perspective:** This perspective focuses on the power struggles between (inter) dependent stakeholders in a policy domain; struggles that are focused on protecting interests or 37 developing common interests. In doing so stakeholders make use of different resources and develop all kinds of strategies. Support from these stakeholders is a necessary condition for effective policies. In scholarly terms, this approach tries to explain the conditions that contribute to support from stakeholders. From a practical perspective, this approach articulates the importance of political and strategic skills.
3. **Cultural perspective:** The cultural perspective acknowledges that our perspective on the world is biased by our past experiences, beliefs, values and positions. Interaction processes are about sense-making: creating a shared understanding of the world in which we live by looking at the (different or convergent) frames that actors develop. This implies that in the cultural perspective public policy is an endeavor to bridge the diverging ideas about policy issues and integrate them into a shared understanding. For policy scholars, the cultural approach highlights the importance of language, symbols, visuals and interactions in policy processes in framing issues. For practitioners it offers insights in the backgrounds of diverging ideas in policy processes and may be helpful in developing framing strategies to deal with these diverging ideas in an open and equal dialogue. This perspective is also sometimes described in the literature as the social-constructivist perspective.

4. ***Institutional perspective***: Institutions can be defined as the formal and informal rules that affect or even guide actors' behavior, for instance if we look at the routines, procedures but also grown habits that have to be followed. These rules are often formulated to protect specific values that we consider important. Policy processes are socially and historically embedded processes. They are embedded in different and linked institutions, like the welfare state or the "Rechtstaat". Public policies can be considered as elements in the evolution and confirmation of these rules. Policy defines appropriate and inappropriate behavior and therefore affects the effectiveness and efficiency of policies. Many scholars are interested in the relation between different sets of rules (which can also be seen as institutions) and policy performance. For practitioners in the policy process the institutional perspective helps to identify and perhaps even overcome the limits these informal and formal rules represent, when implementing new policies or adjusting existing policies.

Seven characteristics to highlight the distinct features of each approach:

- **Dominant explanatory mechanism**: the basis explanations that are usually provided by the approach for the way policy processes evolve
- **Perspective on human behavior**: The basic explanation in the previous characteristic usually is based on a more abstract picture of what people are and why they behave like they do. Revealing this picture is helpful for characterizing each of these approaches.
- **Policy instruments**: Different perspectives on the policy process and human behavior also lead to different tools for interventions. Each of "our" perspectives offer guidance on tools that may be successful in specific settings and on the way these tools need to be implemented.
- **Evaluation**: The perspectives also differ in their perceptions of what successful policies are. They do this on the basis of different criteria. We will discuss the different criteria for each of the approaches.
- **The role of knowledge and information**: In each of the perspectives, scientific and policy-relevant information is an important asset. However, its meaning varies between the different perspectives.
- **The course of the policy process**: The perspective of the policy process varies between our four approaches. Is policy development to be considered as a linear, sequential process of different stages or is it much more complex and random?
- **The role of politics**: Finally, the perception of the role of politics and politicians varies between the four perspectives. This is closely connected to the issue of the primacy of politics in democratic regimes.

### 2.3 The rational perspective on public policy

- **Dominant explanatory mechanism**: policy and policy processes are connected to the realization of goals. Supporters of this model focus on the final assumptions in public policies: goals and means are the ground structure of public policies.
- **Perspective on human behavior**: human beings are considered as rational actors in this perspective. The actions are based on rational calculations of the costs and benefits of alternatives that contribute to the realization of their goals.
- **Policy instruments**: Goal rationality can be observed in at least three ways:
  1. It implies that the actions that have to be taken have to be programmed and planned
  2. The actions that have to be performed in this approach imply that policy makers have to devote their attention to the design and selection of policy instruments that they want to use → effective policy will be reached through the application of well-designed policy instruments
  3. Within the rational model, three main types of policy instruments are usually distinguished: regulative, economic and communicative instruments.
    - **Regulative**: "measures taken by governmental units to influence people by means of formulated rules and directives which mandate receivers to act in accordance with what is ordered in these rules and directives"



- Economic: involve the handing out or the taking away of resources while the subjects of the instruments are not obligated to perform the actions at which the instrument is directed
- Communicative: attempts to influence people through the transfer of knowledge, communications of reasoned argument and persuasion
- Policy evaluation: assessment of policies is particularly based on the extent to which the policy goals have been reached. Effectiveness and efficiency (and consistency) are the basic criteria for evaluating public policy, specifically from rational perspective.
  - Effectiveness of public policy → the extent to which the policies are achieving the benefits they are supposed to achieve plus any unanticipated side benefits.
  - Efficiency → transformational and distributional. Transformational refers to the relation between costs and benefits of a policy intervention. Distributional refers to the impact of a policy program on society as a whole.
- Role of knowledge and information: much significance to the role of knowledge, preferably scientific knowledge and information as well to the role of information and communication technologies. Two goals:
  - Required to process-trace the causal mechanisms that lead to the occurrence of a societal problem and identify factors that may be receptive to policy interventions
  - Useful to predict adequately the impact of different interventions
- The course of the policy process: linear and cyclical process that consists of several sequential stages or phases. Societal challenge enough political attention → issue political agenda → development of a policy program → implemented and enforced → evaluation
- The role of politics: the rational perspective departs from the idea of the primacy of politics. There is a sharp division between “politics” and “administration”. Politicians are the principles that guide the bureaucratic process and that follow from ideological goals.

#### 2.4 The political perspective on public policy

- Dominant explanatory mechanism: policy processes are characterized by a continuous struggle between different, competing values. Conflicts of interests characterize the process. → Power (conflicts) and political strategies of stakeholders much more determine the development of the policy processes.
- Perspective on human behavior: human behavior is guided by self-interest. Protecting their own interests, but actors rely on other actors to reach their goals.
- Policy instruments: policy instruments are not considered as neutral and objective tools of government (as the rational perspective suggests). These are considered as sources of power and therefore may be the inputs as well as the outcomes of processes of strategic interactions. They might strengthen the power position of some actors and weakening some others. There are four types of network management strategies:
  1. *Connecting strategies*: are aimed at initiating connections and interactions between stakeholders that are involved in a specific policy issue.
  2. *Arranging strategies*: after interactions between stakeholders have been initiated, a formal or informal set of arrangements needs to be defined to shape the interactions between stakeholders.
  3. *Content exploration strategies*: Within policy networks, stakeholders should be challenged to discover common ground to bypass their self-interest
  4. *Process strategies*: are aimed at governing the relations between actors
- Policy evaluation: policy will primarily be judged on the extent to which it advances that actor's interests.
- Role of knowledge and information: perceived in terms of "resource politics": knowledge, information and information and communication technologies represent power
- Perspective on the policy process: provides a much more dynamic and interactive perspective on the policy process. Therefore, there are three reasons:
  1. Decisions in the public domain hardly ever involve major shifts, based upon a rational analysis of the nature of the problem and a rational estimation of costs and benefits

2. Stages of policy design, decision-making, implementation and evaluation are not sequential at all.
3. Non-linear and chaotic character of policy processes may be illustrated by the work of Cohen
  - Role of politics: politics and administration are not separate items, but closely intertwined. Thereby, the sharp distinction between the political role of politics and the neutral role of bureaucracy is questioned too.

## 2.5 The cultural perspective on public policy

- Build upon the assumption that our view of the world, the challenges that we perceive, is essentially socially constructed. It focuses more on a voluntarist approach to sense-making or the ability to give meaning.
- Dominant explanatory mechanism: policy is considered as a socially constructed perspective on reality which results from continuous processes of interaction between participants in policy processes. The role of language, symbols and metaphors is important. → develop a shared frame. It shows the importance of other means of communication like images, symbols or metaphors too.
- Perspective on human behavior: the characteristics of policy and politics are created through processes of interaction and communication. Society may be viewed as an infinite reservoir of potential meanings and processes of sense-making. The latter implies that it's important to link the cultural perspective on policy processes to the political perspective.
- Policy instruments: Two views, both follow from the central premise that interaction and communication determine policy and politics.

1. To solve societal problems, policy makers should enable open processes of communication between stakeholders. The only power that should count is the power of communication and there are three ways to open a dialogue:

- Creating platforms where stakeholders can meet to interact openly
- Policymakers may define the rules of communication, safeguarding the conditions for a power-free dialogue based on arguments
- Policy makers can appoint process managers that guide or supervise the interaction process not based on results or outcomes, but based on the conditions for a successful, open and power-free dialogue.

2. Power is an inevitable necessity. Discursive and visualizations strategies are focused on developing and disseminating persuasive frames and messages in which cues are inserted that try to convince other actors of the claims that are being pursued.

- Evaluation: Two criteria for determining the success of public policy. The first criterion focuses on the outcome of policy processes and the second focuses on the quality of the interaction process.
- Role of knowledge and information: it challenges the idea of objective knowledge and information about a 'knowable' social reality. Scientific knowledge does not differ from the personal experiences and observations of actors in the policy process. The way the stories and knowledge fit in the common story that is constructed by the participants in a policy process, that's important. It's convincing because of its internal coherence, the quality of its argumentation and the connection to the worlds who are affected by it.
- Policy process: is defined by processes of continuous interaction in which meaning is given to specific policy challenges. A specific narrative or storyline is being produced and reproduced. Outcomes of policy processes can be understood in terms looking at the interaction that takes place within and between different discourse coalitions. How to intervene and need to intervene. Continuous processes in which interpretations of the social reality are produced, adjusted and reproduced by making use of narratives.
- Role of politics: not a power game of winners and losers, but it's a collective endeavor of sense-making. It may take place in traditional, formal and institutionalized arenas, but also numerous other less institutionalized arenas.

## 2.6 The institutional perspective on public policy

- Highlights the rather deterministic character of the social context in which policy processes take place.
- Explanatory mechanism: not the product of design of rational actors, nor the outcomes of political negotiation processes. It can be defined as: “the routines, procedures, conventions, roles, strategies, organizational forms and technologies around which political activity is constructed.”
- Perspective on human behavior: is guided by institutional rules that try to stress the importance of specific value or value-sets that societies or groups in society consider important, like interaction. A policy sector can be regarded as a regulative, normative and cognitive infrastructure which conditions as well as facilitates the behavior and performance of individual organizations within the sector:
  - Regulative pillar --> explicit regulatory process
  - Normative pillar --> moral norms and values that are dominant within the sector
  - Cognitive pillar --> collective self-image of the sector

These prescribe the roles that participants should play in the sector and the level of freedom they have when interpreting these roles. It's a role-guided behavior.

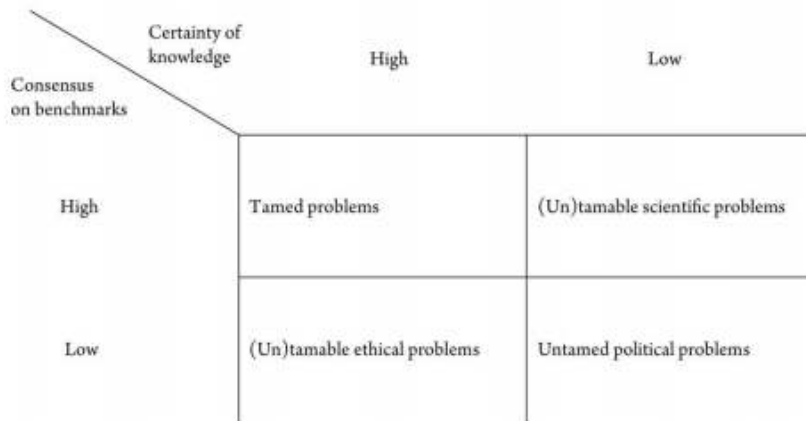
- Policy instruments: institutions determine behavior, so changing behavior requires changing sets of formal and informal rules.
  - Closely related to authorities and tools that make policy makers already use in specific context.
  - Creation and design of policy instruments can be considered as a process of institutional design.
- Role of knowledge and information: Three elements need to be highlighted in here:
  1. Institutional rules to large extent determine which knowledge is available for policy makers in the policy process. It determines which information becomes available and which not.
  2. It also highlights the role that the information plays in structuring the policy process. The choices guide the access to information and define the relation and integration of information from different sources.
  3. Institutions themselves can be seen as a reservoir of knowledge and expertise
- Policy evaluation: necessary to make a distinction between the logic of consequence and the logic of appropriateness.
  - Logic of consequence = people make decisions on the basis of a subjective consideration of alternatives, assessment of their outcomes and preference-driven choices --> they make rational decisions based on the model of the homo economicus that we encountered in the rational model.
  - Logic of appropriateness = are considered as fixed, standardized responses to defined situations. It may also be aimed at the decision-making context itself.
- Policy process: Formal and informal rules play an important role in the institutional perspective. Institutions prescribe roles to organizations and individuals. The routines, procedures and instructions that have been developed within policy sectors determine the course of the policy process.
- Role of politics: Duality characterizes the institutional perspective. On the one hand, the task of politics is to shape the basic rules in society, given the primacy of politics in representative democracy; on the other hand politics itself is governed by a variety of rules with regard to what politicians can and should do and how they should do it. Thereby, politics is also an institution which functions according to specific rules that stress specific values that are related to the embeddedness of politics in a specific democracy model.

**Table 2.1** Four perspectives on the policy process

	Rational perspective	Political perspective	Cultural perspective	Institutional perspective
Explanatory mechanism	Goal rationality	Power, dependency and interests	Sense-making and interaction	Grown practices and established formal and informal rules as well as path-dependency around values
Human behavior	Homo economics in which people look for (sub) optimal choices between costs and benefits	Humans as political actors, aimed at defending positions and interests that operate in an arena	Humans as communicative beings that (re-)construct social reality through frames and story telling	Humans caught in the iron cage of formal and informal rules that prescribe how to behave
Policy instruments	Rational selection of tools from the toolkit of government	Policy tools as sources of power	Constructing and facilitating open, power-free dialogue	Directly and indirectly rules that structure decisions by actors in the policy process
Evaluation criteria	Programming and planning	Support, satisfaction by actors	Quality of argumentation and discourse	Logic of consequences
Role of knowledge and information	Effectiveness, efficiency and coherence	Network management as an important policy tool	Persuasive rhetorical and visual strategies for framing	Logic of appropriateness
Structure of the policy process	More knowledge and information leads to better policies	Knowledge and information are sources of power to be used to protect interests	Knowledge is socially and culturally constructed by making use of frames	Institutional setting (thus rules) determines type of use of knowledge and information
Role of politics	Capricious, non-linear incrementalism	Garbage can: Random order of different stages	Interpretative knowledge	Informal and formal rules define policy processes
	Primacy of politics, division between politics and administration	Politics as part of the policy game	Interaction of ideas, information, knowledge, experiences and observations, produced in discourse coalitions	
		Politics as struggle for power	Politics as sense-making	Politics is an institution that functions according to specific formal and informal rules which are reproduced and contested
			Politics facilitating discursive space for argumentation and debate	

### Chapter 3: Policy problems and agenda setting

#### 3.2 Types of policy problems



Source: Hoppe, 2011.

**Tamed problems** are problems of which we know how they are built up. We have a high certainty of knowledge and there is high consensus on benchmarks. The rational approach of policy is very suitable to tackle tamed problems.

**(Un)tamable scientific problems** are problems where there is a discussion about the quality of knowledge. The knowledge might be low, but the consensus on benchmarks is high though. But we agree that something must happen to solve this problem. The battle between believers and non-believers has an important role in the development in this policy.

**(Un)tamable ethical problems** are problems where parties share common knowledge on the specific topic, but they differ in their opinion on what values need to be taken into account when a government decides to (not) intervene. The matter concerns the values we want to pursue in society, which is the implementation of policy likely to happen through political approach.

**Untamed political problems** also known as wicked problems. There is a lack of unambiguous moral benchmarks and our knowledge is not enough which leads to fundamental gaps.

*The status of a policy problem can change, due to an expansion of knowledge for example.*

### Elements in the construction of policy problems

- First, the political approach to policy teaches us that actors try to direct the way policy problems are defined by prioritizing their own interests and position. Also, they will use any sources of power available to them to directly influence the problem definition.
  
- Second, the cultural and institutional approach teaches us that in the definition of policy problems, the referential framework or conceptual framework of the involved actor plays an important role.
  
- Third, inspired primarily by the institutional approach, we know that diverse rules and institutions within which actors need to function also decide the problem perception. For example, from the perspective of the city council, processes of interactive policy implementation – where citizens play an active role in the development of plans and decision-making regarding these plans (for example through advisory referendums) – are considered suspicious.
  
- Fourth, the language we use to formulate the nature and size of a policy problem also influences the way the problem is defined. The cultural approach shows us that metaphors, slogans and symbols play an important role in this. They tell and visualize the story being told about the question of why government intervention is (not) desired by creating an image of the severity of the issue.
  - Causes can also be considered as a language used to steer the formulation of problem definitions in a desirable direction. There are several different “causal stories” told about many policy problems
  - Another language that can shape the way problems are defined is that of responsibilities (Stone, 2001:210 and further). The way in which we define a problem largely decides who the owner of the problem is.
- A fifth element in the construction of problems, speaking to the political perspective in particular, involves the development of coalitions. Certain coalitions can come into existence regarding certain definitions of and approaches to policy problems that will take every opportunity to bring specific problem definitions or approaches to the forefront.
- A final element in the construction of problems involves communication. Definitions of reality and thus of a certain policy problem are also realized through communication. They are not always imposed. Because of that, the cultural approach to policy values the formulation of policy as a process of common perceptions of the nature and size of a problem, as well as the question of how it should be dealt with.

### 3.3 Social classification of target groups

**Classification** = there is a process of in-and exclusion of groups taking place: those who are within certain boundaries – within classifications – and those who are not.

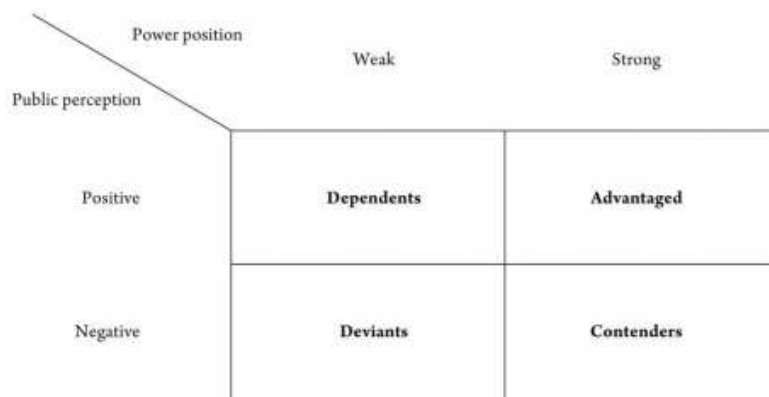


Figure 3.2 Four target group constructions

**The advantaged:** Policy directed at the advantaged often wants to put a positive light on a group that meets certain standards, excels in something or is relatively powerful.

**The challengers:** Policy directed at groups that might have a lot of power, but who challenge existing practices and therefore have a negative image.

**The dependents:** Policy directed at the support of groups who are in a difficult position causing them to be dependent on help and support of others, like the government.

**The deviants:** Policy directed at groups that deviate from existing norms and therefore have a negative image.

### 3.4 Types of agendas

**Agenda** = a collection of problem perceptions, views on possible causes, symbols and views on possible solutions that draw the attention of different politicians, policy makers, *opinion leaders*, and administrators. It can consist of a list of law proposals under discussion in parliaments, or the decisions that are up for submission in a municipal council. It can also concern certain viewpoints on the question of why a government has to get involved.

- **Agenda universe:** is the most abstract type of agenda that can be distinguished. All subjects that are considered to be significant for political discussion and deliberation by different parties.
- **Societal (or public) agenda:** concerns all subjects that members of a political community collectively consider to be possibly politically relevant and refer to the competences and responsibilities of certain public bodies. → are the subjects negotiable?
- **Political agenda:** a selection of subjects derived from the public agenda and which are considered to be subjects needing explicit and careful political attention.
- **Decision-making agenda:** collection of subjects of which politicians, administrators and policy makers believe they need to be converted into actual policy programs of specific laws and regulations.

### 3.5 Rational perspective: the “discovery” of problems

Problems are not “put” on the agenda by actors but are “discovered” by the actors based on sound evidence and information. It also assumes that people not only have full access to and are able to understand information, but also that they will actually respond to knowledge and information.

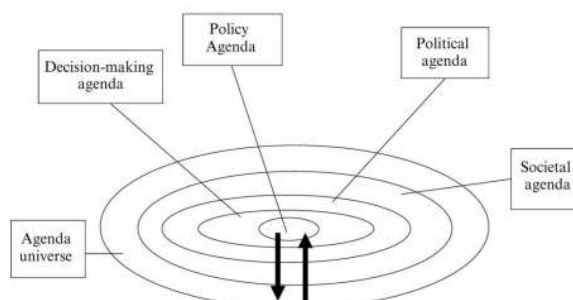


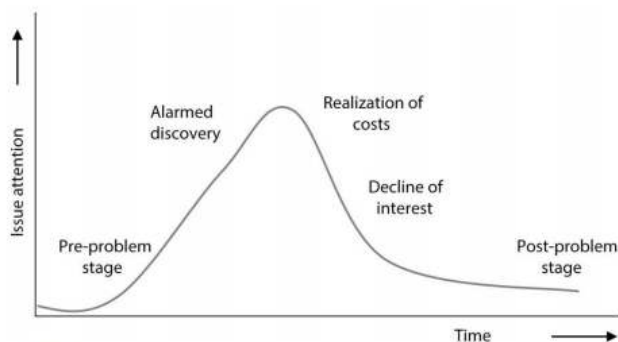
Figure 3.3 Different types of agendas

**Bounded rationality** means that not all problems can emerge on the agenda if objective indicators state so, but that attention can be allocated only to a limited number of topics at any given moment. **Barrier model** is one of the theories used by the rational perspective. Problems need to overcome various objective barriers before they can emerge on the agenda.

- First, a topic must rise on the public agenda, capturing broad public attention. Issue attention is here taken as a proxy for issue salience.
- Second, issues with broad public attention will rise on the political agenda as well. Politicians all want to speak about the current topics of the day. Think of how many parliamentary questions are raised the day after a topic is highlighted in the evening news.
- Finally, once on the political agenda, an issue can make its way onto the policy agenda. Once politicians have discussed the topic it can be selected for consideration of policy alternatives.

The amount of public attention is important for a problem to make it onto the policy agenda. The model pays a lot of attention to the process of *issue-articulation* and *issue-expansion*. In this process, the following factors play an important role:

- **The specific character of a subject:** the more ambiguous a subject is, the sooner it will get the attention of larger audience.
- **The public meaning of a subject:** the more public meaning, the bigger the chance that a larger audience feels affected.
- **The temporality of a subject:** the more long-term meaning to society, the bigger the chance that it will be taken up by a larger audience.
- **The technical character of a subject:** the more technical, and therefore the more knowledge is necessary to understand it, the smaller the chance that it will draw the attention from a larger audience.
- **The unique character of a subject:** the more unique, meaning that it is not a mere variation on a familiar theme, the larger audience will be interested.



Source: Downs, 1972.

Figure 3.4 The issue attention cycle

Barrier model suggests a rather linear perception of issue articulation, expansion and agenda setting. It shows how problems, after periods of being ignored, will go through a phase of “alarmed discovery”. It also comes forth in the preference it has for one-way traffic: policy agenda → political and public agenda, which is an *outside initiation* model, but there is also an *inside initiation* model.

Another criticism concerns the role of media that becomes more nuanced when we look at their role. Three positions can be distinguished:

1. Issues are put in different perspectives
2. Independent role that mass media have in formulating certain subjects can be identified over the merely facilitating role → so called media-agenda
3. Phenomenon of mass media is put in a different perspective when it is associated with new media

### 3.6 Political perspective: advocacy coalitions and multiple streams

Power in any society is not in hands of one elite, one oligarchy, but there are different political elites. Policy is the outcome of a struggle between organized groups in a certain environment.

**Multiple streams approach**, inspired by garbage can model (= used to understand the chaotic nature of restructuring in universities), professional organizations and government bureaucracies are considered as an “organized anarchy”. Kingdon considers agenda-setting as the more or less incidental coupling of three different streams:

1. **Problems** → conditions that policy makers consider to be problematic. Three mechanisms play a role in focusing the attention on the conditions that may be considered as problems:
  - Indicators play a role in assessing the existence and magnitude of a condition
  - Dramatic events or crises can highlight the problematic character of a condition
  - Feedback from inside or outside the policy system may highlight potentially problematic conditions
2. **Policies** → wide variety of ideas floating around in the “policy primeval soup”
3. **Political** → composed of such things as the national mood, pressure group campaigns, election results partisan or ideological distribution, and changed of administration. The following political realm are important in explaining processes of agenda-setting:
  - *The national mood*
  - *Organized political forces* → the manner in which the political system is organized and the dominant position of all kinds of formal and informal organizations.
  - *Turnovers in the position of the public authorities* → outcome of the elections.

The three streams are independent from each other, but when they meet, they couple, a *policy window* opens, also known as a *window of opportunity*. *Policy entrepreneurs* are individuals who are willing to invest their time etc. to promote to get a window of opportunity.

**The Advocacy Coalition Framework** argues that the locus of the policy process is not so much the macropolitical level, but rather the level of *policy subsystems* (= consists of “actors from a variety of public and private organizations that are actively concerned with a policy problem or issue”). Agenda setting can be perceived as a process of putting issues that are usually dealt with by specific actors, on the broader political agenda. An *advocacy coalition* consists of “people of various governmental and private organizations that both: share a set of normative and causal beliefs & engage in a nontrivial degree of coordinated activity over time” → it can be composed of a broad range of actors

### 3.7 Cultural perspective: the “framing” of problems

It emphasized the role of ideas, images and stories or narratives in agenda setting. There are various frames competing for attention and for influence on the policy making process. Frames can be deducted or reconstructed based on the policy stories that actors tell about what they see as a problem.

- “What” → definition of the problem → language, rhetoric and symbols used to define
- “Why” → a causal theory of “causal story” that interprets a problem situation by attributing a plausible cause or source of the problem
- “Who” → definition and construction of involved target groups
- “How” → “leap from is to ought”, identifying possible programs or strategies for addressing the problem situation

Not the empirical validity of a frame determines whether it leads to agenda setting, but the persuasiveness of a frame.

### 3.8 Institutional perspective: negative and positive feedback

Struggle of institutionalists is that focus on path-dependency has been how to account for the fact that many studies show that policy areas indeed reveal path-dependency over relatively long periods of time, but also tend to be occasionally interrupted by major policy changes.

**Policy monopoly** has a definable institutional structure responsible for policy making in an issue area, and its responsibility is supported by some powerful idea or image. The image is connected to core political values. Culturalism and institutionalism define a policy monopoly as being constructed around a clear problem definition or “policy image” and specific institutional actors → “iron triangles”



Politics of attention that is central to punctuated equilibrium framework → non-incremental change or “policy punctuations” (= involves a major policy change, where not only the image but also the institutional structure of a policy field will change).

Several factors are distinguished as factors or strategies that are likely to contribute to positive feedback:

- **Image manipulation** → “framing”, one strategy that could contribute to positive feedback. Dramatization or personalization of issues may be particularly helpful.
- **Venue shopping** → alternative venues may provide more opportunities for gaining momentum toward policy change
- **Mimicking** → intelligent forms of copying, provides a strategy for making use of the momentum toward policy dynamics that has been created in one area, to promote change in other areas as well
- **Focusing events** → tends to bring together ideas and institutional processes in a way that often can’t be predicted nor controlled by specific actors

#### Chapter 4: Policy formulation: development, steering, instruments and decision-making

4.2 The rational perspective on policy development: the evidence-based programming of goals and actions

There are assumptions which help to systematize and program the actions to be taken. Three types of assumptions are relevant:

1. Refers to causes and the effects of a specific issue that has acquired public and political attention and which has led to a call to act.

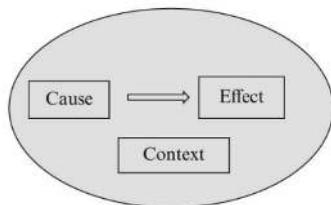


Figure 4.1 Causal model

2. Relate to the goals and means that constitute a policy program.

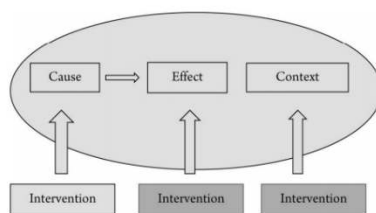


Figure 4.2 A simple intervention model

3. Deal with a number of values that have to be addressed in the program. These values act as criteria that can be used to define what actions should be pursued, but they also help to prioritize these actions and help to formulate a hierarchy of goals to be achieved, in terms of which goals are super-ordinated to other goals. In the rational theory, this is where the politics comes in.

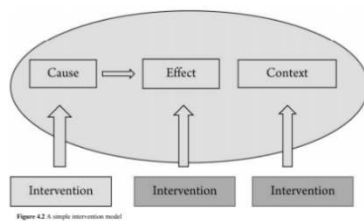


Figure 4.2 A simple intervention model

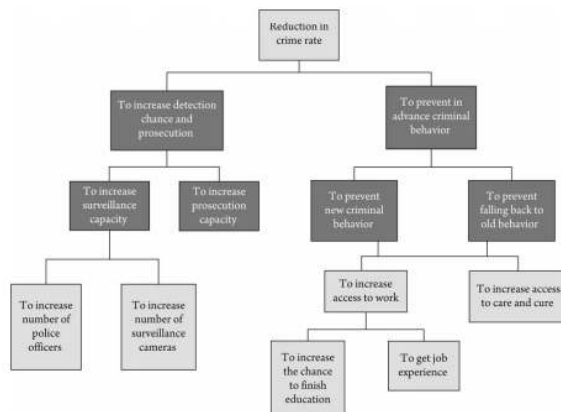


Figure 4.3 An example of a goal-tree

Policy-relevant information refers to the role of facts, but also in a broader sense. The knowledge that is needed not only refers to the description and explanation of how and why specific problematic situations occur. It also refers to the prescriptive nature of policy making. **Evidence-based policy making** → whether a specific approach or intervention will work, and how we know it will work. Why is this term embraced?:

1. It expresses the idea that political ideologies have lost their significance in designing policy programs.
2. Especially in times of austerity it is important to spend public money only on programs that really work.
3. The performance deficit of public administration.

#### 4.3 The political perspective on policy design: managing interests, power and interdependency

It is not seen as a rational and analytical endeavor. Policy design is in essence a political exercise, because it touches upon specific goals, interests and claims that are put by different actors. The vital question is: what actor or what coalition of actors has been able to formulate the problem at hand and the approached to be followed. The development of a policy program can be understood as a struggle between different stakeholders, with winners and losers. The challenge is to develop a common problem definition and solutions or approached, given these different views, interests and claims. In order to protect or enhance their interests, they make use of the power that they possess. Examples:

- Material resources
- Financial
- Human
- Information, ICT and knowledge
- Formal resources, like specific rights
- Social capital resources

The powerfulness of these resources is influenced by:

- The criticality of a specific resource
- The degree to which a specific actor is really able to control the access, the distribution and use of resources
- The degree to which alternative resources are available or can be generated

Game strategies to develop policy:

- **Avoidance** → interacting with each other, by not interacting with each other
- **Competition and conflict** → battle

- **Coalition formation** → form coalition with other actors that some extent share the same ideas
- **Competition regulation** → reduce fierceness of the competition by common playing rules
- **Consensus development** → negotiate and formulate a compromise
- **Coercion** → force other actors to comply to their definition or situation
- **Complexity reduction** → splitting complex problem into parts, to find solution for a specific part

Several types of dependency:

- **Pooled interdependency** → make use of the same reservoir of resources to which they are all connected to
- **Sequential interdependency** → one specific actor is dependent on the activities that previously been executed by another actor → chain-like sequence
- **Reciprocal interdependency** → mutual input-output relations between involved actors. Dependent on each other, dependent on the municipality

#### 4.4 The cultural perspective: developing appealing frames

The emphasis is put on the development and alignment of appealing and convincing frames which make sense to different groups of different people. Policy program can be seen as a story or set of stories. To make a story, policy makers can include the following elements:

- Personalizing
- Synecdoche → part used to represent the whole
- Metaphors
- Symbol
- Specific myths → like past experiences
- Figures
- Visualizations → like pictures
- “Magic concepts” → specific policy, management or governance concepts

#### 4.5 The institutional perspective: playing with different design logics

Rationalities provide a prescriptive framework of reference that policy makers have to use, when formulating policy goals and actions. Two logic are important in developing and implementing public policies.

1. **Logic of consequences** → when drafting a policy program, policy makers have to assess the consequences of a program in terms of effectiveness, efficiency and internal and external coherence
2. **Logic of appropriateness** → refers to the degree in which a specific program will have enough political and public support, given the dominant political and public support and given the specific problem that needs to be dealt with.

Based on the two logics, we are able to put forward four design questions that policy makers need to answer. These four questions constitute the boundaries within which policy makers have to operate:

- **Does it work?** → take into account the possible outcomes of a program, given the goals that have been formulated. The question relates to the more rational design perspective and can be seen as a rational attempt to address and assess the possible outcomes in terms of effectiveness, efficiency and coherence
- **Is it allowed?** → also based on logic of consequence and deals with legal consequences that have to be taken into consideration. All government interventions have a legal grounding, have to be based on “the rule of the law”
- **Is it applicable?** → is a policy program able to deal with specific circumstances and contingencies in which it is applied. It can be linked to the concrete support or concrete resistance. This question related to the applicability of the measures that are proposed → logic of appropriateness
- **Is it appropriate?** → relates to the legitimacy of government and the trust that citizens have in the ability of government to deal with a problem. → logic of appropriateness.

Persuasive frames are important, because they provide grammar to the actors involved, so they can link their individual interests, motives and beliefs with each other. Thereby, the distinction that has

been made between those four perspectives may also function as a check on the quality of design process.

#### 4.6 Policy development as the development of different steering arrangements

The ability and willingness to influence societal challenges in a specific context can be defined as an act of steering. But policymakers often adhere to a specific set of implicit or explicit assumptions that together constitute a steering conception or a steering arrangement which very often lies behind a policy program. The following assumptions can be discerned:

- **Political and ideological legitimation to steer or to intervene** → steering is not neutral, but reason for intervention is legitimized.
- **Steering capacities of the actor that intends to steer and being steered** → refer to the resources that a specific actor has at his disposal and the way these resources are organized.
- **Context and object of steering** → takes always place in a specific context and the particularities of this context also influence the ability to steer.
- **Role of information, knowledge and information and communication technologies** → based on an insight in the nature and course of the development and processes which one tries to influence, while at the same time it is relevant to know if the steering activities that are being pursued really make a difference.
- **The way to intervene and the instrument that can be used** → different forms and different instruments can be used for intervention.

***Steering as command and control:*** The idea is that government, structured as a pyramid and organized as a machine in which each cogwheel is smoothly connected to another, from a super-ordinated location in society is able to govern society → perfect administration: routinized, efficient and reliable and predictable way, based on a well described definition of tasks responsibilities and competences which are linked to each other by clearly defined lines of communication and coordination. The society is, like the government, defined as a machine. To develop policy programs, emphasis is paid to the role of information and knowledge → rational and political perspective.

***Steering as steering on input and output parameters:*** Idea that society possesses self-regulation capacities that can be used. It implies that organizations, societal groups but also individual citizen do not act as cogwheels in the machinery of government, but they strive for their own goals and their interests and control specific resources. This way of steering was embraced by New Public Management. A combination of political and rational models is present. Political → this way acknowledges that society can't be steered from a central point but actors in society have powerful resources that can be used to obstruct policy programs, because they don't fit. Rational → idea that system of penalties and rewards changes the costs and benefits balance of a specific actor.

***Steering by making use of incentives:*** Incentives try to persuade people, organizations and societal organizations to develop a specific kind of behavior that governments want to pursue. A specific stimulus, like a subsidy. It still allows actors to make their own decisions. It recognizes their autonomy, their interests, frames of reference and resources, while it is not compulsory. It acknowledges the impossibility of government to control behavior of actors in society, thus put its power into perspective (political model). This steering arrangement is based on more advanced behavioral insights that try to make use of the degree in which people act rationally (or not).

***Steering through the structuration and proceduration of relationships:*** “level playing field”, can be organized, which enables actors to make their own choices, to develop their own strategies or set up their own collaboration arrangements, but it isn't a game in which everything is allowed. Idea is that through the structuration of the positions and roles of the involved actors and through the proceduration of the interaction between them, specific outcomes may be achieved. Also described as the “institutional design”. Political perspective → this arrangement acknowledges that different actors may have different interests and resources which can be seen as a reservoir for self-regulation. Institutional → in order to develop these new practices, a re-arrangement of positions, relations and playing rules is necessary, thereby leaving all kinds of established path-dependencies behind.

***Steering as the development of shared understanding:*** The aim that government tries to bring all relevant stakeholders together, in order to facilitate a process of shared understanding between them. Tries to bring different frames together. Has often been described as a form of network governance, which has the advantage that based on the recognition of the interdependencies between the involved stakeholders, more and different views are taken into consideration. Stakeholders with direct interests, but tries to keep in mind a specific distance to facilitate communication between different actors. Different frames of the involved stakeholders refers to political perspective, but process of trying to develop a common frame of reference, based on re-framing and frame-alignment, shows influence of cultural perspective.

#### 4.7 Opening Pandora's box: the tools of government

Policy instruments were primarily seen as the tools of government but at the same time these instruments have to be in accordance with fundamental laws and have to be democratic. In the rational approach, the selection of a policy instrument was considered as a deliberate choice, which rationality could be enhanced if relevant evidence was taken into consideration so that a more informed choice could be made. → distinction between specific families of policy instruments. The idea that there are three families:

1. ***Legal instruments*** → “the stick”, based on a legal norm setting that are obligatory, because they are inserted in a law or have been laid down in a contract

2. **Economic instruments** → “carrot”, try to appeal to the cost-benefit assessments that citizens, companies and societal groups make.
3. **Communicative** → “the sermon”, try to influence citizens, companies and societal groups, by providing information and setting up a dialogue in order to convince them to develop specific actions.

Table 4.2 Legal, economic and communicative “families” of instruments

Policy instrument family/aspect	Legal	Economic	Communicative
Constituting	Constitution, state law	Infrastructural works and facilities	Education, research
Directing	Instituting a ban, giving commandments	Fixation of prices	
Individual	License	Fines	Advice
General	Laws and regulations	Fixation of prices	Mass media campaigns
Restricting	Bans, commandments	Taxes, Fines	Propaganda
Enlarging	Contracts	Subsidies	Government information campaigns

Constituting → instruments that rely on the actions that governments themselves have to do  
 Specificity  
 Diminishes or enlarges freedom of citizens.

Characteristics of policy instruments to behavior of people:

- Law does not direct people or authorize them to take action → legitimacy
- Lack incentive to take action → incentive tools assume that people are utility maximizers who will change their behavior when pay-offs will be offered to induce compliance or encourage utilization.
- Lack capacity to take actions → capacity tools assume that individuals may lack information, training, education and skills to take into account all the alternatives and costs and benefits of these alternatives. It assumes that the bias and barriers that people encounter can be taken away by providing information etc.
- Disagree with the values that are implicitly embedded in the policy goals or means → induce the desired behavior by manipulating symbols and influencing values by referring to the beliefs of people. Symbolic and hortatory tools can be especially linked to the cultural perspective of policy process.
- Encounter high levels of uncertainty so that they don't know what to do or what possible is, which can lead to disagreement → learning tools can be used to help them to solve the problems that they are wrestling with or motivate them to solve these problems.

The use of a policy instrument can be seen as a political intervention that changes power relations within the network. It can also be seen as a governance strategy in order to influence the positions of actors and relations between them. The more dependent an actor, the more open.

Power resource perspective on policy instruments, developed by Hood: distinction between effectors and detectors. **Effectors** → instruments that government can use to try to make an impact on society.

**Detectors** → instruments that government uses for taking in information. These are seen as essential capacities that a government should have in order to influence societal developments and policy problems in an effective way.

Government needs four basic resources at their disposal to develop detecting and effecting tools:

- **Nodality** → property of being in the middle of an information or social network. Governments can try to control the node in a network, while governments are the central actor in the network, with expression: “all roads lead to Rome”. It gives government the ability to gather, process and distribute information in such way that it is in the lead or is able to generate the broader picture.
- **Treasure** → not only the possession of a stock of monies, but anything which has money-like property of “fungibility”
- **Authority** → the possession of legal or official, formal power based on the allocation of tasks, competences and responsibilities which enable government to demand, forbid, guarantee or adjudicate.

Resource/ instrument	Nodality	Treasure	Authority	Organization
Effectors	Advice to farmers	Grants, loans, subsidies to farmers	Certification of healthy stock	Marking of subsidized animals, stud farms and artificial insemination;
			export licenses	vaccination, quarantine and slaughter of sick animals

- **Organization**

Technologies influenced the powerfulness of the position that government may take in all kinds of policy networks:

- ICT increase the detecting capacity of government.
- As a resource increase the nodal position of government in policy networks.
- Increasingly integrated in specific policy instruments
- Reflexive technologies, because they are able to generate information about their own use
- Improve the access and the handling of information and knowledge, which can be used by citizens

In policy instruments the rational and political perspective seem to be the most dominant perspective. Tool to achieve goals (rational), but also seen as powerful resources that can change power between actors (political). Cultural is present only in the way in which symbols, rhetoric and visualizations are used to frame specific messages.

#### 4.8 Decision-making

Development of policy program → decide upon the concept in order to give authority

**The rational perspective: the rational actor model** → perceived as the outcome of a rational decision-making process. It is based on the assumption that actors act as a homo economicus who makes deliberate choices. To make these choices, decision-making process is based on a rather analytical approach of how to proceed → based on the following assumptions:

- Collection of specified goals and values that are considered important → translated into hierarchy
- Collection of options → actions and instruments → achieve the formulated goals ‘evidence’
- Assessment of the consequences → possible costs and benefits
- A choice based on value-maximizing → implies that homo economicus will select the option whose consequences rank highest in terms of goal accomplishment.

It’s important that government operates as a unified actor. The assumption is that through a clear chain of command unity can be achieved. Another important assumption: the driver for a government to act is based on external threats and opportunities.

The rationality of decision-making process is rather limited and introduces the bounded rationality → implies that people, but organizations too, have a limited capacity to gather and process information which seems to be needed to make a comprehensive inventory of possible actions and of possible consequences. Hence, in decision-making process only a limited number of options and a limited number of consequences are taken into consideration, because of several reasons:

- The knowledge that is needed is fragmented and incomplete
- Some consequences can’t be known
- Not enough time to consider all options
- Staff is needed to make an inventory or assessment is limited
- Memory of people, but also organizations is limited
- Routines and habits play a role

**The political perspective: muddling through** → concept of “incrementalism”, which challenges the assumption behind the rational actor model, called the “root method”, by looking at the practice of decision-making. It can be characterized by a large number of intertwined small steps, it takes small decisions. The essence of the “muddling through” concept → political decision-making is about mutual adjustment and negotiation, in which each time new but small, so-called incremental steps are taken. Many decisions are made by accident, on an ad hoc basis. Result goals and means are often adapted to each other, that leads to policy programs and decisions also built upon each other and there is no large vision, so that other goals and values are neglected. There are two reasons for this happening:

1. Decision-making involves a process of bargaining and negotiation, which seldom leads to an optimal decision. There are always compromises, which challenges the government to be an unified actor, and so it is subjected to hierarchical decision-making → “partisan mutual adjustment”
2. It involves different and sometimes irreconcilable values which have to be balanced

The criticism regarding this approach:

- The emphasis on step-by-step mutual adjustments → it is important to understand decision-making processes in relation to the process of agenda setting and the role that policy windows play
- The inherent ideological connotation of muddling through → it justifies a rather conservative perspective on decision-making
- Policy makers and decision-makers are not challenged enough to embark on new and more creative ways of policy making

**The cultural perspective: group think** → importance of framing and the use of frames which are used to give meaning to specific interest, policy problem definitions as well as possible approaches.

- Inward-looking frame → tunnel vision
- Polarization → us and them

Produce decisions that don't aim to have real consequences, by putting them in motion. The desired outcome is to show that policy makers are dealing with the issue and show that they are doing something, because there is still no consensus among the involved stakeholders.

**The institutional perspective: organizational routines** → the idea that decision-making processes are processes that are embedded in all kinds of formal (and informal) rules that actors are obliged to follow. Government is not viewed as a unified entity. It is a constellation of loosely coupled and allied organizations or organizational units on top of which government leaders sit.

## Chapter 5: Policy implementation

### 5.1 The foundations of policy implementation research

#### **The default of the rational approach: the machinery of government**

- First stages of implementation research based on idea that implementation of policy is a mechanistic process that is completely separated from policy making.
- Policy implementation was considered as a closed process, free from the influence of various social and political-administrative development → Seen as something that had to be carried out.
- Implementation of policy was considered a process to be designed rationally and centrally controlled.
  - Effective implementation → as a planning and programming task that had to be performed from a hierarchical perspective, that also related to the primacy of politics
  - Local implementation → *operating units*, seen as units located at the periphery of the policy process, but behaving as loyal and willing implementers
  - Policy implementation → *perfect administration*, not only know what is expected from them, but actually can and want to implement the policy. To achieve this, the following conditions must be observed:
    - Explicated work assignment → objectives of policy are specified clearly
    - Organization forms unit with clear authority structure
    - Organization is differentiated to such extent that tasks are manageable
    - Relations with environment are specified
    - Communication systems ensures exchange of information
    - Resources that enable the functioning of organization are sufficiently available
    - Monitoring and control system that monitors process/measures performance
    - Organization is self-reflective
    - System of positive and negative sanctions support this



- Policy making is disconnected from implementation

In rational perspective, absence of these conditions has been seen as the key explanation for failing policy implementation, but it turned out that the idea of perfect administration was at odds with reality.

### ***Policy development in the context of policy implementation***

Policy should be adapted to the situation with which the implementers are confronted. There is a policy development process that occurs within the phase of implementation. The formation of policy is not completed after the policy has formally been adopted and the consequence is that a new phase of exploration and learning occurs in the implementation stage. Policy develops further in the implementation, because for example, objectives and resources are aligned with each other in the light of what is feasible à more political and therefore more open character than rational approach. In this case, implementation can be seen as a game in which parties seek to strengthen their positions through persuasion, negotiation and manipulation

***Policy discretion*** --> also known as discretionary space or discretionary power. This exists because it is impossible to foresee every possible situation when designing a policy. Discretion can be found at:

- Level of implementing organization --> collective administrative policy discretion
- Level of individuals that implement policies --> individual administrative policies

Availability of policy discretion is typical of many *street-level bureaucrats* working in public organizations on the front line of society. This offers space for further consultation and negotiation. In preliminary consultation, it is negotiated how certain norms should be interpreted and under what conditions the permit is granted, in relation to additional complementary measures for example.

Advantages policy discretion:

- Policy programs must be translated into and refined to individual situation or citizen --> customization
- It provides implementers with an opportunity to adjust the policy to changing or unforeseen circumstances or to anticipate this --> avoiding potential problems
- Provides organizations and their employees with the opportunity to gain experience in the implementation of certain measures

Disadvantages policy discretion:

- Can contribute to legal inequality and legal uncertainty
- Can be used to frustrate the objectives of the policy and discretionary powers often act as a power source for resistance
- Allocation of policy discretion can be used to go out of the way of certain sensitive decisions that had to be made in the formation of the policy for the time being

***Conflicting objectives and standards*** --> Often the result of the densification of rules that implementing organizations face --> densification is the result of an increase in the scope of the number of rules that must be implemented.

***Multilayer problems*** --> it is necessary that various implementers at various levels have the same idea about the use and necessity of a given measure and that they are aware of their interdependency for successful implementation across multiple layers.

***Target group orientation*** --> reactions of these groups determine the success of the implementation and therefore the policy. Nevertheless, these groups don't conform to the objectives of the policy in advance.

### ***The bottom-up model of policy implementation***

It shows strong affinity with the previously presented rational model of policy implementation. Instead of seeing implementers as cogs in a machine or links in a chain of command, it is advisable to see the formation and implementation as process of *backward mapping*, instead of *forward mapping*

***Backward mapping*** = begins with recipients or target groups of the policy, raises the question of what actions and measures should be taken to ensure that the characteristics and behavior of the "recipients of policy" are taken into account. In this case street level bureaucrats play an important role in the endpoint of the policy

The consequence --> it is accepted that policy objectives are vague and sometimes contradictory. Those organizations playing a role in the implementation can also pursue other interests that run counter to the intentions of policy to be implemented.

Choice of a more top-down or bottom-up approach --> two perspectives

1. Implementation of policy can be understood as the ability to learn from the actions undertaken in the implementation stage --> not limited to a specific organization or part of the organization
2. Draws attention to the relationship between implementation of policy and the organization and management of the implementation --> especially steering effect that all kinds of organizational rules etc have on the success of policy implementation

## 5.2 Policy implementation from a management and organizational perspective

It is mostly about "policy introduction" or "policy fine-tuning". A way policy can be characterized is the bureaucratic character:

**Bureaucracy** = embodiment of rational-legal authority relations --> actions of the State is bound to objectified rules laid down in legislation that is made known to everyone and that have to ensure that "all similar cases are treated equally" and dissimilar cases not equally. --> legal equality and legal certainty. This differs from traditional and charismatic authority relations, in which there is always an element of arbitrariness in the exercise of authority.

Government bureaucracies are characterized by:

1. A high degree of standardization and formalization --> implementation of tasks programmed and recorded.
2. High degree of centralization --> result of consideration that in a rule of law, it must be possible to hold directors accountable for the functioning of the organization concerned in relation to the implementation policy.

If these regulations etc start to lead their own life, it leads to perverse effects.

### ***Mechanistic and organic regimes***

It is essential that an implementation organization is able to adapt to changing circumstances. Characteristics of mechanistic regimes is that they adapt to changing circumstances less easily.

Table 5.1 Mechanistic and organic organizational regimes

Mechanistic regime	Organic regime
Own task is regarded separately from the overall task setting of the organization	Own task is seen in the context of the overall task setting of the organization
Coordination of these individual tasks by close and higher chief	Mutual adaptation and revision of individual tasks through mutual interaction and communication
Separation of performance of tasks on the one hand, and authorities and responsibilities on the other hand	Greater personal responsibility for the performance of tasks and associated responsibilities
Emphasis on precise definition of everyone's rights and duties associated with the performance of tasks	Distributing responsibilities among each other rather than passing the buck to each other
One sees oneself as "contract partner" of the organization (represented by its chief)	One sees oneself as a joint owner in the organization (organization as working and living community)
Interactions are mostly vertical in nature (meaning up and down), thus creating a hierarchical structure of authority	Both many "vertical" and "horizontal" interactions (meaning up, down and sideways), creating a network-like structure of authority
Activities are determined by instructions and decisions from the chief	Activities are determined by information and advice from the chief rather than by instructions
Emphasis on loyalty and obedience as conditions for the "membership" of the organization	Emphasis on commitment to the overall task setting and to a "technological ethos" focused on progress and expansion as conditions for membership of the organization, and less on loyalty

Sources: Burns and Stalker, 1961:120-122; Lammers, 1978; Mintzberg, 1979:87.

The list clarifies that when government bureaucracies face a more dynamic environment, a predominantly mechanistic regime is a handicap in this adjustment process.

### ***Absorption capacity and the implementation of policy***

Central questions in the introduction are:

- Do they *know* what is expected from them? --> knowledge and information

- Can they implement the policy? --> various types of resources
- Do they want to implement the policy? --> willingness

Successful implementation depends on the extent to which implementing organizations actually have the people and resources to implement the policy. Problems arise when there is a lack of adequate resources and too little time and also when implementing organizations face several programs that have to be introduced and implemented at the same time.

**Quality systems and the implementation of policy** → this aims to make the organizations more transparent and manageable and give the performances of the organization better accountability.

### 5.3 Characteristics and changes in implementing bureaucracies

Implementing bureaucracies in shapes and sizes:

1. **The selection bureaucracy** = focused on the selection of clients who, as they meet certain criteria or as they can be organized in a certain way, are eligible for certain rights and obligations. The core values are mainly legal equality and legal certainty, which are often realized by implementing uniform rules and procedures.
2. **The mass service organization** = focused on the provision of mass services products that, despite a personal service aspect, are based on the implementation of standard programs founded on specialist and professional knowledge. Efficiency and maximization of profitability are core values of this type of organization
3. **The professional services organization** = not have the score of the previous two types. Characteristic is that it's about highly educated professionals who are often self-managing. It is focused on helping specific individuals instead of a large group. Quality is a core value
4. **Care arrangements** = also found in various social services and often stems from a private initiative. This organization, dependent residents or their representatives can rely on care, nursing and attention. Care is provided by highly qualified professionals and the core value is to provide continuity and security.
5. **The volunteer organization** = implementers of policy and the clients are volunteers. The core value is not only voluntariness, but also that this is motivated by the wish to contribute to certain values.

Implementing organization as process bureaucracy

- Street level bureaucracy → law was leading in the development of implementing organizational unit.
- From street level bureaucracy to screen level bureaucracy → focusing mainly on entering the necessary data without making a single decision themselves.
- System level bureaucracy → initial parallelism between legislation and system development is replaced by the primacy of the system development

Table 5.2 Technological transformation of implementing bureaucracies

Type of implementing organization	Street level bureaucracy	Screen level bureaucracy	System level bureaucracy
Role of IT	Supporting	Leading	Decisive
Function of IT	Registration data	Assessment and a virtual assembly line of requests	Implementation, monitoring, external communications
Human interference with individual cases	Full	Partial	Absent
Key figures within the organization	Implementing officials	Production managers	System designers
Organizational boundaries	Strict between organizations	Strict, both within and between organizations	Fluid, both within and between organizations
Legal regime	Open, much discretion	Closed, little discretion	Closed, no discretion
Legal reach	Some articles in the law	Comprehensive law	Various laws and legal domains
Relationship legislation, system development and organizational development	Primacy of legislation	Parallel development of legislation and system development	Primacy of system development

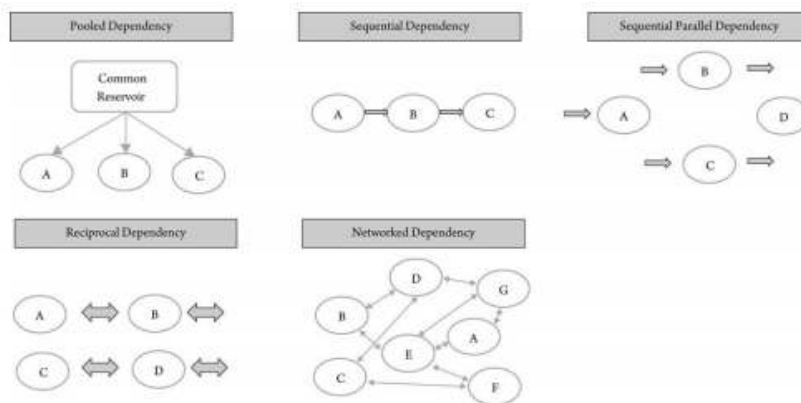
## 5.4 Collaborative public service governance

### *The recognition of dependency in collaborative public services*

This is related to a process of specialization that has taken place and that has also led to fragmentation. On the other hand the introduction of more market-based incentives the financial management and accounting systems of these hospitals require processes of internal pricing and recalculation, which stimulated a rather inward looking perspective.

The following types of ideal-typical dependencies are distinguished:

- **Pooled dependency:** the resulting dependency is the product of the fact that organizations use the same reservoir of resources that can also be seen as a “common pool”
- **Sequential dependency:** there is a chain, with each link in the chain passing the baton to another link. The activities performed by each link follow each other in time.
- **Parallel sequentiality:** given stream is split in separate flows that run parallel and then put together again. Within the chain, there may also be a forward and backward process (*reciprocal interdependency*) between the links in the chain.
- **Networked dependency:** the sequence of certain actions is lost too, not only the forward and backward processes of activities, knowledge and information.



Sources: Thompson, 1967; Grijpink, 1997.

Figure 5.1 Types of dependency

### Models of coordination in collaborative services

1. Direction as a form of self-management. In this case, there is a collaborative service arrangement that manages itself. Within this chain, there is no separate management unit. The autonomy of participating organizations is paramount. Management of common activities is done by the individual organizations that form the chain together. Decisions related to the functioning of the chain are made collectively or by organizations that want to work on certain aspects together, such as regarding the sharing of information, knowledge or expertise. Collaboration often occurs on an ad hoc basis. For this purpose, bilateral or multilateral agreements are usually made. The advantage of this type of chain direction is that the involvement of the parties may be relatively large. Another advantage is that this form of collaboration and direction gets form and content based on voluntariness and concrete needs. The downside is that no clear coordination structure exists and that everyone communicates with everyone. It may also be that such a chain has no face to the outside world, causing the chain not to have any point of contact. Additionally, none of the organizations involved is accountable for the performance of the chain as a whole.
2. Direction by the leader of the chain. In this case, the formation of direction occurs by giving a particular organization in the chain a relatively higher-level position. As well as implementing, this leading organization also directs the chain. The director's role may be allocated from above (for example, under certain statutory powers or based on a subsidizing task). An example of this is the position that the earlier described Dutch Vehicle Registration Agency (RDW) performs in running all kinds of public service delivery chains in which license number information plays an important role, such as the MOT for cars. The RDW can take on that leadership role, because it has a legal monopoly on the registration of license number

data, on which other parties depend. In addition, that leadership role can be allocated from below. In such a case, the parties collaborating in a chain assign one of them the leading role for the functioning of the chain as a whole. The manner in which this leading organization can then do its work partly depends on how much power the other organizations are willing to give up. The leading organization makes the most important (usually operational) decisions, while the leading organization also coordinates the activities within the chain. This leading organization may also provide certain administrative support. The advantage of this method of chain direction is that there is coordination and an unambiguous face or point of contact. The downside is that the interests and viewpoints of the leader may not always be consistent with those of the other organizations, causing the so-called chain interest to be dominated by the interests of the leading organization. Essential for the functioning of this type of direction is therefore the degree to which the chain partners see the leading organization as legitimate.

3. Direction by an independent, external chain director. In this case, there is a third and often independent party that acts as an intermediary or broker between the parties. This party is responsible for the coordination within the chain and its task is to monitor and direct the performance of the chain as a whole. Contrary to the role in the form as referred to under (2), this director does not perform any tasks in the chain. It is necessary though for the organizations concerned to give this independent director the mandate to act as chain coordinator. An example of such a form of chain direction is found in social security in many western countries. The director functions as an independent broker between all kinds of different organizations that are involved in administering and implementing social benefits. These organizations do not exchange information directly with each other; this is done through the broker. This ensures the autonomy of the participating parties without damaging the quality of the information exchange. To safeguard the quality of this exchange, this broker may make specific demands on how information should be exchanged. Sometimes, this third independent party acts as a third trusted partner. As a solicitor does when buying and selling a house, this external director makes sure the exchange – in the form of information exchange – between two or more parties happens in an orderly manner and sees to it that each party adheres to the agreements made.

### 5.5 Service as aspect of the implementation

The implementation of policy is an important phase that affects the position and appreciation of the government in society:

1. It contributes to the efficiency and effectiveness of policy
2. Affects the legitimacy of the government and the confidence that citizens and businesses have in governments.

#### Focus on service

Thinking about service was dominated by a supply-oriented approach resulting from a fairly mechanistic notion of policy implementation. It was pressured by a number of developments:

- *Individualization*
- *Assertiveness of citizens*
- *Decreasing turnout of citizens in elections*
- *New Public Management* and the discussion on *Reinventing Government*
- *Possibilities of IT*

#### Types of service

- *Information services* → aimed at providing information
- *Contact services* → aimed at asking questions and getting answers
- *Transaction services* → aimed at assigning individual rights and obligations to citizens
- *(E-)government* → form of digital service. It can be defined as supporting or redesigning the relationships and related processes that a government has with relevant parties in its environment to offer certain added value by using IT.

#### Shifts in service

- *Supply-oriented* → *demand-oriented service*: focus on the ability to design the service to the needs of citizens as costumers
- *Fragmented* → *integrated and holistic service*: demand pattern of a citizen is taken into account, instead of being confronted with the compartmentalized offer of all kinds of isolated services
- *Reactive* → *proactive service*: governments approach citizens and businesses actively and on their own initiative, and point out certain rights or obligations
- *One point of contact* → “*multi-channeling*”: citizens have access to a wider range of points of contact and communication channels for obtaining certain services than just one physical counter.
- *Collective* → *individual services*: more and more customization is delivered rather than mass services for large groups
- *Specialist* → *generalist service*: front office where the actual contact with the customer takes place, and the back office refers to the administrative handling of things.
- *Passive customer participation* → *active customer participation and engagement*: people are increasingly involved in the design and organization of services that are important to them as well as given some tasks in the execution of these services.

Various logics interact with the implementation which influence the appreciation of the involved as well as of the involved civil servants etc.

- ***Institutional logic*** → the demands made on the implementation under laws and regulations
- ***Provision logic*** → focuses on the demands an implementing organization makes on the way in which the implementation should be organized and the service to the citizen should take place
- ***Professional logic*** → results from the professionalism of the implementing official
- ***Demand logic*** → stems from wishes, needs and interests a citizen seeks to put forward in one’s contacts with the government, because one applies for a certain benefit for example

***Policy alienation*** = the difficulty civil servants have by identifying themselves in these dilemmas and tensions. This is especially influenced by:

1. The degree of powerlessness that public professionals or street level bureaucrats experience when they are confronted with the tensions between these four logics.
2. The degree of meaninglessness that professionals experience during implementation → increase if public professionals don’t have the power of discretion to implement more tailor made decisions

## 5.6 Monitoring, supervision and enforcement

More attention for monitoring, inspection, supervision and enforcement. Three reasons for this:

1. The shortcomings in many countries of the implementation process were learned the hard way
2. The radical restructuring that many governments have experienced under the label of *new public management* → problems like information asymmetry
3. The shift from the positive to the regulatory state. In the positive state, governments try to reach their goals by directly interfering in societal processes through taxing and spending. In the regulatory state, governments not directly tax or spend, but only design rules to reach preferred societal outcomes.

Monitoring, supervision and enforcement: definitions

***Monitoring*** = it allows policy makers and interested actors to systematically examine the process of creating a policy, implementing it, and evaluating its effects (Waterman and Wood). A tool for policy analysts by defining monitoring as an analytic procedure that produces information on causes and consequences of public policies (Dunn). Sapru considers monitoring as the process of observing the policy implementation progress and resource utilization and anticipating deviations from expected policy outcomes.

***Supervision*** = popular between manager and employees. In public context, supervision relates to potential or actual interactions between public bodies with specifically defined roles, tasks and responsibilities. The supervisor has the authority to assess the supervisee’s actual and intended

activities and has the possibility to influence the behavior of the supervisee. In comparison with monitoring, the roles and tasks in a process of supervision are usually better defined.

**Enforcement** = a strategy that is aimed at ensuring that legally binding regulations are followed in practice by applying the means of private law, public law or criminal law.

Three modes of supervision

**Repressive supervision** → traditional mode and is primarily based on the rational approach of the policy processes, a cybernetic model of control and the so-called principal-agent theory. It relies on a cybernetic model of control, that allows a comparison of the actual state of affairs with the previously stated policy objectives or standards in law and regulations. The supervisor tries to affect the behavior of the supervisee (single-loop learning)

**Supportive supervision** → start from joint interests, also known as the stewardship approach. The aim is to exchange knowledge, information and experiences between supervisor and supervised party to create a collective learning process. Follows the political and cultural perspectives on policy. Supervision can be considered as a process of collaboration between supervisor and supervisee with the goal to improve policy performance. → Double loop learning; allows a critical reflection on the appropriate policies and supervision criteria.

**Polycentric supervision** → not relationship between supervisor and supervisee as starting-point, but embeds the process of supervision with the broader network of stakeholders involved in a specific implementation process. It is not in hands of a central supervisory. It is much more about installing adequate checks and balances and fits within the political and institutional perspective. And a supervisor may invest in positioning adequate checks and balances, but also publish information about the performance of the organization (naming and shaming)

Dilemmas in monitoring, supervision and enforcement

There are three dilemmas that are related to the design, position and implementation of monitoring, enforcement and supervision.

1. Related to way in which the supervising body positions itself vis-à-vis the supervisee.
2. Dilemma related to the moral hazard of supervisees
3. Related to attitude of supervisor

*Position: close or distant?*

Some supervisors collaborate with supervisees in formulating quality criteria that supervisee should strive for and is the criteria. But this differs from every situation.

*Role: interventionist or non-interventionist*

Moral hazard → organization or individuals don't (fully) experience the consequences of their behavior, because they are willing to take more risks than they should do.

*Attitude: trust or distrust*

The relation between supervisor and supervisee is basically based on distrust

## Chapter 6: Evaluating public policy

### 6.1 Types of evaluation

Evaluation usually serves two purposes:

1. A condition for learning, with the aim of enhancing the quality and the impact of policy
2. A condition for public accountability for what has been achieved with a policy

Systematic and ad hoc evaluations

-Goals of learning and accountability can be achieved systematically and periodically → implementation and outcomes of policies structurally and frequently followed

-Evaluations can also be ad hoc. Objective indicators, such as monitors, can give rise to ad hoc policy evaluations.

Ex ante and ex post evaluations

**Ex ante** = evaluations that are done before a policy is implemented

**Ex post** = evaluations after implementation

Objects of evaluation

An evaluation has different types:

- **Input evaluations** → involves evaluations of the resources and efforts that have to be put into a policy in order to achieve certain aims
- **Goal achievement evaluations** → involves evaluations of the extent to which the stated policy objectives have been met. Important to differentiate between the *output* of policies and the *outcomes* or effects of policies
- **Effectiveness evaluations** → evaluations that do take the (broader) *outcomes* of a policy as objects of evaluation. Summative evaluations focus solely on whether the formal goals and effects have been achieved. Formative evaluations take the broader outcomes of a policy in to consideration in order to provide an answer to why goals and effects have or haven't been achieved
- **Efficiency evaluations** → evaluations of the costs in relation to the benefits of a specific program, so a cost-benefit analysis
- **Process evaluations** → evaluations of different processes involved in a policy

Internal and external evaluations

**Internal** = involve evaluations that are performed by organizations that are also involved in the implementation of the policy that is being evaluated.

**External** = performed by evaluators that are not themselves stakeholders in the policy that is being evaluated.

## 6.2 Evaluation criteria

The formulation of the criteria is a political choice.

### ***The rational approach: effectiveness, efficiency and coherency***

It is all about “learning about the consequences of public policy”. By rational evaluation, policies should learn about how to improve instruments or adjust goals. It puts all emphasis on the goals of policy, as these goals are supposed to give direction to the input of means and resources. This success is measured by means of three criteria:

- **Effectiveness** → refers to extent to which the measures and means that have been taken have managed to achieve the output or outcomes that had been set. Distinction between output and outcomes of policy
- **Efficiency** → refers to extent to which policy is able to achieve output and outcomes against the lowest possible costs in terms of resources. (ex ante and ex post evaluations)
- **Consistency** → closely associated with the idea of government as “perfect administration”. It means that policy should be consistent, internally as well as externally. Internally means for instance that all stakeholders involved in a policy know what is expected from them. Externally means that one policy does not contradict other policies.

### ***The political perspective: the politics of evaluation***

It's all about actors positioning themselves and protecting the interests. Judgements will frame and has contribution to a strengthening or a weakening position. This connects evaluation into the interests of coalitions of actors. It is inherently a political practice, leading to what can be described as the “politics of evaluation”

### ***The cultural approach: evaluation as the creation of a shared policy story***

Focuses on how evaluation studies create a shared meaning or interpretation of a specific policy. It doesn't focus on the objective measurements of effectiveness, efficiency and consistency or the serving of vested interests of a dominant coalition that determine a policy's successfulness, but want to



create a shared image or “story”. Evaluation, especially done by authoritative experts, can have an important impact on how people understand a policy and interpret its successes or failures.

***The institutional approach: policy evaluation as multi-rationality***

Combines elements of other approaches. It recognizes the multiple “rationalities” that can be institutionalized into a policy field. One of the rationalities focuses on whether policy works (effective, efficient and consistent). The other focuses on the feasibility of a policy. It also focuses on the institutional embedding of a policy that includes the principle of legality. Finally the focus on the institutional embedding of policy not only involves the legal embedding, but also the more social embedding in terms of legitimacy.

6.3 Designing policy evaluation

Most important design issues:

***The rational approach: measuring effects***

Evaluation in this approach means (objective) measuring, policy makers are enabled to cast an objective judgment on the success or failure of policy.

*Reconstructing the “policy theory”*

1. Reconstruct the “public theory” on which a policy is based. There isn’t an explicit policy theory as the rationalists hope for.

Policy evaluator should try put her or himself as best as possible in the shoes of the policy designers, to reconstruct the causal, final and normative assumptions they had in mind when designing the policy to be evaluated. However, the evaluator must also be aware of the discrepancies that may exist between the policy theory as it was when the policy was being designed and the theory as it is at the time of the evaluation. Goal displacement can be another factor behind the discrepancy between original and actual policy theory, because this allows for a more balanced policy evaluation.

*Measuring effects*

Rational measurement of policy effects comes with a number of issues:

1. How to determine whether changes that are measured are actually the effects of policy? → important for rational policy evaluation to have well-informed and well-articulated causal model (good insight)
2. The distinction between intended and unintended or inadvertent effects. Rational policy evaluator is interested in presence or absence of intended effects, but this also reveals other effects or consequences, not anticipated in the policy design.
3. Some policy efforts may only become manifest after long periods of time. Rationalist evaluation takes into account of periods that policies need to work out in practice often conflicts with political logic that is bound to an election cycle of often four or five years → ‘political impatience’
4. The actual measurements of effects itself.
5. Objectivity of the evaluation, or the extent to which the evaluation are seen as value free. Important to be aware that evaluation always has a normative dimension: policies always related to specific political values. It is important that any normative elements for evaluation are stated explicitly and are clearly derived from the actual policy design itself.

***The political approach: evaluation as the measurement of support***

Evaluation is all about the support that a policy can mobilize and it is successful if it managed to mobilize sufficient support amongst relevant stakeholders, providing the policy with sufficient resources.

Network analysis is method for mapping the constellation of actors and stakeholders:

1. Identify the relevant actors involved and define the network of positions, interests and dependencies within the network → it should also address these actors’ perceptions and interpretations of a policy’s success or failure.

Key issue in using network analysis → defining relevant actors or stakeholders. When actors can’t be identified, a network analysis can become a very laborious activity.

The aim of the network analysis is to define the basis of support for a policy, as well as to define possible bottlenecks in a network that may obstruct the effectiveness of a policy. The orientation of the political approach on the broader network of actors is also seen as a condition for the findings of an evaluation to be actually used by these actors. The political approach to evaluation also advocates the involvement of such actors in the formulation of an evaluation study.

### ***Cultural approach: evaluation as interpretation***

Rational approach → all about objective measurement of effects

Political approach → determining policy's level of support and resources

Cultural approach → evaluation is a form of interpretation, which involves a strongly subjectivist approach to evaluation. This focuses more on the stories that actors tell about a policy than on the actors' interests and resources, as the political approach does. → "fourth generation of evaluation" (Guba and Lincoln)

Interpretations of a policy's success and failure depend on the specific context in which an actor is situated. Evaluation involves the construction of a common story that involves a form of judgement about a policy. The construction of a common story evolves much more around language and social interaction. It is about the construction of an intersubjective story that is convincing and that makes sense to the actors involved.

This construction takes place in a process of social interaction. Language or framing can play an important role in this interaction and the shaping of a collective story.

### ***Designing evaluation as social interaction***

The process of interaction between actors is key. Goal of interaction should be to create a shared interpretation of a policy reality.

1. A process needs to be created that allows for meaningful interaction between involved stakeholders. Connect the different actors' stories in a common evaluation.

The aim is not to draw a network analysis and analyse interdependencies and resources, but rather to create one palette out of different stories. The goal is to develop a mutual understanding in form of common story or narrative, through social interaction and dialogue. → "responsive evaluation"

2. Culturalist evaluation design is identifying and addressing any potential barriers that may exist and obstruct the dialogue between actors. Evaluator must identify potential barriers and introduce a bias in the policy evaluation.

3. Value pluralism. Rationalist perspective assumes clear ordering of normative premises on which a policy theory is based → cultural perspective assumes that policies are always based on a plurality of normative perspectives. It involves a blend of values.

### ***The evaluator as coach***

The role of the evaluator should take in the evaluation itself.

Rationalist → independent and objective as possible, preferably keeping a certain distance from actual policy stakeholders.

Political → more like a chief negotiator standing in between stakeholders

Cultural → becomes one of the actors in the evaluation, who has to work with the actors in the construction of a common policy story (not objective in traditional sense), which leads to two major challenges:

1. Evaluator should try to promote the ideal speech situation → such a situation may be very hard to establish in practice.

2. Challenge to address value relativism → culturalist approach can lead to nihilism as it does not have methods for determining a hierarchy of values

### ***Fischer's multi-layered approach to policy evaluation***

This framework has been widely used in academia for the study of evaluations, but also offers structuring principles for a culturalist evaluator, while combining important elements of the rational, political and cultural perspectives. Fischer renounces the idea that evaluation involves a pure calculation of inputs and effects. He distinguishes four layers: verification, situational validation, societal vindication and social choice, that can facilitate the process of dialogue and communication that is so essential to the cultural approach. The goal: not to "plug in" answers or to fulfil pre-specified

methodological requirements, but to engage an open and flexible exploration of the kinds of concerns raised in various discursive phases of the problem.

- *Program verification* → first layer, “technical-analytical discourse”, this level comes close to what we call the rationalist approach to policy evaluation and involves what is described as “conventional policy analysis”, whether a policy has achieved its objectives and is most efficient.
- *Situational validation* → second layer, “contextual discourse”, to what extent a policy still fits a specific problem situation.
- *Societal vindication* → third layer, puts policy in a broader evaluative perspective, described as “system discourse”, which means whether a policy fits the broader political and social choices that have been made.
- *Social choice* → fourth layer, most abstract layer involves ideological discourse or the choice for the very social order on which policy is based. It turns attention to the very basic ideological principles on which a policy is based.

It is always a form of a social choice.

### ***The institutional approach: evaluation as dealing with multi-rationality***

It questions the possibility for casting a single judgment about policy success or failure. Not the actors’ interests or their problem perspectives, but rather the different institutional settings in which actors operate. The four questions that are key for this approach (is it applicable, does it work, is it appropriate, is it allowed) also applied to evaluation.

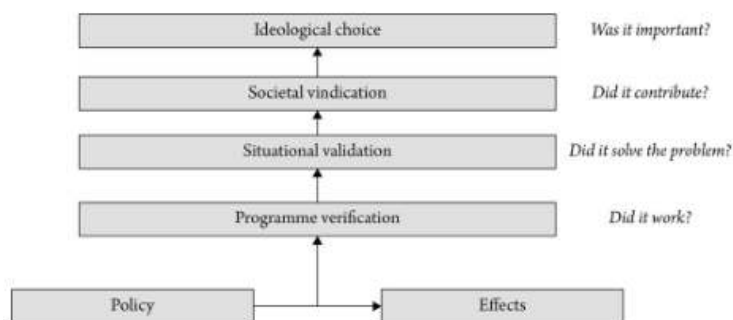


Figure 6.1 Schematic overview of Fischer's multi-layered approach to policy evaluation

*Does it work?* → whether goals and outcomes that had been set by original policy have actually been met.

*Is it applicable?* → reflects ideas from political perspective. Focuses on whether policy that is being evaluated can rely on sufficient support from stakeholders.

*Is it allowed?* → more legalistic perspective on policy evaluation, a dimension that is considered of key importance in the institutionalist perspective and perhaps somewhat forgotten in other perspectives. Involves if it's allowed in broader legal implications for the generic principles of the parliamentary democracy and rule of law.

*Is it appropriate?* → addresses broader social and institutional fit of a policy. Does a policy, according to the stakeholders involved, fit their interests, ideas, expectations, values and norms?

Challenge to address all four of these evaluation questions, but also deal with potential ambiguities and contradictions that may arise when addressing all four questions.

### 6.4 Utilization of evaluation studies

Evaluation studies will not always be used. The reality of impact of knowledge is often: ambiguous, amorphous, incremental and meandering. Rather speaking of “impact” or “influence”, there is a preference for “knowledge utilization” which can be more clearly defined, operationalized and studied

### ***Models of research-policy relations***

Distinction between different models of the relationship between knowledge producer and knowledge utilizer. Hoppe has distinguished several ideal typical research-policy relationships, which can be applied to evaluation studies as well. The four types differ on two dimensions:

1. Whether there is a primacy of research or policy in the mutual relationship
2. “boundary work”, whether there are clear defined boundaries between science and politics, or whether the roles of both realms converge and intertwine (Jasanoff and Gieryn)

→ definition of four models: enlightenment, technocracy, bureaucracy and engineering model

Table 6.1 Overview of models of research-policy relations

		Relative primacy	
		Primacy of research	Primacy of policy
Differentiation of roles	Sharp boundaries	Enlightenment	Bureaucracy
	Diffuse boundaries	Technocracy	Engineering

Source: Hoppe, 2011.

- **Enlightenment model** → the researcher/evaluator stays at a distance from the policy realm. The evaluator or agency of which he or she is part, determines what is evaluated. This model puts most emphasis on the “push” factor of knowledge as a source of new ideas and insights that may (or may not) take their way into the policy process. If knowledge makes its way into policy at all, this will be done in a rather indirect way, known as the “knowledge creep”. Indirect relationship between producer and utilizer of knowledge.
- **Technocratic model** → very direct relationship between producers and utilizers of knowledge. Radical models, the knowledge producer takes over the seat of the policy makers. Evaluation studies are to have a clear policy orientation, the researcher/evaluator maintains primacy in this relationship → rather technical and depoliticized conception of the mutual relation.
- **Bureaucratic model** → primacy for policy in the mutual relationship. Relative primacy is associated with a clear separation of roles. Knowledge producer produces knowledge “on demand” and does absolutely no more than just provide knowledge, so without any policy orientation. Evaluation study is to provide information into the policy process to allow policy makers to take actions wherever they are need, rather than bringing policy alternatives.
- **Engineering model** → policy has primacy, but roles between research and policy are more convergent than in bureaucratic model. Knowledge or research provides a marketplace full of ideas and policy-relevant suggestions from which policy makers can happily select and choose. Policy makers can select from marketplace of research to support design or engineering of new policies, but they can also choose to ignore an evaluation study. This model carries an important risk of research being used as “ammunition” in the broader political process, which brings us to the patterns of knowledge utilization.

### Patterns of knowledge utilization

Distinction can also be made between different patterns of knowledge utilization. Mostly referred to the instrumental knowledge utilization, which involves direct forms of using knowledge, such as the findings of an evaluation committee, for filling gaps of knowledge in a policy theory and designing specific policy initiatives. Instrumental knowledge utilization most likely when the actors involved also recognize uncertainty and the need for knowledge to enhance their functioning → assumed in the technocratic and bureaucratic types

Two kinds of *symbolic knowledge utilization* → symbolic meaning of knowledge that is being put to purpose rather than the actual knowledge at an epistemological level itself.

1. Refers to the substantiation of specific policy (or organizational) discourses with reference to knowledge and expertise. → symbolic meaning of research that supports policy programs or discourses that have already been developed, rather than being utilized to design or develop these programs.
2. Research utilized primarily to legitimize the involvement of a specific actor or institution in a policy field. In the legitimizing form it is the mere fact of (letting do) research that boosts the authority of an actor or institution (not substantiating knowledge)

Also possibility of *non-utilization of knowledge*, but it is almost impossible because there are so many evaluations done by so many different institutions.

#### 6.5 Evaluation as a form of accountability

It has also an important function in terms of (public) accountability, not only in policy change and learning. It provides a means for holding policy actors accountable for their policies and the effects that they have achieved. Accountability closely related to responsibility.

Being held accountable has a legal as well as a political and social dimension.

Evaluation can be an important means for holding officials accountable. Technical sense → provides method for objectifying policy input, output and outcomes. Legal or political implications if an evaluation reveals any unlawful activities.

Many democracies have procedures for the establishment of special commissions in cases where parliament considers further investigation is required and sometimes this involves formal parliamentary inquiries where a committee is established that has formal competences to interrogate persons under oath.

**Accountability** connected to concept of responsibility, applies in particular to cases where an evaluation study shows that a specific “norm” has been violated. Can be in the form of a direct evaluation study or in public interpretation where the conclusion is drawn that a norm has been violated.

**Responsibility** can be conceptualized in different ways

- *Active* and *passive* → passive refers to those cases where someone is held accountable *ex post* for something that may have happened because of policies. Active refers to whether someone as made sufficient effort *ex ante* to prevent a certain situation from occurring

Distinction between five different forms of (active or passive) responsibility

- *Cause* → responsibility means that a specific action (or absence thereof) is seen as the cause of a situation
- *Liability* → individual or organization is held accountable for the consequences of specific actions or the absence thereof. Can involve liability in legal, moral or political sense.
- *Capacity* → the qualities that are required for bearing responsibility in the first place. But in some cases we can better speak of misfortune than failure, when situations are neither controllable nor foreseeable.
- *Task* → coupling made between tasks, responsibility and competencies.
- *Virtue* → beyond legal sense, more to what extent a person or organization has really taken its formal responsibilities seriously and has been sufficiently aware of the work needed to live up to this responsibility.

These forms work in a cumulative way. When evaluation shows that a person is responsible for the cause of a situation, can be considered liable, but it may be very difficult to infer responsibility on all five accounts, especially when dealt with wicked policy problems.

Politicization has increased the use of democratic fora for evaluation and accountability, but on the other hand accountability is increasingly taking place in broader society, in media for example.

### Chapter 7: Policy dynamics: learning, change and innovation

#### 7.2 Conceptualizing policy dynamics and policy learning

Policy learning should be considered as one of the factors that accounts for policy change.

- *Rational perspective* → learning is condition for policies to be (and to remain) efficient and effective.
- *Political perspective* → promote support for a policy
- *Institutional perspective* → a key for institutional survival and in maintaining legitimacy
- *Cultural perspective* → concept of learning is approached more critically because of its cognitivist bias.

Learning does not necessarily have to lead to policy change, but it can also strengthen the conviction that policy shouldn't change, call for non-incremental policy change.

- Some consensus that policy learning has something to do with cognition → approximates “puzzling” rather than “powering”. → way we make sense of policy situations and tools and methods.
- Consensus learning often takes place on the basis of (new) *knowledge, information or experiences* → knowledge and information by experts, also so-called lay expertise or experiences from past policies. It is a context-dependent process.
- Learning mostly defined as *iterative process* that takes place constantly throughout the policy process and often involves much trial and error. → explicit policy learning, but most of the time implicit and embedded processes

But who learns?

- *Individual level* → it can't be considered policy learning, but the individual must be able to convince sufficient other policy stakeholders as well as able to make a difference.
- *Organizational level* → contributing to capacity of an organization to adapt to a changing policy environment and to improve and strengthen its role in a certain policy area. It can also be about learning about organizations and the “organizational culture”
- *Policy sectors* → “policy subsystems” → relatively enduring alterations of thought or behavioral intentions which result from experience and concerned with attainment or revision of policy objectives”

Distinction between first, second and third order learning, used in social sciences

- *First order learning* → learning oriented at improving policy instrument, which means that neither the choice of instruments nor the policy targets are at stake, but rather how these instruments are put into practice.
- *Second order learning* → learning that does address the choice and selection of policy instruments, while not discussing the fundamental policy aims and priorities.
- *Third order learning* → does put the aims and priorities of policies at stake. It involves learning at the level of policy paradigms/policy beliefs. This involves a fundamental reconsideration of how the policy problem is defined etc. → likely to affect roles and positions of actors involved in policy as well, thus challenging the status quo.

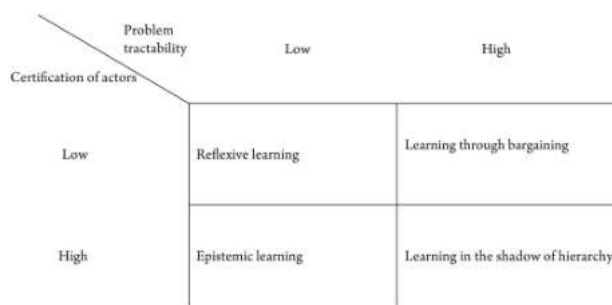
There is a debate whether and under what conditions the third order learning takes place. There are scholars who believe that such fundamental policy changes will always be triggered by external events and breakthroughs, rather than by learning by involved actors themselves. On the other hand, there are scholars who believe that under the right conditions, third order learning can take place.

Typology that connects types of learning to two key factors

- *Problem tractability* (or level of uncertainty involved in specific policy issue) → the distinction between types of public problems and links to levels of learning distinguished by Hall. If problem is intractable, uncertainty is high, and learning takes place at higher level. Tractable and well structured, uncertainty is low, and learning takes place at lower level.
- *Actors that are involved in learning process*

Combining these two dimensions (problem tractability and certification of actors) → definition of four “ideal types” of policy learning

- *Reflexive learning* → open process of learning where fundamental policy ideas are discussed (first + second), like interactive or deliberative modes of learning.
- *Epistemic learning* → addresses also fundamental policy ideas, but here learning is promoted by certified actors such as experts or advisory bodies. It speaks closely to role of knowledge elites or “epistemic communities”
- *Learning through bargaining* → tractability is high and multiple actors have access to the learning process. Knowledge often used as strategic source (“ammunition”) transferred between actors in processes of political and social interaction (“policy transfer”)
- *Learning in the shadow of hierarchy* → tractability is high and certification of actors is also high.



Source: Dunlop and Radaelli, 2013:603.

Figure 7.1 Typology of policy learning

### 7.3 Rational perspective: learning as the motor of policy change

Knowledge and information are at the core of policy process in rational perspective → acquisition of new knowledge and information key motor of policy dynamics. In ideal rationalist (“positivist”) world, policy dynamics would be a direct response to learning or the organized production and collection of knowledge and information. → **technocracy** = technical organization of the policy process where knowledge producers take the seat of the policy maker and keep politics out in order to avoid normative bias: “politics spoils good policies”

Framing → evidence-based policy making

#### Incrementalism and the science of muddling through

Lindblom criticized the idea that knowledge and information could be the single drivers of policy change (“comprehensive rationalist model”), because such model would ignore the complexity of many policy issues. Method of “*incrementalism*” more realistic alternative and is a “science of muddling through” → rational “scientific” approach to policy analysis continues to be relevant but will at best only result in small step-by-step changes. This method takes the shape of “successive limited comparison” → when policies are change, knowledge and information is acquired only on marginal policy adjustments and are always incomplete. Form of trial and error necessary for gradually improving policies.

#### Evidence-based policy making and cybernetic learning

Evidence-based policy making is widely used in policy-oriented research in many European countries and refers to the relevancy of knowledge of “what works” in the evaluation and subsequent redesign of policies. Reference to policy cycle heuristic, it emphasizes the importance of evaluation in order to acquire the necessary knowledge and information to improve policies. As a model of policy dynamics, evidence policy making therefore assumes a constant testing, monitoring, evaluation and adjustment of policies.

There are three characteristics of evidence-based policy:

1. Belief that acquiring knowledge of what works and why it works is not only important for solving policy problems in increasingly complex social systems, but also for accountability and legitimacy of policies.
2. Associated with an apolitical and sometimes even pragmatic or trial and error approach to policy change. It rarely seems to address the level of policy beliefs or what we describe as “third order learning”
3. Popularity is associated with a revival of interest in (positivist) research and evaluation methods, emphasizing validity and reliability of quantitative methods. This involves the exploration of relatively new methods.

Evidence-based policy making speaks closely to the notion of “**cybernetic learning**” → learning within a specific system or an organization by means of building feedback mechanisms that monitor the efforts made by specific actors as well as the contribution to achieving the policy goals. These feedback mechanisms allow policy makers to pinpoint problems or errors and to make corrections wherever required. Cybernetic feedback mechanisms may work out less ideally, when there is a lack of clear indicators, when measurement tools fail, or when communication of measurements is distorted.

Distinction between two levels of learning in cybernetic approach

1. **Single loop learning** → involves most simple feedback mechanism when policy results are measured in relation to policy aims.
2. **Double loop learning** → also includes feedback mechanism to adjust goals and norms whenever necessary, but this involves “third order learning” → where policy assumptions are put at stake and adjusted.

The rationalism of policy transfer

**Policy transfer** → involves a mode of policy learning by social interaction and comparison. It involves the “travel” of policy ideas, programs or experiences from one setting to another. “*a process by which knowledge about policies, administrative arrangements, institutions and ideas in one political system is used in the development of policies, administrative arrangements, institutions and ideas in another political system.*”

In context of globalization and internationalization, more interdependencies have emerged bringing about more intensive contacts across the globe, which has strongly increased opportunities for policy transfer.

Policy transfer comes in different forms:

1. Distinction between coercive and voluntary transfer → Coercive transfer = to those cases where the transposition of a specific policy is a requirement. Voluntary transfer = described as lesson drawing.
2. What is transferred, can differ as well. There are also multiple possibilities regarding who is involved in transfer and at what level it takes place.
3. Transfer simply refers to one policy inspiring the development of another → for instance that there is a policy and another country uses it but develops their own instead of copying.

7.4 Political perspective: between powering and puzzling

Political perspective emphasizes the role of power, interests and conflict. The dichotomy between “puzzling” and “powering”, with political perspective concerned primarily with the second one. The distinction between puzzling and powering is difficult to make, because they are both closely intertwined. For instance, knowledge is also power.

Learning in the Advocacy Coalition Framework

Developed by Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith. Notion of “*policy subsystems*”, which involve relatively demarcated networks of actors operating in relation to a specific policy topic. → important for understanding both learning and change.

Notion of “*advocacy coalition*” or actors who share specific policy ideas or “beliefs” and share in efforts to achieve those beliefs.

Agenda setting involves a struggle between advocacy coalitions who tried to get an issue from the subsystem level onto the political agenda) and advocacy coalitions who were best served by the status quo and tried to prevent agenda setting. → held together and hold the key for understanding the role of learning in the ACF, like *policy belief systems*, which includes “value priorities, perceptions of important causal relationships, perceptions of world stated and perceptions/assumptions concerning the efficacy of various policy instruments”

Several “levels” within policy belief system

- **Deep core** (first level) → a policy belief system involves fundamental beliefs and norms that are highly resistant to change. It includes fundamental beliefs about the relation between state-society-individual, about equality and freedom, and so on.
- **Policy core** (second level) → beliefs that are specific to a policy problem or issue, such as the problem definition, causal theories, choice of policy strategies. This level binds together an advocacy coalition.
- **Secondary aspects** (third level) → more instrumental character, referring to the choice and setting of instruments and applications of specific means.



Opportunities for change and *policy learning* differ strongly between these levels of policy belief systems. Change at deep core is considered highly unlikely. Though learning is considered to play a key role at the level of secondary aspects.

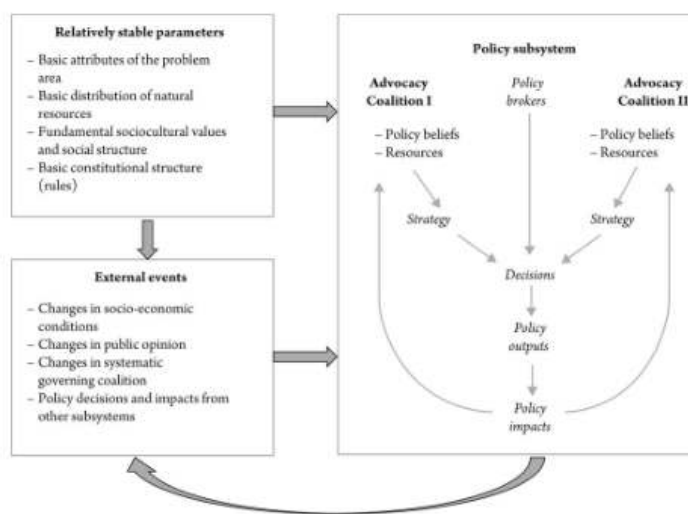
Policy learning can lead to incremental policy change (or “policy adjustments”), especially on level of secondary policy aspects. The interaction between and within advocacy coalitions play a key role. Conflict and competition have an important function in the ACF: they are triggers for advocacy coalitions not to change their beliefs, but to defend and sharpen their understanding of how to best achieve their aims.

Relative policy stability (mostly for incremental policy adjustments rather than fundamental policy change) is further sustained by *relatively stable parameters* that structure a policy subsystem and are unlikely to change easily. Generic legal principles but also distribution of resources promote relative stability.

Non-incremental policy change can occur in the ACF, but is unlikely to be the consequence of policy learning. To trigger major policy change we need external perturbations, which involves large external changes to a policy subsystem that do change the “balance of power” between advocacy coalitions. Sabatier also recognizes the opportunity of “trigger” or “focus events”, and the opportunity of such events triggering rather sudden “swings” in the public mood.

Policy analysts can contribute to policy dynamics in the ACF in different ways

- As part of specific advocacy coalitions, engaging in research and evaluation that lends support to and contributes to the refinement of a policy belief system. → “political ammunition”, but as evaluation contribution to first and second order learning.
- Fulfill role of policy brokers in between different advocacy coalitions → aim of policy analysis can be to bring together advocacy coalitions
- Can contribute to what he describes as “enlightenment”, especially by exploring subsystem parameters or changes in the subsystem environment.



Source: Based on Sabatier, 1988.

Figure 7.2 Schematic overview of conceptual relations in the Advocacy Coalition Framework

### 7.5 Cultural perspective: epistemic communities, discourses and critical frame reflection

Culturalist perspective largely refrains from using the notion policy learning at all. Learning has a cognitivist connotation, which is rejected or at least nuanced in this perspective. The culturalist likes to speak of ideas, discourses or beliefs. They tend to look at how ideas persuade and spread and eventually structure the process of policy formulation

Learning is seen as a process of construction, which is an inherently social activity, which involves the development of a shared language. This language enables actors to create a shared frame of reference for defining specific phenomena and developing a shared interpretation of a situation. It involves a bend of information, knowledge, experiences, thoughts etc, but the distinction between knowledge and

ideas is problematized, so is the distinction between interests and ideas → actors often have no objective way of defining their own interests; their interests are what they perceive them to be. The benefit of learning is the social interaction, which involves in developing a shared interpretation of a situation. This is a necessary basis for collective action or policy making, because without it only individual interpretations would remain, leading to relativism and policy stalemate. Free and open exchange, which demands from actors that they surpass the institutional environments.

This perspective puts much emphasis on plurality, or the multiplicity of ideas in policy fields as a source of creativity and innovation.

Political → focuses on the competition between belief systems

Rationalist → emphasizes processes of negative and positive feedback

A process of creative competition can emerge where new combinations of problem constructs and policy approaches emerge. This could lead to what we have defined as third order learning. The creativity can be important and a functional source for policy dynamics and innovation as well.

Three frameworks that can be positioned within the culturalist perspective, which share a culturalist understanding of the role of ideas in policy dynamics, but they vary in their perspectives on learning: **Epistemic communities** → approximates the rationalist perspective in its emphasis on the role of knowledge and beliefs in policy process. It borrows elements of the political perspective in its emphasis on knowledge being developed in and propagated by communities (“epistemic communities”). It rejects the rationalist idea that it is the objectivity of knowledge claims that defines their relevance to policy making, it defines knowledge as “epistemic beliefs” that can persuade and have impact on many different grounds than their objectivity and knowledge is often uncertain. It discards the political perspective’s preoccupation with conflict and competition between advocacy coalition.

Culturalist: emphasizes the key role of experts, as unified in epistemic communities, play in the policy process. “*a network of professionals with recognized expertise and competence in a particular domain and an authoritative claim to policy-relevant knowledge within that domain or issue-area*” → more emphasis on the role of professionals than the notion of advocacy coalitions. This community is held together by a “shared set of normative and principled beliefs” and “shared causal beliefs”, which can be compared to deep core and policy core beliefs.

Validity has important meaning, because they have their own notions of validity, which are intersubjectively shared and which contribute to the persuasiveness of epistemic claims.

It also engages in a “common policy enterprise”, which can take the form of a shared professional approach to a specific policy issue.

Epistemic communities do seek influence in policy process, not involving “learning” of a cognitive kind, but rather that “the claim to truth being advanced must be more persuasive to the dominant political decision makers than some other claims” → professionals and experts, besides proving the “validity” of knowledge claims, have to make sure that their knowledge claims are framed in persuasive terms.

**Critical frame reflection** → combines culturalist approach (how policies and policy problems are “framed”) with a perspective on how reason or cognition can play a role in changing such frames → rather than learning, it speaks of “reflection” or “critical frame reflection”

**Frame-shift** constitutes a non-incremental policy change as it alters the fundamental underlying problem perceptions and policy prescriptions and critical reflection can be source for those shifts. CFR → important strategy for avoiding “the relativist trap”, or a radical constructivist interpretation where all meaning is seen as subjective. Not learning, but addressing the consistency and coherence of frames, the relation between frames and the evidence that should fit the frames.

**Design rationality** = specific conditions to allow CFR:

1. **Communicative imperative** → actors must at least be willing and able to engage in dialogue and to engage in interaction and a free exchange of ideas about how to address a problem situation.
2. **Put themselves in the shoes of another** → in order to assess potential alternative frames

3. *Must be aware of their own frames, through introspection* → only then an actor can critically assess a frame in terms of consistency and coherency.
4. *Willing to alter their frame when reflection reveals that this may be necessary*
5. *Must be a certain degree of trust between actors*

The development of a shared interpretation and definition of a specific problem situation often involves a process of *frame alignment*, which involves a process of linking between frames in order to create resonance between different frames, thus creating a more broadly shared interpretation of the situation and providing the basis for mobilization or collective action. This frame alignment can take place in four different ways (conceptualized as framing strategies):

1. *Frame bridging* → linking and merging of two frames into one more broadly shared frame
2. *Frame amplification* → involves the “clarification and invigoration” of a specific frame to give it more resonance amongst a broader group
3. *Frame extensions* → involves the expansion of a frame by incorporating problem definitions and beliefs of other actors
4. *Frame transformation* → may take place when a frame fails to resonate and needs to be reformulated or “transformed” in order to acquire more support and offer a more adequate interpretation of a problem situation.

***Discourse structuration and institutionalization*** → in contrast to the epistemic communities approach and the frame reflective approach, the DCF puts much less confidence in the role of knowledge and cognition. DCF sees policy dynamics as evolving around specific policy discourses (= an ensemble of ideas, concepts and categories through which meaning is given to phenomena). These discourses are supported by “discourse coalitions” or “an ensemble of a set of storylines”. There is some similarity with the notion of advocacy coalition, but there are two key differences:

1. Discourse coalitions are held together by language and storylines, rather than by interest and belief systems on a cognitive level. DC does not much evolve around the objectivity of a discourse, but rather by a “*discursive affinity*”
2. There does not have to be a clear degree of organization in a discourse coalition. Rather than by shared mobilization and advocacy, a DC spreads by diffusion of a specific discourse on a problem situation

Two mechanisms through which discourses can become dominant or embedded:

1. *Discourse structuration* → involves a process in which “a discourse starts to dominate the way a society conceptualizes the world”. Process can take place tacitly. Knowledge and expertise can play a role not because of their objective input, but rather because their claims have authority in persuading and convincing others to adopt a specific frame.
2. *Discourse institutionalization* → involves a process where discourses “solidify into an institution, sometimes as organizational practices, sometimes as traditional way of reasoning”

Discourse structuration and institutionalization are mutually reinforcing processes. Once a discourse starts to structure problem perceptions, institutionalization will become more likely and the other way around. This way, discourse coalition framework provides a bridge between culturalist perspective and institutional perspective.

#### 7.6 Institutional perspective: institutional path-dependency and punctuated equilibrium

Institutionalists show how the institutional setting of policies constrains opportunities for policy change. The setting can be an important source of “negative feedback” or feedback that helps to neutralize any challenge and thus promote policy stability or incremental change rather than non-incremental change. On the other hand, the institutional setting may under specific conditionals also provide opportunities for change, which can trigger “positive feedback”, or a process where actors that manage to create an institutional breakthrough face “increasing returns to scale” in their efforts to challenge the status quo.

#### Negative feedback and institutional path-dependency

Dynamics forces have to be at work to preserve this (relative) policy stability. This is maintained as long as the forces that promote stability are stronger than the forces that challenge the status quo and

promote change. *Negative feedback* → forces promoting stability and equilibrium, can involve actions that explicitly maintain stability, as well as practices that have stability as an implicit consequence. *Institutional path dependency* → when negative feedback prevails over positive feedback, doesn't mean that there can be no change, but rather that change is likely to be incremental rather than non-incremental, and direction of change follows out of past decisions and developments. *Policies create new politics* → once policies are established, they create specific "opportunity structures" that may constrain or rather enable actors in specific ways. Past-decisions may create *lock-in* effects (when huge investments have been made to start developing a specific policy instrument or program, which can't be easily reverted) and also have interpretative implications (they are sources of information and meaning that affect future decisions)

Mahoney focuses on how policy decisions follow from very specific *historic sequences of events*, rather than focusing on how institutions "lock in" future decisions. He shows that policies develop according to specific paths. *Critical junctures* can emerge when historic sequences intersect, and his conceptualization of critical junctures shows that path-dependency doesn't always lead to incremental changes only but can lead to non-incremental change when different parts collide at specific moments. **Group think** is another source of path-dependency and involves a relatively high degree of cohesion within a specific group of policy makers or decision-makers concerning the definition and interpretation of a policy situation → can lead to a "tunnel vision", when new information and knowledge is ignored or misinterpreted. When there are strong interdependencies between actors, the likelihood of group think in order not to disturb these interdependencies increases, which can contribute to a "monopolization of reality" → becomes embedded not only in shared beliefs, but also in institutions and routines that further stabilize a problem understanding.

Group think may be promoted by "group polarization" → involves a sharpening of specific policy understanding in confrontation or conflict with others, leading to (dysfunctional) stereotyping and dichotomization (them vs. us)

**Self-referentiality/ autopoiesis** → group think is an element of social interaction, self-referentiality is a characteristic of social system in which policy making takes place → developed as part of the autopoietic social systems theory. **Autopoietic** = "referring to oneself" → social system theory emphasizes importance of social differentiation, which involves a differentiation of society in different "systems", which are designed based on their own perception of reality, which is institutionalized and maintained through various rules, routines within the system itself.

Path-dependency can involve very specific forms of policy learning

1. *Institutional layering* → involves questions of only specific parts of an institutional practice, while leaving other elements intact. Leads to process of accommodation (policy adjustment), without core of institutional practice and the associated policy values and norms being affected.
2. *Institutional conversion* → doesn't involve a change in parts of an institutional practice, but rather change in procedures, the position of specific actors or a redistribution of resources in order to change a policy's course.

Positive feedback and punctuated equilibrium

In punctuated equilibrium, policy change plays a central role. Policy dynamics tends to follow a pattern of punctuated equilibrium (= long periods of relative stability interrupted by moments of dramatic policy change). Negative feedback plays a key role in it too, especially in accounting for the periods of relative stability. Negative feedback refers to feedback that negates any challenge that tries to bring a specific policy off its path of development. Negative, not in normative sense, but in sense that challengers face "diminishing returns to scale" for their efforts to press for change → result will be incremental change and preservation of position of incumbent *policy monopoly*.

Concept of change is central to punctuated equilibrium framework, but concept of learning is problematic. Learning is expected to take place especially during periods of relative stability as a factor in negative feedback and incremental policy change. Policy monopolies are expected to learn by refining (rather than adjusting) their policy images in response to new information and by improving programs and methods for implementing the policies they advocate. Learning can be an important

source of negative feedback (holding off challenges and preserving status quo), however, there is very limited room for learning during processes of positive feedback. This is where logic of politics applies → knowledge and information can play important role in positive feedback processes as well, but often more as ammunition and to boost the authority of specific claim makers, rather than using knowledge and information instrumentally for policy learning.

### 7.7 Policy innovation

**Innovation** = “an idea, practice or object that is perceived as new by an individual or a unit of adoption”

An innovative public sector: a contradiction in terms

Innovation in public sector is “a contra dictionary in terminis”, especially if public is comped with private sector, because public sector lacks competition and competition is being viewed as a necessary condition for innovation.

There are arguments against that statement:

1. *Empirical argument* → when we look at the practice of innovation in public sector, we see that the public sector has a long-lasting tradition of innovation
2. *The perspective that we want to take into account also makes a difference* → more historical and evolutionary approach to public sector innovation, changes that have been made often consists of a long-lasting series of smaller steps that have resulted in a fundamental transition, which only can be seen if we are able to have a longer lasting look
3. *Important source of PS innovation is the changing societal and political demands governments are confronted with* → and that not only challenge their efficiency and effectiveness, but also their legitimacy and media.
4. *Existence of wicked problems* → demands that refer to the rising demands of citizens that expect that governments are able to deal with, while at the same time politicians, public managers as well as other policy makers suggest that they are also able to solve them. These wicked policy problems forces governments, often in close co-operation with other relevant stakeholders, to look for new approaches or to re-frame existing problem definitions in new ones so that new perspectives and new bodies of knowledge can be linked to.
5. *Private sector added value of innovation can be calculated in terms of profit share or market share* → doesn't mean there is no added value in public sector, but in public sector economic values like efficiency and effectiveness are not the only values that stimulate government to embark on the innovation journey. Political, democratic and legal values are seen as important too.
  - *Political* → refer to the nature of political process, which refers to how to deal with challenges that societies as being political communities are confronted with and which can't be dealt with in a satisfactory way by the market.
  - *Democratic* → how to respond to the changing needs in society and how to give society a say in defining these needs and ways in which they can be accomplished.
  - *Legal* → fundamental values of the rule of law and that have to be applied in terms of legal security, lack of arbitrariness but also fundamental rights like privacy.
6. *Competition between countries, cities and regions as being most attractive place to work, to live etc* → driver for innovation

The concept of innovation: types and process

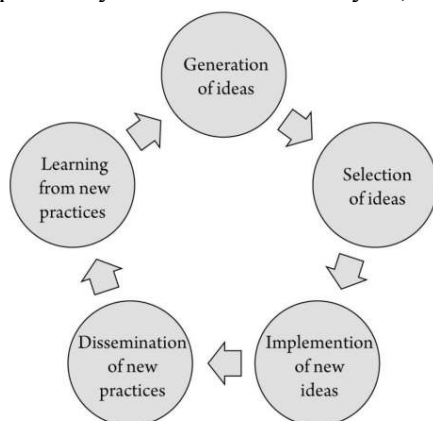
Rather a fuzzy concept, because it is often perceived as a “magic concept”, which is gladly embraced by politicians, policy makers, public managers as well as citizens. Innovation is often considered as a normative concept, because it is perceived as “something good” which prevents policy makers and scholars from developing a critical approach.

The literature of innovation provides various classification of different types of innovation

- *Service-oriented innovations* → aimed at creating new public services and products

- *Process-oriented innovations* → aimed at designing or redesigning administrative processes within government and between governments and citizens or companies, which can be easier and more efficient by making use of “common pool” services
- *Technological innovations* → aimed at the application of new technologies
- *Organizational innovations* → aimed at introducing new organization and management models, working methods and new techniques
- *Conceptual innovations* → for instance aimed at developing new ideas or concepts, leading to a different definition and approach of specific policy problems or the concept of participatory budgeting
- *Governance innovations* → aimed at the development of new forms of steering, thereby making use of self-regulating capacities that are present in society

When we talk about public sector innovation, it's important to look at the process of innovation. Innovation was defined as “a process of creative destruction” in which “new combinations of existing resources” are achieved. This process of creative destruction is sometimes considered as following a specific cycle: the innovation cycle, which consists of number different stages or sub-processes



Source: Adapted from Sørensen and Torfing, 2011.  
Figure 7.3 The innovation cycle

Innovation processes are shaped in all kinds of complicated and highly dynamic interactions, which can be defined as learning processes. Innovation requires change and willingness to learn, but change not always innovative, because learning doesn't always turn into new ideas. → issue of discontinuity with the past is an essential distinction in order to understand the nature of innovation. That's why it is important to make a distinction between organizational development and service improvements on the one hand and innovations on the other hand. Both leads to changes, but innovation is more radical, more transformative, because an innovation changes the paradigm → paradigm shifts

Paradigm shifts are also often related to introduction of

new technologies which offer the possibility of creating new business models.

### An open or ecological perspective on innovation

Innovation does not take place in a vacuum

1. *Takes place within a specific environment* → can be considered as an important input for the process of innovation, given the needs that are present in this environment. Especially societal needs, in combination with media and political pressure, are an important source of public sector innovation, while at the same time the outcomes are given back to the environment. Innovation can be seen as a process in which ideas and interests co-evolve. The adoption of this ecological perspective also enables us to take into account the different governance traditions in various countries, which also touches upon the institutional perspective of policy process.
2. *Innovation theory stresses the open character of innovation as being a (radical) learning process* → innovation is not something that can only be attributed to the capacities and capabilities of a specific person, systematic process and development that has been institutionalized in a laboratory. The study of innovation shows that innovation processes require the ability and willingness of relevant actors to co-operate and to link and share ideas, knowledge and experience beyond traditional organizational boundaries. Moreover it requires the existence of an open culture and a safe context in which “trial and error”, “reflection” and “learning” can take place without being penalized for making “mistakes” or not realizing immediate results. Importance of free and open exchange for resources based on shared understanding about challenge → political and cultural perspective.
3. *Public innovation processes around wicked problems* → presupposes the willingness and ability of relevant stakeholders to exchange and share relevant resources, also implies that innovation processes in the public sector take place in arrangements that facilitate and support collaboration.

4. *The role of citizens and citizen groups in public sector innovation* → citizens are given a more active role in public sector innovation.
5. *Innovation process itself can be considered as a virtue on its own* → doesn't have to result in new ideas, products or services. It is the process itself that matters and can be labeled as innovative. This process of innovation refers to a process of sense-making. Innovation is perceived as valuable to the people and organizations who are involved in the progress of generating, selecting, implementing, adopting and learning from new ideas. By getting involved, an organization or people in organizations seek to adapt to changing circumstances, thereby seeking to acquire legitimacy. Innovation value on its own, which relates to the cultural perspective on policy making that we have discerned in this book.

## Chapter 8: The reflective policy maker

### 8.2 Legitimacy: the invisible hand in policy making

Lasswells definition of politics → allocation of goods, services, resources and values among the members and groups in a community. Politics and policies are about communities that try to deal with all kinds of challenges with which these communities are wrestling. The allocation within a community is always controversial, because there is always scarcity. → fourth question, not only what, when and how, but also why?

Why refers to the justification of the political decisions that are made regarding the policies that are formulated and implemented. → Easton description of policy: Politics not only refers to politics as the allocation of values for society as a whole, but also the binding allocation of values. Binding implies that although controversial, the members of a political community are willing to accept the decisions and policies that lay behind this allocation.

#### Legitimacy as invisible hand

Market has "invisible hand", so does the political system have a "invisible hand", which is known as *legitimacy* → we know it exists as a force that holds communities together, but we can't give satisfactory explanations of how to create it.

The notion of authority is important for understanding legitimacy, because these two are interrelated concepts. Legitimacy pre-supposes authority. A legitimate authority, one that is recognized as valid or justified by those to whom it applies → decisions made will be perceived as binding, as authoritative. Hence, in legitimation of political decisions, two issues play an important role. Legitimacy can be considered as being lawful, just or rightful. A political decision should be based on "the rule of law" and being recognized as "a good decision"

Legitimacy (→ implies that one interpretation of legitimacy especially looks valid if a political decision or a policy program is in accordance with the law) is closely related to *legality*

Idea of the Rechtsstaat → rule of law prevails. A solid reservoir of well-established norms, rules and procedures and implies that interventions in a society by government should always be based on well-known and well-described rules and regulations that contribute to fairness and equality before the law and contribute to (legal) predictability and stability. Thereby the legitimacy of a policy program are not only based on the content of these norms, but is also based on how the norms are applied.

Legitimacy = right or just → also refers to the expression of the will of a political community, which is based on shared beliefs regarding rights, duties and liabilities as well as to a certain status. Legitimacy also refers to the degree of support that a policy program might encounter.

**Notion of procedural legitimacy** → implies that the legitimacy of political decisions and the drafting of controversial policy programs may benefit if the procedures refer to procedural values and norms that are based on shared beliefs about how to make these kinds of decisions.

Friedrich: *legitimacy as such is inferior to the process of legitimation*. The process in which legitimation is sought, adds to the legitimacy of a policy program. If this process has an arbitrary and unfair nature or it touches upon the integrity of people that are involved, then it will undermine the legitimacy of a policy program and the trust in the political system that produced this program.

## Sources of legitimacy

Weber describes three ideal types of authority systems that are founded on different sources of legitimacy:

- *Charismatic legitimacy* → based on the independent belief in the personal competences of the authorities involved and the values that are embodied in this person.
- *Traditional legitimacy* → is based on the conviction that the stability in a society is served if power is exercised along the lines of general, rationally designed, transparent and logically ordered rules that offer security, fairness and predictability in order to prevent capriciousness and arbitrariness which is typical of more personal and traditional authority regimes.
- *Rational legitimacy* → refers to earlier mentioned idea of the Rechtsstaat, which refers to three fundamental issues
  1. *Rule of law* → entails that all the decisions which are taken by government refer to well-known and well-described rules in which the competences and responsibilities are defined of the authority that takes a decision as well as how decisions should be made and how they are implemented by making use of the law
  2. *Fundamental rights and obligations* → governments and citizens have to comply with
  3. *In order to prevent misuse of power* → for instance, distinction is made between legislative, judiciary and administrative powers, in order to create a system of checks and balances.

Idea of Rechtsstaat refers to something which is called *structural legitimacy* (Easton) → refers to an independent belief in the validity of the structure and the norms of a political system and the roles that are fulfilled in this system. It refers to the institutional embeddedness of the use of authority to take binding decisions for society as a whole:

- Bureaucracy → rules and formalized procedures.

But it may also refer to grown habits and informal convictions and traditions which may add to the legitimacy of a policy program. The state and governance model can also be seen as a source of structural legitimacy. → often this state and government model also touches upon the dominant *democracy model*, which is in essence a decision-making procedure that societies can use to develop binding decisions for society as a whole.

Structural legitimacy can be structured in two parts:

- *Personal legitimacy* → refers to qualities of a person as being the reservoir that can be tapped to enhance the legitimacy of decisions
- *Ideological legitimacy* → to the shared moral convictions about the validity of a political regime or certain authority roles, the role of politics

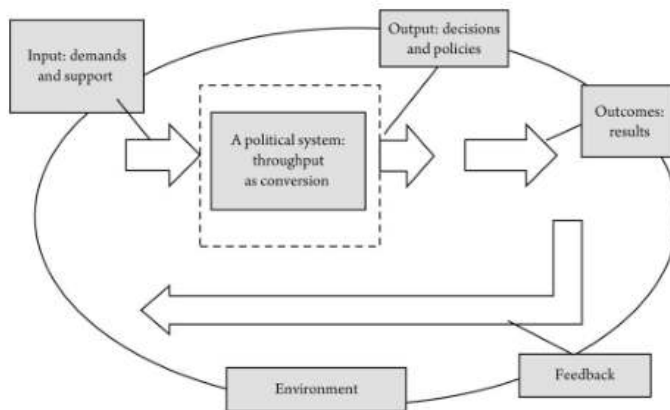
Legitimacy as a corner stone for the reflective policy maker

*Reflective policy making* → presupposes that policy makers should be aware of the fact that in the end, the ultimate corner stone when assessing the quality of a policy program is the perceived legitimacy of a policy program. Not only in terms of lawful, but also rightful, which implies that a reflective policy maker should always take into consideration that:

- A policy program should *take into account the values and procedures that are represented by the Rechtsstaat and especially the rule of law.* → lawfulness of the plan
- “” *should be responsive toward the shared beliefs, convictions, traditions, values and norms and changes within them, within a community.*
- *Policy makers should be sensitive toward the way in which they organize the development of a policy program and the decision-making process that is related to it.* → importance legitimizing
- “” *should be sensitive regarding the way in which the dominant state and governance as well as democracy models in which decision-making procedures are embedded may stimulate or frustrate the legitimacy of policy programs.* → sensitive regarding strengths and weaknesses of models, in terms of how well they function



### 8.3 Legitimacy: a system analysis



Note: A system analysis model of political decision-making, adapted from Easton, 1957:384.

Figure 8.1 An open system model of political life and policy making

Open system perspective on analyzing political systems and political decision-making processes.

Open system approach

- Focus on taking binding decisions for society as a whole is embedded in an environment

*Input:* interactions between political and environment systems

*Output:* decisions, policy programs and laws and regulations that the political system formulates and which are binding for society and can be imposed on the environment

*Feedback:* matching of how

successful results are related to wishes of citizens. *Throughput:* conversion of needs and wishes from the environment into decisions, policy programs and laws and regulations.

Distinction can be made between input, throughput, output/outcomes and feedback legitimacy

**Input legitimacy** → to the political values and norms that tell us something about how the input of demands, wishes, claims as well as support takes place and how the interaction between a political system and its environment at this side of the model occurs.

The following indicators can be formulated to assess the input legitimacy of political decision-making process that lies behind drafting of a policy program:

- *The degree in which there were opportunities for (citizen)participation* → so that citizens and other groups have been able to voice their wishes, desires, claims and interests.
- *The quality of the representation of the interests and demands that are voiced*
- *The degree in which there is an open agenda setting process* → not always open process, because it is often biased toward specific problem solutions and approaches, which can even lead to a blocked agenda setting process.

**Throughput legitimacy** → the conversion of demands, interest claims and support into specific political decisions that have an impact on society because they are binding, given the authority of institutions whose task it is to take these decisions. The transparency of the organization of this process tells us something about the legitimacy of the decision-making process:

- *The way in which collective decision-making and will formation is being pursued* → also the degree in which there seems to be a rather fair balance between winning and losing and the way in which possible losses are compensated.
- *The quality of the participation in the collective decision-making and will formation processes* → also the degree to which people who participate in political decision-making processes have access to relevant knowledge and information, to make informed decisions
- *The degree to which “checks and balances” are built into the decision-making and will formation process and the degree to which they really do their job*

**Output/outcome legitimacy** → legitimacy also refers to actual decisions and programs that are produced by a political system and the results that these decisions and programs actually achieve. Output legitimacy is achieved in the implementation stage of policy making.

The following indicators tell us something about the output/outcome legitimacy of a policy program:

- The degree in which *the intended results have been actually achieved by looking at their consequences in terms of effectiveness and efficiency.* → Effectivity: degree in which goals in policy program have really been met. Efficiency: balance between costs and benefits.
- “” *the realized results have been responsive toward the original or changed demands and wishes of society* → Responsiveness: the question if the outcomes that have been accomplished were able to meet the (changing) wishes and demands of society
- “” *the realized results have gained societal support*

- “” a program is in accordance with the law → lawfulness

**Feedback legitimacy** → results have been achieved and are translated in new demands, in support and other claims. Quality of feedback process tells us something about the legitimacy of policy program:

1. The way in which policy makers can be held *accountable* for the results that have been achieved.
2. The degree in which the outcomes of a policy program can be used as a source of knowledge to develop new policies or adjust existing policies (touches upon the *responsiveness*)

Legitimacy in multi-level governance arrangements

Many programs are multi-level arrangements, in which a “legitimacy deficit” might occur. Issues at one level have implications for legitimacy at another level. They are intertwined, which really makes it difficult to establish how legitimate a specific program is. A reason for this complexity is that the stages are connected to each other. Another reason is that legitimacy refers to rather wideranging sets of values and critical issues that have to be taken in consideration.

#### 8.4 Operating in a different world: inside and outside

Four perspectives on policy processes:

- Rational → focuses on goals, and means and knowledge
- Political → teaches us how important a multi-actor perspective is, taking into account interests, dependencies and power resources
- Cultural → framing plays an important role, while embracing the persuasive power of language, symbols and visuality
- Institutional → draws our attention to the role of grown practices that become manifest in routines, procedures, logics and systems.

Reflective policy maker should always look over their shoulder, while trying to understand what is happening in the organization or organizational unit that they present. But the opposite is also true: policy makers who are completely internally focused may present approaches that do not find much support in the outside world. Hence, a reflective policy maker should be aware of the fact that in many cases he or she is fulfilling a *boundary spanning role* between these two worlds

- On the one hand: this enforces his position in terms of being a gate keeper, because he can influence the exchange of views, frames, claims, information and knowledge in terms of being selective in what to pass through
- On the other hand: his position is vulnerable, because he has to deal with competing demands

Two developments in the western political systems

1. *Political polarization* → decline of traditional political parties which very often operate at the center of the political system and which integrate and moderate different views and claims and the rise of populist parties
2. *Mediated democracy* → politics and democracy have become mediated politics and mediated democracies, which also influence the content, shape and dynamics of public policy processes. Media plays a vital role in the way politics is represented and portrayed by the media and how politicians make use of the media logic in terms of trying to strategically influence the image that they want to communicate. → drama democracy: politics portrayed as theater, politicians are actors on stage, citizens defined as the watching and rather passive audience that needs to be entertained. Entertainment is being created by presenting policy issues in terms of drama etc.

Social media enables citizens and groups to mobilize themselves around specific issues very rapidly on a massive scale, which also leads to polarization.

→ Strategic issues

#### 8.5 Contested knowledge

Traditionally knowledge has a important role in policy processes, because knowledge is often used to legitimize the interventions and programs that governments want to pursue. Knowledge is resource to make rational decisions, but is also a powerful resource to protect specific interests and claims.

Knowledge controversies repeatedly play a role in policy processes and that’s why policy makers should be able to recognize these controversies:

1. Call for policies to be evidence-based (= what approach works, how can we make use of the evidence that has been gathered), which is strongly rooted in rationalist approach and emphasizes the traditional view of science as the producer of relevant, non-disputed and *authoritative knowledge* about what works and what doesn't.
2. Looking beyond well-established bodies of knowledge and looking at alternative bodies of knowledge, like the *laymen's knowledge*, as opposed to expert knowledge  
*Common knowledge* → provides an alternative and complement to the expert-driven, disciplinary, institutionalized and authoritative process of knowledge creation, distribution and gatekeeping" in modern societies. It plays especially a role in wicked problems and in the definition of the risks that evolve from those wicked problems.
3. *Fact free politics* → the idea that policy making is about visions, beliefs and choices to be made that are based on these beliefs while at the same time it is the task of politicians to formulate these visions and to make these choices, given the fact that "government is of the people, for people and by the people". Perceptions seem to be more important than facts.

Relate three different perspectives on the policy process

- First trend, rooted in rational perspective → embraces the idea that effective policy making is evidence-based policy making, while at the same time, in order to acquire knowledge, specific procedures and routines have to be followed (institutional) → *primacy of knowledge*, dominant institution which has the monopoly on delivery of evidence-based knowledge
- Second trend → fact that citizens and all kinds of societal organizations, single issue and other social movements are able to acquire competing knowledge that can be used to pursue specific interests and to advance specific views. Open knowledge and information reservoir of internet, which represents powerful source (political), well-established knowledge producing organizations can be bypassed (institutional) → *primacy of society*
- Third trend → argues that policy making is about politics and that effective policy making is about "fact free politics", about political sense-making, thereby trying to link to the will of people. Fact free politics is primarily rooted in political perspective as well as the cultural and as well as the institutional → *primacy of politics* and *primacy of society*

## 8.6 Integrity and responsibility

Policy makers have to deal with different kinds of legitimacy, which implies that they are brought into a delicate position; a delicacy which makes them vulnerable, which also touches upon their integrity. A reflective policy maker should always be a responsible policy maker, because there are always ethical aspects at stake. Policy makers are forced to negotiate permanently with themselves and their consciousness.

## 8.7 Toward a reflective policy practice

Reflection implies that the conditions to learn are available. Learning not only refers to the ability and willingness to adjust the goals in relation to changed circumstances that have not been foreseen, when drafting a policy program. It goes beyond the question, if the set of actions that are pursued, or the instruments that are being applied, will contribute to the achievement of the proclaimed goals and to the corresponding question that changes have to be made. Reflective policy practice also presupposes the willingness and ability to question assumptions behind policy program. It also implies that policy makers should be rather critical toward the established and grown policy practices

To facilitate reflective policy practices:

1. Important to acknowledge that policy processes are in essence *political processes* → they deal with the allocation of values for society as whole in such a way that this process of allocation is perceived as binding.
2. Policy processes can strengthen their *reflexivity*, if policy makers opt for an outside-in perspective → that it is important to understand how fundamental transformations in the political, economic, sociocultural and technological realm of society influence the content, course and outcomes of these policy processes.

3. Acknowledge its *complexity* instead of trying to fit into one single model or one super-ordinated approach → opt for a multi-focal approach in order to enhance the reflexivity of policy making practices.
4. Perceived *legitimacy* of a policy program and the processes that are followed to draft, implement and evaluate them. → it's a multi-faced concept, because it relates to different but interlinked processes. The importance of the Rechtsstaat. Aware of the fact that the way in which relevant processes are organized (the procedures that are followed) substantially contributes to the legitimacy of a policy program and of government (procedural legitimacy)
5. Has to connect to *an inside and outside world* → operation at boundaries of government, but the boundary spanning role is subjected to a lot of pressure, which is based on increased political polarization and mediatization of the involved policy processes, which influences the role of knowledge. Furthermore, operating at the boundaries implies that reflective policy makers possess a vulnerable position, because conflicting interests, rules, roles and values generate all kinds of ethical issues that touch upon someone's integrity.