



EGPA/IIAS
European Group
for Public Administration

2020

Annual Conference of the

*European Group for Public
Administration*

2-4 September 2020

PhD Symposium

1-2 September 2020

*Permanent Study Group XIII:
Public Policy*

Call-for-Papers

EGPA Permanent Study Group XIII on Public Policy

Policy Bureaucracy Reloaded: Bureaucrats as Policy-Makers

The EGPA Permanent Study Group on Public Policy provides a platform for the study of public policy in the context of public administration. Its main purpose is to develop and strengthen the ties between the fields of public administration/public management and political science/public policy by bringing scholars from these fields together. At the intersection between public policy and public administration stands the bureaucrat who is the transmission belt between government and governed, i.e. between the policy and its target population.

The EGPA-website features a mission statement of the Permanent Study Group XIII on Public Policy. After a successful launch in 2010 (Toulouse) and a continued range of workshops held in the successive years, the Study Group will have its eleventh meeting at the 2020 EGPA conference in Budapest. The topic of this year's call for papers is to explore the bureaucrats' role in policy-making ranging from agenda setting to service delivery and thereby embracing the whole policy cycle.

Focus : Policy Bureaucracy Reloaded: Bureaucrats as Policy-Makers

This year's workshop of the Permanent Study Group XIII on Public Policy focuses on the policy-making role of public administration at all stages of the policy cycle. It is now well-accepted that bureaucrats are much more than mere executive agents: due to their discretion and influence in the preparation, execution, and evaluation of public policies, they become crucial policymakers of their own. One prominent example is street-level bureaucracy (Lipsky 1980). Drawing on the notion of «Policy Bureaucracy» (Page and Jenkins 2005), the workshop unfolds the influences of the innumerable public servants at all levels of administrative hierarchy involved in formulating, designing, and executing public policy before and after it enters the politics of formal decision-making. While policy bureaucracy focuses on the “parts of government organisations with specific responsibility for maintaining and developing policy” (Page and Jenkins 2005: 3), this workshop encompasses all public servants who determine public policy by execution of their job.

Harold Lasswell (1956) popularized the idea that public policy is subject to changes throughout the full process of policy making. Thus, public administration plays a role at all stages of the policy cycle. Literature on the Politics-Administration Dichotomy (Overeem 2015, Rosser and Mavrot 2017; Sager et al. 2018) points at the delicate balance between democracy and expertise in the day-to-day division of powers in modern societies. The evidence-based policy debate transferred this classic dilemma to the study of current policy-making (Boaz et al. 2019). The policy network literature focuses on the important nodes occupied by administrative actors in complex interaction networks developing and negotiating solutions for policy problems (Jenkins-Smith et al. 2017). This literature has recently emphasized that policy-determining expert networks are organized not only horizontally but also vertically for example in decision-making in multilevel systems (Heidbreder 2017; Mavrot and Sager 2018).

Implementation literature demonstrates the over-arching policy-making capacity of public servants, once a formal decision has been taken. Policy implementation is a political process because implementing agents – whose goals not always are in line with the priorities of the policy decision –

constantly shape public policy (Lavee et al. 2018), utilizing their discretionary power (Thomann et al. 2018a). Hence, administrative actors are crucial at all levels and in all forms of implementation (Saetren 2014), serve as the core in multi-level implementation (Thomann and Sager 2017), and determine policy in their role as street-level bureaucrats (Gofen 2013, Gassner and Gofen 2018, Hupe 2019, Thomann et al. 2018b). Finally, public servants are both the main commissioners and the main users of policy evaluation reports displaying their policy-making role also in the last stage of the policy cycle (Sager 2017).

Against this background, the workshop of the Permanent Study Group XIII on Public Policy to be held at the EGPA 2020 conference seeks papers on the bureaucrat as a policy maker. PSGXIII is committed to theoretical and methodological pluralism and welcomes contributions from different conceptual frameworks, various analytic approaches, and diverse research designs that explore the current developments in policy bureaucracy around the globe. Our aim is facilitating a wide-ranging discussion of the political role of public servants. The workshop invites both experienced and junior researchers to propose theory-based papers that shed light on the policy-determining role of public administration.

Joint session and Best Paper Award

One workshop session will be organized jointly with the EGPA Permanent Study Group XX Welfare State Governance and Professionalism.

Procedure

We kindly invite researchers interested in the workshop theme to submit a short abstract (max. one page) outlining:

- the title of the paper
- the argument and contents of the paper
- the research methods and empirical material used
- name, affiliation, and contact information of the author(s)

Practicalities

As the conference takes place in September 2020, the following deadlines apply:

- ✓ Deadline for submission of Abstracts: April 30, 2020
- ✓ Deadline for notification to the authors: no later than May 25, 2020
- ✓ Deadline for online submission of full papers: August 10, 2020
- ✓ EGPA 2020 Conference: September 2-4, 2020

EGPA 2020 Conference Website: <https://www.egpa-conference2020.org/>

EGPA 2020 Conference Management System : <https://www.conftool.org/egpa-conference2020/>

Co-chairs of Permanent Study Group XIII

Dr Eva Thomann

Department of Politics, University of Exeter, United Kingdom

E-mail : E.Thomann@exeter.ac.uk

Dr Anat Gofen

Federman School of Public Policy and Governance, Hebrew University, Jerusalem

Israël

E-mail : anatgo@mscc.huji.ac.il

Prof Dr Fritz Sager

University of Bern, KPM Center for Public Management

Switzerland

E-mail : fritz.sager@kpm.unibe.ch

References

Boaz, Annette, Huw Davies, Alec Fraser and Sandra Nutley (eds). 2019. *What Works Now? Evidence-informed Policy and Practice*. Policy Press.

Heidbreder, Eva G. (2017) Strategies in multilevel policy implementation: moving beyond the limited focus on compliance, *Journal of European Public Policy*, 24:9, 1367-1384, DOI: [10.1080/13501763.2017.1314540](https://doi.org/10.1080/13501763.2017.1314540)

Jenkins-Smith, H.C., Daniel Nohrstedt, Christopher M. Weible, Karin Ingold (2017). The Advocacy Coalition Framework: An Overview of the Research Program, in Christopher M. Weible, Paul A. Sabatier (eds.). *Theories of the Policy Process*, 4th Edition. New York: Routledge

Gassner, D. and A. Gofen. 2018. Street-Level Management: A Clientele-Agent Perspective on Implementation." *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 28(4): 551-568.

Gofen, A. 2013. Mind the gap: Dimensions and influence of street-level divergence. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 24(2): 473-493.

Hupe, Peter, ed. (2019). *Research Handbook on Street-Level Bureaucracy*. Cheltenham, UK and Northampton, MA, USA: Edward Elgar.

Mavrot, Céline, and Fritz Sager (2018). Vertical epistemic communities in multilevel governance, *Policy & Politics* 46 (3), 391-407.

Lasswell, H.D. (1956) *The Decision Process: Seven Categories of Functional Analysis*. College Park MD: University of Maryland Press.

Lavee, E., Cohen, N. and H. Nouman. 2018. Reinforcing public responsibility? Influences and practices in street-level bureaucrats' engagement in policy design. *Public Administration*.

doi.org/10.1111/padm.12402.

Overeem, Patrick (2012). *The Politics–Administration Dichotomy: Toward a Constitutional Perspective, Second Edition*, New York, NY/Abingdon, UK: Routledge.

Page, Edward C., and Bill Jenkins (2005). *Policy Bureaucracy: Government with a Cast of Thousands*. New York, NY/Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Rosser, C. and Mavrot, C. (2016) ‘Questioning the Constitutional Order: A Comparison of the French and the U.S. Politics–Administration Dichotomy Controversies After World War II’, *The American Review of Public Administration*, 47(7), pp. 737–751. doi: 10.1177/0275074016661629

Sager, F. (2017). “Evaluation and democracy: do they fit?” *Evaluation and Program Planning, Volume 69*: 125-129. doi: [10.1016/j.evalprogplan.2017.08.004](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.evalprogplan.2017.08.004)

Sager, Fritz, Christian Rosser, Céline Mavrot, Pascal Y. Hurni (2018). *A Transatlantic History of Public Administration. Analyzing the USA, Germany and France*. Cheltenham, UK and Northampton, MA, USA: Edward Elgar.

Saetren, H. 2014. Implementing the third generation research paradigm in policy implementation research: An empirical assessment. *Public Policy and Administration* 29(2): 84-105.

Thomann, E. and F. Sager. 2017. Moving beyond legal compliance: Innovative approaches to EU multilevel implementation. *Journal of European Public Policy* 24(9): 1253-1268.

Thomann, E. van Engen, N. & Tummers, L. (2018a). The necessity of discretion: a behavioral evaluation of bottom-up implementation theory. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 28, 4, 583–601. <https://doi.org/10.1093/jopart/muy024>

Thomann, E., Hupe, P.L. & Sager, F. (2018b). Serving Many Masters: Public Accountability in Private Policy Implementation. *Governance* 31, 2, 299–319. <https://doi.org/10.1111/gove.12297>