

PhD WORKSHOP

Thursday, 4 April 2013: 15.00-19.15

Marko Kovačić, PhD Candidate in Public Policy Analysis, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia,

The role of civil society in the policymaking process on the example of youth policy: Comparing Croatia and Slovenia

The aim is to determine whether it is possible to upgrade the policy style approach by introducing the analysis of outcomes in the perspective and emphasizing the role of non-state actors, more concretely civil society. In other words, author proposes a model which combines policy style concept with actors' theory as well as some features of evaluative research in order to get a comprehensive tool for assessing processual dimension of policies. In the second part of this dissertation the given model will be tested by a comparative analysis of Croatia and Slovenia with regard to youth policy.

Research questions are: (1) Is it possible to build a model which will comprehend a policy style framework, actors' theory and evaluative research? Can the policy style model be upgraded with introducing civil society as a pivotal actor in the focus enclosed by the analysis of outputs and outcomes?; (2) Is there a difference in creation of youth policies between Slovenia and Croatia? What are the impacts of civil society actors on policymaking process of youth policies? What are outputs and what are outcomes of those youth policies? How many original inputs of civil society can be identified in the end of policy process (in outcomes)?

Aida Liha, Faculty of Political Science, University of Zagreb, Croatia

Institutional adjustment to the EU regional policy in the pre-accession phase in Croatia

The main aim of the PhD research is to explore the factors which conditioned institutional adjustment to the EU Cohesion policy in Croatia, in the period from signing of Stabilisation and Association Agreement (which is understood as the start of the EU pre-accession stage) until today. The basic research hypothesis is that Europeanization in the area of regional policy is characterized by its coerciveness and institutional inertia. (H1) Having institutions as dependent and Europeanisation adjustment pressure (goodness of fit) as independent variables, evolution of the regional policy in Croatia can be divided into two stages: the first one which lasted until 2010 characterised by the policy and institutional inertia (Börzel, 2005), coercive Europeanisation driven solely by the external incentives model of Europeanisation (Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier, 2010), while the second phase has been marked by policy learning and lessons -drawing explained by the model.

Qualitative research methodology will be the principal research tool, consisting of two types of research: questionnaires to be forwarded to all members of three (former) county partnership committees in Croatia as well as interviews with decision-makers and other formal actors of regional policy in Croatia. Using the neoinstitutionalist approach, this research tests institutional adjustment through the 'lense' of creation and institutionalisation of partnerships on the national and subnational level. Partnership principle has been one of the most prominent EU (regional) policy instruments, and in Croatia it provided with particularly strong adaptational pressures on institutions and policy to adjust. Partnership is defined as 'close consultation between the Commission, the member state concerned and the competent authorities designated by the latter at national, regional, local and other level,

with each party acting as a partner in pursuit of a common goal. (EEC Regulation 2052/88). Introduction of the partnership principle in the stage of programming of regional policy in Croatia, although with limited initial effects, has enhanced planning, implementation and the quality of the pre-accession programmes in Croatia. (H3) Nevertheless, there were significant barriers to adjustment at national and subnational levels. On subnational level the partnerships were set up largely to fulfil the requirements of funding and central government dominates the policy process. (H4)

Jasmina Džinić, PhD candidate, Faculty of Law, University of Zagreb, Croatia

Impact of quality improvement instruments on organizational learning in administrative organizations

The aim of the research is to conduct a preliminary verification of the hypothesis regarding the impact of quality improvement instruments on organizational learning in administrative organizations, on the basis of set theoretical framework and empirical research conduction. The basic research hypothesis is that organizations which do not apply the quality improvement instruments have less chance for organizational learning in comparison with organizations which apply those instruments (H1). Considering the importance of communications for organizational learning process, the impact of quality improvement instruments as independent variable on organizational learning as dependent variable by intermediation of communications in administrative organizations, will be examined. Namely, further assumptions are that application of quality improvement instruments increases the communication intensity in administrative organizations (H1a) and that higher communication intensity stimulates organizational learning (H1b).

Furthermore, whereas administrative organizations apply a variety of quality improvement instruments that differ from each other according to complexity degree, it will be examined if and which kind of impacts different instruments have on organizational learning in administrative organizations, i.e. if organizational learning type is conditioned by complexity degree of quality improvement instruments. Complexity will be determined on the basis of quality improvement instrument origin (private or public sector), accepted quality concept, number of the phases in the quality instrument implementation process, components of the quality instrument and actors included in the implementation process. The basic assumption is that complexity degree of quality improvement instruments influences organizational learning type (H2). More precisely, it is expected that administrative organizations applying more complex quality improvement instruments are more inclined to develop generative learning compared to those applying simpler quality improvement instruments (H2a) as well as that latter are more inclined to develop adaptive than generative organizational learning (H2b).

The PhD thesis will comprise following thematic areas: 1. identification of scientific and practical problems of quality management and organizational learning in administrative organizations, 2. setting up of theoretical framework for conduction of research and interpretation of the results, 3. identification, review and classification of quality improvement instruments in the public sector, 4. review of different perspectives on organizational learning, identification and assessment of different organizational learning types, 5. in order to test set hypothesis, conduction of the empirical research using questionnaire and other methods of data collections in selected administrative organizations, 6. analysis of the research results and formulation of final conclusions.

Teo Giljević, PhD Candidate, Faculty of Law, University of Zagreb, Croatia

Impact of autonomy of administrative organization on the level of interorganizational coordination

The main research question of this doctoral dissertation is the impact of autonomy of administrative organization on interorganizational coordination. The goal of every administrative organization is to keep its autonomy or, in other words, to survive (at any cost) - otherwise the administrative organization would be abolished and merged together with another administrative organization. The main thesis of the dissertation is that the autonomy of an administrative organization is in reverse proportional relation with the level of its interorganizational coordination. Interorganizational coordination is defined as the process of consolidating decisions and actions of several administrative organizations with the purpose of achieving a specific goal which could not be accomplished through decisions and actions of a single organization. High level of interorganizational coordination is based on the high level of control (the assumption is that the government, as the central point within the administrative system, can rationally connect elements of the system, which results in its need and tendency to strengthen its central role). Low level of interorganizational coordination implies spontaneous adjustment and interrelation of administrative organizations (analogical to the market-based model of coordination, if the market is perceived as an interorganizational system, in which mutual benefits of all involved parties become clear - exchange of goods and services is possible only if all parties participate together, but impossible if any party acts on its own). The autonomy of administrative organizations consists of the following elements: regulative power, their own income in the total amount of the available financial resources needed for their proper operation, supervision – ex ante/ex post, legality/purposefulness, and type of act of their establishment (law/decreed), participation of citizens in political internal control mechanisms. When considering administrative functions, the assumption is that all agencies are of the same importance, yet under certain conditions some appear more important than others. An indicator which supports this assumption is the replacement of agency lead persons, which often ensues upon the shift in government (change of government is the turning point). The culture of the organization affects the level of interorganizational coordination, which means that the predominant attitude of public servants towards work – professional-proactive or bureaucratic-reactive - affects the level of interorganizational coordination to a certain extent. Administrative organizations with predominantly professional-proactive attitude toward work (legalistic, participative and entrepreneurial) tend to achieve higher level of interorganizational coordination, while administrative organizations with bureaucratic-reactive attitude toward work (bureaucratic, authoritative or steering) tend to achieve lower level of interorganizational coordination.

Nikola Baketa, MA, PhD candidate, Faculty of Political Science, University of Zagreb, Croatia

The effects of the European higher education initiatives on the national policy making - Case study of Croatia

The research objective of this PhD project is to analyze the relationship between European higher education initiatives and its implementation on the national level. More precisely, the aim is to analyze the position of the first tier (Bachelor) presented in the Bologna Declaration through mutual relation between institutional level (seven Croatian universities), system level authority and employers using neo-institutional approach – historical institutionalism.

The research questions covered are - what are the roles of policy actors – state, universities and employers – in implementation of European higher education initiatives (case of the Bachelor level in Croatia)? And what are the results of implemented heterogeneous system of higher education? To which extent are Bachelor diploma holders, as a product of European higher education initiatives and its implementation on the national level, recognizable at the labor market and employable? How is the relation between national policy actors (universities, authority and employers) structured in order to regulate position of Bachelor diploma holders?

The answers to these research questions should provide two types of information. On the one hand, there is an interaction between European level and different national actors through process of acceptance of European higher education initiatives. It is highly important to understand when, how and why these initiatives were implemented and what role individual actors had in that process. On the other hand, this research would provide deeper insight into the position of specific higher education policy. The problems related to the employability and recognition of Bachelor diploma holders were covered in high extent by researchers in other European countries. However, this problem in Croatia was not covered enough until now. In order to obtain answers to the research question following methods will be used - qualitative interviews, questionnaires, data and document analysis.

Anka Kekez Koštro, PhD candidate, Faculty of Political Science, University of Zagreb, Croatia

Clientelism, governance and administrative reforms: Implementation of social policy in Croatia

The study of reforms in relation to public policies has, thus far, been divided between a literature which traces different reform practices in developed, Western democracies, and those which address reforms in other contexts, including new democracies, countries in transition, post-conflict societies, and societies in the developing world. Of course, any attempt to break down this distinction has to deal with the fact that the 'prevailing conditions' in different societies are very different. This means that reforms implemented in one setting can never be merely transplanted to another, without the specific historical legacies and political agency rendering the effects of these reforms very different. At the same time, models developed in one context do have an impact, albeit not always the desired one, when implemented elsewhere.

The aim of this PhD project is to analyze administrative reform practices in Croatia while looking at social policies, as a core element of public administration. Croatia is selected as a case because of its specific political and social context. Its democratic path was marked with the fact that during 1990s and 2000s party that was in power for 17 out of 20 years based its reelection calculus, and consequently it's governing, dominantly on the clientelistic linkages with citizens. After decade of centralized governing that was resistant to reforms and external influence, Croatia entered the consolidation phase in 2000. This opened the space for the transformation of governance practices towards harmonization with Western governance modes and reform paradigms. Within that process significant efforts were made to reform social policies towards greater effectiveness, efficiency and, to an extent, equity. Whilst a 'crowded playground' of international actors emerged, there was general agreement on the needed reforms and of the importance of decentralisation, diversification of providers and community-based social planning. Nowadays, as Croatia prepares for EU membership, the results of those reforms are limited and uneven, generating various unintended and unexpected consequences, particularly evident in the implementation process.

While seeking to account for why this has been the case this PhD project proposes a model which explores different forms of citizens-politician linkages, with emphasis on clientelism, and their impacts on the transformation of Croatian social policy governance. Specific research focus is placed on the implementation process which is viewed as the operational governance. The main expectations are that the reform of operational governance in Croatia will differ among particular social policies and that the absence, or modified adaptation, of reform package will be strongly related with the existence of clientelistic linkage of politicians with beneficiaries or implementers of certain policy. By applying the most similar cases design, proposed model and hypothesis will be tested through a sub-national comparative research of specific social policies that are oriented toward different target groups including elderly, children without parental care, veterans and persons with disability.