

The Long Mile from Knowledge to Political Action

How to enable political science to feed into policymaking in the area of human rights, mobility and political asylum?

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Protect

Factual basis

- My five research proposals with policy impact plans to EU Framework Programmes, out of which three were successful
- Project leadership of GLOCALMIG (2002-2004, FP5), EUROSHERE (2007-2013, FP6) and PROTECT (2020-2023, H2020) - all with a long range of policy implications and recommendations
- Member of project evaluation panels (SSH) for the European Union (ERCEA and EU-REA), including evaluation of projects' potential policy impact - since 2006 (calls i FP6, FP7 and H2020)
- Member of project review panels for EU-REA



GLOCALMIG (FP5)



- A project about how to increase citizens' feeling of well-being in public spaces
- Degree and types of (mis)alignments between subjective belongings and the belongings that are acceptable in public life emerged as the main reason for increased well-being
- (Mis)alignments were in turn affected differently by various configurations of spatial and mental **mobility patterns, belonging patterns, and participation patterns**
- **We could advise three alternative policy solutions:**
 - Change citizens' subjective belongings to increase their well-being
 - Change citizens' mobility patterns
 - Facilitate participation in multiple public spaces
- **We advised the last one, and informed about why we couldn't advise the first two**

EUROSPHERE (FP6)



- A project seeking ways of making a transnational political public space and political communication possible in the European Union
- We found that there was already a considerable amount of transnational political communication across national and other types of borders
- The European public sphere had already emerged; not a Habermasian but an agonistic sort, which became visible only through Rokkanian lenses. Though, it was elitistic and quite closed to the voices of the groups that were against the European Union.
- **Demonstrating how political cleavages and conflicts have historically formed different public spheres, we put forth a convincing argument that supporting / funding anti-EU groups would strengthen, and not weaken, the European public sphere**

PROTECT (H2020)



- The first international project about how the Global Refugee Compact (GRC) and the Global Migration Compact (GMC) of the United Nations may affect the refugees' right to international protection
- The project and my earlier research on international protection was already noticed by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, which led him to invite me personally to Geneva to participate in the First Global Refugee Forum in December 2019
- The trip resulted in:
 - My joining to the UN's Global Academic Interdisciplinary Network (GAIN)
 - Announcement of a pledge, on behalf of the University of Bergen, on scientifically devising fair and effective institutional architectures for refugee protection
 - Announcement of a pledge, on behalf of the PROTECT Consortium, on assessing the effects of political, legal, governance and attitudinal aspects of protection capacity on implementation of the Global Refugee Compact

POLICY IMPACT

- GLOCALMIG had some impact on education in Canada. Some Canadian scientists transferred my concept of «mobility of minds» to Canadian research on inclusive education.
 - No references to my original policy recommendations about Europe
 - Policy recommendations by some Canadian scientists with references to my concept «mobility of minds»
 - The concept is being referred to by some local Canadian politicians as well
- EUROSPHERE's policy recommendations were comprehensive, concrete and very detailed
 - Due to the dominance of the great philosopher Habermas' concept of public sphere, which is nearly impossible to compete with, we do not expect any conceptual impacts in the foreseeable future
 - The EU politicians and technocrats who attended our policy dialogue forums were skeptical about accepting and funding the anti-EU grassroot organizations as part of the European civil society
 - Some of our policy-relevant findings were included in an official EU policy-review, along with findings from several other projects.
- PROTECT is based on my previous research between 1998 and 2008 on international protection that offered clear and concrete policy alternatives
 - Difficult to attract governments' attention because the objectives of what I offered as policy recommendations do not match with some states' policy objectives regarding refugee protection
 - Some people at the United Nations had obviously seen my research, and they called me in exactly when they needed that knowledge.



MEANS OF POLICY IMPACT

- Preparing targeted summaries of my findings in the language of policymakers
 - Policy briefs: One-way communication to policymakers
 - Policy forums: Multi-way communication between all types of policy actors and researchers
 - Mediatization of findings: Effective use of social and conventional media channels
 - Digitalization of dissemination: Effective use of digital platforms
- Developing and sustaining professional / institutional relations with key policy actors: *the strength of the weak tie*
- Conclusions
 - Governments have a high-level awareness of scientific research results that are relevant for their policymaking. However, their policy choices have to depend more on citizens' perceptions and preferences than on what comes out of research
 - Transnational and international political entities like the European Union, the African Union, the United Nations etc use scientific research more as the basis of their policymaking as they are less dependent on input legitimacy and more on output legitimacy
 - The relationship between citizen preferences, elites (influencers, technocrats), and policymaking procedures: finding the right person at the right time to talk about the right theme
 - There is always an element of contingency concerning consequences of science communication. Often unexpected consequences as to which findings might be perceived as policy relevant, for which policy, by whom and when.





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Thanks for your attention

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