

MARTIN  
POTŮČEK  
ET AL.

**PUBLIC POLICY**  
A COMPREHENSIVE  
INTRODUCTION

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KAROLINUM



## **Public Policy**

A Comprehensive Introduction

**Martin Potůček et al.**

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# CONTENTS

Introduction .....	7
Overview of the Public Policy Theories Presented .....	9
List of Abbreviations .....	11
<b>PART A</b> .....	13
<b>A1 Public Interest and Public Policy</b> .....	15
<b>A2 Values in Public Policy</b> .....	29
<b>A3 Governance</b> .....	47
<b>A4 Actors and Institutions</b> .....	71
<b>A5 Public Policy Instruments</b> .....	83
<b>A6 Public Policy Process. The Stage of Problem Delimitation and Problem Recognition</b> .....	105
<b>A7 Policy Formulation, Decision-making</b> .....	119
<b>A8 Policy Implementation</b> .....	133
<b>A9 Policy Evaluation</b> .....	147
<b>A10 How to Understand Public Policy</b> .....	161

Literature – Part A .....	175
Journals and Internet Sources .....	189
English-Czech Glossary of Public Policy Terms .....	191
List of Tables – Part A .....	193
List of Figures – Part A .....	195
<b>PART B</b> .....	197
Introduction to Part B .....	199
Terminology of the Pillars in the Czech Pension System .....	201
<b>B1 Historical Overview of Pension Systems in the World and in the Czech Republic</b> .....	203
<b>B2 The Role of Politicians and Experts in the Preparation of Czech Pension Reform</b> .....	217
<b>B3 Czech Pension Reform: How to Reconcile Equivalence with Fiscal Discipline</b> .....	237
<b>B4 Rivalry of Advocacy Coalitions in the Czech Pension Reform</b> .....	261
<b>B5 Pensions Basics</b> .....	277
Literature – Part B .....	287
List of Tables – Part B .....	295
List of Figures – Part B .....	297
Subject Index (Part A) .....	299
Personal Index (Part A) .....	303

# Introduction

The book of public policy in front of you follows in the footsteps of an earlier publication, *Public Policy in Central and Eastern Europe: Theories, Methods, Practices*.<sup>1</sup> Since it came out, the field went through a relatively rapid development. Today, students of public administration, economics, political science, sociology, social policy, demography, international relations, regional development and other social sciences can avail themselves of a range of other educational texts offering novel insights to public policy. Having more than two decades of experience teaching at Charles University in Prague as well as at other universities in the Czech Republic and abroad, I considered it necessary to provide a new, comprehensive and synoptic account of the state of the art. I placed emphasis on the field's conceptual foundation, description of the most frequently used theories, and an illustrative account of how these can be applied in policy analysis and policy making – here, in the form of selected case studies.<sup>2</sup>

Should you choose to pursue your interest in public policy by studying this publication, then several avenues towards that end are opening in front of you.

The easiest way forward is to follow the sequence of chapters in Part A. It starts with the most general topics (definition of key terms, value fundamentals, issues of governance) and continues to more specific texts characterizing actors, institutions and instruments of public policy. This is followed by chapters on four stages of the policy process – problem delimitation and recognition, policy formulation and decision-making, implementation, and

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1 Potůček, M., L. LeLoup, G. Jenei, L. Váradi. 2003. *Public Policy in Central and Eastern Europe: Theories, Methods, Practices*. Bratislava: NISPAcee.

2 Readers with a command of the language may prefer to consult a Czech version of this textbook: Potůček, M. a kol. 2016. *Veřejná politika*. Prague: C. H. Beck.

evaluation. The final chapter of this part brings attention to obstacles in the process of examining public policies and possible methods to overcome them.

At the same time, you may choose a cross-sectional way of studying the most influential public policy theories. They are referred to throughout the textbook in accordance with the focus of the respective chapters. The table “Overview of the public policy theories presented” that immediately follows can help you find where the different theories are presented in Part A and where they are applied in Part B.

Another method will be found useful by those with a preference for narratives and vivid accounts of events. Part B demonstrates the ways selected public policy theories can be applied in telling the story of pension reform in the Czech Republic: repeated attempts to utilize expertise in policy decision-making, executive and legislative responses to a ruling of the Constitutional Court on the unconstitutionality of applicable law, or an attempt to structurally reform the pension system as a whole by establishing a new element, a fully funded, private, so-called “second pillar”, relying in part on mandatory social insurance premiums transferred from the pay-as-you-go first pillar.

The book bears the imprint of the country of its origin, the Czech Republic, and the specific historical legacy of Central Europe. Students of public policy should consider complementing their study with other textbooks of the subject, influenced by other cultural and socio-political traditions, such as Cairney (2011), Howlett, Ramesh (2009) or Peters (2015).<sup>3</sup>

I am much obliged to the co-author of Part B, Veronika Rudolfová, for an inspiring collaboration. I am also thankful to a number of colleagues at the Department of Public and Social Policy, Institute of Sociological Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University in Prague, who proved to be important sources of critique and advice in the process of preparing this book: Arnošt Veselý, above all, and also to Martin Nekola and Vilém Novotný – even though we kept different perspectives on some particular topics. Jan Morávek participated in the final draft not only by conducting an excellent translation but also through inspiring comments on the text as such. I am grateful to him as well as to the book’s editor, Hana Mářzová. Responsibility for the concept of the textbook and for my chapters is, of course, mine alone.

Prague, November 2017  
Prof. Dr. Martin Potůček, PhD.

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3 Cairney, P. 2011. *Understanding public policy: Theories and issues*. Palgrave Macmillan; Howlett, M., A. Perl and M. Ramesh, *Studying Public Policy*. 2009. Toronto: Oxford University Press; Peters, B. G. 2015. *Advanced introduction to public policy*. Cheltenham, UK and Northampton, MA, USA: Edward Elgar Publishing.



# Overview of the public policy theories presented<sup>4</sup>

<b>Theory</b>	<b>Part A, chapter</b>	<b>Part B, chapter</b>
Historical institutionalism	A2	–
Corporatism	A3	–
Policy networks	A3	–
Actor-centered Institutionalism	A4	B3
Actors generating agendas in arenas	A4	–
Advocacy Coalition Framework (ACF)	A5	B4
Discursive institutionalism	A5	B2
A Stage model of the policy cycle	A6	B3
Agenda setting	A6	–
Veto payers	A7	–
Multiple streams	A7	–
Bureaucracy	A8	–
Principal–agent (politico-administrative relations)	A8	–
Rational choice	A9	B3
Framework analysis	–	B2

4 This is the author’s selection of theories which proved to be instrumental in various research contexts. There are of course many other public policy theories applied in specific application fields at different levels of generality. Refer to John (2013) for their overview.



# List of Abbreviations

AC	Advocacy Coalition
ACF	Advocacy Coalition Framework
ANO	Ano bude líp (political movement)
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
CESTA	Center for Social Market Economy and Open Democracy
ČMKOS	Czech-Moravian Confederation of Trade Unions (abbreviation in Czech)
ČNB	Czech National Bank (abbreviation in Czech)
ČR	Czech Republic
ČSSD	Czech Social Democratic Party (political party)
ČSSZ	Czech Social Security Administration (CSSA, abbreviation in Czech)
CZK	Czech Crown (national currency)
DB	Defined Benefit (pension scheme)
DC	Defined Contribution pension scheme
EG	Expert Group (government and opposition party, ČSSD)
EU	European Union
EUR	Euro
FF	Fully Funded pension system
G20	Group of Twenty
G8	Group of Eight
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GNH	Gross National Happiness
GNI	Gross National Income
HDI	Human Development Index
IADF	Institutional Analysis and Development Framework

ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
ID	Identity Document
ILO	International Labor Organization
KDU-ČSL	Christian and Democratic Union – Czechoslovak People’s Party
KSČM	Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia (political party)
MLG	Multi-level Governance
MP	Member of Parliament
MPSV	Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs of the Czech Republic (abbreviation in Czech)
NDC	Notional Defined Contribution (pension scheme)
NERV	The National Economic Council of the Government, Czech Republic (abbreviation in Czech)
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NHS	National Health Service, United Kingdom
ODA	Civic Democratic Alliance (political party)
ODS	Civic Democratic Party (political party)
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OK	Expert Committee on Pension Reform, Czech Republic (abbreviation in Czech)
PAYG	Pay-as-you-go (pension system)
PČR	Parliament of the Czech Republic
PES	Expert Advisory Board/Bezděk Commission II (abbreviation in Czech)
PS PČR	Chamber of Deputies of the Parliament of the Czech Republic
RCT	Rational Choice Theory
RHSD	Council of Economic and Social Agreement (abbreviation in Czech)
RIA	Regulatory Impact Assessment
SP ČR	Confederation of Industry of the Czech Republic (abbreviation in Czech)
SZ	Green Party
TOP 09	Tradition. Responsibility. Prosperity (political party)
UK	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
UN	United Nations
ÚS	Constitutional Court of the Czech Republic (abbreviation in Czech)
USA	United States of America
VÚPSV	Research Institute of Labor and Social Affairs (abbreviation in Czech)
VV	Public Affairs (political party)
WB	World Bank
WWII	Second World War (1939–1945)

# PART A



# Public Interest and Public Policy

What is meant by public interest? .....	16
What is meant by public policy? .....	19
The emergence and development of public policy	
as a scientific discipline: A history .....	20
Relation of public policy to other disciplines .....	20
Defining public policy as a scientific discipline .....	21
Polity, policy, politics .....	22
Public policy as social practice .....	23
Founding fathers and followers .....	25
Future perspectives of the discipline .....	26
Review questions .....	27
Sources .....	27

Some time ago, William Dunn (1981: 8-19) argued that “the study of public policy is as old as Plato’s concern for *The Republic*” (as paraphrased by McCool 1995: 1). But even long before ancient philosophers, people had been trying to solve conflicts between interests and ways of satisfying them intuitively, on the fly. Albeit many armed conflicts arose, other struggles were, fortunately, solved peacefully.

Public policy in practice serves to prevent and solve conflicts, a natural trait of social life which is here to stay. Our lives and deeds depend on the lives and deeds of other people – and not only those. We are confined to societal frameworks that mediate and enable coexistence between people: money, law, organizations, language, culture... it is in these complex relations that our individual interests mix and intersect with those of other people, social

groups, corporations, and/or states. Such interests are often conflicting, and there are many actors who will lose a lot if their interests fail to be reconciled. Economic and social crises, wars, coups and revolutions are, among other things, manifestations of a conflict of particular interests gone out of control.

Building on the basis of philosophy and other existing social sciences, **public policy** became established as a new scientific discipline in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Academics did not invent it as their new toy or source of income. The main reason public policy emerged was that the more responsible part of politicians and public officials felt the need to study the nature of these conflicts of particular interests systematically in order to derive recommendations on how to prevent such conflicts, avoid violent escalation, get them under control – and possibly even solve them, at least for the time being. **The discipline serves to analyze and formulate policies** – such policies that affect people’s lives in specific ways, whether by increasing their quality or by making them more difficult. Examples include transportation, health care, education, sports, housing, monument preservation, protection of nature, and a myriad other concerns.

Every day, politicians and public officials deal with problems that are not easy to solve. Is it reasonable to introduce mandatory vaccination of children against communicable diseases? While children themselves are often unable to express their opinion, many parents oppose such a policy. Should we abolish regulations that prohibit surface mining in defined areas? Such a measure would ensure new jobs and cheaper coal, but also annihilate communities where people have been living for centuries. Is it a good idea to build nuclear power stations? We are not sure how to deposit nuclear waste in a safe and permanent way. Are we better off building more kindergartens, or supporting industrial innovations? Should we devote our limited public resources to providing better pensions to seniors, or better salaries to civil servants? Or should we rather increase welfare benefits for children?

Before attempting to answer questions like these, we need to clarify how public interest can be defined.

## **WHAT IS MEANT BY PUBLIC INTEREST?**

Leading American policy scientist Walter Lippman defines public interest as follows: “Living adults share, we must believe, the same public interest. For them, however, the public interest is mixed with, and is often at odds with, their private and special interests. Put this way, we can say, I suggest, that the public interest may be presumed to be what men would choose if they saw clearly, thought rationally, acted disinterestedly and benevolently” (Lippman 1955: 42). The concept of public interest is undoubtedly of descriptive power but also of a high value loading.



As Lane (1993) notes, there is a constant tension between the term “public” with its relation to the whole and the term “interest” with its individualist connotation. For that reason, some theorists who rely on methodological individualism and philosophical objectivism reject the term “public interests” as misleading (Kinkor 1996).

In defining public interests, one can proceed procedurally or analytically. The procedural approach is typically applied in policy practice and the analytical one in the scientific discipline of public policy.

**The procedural approach to formulating public interests** in a democratic society conforms to certain rules regarding debating about what the public interest is and what it is not, of reaching a consensus on such a definition, and of pursuing public interests in practice. Community, civil society institutions, law and government provide procedural mechanisms for articulating, aggregating, coordinating and, if possible, also satisfying particular interests in a form in which it starts to be useful to speak of public interests. However, an important complication is caused by competition between the particular interests of the actors who necessarily take part in this process: politicians, officials, and interest group representatives. Formulation and realization of public interest becomes the subject of negotiation and, sometimes, social or political struggle. It is an intense historical, social and political process. Of course, conflicts emerge between competing “public interests” associated with the interests of different communities or social groups.

**The analytical approach to formulating public interests** relies on their shared characteristics:

- they pertain to the quality of life of a given society’s members, or other values they find important;
- they can be related to the quality or the effects of the function of society as a whole;
- they are embedded historically, in a given stage of civilization development, and may change;
- they enter an arena where they clash with differentiated individual, group and institutional interests and come to be identified, articulated, acknowledged, and satisfied. The decisions adopted affect the ways public goods are produced, distributed and used; the quality of life of large social groups; and the satisfaction of the functional needs of society as a whole;
- they are related to current social problems or possible futures;
- their realization often goes beyond the competencies of a single institution or an entire department of government, or even a nation.

The benefit of the social whole is shaped by the context of competing value orientations or visions of the world. Therefore, people’s place in it comes to be defined in divergent ways. This in turn gives rise to competing values underlying different public policies.

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**EXAMPLE:**

In debates about public finance, parliaments often see a clash between “penny pinchers,” who associate public interest with balanced budgeting, and “investors for the future,” who believe it is in public interest to support education, science and the like, even at the price of a budget deficit, because they will bring a return in future.

Efforts to promote public interests are embraced by certain types of political orientation (as well as individual orientation, as long as such individuals are well-informed) – namely on advancing the community and solving its problems. In this sense, public interests aggregate the interests of individual members of the community – they arise from the individual level. Yet the same public interests may run against conflicting interests of other individuals or groups. Thus, public interests become the subject of frequent negotiation and occasional struggles as well. There are conflicts between competing “public interests” associated with the interests of different communities or social groups. This is the point where they become the domain of public policy, which studies the processes of identifying, formulating, presenting, recognizing and satisfying the public interest.

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**EXAMPLE:**

The lessons humanity took from the rise of totalitarian regimes after World War I provide a good example of how a new global-level public interest emerged, was formulated, and prevailed. These regimes were established in spite of existing norms of international law or traditional political mechanisms of representative democracy at the national level. All this led to the largest humanitarian disaster in the history of mankind, World War II. When WWII ended, nations quickly agreed on introducing a newly defined public interest – the general **criterion of human rights protection** – into policy documents at the international (Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted by the United Nations (1948)) and European levels (Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms adopted by the Council of Europe (1950)).

However, public interests can also be generated on the basis of autonomous requirements of the function and development of larger social entities that arise from the evolution of the social division of labor and technology. Furthermore, they spread more and more across the frontiers of individual states.

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**EXAMPLE:**

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It is in the interest of all humanity to prevent a nuclear disaster. The need to minimize the nuclear threat is another example of public interest extending across national borders.

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**EXAMPLE:**

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In the age before the Internet, there was no need to ensure people's safety in the online environment. Online security exemplifies how public interests are determined historically, by a given stage of civilization development.

As another example, the rise of automobile transportation requires the construction of a public road network. That, however, may be in conflict with the interests of some groups, individuals or environmental protection. Should we authorize the construction of an expressway through a nature preserve? If the owners of the land within the expressway's corridor disagree, is the state entitled to confiscate their property?

The concept of public interest is associated with an array of similar terms that are used in different contexts. The social teaching of the Catholic Church operates with the term **common good**. Martenas (1991) uses the term **public good** as a moral umbrella term which also covers public interests. The term **general interest** is used by the European Union's Lisbon Treaty and is reflected in specific regulations covering various forms of services at the European level (The Publications Office of the European Union 2012a, 2012b). The rhetorical figure of "sacrifice for the country" is also used to denote a deed which benefits a given national community at the cost of a particular interest.

*In a way, the concept of public interest plays a central role in public policy. However, one rarely comes across the term in practical use. This is because an overwhelming majority of public policies are formulated and implemented at lower levels of generalization. There, the benefit of the social whole is translated into specific objectives such as to reduce school failure or the burden of bureaucracy, to build a bicycle path or a new theatre, to expand the capacity of a shelter or of an electricity transmission network, etc.*

## **WHAT IS MEANT BY PUBLIC POLICY?**

**The term "public policy" is used in two basic meanings: to refer to a scientific discipline, and to denote a social practice.** When using the term, it is necessary to make a clear distinction between both meanings.

# THE EMERGENCE AND DEVELOPMENT OF PUBLIC POLICY AS A SCIENTIFIC DISCIPLINE: A HISTORY

**Public policy as a scientific discipline** was developed in the United States after World War II. In Europe, it started to obtain significant influence around the turn of the 1960s and the 1970s, building, in some countries, on the older **disciplinary tradition of social policy**. Both disciplines indeed share a multitude of research topics and some methodological instruments. In the context of the Czech Republic, public policy has been developing since 1989,<sup>5</sup> inspired by both the American and the European schools of thought.

## RELATION OF PUBLIC POLICY TO OTHER DISCIPLINES

Among the disciplines that have contributed the most to public policy are philosophy, sociology, economics, political science, public administration, law, and management theory.<sup>6</sup> This list can be further expanded to include the broader frameworks of history and the art of taking policy lessons from the past, anthropology and the meaning of culture, demographics with its population forecasts, or various disciplines of science and engineering that

**Table A1.1** Disciplines and topics related to public policy

<b>Discipline</b>	<b>Example topics</b>
Philosophy	Logics, values and ethics, theory of justice
Sociology	Understanding society as a whole, social structure in terms of classes and other groups, social status, social problems, social interests, social exclusion
Economics	Instrumental rationality, institutional economics, cost-benefit analysis, political economy, special economic policies
Political science	Political processes, institutions and actors
Public administration	The role of bureaucracy in shaping policies and implementing decisions
Legal sciences	Law as a normative and regulatory framework
Management theory	Processes of decision making, implementation and evaluation

Source: Potůček et al. (2010: 11; adapted and expanded).

5 The history of policy studies in the Czech Republic is elaborated in more detail by Potůček (2007), Novotný (2012), Veselý, Nekola, Hejzlarová (2016).

6 For a more in-depth discussion of the disciplinary context of public policy, see Potůček, M., L. LeLoup, G. Jenei, L. Váradí (2003: 11-19).

help us better understand health, energy or environmental issues. Public policy makes specific uses of these disciplinary inspirations on the basis of its own theoretical foundations and methodological instruments in order to directly help analyze and propose solutions to such social problems that none of these disciplines alone would be able to grasp and address alone. See Table A.1.

Thus, public policy is a cross-cutting scientific discipline of its own kind. Through the structure of its topics as well as through the explanatory frameworks and research methods applied, it transcends the boundaries of traditional social sciences.<sup>7</sup>

## DEFINING PUBLIC POLICY AS A SCIENTIFIC DISCIPLINE

To define the characteristics of a scientific discipline is not a popular endeavor among academics. This is understandable as the boundaries between disciplines are becoming increasingly blurred in the context of an immense accumulation of innovative knowledge, paradigms and methods, and a growing emphasis on problem- and issue-oriented science. And many, albeit not all, would add that those boundaries are also becoming more and more permeable. In spite of that, I believe a definition of public policy is due, even if it continues to be contested, even in the USA (see above) where the discipline has its deepest roots.

**Public policy** (sometimes also policy studies or policy science) is **defined** as a discipline which elaborates and applies the interpretative frameworks of sociology, economics, political sciences, law, management theory, and other disciplines in analyzing and foresighting the processes of formation and assertion of public interests with respect to solving differentiated social problems. It primarily deals with the institutional mediation of those processes by the public sector, the civic sector and, to some extent, also the commercial sector, in a form that is useful for political practice.

This is, of course, not the only definition. According to Peters (1993), the discipline of public policy studies “the sum of government activities, whether pursued directly or through agents, as those activities have an influence on the lives of citizens” – which operate at three levels: policy choice, policy outputs, and policy impacts. From another perspective, public policy examines

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7 Unfortunately, many authors use these concepts without defining them, and one can only guess by the context in which meaning their terms are to be understood.

what Dewey called “the public and its problems” as early as in 1927. According to Lasswell (1936), policy studies are understood as a discipline that integrates available cognitive approaches in a comprehensive analysis of the overall context of the policy process, policy decisions, and their consequences. As such, they are problem-oriented, multidisciplinary, and pluralistic in terms of methods. In an introduction to his encyclopedia of policy studies, Nagel (1994: xi) defines them as “the study of the nature, causes, and effects of alternative public policies.”

According to Dunn, **policy analysis** is “an applied social science discipline which uses multiple methods of inquiry and argument to produce and transform policy-relevant information...” (Dunn 1981: 35) “..., because policy-relevant information has the potential to improve policy making” (Dunn 2012: 53).

## **POLITY, POLICY, POLITICS**

English is the most popular language of science. Unlike some other languages, it provides scholars with a number of terms to grasp essential analytical distinctions. For public policy as a scientific discipline, different meanings of terms *polity*, *policy*, and *politics* represent its conceptual cornerstones.

The term **polity** refers to the general foundation or orientation of a society, or what is referred to by some authors as the “choice of society” – the direction and nature of its basic aims (Roebroek 1992).

The term **policy** refers to public policy as conceptualized in this chapter.

The term **politics** denotes processes in which actors cooperate, clash, negotiate and reconcile their conflicting interests through political institutions.<sup>8</sup>

At the price of considerable simplification, Fiala and Schubert (2000: 19) succeeded to define all three terms in a single sentence: “The political order constitutes a framework (polity) in which the material element (policy) arises from strategies of political conflict and consensus (politics).”

---

8 In the Czech language, the term *politika* is a frequent source of confusion because it is used, without an accompanying definition, to refer to both policy and politics. While politics is typically driven by struggle for power, policy has, to paraphrase Wildavsky (1979), its own *raison d'être*. Thus, in Czech expert discourse, we recommend using the term *veřejná politika* whenever one refers to a substantive policy area, and reserving the term *politika* to matters of politics.

**Exercise:** Try to assign the following examples: introduction of tuition at universities; adoption of a new constitution; voting down a state budget bill by the Parliament.

Polity	
Policy	
Politics	

## PUBLIC POLICY AS SOCIAL PRACTICE

Anderson (1975) defines public policy as “a purposive course of action followed by an actor or set of actors in dealing with a problem or matter of concern” – a public interest. He distinguishes between (policy) demands, decisions, statements, actions (outputs) and (intended or unintended) consequences (outcomes).

Sartori (1987) argues that a defining characteristic of public policy as social practice lies in collectivized decision making, whereby decision makers are simultaneously the makers and implementers of public policy. Such decisions are taken on behalf of communities (aggregates of individuals comprised of different types of organizations), no matter if by one, several or multiple individuals. Whoever decides does so for all. Thus, public policies are determined by the content and extent of the given decision and collective action.

Jenkins (1978) understands public policy as a “set of interrelated decisions taken by a political actor or group of actors concerning the selection of goals and the means of achieving them” in a given situation and under given constraints.

However, as far as dealing with problems is concerned, most authors do not limit the scope of public policy to government activities. Lindblom and Woodhouse (1993) assume that government officials are mere “mediators,” and they point out that public policies are realized by means of a complex political system and cannot be understood primarily with regard to the actions of top government officials (Ibid: 3). They infer that public policy can be better understood as a product of broader societal factors (especially the dominant position of business in democratic capitalism), as it exists within the constraints of human capabilities, and as it is affected by the discrepancy between rational judgment and political power.

In short, **public policy as social practice** refers to practical uses of public policy in pursuing and satisfying public interests. As mentioned above, the

ambition to become a useful tool and source of information for better solving social problems has been the central factor behind the emergence of **public policy as a scientific discipline**.<sup>9</sup> However, this defining characteristic can be its advantage as well as its Achilles heel. On the one hand, the practical relevance of public policy inspires the effort of students and researchers to better understand society and policy, and to make their results immediately applicable. On the other hand, scholars from other disciplines may frown upon public policy as a craft that lacks scientific explanation and builds upon feeble theoretical premises.

With regard to securing public interest, one can distinguish between liberal and paternalist types of public policy:

**Liberal public policies** intervene only as far as a recognized public interest is jeopardized by the pursuit of individual/group interests. Their fundamental view of the state is that of a “night watchman.”

**Paternalist public policies** often pursue a recognized public interest irrespective of the changing nature of social problems or harm to individual interests... More specifically, in an authoritarian regime, there is an increased risk that particular policies will be pursued under the disguise of public interest.

There is a number of differentiated policy areas such as the economic, social, education, health, family, foreign, energy, media, transportation, or security policies.<sup>10</sup>

For example, if the opinion prevails in a society that good family functioning is a matter of public interest, then family policy is instituted to respond to social problems caused by the occurrence of family dysfunction or breakdown.

#### **Important distinctions of public policy as social practice – case of family policy:**

- **active versus reactive** (family planning advice versus v. foster/residential care);
- **by regulatory principles or instruments applied** (family law, child benefits, tax relief, preschool establishments, parenting education);
- **global/European/national/local** (family policy is mostly implemented at the national level, sometimes at the regional or municipal level; recommendations are also formulated by organizations such as the EU or the OECD);
- **by actors involved** (departments, civic sector service providers, churches, schools, police, courts, family members);
- **by target group** (future families, families with dependent children, families with handicapped members, lone-parent families).

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9 A social problem becomes a policy problem if something can be done about it. Cf. Chapter A6 for more details.

10 Chapter A6 provides a more detailed list of policy areas.



**Permanent tension between theory and practice is the key productive factor behind the development of public policy.** On the one hand, there is an autonomous theoretical and methodological evolution of public policy as a discipline. On the other hand, there are the ever-shifting demands of public policy as a social practice. Public officials and politicians tend to reject more abstract theories as they make little difference in everyday problems. In contrast, scholars may refuse to pursue the practical applicability in their studies because such a goal makes little difference in theory testing and generalization.<sup>11</sup>

## FOUNDING FATHERS AND FOLLOWERS

Sociologists have traced the origins of their discipline back to the works of Auguste Comte. For public policy, such an effort to identify a single founding father is most likely futile. The discipline rather has a number of founding fathers and even one mother, namely Elinor Ostrom, co-recipient of the 2009 Nobel Prize for economics.

**Table A1.2** Authors who made a major contribution to public policy theory

<b>Author</b>	<b>Contribution</b>
Arrow, Kenneth J.	The logic of collective action
Axelrod, Robert	Cooperative and noncooperative behaviour
Dahl, Robert A.	Theory of democracy, polyarchy
Dahrendorf, Ralf	Individual rights and social commitments; social liberalism
Dror, Yehezkel	Rational policy model; strategic governance
Dunn, William	The concept of <i>policy analysis</i>
Easton, David	Political system
Etzioni, Amitai	Ethics in the economy; communitarianism
Fischer, Frank; Forrester, John	Argumentative turn in policy analysis
Heclo, Hugh; Hughes, Owen E.	Issue networks, policy networks
Kingdon, John W.	Theory of agenda setting; three streams theory
Lasswell, Harold	The concept of <i>policy sciences</i> as comprised of <i>policy studies</i> and <i>policy analysis</i> ; the “stages” model of the policy cycle

11 Unfortunately, policy analysis is sometimes misused in the pursuit of particular interests. For example, certain think-tanks do their research with a view to deliver the results expected by their clients or donors. The ideological bias of such works is often not reflected critically.

Lindblom, Charles E.	Incremental model of public policy; relationship between market and government
Lowi, Theodore J.	Model of arenas of power
Ostrom, Elinor	Institutional Analysis and Development Framework
Peters, Guy	Institutionalism; horizontal governance
Rose, Richard	Citizens in public policy; policy programs implementation
Sen, Amartya	Goal and function of public policy; human potential; models of development
Sabatier, Paul A.	Advocacy Coalition Framework
Simon, Herbert	Bounded rationality; human aspect of the workings of bureaucracy
Schneider, Anne L.; Ingram, Helen M.	Social construction of target groups
Weimer, David L.; Vining, Aidan R.	Methodology of policy analysis, relationship between market, government and civic sector
Wildavsky, Aaron	Policy analysis as science and art; implementation; the ethics of the relationship between policy advisors and politicians
Wilenski, Harold	Comparative analysis; corporatism

**Exercise:** As you study public policy, continuously expand the table above by adding new authors and their contributions to advancing the theory of public policy.

## FUTURE PERSPECTIVES OF THE DISCIPLINE

Public policy is an independent, rapidly developing and self-confident scientific discipline. Its explanatory frameworks, analytical capacities and practical proposals for solving problems are more and more in demand by responsible political representatives and administrative officials. Approaches to public policy range on a scale from basic research (at a high level of abstraction) to elaborate empirical studies (often with an important comparative element) to practical applications that immediately intervene in policy and administrative communication and decision-making in the public space (often referred to as policy analysis). Depending on the perspective of choice, each item on this scale has its specific function throughout the discipline.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> There are two focal points of academic instruction and research in the field of public policy in the Czech Republic: the Faculty of Social Sciences at Charles University in Prague (with

## REVIEW QUESTIONS

*Chronicle the emergence, formation and implementation of a specific public policy up to the point of recognizing and securing the public interest.*

*Are efforts to regulate the Internet in the public interest?*

*What are the foundations of a theoretical approach that denies the existence of public interest?*

*Exemplify the consequences of politicians' failure to acknowledge a public interest.*

*What are the differences between political science and public policy - and what do they have in common?*

*Why does public policy cover a broader array of topics than public administration?*

*Exemplify<sup>13</sup> the difference between active and reactive public policies.*

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Dunn, W. N. 1981. *Public Policy Analysis*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

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Lindblom, C. E., E. J. Woodhouse. 1993. *The Policy-Making Process*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Lippman, W. 1955. *Essays in the Public Interest Philosophy*. Boston: Little, Brown and Co.

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the Department of Public and Social Policy of the Institute for Sociological Studies, and the Center for Social and Economic Strategies), and the Faculty of Social Studies (with its Department of Social Policy and Social Work) and Faculty of Economics and Administration (with its Department of Public Economics) at Masaryk University in Brno. Both were well represented at the first two international conferences on public policy in Grenoble (2013) and Milan (2015). *Policy Analysis in the Czech Republic* (Veselý, Nekola, Hejzlarová 2016) was published as one of the world's first national monographs on the history and state of the art. Public policy readership can draw on a number of textbooks and other comprehensive volumes (see commented bibliography below), as well as on Charles University's *Central European Journal of Public Policy* (<http://www.cejpp.eu>). The School of Public Policy, Central European University in Budapest, Hungary represents an important focal point of public policy research and teaching in Central and Eastern Europe.

13 Do not use the case of family policy.

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# Values in Public Policy

Values in polity .....	30
Human rights .....	30
Political ideologies .....	32
How institutions are shaped by political ideologies:	
The case of the welfare state .....	36
Values in policy .....	38
The criterion of quality and sustainability of life .....	39
Values in politics .....	41
<i>Example theory: Historical institutionalism</i> .....	42
Review questions .....	43
Sources .....	44

Social sciences and values are like identical twins. One who attempts to sell the results of his/her research under the disguise of impartial scientific truth, whether a sociologist, an economist or a political scientist, one who believes his/her research may escape the grip of values, is rather a slave to yesterday's fads... However, if this is true, does it make any sense to strive for learning the unknown? My answer is a definitive yes, with only two caveats. Not only do we have to abide by all the rules, respect all the limitations, and make the best possible use of the options science provides, but we must also be aware of the background value of our scholarly work and be prepared to disclose it whenever necessary.

This is especially important in public policy, whether as social practice or as a scientific discipline. Values are omnipresent in public policy as social practice, and every policy practitioner is forced to work in the context of conflicting values (Theodoulou, Cahn 1995). The concluding section is going to elaborate on this.

Values are reflected in the definition of social problems and public interests related to them, in the content of ideologies, policy doctrines, policies, programs and norms. They influence the choice and ways of utilization of policy instruments. They shape institutions, they guide actors' actions. They determine the processes of education, indoctrination or persuasion.

The **value background of public policies** reflects more general human communities' need to coordinate the actions of individuals and groups and foresee the reactions of other actors involved (... and thus minimize the transaction cost of such actions, an economist might say). While public policies must respect the different involved actors' value fields, they often transcend them, for example in order to meet general criteria such as quality of life or human rights. In public policy as a scientific discipline (and even more so in policy practice), one can observe the coexistence of and competition between overlapping specific normative models that are inspired by the works of social philosophers, by political ideologies, or directly by the involved actors' interests. Some light can be shed on this complex matter by the analytical distinction between **polity**, **policy** and **politics**<sup>14</sup>. Each of those levels is associated with values closely and in its own way.

## VALUES IN POLITY

Shared values have been involved in human behavior since time immemorial. In the era of hunters and gatherers 30–20 thousand years BC, people abode by general norms with regard to the ways of getting food, moving in space, protection from forces of nature and external threat, sex life, and family life. Later these rules and values became codified (albeit not everything was written explicitly).

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### EXAMPLE CODIFICATIONS OF VALUE SYSTEMS:

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Code of Hammurabi (1686 BC), Talmud, Bible, Quran, *Magna Carta Libertatum* (1215), Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen (French Revolution, 1789), Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UN, 1948), Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU (2000, 2009).

## HUMAN RIGHTS

Europe has been shaped by the evolution of values from the culture of Mesopotamia through classical antiquity, Christianity, the Enlightenment, up to the modern age. In comparison with the Middle Ages, modernity, the Enlightenment, and liberalism – inspired by renaissance humanism – marked

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14 Cf. Chapter A1.