

# The Governance of Higher Education in a Power Sharing Context: A policy-change perspective.

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# Organization of the workshop

# Main goal of the session

- Discussing issues of 'policy-change'
- Triggering change in a governance system

# Organization of the workshop

## **DAY 1 | January 10 | Theory**

- Lecture: Strategies for 'effective' policy change in power sharing context
- Guidelines for project works

## **DAY 2 | January 14 | Practice**

- Presentations: Strategies for a better Higher Education Governance in Lybia

## **DAY 3 | January 21 | Wrap-up**



## **DAY 1 | SUMMARY**

- 1. Power Sharing and its implications**
- 2. Strategies for 'effective' policy change**
- 3. Guidelines for presentations**



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# **Power Sharing and its implications**

# Peacebuilding and power sharing

- Debate on current models of peace maintenance in the aftermath of civil wars. According to Doyle and Sambanis (2000, p. 779), peacebuilding is ‘an attempt, after peace has been negotiated or imposed, to address the sources of current hostility and build capacities for conflict resolution’.
- Mounting criticism over the mainstream technical view of state-building and institutional reforms, which has been largely discarded because it failed to take into account cultural, social and historical needs (Mac Ginty 2010). Focus on conflicts and institutions (Paris 2004)
- Dilemmas of peacebuilding: the most important is “power sharing”

# Power sharing

- The term power-sharing has been used to describe institutional mechanism for the distribution of nominal political power (e.g. cabinet positions) according to a fixed rule. That rule reflects groups' relative sizes or relative power (Lijphart 1985)
- Power-sharing institutions are the means via which inclusion is achieved in post-war states. Yet it is not clear if these institutions are effective or under what conditions we should expect different power-sharing institutions to reduce the risk of war recurrence. [debate: Caspersen (2004), Sisk (2013), Strøm et al (2015), Sambanis (2020)]
- Do power-sharing mechanisms enable or hinder the transition of a divided society towards democracy? Two different views...



# 1. Consociationalism

- According to consociationalism, power-sharing allows a better representation of all the important groups in a divided society (Lijphart 1977, 2002). Power-sharing institutions are ‘intended to provide each group with a guarantee that it will have a minimum level of representation within government’ (Hoddie and Hartzell 2010, p. 9). Crucial role of consensus, proportionality, autonomy
- Recent research has tried to ‘disaggregate power-sharing’, investigating its components, as electoral systems or types of parliamentary systems (Cammet and Malesky 2012, p. 983). Others have identified different dimensions of power sharing, assessing their different impact on democratic survival

## 2. Centripetalism

- Power-sharing can also affect democratization negatively by excluding moderate elites or freezing ethnic divisions through group representation.
- ‘Centripetalism believes that the best way to manage democracy in a divided society is [...] to put in place institutional incentives for cross-ethnic behaviours to encourage accommodation between rival groups’ (Reilly 2010, pp. 288-289). Several authors (Horowitz 1985) support integrative approaches to power-sharing and centripetalism, which aim to reinforce the centre of a divided political spectrum through incentives for cooperation across ethnic lines.
- Power-sharing is not a positive factor per se, but it depends on the type of institutional design and its implementation (e.g. resource distribution, land reforms, etc.). Focus on different types of institutional design (and their implementation).

# Common aspect and questions

- Consociationalism and centripetalism agree on a similar perspective: institutions that encourage bargaining and accommodation are more likely to produce political stability
- But how is it possible to systematically assess the implementation of bargaining? How can we carefully identify the gradual transformation of adversarial relationship at institutional level? How can we better understand the dynamic interactions among local political players, as well as their features, aims and interests? What are the strategies for effective policy change?



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# **Strategies for ‘effective’ policy change**

# Governance in Higher Education

Some concepts already discussed:

- State / Market / Academic Oligarchy
- Systemic / Institutional governance
- Modes of systemic governance
  - Procedural
  - Hierarchical
  - Self-governance
  - Steering at a glance

# From 'models' to policy making and advocacy

## Models are useful:

1. to classify the reality (analytical function)
2. To identify how we want the reality looks like (normative function)

## ...but how to bring about change in the governance of HE?

1. What is policy change about?
2. Are there strategies to bring about a relevant, feasible, and durable improvement of a given governance structure?

# The object of policy change.

Type of change	Object	Example
<i>First order</i>	The calibration of policy instruments	The weights of performance indicators
<i>Second order</i>	Policy instruments	The introduction of evaluation systems
<i>Third order (Paradigmatic change)</i>	The overall policy goals	Higher Education as a service for the masses

# Does the type of change affect the outcome?

## Not in an univocal way:

- Of course, «paradigmatic changes» are more visible, but they are not necessarily effective.
- On the contrary, small changes may have great effect in relatively short period of time.



# What kind of change to advocate for?



# Relevance

**Policies do change everyday. But not all the changes are 'relevant'.**

**A change is relevant when it produces a non-marginal alteration in terms of:**

- Importance of the policy field in a given political system
- Distribution of power within the policy field
- The policy-takers affected by the policy (Access, quality...)

# Feasibility

- Avoid what is 'impossible' as an imperative of effective policy making
- Possible policies are defined by different kind of constraints
- Identifying constraints is the first step for any advocacy action

*G. Majone (1989) Evidence, argument, and persuasion in the policy process. Yale University Press.*

# Classes of constraints

- **Financial**
  - *Are there available resources to implement the policy?*
- **Technical**
  - *Do existing technologies underpin the policy?*
- **Institutional**
  - *Is the policy consistent with the overall institutional framework?*
- **Political**
  - *Is there sufficient support by politicians, bureaucrats, organized interests for the policy?*

# Constraints: *Objective or Self-imposed?*

- To what extent constraints can be ‘manipulated’?
- In some circumstances an actor simply cannot change a given constraint, in other cases constraints are more flexible.
  - In times of financial crisis resources are likely to be an ‘objective’ constraint, while in ‘booming’ economies this is not the case.
  - Political constraints are usually rigid when policies concern highly salient issues, conversely they can be very weak when de-politicised issues are at stake.

# Durable

- Sometimes relevant changes do take place, but they do not last over time.
- Public policy is not entirely about law-making: Implementation matters!
- Many reforms have no follow-through.

# Dealing with 'political feasibility'

Making policy that 'last' in time is a problem strictly connected with 'political feasibility'

Policies usually do not last because of lack of support by:

- Political parties
- Bureaucracies
- Interest groups

# Strategies of 'subversion'

- Repealing the reform
- Undermining substantive components of the reform
- Lack of implementation
- Delegation of responsibility to not committed actors
- *Layering*: Creation of a new policy in competition with the former

*Patashnik, E.M. and Weaver, R.K. (2020), Policy Analysis and Political Sustainability. Policy Studies Journal, DOI: 10.1111/psj.12391*



# What makes policy stable?

- **Increasing returns**
  - The costs of changing a governance regime is too high
- **Existence of a supportive coalition**
  - Most influent actors in the domain gains from supporting the governance structure

Question:

- Can these two conditions be intentionally designed?

# How to 'create' increasing returns

- Resource allocation (financial, organizational, cognitive...)
  - Timing: Up-front investment
  - Clauses disincentivizing policy reversal

*Patashnik, E.M. and Weaver, R.K. (2020), Policy Analysis and Political Sustainability. Policy Studies Journal, DOI: 10.1111/psj.12391*

# How to create a 'supporting coalition'

- **Find out 'actors' with a stake**
  - Not necessarily in the Higher Education arena.
  - Not necessarily in the domestic arena.
- **Create a new actor**
  - A new regulatory agency
  - An interest group

# An illustration from Italian Higher Education Governance: the impacts of *ANVUR*

- In 2006 the Italian government created the *National Agency for the Evaluation of Higher Education and Research* (ANVUR) in order to implement a significant change in the systemic governance.
- Creating an actor with the explicit goal of implementing evaluation is a case of policy change which fulfilled the three criteria of relevance, feasibility and durability.

*See: Capano et al*

# Has ANVUR had an impact?

A comprehensive assessment of the impact of this governance change is out of the scope of this lecture.

Two aspects deserve attention:

- the agency survived several governments and expanded its domain (**durability**)
- It produced impact in terms of power allocation and the relative importance of research related performance measures for both Departments and single academics (**relevance**)

# Why?

- **Financial and organizational resources allocated to the Agency**
- **Cognitive resources**
  - The agency has skills Department for Higher Education has not
  - Actors in the system – mostly academics – cooperate with the agency and their careers depends to a significant extent with the evaluative criteria adopted
    - Learning effect
    - Adaptive expectations



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# Guidelines

# DAY 2 | January 14

Divide up in groups

- We can have one group for each Lybian University: approx 12 groups

Each group prepares a short presentation

- Max 5 slides
- Max 7 minutes presentation



# Structure of the presentation

1. State few priorities for the innovation of the governance of Lybian HE
2. Outline the main constraints you expect to face
3. Outline a strategy to change the *status quo* and entrench innovation
4. TIPS:
  1. Be realistic!
  2. Focus on actors who can form a winning coalition.

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