

Business Meeting of the Standing Group (SG) 'Theoretical Perspectives in Policy Analysis'
ECPR conference 2018 Hamburg
Friday 24 August 13.00-14.00 in VMP 9 Room A315

Present (24 - 21 listed, 3 people did not sign their names): Claire Bynner, Ellen Stewart, James Henderson, Anne Loeber, Mick Chisnall, Wibke Müller, Peter Skilling, Daniel Galland, Imrat Verhoeven, Efrat Gommeh, Hege Hofstad, Trond Vedeld, Jesse Hoffman, Maarten Hajer, Catherine Fallon, Brian Coffey, Tamara Metze, Roy Heidelberg, Hendrik Wagenaar, Anna Durnová, Koen Bartels (minutes)

Agenda

1. Update on development of the Standing Group
 - Membership
 - Mailing list and website
 - Network/collaboration
2. Changes to ECPR SG framework
3. SG mission statement (see appendix)
4. Collaboration with other interpretive groups and journals
 - IPA conference, summer school and website
 - PA Theory Network and Administrative Theory & Praxis
 - IPPC and International Review of Public Policy
5. Next year's theme & ideas
6. AOB

1. Update on development of the Standing Group

The Standing Group has been developing and growing in a number of ways:

- *Membership* has grown to 184. Koen emphasised the importance of further increasing our number of members. A bigger membership base will give us greater traction within ECPR, which will translate into e.g. more panel slots at the General Conference.
- We are now making more active use of our *mailing list and website*. Everyone is encouraged to send the conveners any relevant information (new publications, job openings, conferences, workshops, etc.) they may have. It will then be forwarded to the members.
- We have started to build *collaborations* with a variety of akin groups, networks and journals: Public Administration Theory Network, PSA Interpretive Political Science Specialist Group, Interpretive Policy Analysis group, Administrative Theory & Praxis, Critical Policy Studies, Policy & Politics, and International Review of Public Policy. We aim to further intensify and formalise these collaborations over the next year (see 4).

2. Changes to ECPR SG framework

Koen and Anna explained that the ECPR has announced that it is going to make changes to its framework for Standing Groups, because it was up for a formal review (which is done every five years). Moreover, since this framework was last drafted, the ECPR has obtained charitable status and therefore has to revisit the way Standing Groups are incorporated in its Constitution. These changes have been discussed at a Retreat for SG Conveners (to which we were invited but unfortunately could not attend due to the late notice). The aims of the Retreat and the consultation were to integrate the Standing

Groups more fully into the ECPR, show the ECPR's appreciation of their value, and allow discussion of challenges and issues. These changes do not have any direct, major consequences for the SG members. But it is good that everyone knows that the ECPR sees the Standing Groups as central to the entire organisation and are working to make sure that their nature and needs are adequately reflected in its formal framework.

3. SG mission statement (see appendix)

Henk indicated that we would like to invite all SG members to reflect on our mission statement. It was drafted several years ago and, despite a recent update, we want to ensure that it reflects the ideas, work and ambitions of the members. We have tried to change the SG name twice but both times this got stranded in resistance from the ECPR, who were afraid that the groups' remit would become too narrow. But maybe the broad name can be turned into an advantage. As long as we do not lose sight of the interpretive, deliberative, and practice foundations that make us distinctive.

We will shortly send out a consultation to get members' views on what they feel the SG should be about. The ideas and insights that surfaced from discussions in this year's conference Section could also feed into this. The deadline for this will be mid-September.

4. Collaboration with other interpretive groups and journals

As already came up under point 1, we are planning to further develop and institutionalise our collaborations with other groups, networks and journals. Henk said that our community is burgeoning yet fragmented and beleaguered. We need to bring different strands together and formalise our collaboration. Our plan is to do so through Memorandums of Understanding and trying to get one overarching website for announcing news and directing people to the various participating entities. We can build on a number of exciting developments:

- Tamara highlighted that the *Interpretive Policy Analysis* group has launched a new website (<https://ipa.science/>) and is also present on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/interpretivePA/>). It has organised a successful summer school this summer in Amsterdam. It is hosting its next annual conference in India in 2019. It was also emphasised that this year's Section has been organised in collaboration with Katharina Paul and Tamara Metze from the IPA group.
- Roy said that the *PA Theory Network* is going to organise its annual meeting in Sweden in 2020. This could be a good opportunity for collaboration, or at least organizing a section/panel series around interpretive policy analysis. With its new editorial board, the journal *Administrative Theory & Praxis* continues to grow and develop. It is hosting many special issues and is encouraging more of these. It has also recently been included in Scopus. Roy, Koen and Henk are on the editorial board and have raised the importance of connecting with the interpretive policy analysis community at the recent editorial board meeting.
- The *International Public Policy Association* continues to expand rapidly. It is organising summer and winter schools and has launched a new journal: the *International Review of Public Policy*. Anna is on the editorial board on behalf of our community. IPPA is organising its next annual conference in 2019 in Montreal.

5. Next year's theme & ideas

Everyone was encouraged to submit a proposal for a Section at next year's conference. This is not and should not be the sole prerogative of the conveners. All SG members can put forward proposals. Besides fitting with the aims and objectives of the SG, the only real requirement is that the proposal is wide enough to attract a wide variety of panels and people from all over the world. The conveners will decide which proposal will be

officially endorsed. The fact that only one Section proposal can be endorsed does not mean that there cannot be more than one Section proposal affiliated to the SG. We would certainly do our best to offer support to other proposals too.

- Imrat asked whether the conveners could please send timely reminders of the deadlines. Koen promised to do this and also pointed out that the schedule for next year's conference can already be found on the ECPR website.

6. AOB

- It was asked what Sections are exactly for. Koen explained that this is the way the ECPR structures its conference. Since it is quite a massive conference, the Sections are a way to make specific interests and groups visible. They also enable Standing Groups to bring their members and community together.
- It was suggested that for next year's conference we should try to diversify more by linking in with non-interpretive policy analysts and interpretive policy analysts operating in specific sectors, like education.
- It was questioned whether we could do anything about the requirement to have five papers on panels, because this puts a lot of pressure on the conveners and participants and makes it difficult to have sufficient space for discussion. Koen and Henk appreciated this difficulty and explained that unfortunately there is little we can do about this within the context of the ECPR conference. It is massive and gets a huge number of proposals. As a rule of thumb, we are expected to turn down one third of these, which we have done this year. But we do not want to turn away good proposals and therefore try to fit them into existing or new panels as best as we can.

Next meeting to be held at next year' conference.

Short Description

The central goal of the Standing Group is to explore the path of a critical and democratic policy analysis. We draw inspiration from the founding fathers of policy science: John Dewey, Charles Merriam, and Harold Lasswell, as well as Critical Theorists such as Jürgen Habermas. Their insight is that policy analysis should never be seen apart from the society in which it functions and to which it contributes.

Theoretical Perspectives in Policy Analysis has two broad aims. The first is enlightenment, in the sense of revealing the, often taken-for-granted, cognitive horizons of social and policy issues. Such intellectual constraints restrict both our understanding of these issues as the formulation of creative, effective and just solutions. The second is transformation, in the sense of enabling and facilitating groups to free themselves from oppressive conditions or practices. Members of this Standing Group celebrate methodological and conceptual innovation rather than highlighting a single approach.

Aims and Objectives

The central goal of the Standing Group *Theoretical Perspectives in Policy Analysis* is to explore the path of a critical and democratic policy analysis. Members of this Standing Group celebrate methodological and conceptual innovation rather than highlighting a single approach. In addition to traditional quantitative methods, participants of this Standing Group use a variety of different approaches to policy analysis, such as qualitative research, discourse analysis, interpretive, deliberative and practice-based approaches, political ethnography, and collaborative and action research. We think that these approaches are conversant with the new insights in social theory, political theory, and contemporary theories of public administration and the policy process.

Over the past decades the Standing Group has been part of the development of a thriving international academic community. The International Conference in Interpretive Policy Analysis is the flagship conference of this community. Over the past decade, it has held successful meetings in Birmingham, Amsterdam, Essex, Kassel, Grenoble, Cardiff, Tilburg, Vienna, Wageningen, Lille, Hull and Leicester. The conference takes great efforts to facilitate early career researchers. It organises a pre-conference methodology school and methodology sessions for PhD students during the conference. In 2018, members of the Standing Group organised a summer school in interpretive policy analysis in Amsterdam

The Standing Group annually convenes a Section at the *ECPR General Conference*. It also supports – and organises panels at – the *International Conference in Public Policy*. The *Interpretive Politics Specialist Group* of the *Political Studies Association* convenes panels for interpretive political scientists at the Annual PSA conference. The *Public Administration Theory Network* organises an annual meeting for public policy and administration theorists. The Standing Group's journal *Critical Policy Studies* is a well-established and recognised outlet for high quality publications. Each year it gives an award for the best article and the best article of an early career scholar. The Standing Group is also affiliated with the renowned US-based journal *Administrative Theory & Praxis* and the prominent journal *Policy & Politics*.