We are pleased to announce the workshop on “Policy Making and Policy Implementation: An Intermediation Perspective” to be held in person at Heidelberg University, Germany, on Thursday and Friday, May 2 to May 3, 2024. The deadline for abstract submission is January 31st 2024, via the online form:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeExxu7AdtiR1qd8zqlYypAAIRnDn3SqeMErV9SGfgJ_jwZQg/viewform?usp=pp_url

The deadline for draft paper submissions to the workshop (around 5000 words) is April 15 2024. Selected paper will form a special issue to be submitted to the journal Policy and Society with a deadline of end of July 2024. Financial support for travel and accommodation will be available for scholars in need and especially young scholars.

Aims and Scope of the Workshop

Policy studies have developed in a remarkable and stimulating fashion in the last decades. Nonetheless, we strive forward and in doing so looking into ways that will move it forward. One way to do so is to analyze and theocratize the policy process from an intermediaries and intermediation perspective (Abbott, Levi-Faur, and Snidal 2017). Intermediaries are the ‘go-betweens’ who can facilitate the proposal, adoption and implementation of public policy by connecting policymakers with policy-takers. Intermediation mechanisms are the institutional procedures that are used in intermediation, ranking, registration, rating, certification, auditing and reporting come to mind. Their role is evident both in the making of policy and the institutional design as well as in policy implementation. Intermediaries and intermediation mechanisms allow at the policy design stage to include or recognize the role of diverse set of actors that can make the design more decentered. At the same time and with the implementation stage they may allow trust in government and governance to be a vigilant trust. In other words, they allow the regime to decentralize authority and at the same time to trust but verify, to distinguish the trustworthy from the untrustworthy and potentially encourage trustworthy behavior (and hence reduce compliance costs).

Intermediation is central to democratic policy making in liberal democracies. We aim in this volume to bring the intermediaries in and to puzzle and theorize their role in governance in ways that were neglected before. Intermediaries are not always a specific and formal type of actors in the policy process – most individuals, groups or organizations which would qualify as policy actors can function as intermediaries. Intermediation is about the role actors play in the policy process as well as the mechanisms they use (Tosun, Tobin, and Farstad 2023). For example, there exists a wealth of research on political parties and how they shape public policy. Most of the policy research concentrates on parties as actors. Evidently, this perspective is accurate since political parties select candidates for elections who – when successful – become members of the executive or the legislative. In that capacity they are responsible for proposing and adopting public policy.

The Major research questions that we will deal with ask are:

- RQ1: How does politics and policy interreact in the institutionalization of intermediaries during the stage of policymaking?
- RQ2: How do politics and policy interreact in the institutionalization of intermediaries at the stage of policy implementations?
- RQ3: When and why do actors choose to perform the role of intermediaries and to what extent they affect the successes and failures of the policy process?
- RQ4: What are the advantages and disadvantages of the use of different mechanisms of intermediation in the policy making and policy implementation?

See you in Heidelberg!
All the best,

Jale Tosun, David Levi-Faur, Paul Tobin and Avri Eitan