

Fabrizio Gilardi, Professor of Public Policy, Department of Political Science, University of Zurich

POLICY DIFFUSION: THE ISSUE-DEFINITION STAGE

Thursday, 30 November 2017, 12.30 – 13.30

Anna Nussbaum Auditorium, World Trade Institute, University of Bern
Hallerstrasse 6, 3012 Bern, Switzerland

Abstract

We put forward a new approach to studying issue definition within the context of policy diffusion, that is, the process by which policymaking in one government affects policymaking in others. Most studies have focused on policy adoptions. Instead, we shift the focus to an important but neglected aspect of this process: the issue-definition stage. We use structural topic models to estimate how policies are framed and how these frames vary as a function of prior policy adoptions. Focusing on restrictions on smoking in U.S. states, our analysis draws upon an original dataset of more than 3.1 million paragraphs from newspapers covering 49 states between 1996 and 2013. We find that frames are related to prior adoptions within a state's diffusion network, but this holds true only for frames regarding the policy's concrete implications and not those considering normative

justifications. These findings open the way for a new perspective to studying policy diffusion in many different areas.

Biography of the Speaker

Fabrizio Gilardi is Professor of Public Policy in the Department of Political Science of the University of Zurich, Switzerland and an editor of the Journal of Public Policy. His work on regulatory institutions, policy diffusion, and women's representation has been published in journals such as the American Journal of Political Science, the British Journal Political Science, Comparative Political Studies, and the Journal of European Public Policy, among others. His latest book, co-authored with Martino Maggetti and Claudio M. Radaelli, is *Designing Research in the Social Sciences* (SAGE Publications, 2013).

**Participation is free of charge, no registration is needed.
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