

Public Participation in Policy Processes: Towards a Research Agenda

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Abstract: This paper starts from the point of view that still little is known about the factors influencing interactive policymaking and the effects of interactive policymaking. It suggests to go back to the basics of social processes, namely the 'why', the 'who', the 'what', the 'how' and the 'when'. This results in a proposal to conduct research into the following aspects of interactive policy making: theory driven empirical research into the question of the actual occurrence of the expected impacts in interactive policy making processes; research into the explaining factors behind the actual inclusion and exclusion of various stakeholders in interactive policy making; Research into the varying impact of existing designs with regard to all those effects that are theoretically expected from interactive policymaking processes; research into the question to which degree the requirements for interactive policy making processes are fulfilled in different countries of the EU and to which degree the procedural, informational, institutional and restructuring measures taken show a bias toward a specific purpose of interaction processes; research to investigate whether there is an optimal point within the policy making process to begin public involvement, which factors are determinative in this respect and whether this varies over policy areas and countries.