

Introduction to Public Policy

Week 7

Agenda Setting

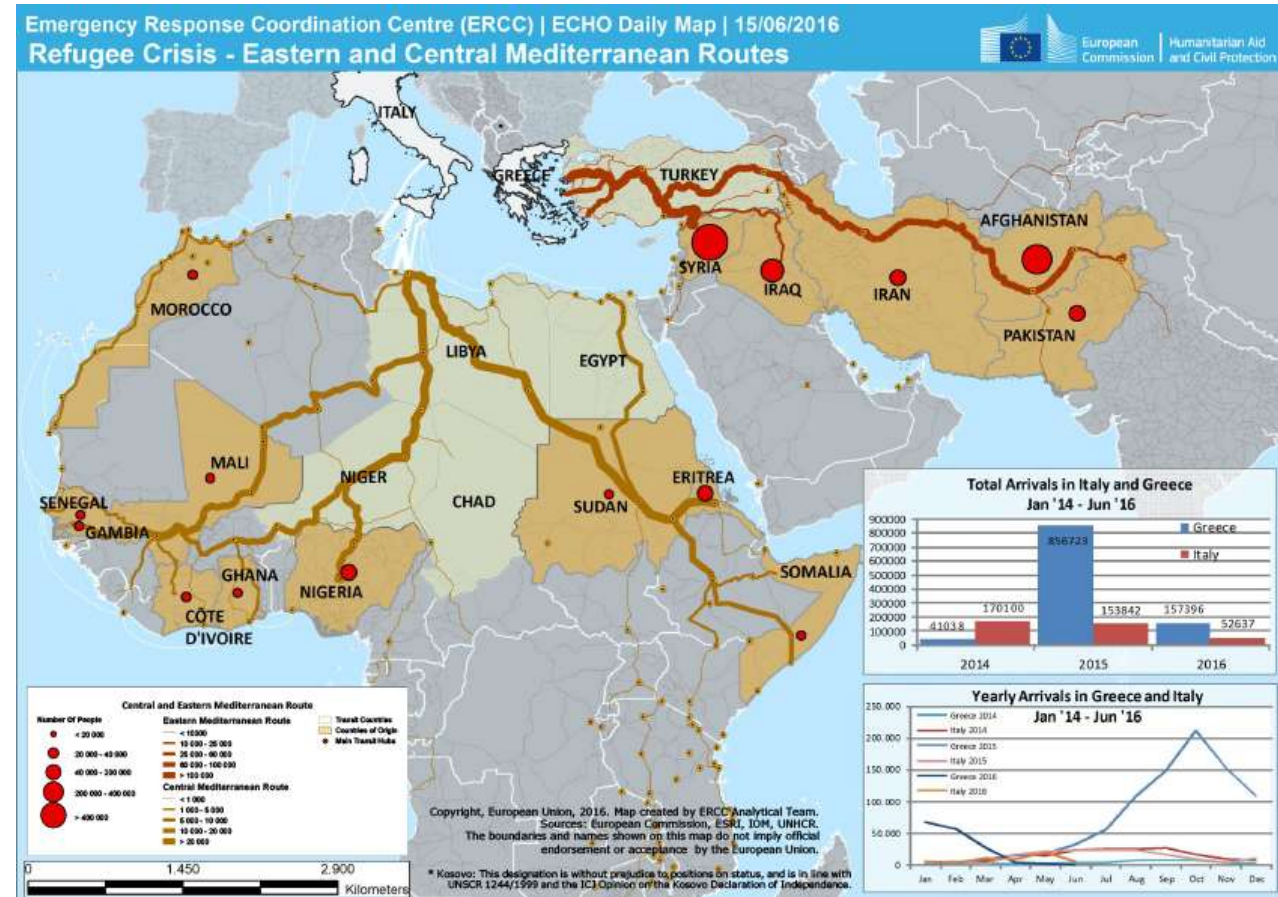
Theodolou & Kofinis, pp. 117-130.

Agenda Setting

- Why issues enter & survive on the agenda & finally considered for some policy action.
 - Stages in which issues develop & emerge within a public & government agenda
- How issues gain attention
 - The theoretical & practical process by which issues emerge onto the political & policy agenda

Agenda Setting: List of Ignored Problems???

- Which Problems Enter Agendas?
 - Problems that are **high in cost and scope** are more easily perceived as important
- Which problems can or **can not** be ignored?
 - Environmental problems
 - Global warming; Ocean pollution
 - Economic crises
 - Refugee crisis



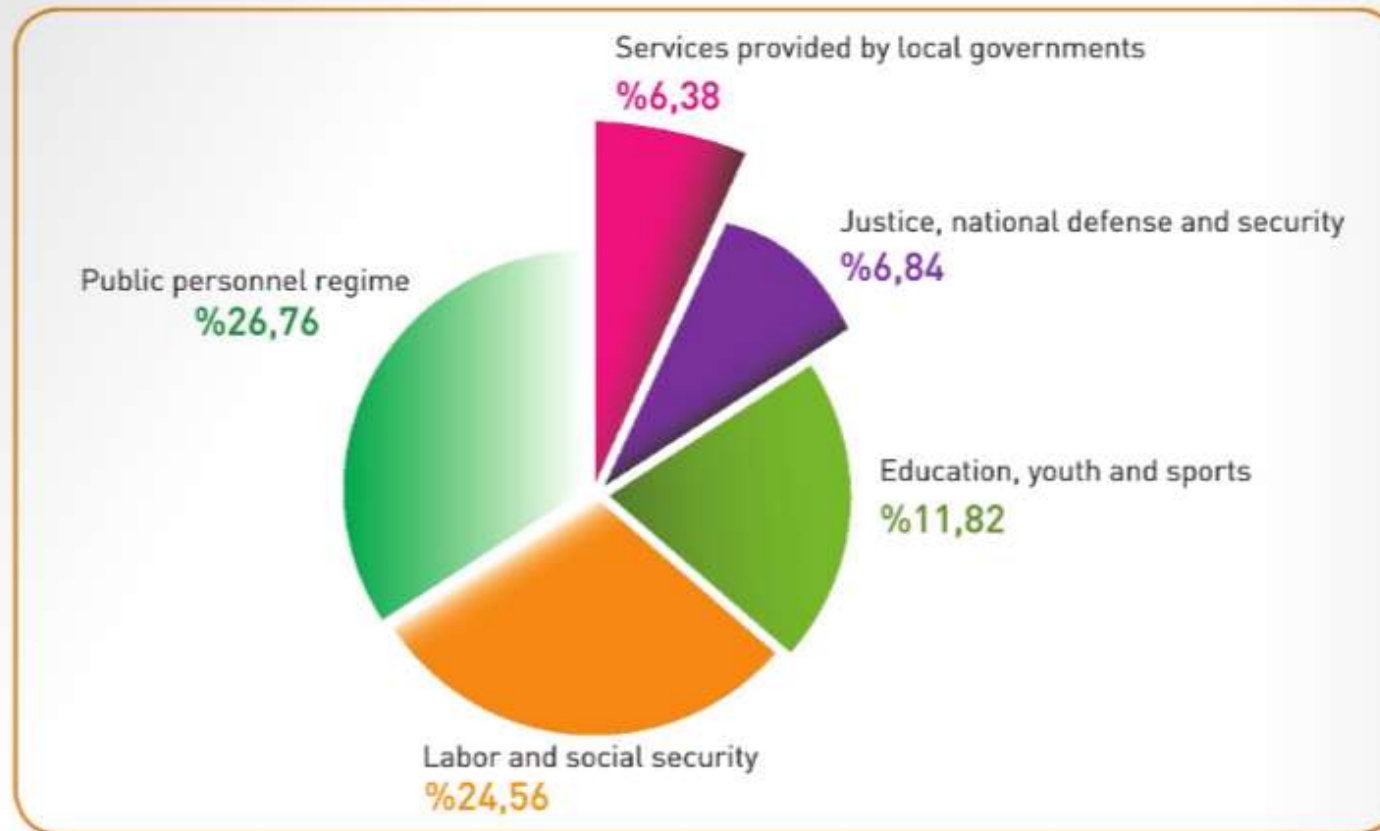
Applications to the Turkish Ombudsman, 2018

@https://www.ombudsman.gov.tr/yillik-rapor/2018_y%C4%B1l%C4%B1k_raporu_ing/mobile/index.html#p=91, Dec. 4, 2019.



THE OMBUDSMAN INSTITUTION OF THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY 2018 ANNUAL REPORT

Figure 3: Distribution of the Complaints as per Subjects in 2018



Agenda Setting

- The dynamic process by which an issue **rises from obscurity** (being unknown) to gain public and political attention.
 - Important pre-decision stage
 - Entering the agenda is necessary for an issue to be considered for policy action.
- How a large set of issues **compete for policy attention**
 - How the set/agenda of issues to be considered for policy action become limited in number.
 - Some issues may be recognized as important, but not all important issues enter onto the policy agenda.

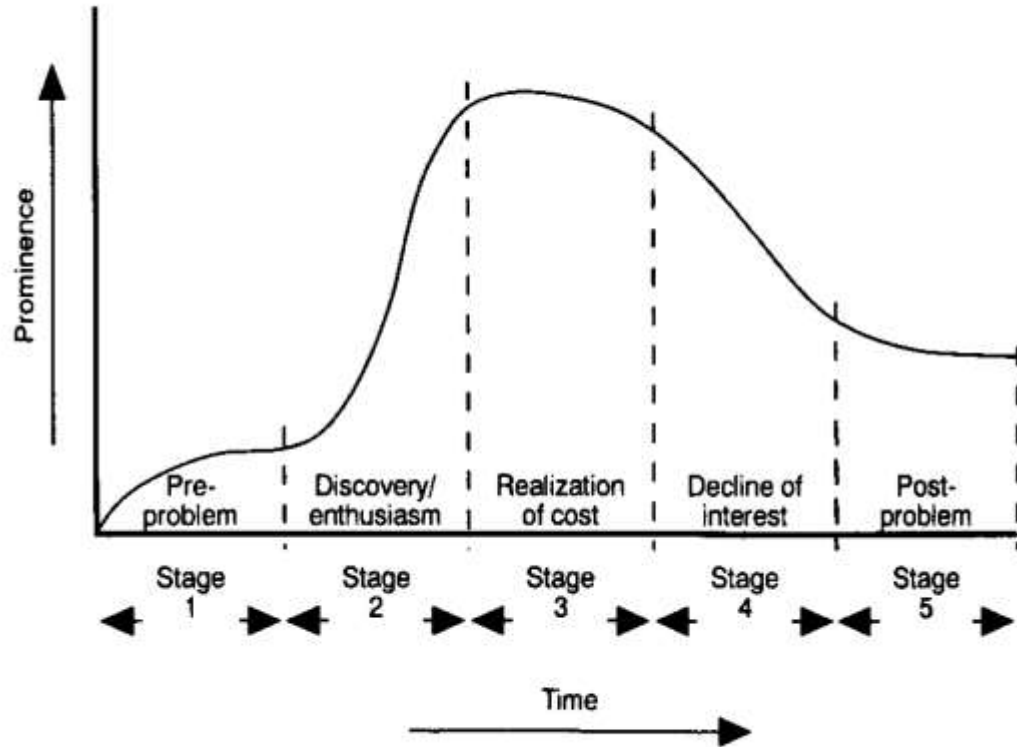
Agenda Setting

- To consider issues, policy actors have
 - Limited time
 - Limited energy
 - Limited resources (Money, personnel...)
 - Limited amount of interest
- The issue selection process is
 - Competitive
 - Competition between beliefs, perceptions & attention
 - Not fair or just

Agenda Setting

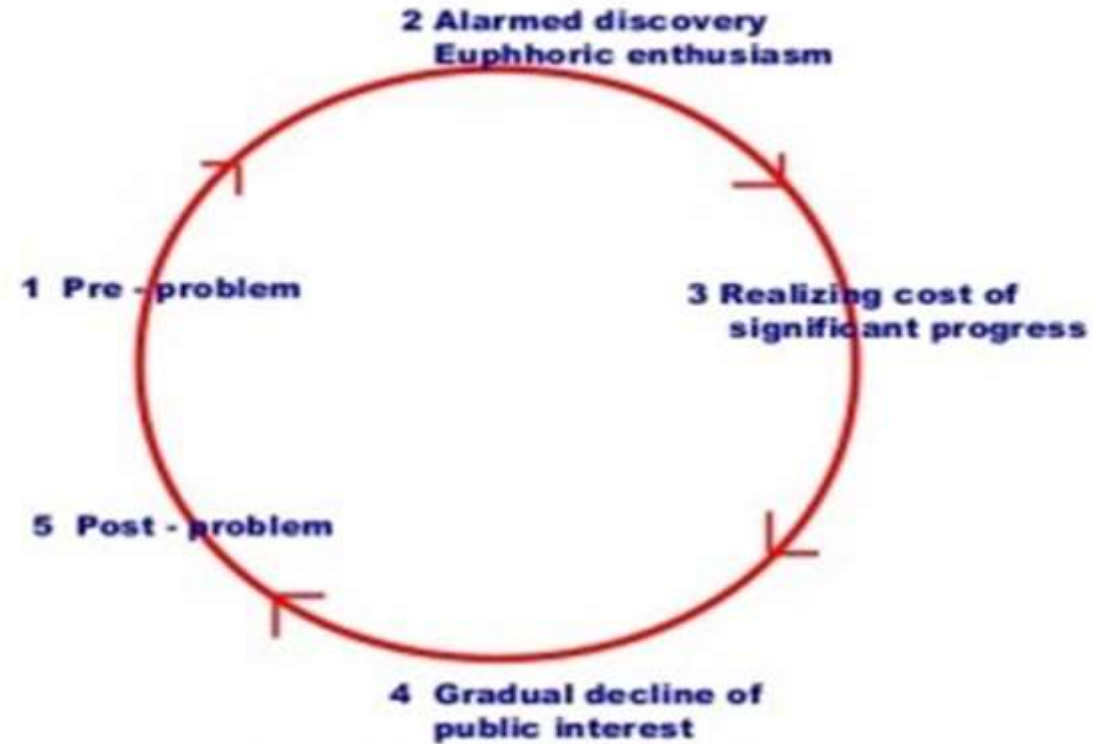
- Three Theories of Agenda Setting
 1. Downs' Issue Attention Cycle
 2. Kingdon's Multiple Streams Theory
 3. Cobb & Elder's Systemic & Institutional Agendas
 - Interaction between two policy agendas

1. Downs' Issue Attention Cycle



ISSUE ATTENTION CYCLES (IACs)

(Anthony Downs : 1972)



1. Downs' Issue Attention Cycle

- How a private issue becomes a public issue that attracts public attention?
 - Presents the «life cycle» of issues
- Examples
 - Obesity
 - Islamic State (ISIS) Terror



Downs' Issue Attention Cycle

1. Pre-Problem Stage:

Experts and policy-makers may be aware of the problem, and knowledge may have been produced, but there is negligible public interest.



Downs' Issue Attention Cycle

2. Alarmed Discovery and Euphoric (Joyful) Enthusiasm Stage:

The issue is recognized as a problem, prompted by a disaster or positive event, which focuses concern and leads to demands for government action



Downs' Issue Attention Cycle

3.Counting the Costs and Benefits Stage:

Policy makers and the public become aware of what progress will cost.

4.Decline of public interest in issue

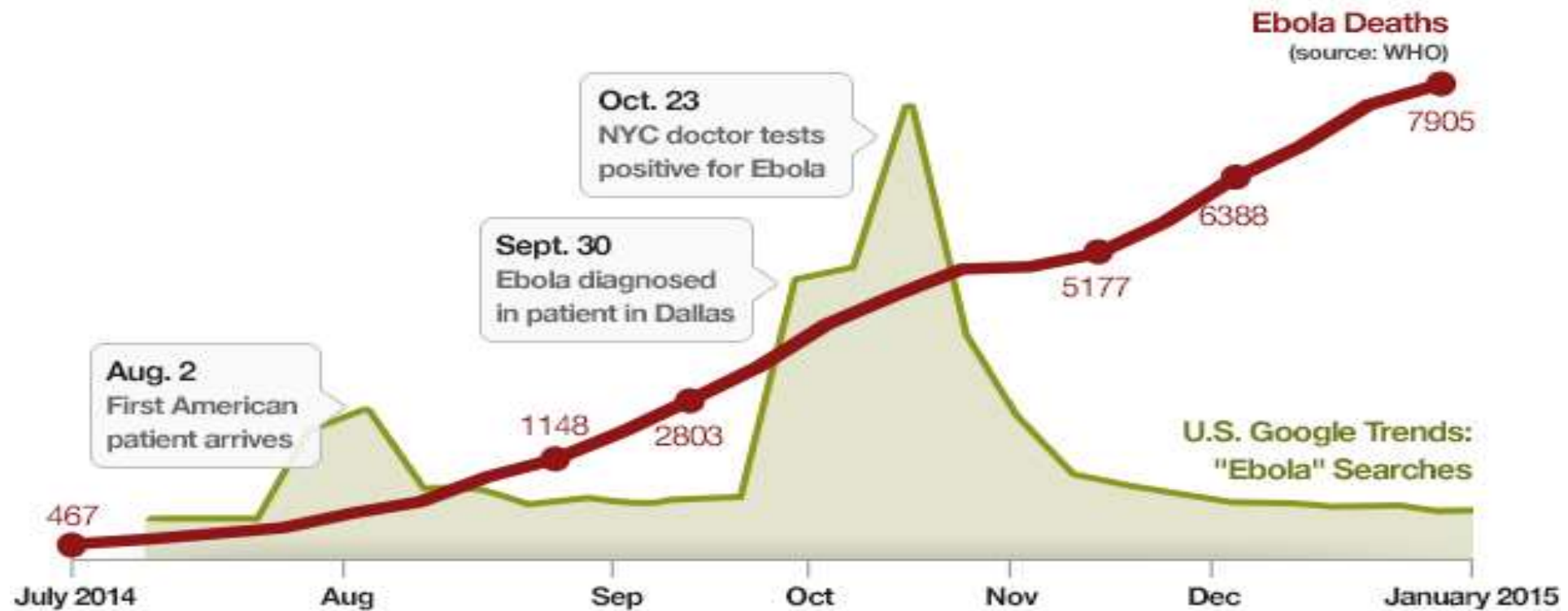
5.Post-Problem Stage:

The issue slips down the public agenda. New issues replace the environment in public opinion and policy agendas.

Issue Importance & Public Interest

EBOLA TRENDS:
Death toll rises while U.S. interest wanes

JULY - DEC. 2014



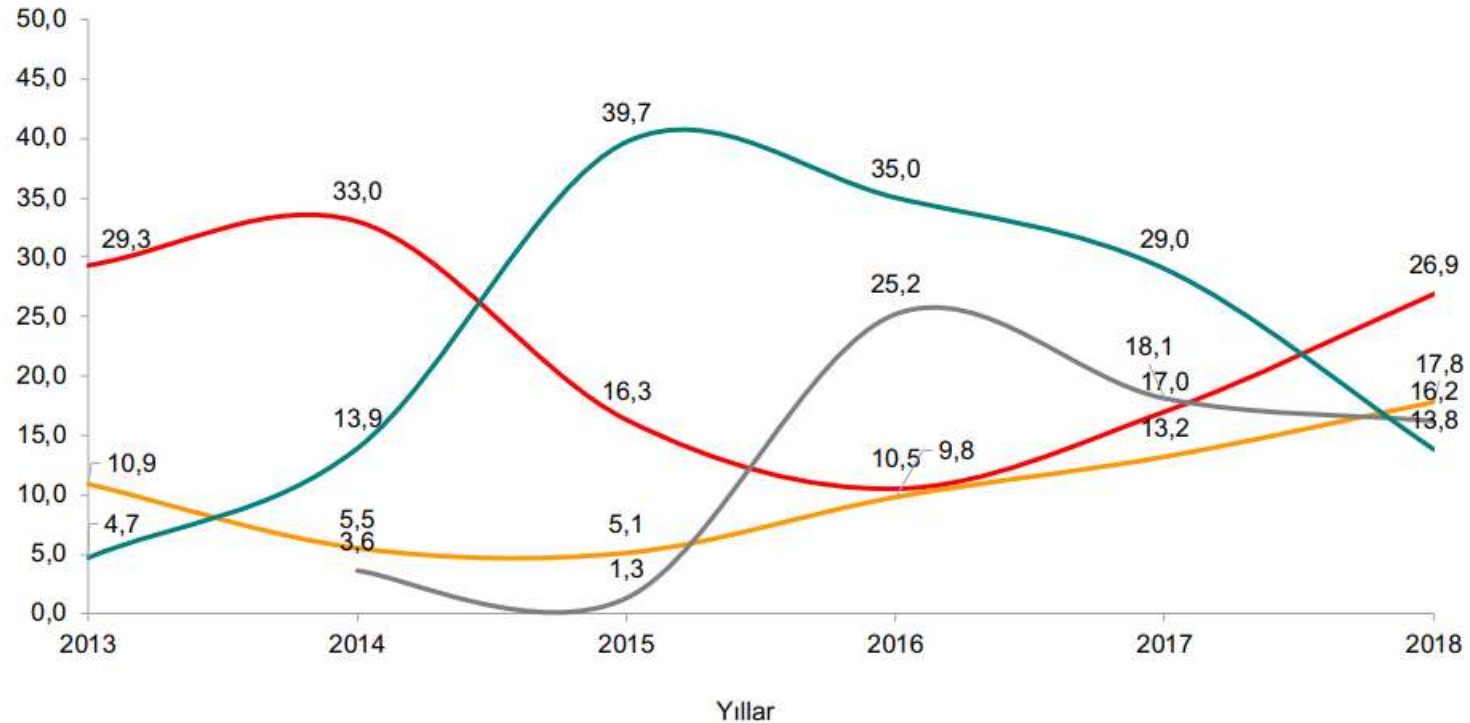
Issues Rising & Declining in Importance on the Agenda

Research on Social & Political Trends in Turkey | 16



Turkey and Its Problems (2)

The most important problem of Turkey



— Unemployment

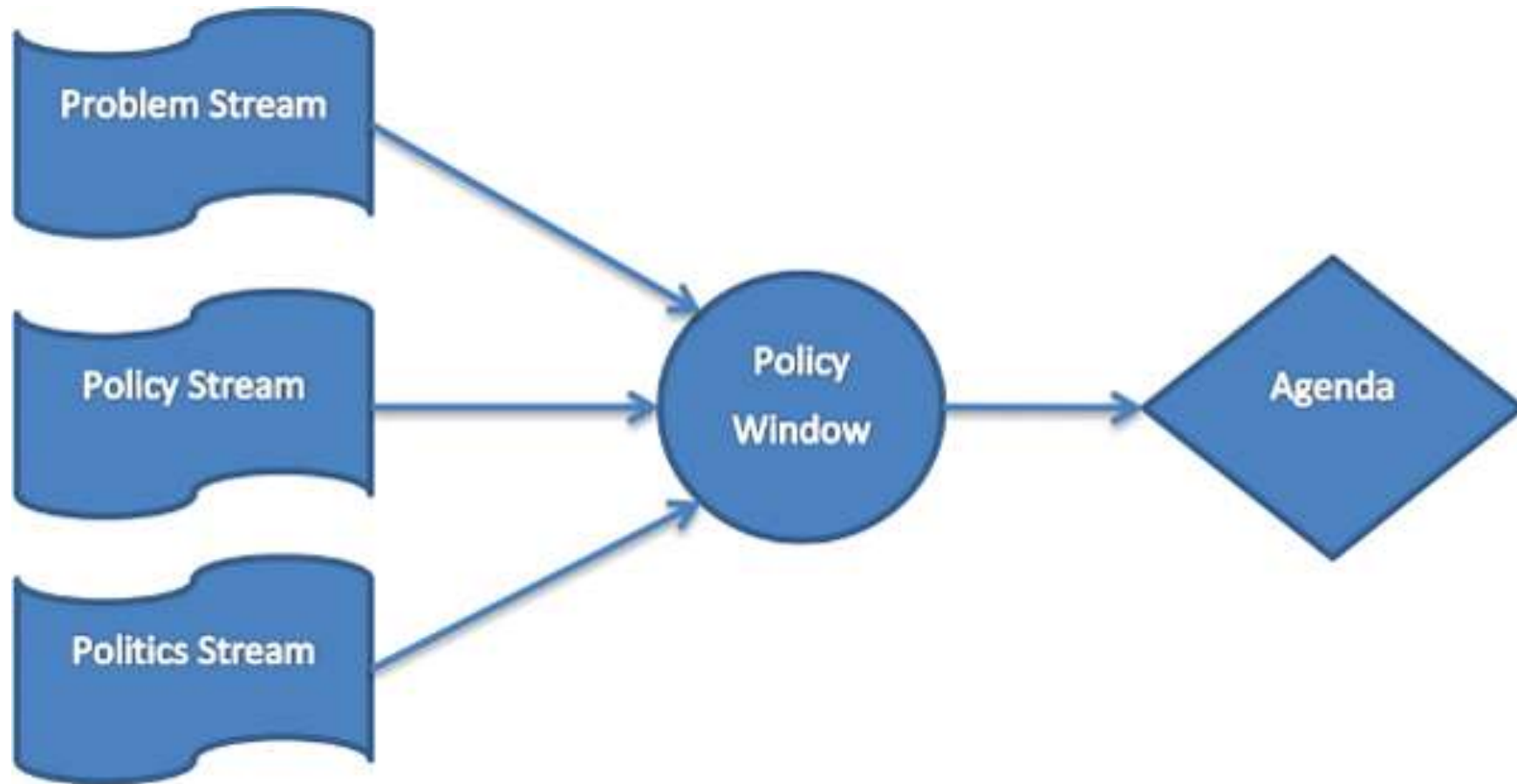
— High Level of cost of living

— FETO

— Terrorism

Basis	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000

2. Kingdon's Multiple Streams Theory

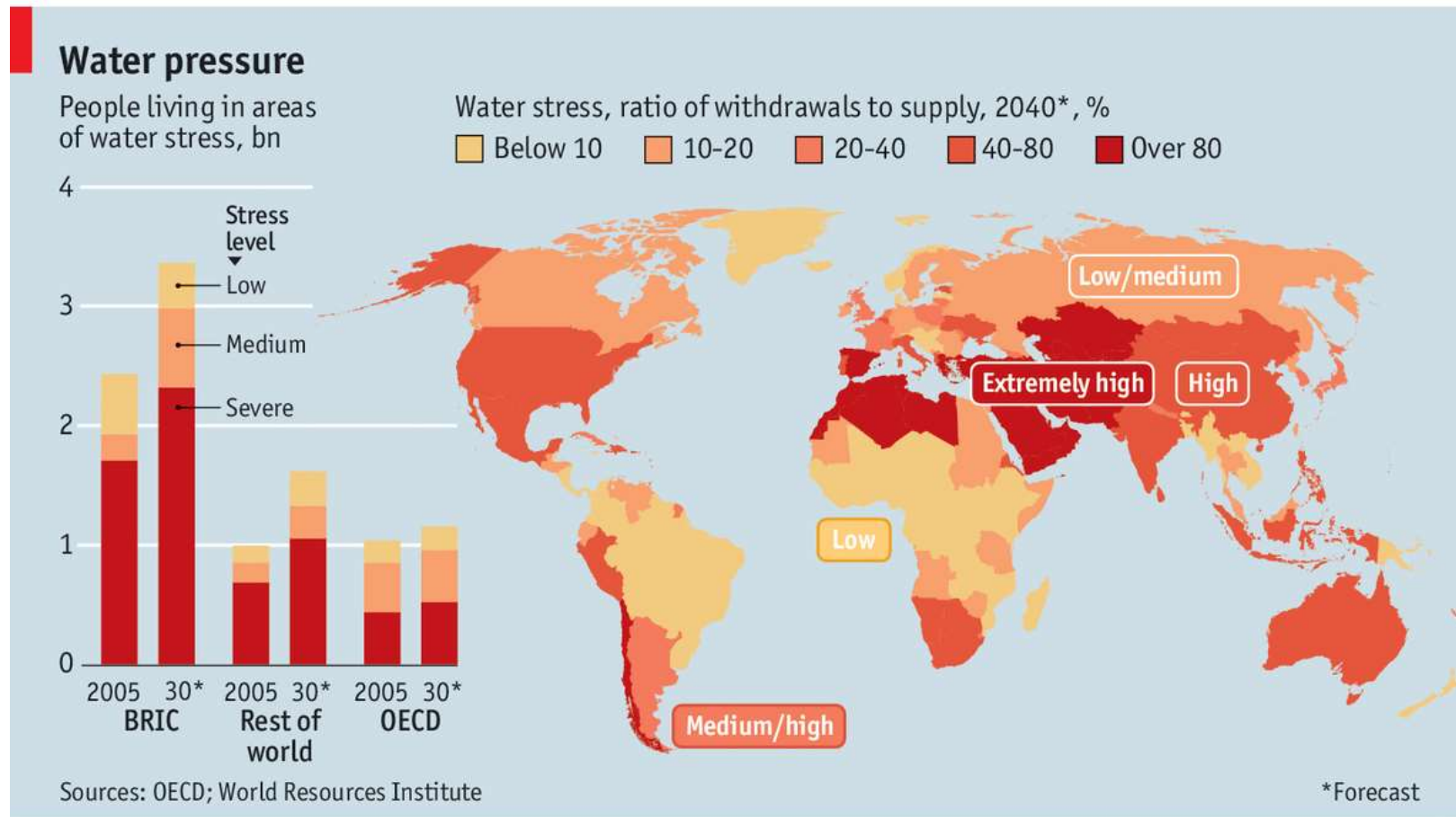


2. Kingdon's Multiple Streams Theory

- Highlight the role of «timing» in the public policy process
- Streams
 - Problem Stream
 - Policy (Solution) Stream
 - Political Stream

Problem Stream

- Issues that policy actors focus on
 - Based on indicators, focusing events (such as a crisis or a disaster) & feedback



Policy Stream

- Ideas and solutions debated among policy actors & entrepreneurs
- Role of **policy entrepreneurs** (girişimci)
 - Expecting rewards (prestige, power, wealth...) for successful matches between problems and policies
 - Examples
 - Hayrettin Karaca (TEMA Foundation)
 - Ahmet Mete Işıkara (Deprem Dede; Mr. Earthquake)
 - Kemal Derviş (Economic reforms)

Policy Stream

- Factors affecting the selection of policies
 - Technical feasibility
 - Manned Mars missions?
 - Value acceptance by the policy community
 - Smaller or larger role for government or the private sector?
 - Tolerable cost
 - Free Internet access to everyone?
 - Anticipated public acquiescence/support
 - Sending soldiers to Syria to fight ISIS?
 - Political acceptability
 - Accepting more Syrian immigrants to Turkey?

Political Stream

- The broad political context
 - The national mood
 - Shared concerns & interests
 - Organized political forces
 - Interest groups
 - Members of the government
 - The elected, appointed & bureaucracy

«Politicians Discussing Global Warming» Sculpture

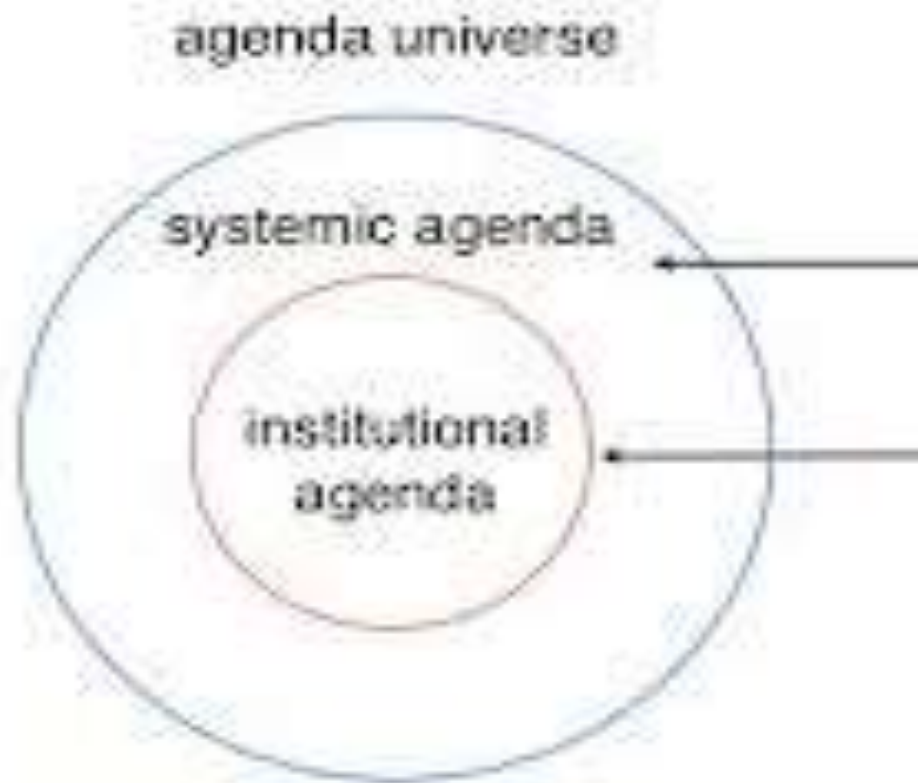
by Isaac Cordal (2011) in Berlin, Germany



Policy Windows of Opportunity

- Opportunities for action
 - Stay open only for short periods
- Syrian refugees example
 - A window of opportunity for Turkey's EU membership?
 - Problem: Refugees
 - Policy: Keep refugees in Turkey
 - Politics: Is it acceptable for Turkey, for the other policy actors?

3. Cobb & Elder's Systemic & Institutional Agendas



3. Cobb & Elder's Systemic & Institutional Agendas

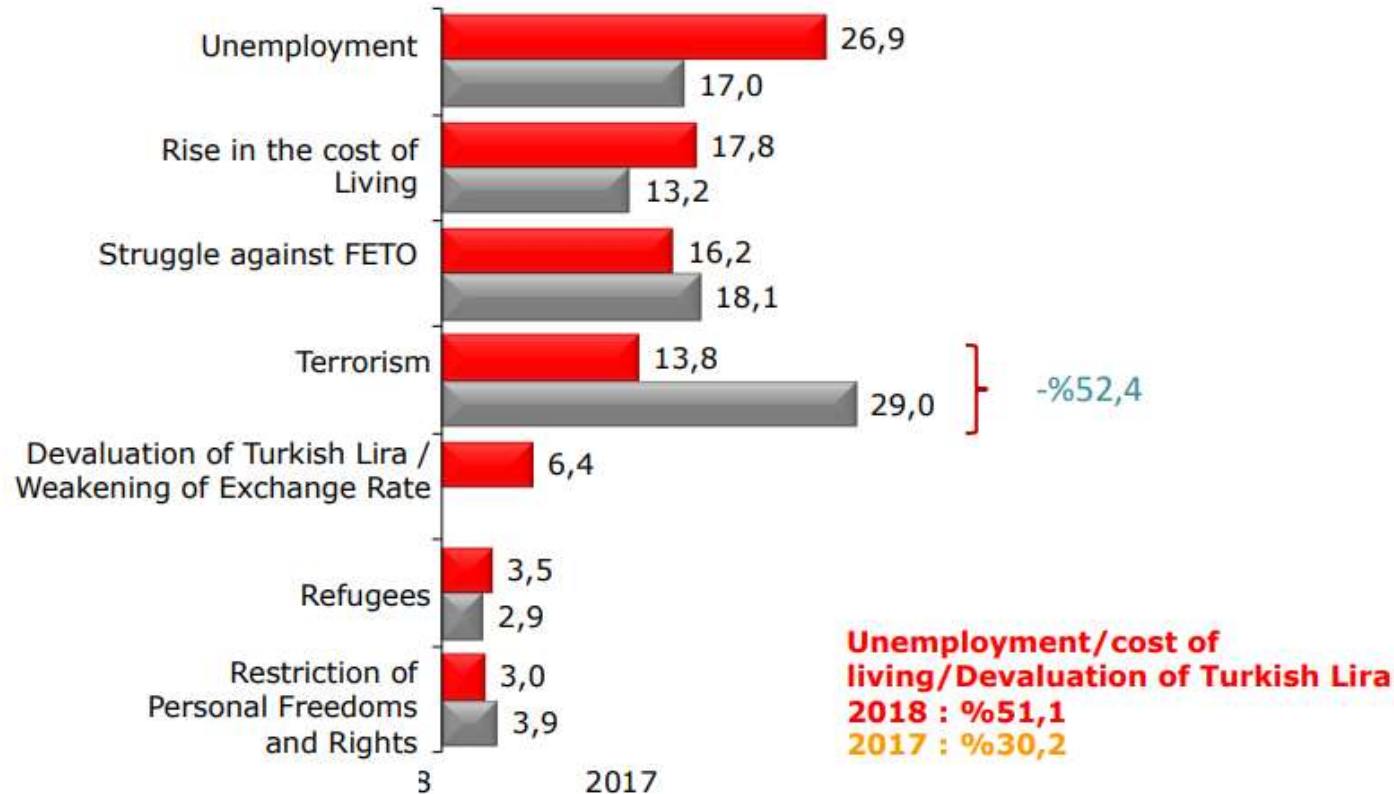
- A potential problem: A negative effect on some segment of the society, group or individual
 - Is there a need for public action?
 - Are **previous attempts** to solve the problem privately failed?
 - Is the issue a **crisis**?
- Example: Unemployment



Turkey and Its Problems (1)

The Most Important Current Problem in Turkey

Please indicate from the selection provided on the card what is the most important current problem in Turkey?



Data under 3,0% is not included in the chart.

Listed based on the top 6 problems in 2018.

Factors that Affect Agendas

- Agenda types framed & defined by beliefs, actors & resources.
 - Organizational culture
 - Ideologies
 - The need for reelection/political calculations
 - The preferences of citizens
- Example: The proper role of government in health
 - PPP: Public-Private Partnerships

Proper Role of Government in Health: The PPP Model

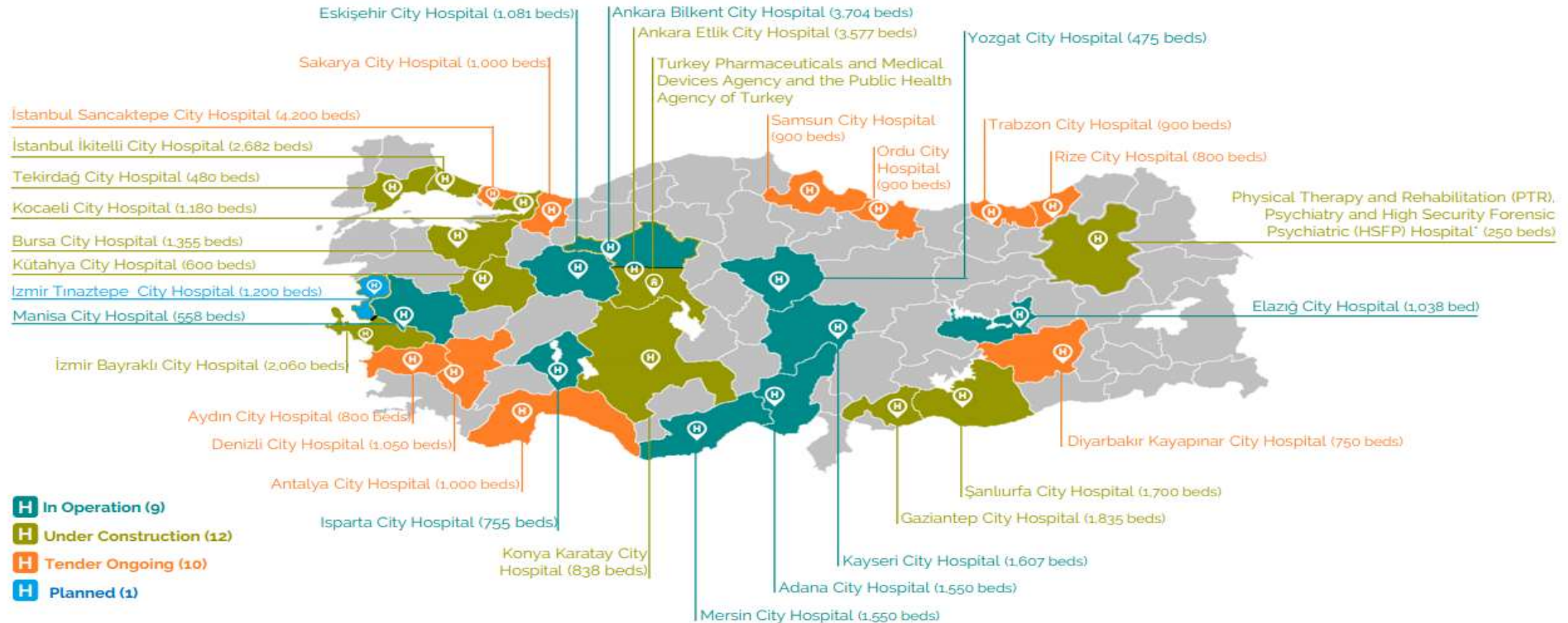
@<http://v1.invest.gov.tr/tr-TR/infocenter/publications/Documents/ALTYAPI.SEKTORU.pdf>

Güvenli değil | v1.invest.gov.tr/tr-TR/infocenter/publications/Documents/ALTYAPI.SEKTORU.pdf



Opportunities in Healthcare

Turkey has recently introduced new PPP projects to build *integrated healthcare campuses* across the country and more opportunities are in the pipeline..





Systemic and Institutional Agenda (Cobb & Elder)

- Transformation of an issue into an (institutional) agenda item
- Expansion of an issue from a specifically concerned attention group to a wider interested or attentive public



Systemic and Institutional Agenda (Cobb & Elder)

■ Systemic Agenda

- All issues commonly perceived by members of a political community as meriting public attention of public authorities
- Shared concern of a sizeable portion of the public

■ Institutional Agenda

- Explicitly up for active and serious consideration by decision-makers
- May be an old item which is up for regular review or is of periodic concern; or it may be a new item.



Issue Triggers (Cobb & Elder)

- Internal Triggers

- Natural catastrophes
- Unanticipated human events
- Technological changes
- Imbalance or bias in the distribution of resources
- Ecological change

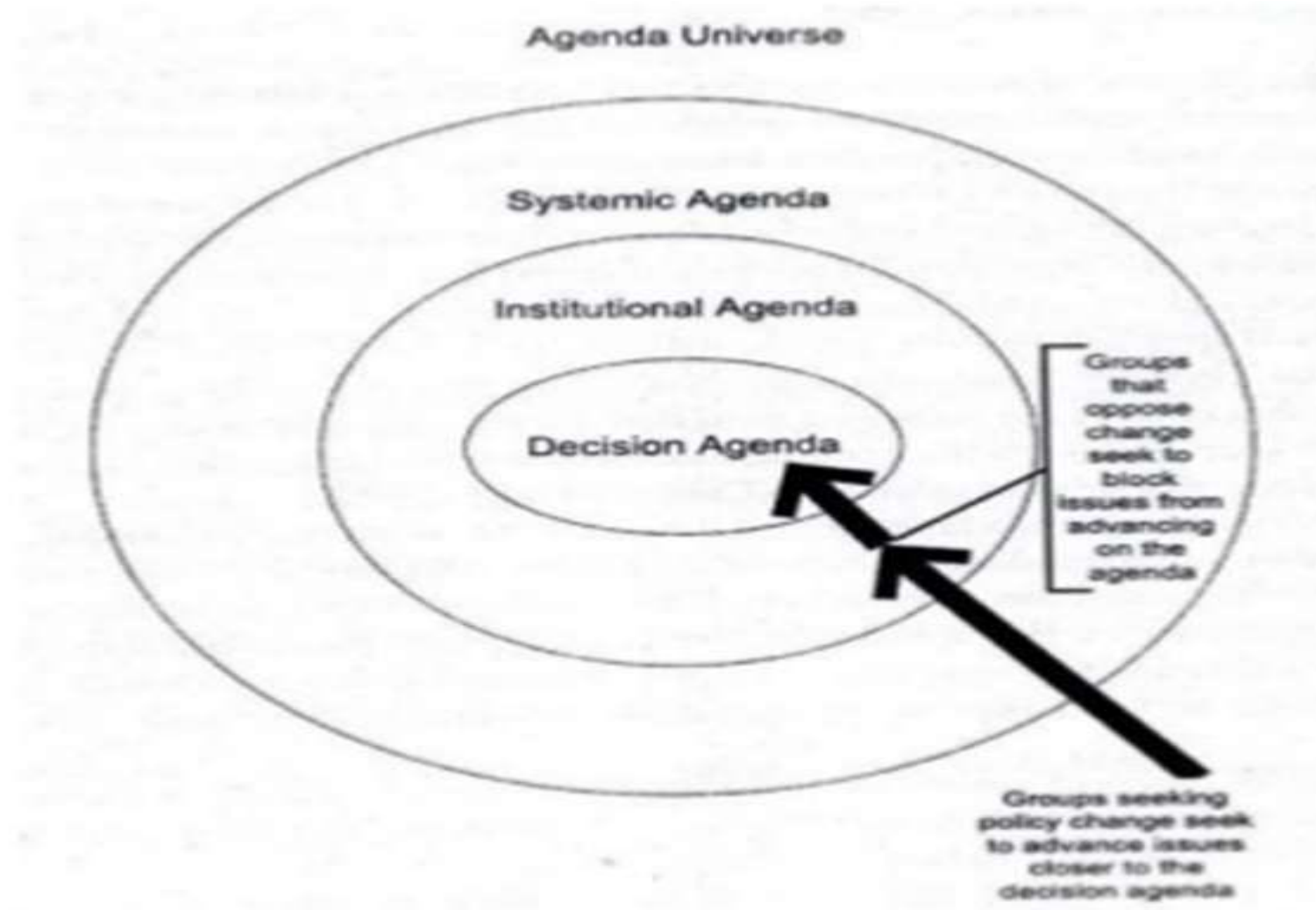
- External Triggers

- Act of war
- Innovations in weapons technology
- International conflict
- Patterns of world alignment

Ecological Change



Levels of Agenda (Thomas Birkland, 2006)



If you were the mayor, which issue would you transfer to the decision agenda?



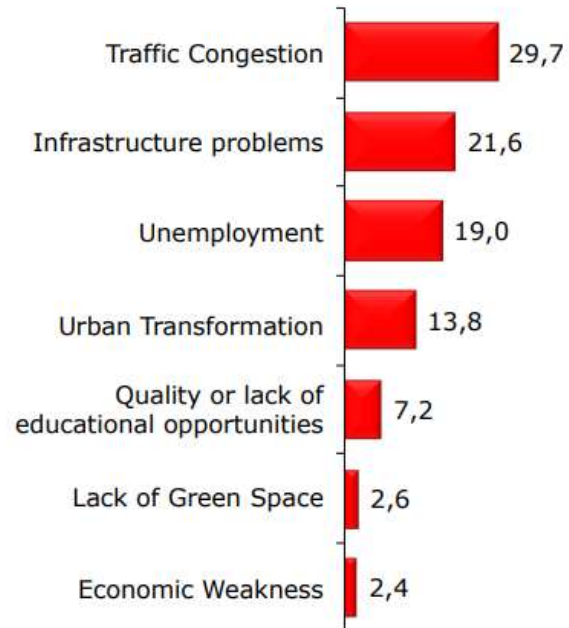
AKADEMETRE



Turkey and Its Problems (5)

The most important problems Ankara/Izmir/Istanbul

Which is the most important problem of X-City?



Basis: 458
(Based on Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir)