KAY 203
INTRODUCTION TO PUBLIC POLICY

WEEK 1:
WHAT IS PUBLIC POLICY?

Theodolou & Kofinis, 2004: 22-34
Knill & Tosun, pp. 1-13.

Grading

- **40% Midterm Exam**
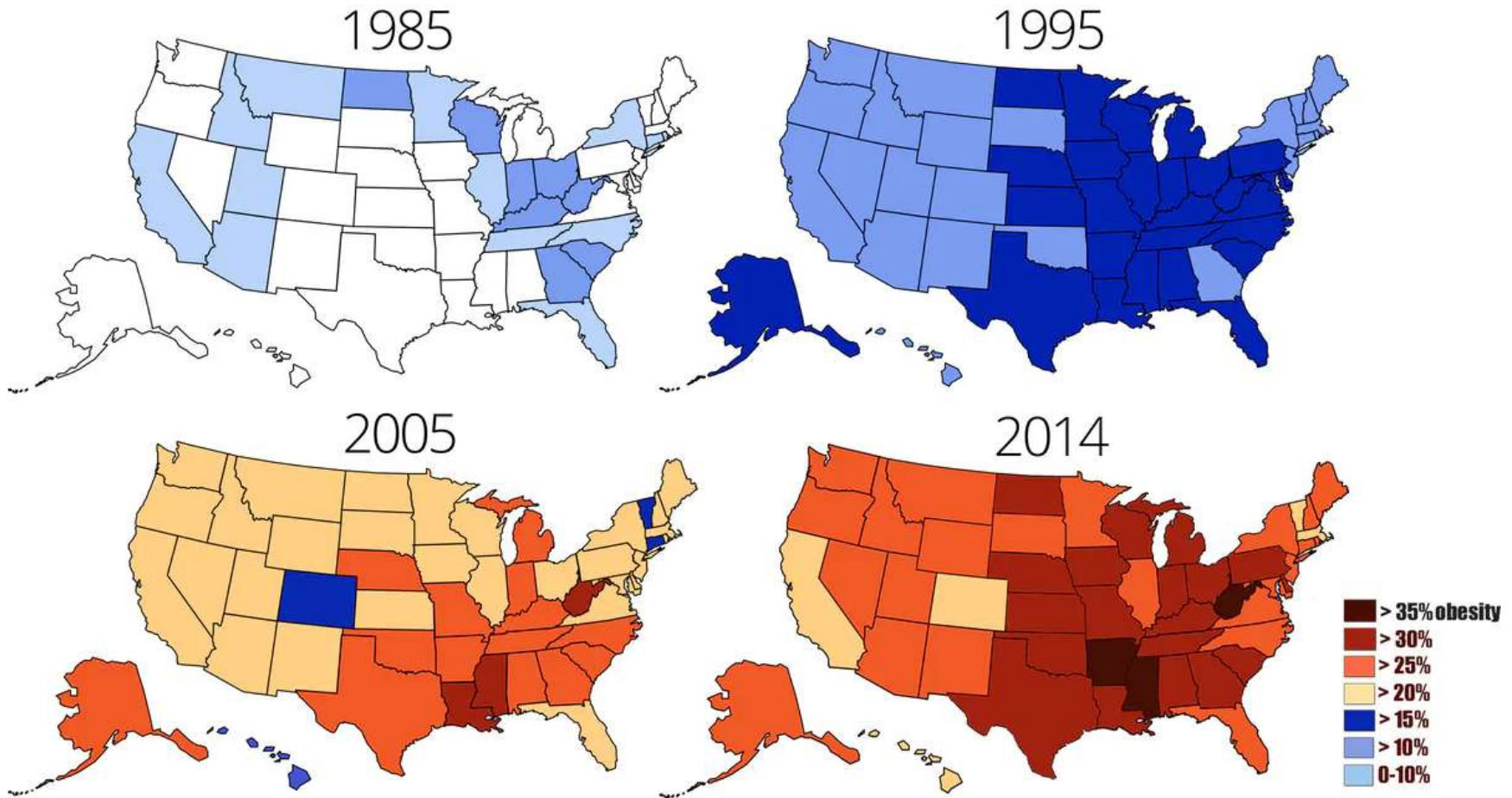- **60 % Final Exam**

Public Policy is Everywhere

- Almost every aspect of our daily life is to some extent directly regulated through public policy decisions of which we are often entirely unaware.
    - Nobody can escape the consequences of public policies in whichever country they live.
- For an average university student:
    - Travel to and from campus is regulated by traffic policy,
    - Registration, taking classes, participting in the Erasmus program are regulated by higher education policy,
    - If the student gets sick, treatment process is regulated by health policy,
    - After graduation, job finding process is regulated by employment policy.

What is Public Policy?

- Identifying, analyzing & trying to solve **public** problems

- Analysis of the contents, causes and conditions as well as the outcomes and impacts of governmental activities

- The study of public policies concerns the whole process of public decision-making

Obesity Problem:
Personal or Public Problem?

1985

1995

2005

2014

■	> 35% obesity
■	> 30%
■	> 25%
■	> 20%
■	> 15%
■	> 10%
■	0-10%

What is Public Policy?

- A course of action (or non-action) taken by a government or legislature with regard to a particular issue.

  – A whole range of legal and administrative activities in a given policy field or subfield to concrete policy targets.

- Governmental activities made in response to given societal or political problems, as a problem solving activity.

Polity, Politics and (Public) Policy

- Polity
  - Institutional structures characterizing a political system
- Politics
  - Focusing on institutions or (decision-making) processes, such as political party cleavages
- (Public) Policy, by
  - Analysis of the outputs of a political system, i.e. the decisions, measures, programs, strategies & courses of action adopted by the government or the legislature.

Some Important Concepts

Context: A New Smoking Ban Law

- ## Policy Outputs
  - Examples: Decreased sale of cigarettes?
  Decrease in Number of smokers?

- ## Policy Effects
  - Example: Less cases of lung cancer?

Some Important Concepts

- **Policy Variation:** Explanation of differences between public policies across sectors and countries
  - Example: Why in one country there are tuition fees for university students and in others not?

- **Policy Change:** Explanation of stability and change
  - Example: Why one country changes policy from having university tuititon fees to no tuition fees?

Some Important Concepts

- **Policy Targets**: What a legal act regulates
  - Example: Target of immigration policy is to decide which individuals may legally enter a country.

- **Policy Instruments**: Define how they are regulated
  - Example: Preference system based on quotas, which allocates a number of visas to certain groups of immigrants OR an official ban on immigration

Comparative Policy Research

- **Policy Convergence**
  - Different policies becoming similar
    - Example: Lockdown policies for COVID becoming similar throughout the world?

- **Policy Divergence**
  - Similar policies becoming different
    - Example: Why does Sweden have a different policy regarding COVID-19 Pandemic?

Public Problems

- Publicness of a problem may change over time.
  - Example: Domestic violence
- How urgent is it?
  - Can we wait?
- Is the problem one of a kind or similar to other problems?
  - Is it open to policy transfer?

Smoking in Cars:
Public or Private Space?

Over 5,000 Turkish drivers fined for smoking in cars as police enforce new law

ANADOLU AGENCY

ANKARA

Published
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SABAH Photo

More than 5,000 people across Turkey have been fined for smoking in cars, the Interior Ministry said Thursday.

A total of 37,065 personnel across the country enforced the smoke-free cars policy Wednesday aided by 169 sniffer dogs.

Some 150,000 vehicles were checked.

The smoke-free cars policy followed President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's

Wicked Problems

- Very difficult problems
  - Very difficult to define
  - Very complex problems with many causes & connections, and multiple actors are involved
  - No clear or possible solution
  - Unstable, any intervention may have unintended consequences
- Are there problems that seem to be **unsolvable**?

Multi-disciplinary Policy Making

- Understanding violence to stop/minimize it.
- Why are some people more inclined to violence?
  - Psychology (Personality?)
  - Sociology (Family? Society?)
  - Communication studies (Movies? Video Games?)
  - Chemistry (Hormones?)
  - Mecidine (Brain functions?)

Where do most public policy problems emerge from?

- Government (or governance) failures
  - When government intervention in the economy causes an inefficient allocation of resources and a decline in economic welfare, e.g. government monopolies in telecommunications and energy.

- Market failures
  - When allocation of goods and services by a free market is not efficient, e.g. public goods such as clean air and national defense.

- Social failures
  - Failures in society that may require public sector intervention, e.g. crime,povery and family breakdown.

What kind of failure?

Definitions of Public Policy (PP)

- Complex subject, no single/simple universal definition, multiple competing definitions:
  - Identifying & analyzing public problems
  - Speaking truth to power
  - Minimize or maximize something
  - Whatever government choose to do or choose not to do

Definitions of Public Policy:
Identifying & analyzing public problems
(Data from Australia)

Definitions of Public Policy: Speaking truth to power

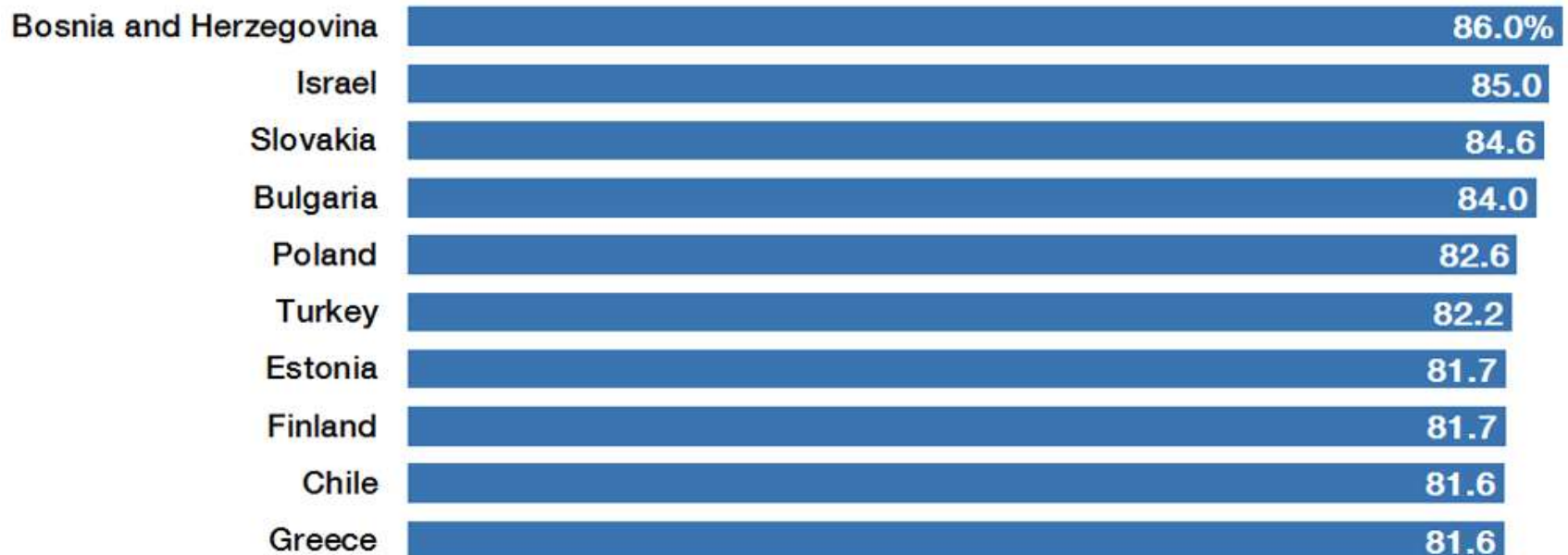- Teen activist Greta Thunberg shames world leaders for climate inaction in her UN speech: 'How dare you!'

Maximization Problem:
Not Enough Forests in İstanbul

Minimization Problem:
How to decrease smokers?

Which countries have the highest tax on cigarettes?

Taxes as a percentage of cigarette price. All applicable taxes, 2014

WORLD
ECONOMIC
FORUM

Country	Tax
Bosnia and Herzegovina	86.0%
Israel	85.0
Slovakia	84.6
Bulgaria	84.0
Poland	82.6
Turkey	82.2
Estonia	81.7
Finland	81.7
Chile	81.6
Greece	81.6

Source: World Health Organisation

Definitions of Public Policy:

Whatever government choose to do or choose not to do

- Hundreds of people across New Zealand buried their heads in sand to send a clear message to the New Zealand Government.
- Do something useful on climate change!

DEFINITIONS OF PP

- Actions of government and the intentions that determine those actions

- No accidental action or result, but choosing among conflicting goals and alternatives
  - Example: Decreasing domestic abuse or preserving the family unit?

- Manifested in laws, public statements, regulations, etc.

CONCEPTS OF PP

- Externalities: Unexpected, unintended, unplanned consequences of policy actions
  - Example: Anti-smoking laws or higher taxing decreases cigarette sales, but also decreases the income of tobacco farmers

- Opportunity Cost: The value of the next-highest-valued alternative use of that resource.
  - Example: If a city does not build an animal shelter, what is the second-best use of those resources?

Intended Actions & Unintended Consequences

- Intended Course of Action
  - Policy goals: Laws, services, taxes, etc.
    - Example:
      - Law 6284: Protect women from domestic violence or protect the family unity?

Intended Actions & Unintended Consequences

- Unintended, Unforeseen Consequences
  - Externalities (Both positive & negative)
    - Example: Protecting women from domestic violence means more divorces and more husbands seeing their children less
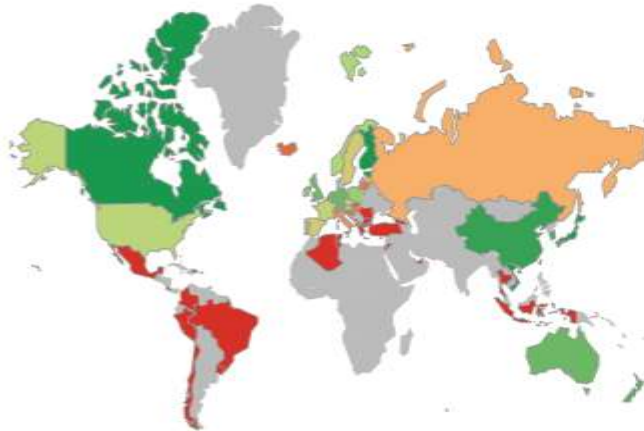

Boşanan Babalar 'Yasa' Mağduru!

OECD Pisa Scores

More than half a million 15-year-olds took part in the OECD's latest global education survey, known as PISA.

← → C ⓘ www.oecd.org/pisa/

Français Deutsch

Results by Country

select country/economy   × ▾

PISA 2015 Results

Volume I: Excellence and Equity in Education
English | French | German

Volume II: Policies and Practices for Successful Schools
English

Volume III: Students' Well-Being
English

Volume IV: Students' Financial Literacy (available from 24 May, 11h)
English

PISA 2015 Results in Focus
English | French | Spanish

View the full set of recordings and presentations of PISA 2015 launch events

Performance - Science   ▾

below   average   above

Policy Making Process Cycle

- Predecision Phase
  - Problem definition
  - Agenda setting
  - Policy formulation
- Decision Phase
  - Policy adoption
- Postdecision Phase
  - Policy implementation
  - Policy evaluation
  - Policy change or termination

Stages of Public Policy Analysis

Table 1.2 *Policy stages and related research topics*

Problem definition and agenda-setting	Policy formulation and adoption	Implementation	Evaluation
• Why do perceptions and definitions of policy problems change over time/vary across countries?	• How do policy decisions come about?	• Why do certain policies fail?	• How can policy effects (outcomes and impacts) be measured?
• Why are certain problems ignored while others are placed on the agenda?	• How can policy outputs be explained?	• Which factors account for the variance in policy implementation?	• Which factors explain variation in policy effects?

Actions in PP

- Policy actions
  - Legislative
  - Judicial
  - Executive
    - Action:
      - The US decision to drop an atom bomb to Japan during World War II
    - Inaction:
      - The decision not to drop an atom bomb to Soviet Russia during the Cold War

Inaction in PP

- Example: The decision to accept or not accept refugees to the European Union?
    - Do we want to change the economic, political, social status-quo?
    - Do we need to change the status-quo?

- Once the status-quo changes, the consequences are unclear.
    - Potential consequences of action versus inaction

Inaction in PP

- For government
  - Is the status quo politically acceptable?
  - What are the motivations to act?
  - What are the justifications to act?

ACTION VERSUS INACTION

	ACCEPTABLE	UNACCEPTABLE
ACTION		
INACTION		

ACTION VERSUS INACTION

	POLITICAL	ECONOMIC	SOCIAL	ETHICAL
BENEFITS				
COSTS				

ACTORS & STAGES OF PP

Actors	Policy Design	Policy Adoption	Policy Implementation	Policy Evaluation
Government National Government				
Local Government				
Private Sector				
Non-governmental Actors (Lobbyists, interest groups, citizen activists)				
International Organizations				
Media				

FORMAL ACTORS

- Operate with constitutional & legal legitimacy in institutional arenas of policy
  - Executive, legislative and judiciary
    - Elected and appointed officials
      - Politicians & bureaucrats
      - Members of Parliament (MPs), mayors…

INFORMAL ACTORS/PLAYERS

- Experts and academics
- Lobbyists
- Citizen activists
- Political consultants
- Interest groups
- Media
- Think tanks

Think Tank Reports on Public Policy Issues

US elections in light of pandemic and Trump testing positive

There is a general consensus around the globe that 2020 will be a unique year in history. The COVID-19 pandemic put its mark on the year from the very beginning, and the developments that took place in the U.S. at the year will continue to surprise and shock us until the very end.

TYPES OF PUBLIC POLICIES

- **Different typologies**
  - Substantive versus procedural policies
  - Redistributive vs. distributive policies
  - Regulatory vs. self-regulatory policies
  - Material vs. symbolic policies

Substantive vs. Procedural Policies

- ## Substantive:
  - Definition: A tangible action, with benefits & costs, advantages and disadvantages
    - Example: Constructing a nuclear plant

- ## Procedural
  - Definition: Arranging rules, conditions and actors for action
    - Example: Preparing strategic plans

Substantive or Procedural Policy?

Redistributive vs. Distributive Policies

- ## Redistributive
  - Definition:Shift resources, material benefits, rights and privilidges among various segments of the population
  - Creates «winners» at the expense of «losers»
    - Example: Urban transformation

- ## Distributive:
  - Definition: Assignment of goods and services to target populations specified by the government
    - Example: Agricultural subsidies, material aids to the poor, elderly etc.

Redistributive or Distributive Policy?

Turkey to launch urban renewal project for 1.5M houses

Project targets to renew 1.5M houses in 5 years, including 500,000 in Istanbul

Regulatory vs. Self-regulatory Policies

- Regulatory:
  - Definition: Governmentally mandated rules on the actions of specific target populations
    - Example: Airline safety regulations, environmental protection rules (Volkswagen lies about its cars' CO2 emissions)

- Self-regulatory
  - Definition: An attempt to self-manage rules that restrict or control the behavior by the target population itself.
    - Example: Professional standards, for attorneys, doctors, etc.

Regulatory or Self-regulatory Policy?

www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-china-38714949

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China birth rate up after one-child rule change

23 January 2017 | China

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Few young Chinese people have grown up with siblings

Birth rates in China rose to their highest level since 2000 last year, despite a fall in the number of women of childbearing age, say officials.

The increase follows the relaxation of China's strict one-child policy **a year ago**.

There were 17.86 million births in 2016, an 7.9% increase on 2015, **according to National Health and Family Planning Commission (NHFPC) statistics**.

Material vs. Symbolic Policies

- Material:
  - Definition: Provide tangible benefits or power to their beneficiaries, or impose real disadvantages on affected parties
    - Example: Monetary support for parents, who would like to send their kids to private schools (school vouchers)

- Symbolic:
  - Definition: Principally rhetorical and seek to inform or persuade populations
  - Attempt to appeal to emotions
    - Example: Speech calling for World peace

Material or Symbolic Policy?

Greta Thunberg

Greta Thunberg condemns world leaders in emotional speech at UN

- Thunberg, 16, says governments have betrayed young people
- 'You are not mature enough to tell it like it is. You are failing us'

Oliver Milman *at the United Nations*

🐦 @olliemilman

Mon 23 Sep 2019 20.27 BST

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             10.576

▲ Greta Thunberg to world leaders: 'How dare you – you have stolen my dreams and my childhood' - video

Greta Thunberg has excoriated world leaders for their "betrayal" of young people through their inertia over the climate crisis at a United Nations summit that failed to deliver ambitious new commitments to address