

# Abstracts

**R. Mayntz**

## **New challenges to governance theory**

The subject of this paper is the development, and the successive modifications, of governance theory, a theory that began by being concerned with the steering actions of political authorities as they deliberately attempt to shape socio-economic structures and processes. In Germany this goes by the name of 'Steuerungstheorie'. The English term 'governance' has long been equated with 'governing', the process aspect of government studies. In other words, governance was used roughly as a synonym of 'politische Steuerung'. Recently, however, the term governance has been used in two other, both distinct from guidance or steering. To distinguish these different meanings is not only important in order to avoid misunderstandings, but also because a change in the semantics usually reflects a change in perception.

**A. Hemerijck and J. Visser**

## **Policy learning in the Dutch welfare state**

While the progressive European politicians are on the lookout for a new model of 'third way' capitalism with a human face, the Dutch model occupies a prominent place in many commentaries. Foreign observers especially place the favourable employment record of the Netherlands. For a full explanation of the Dutch experience we must go back at least fifteen years, and study the combination of problem loads, power shifts, institutions, and ideas, in three 'tightly coupled' policy domains of the Dutch welfare state: industrial relations, social security, and labour market policy. The return to wage moderation took place in the early 1980s and was above all an adjustment to changing conditions in world markets. This was followed by a series of reforms in the system of social security in the late 1980s and early 1990s. From the mid-1990s, finally, the adoption of an active labour market policy stance, in order to enhance overall efficiency and create a new domestic balance between wages and social benefits, gained political currency. In this article we present a stylised narrative of these policy

changes — what happened, how it happened and what it meant. We shall try to demonstrate that the three policy shifts were interrelated: they created the conditions and the demand for one another, and neither of these policies could have been successful on its own. The overall trajectory of policy adjustment in the Netherlands, we believe, is best understood in terms of a lengthy and interconnected process of policy learning.

**J. Weggeman**

#### **Political parties and the infrastructure**

A 'first exploration' of possible new political conflicts in the Dutch party system was published in the last Yearbook of *Beleid & Maatschappij*. Despite suggestions in earlier literature, the conflict between materialist and postmaterialist values in the Dutch party system is neglected. This article fills up this gap. It shows the importance of this conflict in Dutch politics by analyzing electoral platforms and legislative behavior of the political parties in the field of infrastructural policies. The results of this analysis show the importance of incorporating the materialist-postmaterialist conflict in contemporary studies of the development of the Dutch party system. The positioning of political parties on a postmaterialist-materialist scale differs from the positioning of political parties on left-right scales that center around dimensions like the ones hypothesized in the Yearbook.

**J. Bussemaker, A. van Drenth, T. Knijn  
and J. Plantenga**

#### **Lone mothers and social policy in the Netherlands from carers to breadwinners?**

The central theme of this article is the unravelling of the policy logics of the Dutch welfare state with regard to lone mothers. We will demonstrate that lone mother were never an easy fit in the strict Dutch post war gender regime. Especially never-married and divorced mothers were difficult to place

in the complementary regulatory environment based on the breadwinner/motherhood ideologies. However, despite a clearcut choice of policy, some important shifts in the policy logics can be ascertained. Whereas in the fifties, lone mother were basically viewed as carers, in the eighties more and more emphasis was laid on their role as breadwinners. It was recognized, however, that the combination of work and care causes some special problems for this category. As a result the policy logic of the nineties could be described as moving slowly in the direction of a model in which lone motherhood implies two roles: caring and breadwinning.

**I.Th.M. Snellen**

#### **Public administration discipline in the Netherlands: An assessment**

In this article an attempt is made to sketch recent developments in Dutch public administration discipline. An overview is given of the institutional situation of public administration discipline at the universities. Institutionally public administration discipline is scattered over different faculties even at the same university. The position of the discipline could be strengthened by grouping together the general discipline of public administration with its facet oriented and sector oriented offshoots. As far as its content is concerned, the object of study is expanding from the state apparatus to the public sector as such. At the paradigmatic level the role of the discipline was re-defined several times, according to the function ascribed to the public sector: from obedient instrument, effective production system, facilitator of appropriate supply and demand relations between bureaucracies and politicians, scientificator of policies, to post-modern mediator between different rationalities. Apart from discussions about these paradigms, many recent Dutch studies (a.o. dissertations) are focused on the possibilities of governments to steer developments in society. Biological, natural science, system analytical, and theories from many other disciplines are borrowed to inform public administration discipline in this respect.

