

Stream 11.1 – European Public Health Care Systems and institutional-organisational change: an evaluation of their performance

The Europeanization of Cancer Control Performance: A Theoretical Framework, with Application to Britain

François Briatte

26 March 2010

Abstract

In the past decade, cancer control policies have been thoroughly reformed in at least half of all European public health care systems. Institutional and organizational changes vary significantly from a country to another, but a common characteristic to all reforms lies in the performance indicators mobilized by medical, bureaucratic and political elites across nation-states, such as incidence, mortality and survival rates. At the European level, cross-national measurements of these indicators have provided an informal scheme to shape both policy inputs and outputs, by providing a sense of urgency for reform as well as an intuitive framework to assess the formal effectiveness of these reforms on health outcomes.

This paper develops a comparative country-level framework to understand how the collection of epidemiological data across European public health care systems can affect policy-making at the national level. Specifically, it provides a theoretical interpretation of the Europe-wide EUROCARE cancer survival study as a *performance regime*, a notion recently developed by Bertelli and John (2010) in connection to their study of distributive politics. The framework also draws on the current spread of quantification as an acceptable means of performance measurement, and as a vector for institutional and organizational responses (Espeland and Stevens 2009).

Empirically, this interpretation is then tested on the establishment of national cancer control programmes in Britain over the 2000–2009 period. The observed effects of performance on institutional and organizational change suggest that performance regimes can affect health reform in at least three ways: (1) by encouraging the establishment of performance targets and other managerial approaches to policy development, (2) by encouraging policy-makers to connect their policy initiatives to the foundational principles of their national health systems, and (3) by encouraging policy succession (Hogwood and Peters 1982) on a relatively short time span.

– 291 words

References

- Bertelli, Anthony M. and Peter John. 2010. "Government Checking Government: How Performance Measures Expand Distributive Politics." *Journal of Politics* 72(2): 545–558.
- Hogwood, Brian W. and B. Guy Peters. 1982. "The Dynamics of Policy Change: Policy Succession." *Policy Sciences* 14(3): 225–245.
- Sauder, Michael and Wendy N. Espeland. 2009. "The Discipline of Rankings: Tight Coupling and Organizational Change." *American Sociological Review* 74(1): 63–82.

Contact details

François Briatte
Institute of Political Studies
University of Grenoble
BP 48; 38040 Grenoble cedex 9, France
Tel. 0033-(0)-643-866-408
Email: f.briatte@ed.ac.uk

For postal correspondence, please use the following:

François Briatte
c/o M. Jonathan Leray
11 rue de Vaucouleurs
75011 Paris, France