

Walk on the light side:

What might we learn about public governance by studying its successes?

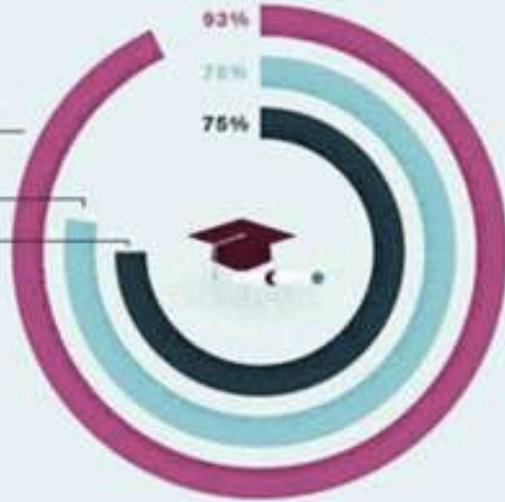
Paul 't Hart
Utrecht University School of Governance

www.successfulpublicgovernance.com

Finland's school system accomplishes some impressive feats:

THEIR HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION RATE IS AT 93%.

COMPARED TO 78% IN CANADA, AND 75% IN THE US.



ABOUT 2 IN 3 STUDENTS IN FINLAND WILL GO ON TO COLLEGE.

That's the highest rate in all of Europe.

So what makes Finnish students so successful?

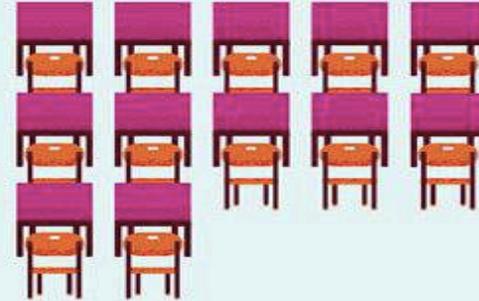
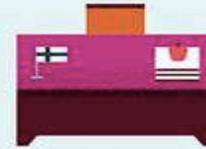
STUDENTS GET PLENTY OF TEACHER INTERACTION.

Finland and New York City have the same number of teachers. But Finland has nearly half the number of students.

FINLAND

Students: 600,000

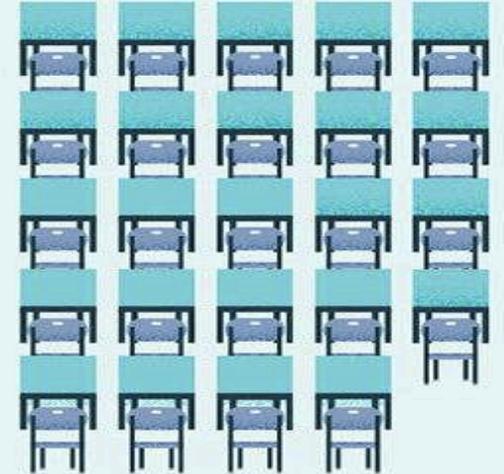
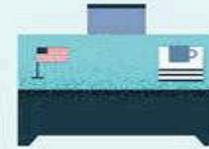
Student to teacher ratio: 1 TO 12



NYC

Students: ALMOST 1.1 MILLION

Student to teacher ratio: 1 TO 24

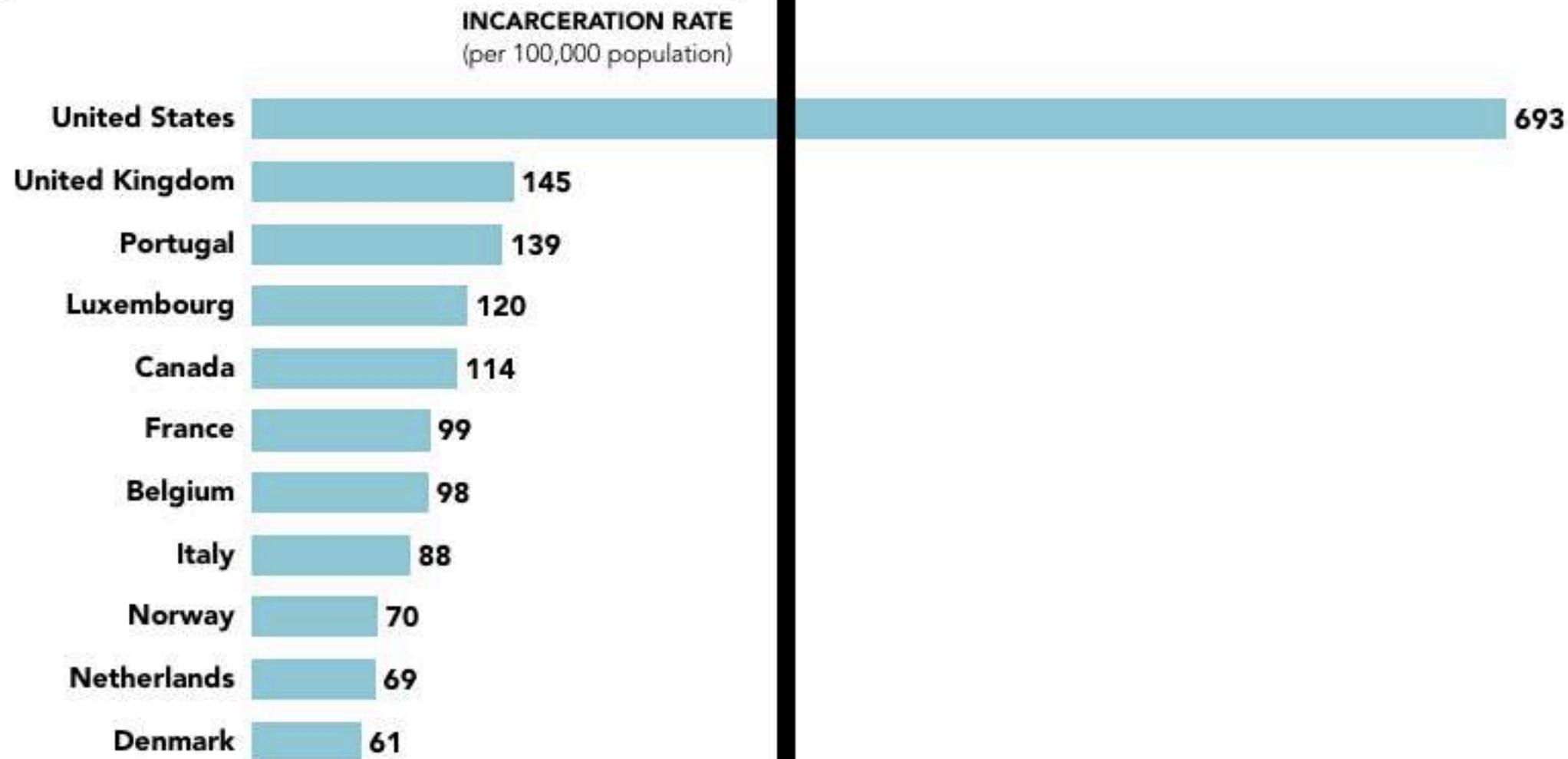


THOUGH 1 IN 3 FINNISH STUDENTS RECEIVES SOME SORT OF SPECIAL HELP IN SCHOOL...

There are no separate classrooms for accelerated learning or special education.

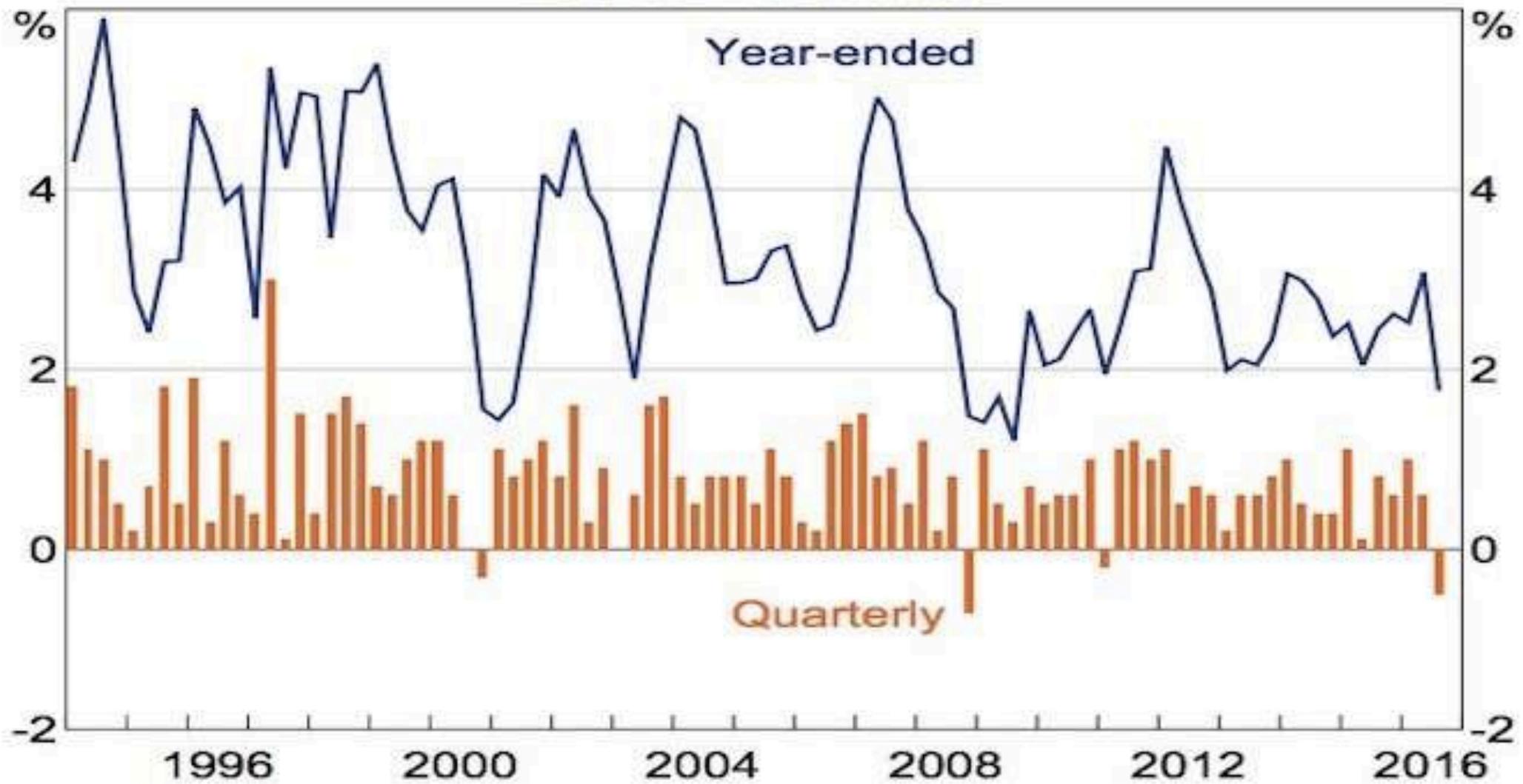
INCARCERATION RATES

AMONG FOUNDING NATO MEMBERS



Source: <http://www.prisonpolicy.org/global/2016.html>

GDP Growth



Source: ABS

But: Ambiguities (and traps) of evaluation

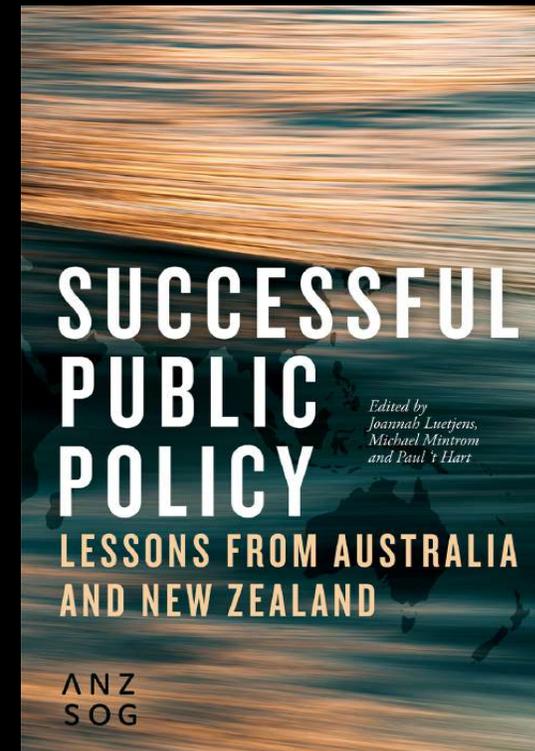
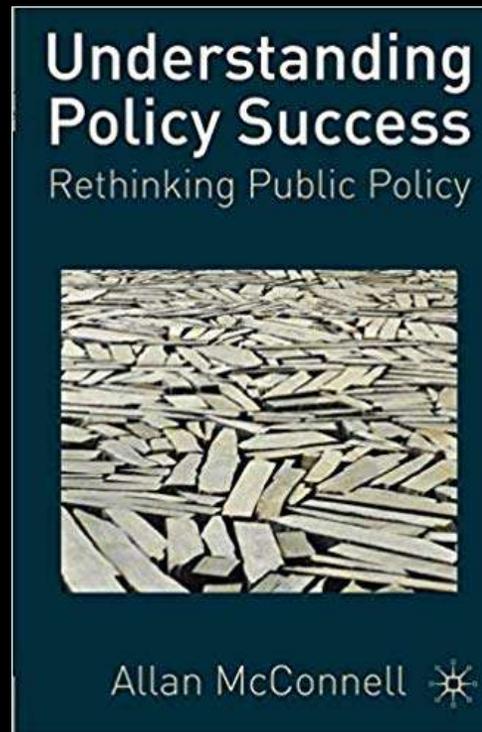
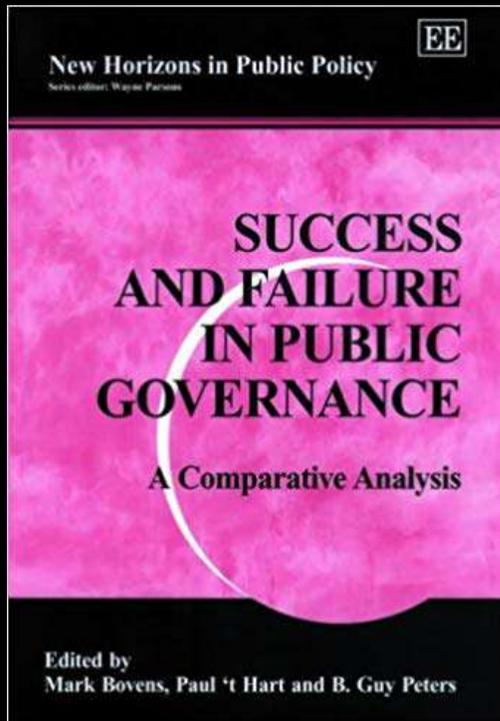
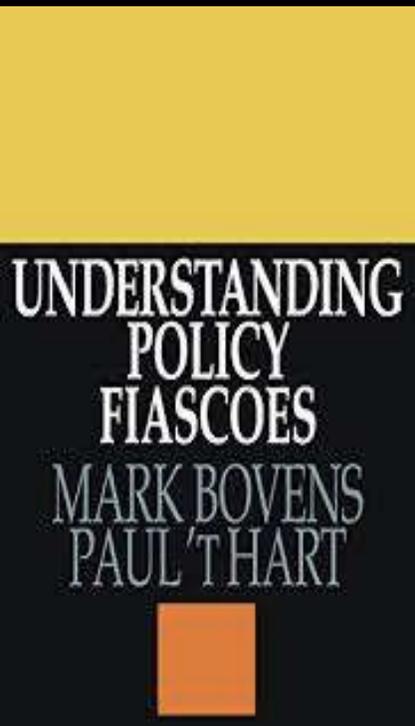


Case-in-point

Assessing 'Covid governance'



Researching Policy Success – A Short History



1996

present

SUCCESS AND FAILURE IN PUBLIC GOVERNANCE

A Comparative Analysis

Edited by
Mark Bovens, Paul 't Hart and B. Guy Peters

Programmatic	++	--
Political		
++	Complete success	Hidden failure
--	Underrated achievement	Complete fiasco

Understanding Policy Success

Rethinking Public Policy



Allan McConnell 

PROGRAMMATIC DIMENSION

- Implemented as per objectives?
- Achieve intended outcomes?
- Efficient use of resources?
- Equitable benefits?

POLITICAL DIMENSION

- Politically popular?
- Help with re-election?
- Secure or boost credibility?

Understanding Policy Success

Rethinking Public Policy



Allan McConnell 

PROCESS DIMENSION

- Legitimacy in the formation of choices?
 - Due process; constitutional; values of democracy
- Was the legislation passed with no, or few, amendments?
- Did the policy have the support of a sufficient coalition?
- Was the policy based on new ideas or policy instruments, or did it involve the adoption of policy instruments from elsewhere?

Understanding Policy Success

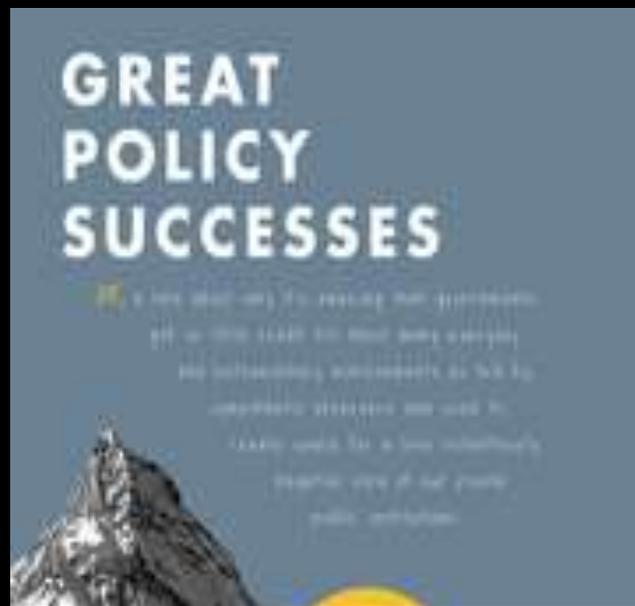
Rethinking Public Policy



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Beyond ideal types: nuanced assessment

- Successful Process vs. Unsuccessful Programs - *“Winning battle, losing the war”*
- Successful Politics vs. Unsuccessful Programs - *“Good politics but bad policy”*
- Successful Programs vs. Unsuccessful Politics - *“Doing better, feeling worse”*
- Success continuum: *complete* → *resilient* → *conflicted* → *precarious* → *failure*
- Success for whom? Issues of distribution, justice & power (McC, Grealy, Lea, 2020)¹¹



Our SPG approach:

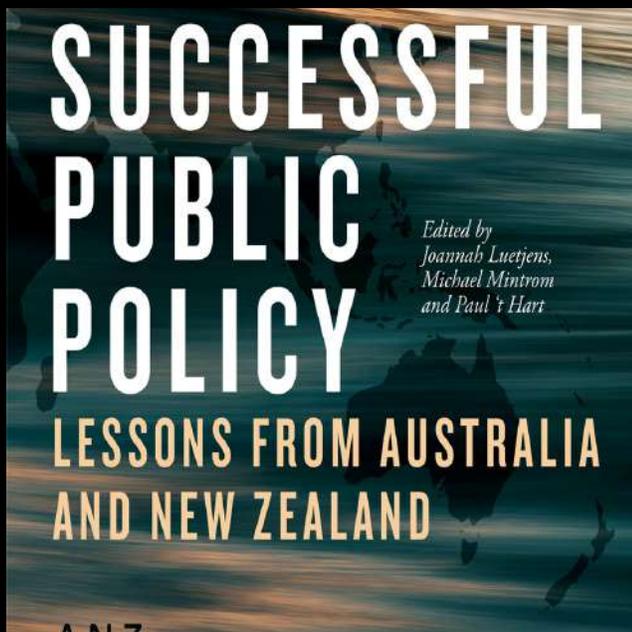
Programmatic, Political, Process and Endurance Dimensions

Programmatic: Purposeful and valued action

Political: Stakeholder and public legitimacy for the policy

Process: Thoughtful and fair policymaking practices

Endurance: Sustained performance over time



FROM: “A shadowy mix of politics, sensitivity, and good sense with a rather large random component having something to do with timing.”

(Linder and Peters, 1980s)

Policy Success=

TO: “A policy is a complete success to the extent that (a) it demonstrably creates widely valued social outcomes; through (b) design, decision-making, and delivery processes that enhance both its problem-solving capacity and its political legitimacy; and (c) sustains this performance for a considerable period of time even in the face of changing circumstances.”

(Luetjens et al., 2019)

Policy
Success
Assessment
Map

I. Programmatic assessment: Purposeful and valued action	II. Process assessment: Thoughtful and fair policymaking practices	III. Political assessment: Stakeholder and public legitimacy for the policy
<p>A well-developed and empirically feasible <i>public value proposition</i> and theory of change (ends–means relationships) underpins the policy</p> <p><i>Achievement</i> of (or considerable momentum towards) the policy’s intended and/or other <i>beneficial social outcomes</i></p> <p>Costs/benefits associated with the policy are distributed equitably in society</p>	<p>The policy process allows for <i>robust deliberation</i> about and <i>thoughtful consideration</i> of: the relevant values and interests; the hierarchy of goals and objectives; contextual constraints; the (mix of) policy instruments; and the institutional arrangements and capacities necessary for effective policy implementation</p> <p>Stakeholders overwhelmingly experience the making and/or delivery of policy as <i>just and fair</i></p>	<p>A relatively broad and deep political <i>coalition</i> supports the policy’s value proposition, instruments and current results</p> <p>Association with the policy <i>enhances the political capital</i> of the responsible policymakers</p> <p><i>Association with the policy enhances the organisational reputation</i> of the relevant public agencies</p>
<p>IV. Temporal assessment</p>		
<p>Endurance of the <i>policy’s value proposition</i> (i.e. the proposed ‘high-level’ intent and commitment underpinning its rationale and design, combined with the flexible adaptation of its ‘on-the-ground’ and ‘programmatic’ features to changing circumstances and in relation to performance feedback)</p> <p>Degree to which the policy’s programmatic, process and political <i>performance is maintained</i> over time</p> <p>Degree to which the policy confers <i>legitimacy on the broader political system</i></p>		

Lifting millions out of poverty: Brazil's Bolsa Família program



PROGRAMA **BOLSA FAMÍLIA**



Programa Bolsa Família is the largest Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT) program in the world, and Brazil's largest social welfare program.

Objectives

- Combat hunger, and food and nutrition insecurity
- Combat poverty and other forms of familial deprivation
- Provide access to public services: health, education, food security and social assistance

Program Stats

1/4 Total population currently enrolled
99.7% Brazil's 5570 municípios involved
50 Million People currently benefiting
13.9 Million Families currently enrolled

Participants

Bolsa Família targets Brazilian families in two specific income brackets

Extreme Poverty: less than R\$85.00 per person per month.

Poverty: between R\$85.01 and R\$170.00 per person per month.

Participating families can be allocated between R\$32.00 and R\$242.00 per month.

Program Requirements

- ✓ **Mandatory school attendance** 85% of the time for children 6-15 years old; 75% for those 16-17 years old.
- ✓ **Mandatory immunization** for children age 7 and under.
- ✓ Mothers and children must get **regular medical checkups**, allowing children's growth and development to be monitored by national health service professionals.
- ✓ **Mandatory prenatal and postnatal care** for pregnant and new mothers.

Between 2003 and 2013, Bolsa Família helped to reduce extreme poverty from **9.7% to 4.3%**. It has also been credited with **reducing child mortality, increasing school attendance and grade progression, and promoting dignity and autonomy of the poor.**

A perfect storm: Australia's gun control saga



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Australian Government
A joint Australian, state and territory government initiative

NATIONAL FIREARMS AMNESTY
JULY-SEPT 2017

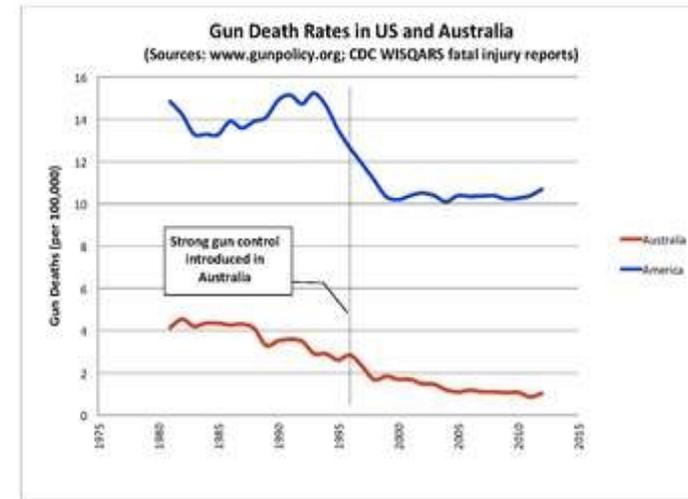
Have a hand in making your community safer. Register or dispose of unregistered firearms.

The National Firearms Amnesty is your one opportunity to hand in or register any unregistered or unwanted firearms, with no penalty. You may also be eligible to sell your firearm to a dealer. So if you'd like to help make a safer community, now's the time to act.

**PENALTIES APPLY AFTER SEPTEMBER 30:
FINES UP TO \$280,000 • UP TO 14 YEARS JAIL**

Call 1800 909 826 Visit firearmsamnesty.ag.gov.au

Advertisement by the Australian Government, Capital Hill, Canberra.



Adapting to climate change: the Dutch delta's water management



Beating the resource curse: Norway's Petroleum Fund



Alberta vs. Norway: Who's Cashing In?

Alberta is **\$10.6B** in debt, and has an annual deficit.

ALBERTA vs. NORWAY

Norway has **NO GOVERNMENT DEBT or deficit**, and **EDUCATION IS FREE** from pre-school through post graduate university.

2.30 MILLION BARRELS PER DAY*

1.48 MILLION BARRELS PER DAY*



\$17.5 B

Alberta's Heritage Savings Trust Fund, started in 1976.

Norway's Government Pension Fund Global, started in 1990

\$905 B

30% of Alberta's oil revenue was to be added yearly to this fund, but it was only active for little more than a decade - after 1987 no new royalty revenue was added into the fund.

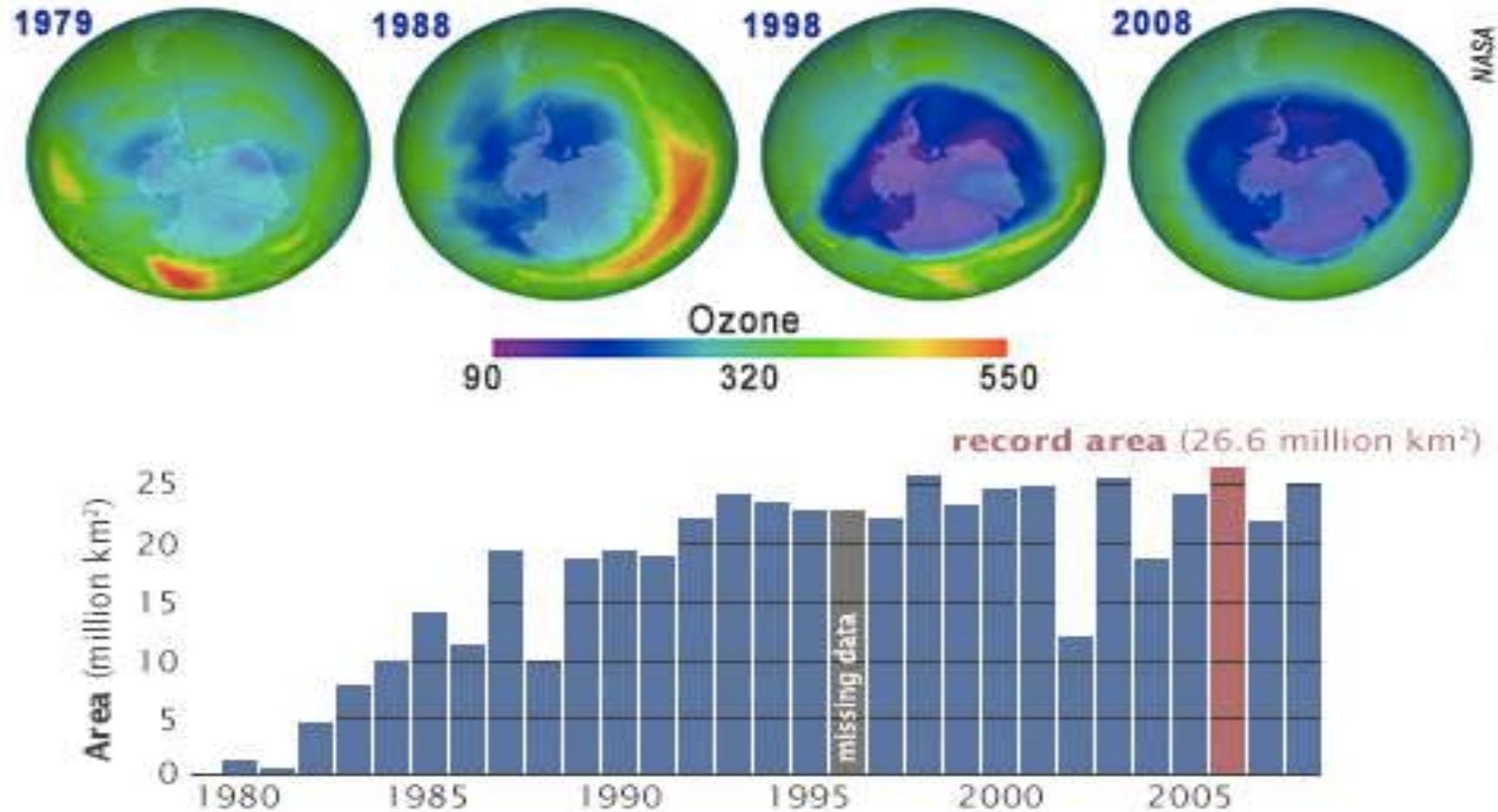
Meanwhile, in Norway:

- The government maintains 67% shares of its oil company, Statoil, which is the largest operator on the Norwegian continental shelf.
- Oil companies are taxed up to 78%
- Norway spends only 4% of its Government Pension Fund's assets per year.

* approx, in 2012

For more information, visit www.CredBC.ca

Tackling ozone depletion: A global policy regime



Multi-dimensional, differentiated assessment

CASE	PROGRAM	PROCESS	POLITICAL	ENDURANCE
Bolsa Familia	4	3	4	3
Singapore Healthcare	4	4	3	3
NHS Waiting Times	2	2	4	2
UK Tobacco Control	3	3	3	4
Finnish Education	4	4	3	4
Estonia e-gov	3	2	4	2
Alameda Corridor	4	3	2	3
Dutch Delta	4	4	4	4
Danish Urban Planning	4	4	4	3
Norwegian Future Fund	4	4	3	3
German Labour Market	3	4	2	3
Montreal Protocol	4	4	4	4
GI Bill	3	1	4	3
Marvellous Melbourne	3	3	3	3

From case assessment to explanatory analysis

“What works”.....

1. In designing policies/programs that are really beneficial
2. In getting them adopted, resourced and implemented
3. In ensuring they have broad support
4. In safeguarding these assets over time

Inductive inferences from the two volumes

- Triggers: necessity/fight ===== opportunity/appetite
- Timing: reactive (crisis-driven) ===== anticipatory
- Pacing: inches (incrementalism) ===== miles (big-leap reform)
- Packaging: grand narratives ===== smuggled-in change
- Style: top-down 'powering' ===== consultative 'puzzling'
- Participation: elites and peaks ===== publics and grass roots

How policy successes happen: a first attempt

Table 3. Operational coding rubric for the three design factors 'inclusivity', 'pace' and 'innovation'

Fuzzy set value	Process Inclusivity	Pace of Policy Change	Degree of Innovation
<i>Fully out (0)</i>	Few or no societal actors affected by the policy were <i>meaningfully informed or consulted</i> in the policy process	Change adopted in series of steps <i>over two terms</i> of government	All or most of the key elements of the reform/policy/program were <i>imitated</i>
<i>More out than in (0.33)</i>	Societal actors affected by the policy were <i>informed</i> throughout the policy process	Change adopted in series of steps <i>between one to two terms</i> of government	Most of the key elements of the reform/policy/program were <i>imitated</i> ; few were <i>invented</i>
<i>More in than out (0.67)</i>	Societal actors affected by the policy were <i>consulted</i> throughout the policy process	Change adopted in series of steps/stages <i>within one term</i> of government	Most of the key elements of the reform/policy/program were <i>invented</i> ; few were <i>imitated</i>
<i>Fully in (1)</i>	Societal actors affected by the policy <i>actively collaborated</i> with policymakers throughout the policy process	Change adopted and/or implemented in <i>one fell swoop</i>	All or most of the key elements of the reform/policy/program were <i>invented</i>

Table 4. Truth table for Policy Successes (n=31)

Conditions				
Process Inclusivity	Pace of Change	Degree of Innovation	Consistency	Cases
1	0	1	0.85	Bolsa Familia, UK Tobacco Control, NZ Early Childhood, NZ Whanau Ora, AU HIV/AIDS
1	1	0	0.83	Dutch Delta, AU Plain Packaging, AU GST
1	0	0	0.82	Finnish Education, Montreal Protocol, Marvellous Melbourne, NZ Waitangi, AU Competition Policy
1	1	1	0.80	GI Bill, AU Child Support
0	0	0	0.78	Danish Urban Planning, German Labour Market
0	1	1	0.63	NZ KiwiSaver, AU HECS, AU Gun Control, NZ Fiscal Responsibility
0	0	1	0.63	Singapore Healthcare, NHS Waiting Times, Estonia e-gov, Alameda Corridor, AU Water Markets, NZ Accident Comp
0	1	0	0.56	Norwegian Future Fund, AU Medicare, AU GFC Stimulus, NZ Economic Turnaround

Upshot of 1st QCA exercise

- Inclusive design practices strong contributor to multidimensional success
- Low-innovation policies to be driven at relatively fast pace
- For high-innovation policies, ample time must be taken to develop them inclusively

Conclusions -/ discussion points

- Overcoming negativity bias, escaping 'complexity jargon': The (de)merits of 'positive' policy analysis
- Policy success is not policy failure inversed: Towards sensible & balanced yet nimble multi-criteria assessment methods
- From assessment & storytelling towards mechanisms & design principles: hard road, easy to over-promise, no grand theory, context matters, but still.....
- Quite aside from analytical (de)merits, there is a practical, pragmatic, democratic, empowering agenda here

Interested?

- Forthcoming:
 - *Successful public policy: Lessons from Canada* (Howlett et al, OUP late 2021)
 - *Successful public policy: Lessons from the Nordic region* (de la Porte et al, OUP, early 2022)
- See further: www.successfulpublicgovernance.com



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