

RT05 | DOES IT MAKE A DIFFERENCE: (EX)POLITICIANS WITH A BACKGROUND IN PLANNING?

Chairs

- Louis Albrechts.

Speakers

- Alessandro Balducci, Former Deputy-Mayor of the City of Milan;
- Angela Barbanente, Former Deputy-President of Apulia Region;
- Artur da Rosa Pires, Former Secretary of State Portugal; former Vice-President of the Regional Coordination and Development Commission;
- Jim Throgmorton, Mayor of Iowa City.

Description

In planning literature there are ample examples of well-documented cases of 'plan-making' and formal decision-making (Meyerson and Banfield, 1955; Altshuler, 1965; Benveniste, 1989; Flyvbjerg, 1998; Albrechts, 1999) and substantive literature on implementation is also available (Pressman and Wildavsky, 1974; Majone and Wildavsky, 1979; Wildavsky, 1979; Mastop and Faludi, 1997; Gualini 2001). As far as we know nothing is available on the impact planners who enter the political scene have on political decision making and on what this experience means for their teaching/research when they go back to academia. In this roundtable (ex)politicians reflect on their experience in politics and what it means for their teaching/research when they return to academia.

Some questions that will be raised:

- Do they consider their background (theories, technical expertise) in planning useful/relevant for decisions in their own field? And in other fields? What role did they assign to academia?
- Do they use their specific knowledge to influence decisions and does it work out? Did they try to change knowledge/power relationships? Does their specific knowledge add to their credibility? Does it make them more successful? Does it make them stronger? How are they looked at by fellow politicians?
- Do they manage to bring new/different concepts/issues/problems on the political agenda? Are they able to focus on structural issues or are they trapped in day-to-day issues (their term in office)? Is their way of dealing with citizens

different (more open, and beyond usual participation) than other politicians?

- Do they focus more on the technical than on the political? What do they consider as structural, crucial constraints to be changed?
- How do they deal with conflicts?
- Does their political experience change the way they do research and the way they teach? Did it change their view on the relationship between science and policy- making?
- Do they design research projects in a different way?
- Do they use theory in the same way?