



POLICY DECISIONS



I. actors and their goals

WHAT IS AN ACTOR

Individuals or organizations acting purposefully and able to influence the decision process:

- Legal entitlement is not necessary to be a decision maker

Collective actors may be considered when:

- common goals
- rules guarantee unity
- there is a collective identity

ACTORS' GOALS

- **CONTENT**, related to the problem/solution
- **PROCESS**, related to the relation with other actors (i'm in because you're in; i'm against because you're in favour; i'm in because this is my turf...)

2. ACTORS' RESOURCES

LE RISORSE DEGLI ATTORI (I)

- Political interactions are based on exchanging resources.
- Power is the capacity of actor A – who controls the effect X which is of interest for actor B – to influence actor B, who controls effect Y which is of interest for A.

ACTORS' RESOURCES (2)

- Power is not a resource but a relation.
- A resource is something of interest for other actors in the process
- There are 4 fundamental resources in political exchange: political, legal, cognitive, economic.

POLITICAL RESOURCES (I)

- Ability of mobilising consensus in part/all citizens, i.e. public opinion, preferences, votes or voters

WHO MAY HAVE POLITICAL RESOURCES?

- Certainly politicians, because of their constituency or media power
- NGOs and their leaders (wwf, Gino Strada...)
- Show business (Dario Fo, George Clooney, ecc.)
- Journalists
- Experts
- Etc.

ECONOMIC RESOURCES

- Ability to mobilise money through:
 - **Transferring funds (direct)**
 - **Greater capacity (indirect)**
- Both private and public actors may have these resources

LEGAL RESOURCES

- Legal power, prohibitions, sanctions, veto points, procedural positions etc.
- THE LAW IS A RESOURCE IN THE POLITICAL PROCESS, IT IS NOT A DESCRIPTION OF REALITY – IT DOES NOT DEFINE PRECISELY WHAT HAPPENS
- Hence, it can be used strategically!

REGIONS VS. THE STATE 2002-2012

[HTTP://WWW.ILSOLE24ORE.COM/PDF/2010/SOLEONLINE/_OGGETTI_CORRELATI/DOCUMENTI/NOTIZIE/2013/01/RICORSI-REGIONI-CONSULTA-2.PDF?UUID=B0A68ABA-6BA5-11E2-8B26-A685975CCA20](http://www.ilsole24ore.com/pdf/2010/soleonline/_OGGETTI_CORRELATI/DOCUMENTI/NOTIZIE/2013/01/RICORSI-REGIONI-CONSULTA-2.PDF?UUID=B0A68ABA-6BA5-11E2-8B26-A685975CCA20)

I RICORSI DELLE REGIONI CONTRO LO STATO

	NUMERO RICORSI
Toscana	81
Provincia di Trento	48
Emilia Romagna	45
Veneto	33
Sicilia	32
Provincia di Bolzano	28
Campania	27
Marche	25
Puglia	23
Piemonte	22
Umbria	21
Valle d'Aosta	21
Friuli Venezia Giulia	18
Lombardia	16
Lazio	14
Liguria	14
Basilicata	13
Calabria	13
Sardegna	12
Abruzzo	9
Trentino Alto Adige	9
Molise	5

STATE VS. THE REGIONS 2002-2012

[HTTP://WWW.ILSOLE24ORE.COM/PDF/2010/SOLEONLINE5/_OGGETTI_CORRELATI/DOCUMENTI/NOTIZIE/2013/01/RICORSI-REGIONI-CONSULTA-2.PDF?UIID=B0A68ABA-6BA5-11E2-8B26-A685975CCA20](http://www.ilsole24ore.com/pdf/2010/soleonline5/_OGGETTI_CORRELATI/DOCUMENTI/NOTIZIE/2013/01/RICORSI-REGIONI-CONSULTA-2.PDF?UIID=B0A68ABA-6BA5-11E2-8B26-A685975CCA20)

I RICORSI DELLO STATO CONTRO LE REGIONI

NUMERO RICORSI

Abruzzo	53
Puglia	49
Calabria	47
Toscana	45
Friuli Venezia Giulia	44
Campania	43
Marche	39
Liguria	38
Veneto	35
Sardegna	32
Basilicata	31
Lombardia	28
Emilia Romagna	28
Piemonte	25
Umbria	23
Lazio	23
Molise	23
Valle d'Aosta	16
Sicilia	16
Provincia Trento	7
Provincia di Bolzano	6
Trentino Alto Adige	5

KNOWLEDGE

- Information, data, models helpful to understand problems and take solutions
- (Knowledge of decisional processes is what it takes for successful decision!)

WHAT TO DO WITH AN ANALYSIS OF RESOURCES?

- Prospectively: understand which resources are needed but absent and who could actually provide those resources
- Analytically: what resources are present and who possesses them

3. actors' type

WHICH KIND OF ACTORS ARE WE GOING TO FIND IN DECISIONAL PROCESSES?

- Politicians, bureaucrats and bureaucracies, experts, special interests, general interests
- The type of actor provides a way to understand the ‘rationality’ of that actor in the process: what she will prefer, how she frames the problem and which resources he is able to mobilise

POLITICIANS

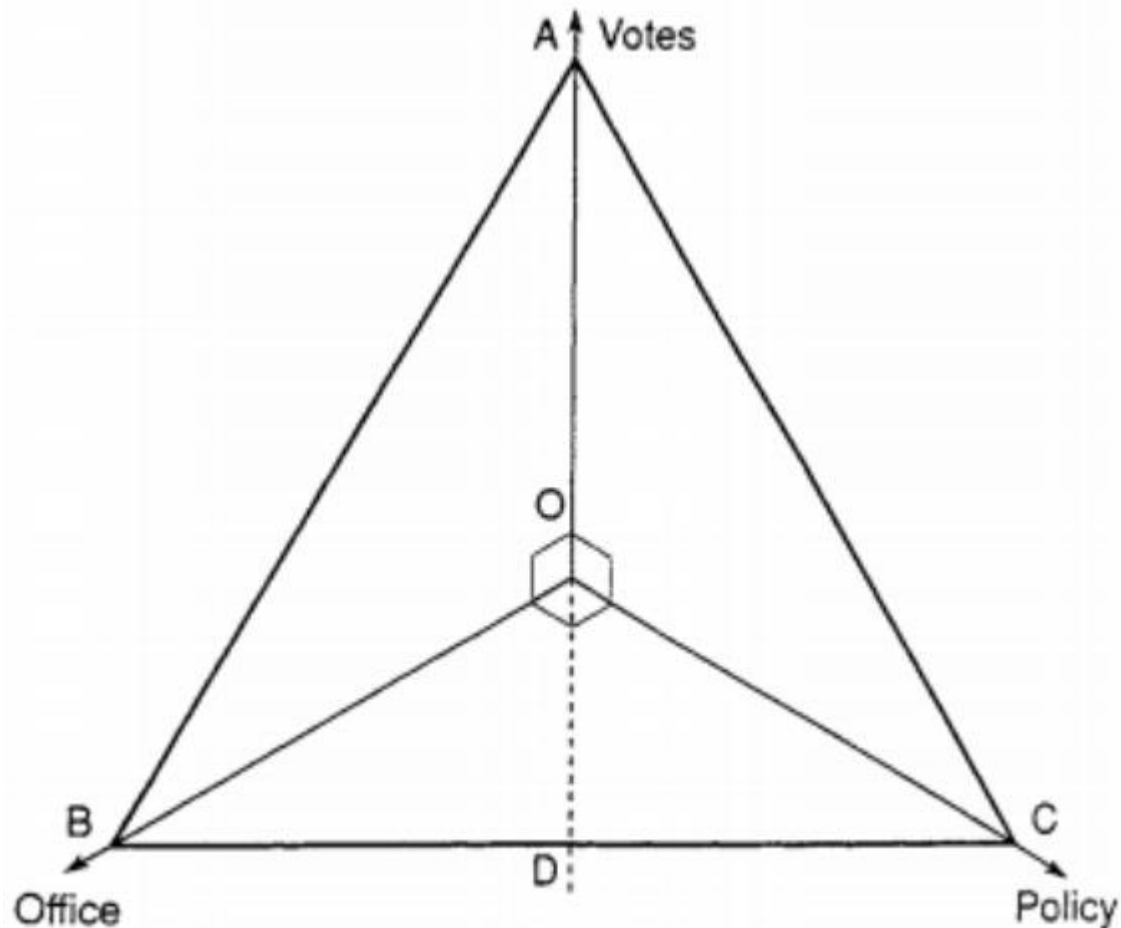
- Their legitimacy is based on representing the citizens and are particularly sensitive to the use of political resources

WWW.OPENSECRETS.ORG

TOP RECIPIENTS FOR IDEOLOGY/SINGLE ISSUE

Rank	Candidate	Office	Amount
1	Markey, Ed (D-MA)	Senate	\$607,661
2	Shaheen, Jeanne (D-NH)	Senate	\$320,075
3	Landrieu, Mary L (D-LA)	Senate	\$224,180
4	McConnell, Mitch (R-KY)	Senate	\$218,653
5	Collins, Susan M (R-ME)	Senate	\$210,660
6	Cornyn, John (R-TX)	Senate	\$193,800
7	Scott, Tim (R-SC)	Senate	\$172,627
8	Hagan, Kay R (D-NC)	Senate	\$167,185
9	Begich, Mark (D-AK)	Senate	\$161,718
10	Udall, Mark (D-CO)	Senate	\$154,546

MÜLLER & STRØM. *POLICY, OFFICE, OR VOTES?: HOW POLITICAL PARTIES IN WESTERN EUROPE MAKE HARD DECISIONS*. CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS, 1999.



BUREAUCRATS

- Their legitimacy is based on legal resources, they have a granted place in the process and procedures

«YES, MINISTER!»



SPECIAL INTERESTS

- Their legitimacy is based on direct interest on that specific decision.
- They (try to) participate because they will get the benefits and costs of that decision and hence they frame policy decision as such

GENERAL INTERESTS

- Similar to special interests, but act for the defence of wider collective interest (environment, consumers, etc) with no specific reference to a certain policy

EXPERTS

- Their legitimacy is based on their knowledge – they are sensitive to clashes with other experts

FINAL NOTE

1. The same actor may mobilise different resources
2. The formal type of an actor – e.g. bureaucrat – does not mean he can mobilise only those resources typical of his type – e.g. legal.

4. ACTORS' ROLES

ACTORS CAN PLAY DIFFERENT ROLES IN THE DECISION PROCESS

- The role depends on the position of an actor with respect to the problem/solution (content-related goal) and other actors in the process (process-related goal)
- Some roles are always present: promoter and director
- Others are not necessary: ally, opposer, gatekeeper

NECESSARY ACTOR: PROMOTER

- The promoter is central in policy formulation
- He identifies the problem, tries to mobilise consensus and comes up with a solution
- He always has content-related goals

NECESSARY ACTOR: DIRECTOR

- She is the one more interested in reaching a decision
- She normally has more relations with other actors
- She may have both content- and process-related goals
- She is particularly good in finding allies and building coalitions

MAYBE: OPPONENT

- He does not agree with solution/problem
- He may have both kinds of goals

MAYBE: ALLY

- He shares with promoters and directors their choice on solution/problem
- He may have both kinds of goals

MAYBE: GATEKEEPER

- Gatekeeper is typically a bureaucrat with legal or cognitive resources
- She is not interested in the problem/solution, but in the procedure
- She tends to maximise her veto power



ACTOR	GOAL	RISOURCES	TYPE	ROLE

5. the stake

STAKE AND PAYOFFS (I)

- One major hypothesis underlying policy analysis is that the result of the decisional process depends not only on actors and resources but also on the type of policy to be decided.
- This is counterintuitive with respect to the idea of the political system producing outputs (i.e., policies as dependent variables)

POLICY DETERMINES POLITICS

Lowi, T. (1972) *Four Systems of policy, politics and choice*, Public Administration Review

		Applicability of coercion	
		Individual	Environment
Probability of coercion	Remote	Distributive (Subsidies)	Constituent (Electoral system)
	Immediate	Regulative (Environmental standards)	Redistributive (Fiscal policy)

- Different arenas (Congress – President)
- Different balance of power
- Different modes of interaction

LA TIPOLOGIA DI WILSON

benefits	costs	
	Concentrated	Distributed
Concentrated		
Distributed		

ZERO SUM
GAME

		actor A	
		X	Y
actor b	X	2	-2
	Y	-2	2

nonZERO
SUM GAME
(positive)

		actor A	
		X	Y
actor b	X	3	1
	Y	1	2

6. modes of interactions

PROCEDURES VS MODES OF INTERACTIONS

- Formal procedures provide legal resources to actors, they do not describe decisional processes

HOW AND WHY ACTORS INTERACT IN A CERTAIN WAY

		Salience of distribution	
		Bassa	Alta
Salience of value creation	Bassa	Negative coordination	Bargaining
	Alta	Collaboration	Positive coordination

A DESCRIPTIVE CLASSIFICATION

- Conflict: actors weigh their resources one against the other
- Bargaining: actors exchange resources
- Collaboration: actors pool their resources