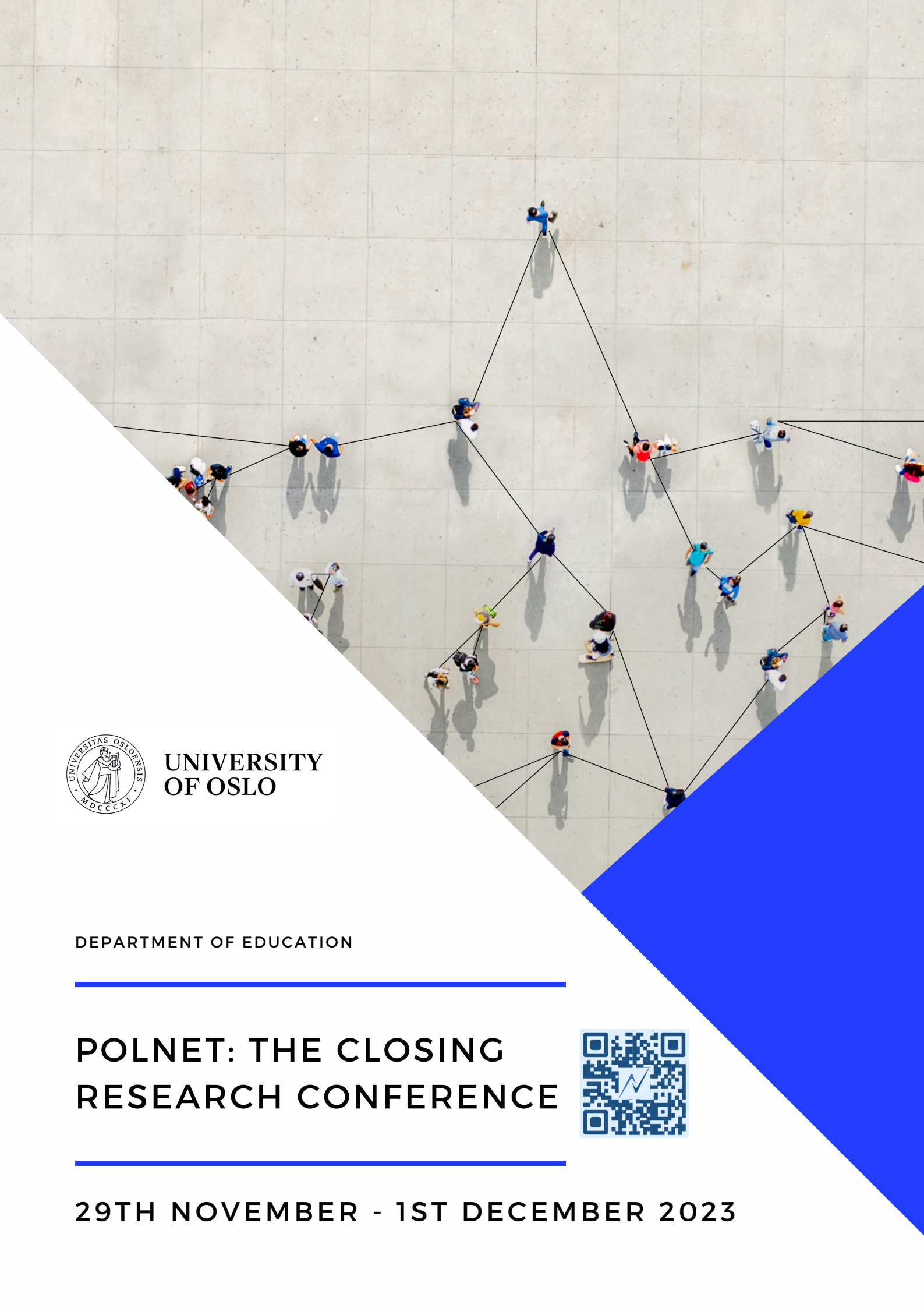




UNIVERSITY
OF OSLO

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

POLNET: THE CLOSING RESEARCH CONFERENCE



29TH NOVEMBER - 1ST DECEMBER 2023



EVENT PROGRAM

DAY 1

29TH NOVEMBER 2023

HE AUD 2 HYBRID

REGISTRATION

THE HELGA ENG BUILDING (HE)

FROM 12:00

OPENING AND WELCOME

KIRSTEN SIVESIND, UNIVERSITY OF
OSLO (UIO)

13:15 - 13:45

AUD.2

INTRODUCTION

STONE KVERNBEKK,
HEAD OF THE DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION, UIO

NORDIC SCHOOL REFORMS BY COMPARATIVE NETWORK ANALYSIS. FINAL OUTCOMES OF THE POLNET PROJECT

KIRSTEN SIVESIND (PI), UIO,
CHANWOONG BAEK, GENEVA GRADUATE
INSTITUTE
BERIT KARSETH, UIO

13:45 - 14:45

AUD.2

BREAK

14:45 - 15:15

REVISITING EDUCATION POLICY MOVEMENT RESEARCH: NEW DEVELOPMENTS AND LINES OF INQUIRY

15:15 - 16:00

AUD.2

PLENARY KEYNOTE BY ANTONI VERGER,
AUTONOMOUS UNIVERSITY OF
BARCELONA

COFFEE BREAK

16:00 - 16:30

PARALLEL SESSIONS

16:30 - 18:00

HE231 & HE232

SESSION 1:

- JARMO KALLUNKI, JONI FORSELL,
PAULA SILVEN, KATRI EEVA,
AND JAAKKO KAUKO, TAMPERE
UNIVERSITY

- BERIT KARSETH, UIO
NINNI WAHLSTRÖM, LINNAEUS
UNIVERSITY
OREN PIZMONY-LEVY, TEACHERS
COLLEGE, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

- KIRSTEN SIVESIND, UIO,
ANDREAS NORDIN, LINNAEUS
UNIVERSITY
CHRISTIAN YDESEN, UNIVERSITY OF
AALBORG

CHAIR: OSCAR MINGE, UIO

SESSION 2:

- BERGLIND RÓS MAGNÚSDÓTTIR,
UNIVERSITY OF ICELAND

- SØLVI MAUSETHAGEN AND GURI
SKEDSMO, OSLO METROPOLITAN
UNIVERSITY AND UIO

- ASTRID TOLO AND ANNE HOMME,
UNIVERSITY OF BERGEN

CHAIR: SIMONA BERNOTAITE, UIO

RECEPTION

FROM 18:00



DAY 2

30TH NOVEMBER 2023

REGISTRATION
THE HELGA ENG BUILDING (HE)

FROM 08:30

PLENARY KEYNOTE

09:00 - 10:00

CHRISTOPHER LUBIENSKI, INDIANA
UNIVERSITY

AUD.2

CHALLENGES TO THE IDEAL OF
EVIDENCE-BASED EDUCATION POLICY

BREAK

10:00 - 10:15

PLENARY PANEL

10:15 - 12:00

MARTE MANGSET, UIO
JOHAN CHRISTENSEN, LEIDEN UNIVERSITY
STINE HESSTVEDT, INSTITUTE FOR SOCIAL
RESEARCH
EIVIND ENGBRETSSEN, UIO
TARAN MARI THUNE, UIO

FROM SCIENCE TO POLITICS: EXPERTISE,
EVIDENCE AND KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER.
15-MINUTES PRESENTATIONS AND DISCUSSIONS
OF ONGOING RESEARCH PROJECTS AT UIO

CHAIR: BERIT KARSETH, UIO

LUNCH

12:00 - 13:00

CAFÉ HELGA ENG

PARALLEL SESSIONS

13:00 - 14:30

HE231 & HE232

SESSION 1:

- BERNADETTE HÖRMANN, PRIVATE
UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION; DIOCESE OF
LINZ
KIRSTEN SIVESIND, UIO
- PETTERI HANSEN, NORWEGIAN
UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND
TECHNOLOGY
KIRSTEN SIVESIND, UIO
- LARS G. JOHNSEN, NATIONAL LIBRARY
OF NORWAY
- SVERRE TVEIT, UIO

CHAIR: SAIJA VOLMARI, UNIVERSITY OF
HELSINKI

SESSION 2:

- BERGLIND RÓS MAGNÚSDÓTTIR,
UNIVERSITY OF ICELAND
GUNNLAUGUR MAGNÚSSON,
UNIVERSITY OF OSLO/UPPSALA
- ØYUNN SYRSTAD HØYDAL,
OSLO METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY
- ERIK RYEN & EVY JØSOK,
OSLO METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY
- CHANWOONG BAEK, UIO,
GENEVA GRADUATE INSTITUTE,
ANDREAS NORDIN, LINNAEUS
UNIVERSITY

CHAIR: AFSHAN BIBI, UIO

COFFEE BREAK

14:30 - 14:45

PLENARY KEYNOTE**14:45 - 15:30**

GITA STEINER-KHAMSI, COLUMBIA
UNIVERSITY, NEW YORK

AUD.2

BROKERS AS BOUNDARY SPANNERS
BETWEEN SCIENCE AND POLITICS:
APPLYING THE TWO-COMMUNITY THEORY
TO THE NORDIC EDUCATION POLICY
SPACE

CLOSING**15:30 - 15:45**

KIRSTEN SIVESIND AND BERIT
KARSETH, UIO

AUD.2

BREAK**15:45 - 16:00**

**WORKSHOP - FINAL PROJECT
MEETING****16:00 - 17:00****HE231**



DAG 3

1. DESEMBER 2023
DOMUS BIBLIOTHECA
KARL JOHANS GT. 47, 0162 OSLO

EN KORT OPPSUMMERING AV RESULTATER FRA POLNET-PROSJEKTET

FRA 10:00

BERIT KARSETH OG KIRSTEN SIVESIND, UIO
GUNNLAUGUR MAGNUSSON, UPPSALA
UNIVERSITET

PANELDISKUSJON

FRA 11:00

GURI SKEDSMO, PH SCHWYZ
TARJEI HELLAND, UDF
SØLVI MAUSETHAGEN, OSLOMET
JORODD ASPHJELL, NORDIC COUNCIL
KARI-ELISABETH SKOGEN, KD/TIK
ANDREAS NORDIN, LINNÉUNIVERSITETET

OPPSUMMERING

BERIT KARSETH OG KIRSTEN SIVESIND, UIO

11:50 - 12.00

Keynote 1

HE AUD 2 29 Nov 15.15 – 16.00

Revisiting Education Policy Movement Research: New Developments and Lines of Inquiry

Antoni Verger
Autonomous University of Barcelona



The study of policy movement has gained prominence in recent decades, as transnational policy circulation has intensified and policy growth has continued in most democratic societies. Policy movement manifests in different domains, including education, where there is a well-established literature exploring the mechanisms and forms of agency behind the phenomenon. However, this literature needs to be revisited to address recent developments in the field that defy established assumptions. This talk will focus on three of these developments and related research challenges:

1) Exogenous transformations: Recent political and economic transformations, such as the (neo)liberal backlash and the changing power balance between countries in international fora, are challenging main theoretical premises about the drivers of education policy movement. 2) The changing role of international organizations: In an increasingly competitive transnational market of policy ideas and evidence, the role of international organizations in policy dynamics is changing rapidly, from a focus on policy transfer to the theorization and construction of policy models. 3) Policy recontextualization: The intensification of policy movement has not meant educational systems looking more alike internationally. Research on global education policy, in parallel to the study of policy convergence trends, should inquire more into policy recontextualization processes. Despite these challenges, comparative and education policy studies are increasingly equipped, both theoretically and methodologically, to address them and to capture a richer multi-scalar policy-making reality.

Keynote 2

HE AUD 2 30 Nov 09.00 – 10.00 AM

Challenges to the ideal of evidence-based education policy

Christopher Lubienski
Indiana University



Many researchers like to believe that the knowledge they produce can substantially inform education policy and practice. Thus, the research community looks to examine factors such as knowledge mobilities and translation, policy formation and design, and adaptation and implementation fidelity relative to international standards and “best practices” as indicated by experts in the field. Indeed, researchers should promote the use of evidence in policy and practice, and hold accountable policymakers and practitioner leaders that ignore research findings. Yet researchers must also consider the real-world challenges to any idealization of evidence use and expertise, particularly in education policy and practice. This overview considers a number of such challenges, including the insulation of education policymakers from accountability pressures, provincialism and exceptionalism, the democratization of expertise, the rise of alternative sources of expertise and the pollution of the information ecosystem, and the contradictory nature of the purposes of mass education systems.

Keynote 3

HE AUD 2 30 Nov 14.45 – 15.30

Brokers as boundary spanners between science and politics: Applying the two-communities theory to the Nordic education policy space

Gita Steiner-Khamsi
Columbia University, New York



Over the past five years, the POLNET research project investigated the relationship between science and politics. Concretely, the five-country study examined the use of research evidence for policy decisions. It may be an opportune moment to reflect on the space in between given the rise of knowledge brokers which bridge the gap between science and politics. There is not only a surplus of information in the digital age but also a proliferation of “information silos” enabling interest groups to selectively use data, turn the data into evidence, and make their research evidence heard vis-à-vis decision makers (Lubienski and Malin, 2023). In concert with the observation of other authors

(see Mackillop, Downe, and Quarmby, 2019), there is an overemphasis in public policy research on individuals as brokers. There is need to de-individualize knowledge brokerage and instead examine government-appointed institutions which have the mandate to review research, translate that research for purposes of policy decisions, and make concrete policy recommendations. In the Nordic policy space, two knowledge brokerage institutions stand out: one at the national level and one at the international level. At the national level, the government-appointed advisory panels which produce Green Papers (NOUs in Norway, SOUs in Sweden) may be considered knowledge brokers. Across all five countries of the Nordic region, the OECD surfaced as an important knowledge producer *and* broker of competency-based curriculum reform (see also Seitzer, Baek, Steiner-Khamsi, 2023). Drawing on the bibliometric analyses in the POLNET study (see Karseth, Sivesind, Steiner-Khamsi, 2022), the presentation first disaggregates the institutions that engage with production, (ii) brokerage, and (iii) usage of research evidence for policy decisions in the five participating countries, and then investigates how international knowledge brokerage (advanced by the OECD) is translated at the national level.

References

Karseth, B., Sivesind, K. and Steiner-Khamsi, G., eds (2022). Evidence and expertise in Nordic education policy. A comparative network analysis. New York: Palgrave. Open access: <https://link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-3-030-91959-7>.

Lubienski, C. and Malin, J. (2023). Evidence Production, Promotion and Pollution: Private Interests and Knowledge Brokerage in US Education Policy. Presentation at the 2023 CIES conference in Washington, DC (forthcoming as a book chapter, E. Elgar Press).

Mackillop, E., Downe, J. and Quarmby, S. (2019). Does knowledge brokering facilitate evidence-based policy? A review of existing knowledge and an agenda for future research. *Policy and Politics*.

Seitzer, H., Baek, C. and Steiner-Khamsi, G. (2023). Instruments of Lesson-Drawing: Comparing the Knowledge Brokerage of the OECD and the World Bank. *Policy Studies*, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01442872.2023.2220282>.

Plenary panel abstracts

Thursday, Nov 30, 10.15 – 12.00, Aud 2

Chair: Berit Karseth, University of Oslo

Experts in Governance: A Comparative Analysis of the Nordic Countries

Johan Christensen
Leiden University

The Nordic countries have traditionally been seen to share a distinct and successful governance model, combining high administrative capacity, extensive interest group involvement and active channels for incorporating expert input in policy-making. In recent decades, this model has come under pressure. Yet, while changes to the statist and corporatist elements of this model are well documented, we know little about the changing role of expertise in Nordic governance. Focusing on one key institutional channel for incorporating expert knowledge in policy-making, namely government-appointed advisory commissions, we compare changes in academic participation on Nordic commissions over the last half-century. Drawing on a unique cross-national dataset covering more than 6700 advisory commissions and 73000 commission members, we find significant cross-Nordic divergence in academic participation on advisory groups. We offer a historical-institutionalist account for this divergence. The project contributes to scholarship on expertise and policy-making and debates about the Nordic governance model.

Bio: Johan Christensen is Associate Professor at the Institute of Public Administration at Leiden University. His research examines the role of expert knowledge in public bureaucracies and policy-making. He currently co-directs the project 'INFLUEX: The influence of experts on public policy' funded by the Research Council of Norway

The use of use of evidence in policy documents across ministries in Norway

Stine Hesstvedt
Institute for social research, Norway

Evidence-based policymaking has become an important norm. However, what counts as evidence and knowledge varies widely across ministries and policy areas. This presentation compares the use of evidence in policy documents across ministries in Norway. Based on data collection from a recent research project on policy documents published by Norwegian ministries between 2000 and 2020, the presentation shows how much the composition of expert advisory committees, the citations in white papers and the type of reports commissioned by the ministries differ from one policy area to another. The empirical analysis

points to striking and systematic differences in the use of evidence and suggests that the Ministry of Education makes particularly heavy use of research and science.

Bio: Stine Hesstvedt (PhD Sociology, 2021) is a Senior Researcher at the Institute for Social Research in Oslo. Her research interests include the role of experts in public policy, the politics of expertise and democratic decision-making more broadly. She is currently involved in the research project INFLUEX (“The Influence of Experts in Public Policy”, UiO), in which she studies the use of research and expertise in Norwegian policymaking.

Contextually bound authoritative knowledge. On the relationship between academically oriented and practice-oriented knowledge in policy making.

Marte Mangset
Leiden University

Bio: Marte Mangset is an associate professor in Sociology at the University of Oslo and affiliated to Centre for the Study of professions at OsloMet and Centre de sociologie des organisations at Science Po Paris. A key interest in her research is the relationship between knowledge and power, and how authoritative knowledge is defined and practiced differently in different institutional contexts. She has studied how academic disciplines are defined, what kind of competence that is valued among bureaucratic elites, and evaluation of research and academic competence. Currently she manages the project TAXLAW and the role of tax law expertise in defining tax policy, and she works on the project POLITEX on decision making in cabinet government.

Rethinking evidence in times of crisis

Eivind Engebretsen
Universitetet i Oslo

In my presentation, I will explore the profound impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the nexus of science and policy, with a special focus on medical evidence. This period highlighted the critical role of scientific evidence in shaping public policy and health decisions. There were widespread discussions in newspapers and on social media about the effectiveness of various public health measures, such as wearing masks, implementing lockdowns, or closing schools. These debates often centered around the strength of the evidence supporting these measures.

Simultaneously, the pandemic posed significant challenges to the core principles of evidence-based medicine, which traditionally views evidence as something that can be measured and classified on a singular scale, as strong or weak, present or absent. This viewpoint assumes a singular, rational and value-neutral approach to assessing evidence.

In the book *Rethinking Evidence in the Time of Pandemics* (2022, CUP, Open Access), co-authored with Mona Baker, we revisit some of the key controversies regarding evidence during the COVID-19 pandemic and examine how these debates have questioned and potentially reshaped some of the fundamental concepts of evidence-based medicine. This discussion aims

to provide a nuanced understanding of how scientific evidence and policy interacted in the context of a global health crisis.

Bio: Eivind Engebretsen is a medical humanities scholar and a professor of interdisciplinary health science at the University of Oslo where he heads a Centre for Excellence in Education, Centre for Sustainable Healthcare Education (SHE), and the Faculty of Medicine's Sustainable Health Unit (SUSTAINIT). Recently, he was appointed as the inaugural Dean of the Open Campus at the European University Alliance Circle U.

Presentation of the research centre ORIS

Taran Thune
Universitetet i Oslo

OSIRIS is a research center that works on impact of science in industry, policy and healthcare funded by the Research Council of Norway. One of the work packages in the center is about the role and impact of research in policy making. Through multiple conceptual and empirical studies in different policy domains and policy organizations, researchers in OSIRIS have looked into how policy makers, and government officials in particular, access, circulate and use research as part of government work. In the panel, we will present some insights and results from two large surveys among Norwegian policy makers amount how they use research, and some of the conceptual and methodological work that underpinned this effort.

Bio: Taran Thune is professor in innovation studies at the Center of Technology, Innovation and Culture at the University of Oslo.

Session abstracts

Parallel session I (a): Wednesday, Nov 29, 16.30—18.00 HE31

Chair: Oscar Minge, University of Oslo

Network analysis in education policy research

Jarmo Kallunki, Joni Forsell, Paula Silven, Katri Eeva, and Jaakko Kauko
Tampere University

The presentation draws on a systematic literature review focusing on network analysis in education policy research. It scrutinises the challenges and benefits of social network analysis (SNA) and network ethnography in the field. The presentation is mainly based on a submitted chapter manuscript.

SNA has theoretical basis in graph theory. Data is gathered on network nodes, ties, and their attributes in a systematic manner, which allows quantitative multivariate and graph-theory based analysis (e.g. centrality analysis) (Borgatti, Everett & Johnson 2013). Network ethnography is described by Howard (2002) as “the process of using ethnographic field methods on cases and field sites selected using social network analysis.” A powerful reinterpretation in education policy was made by Ball (2008) and Ball and Juneman (2012), who used “internet searches” to form networks. In this reinterpretation the data collection based on theory-based interpretation of network and it allows qualitative analysis of relations and network members.

The review maps different main foci used in SNA research on education (policy networks, philanthropic organisations, Bourdieu’s field theory and social media) as well as the emerging topics (network connections’ influence on policy, SNA and bibliometrics and citation analysis). It also covers main foci in network ethnography as for instance non-state actor roles in education policy.

The conclusion discusses the main strength of SNA, robust analysis, and its potential weakness in boundary-specification problem. The examples are drawn from previous research as well as the on-going research project “Transnational Knowledge Networks in Higher Education Policymaking (KNETS)” (Research Council of Finland).

Tracing Policy Networks in Education Reforms: A Comparative Study of Norway and Sweden

Berit Karseeth, University of Oslo
Ninni Wahlström, Linnaeus University
Oren Pizmony-Levy, Teachers College, Columbia University

Scholars have documented the role of policy networks in education. However, we know little about policy networks in socio-political dominated by the state and its bureaucracy. Focusing on Norway and Sweden, we analyze education policy networks by constructing author co-citation networks from recent reform-related official documents. The findings underscore the paramount influence of the state in both countries' networks, alongside a notable presence of the OECD. Furthermore, our analysis highlights the capacity of individual authors to attain central positions within these networks. Despite important similarities, the analysis also reveals important differences between the two networks due to different policy traditions regarding the positioning of research communities and approaches to governance. Consequently, we assert the imperative for deeper exploration of policy networks within countries characterized by robust state apparatuses.

Internationalisation of Nordic school reforms: A three-country comparison

Kirsten Sivesind, University of Oslo
Andreas Nordin, Linnaeus University
Christian Ydesen, University of Aalborg

Today international comparisons play a decisive role in education policy and education governance (Novoa and Yariv-Mashal, 2003; Pettersson and Popkewitz, 2019). Major international surveys and reports have considerably altered the very expectations of national policymakers in education over the last three decades and promoted the implementation of international standards and new accountability systems (Addey et al., 2017; Steiner-Khamsi & Waldow, 2018; Verger, Fontdevila, and Parcerisa, 2019). Through a comparative analysis, this paper explores the intermediary bodies that facilitate salient interactions between international organizations such as the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and national policymakers. The paper synthesizes key findings and interpretations from a large Nordic research project that studies the transfer and translation of international policies in a Nordic reform context (Karseeth et al., 2022). The project has elucidated distinct patterns of references to international and national publishers in three clusters of policy documents from Denmark, Norway and Sweden, to clarify how national and international publishers as policy constituencies orchestrate the dynamic interplay of international and national knowledge providers. In a recent study based on data material from three of the countries (Finland, Iceland and Denmark), Ydesen et al. (2022) found that all policy documents in the three countries adhere to the demands and tenets of evidence-based policy, imposed by international organizations such as the OECD. This paper extends the study by examining the distribution of references to publishers in Norway, Sweden and Denmark. In this sense, the paper adds to our understanding of differences in reference patterns and explores to what extent differences emerge from institutional systems of state bureaucracies and their affiliations with new constitutive actors by their ways of coping with today's international policies.

Parallel session I (b): Wednesday, Nov 29, 16.30—18.00, HE32

Chair: Simona Bernotaite

The school-autonomy-with-accountability reform in Iceland: Looking back and making sense*

Berglind Rós Magnúsdóttir
University of Iceland

This presentation draws on a forthcoming publication with the same (tentative) title. It draws on Icelandic scholarship regarding the New Public Management (NPM) reform in education, including the most recent, comprehensive study on school autonomy over curriculum development in upper secondary schools of Iceland (Kolfinna Jóhannesdóttir, 2023). Our study complements the existing scholarship with a retrospective analysis of the reform as well as a retroactive interpretation of the reform. There are three conceptual and methodological features of this study that deserve special mention here: First, we conceive of the NPM reform, also known as the school-autonomy-with-accountability reform as a complex reform with its own (i) theory of change, (ii) a mix of school-autonomy-with-accountability (SAWA) policies, and own (iii) policy instrument to achieve and sustain change. Unbundling the reform package and dissecting its elements affords us to examine why some of the NPM policies resonated at the time with practitioners and policy makers, and others did not. We also show how the selectively borrowed NPM policies were subsequently translated and recontextualized in ways that would address the challenges of upper secondary schools. Second, the study introduces a novel method of inquiry for understanding the fundamental reform in upper secondary schools retroactively: We held several Meaning Making Meetings (MMM) with politicians, policy makers, education experts and policy advisors** in Iceland in which we presented our preliminary findings in order to solicit feedback and validation on factual information. Finally, we collectively look back at these MMM to assess which of the NPM/SAWA policies endured, which ones were suspended, and which ones were modified over time, and how and why. In other words, we apply the temporal dimension of policies to examine the lifespan of a policy, that is, we determine when a policy was conceived, when it died, and—not unimportantly—what life it had in between.

* The authors of the article are Gita Steiner-Khamsi, Kolfinna Jóhannesdóttir, Berglind Rós Magnúsdóttir.

** The names of the experts and policy advisors will be listed in the publication unless instructed otherwise by the invited individuals.

Creating safety nets in a system with loose links. County municipality practices for retaining students in upper secondary education

**Sølvi Mausethagen and Guri Skedsmo
Oslo Metropolitan University and University of Oslo**

Although Norway has, since the introduction of Reform 94, given all students the right to participate in upper secondary education and thus aimed to create a common school for all students, around 20 percent of the students still do not complete upper secondary education during the five years they are entitled to the education (SSB, 2022). In recent decades, a number of national measures have been implemented to increase the proportion of pupils who complete upper secondary education, using legal, administrative and pedagogical instruments. The county municipalities have overall responsibility for upper secondary education, including quality assessment and competence development. 'Dropout' has become a key element in the management of upper secondary schools. In this parallel session, we provide an insight into county council strategies and practices for retaining students in upper secondary education with a focus on 1) what characterises the practices, 2) to what extent can they be described as 'promising', and 3) what intended and unintended consequences can the practices lead to? Our analysis is based on interview and observation data from three case counties. The results show that the counties are characterised by a desire to spread good local practices, which takes place through a) the establishment of new, procedure-driven routines, but also a masking of variation in existing routines; b) performative accountability based on available data on dropout and grades; and c) the manifestation of an interdependence between all actors involved, including through a moral imperative of 'the best interests of the student'.

Private and non-governmental actors in Norwegian and Italian secondary education

**Astrid Tolo and Anne Homme
University of Bergen**

Public education is in its "purest form" built upon social contracts involving the state or government, citizens, and their surrounding communities. However, research has illuminated several aspects of how public education is privatized. For example: 1) How the different kinds of public-private relations and partnerships, including philanthropic foundations, have influenced education policy in various periods. 2) How global standardization, the increased use of numeric data, and qualitative examples of success have opened the doors for private actors in public education policy. 3) How the role of multi-stakeholder groups and transnational public-private partnerships is increasingly gaining ground globally, and that those who provide the finances hold the power to define the educational agenda. 4) How the often hidden commercialization of school development and professional development are leading to changes in curriculum, the relationship between teachers and management in schools, and segregation in and across schools. Research also shows that despite the global nature of privatization, the variations in this field are nationally determined.

This paper adds to this research by presenting a pilot study comparing Italy and Norway, two countries with state-centred school systems where more than 90% of the schools are public. Research questions are: What kind of private and non-governmental actors are involved in secondary schools, how are they involved, and which impact has the employment of these

external capacities on the development of the public school system? The study relies on data from semi-structured interviews with six schools and contextual information. We are also mapping the field for private providers and their possible cooperation. We are adopting a historical institutionalist approach for the analyses.

Preliminary findings show that many private actors are involved in public schools in Italy and Norway, and the relations and partnerships take different forms. The involvement is fragmented, with more minor, bigger, and more and less powerful actors. The differences between the two welfare states are evident, for example, with the contributions from powerful foundations to the schools in Italy, while in Norway, many small private and non-governmental actors are involved. Although private and non-governmental engagement in public schools at first glance may look like a "win-win" situation in both countries, it also challenges the political governance of the school. There are, for example, some fields with more private actors involved than in other fields. Schools say that they wish they could meet the Curriculum and Education Act's demands without relying on external capacities. There is also varying control over the programs and products that private actors contribute. In addition, the priorities of the foundations and private actors shy away from political debate and government control. We will investigate all of this in more detail. We also still need to investigate how the money flows in this area, what legitimizes the involvement of private actors, what consequences this involvement has for the development of the public school in the long run, and especially how it will affect vulnerable groups of students.

Parallel session 2 (a): Thursday, Nov 30, 13.00—14.30, HE31

Chair: Saija Volmari, University of Helsinki

How expert interviews can inform policy studies of knowledge networks

Bernadette Hörmann, Private University of Education; Diocese of Linz
Kirsten Sivesind, University of Oslo

The theory of epistemic communities has received much attention in academia. A number of researchers write about the importance of epistemic network communities in school and educational contexts and the structures that policy design bears its mark on. Tichenor et al. (2022), for example, choose to focus on an epistemic infrastructure that is materially expressed in the form of data and indicators, through interconnections in networks and communities and paradigms that characterize new ways of working. Epistemic networks give the opportunity to see knowledge development as an important condition for policy expertise and infrastructure makes sense for understanding how things enable this knowledge development. At the same time, the theory of epistemic networks is criticized. Sending (2015, p. 18), for example, claims that the theory of epistemic networks over-generalizes the characteristics of individuals and organizations and makes it difficult for researchers to uncover how someone gains expert status. He argues that one should rather analyze how the relationships unfold between actors in politics and how they compete to establish an authoritative role as an expert by being recognized. This competition between people and their knowledge networks, in turn, contributes to the establishment of hierarchies of experts that are crucial to explore the design and implementation of particular policies. In this presentation, we will briefly address key themes related to expert interviews conducted within the POLNET project and place particular emphasis on those dimensions that can provide in-depth information of how actors acquire authority as experts in the context of education policy process. We will depict different concepts of what was considered valuable and appropriate evidence for policy making among experts from reform panels in Denmark, Finland and Norway. In addition, we will present findings on the role of networks and international knowledge in policy making in the three countries.

Eventually, we will present how our expert interviews contributed insights into the vivid and complex interactions among policy makers in the process of discussing, negotiating, and finally coming to terms as a reform committee. Based on these insights, we understand scientific evidence as a contingent rather than a well-defined concept, that emerges within the interactions of powerful knowledge networks.

Translations of educational policy in temporary network organizations

Petteri Hansen, Norwegian University of Science and Technology
Kirsten Sivesind, University of Oslo

This presentation addresses how translations of education policy take place in "temporary network organisations". We apply a sociological, systems theory perspective. The emphasis is placed on organizations as a form of social systems, which, through communication, deploy various system expectations. We focus on organizational cooperation and the role of network organizations in political governance. By introducing two discourse analytical strategies, semantic analysis and coupling analysis, that is, of how connections emerge between organizations and their members, we propose an analytical design to examine education reform policies (Luhmann, 1995; Andersen, 2008). We exemplify this approach by mapping the actors and expertise of the Finnish teacher education reforms in 2004-2010 as well as Norwegian Knowledge Promotion Reform 2020. Finally, we discuss the possibilities and limits of translations between political ideas, scientific knowledge and educational practice.

Bibliographic networks and digital full-text analysis

Lars G. Johnsen
National Library of Norway

The paper presents how bibliographic networks can be explored through digital full texts analysis. These networks implicitly express which institutions, people and texts that are the most central within particular subject fields. By being frequently cited or identified as related groups of references, a bibliometric network analysis can visualize the sociological prominence of particular authors and their works in particular fields. Thus, reference clusters may point to a thematic organization of documents as well as a sociology connected to documents via the works that are cited or the actors citing them.

Data is constructed from texts available at the National Library, which per today contains one of the world's largest publicly available corpus of published texts. The library currently offers over 600,000 books and 180,000 periodicals, in addition to over 4 million newspapers. It represents a source of information that we will try to tap by using methods that have been developed through my involvement in the POLNET project.

The methodological starting point for the work is described, among other things, in Sivesind and Hörmann (2022). I show how their manual method can be made simpler and for extensive text corpus through the usage of methods for digital analysis of texts. The analysis is carried out on Norwegian texts as they are made available at the National Library via the resources at the library's DH lab. The paper deals with three central questions in the construction of a bibliography (or approximation to such). 1) References and citations 2) Graphs 3) Clustering/grouping of the texts.

In the paper, I apply the method based on a very specific case, namely the literature related to the subject of mathematics. A pilot study showed that both national and international authors are prominent, such as TIMMS and PISA.

Historical trajectories of policy legitimization and its shaping of truth systems and associated validity claims underpinning curriculum and assessment reform

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This paper discusses the different historical trajectories of policy legitimization that have shaped the contemporary use of national testing and examination instruments in Norway, Sweden and Denmark and constructed different truth systems and associated validity claims that underpin curriculum and assessment reforms.

The paper identifies three roles of contemporary educational assessment policies and associated transnational trends of educational assessment. Contemporary educational assessment instruments are used to *certify*, *govern* and/or *support* learning and instruction (Tveit, 2019). Transnational trends for use of educational assessment have been taken up in nation states' policies in different ways and at different times throughout history.

First, the *meritocracy trend*, focusing on fair certification and selection procedures for individual students, was emphasized in international research projects such as the International Examinations Inquiry (IEI) in the 1930s. Second, the *accountability trend*, which placed more emphasis on the governing of education systems and supranational agencies' role in global competition among national states, became more prominent when comparative testing programs were organized in fixed cycles, such as the TIMSS and PIRLS tests facilitated by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) from the 1990s onwards, and the PISA tests facilitated by OECD from 2000 onwards. Third, the *Assessment for Learning* trend, emphasizing the role of assessment instruments and procedures in supporting student learning, emerged at the change of the millennium following the publication of research overviews that identified "formative assessment" and "formative use of summative tests" as successful strategies for enhancing students' and countries' achievements.

Each of the three roles and their associated transnational trend draw on different knowledge bases or epistemic 'truth systems'. *Meritocracy* and *certifying* learning and instruction draw on a many centuries long history of emphasizing fair or just competition between individuals. It draws on written essays and oral presentation and questioning approaches to examining candidates as the main modes of assessment. *Accountability* and *governing* learning and instruction are more recent perspectives shaped by methods and technology for standardized testing that emerged during the twentieth century. *Assessment for Learning* and *supporting* learning and instruction draw on core values associated with teaching and the teachers' role in supporting students' learning and tries to 'renew' assessment policies by drawing on knowledge and truth systems related to learning and motivation rather than those of examination and testing.

The paper discusses how the emphasis on the three different roles and transnational trends of educational assessment construct distinct epistemic truth systems and associated validity claims that constitute different premises for knowledge brokering and the legitimization of curriculum and assessment reforms.

Parallel session 2 (b): Thursday, Nov 30, 13.00—14.30; HE31

Chair: Afshan Bibi, University of Oslo

The OECD Influence on Contemporary Icelandic Education Policy

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Gunnlaugur Magnússon, University of Oslo/Uppsala

The OECD is an inevitable force in contemporary education and informs political decision-making and policy-making in education, although several researchers have questioned whether the OECD is an objective, politically neutral organisation (Steiner-Khamsi, 2019; Ydesen, Kauko & Magnúsdóttir, 2022). Still, the organisation's reputation sustains and politicians are under pressure to move education systems up the OECD rankings of education systems. In this paper, policies are seen as "intended to bring about idealised solutions to diagnosed problems" (Ball 1990, 26) and are contested and interpreted by policy-makers, practitioners and external actors. Compared to other countries, Icelandic Ministers have been independent and the role of the position loosely defined (Kristinsson, 2009, Magnúsdóttir & Jónasson, 2022). However, the governmental aim has been to strengthen professionalism and democratic practices (Árnason & Henryson, 2018).

This paper illustrates how the OECD affects recent education policy-making in Iceland and how governmental procedure has developed from one visionary policy document to another, utilizing the OECD. We analyse the most recent large-scale education policy-package from Iceland and compare it to the process on the White Paper 2014 (Magnúsdóttir & Jónasson; Ydesen, Kauko & Magnúsdóttir, 2022). The documents chosen include Education Policy to 2030 (Icelandic Parliament 2020), an action plan (2020-2024), and two green papers (2017; 2019). The introduction to Education Policy to 2030 announces that OECD was the main provider of consultancy throughout the policy making process and that report (OECD, 2021) is therefore included in the analysis. Theoretical concepts from Popkewitz (2008) and Bacchi WPR-method (Bacchi, 1999) structures the analysis.

Interestingly, neither the Education Policy to 2030 nor the report from the OECD frame it in relation to either current educational legislation or curricula. The national curriculum is mentioned only when adaptations of it to the new policy are suggested. The White Paper (2014) was not supported by green papers, however, Education Policy to 2030 was supported by two green papers, both concerning inclusive education. The OECD report is heavily self-referential mostly referring to other OECD reports and the two supporting green papers are not mentioned. Our preliminary conclusions are that the OECD is of great influence in these two education policies studied here, and in the Education Policy to 2030, they are not only a referential point and a tool to legitimate particular policies, but also a post-hoc policy-implementation adviser. It seems that OECD has become the solution to the perceived lack of professional procedure in Icelandic governance.

**Political bias in evidence for policymaking and the knowledge work of civil servants
- The case of the ongoing digitalization of the Norwegian school**

**Øyunn Syrstad Høydal
Oslo Metropolitan University**

This article engages in evidence-based policymaking by addressing how civil servants endeavor to link evidence and education policy and examining how political bias influences on this knowledge work.

Within the current political-administrative paradigm of evidence-based or evidence-informed educational policymaking, a key task for civil servants is to provide the knowledge required for policy formulation. This task involves identifying relevant evidence and experts, as well as facilitating reports, research and evaluations and overlooking the translation of international ideas to a national context (Karseth & Sivesind, 2022; Maybin, 2016; Olejniczak, 2017). According to Strassheim (2017), how to select, validate and appraise the relevance of evidence in the context of policymaking are the result of an interplay of scientific as well as political aspects. However, we know little about how civil servants use their personal and professional judgement to strike a balance between political interests on the one side and scientific findings on the other, and how they decide on what kind of evidence that will be included in the policymaking process (Baek et al.; 2022, Oliver et al., 2014).

Even though the ideal might be evidence-based political decisions, research seldom shapes policy in a linear and instrumental order (Boswell & Smith, 2017; Weiss, 1998). Policymaking is not the same as technical decision making. Policymaking involves seeking consensus, being responsive to public values and including stakeholders, hence the use of evidence will always be a complex and contested matter (Cairney, 2019; Parkhurst, 2017).

According to Parkhurst (2017) the failure to engage with issues regarding the political nature of policymaking is a major problem in the growing body of literature on the evidence policy nexus. The goal of this article is therefore to contribute to the gap in the literature by addressing how civil servants endeavor to link evidence and policy in a specific policy process; the ongoing digitalization of the Norwegian 1-13 school. More specifically it looks at the uncertainties civil servants encounter in their ambition to use evidence in policymaking relating to different definitions of knowledge, a lack of the desired knowledge, or incomplete or conflicting scientific findings. The findings suggest that the political decision to digitalize the school, despite limited or conflicting evidence, influence the definition of relevant evidence and hinders alternative perspectives or critical research or voices from being heard. Still, evidence must hold high academic standard and be useful within a national context to be considered relevant. The findings suggest that the framing of evidence represents a greater challenge than methodological quality in the discussion regarding the political nature of evidence for policy.

Legitimizing the marginalization of civic knowledge: An analysis of the references connected to 'democracy' and 'citizenship' in two white papers

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Knowledge of political institutions has traditionally constituted a core of the social studies curriculum in Norway. Since school subjects can be seen as carriers of 'powerful knowledge', i.e. specialized knowledge that differs from the knowledge students encounter outside school (Young 2007), social studies can be said to have a particularly important role in providing students with the knowledge they need to be able to take an active part in democratic processes. However, analyses of the LK20 social studies curriculum show that the institutions where political participation takes place are not very visible, and that participation is mainly seen as something that happens detached from these institutions (Børhaug 2022).

In parallel with the marginalization of knowledge about political institutions in the social studies curriculum, democracy (and citizenship) seems to have gained a stronger position both in the subject curriculum – where it is defined as a 'core element' – and in the general curriculum, where it is described as an 'interdisciplinary topic'. In an attempt to understand this rather paradoxical development, we analyze the references associated with the concepts 'democracy' and 'citizenship' in the white papers that preceded the last two, 'competence based', curriculum reforms, LK06 and LK20. The analysis has two aims; firstly, we want to find out what understanding of knowledge is promoted through these references. Here we use Klafki's (2001) concepts of 'material' and 'formal' Bildung theories. Secondly, we want to find out where the conceptual understanding emanates from.

A close reading of the three most prominent references, the Norwegian reports from the international comparative surveys Civic 1999 and ICCS 2009, as well as Janicke H. Stray's (2014) book chapter about the school's democratic mandate, shows how the importance of knowledge about democratic institutions is toned down and separated from the more ambitious goals of democracy education. Knowledge of democracy is seen as something measurable that can be made subject to international, comparative analyses where there is one correct answer. In the two reports, representative democracy is contrasted with participatory democracy, not only as two different forms of democracy, but also as representing two different forms of education. Thus, participatory democracy becomes not only a political, but also an educational ideal, while representative democracy, where knowledge is given importance, becomes the opposite. This dual approach opens for marginalizing the importance of knowledge as well as legitimizing an unhelpful distinction between knowledge dissemination, linked to passivity, and democracy education through participatory practices, linked to activity. The concept of citizenship, which appears in the report from the ICCS 2009 survey and in the policy documents leading up to LK20, seems to underpin and reinforce this distinction.

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Understanding implicit reference societies in education policy

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This study examines the reference societies of Norway and Sweden embedded in their education policy documents. We examined 4,260 bibliographic references in 19 white papers and green papers prepared for the 2016/2020 renewal of the Knowledge Promotion Reform in Norway and the 2015/2018 Knowledge Achievement Reform in Sweden. In addition, we interviewed ten policy experts who participated in the preparation of the analyzed policy documents. The results show that the reference societies overall reflect the existing knowledge production and dissemination mechanisms in education policy; however, they significantly differed between Norway and Sweden regarding whether and to what extent they reference knowledge produced in other Nordic countries. Specifically, while Norway drew extensively on knowledge from its neighbors, particularly Sweden, Sweden seldom referenced knowledge produced in other Nordic countries. Policy actors identified similarity, relevance, accessibility, reform contexts, and institutional arrangements as reasons for (not) referencing neighbors. This study calls for further consideration of the political, social, and cultural embeddedness of the “socio-logic” to understand implicit reference societies.