

## **Mass Media and public Policy**

Mass media played a crucial role in information distribution by providing news to different types of groups in society, but over the last decades, the role of the mass media in the political process has changed fundamentally from a rather passive conveyor of messages to a political actor.

As a large body of literature suggests, the media are now taking an active part in the public representation of politics by shaping the agenda of the political discourse and by contributing their own preferences in political controversies

Some authors even argue that the growing dominance of the media has led to a new type of democracy –‘media democracy’ –where the media’s logic of operation is increasingly ‘colonising’ the political process leading to the effect that political institutions are, at least to some extent, losing control over the course of politics.

the political impact of the media in modern democracies has focused on two large areas: media effects on citizens attitudes and participation of election campaigns, as a response of political parties, wich aim to change the electoral environment and rebuild the electoral machine.

However, it remains an open question whether these changes in political communications are confined to the public representation of politics or whether the dynamics of mass communication goes further to also affect the substance of political decision making. In other words, do the media influence the process and content of public policy making? This aspect of the media’s role in democratic politics has only recently been addressed.

the Existing literature based on various case studies provides a rather mixed picture with some instances where policy decisions were made without any media interference and others where media coverage had a significant impact on the outcome of the policy process.