6. Design activation in multi-level settings

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1 INTRODUCTION

As discussed in other chapters of this volume, causal mechanisms can be conceived as a sequence of phenomena that link input to an outcome in a causal manner. This causal relationship can be a component of an encompassing theory of change, but the existing literature is often quite prudent in offering examples of how agents can contribute to the activation of specific causal mechanisms. Hence, many causal mechanisms exist, but the literature on how they can be triggered is scarce.

In this research, we focus on the contextual factors that shape entrepreneurial strategies, which, in turn, affect first-order change. Hence, this chapter focuses on the agency of actors to trace how they may trigger the behaviour of policy targets. We hypothesize that policy entrepreneurs trigger first-order mechanisms through selecting strategies that are based on the context of policy design and the availability of skills and resources. The goal is to contribute to the growing literature on the context in which entrepreneurial action takes place and make the connection with the type of strategies being selected. This is based on the assumption that policy entrepreneurs are limited in what they are able to do based on the combined effects of governing structure, current policy settings, behaviours and expectations of other groups and individuals (Mintrom, 2000). Also, the policy ideas that entrepreneurs are pursuing are not created in a vacuum, they are shaped by the social and political context in which they are developed (*ibid.*). At the same time, the literature on policy change has said very little about the role of entrepreneurs in ‘making things happen’ (Zahariadis, 2007), and on how behavioural change comes about (Cairney and Jones, 2016). These elements are crucial for policy design, especially when looking at the promotion of change linked to means and goals. In this sense, design choices and subsequent policy failures or implementation gaps may imply the involvement of different actors who influence the policy dynamic through the activation of specific first-order mechanisms of behavioural change.

In the chapter we draw on empirical examples at European level and the Italian national and local context to highlight the connection between policy context, entrepreneurial strategies and first-order behavioural changes. The examples are situated within a multi-level policy setting to show variation in context and resources for strategy selection and first-order change. Thereby, multi-level policies offer an interesting angle to investigate the role of actors in triggering policy change through first-order mechanisms. In fact, the multi-level nature of these policies often implies two different kinds of challenges that can be dealt with by a skillful policy entrepreneur. First, the compliance of design choices by local actors might be difficult because of information asymmetries, lack of resources and autonomy at local level, as well as the heterogeneity of target populations (Weaver, 2014). Thus, in a multi-level context, compliance problems may require the strategic use of knowledge, financial and organizational resources to deal with capacity issues. And second, the policy design and the implicit theory of change developed at superior levels might have to be adapted to the local context – to the preferences, motivations and rationales of local actors. This is because the implementation of multi-level policy change barely implies the need to engage local elites and to build local coalitions in support of the proposed change. For local coalition-building to activate first-order mechanisms locally, networking, ideational and authoritative resources can play a major role in fostering the activation of causal mechanisms.

We focus on the role of actors at different levels to investigate whether the characteristics of actors activated by policy design affect first-order mechanisms of behavioural change in a multi-level setting. In other words, our chapter aims to show how causal mechanisms for policy design may be triggered by purposeful individual or organizational actors and, in turn, how these triggers may preselect the way the policy is designed down the line, by activating specific strategies and by using different resources. To address these questions, we concentrate on policy entrepreneurs as ‘the people who seek to initiate dynamic policy change’ (Mintrom, 1997, p. 739).

Based on the literature on policy entrepreneurship, our working hypothesis is that policy entrepreneurs make strategic choices based on a pre-existing context and, in a second step, these strategies affect first-order changes. Entrepreneurs can thus perform very different strategies, according to the features of the context of actions, and the type of the causal mechanism at play. The literature points towards the fact that the context in which policy entrepreneurs act matters (Palmer, 2015; Mukherjee and Giest, 2017). However, there is little research on how the context shapes the entrepreneurial process and ultimately first-order policy change. The following section highlights the existing theoretical underpinnings of these aspects of policy entrepreneurship.

2 THEORETICAL UNDERPINNINGS

2.1 Policy Design, Policy Context and Entrepreneurial Action

Current research defines the context in which policy entrepreneurs make strategic decisions in three different ways. Some look at the network environment in which entrepreneurs operate, which includes the level of trust among network members, the type of actors participating and the strategic actions of fellow stakeholders (Fisher et al., 1983; Scharpf, 1997; McCown, 2004; Brouwer, 2013). At the network level, researchers take into account the complexity and interdependencies among members and the power base of the entrepreneur within this weave of relationships (Stokman, 1999; De Bruijn and ten Heuvelhof, 2000; Brouwer, 2013). In short, ‘frequent reference to the relevance of networks for entrepreneurial action has been associated with the effects of networks on actor accumulation of social and political capital, actor reach, effective manipulation of resources and the manipulation of others’ (Christopoulos, 2006, p. 761). This builds on a wide array of research that looks at network relationships more generally and ties that occur within them (Christopoulos, 2006). Based on the example of the European Commission Trading Scheme, Christopoulos (ibid.) concludes that actors with low political capital within a network engage in more high-risk opportunistic actions, while actors with high political capital opt for low-risk incremental actions.

Others emphasize the policy proposal within which entrepreneurs are active. This includes the proposal’s characteristics such as its scope and interconnectedness as well as its topic (Brouwer, 2013). This also applies to policy more broadly when it comes to salience and current developments (McCown, 2004). Factors derived from this argument include the number and type of actors involved and also the willingness for change when an issue is high or low on the political agenda. The type of actors that are active is further determined by the policy sector in which the entrepreneur is aiming for change. Mintrom (2000) also points towards the policy problem an entrepreneurial solution relates to, since this affects the rhetoric and the ability to point to actual working examples. Meijerink and Huitema (2010) further find that while strategies of policy entrepreneurs are specific to a policy sector, they are consistent within a policy field across countries. In the case of water management, for example, they uncover that there are striking similarities in the ways in which water management issues are framed. This example also shows that entrepreneurs use rhetoric that relates to or manipulates existing policy images (Baumgartner and Jones, 1991). This implies that pre-existing policy images frame the discussion and solutions around a certain topic. Overall, the strategic choices that policy entrepreneurs make in this context can be summarized as

coalition-building. As for the policy options available, research shows that generally policy-makers are more willing to adopt a solution that is from an existing menu of policies with the goals of high levels of acceptability and technical feasibility (Zahariadis, 2008).

Finally, another stream of research focuses more heavily on the institutional setting in which the policy entrepreneur is active, in other words, the opportunity structure that the institutional framework at a specific government level or within a country offers for entrepreneurial action (Meijerink and Huitema, 2010). 'Complex decision-making processes in which many different parties and levels of government are involved usually feature a wide range of venues where change agents may place their issues on the agenda or seek support for their ideas' (ibid., p. 21; Lebel et al., 2009). Schneider, Teske and Mintrom (1995) find that, specifically, the existence of neighbourhood organizations can be a springboard for entrepreneurs. 'By lowering organizational costs and providing a mechanism by which to build a reputation as a reliable and trustworthy political actor, neighborhood groups can directly ease the costs of entrepreneurship' (ibid., p. 92). Schneider et al. (1995) further point out that a strong tax base enables a wider range of policy options for entrepreneurs to choose from. In this situation, entrepreneurs would pick from existing solutions during a window of opportunity for change. If, however, existing solutions are blocked due to negative feedback or evidence of failure, policy entrepreneurs have to reframe existing solutions for them to be adopted (Copeland and James, 2014).

Overall, recent literature shows that the context contributes to the type of strategies that are being pursued by policy entrepreneurs and linked to that the likelihood of success. The social and political context shapes both the ideas that policy entrepreneurs come up with as well as the strategic action taken to put them into place. Research identifies three broader themes that include the network environment, the policy proposal and the institutional setting. Individually they affect entrepreneurial work, as well as in unison when it comes to putting in place policy innovations. Finally, this is not understood in a deterministic way, but rather as a way to look at how entrepreneurial action is shaped by different contextual characteristics that lie outside individual traits of policy entrepreneurs. Knowing about these contextual factors can thus help in understanding why certain entrepreneurial action is chosen and, in a second step, how it affects first-order change.

2.2 Policy Entrepreneurs: Definitions, Strategies and Resources for Behavioural Changes

For the purpose of this chapter we define policy entrepreneurs as 'the people who seek to initiate dynamic policy change' (Mintrom, 1997, p. 739). We

further assume that policy entrepreneurs active in the policy design context can have a paramount role in affecting behavioural changes. Policy entrepreneurs are the actors who invest their resources – time, energy, reputation and money – to promote a position in return for anticipated future gains, and take advantage of windows of opportunity for change also at other levels of government (Kingdon, 1995, p. 188). Their success in promoting change depends on the strategic use of different resources and skills.

2.2.1 Entrepreneurial activities

Contextual factors influence entrepreneurial actions in a way that impacts their activities and strategy selection (Giest, 2018). Thereby, policy entrepreneurs can activate different causal mechanisms (such as compliance of others), through different strategies. For example, the Multiple Streams Approach has been extensively applied in order to explain how change is achieved: through the advocacy of policy ideas and the brokering; through negotiations to match problems, solutions and political momentum; through the pushing of ideas higher on the agenda; and through the softening up of the system and of the solutions (Kingdon, 1995, p. 241).

Other researchers have built on the work of Kingdon to better characterize the activities of policy entrepreneurs in fostering policy change also beyond coupling mechanisms. Policy entrepreneurship discovers unfulfilled needs, bearing the risks of uncertainty, resolves collective action problems by assembling and coordinating networks; moreover, it sells ideas by identifying problems, shaping policy debates, networking and building coalitions (Mintrom and Vergari, 1996). Thus, policy entrepreneurs make efforts to display social acuity; define problems; build teams; and lead by example (Mintrom and Norman, 2009). Moreover, Mintrom and Norman (2009, p. 657) emphasize the need for a good sense of timing for entrepreneurs to take advantage of windows of opportunity.

2.2.2 Entrepreneurial resources

Policy entrepreneurs have to develop an array of skills and qualities that makes them more successful, not just in fostering policy change by coupling problems, solutions and policies, but also in activating other first-order mechanisms. For example, Kingdon proposes that policy entrepreneurs have four main qualities: they have some claim to a hearing; they have political connections and negotiating skills; they have tenacity and are persistent in pushing their ideas; finally, they have to be ready to take advantage of opportunities (Kingdon, 1995, pp. 189–90). Zahariadis (2007) states that policy entrepreneurs are more effective when they have greater access to policy-makers and commit more resources to pushing their proposals, and when they are able to avoid the decoupling and the failure of coalitions in the implementation

phase through issue linkage and framing, side payments, and institutional rule manipulation (Zahariadis and Exadaktylos, 2016). Thus, policy entrepreneurs may rely on material incentives to affect the behaviour of the target population. When acting as policy entrepreneurs, policy-makers may further resort to a strategic use of symbols and emotions (Zahariadis, 2016).

2.2.3 Entrepreneurial strategies

Policy entrepreneurs may activate different strategies, acting as triggers for the desired first-order mechanism of behavioural change. According to the literature, some of the most common strategies of policy entrepreneurs are framing, salami-slicing tactics, using symbols and affect priming (Zahariadis, 2007, p. 74); the selection of policy ideas at the EU level (Copeland and James, 2014); or the use of ideas as coalition magnets (Béland and Cox, 2016) to establish a coherent message to build more stable coalitions of political supporters across levels of government (Saurugger and Terpan, 2016).

Hence, we propose that specific strategies are more appropriate for the different contextual conditions highlighted in the previous section. In other words, we propose that the characteristics of the policy design context affect the preferred entrepreneurial strategy. In particular, we propose that coalition-building strategies are important to deal with the network environment; framing strategies and the softening up of policy ideas are crucial to the type of policy proposal and sector; and venue manipulation strategies and taking advantage of windows of opportunities at multiple levels are important to foster change in complex institutional settings.

Coalition-building strategies

Coalition-building is a strategy that has an impact on the network of relevant actors, by creating ties and trust among different groups. Trust and ties can be built on symbols and emotions (Zahariadis, 2007), and also on interests and incentives (Mintrom and Norman, 2009). The type of coalition-building of policy entrepreneurs can thus be very different: they can build a coalition of advocates who share the same policy beliefs, or a more restricted alliance of actors who benefit from specific policy incentives or tools. Several studies on policy reforms emphasize the variety of strategies that policy entrepreneurs may employ during policy reforms to make other actors change their behaviour and, ultimately, allow policy change. Policy entrepreneurs not only build coalitions in support of policy change at the political level, they also act upon motivation of managers and target populations activated by the policy design at the managerial level. They propose new visions of a problem; they develop the policy content of policy change by enlisting stakeholders and the expertise of strong allies; they enrol local policy teams as well as national and regional stakeholders; and they clarify the problem repeatedly to attract interest from

potential users and contributors (Oborn, Barrett and Exworthy, 2011, p. 330). This multi-level dimension of coalition-building emerges in different studies on policy change, including delicate instances such as anti-corruption policies (Navot and Cohen, 2015) and post-conflict cooperation (Arieli and Cohen, 2013, pp. 252–3), where policy entrepreneurs engage in horizontal and vertical coalition-building across levels of government and support bottom-up initiatives to overcome local opposition.

Framing strategies

In water policy reforms, policy entrepreneurs use framing strategies to promote water transitions as changes in specific policy tools or in the overall governance of water delivery (Crow, 2010). Meijerink and Huitema (2010) suggest that entrepreneurship in water management is often collective, and focuses on strategies for developing and disseminating new ideas within multi-level governance networks. Brouwer and Biermann (2011) focus on the behaviour of policy entrepreneurs at the micro level. They employ four types of strategies: (1) attention and support-seeking strategies, to demonstrate the significance of a problem and to convince a wide range of participants about their preferred policy; (2) linking strategies, to connect with other parties, projects, ideas, and policy games; (3) relational management strategies, to manage the relational factor in policy-change trajectories; and (4) arena strategies, to influence the time and place wherein decisions are made, thus following the idea that entrepreneurs act upon the opening of windows of opportunity for change.

Venue manipulation strategies

Meijerink and Huitema (2010) offer some ideas about how the institutional context constrains or enables the activity of policy entrepreneurs. These strategies involve anticipating, manipulating, and basically exploiting windows of opportunity that can also open up at different levels of government. Various country and governance settings may offer different opportunity structures for entrepreneurs to achieve their goals. For example, complex decision-making processes with different levels of government involved offer a variety of venues for change agents, but also more centralized systems may present opportunities, especially when entrepreneurs manage to access the main decision-makers. This is particularly important when the policy design and the implementation of policy change require the use of financial resources that are not accessible for the lower levels of government.

3 EMPIRICAL EXAMPLES

3.1 Entrepreneurial Strategies as Triggers for Behavioural Changes in Multi-level Settings

When policy change entails multi-level dimensions, policy entrepreneurs can be activated by policy design choices at different territorial levels and in different institutional venues (state, regions, cities). Further, in a multi-level policy context, the role of information, risk, and trustworthiness become paramount in cases where the issues are complex and their effects on citizens seem remote, even if they could be significant in the future (Mintrom and Norman, 2009, p. 661). The need to match different types of resources at the right moment suggests concentrating on the role of policy entrepreneurs as activators of change.

The literature on policy entrepreneurs suggests there are three main strategies that they may use to promote behavioural change: coalition-building, framing and venue manipulation. These strategies seem particularly appropriate to deal with the policy design context, and respectively with the features of the network environment, of the policy sector and of the institutional setting.

Our proposal is to make reference to existing empirical examples of policies designed or implemented at local level to see whether different entrepreneurial strategies are able to trigger first-order behavioural change. As said, we are not deterministic in matching a type of entrepreneurial strategy with specific context conditions, or with one type of first-order behavioural change. Nonetheless, we will concentrate on a variety of policy sectors to show the link between context and different instances of behavioural change (see Table 6.1).

Additionally, we focus on the local level, since the connection between design and implementation allows easier observation of actors' behaviours, and thus to develop a clearer understanding of their roles in the development of the causal mechanism (Kalafatis and Lemos, 2017). The examples stem from the European context and include a case at EU level (transnational climate change networks), one at national level (industrialization in Italian water reforms) and two at local level (Turin social housing and urban planning). The cases were chosen based on the representation of different governmental levels as well as a variation in policy field, which translates into variation in contextual and resource factors.

Table 6.1 Empirical examples of entrepreneurial activities

Examples/Cases	Policy Design Context	Entrepreneurial Resources	Entrepreneurial Strategy	First-order Behavioural Change
Example 1: European transnational climate change networks	Multiple government units at various levels responsible for climate change; loose network with top-down support and varying horizontal commitment	Variety of knowledge resources; Political connections	Vertical coalition-building	<i>Local commitment and engagement</i>
Example 2: Industrialization in Italian water reforms	Fragmentation in local public utilities, national governments imposing privatization and municipal governments resisting the change	Ideational; Incentives; Partisan affiliation at the regional level	Horizontal coalition-building; Framing	<i>Inventive activity:</i> Industrialization of service operators; creation of regional multi-utility in the Emilia-Romagna region
Example 3: Social housing in Turin (1997–2006), Italy	Retrenchment of the central government from public housing, municipal government oriented towards policy innovation (rent housing subsidies)	Ideational; Incentives and organizational innovations	Horizontal coalition-building; Framing (a new image for the municipality as a mediator in the real estate market)	<i>Inventive activity:</i> Increase in the number of subsidized rents; pilot projects in co-housing
Example 4: Urban planning in Turin (1993–2006), Italy	Resistance of local and national stakeholders to the implementation of the new urban master plan; promotion of urban policies at the EU level; promotion of sports events at the national level	Access to multiple institutional venues; Economic incentives	Exploiting multi-level windows of opportunity (EU level for urban regeneration projects; national level for Winter Olympic Games)	<i>Compliance:</i> New pro-growth coalition for urban renewal spreading from urban strategic planning and great events (Winter Olympic Games)

3.2 Policy Entrepreneurs in Transnational Climate Change Networks (Example 1)

Transnational climate change networks are complex multi-level governance arrangements, because their organizational structure has multiple, relatively independent local centres while following EU goals on sustainability targets (Sandström and Carlsson, 2008; Giest and Howlett, 2013). These networks have increasingly become a tool for the EU to implement place-sensitive programmes and designing wider policies. The transnational networks thereby have two goals: first, engaging member states in climate change targets while leaving space for place-specific initiatives; and second, facilitating the exchange of knowledge among network members (Giest and Howlett, 2012). Examples are Eurocities or ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability.

In this set-up where there is a top-down force to comply with climate change targets as well as bottom-up collaboration, policy entrepreneurs play a central role as connectors. As Kern and Bulkeley (2009, p. 326) point out:

Political support at local level and the existence of policy entrepreneurs are, therefore, crucial for the governing capacity of a network because they have a decisive influence on the changes on the ground and provide the means through which the network assesses progress. If such policy entrepreneurs are missing or marginalized, it is almost impossible for the network to stimulate action on the ground.

The context in which these entrepreneurs operate varies from region to region, however the common characteristics include:

- various government units at different levels: local, network, European;
- connections among network members with forms of cooperation ranging from information sharing to taking action together;
- loose commitments by local stakeholders.

In this setting, policy entrepreneurs choose strategies that can be described as vertical coalition-building. They link up committed, local stakeholders to the network to facilitate collaboration and create wider acceptance. Entrepreneurs also play a role in diffusing knowledge from one place to another (Mintrom and Norman, 2009). The first-order behavioural change that entrepreneurs are aiming for with this strategy is that of local commitment to the transnational climate change goals while also participating in the network-wide collaborative activities, such as sharing of best practices and working with partner cities.

3.3 Policy Entrepreneurship in Water Reforms and Local Public Utilities in Italy (Example 2)

Water reforms in Italy are in response to the inefficiencies of local service provision and the deficiencies in water infrastructures in a period of deep public debt crisis (Massarutto and Ermano, 2013). National governments fostered the privatization and industrialization of service operators, whose dimensions corresponded to the municipal territory, being rather small on average. The traditional municipal public utilities epitomized the power of local elites, resistant to any form of change. Privatization encountered strong resistance in the periphery, as the presence of private actors and the introduction of competition for service provision threatened local enterprises. Therefore, the design context presented a fragmented network of local public utilities, with the timid intervention of the national government to promote privatization and industrialization, and local municipalities striving to cope with financial problems.

In this context, some mayors acting as policy entrepreneurs were able to shape the negative perceptions over privatization and to create trust among decision-makers affiliated to the same political party. In doing so, they pushed local governments to implement the industrialization of water service provision reform in their region far beyond initial expectation, by creating a regional champion in the multi-utility sector, HERA S.p.A – the result of the merger of more than 100 former local public utilities. The role of some mayors of the Emilia-Romagna region and of the top management of the largest service operators in the implementation of the water reforms was crucial for several reasons. First, they translated the guiding principles of the water reform into concrete advantages for the municipalities in the implementation phase. Second, they were able to create mutual trust among local governments of the same region, also relying on the common partisan affiliation of most of the mayors (Di Giulio, Galanti and Moro, 2016). The role of entrepreneurs was of paramount importance given the wide range of options that the national policy design allowed to local actors and the massive opposition of local governments to the reforms throughout the country.

It can be said that the creation of a regional multi-utility as a unique model for service providers is a case of inventive activity. A composite policy entrepreneurship of mayors and top managers from the Emilia-Romagna region triggered this innovation through two main strategies. First, they were able to reframe the privatization issue according to a common discourse in water reforms worldwide (Meijerink and Huitema, 2010). They exhorted for the inclusion of private capitals and organizational models in order to ameliorate the efficiency of the service provision. Second, they convinced other mayors in the same regions to merge the small municipally owned utilities into a greater industrial player. This could be done by taking advantage of some financial

incentives to privatization provided by the national law, and by consolidating the network of mayors with reciprocal trust. The trust among mayors was possible also due to the cohesiveness of the regional dominant party at the time, the former Communist Party.

Hence, policy entrepreneurs were able to trigger the creation of the regional multi-utility HERA as a case of innovative activity from water reform by involvement in the framing of the consequences of privatization and by building reciprocal trust in horizontal coalition-building. These strategies entailed the use of ideational resources, as well as the exploitation of economic incentives present in the national policy design.

3.4 Policy Entrepreneurship in Social Housing in the City of Turin (1997–2006) (Example 3)

Housing policies were traditionally based on public housing financed with national funds and assigned at the provincial and municipal level, with a scarce number of dwellings and financing. From the 1990s on, the state progressively retrenched from the financing of public housing, while delegating planning to the regional level, leaving most of the management at the local level. Thus, Italian municipalities designed very different policies, with few policy options: assignation of the existing stock of public housing on the one hand, and the promotion of subsidized rents on the other. In the 1990s, the Italian city of Turin was already experiencing a serious housing crisis, after the economic crisis of the automobile company FIAT, which was the main industry at the time. In response to the economic crisis, many associations, charities and local banks were active at the city level, collaborating with the municipal government for other welfare services (Galanti, 2018).

This context of scarce financing and multiple private actors inside and outside the local housing market was fruitful for the action of policy entrepreneurs, spreading from within the administration. In particular, one senior manager and a couple of politicians used a double strategy to make local public and private actors act in coordination and to experiment with innovative policy solutions to the housing crisis. On the one hand, policy entrepreneurs started to frame housing policies in a new way. They abandoned the view of housing as pure assistance, leading inevitably to marginalization, while proposing the idea that public housing should present a good social mix of classes of people. At the same time, the municipality proposed subsidized rents as the main policy instrument to intervene in the housing market, by creating economic incentives for landlords to propose this type of contract, and by creating dedicated municipal offices for the tenants to gather information and offers of this type. On the other hand, policy entrepreneurs were able to create a more cohesive network of public and private actors on housing issues, by involving private

partners in some experimental projects of co-housing aimed mainly at young people and families.

In other words, these local policy entrepreneurs used ideational and economic incentives to make landlords and tenants change their mind about initiatives of public housing. The municipality actually became the connector between the demand and the supply of housing both in the public realm and in the private market on the one side, and by experimenting with new solutions for public housing on the other. This could also be done by taking advantage of extra EU funding for renovation activities, which was partly used also to finance the amelioration of existing dwellings.

3.5 Policy Entrepreneurship and Urban Planning in Turin (1993–2006) (Example 4)

The role of Italian municipalities in urban planning is paramount. In fact, national legislation only intervenes in the case of great infrastructures and big events, while the regional level ratifies the modifications to urban master plans decided at the local level (Vettoreto, 2009). In the midst of the local economic crisis of the 1990s, urban planning was seen as the way to redesign the industrial vocation of Turin as a typical Fordist city, and to propose a different type of economic renaissance based on knowledge economy, culture and leisure (Galanti, 2014). After almost 15 years of political conflict, the local government approved a new master plan that intervened heavily on the infrastructure of the city, proposing to intervene in many of the existing post-industrial buildings, to create new transport infrastructure, residential areas, museums and universities. These transformations encountered the resistance of the residents, trade unions, academics, and of some major national and local private owners. The context was then characterized by a difficult implementation at great risk of non-compliance, with a fragmented network of opponents at the local level, and with few policy instruments at the disposal of the administration to boost construction investments.

In this context, the mayor, the executives of the local government and some of the managers from the marketing sector were able to play the role of policy entrepreneurs by diffusing ideas about the necessity of a new economic vocation for the city, and, most of all, by taking advantage of windows of opportunity at the local and at the national level. This in turn created a strong commitment to comply with the urban transformation by various civic associations, interest groups and ordinary citizens. First, the mayor and his urban planning representative pursued an unprecedented strategy of top-down involvement of the citizens in different projects of transformation, through the use of strategic planning – an instrument for local participation that was quite innovative at the time and was regarded as a success of the administration

(Pinson, 2002). Second, the mayor and the city manager hired from the private sector several managers specialized in project development, with the goal of proposing the candidature of Turin for urban regeneration projects at the EU level (like the Urban I and II initiative) and, most importantly, for the 2006 Winter Olympic Games (WOG). The participation of an Italian candidate for such a big event was promoted by the national government but local governments had not been interested in participating. Instead, the composite policy entrepreneurship of Turin saw in the WOG the opportunity to gather financial resources to implement part of the master plan, and to create a sense of community and pride among citizens. The WOG in 2006 proved to be a success, both in symbolic and economic terms. The exploitation of windows of opportunity at multiple levels and access to EU financial resources for urban regeneration corroborated the framing of urban transformation as a new renaissance for Turin, thus bringing success in the implementation of the master plan, despite the initial resistance and the initial mistrust of many relevant stakeholders at the local level.

4 CONCLUDING REMARKS

These examples of successful policy entrepreneurship are intended to show how the action of an individual or organization is able to trigger first-order mechanisms of behavioural change. Our hypothesis is that contextual factors and resource availability shape entrepreneurial strategies that trigger behavioural changes. The cases of the European transnational climate network, Italian water privatization, social housing and urban planning show how vertical and horizontal coalition-building, framing and taking advantage of windows of opportunity are viable strategies when the context is characterized by a fragmented network environment, by specific policy solutions available, and by the possibility to access multiple levels of government. All in all, we propose that policy entrepreneurship can assume different formats, being composed of one or more agents, and that it can deploy an array of very different activities. Nonetheless, given the characteristics that link policy design to the implementation phase, the most important strategies are those aimed at the building of a trustworthy network of actors in support; at the use of symbols and emotions to rouse commitment in favour of a policy idea; and at the exploitation of windows of opportunities at different institutional levels, to cope with the endemic scarcity of financial resources to support urban transformations, and to provide incentives for collaboration among dispersed actors in loosely coupled networks.

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