Preface

This book originated in conversations first sparked by Dr. Darryl Jarvis and colleagues in November 2019. We weren't exactly pessimistic about the future of the policy sciences, but had some premonitions even then, pre-COVID, that the future was not what it used to be. In the plus column, the policy sciences have enjoyed impressive growth and prominence in the last 50 years. Schools, institutes, programmes, think tanks, and scholarly associations have expanded impressively, as have governments and their policy footprints. While economics remains the queen of the social sciences, and the sharp-edged benchmark of policymaking, "good governance" and hence good policymaking is now universally acknowledged as a key ingredient in social well-being. In the minus column, we sensed an inchoate collective ennui, frustration with how good policy always seems eclipsed by bad politics, and a feeling that our theories were cramped and narrow.

We decided that a more deliberate accounting was needed, and agreed to meet in March 2020 in Doha, Qatar, at the College of Public Policy at Hamad Bin Khalifa University (HBKU) to launch this book project. By January 2020 there was word of the pandemic spreading from China through to Europe and North America, rumours of travel bans, strange and disturbing spikes in cases in Italy. By mid-February we knew something unusual and dangerous was happening, but still hesitated to cancel or postpone the project. By March, even as papers were arriving, we knew that colleagues could not. But we had the papers, strong papers written by leading scholars, weighing the fortunes and future of the field. Now, however, a harsh global reality was pounding on the door – a global pandemic that was upending most of our assumptions about governance and policymaking. Borders were closing. Entire cities first, and then entire countries next, locked down for weeks and then months. Policy responses seemed both tragically inept in many cases, and frighteningly draconian in others. The policy landscape became almost unrecognizable in just four months.

This was a unique opportunity. We had balance sheets on the discipline calculated on the basis of "normal" policymaking. We now also had a sidewinder of abnormality, and so invited the authors to revise and rethink the future of the policy sciences yet one more time, in the dark light of COVID. What new policy and governance challenges can we expect post-pandemic? What kinds of policy tools will governments now use, juiced-up with security and public health rationales? Is globalization dead? How do we grapple with these issues from the perspective of theory, but also of practice, and in our teaching? Our authors agreed to tackle these questions and more. The result is a book that surveys the past developments in the field, takes the measure of the challenges that might have been conventionally anticipated circa March 2020, and presents one of the first sustained reflections of what the pandemic might mean for the discipline and its future.

We thank our authors and colleagues for their perseverance through an extraordinarily difficult time, and also Harry Fabian at Edward Elgar for commissioning the book, and the

editorial team that brought us to safe harbour, in particular Beatrice McCartney and Elizabeth Clack. At the College of Public Policy at HBKU, Ms. Amal Hassan oversaw the organization of the meeting that was to have been held in March 2020. As we shifted to a book project, Ms. Ayah Deif at the College became our indispensable support.

This is a book about the future of an academic field of study and practice – the policy sciences – that might seem dry and distant. But policy touches each of us as citizens, never more than it has during the pandemic. We dedicate this book to our children (from Anis, to Zakaria, Ayoub, Maryam and Sarah; from Leslie, to Matthew, Michael, and Meredith). The future of the policy sciences will be their future as well.

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