

# NEWSLETTER



## Public Mediation Programme

### Masterclass 'Media and societal conflicts'

On the 17<sup>th</sup> of November Ron Fresen – political commentator for the NOS news – gave a masterclass on framing and the role of media in societal conflict. Using examples from practice, he gave an explanation of how frames are applied and the way in which this influences the political agenda. A discussed example was an incident with street youth in the city of Zaanstad that was framed as a consequence of Turkish tensions in the summer.

Among other things, Fresen spoke about the role of social media in establishing a frame and the corresponding need to react as swiftly as possible to this. He also gave an explanation of how the media makes a choice whether or not to use existing frames and the failure of frames.



Since the end of the summer the Public Mediation Programme has been working on several new projects, such as a collaboration with the Expertise Unit Social Stability of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment, the start of a research study on public mediation in Europe and a study for the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations on vision formation. In addition, the programme has also submitted a research proposal for the Top Sector Energy. Lastly, several projects have also been continued such as RAAK and the collaboration with the municipality of Amsterdam. Please keep an eye on our website [www.uva.nl/pmp](http://www.uva.nl/pmp) for updates on our events.

### Project proposal Deal-Crafting for the Energy Topsector

The Netherlands has not yet achieved the established sustainable energy goals. Therefore over the next decade many energy projects will be realised. With the increasing resistance against energy technologies this task will not be an easy one. The current strategy of *deciding- announcing- defending* does not contribute to the acceptance of society of these projects. The question is thus if this can also be done differently.

PMP has submitted a research proposal together with five

## Leadership in a complex society, Senior Civil Service (ABD)

On December 1<sup>st</sup> PMP organised a simulation for the governmental candidate programme Senior Civil Service (ABD). The simulation was part of the module 'Leadership in a complex society' and lasted one day. It concerned controversies and complexity in practice on the issue of asylum seeker housing. The simulation, with fictive events, meetings and characters, was developed on the basis of situations that took place in the Netherlands in the last few years surrounding the issue of asylum seeker housing.

The simulation was accompanied by several intermezzos by Marilyn Haime, Freek Salm and the Fada Theatre group.

The theme of leadership was central in the simulation. The participants have discovered different leadership styles in a complex issue, whereby not only their own leadership was important, but also that of others.

partners at the Top sector Energy to search for new ways to deal with resistance against sustainable energy projects. In the field of conflict research and negotiation it is often believed that that between an outspoken 'yes' and a whole-hearted 'no' against sustainable energy technologies there often lies a grey area of possible solutions that is not explored. Presenting a solution for sustainable energy production – such as a windmills – means that there is no conversation possible about the problems for which a solution is being sought. This subsequently leads to resistance.

The project Deal-Crafting starts with the presupposition that conflicts do not arise as a result of goals and ambitions of parties that oppose one another – opposed interests are rare in practice – but because of the inability to explore this grey area. In that area there is cause and possibility to talk with each other, to research and negotiate practical results that are better for all those involved. This asks for a process of deal-crafting; the skill of carefully assembling an agreement. With this, the research offers insights that can improve the current practice of decision-making about innovative energy supply.

## Public Mediation in Europe

This fall PMP has started a project with a group of students from the master Conflict Resolution and Governance (UvA). The project will take stock of public mediation practices in different European countries. The goal is to map where and in what way mediation is practised and to connect practitioners. Practitioners of public mediation often feel isolated, or are not familiar with what takes place in the (European) field of mediation. With this research we hope to provide a platform to learn from and with one another.

During the research, practitioners will be interviewed about their practices, the topics on which they work and their working method. PMP regards mediation as a family of practices and so we will be researching a broad range of stakeholder based, interactive and agreement seeking processes.

In this cycle the following countries shall be studied: The Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, Italy, Sweden, Finland,

## Collaboration with Expertise Unit Social Stability (ESS), Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment

From September onward, PMP is collaborating with the Expertise Unit Social Stability (ESS) of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment. The Unit works on social conflicts and tensions in the Netherlands. The collaboration follows a series of three masterclasses that PMP gave in the spring of 2016.

The focus of the collaboration is on collectively taking part in research in several conflict situations, with the goal to make diagnoses and observe in what ways 'early warning signals' can possibly be mapped. Simultaneously the members of the unit will be guided and trained in diagnosis and conflict management skills.

France, Poland and possibly the United Kingdom. Short 'country reports' will be drawn up per country. These reports will be published on our website in time, so that the information will be accessible for all. Ultimately, we hope to bring these practitioners together once every year in Amsterdam.



## HvA research on the action repertoire of participation professionals

With a RAAK subsidy, the research programmes of Management of Cultural Change, and Cultural and Social Dynamics of the Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences (HvA) and the Public Mediation Programme are researching the action repertoire of participation professionals in relation to citizen initiatives.

In this action-oriented research, the main focus is on the development of a framework for reflection and an action repertoire for participation professionals. Which theoretical framework for reflection and generic or specific action repertoire makes it possible for participation professionals to contribute to the strengthening of citizen cooperations that take on public tasks?

The research will concentrate on four citizen cooperations in Amsterdam and is currently far advanced. An extensive intake research report has been drawn up on the four cooperations. Besides

## Collaboration area coordinators municipality of Amsterdam

Following the *tankstation* and workshops on 'conflict management in the city' for the area managers of Amsterdam, a similar series has been set up for the area coordinators. The emphasis during the programme lies in practicing a lot, and it thus does not solely consist of the discussion of theory. Through real life situations, based on existing teaching cases and simulations that are based on the everyday practice of area coordinators, conflict management skills will be offered.

The first *tankstation* has taken place on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of November and formed the kick-off of the series. The day consisted of several simulation exercises and an interactive discussion. The workshops will follow in the first quarter of 2017.

### Contact

To register for events or for more information please contact us via [pmp-fmg@uva.nl](mailto:pmp-fmg@uva.nl) or visit our website at [www.uva.nl/pmp](http://www.uva.nl/pmp).

the active role that PMP has in the learning trajectory, we are also identifying more opportunities to do action-oriented research with the citizen cooperations. Some of these cooperations offer the opportunity to reflect on tensions within their own organisation. PMP is striving to organise a workshop to provide these groups with insights into their own working method and to offer possible action methods to deal with these tensions. This further offers the professionals something in return, given that they invest so much of their time in the study.

### Vision formation in the Omgevingswet

In 2019 the new Omgevingswet (Environment and Planning Act) will come into force, based on the idea of less rules and more involvement of citizens in spatial planning of their surroundings. The protection and utilising of the environment thereby becomes a shared responsibility of the government, corporations and citizens. The law dictates that all governments have to formulate an environment vision. In addition the law appeals to citizen participation and gives society more space to develop initiatives itself. To develop a supported environment vision cooperation is thus needed.

Preceding the coming into force of the Omgevingswet, the Ministry of Interior Affairs wants to acquire experience with citizen participation in the developing of an environment vision. They want to be able to advise municipalities in the near future. Commissioned by the Ministry of Interior Affairs PMP is conducting a research on vision formation in the Omgevingswet. The goal of the research is to draw up a case description on the basis of practical experience that can function as inspiration for municipalities that have to develop such a vision. The practice part of the research consists of developing a vision on sustainable energy in the municipality of Hellendoorn.