

## **Narratives for or against change: A Narratives Policy Framework perspective on policy debates in Moscow**

This paper presentation will provide an overview on a research project on policy narratives in Moscow. The purpose of the research is to examine policy narratives in salient policy debates in Moscow. It aims at answering the question of what role narratives play in justifying or contesting policy change in Moscow. To this effect, the research focuses on four selected cases of recent policy debates in Moscow, namely: public transport reforms, the housing renovation program, waste management and recycling policies, and citizen online participation through *aktivnii grazhdanin*. The study group will apply the Narratives Policy Framework (NPF), a recently developed but already renowned public policy framework. The NPF examines narratives' content and strategies through generalizable structural elements. By drawing on the NPF, the study group expects that in the selected Moscow policy debates the actors advocating policy change will construct different narratives and employ different narrative strategies from those actors that resist policy change. On one side of the debate we will find the official governmental position, while on the other side a counternarrative will challenge the official narrative, and narrative strategies will largely depend on whether the policy change is advocated by the official position or not. Methodologically, the project will employ a case study design, with the selected four Moscow policy debates as our cases. Each case will be studied as a single case study and comparative analyses across the four cases will be conducted. As data sources, we will draw on interviews and content analysis of documents, media and web-based sources. All data will be coded along narrative elements (problem, characters, plot, solution). Analysis will be done quantitatively, using descriptive statistics such as frequencies, as well as relational statistics and qualitatively. With this research, we expect to contribute, first, to the NPF in a new political context. Second, the research will also shed light into four cases of policy debates in Moscow.