

Till' death do us part: the government advisory bodies in Croatia

Abstract

The advisory bodies in central government have long served as permanent or temporary hubs of expert and scientific knowledge created to support governmental decisions and policy making. The networks of government and external experts with specialised know-how have multiple roles - they present scientific advice which enables evidence-based policy; they serve as a connection between the government and policy stakeholders floating between politics and expertise; and they are important actors in the overall regulation process, with certain level of impact on final regulatory choices. The issues arising in relation to advisory bodies pertain to their roles, coordination and composition, selection and appointment, transparency, ethics and integrity, etc.

The advisory bodies have long been present in Croatian policy making but their role and functioning has not been researched. The spread of strategic steering, the emergence of wicked problems, as well as the need to support the policy decisions with expert advice as a response to eroded trust in government, have given the additional incentive for creation of such bodies. This process is visible both at the level of Government (and offices in the centre of government), as well as at the ministerial level, in the specific policy areas. In this pioneering research for Croatian policy advice research the paper is focused on mapping the advisory bodies in Croatian government and analysing their main features. The research methods include desk research and legal analysis.