



The EU is a moderation structure for the travel of policy ideas and transnational trends. In order to understand how this structure opens up for innovations in policy, it is important to understand how governance is influenced bottom-up by civil sector actors, expertise and local and regional authorities

**policy ideas
civil society
addiction
innovation**

This [area of work in ALICE RAP](#) aims to contribute with advice for the future governance of addiction. We studied how new innovative practices develop in the addiction field and what could be the political impact of the different studies of ALICE RAP. How can the scientific results of the research project become a basis for the elaboration of new governance practices? How do we secure a good balance between expertise knowledge and the legitimate influence by organized groups of citizens?

The addiction problems as well as policy solutions are transnational in their nature. That means that the addiction problems and political solutions move beyond national borders. This is a situation where the political structures within the European Union become most relevant. The EU frames the transfer of policy ideas and the patterns for participation of interest groups and formal authorities.

In order to gain knowledge about the pattern of influence in this multi-level governance structure, we have focused especially on bottom-up processes. The organization of Cannabis Clubs in Catalonia is a concrete example on how a new model for regulation is constructed bottom-up in the governance structure. By organizing in a system of clubs, these citizens win the right to become a part of the democratic political process. They are included in the governance system because of their innovative practice. The Catalan case of cannabis clubs serves as a case of interest organization in a regional setting - paving the way for new principles in the regulation of cannabis.

The future governance in the different areas influenced by addiction problems needs to balance between the ideal of efficiency on one side, and democratic participation, on the other. The regulatory capacity of the EU builds on a number of different methods captured in the term “soft law”. The system of different agencies, cooperation in research and a wide variety of coordination arrangements are part of top-down processes.

In the provision of advice to future governance, we should hit the balance between efficiency, accountability, openness and inclusiveness. In order to do so, we need to include both top-down and bottom-up processes in our recommendations.

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Fjær, S., Colom, J., Sagvaag, H., Segura, L., Ramon, A.: *Balancing governance levels in the European Union*, in [Reframing addictions: policies, processes and pressures](#), ALICE RAP 2014. ISBN 978-84-697-1647-2. s. 30-36

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