

New Public Management and Decision Making in UK Public Policy

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Discuss how the tendency of New Public Management has impacted on decision making in UK public policy.

New Public Management is generally used to describe a management culture that emphasises upon the citizen or customer as being central, as well as having accountability for results. It also suggests organizational structures and promotes decentralized control, many different types of service delivery mechanisms, including quasi-markets with public and private service providers competing for

resources. New Public [Management](#) does not suggest that a [government](#) should stop performing certain tasks. Although the New Public Management often is associated with such a perspective on a policy level, New Public Management is not about whether tasks should be undertaken or not. It is about getting things done better.

New Public Management was devised as a means to improve efficiency and responsiveness to political changes. Its origins were in parliamentary democracies with excessively strong executive powers, centralized governments, and not much administrative law. In this setting, New Public Management embodies the idea of a chain of contracts leading to a single ministerial person who is interested in getting better results within a sector over which he or she has significant and relatively unchallenged control.

One area of reform that illustrates many of the New Public Management principles is the creation of QUANGOs (Quasi-autonomous non-governmental organisations) to [carry](#) out the service delivery. The New Public Management argument for agencies is that service providers should concentrate on efficient production of quality services, with the distractions of evaluating alternative policies removed. The discussion of the creation of “executive agencies” in the UK and the similar developments in Australia, Canada and France has been common with references to clear, well-defined targets that allow providers to concentrate on their main business. Similarly, policy-making is seen

to be more focused, more rigorous, and sometimes even more adventurous if it can be made without the burden of concern for the existing service providers. Once purchasing has been detached from policy-making, there are opportunities for creating contract-like arrangements to provide performance incentives.

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problems of the public sector, a careful and selective adaptation of some elements to selected sectors may be beneficial. The public sector has been completely rearranged as a result of the tendency towards New Public Management and decision making within UK public policy has changed drastically, there now exists a much more formal and planned approach.

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