New NWO Project: Participatory Value Evaluation: A new assessment model for promoting social acceptance of sustainable energy policies

Worldwide, governments and firms invest in sustainable energy policies to decarbonise energy systems. These investments are often made on the basis of Cost-Benefit Analysis (CBA). However, classical CBAs have difficulty incorporating citizens’ ethical considerations concerning the procedural and distributive aspects of such decisions, considerations that clearly affect the social acceptance of decisions on sustainable energy policies. Dutch practitioners now consider the use of Participatory Value Evaluation (PVE) instead of CBA as this approach has the potential to include citizens’ ethical considerations in real-world economic policy analysis. In a PVE, citizens choose a portfolio of policies given one or more constraints (budget/sustainability target). Using these individual choices, behavioural choice models are estimated that subsequently form the basis for an economic evaluation of different policies. The project aims to contribute to the construction and use of ethically sensitive policy evaluation through the further development of PVEs, and is a cooperation between TU Delft (Niek Mouter, Ruth Shortall – who is also guest researcher at VU – and Kornelis Blok) and VU (Paul Koster, Marion Collewet, and Martin van Hees). The project runs from 1 September 2018 to 28 February, 2021. Read more.
STREEM student numbers doubled

Our master’s programme STREEM (Spatial, Transport and Environmental Economics) is doing exceptionally well. Student numbers increased from 35 last year to 70 this year. Both Dutch and international student numbers have risen sharply, the former even more than the latter. Furthermore, STREEM’s cooperation with Indonesia is intensified. Since last year, staff from the Department of Spatial Economics teaches each year a 2-week intensive course in transport, environmental, urban and regional economics at the Universitas Indonesia in Jakarta. The course contributes to gaining awareness and understanding of the kind of teaching and research that we do in Amsterdam. In addition, the cooperation with Beijing Jiatong University (where Erik Verhoef was appointed Adjunct Professor) has been intensified. Measured by the increase in Indonesian and Chinese students in the master STREEM, the first results of our collaboration with both Jakarta and Beijing are visible!

Henri de Groot presents Economische Verkenningen Holland boven Amsterdam

On Friday September 21, Henri de Groot presented the Economische Verkenningen Holland boven Amsterdam (Economic Outlook region North of Amsterdam) for an interested audience of more than 300 entrepreneurs and local policy makers in Alkmaar. The project is a cooperation between TNO, Neo Observatory and the department of Spatial Economics of the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam. The Economic Outlook is available at www.regiohollandbovenamsterdam.nl/ev. It presents the short-term forecasts and long-term trends in the economy of this region.

Upcoming Events

PhD Defense
Ton van den Bremer: ‘Prudence and Precaution for Natural Resource and Climate Uncertainty’
Friday 30 November, 11:45, Aula

Eureka Seminars
(held on Thursdays from 12:15-13:15, location flexible)
20 September: Jamie Chen ‘Travelers’ marginal WTP in ridesharing based on an experimental study in China’
Paul Koster, ‘The economics of participatory evaluation’
Location: WN-M616

25 October: Martin Adler, ‘Roads, market access and regional economic development’
Location: room 5A-36

8 November: Csaba Poganyi (Imperial College London), The effect of the London Underground on local employment in London
Location: room 12A-37

20 December: TBA
Location: room 1A-32

More information: G.C.vanderMeijden@vu.nl
**Spatial Economics Seminars at the Tinbergen Institute**
(held on Thursdays from 12:15-13:15. Location: Tinbergen Institute Amsterdam, room 1.01)

4 October: Laurent Gobillon (Paris School of Economics, France)

15 November: Miren Lafourcade (University Paris-Saclay, France)

22 November: Eric Strobl (University of Birmingham, United Kingdom)

29 November: Sergey Kichko (National Research University Higher School of Economics, Russia)

Titles: TBA
More information: S.Poelhekke@vu.nl

**Staff**

**Welcome…**

Per 1 September **Marion Collewet** works as a post-doc on the NWO-MVI research project about Participatory Evaluation applied to sustainable energy policy. She holds degrees in political science, philosophy and economics. She obtained a PhD in labour economics from Maastricht University and worked as a post-doc at CORE (Université Catholique de Louvain, Belgium). She is interested in innovative ways to elicit preferences, to provide a better basis for welfare analysis and policy evaluation.

**Michael D. König** joins our department as associate professor, starting in September 2018. In addition, he is research fellow at the Centre for Economic Policy Research (CEPR) in London. Previously, he was senior research associate at the University of Zurich, visiting scholar at the Stanford Institute for Economic Policy Research (SIEPR) and the Department of Economics at Stanford University. Michael’s research focuses on the economics of innovation and technological change, and how these affect and are being affect by networked relationships between various economic actors, ranging from individuals, firms, sectors to countries.
Zhaoxin Liu will join our department as PhD student per 1 October. Her research topic: enhancing food system sustainability – policy options for influencing consumer demand, a joint project with IVM and PBL. Zhaoxin recently completed her Research Master in Economics in Groningen. Her research interests cover environmental economics and behavioural economics.

Ruth Shortall is a postdoctoral researcher from Ireland. She obtained a PhD on sustainability assessment of geothermal energy from the University of Iceland. She has also worked for several years in the IT industry and for the JRC-EU. Based at TU Delft, in the faculty of Technology, Policy and Management, her current research topic relates to developing alternatives to traditional economic policy analysis tools with the aim of incorporating citizen’s ethical and environmental concerns into real-world economic policy analysis. At VU, she is working with Paul Koster and Marion Collewet as post-doc on the NWO-MVI research project about Participatory Evaluation applied to sustainable energy policy.

Anna Straubinger is an external PhD candidate, supervised by Erik Verhoef and Henri de Groot. Her research is on welfare effects of and regulatory options for passenger drones for inner-city transport. Anna works as a research associate at Bauhaus Luftfahrt, a small aviation research institute based in Munich (Germany). She will visit VU in November and December 2018.

Thi Thuy An Vo is an external PhD candidate, supervised by Erik Verhoef, Chris Behrends, and Eric Pels. Her research topic is Pricing strategies to improve efficiency for the European Air Traffic Management System. In addition, she works as a research assistant at the Department of Tourism/Transport Management, Worms University of Applied Sciences in Germany. She will stay with us from 1 September until 31 December.
Yixiao Wang is a PhD student from Beijing Jiaotong University, who will stay with us for one year, supervised by Erik Verhoef and Eric Pels. Yixiao majored in transport economics and policy. His research focuses on competition and cooperation between high-speed railways (HSR) and air transport.

As of 1 September, STREEM graduate Wouter Willemsen works as student assistant for STREEM. Currently he is enrolled in the MSc Environment and Resource Management with a specific focus on water management. In addition to his tasks within STREEM, Wouter is working – together with Hans Koster and Jos van Ommeren - on a paper on flood risk in Florida, which was also the topic of his thesis.

Haohan Xiao is a PhD student from Beijing Jiaotong University, China, who will stay with us for one year. He works under the supervision of Erik Verhoef and Vincent van den Berg. Haohan’s research topic relates to transport economics, more specifically urban parking issues.

Goodbye...

Per 1 September, Yann Delaprez, who has been working with us since 2016, has left our department and returned to Toulouse.
In October 2018, **Yuan Gu** will leave our department and start to work at Rabobank in Utrecht as model validator in the credit risk group. She has been here as a TI graduate and a PhD student for 3.5 years. Yuan’s VU email is still in use, or contact her at guyuananne@gmail.com. She will come back for the defense and see you around.

**Gerben de Jong** left our department at the end of August 2018 to start as a researcher at SEO Amsterdam Economics. He will be around until the end of September to finish his dissertation.

**Or Levkovich** left the department in August. He is now working as a senior data scientist at Lone Rooftop (still in Amsterdam). His email address is Orlevko@gmail.com.

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**In the media**

*Vanuit Spangen: de effecten van het Vogelaarwijkenbeleid* (interview with Hans Koster on Radio Een Vandaag, 17 September, 2018)

*Verhandelbare rechten als oplossing voor schaarstevraagstukken* (online news article with comments of Erik Verhoef, Platform31, 5 September, 2018)

*Het veel bekritiseerde krachtwijkenbeleid was geen weggegooid geld* (Hans Koster and Jos van Ommeren in Dagblad Trouw, August 21, 2018)


*The Blitz added £ 4.5 billion to London's annual economy, say experts* (article on Hans Koster’s research in The Telegraph, 6 August, 2018)

*Wat als de dorpsonderneming naar de stad vertrekt?* (Henri de Groot in Friesch Dagblad, 21 July, 2018)

*Een nieuw huis in de stad? Zeg dan maar dag tegen uw auto, of toch niet?* (Erik Verhoef on younger generations' view on car ownership, De Volkskrant, June 25, 2018)
Druk op de weg (Erik Verhoef on congestion in radio programme BNR You can ask me anything, June 20, 2018)

Schiphol mag niet verder groeien (Eric Pels' view on KLM's position in NH Nieuws video, June 20, 2018)

Brandpunt+: Nederland fileland (Erik Verhoef in tv documentary on innovative ways to solve congestion, June 12, 2018)

Selected publications (1 January – 1 September, 2018)

Journal articles


Working papers

More publications >