



COST Action CA 17132

APPLY

European Network for Argumentation and Public Policy Analysis

 publicpolicyargument.eu

Edited by:

Jean H.M. Wagemans

Science Communication Coordinator

J.H.M.Wagemans@uva.nl

Marcin Lewiński

Action Chair

m.lewinski@fcsh.unl.pt

Steve Oswald

Action Vice-Chair

steve.oswald@unifr.ch

Action Chair

Marcin Lewiński

m.lewinski@fcsh.unl.pt

Action Grant Manager

Andreia Zorrinho

andreia.zorrinho@fcsh.unl.pt

THE CHALLENGE

Argumentation is a communicative activity of giving and taking reasons in the context of doubt and disagreement.

As such, argumentation is everywhere, and it is important to study it.

Especially in our information age, where technological developments have drastically changed the way in which people communicate.

With the associated perils of misinformation and populist discourse, improving the quality of exchanging reasons is indispensable to achieve sound public policy that commands the support of both citizens and stakeholders.

THE COST ACTION

The more than 300 researchers involved in the COST Action *European network for Argumentation and Public PoLicY analysis* (**APPLY**) have aimed at improving the way European citizens understand, evaluate, and contribute to public decision-making on such matters of common concern as climate change or a global pandemic.

Both individually and collectively, they have produced empirical results, advanced theories, and developed tools that can help people navigate communication in the information age, especially in the public domain.

THE RESEARCH

Researchers involved in **APPLY** have identified gaps between the argumentation of citizens, policy makers, and scholarly experts, and explored ways of treating them.

Three main Research Questions guided the activities of APPLY:

01

What does public deliberation and argumentation look like?

Investigated by **APPLY's** Working Group 1, this question led to the development of **D-APPLY database** gathering various examples of public deliberation practices; the *Pandemic of Argumentation* volume examining public discourse in the times of pandemic; and *various empirical analyses of public argument*.

02

What norms of argumentation should a healthy and functioning public deliberation process follow?

In addressing this question, the members of Working Group 2 have developed an account of the types of [goals](#) and [norms governing public argumentation](#) and studied various ways in which these [norms are enacted, negotiated, exploited, or violated](#).

03

How can public deliberation be improved?

Focusing on tools for better argumentation, members of Working Group 3 examined [methods for designing public argumentation](#) and advanced user-friendly applications for [conducting large-scale deliberation](#), [challenging fake news](#), [visualizing and analyzing arguments](#), and [argument mining](#) in the context of public debates.

THE RESULTS

The theories and tools developed in cost action **APPLY** can be used to mitigate the perils of populist discourse and policies by enhancing people's critical thinking skills, helping policymakers, citizens, and other stakeholders to engage in well-informed argumentative discussions, and by improving decision-making processes that are vital for our democracy.

All results are posted on the [OUTPUT pages](#) of the **APPLY** website.

THE FUTURE

COST Action **APPLY** has managed to consolidate existing argumentation scholarship across Europe and beyond.

Moreover, it has inspired scholars to intensify collaborative research and to develop new projects and initiatives, many of them winning funding from the European Union or national science foundations.

While **APPLY** as such ended in April 2023, the network will continue to exist in a new form.

To know more about this future of argumentation research in Europe, please consult [the APPLY website](#).