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Author(s): Sietske A. Veenman

Policy issues such as sustainability, healthcare and the financial crisis emphasise the importance of anticipating the long-term perspective. In practice, however, it is difficult to deal with such an irregular or deviant topic as the long term in public policy and politics. A perspective on how the long term and its inherent uncertainty play a role in politics and public policy-making processes is under-represented. This article examines how policy-making processes and politics deal with the uncertainty of a long-term issue from the perspective of futures studies. The case study under consideration is the ageing population in the Netherlands, which has been on the country's political agenda since the end of the nineties. It is shown that the over-reliance on forecasting studies has impacted how uncertainty about the future is dealt with in both policy-making processes and politics. With these conclusions, this paper integrates the existing, yet fragmented, literature on using futures studies in public policy and politics and adds to the scarce empirical research.

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