

**arud**

Zentrum für Suchtmedizin

# The hepatitis C policy

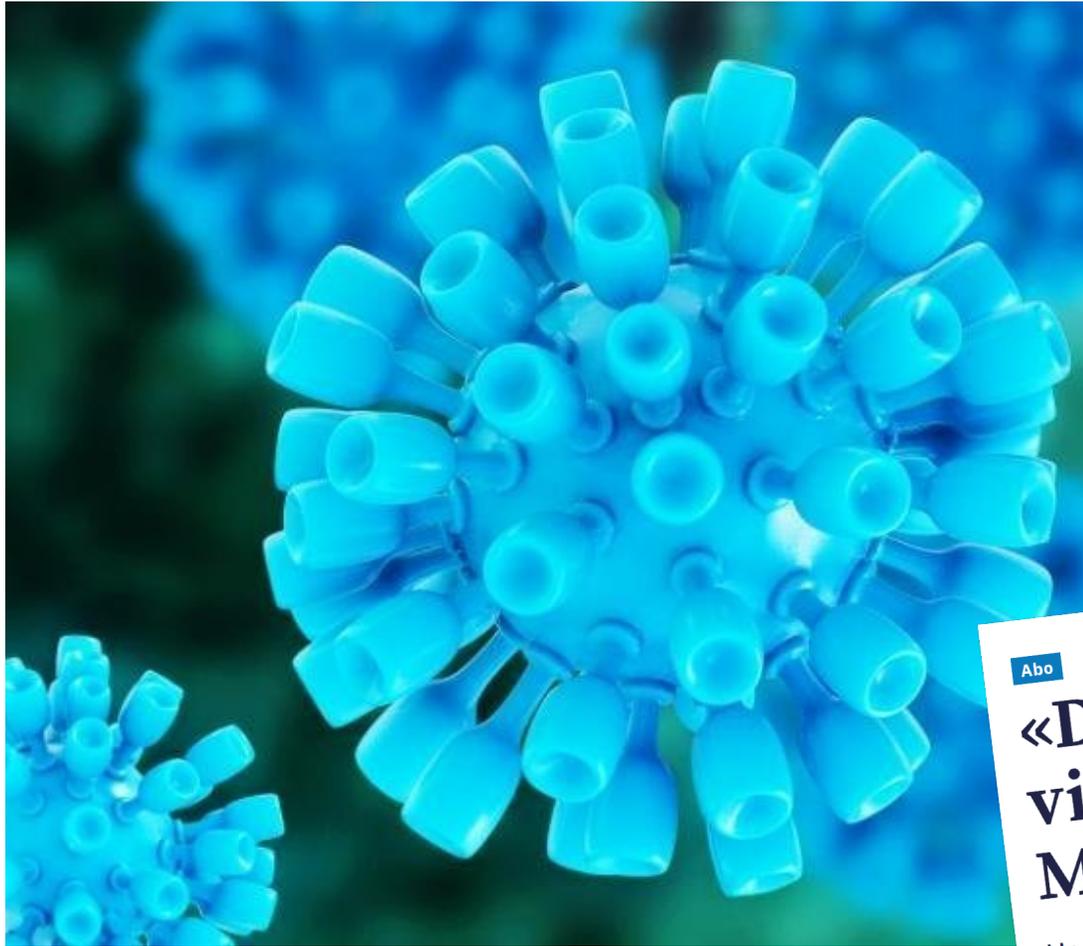
## An analysis of the agenda-setting in Switzerland

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November, 30th 2020

# Hepatitis C in Switzerland

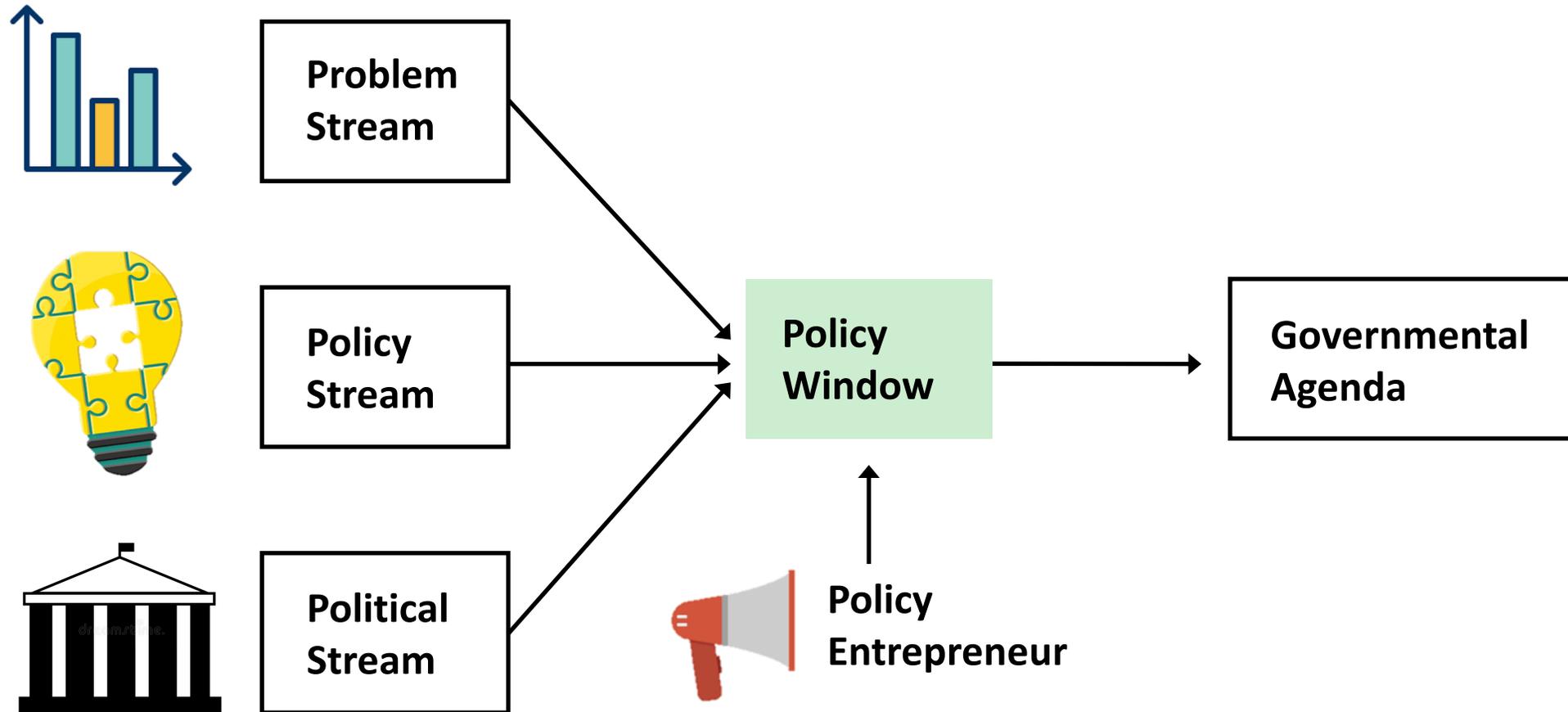


**Abo**  
**Eine Packung Pillen für 19'000 Franken**  
Ein US-K...  
Medikam...  
jedoch a...  
SWI swissinfo.ch  
Schweizer Perspektiven in 10 Sprachen  
Suchen Menü



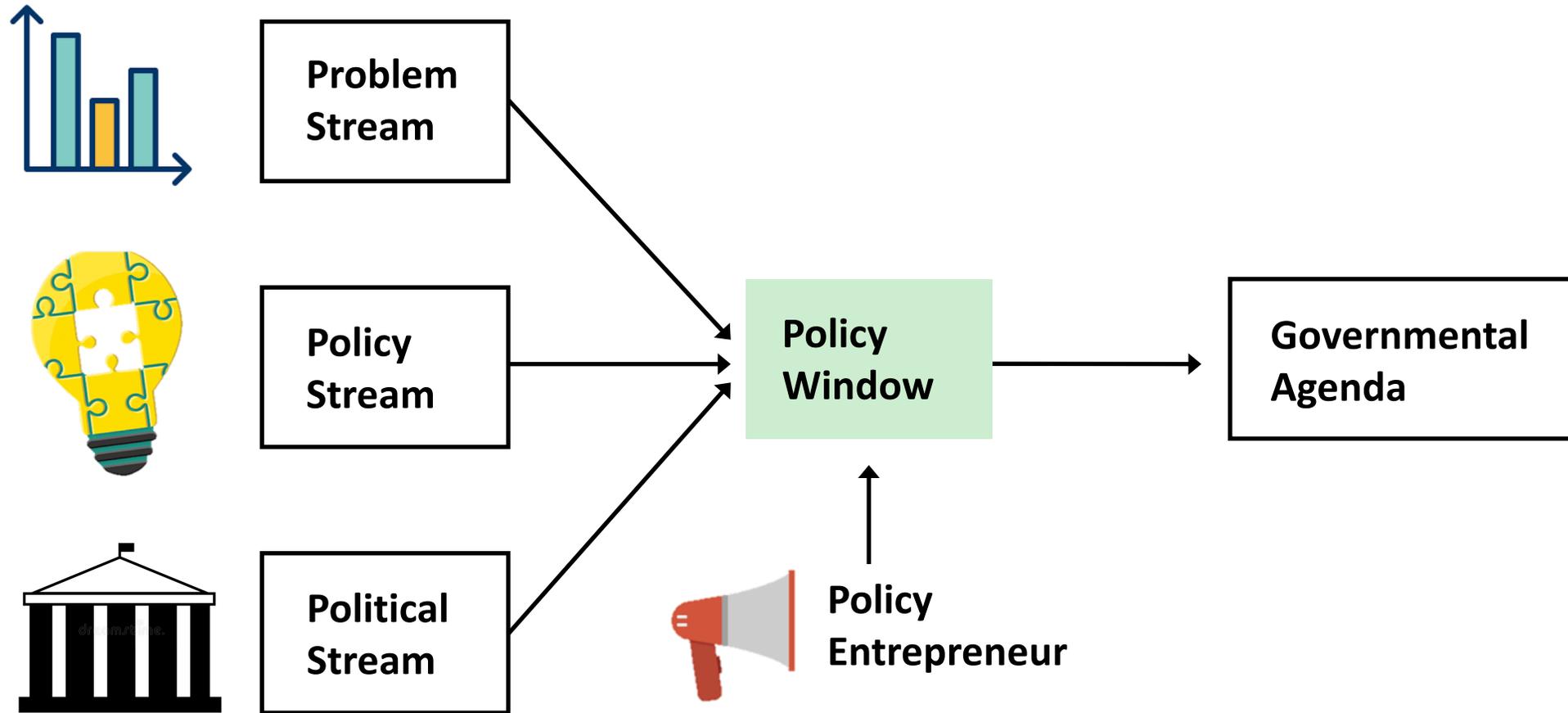
**Abo**  
**«Die 28 Ta...  
viel wie ei...  
Mittelklassew...»**  
Hepatitis-C kann mit einem neuen Medikament besser...  
werden, ist aber unheimlich teuer. Das gibt Probleme. Dazu Arzt und...  
Hepatitis-Experte Philip Bruggmann.

# Multiple Streams Framework by Kingdon (1984)



"Conditions become defined as problems when we come to believe that we should do something about them. [...] How do conditions come to be defined as problems? Values, comparisons, and categories contribute to the translation."

# Multiple Streams Framework by Kingdon (1984)



# Method

- Document analysis
- Interviews with 11 persons:
  - 5 medical professors or **physicians** involved in research
    - 1 immunologist
    - 1 internal medicine/addiction specialist
    - 2 gastroenterologists/hepatologists
    - 1 infectiologist
  - 3 (former) **FOPH employees**
  - 1 former **politician** specialized in health politics
  - 1 former CEO of a **pharmaceutical company**
  - 1 managing director of an **advocacy group**

# Problem Stream

**Lack of  
epidemiological  
data**



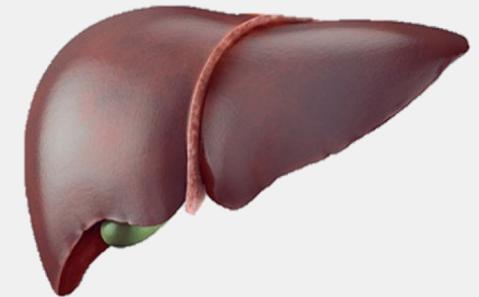
**High estimated numbers  
of unreported cases**



**High drug prices  
led to limitation**



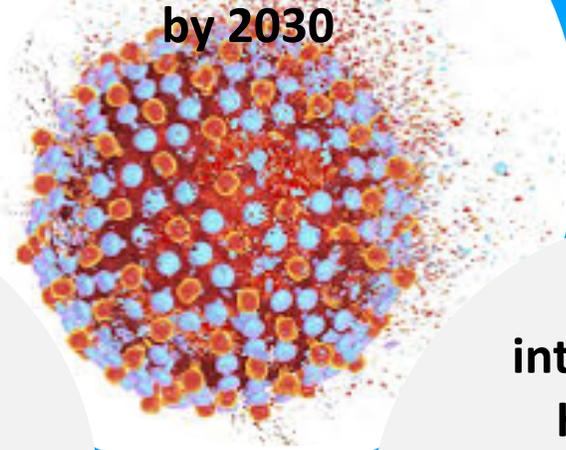
**Hepatitis C  
still seen only as  
a liver disease**



"Where a big discussion has developed in the professional world and between us is whether asymptomatic hepatitis C is worthy of treatment or not. If someone is only infected, only the carrier, should one really treat him or not? And this automatically leads to the question: Do we have to look for them or not?"

# Policy Stream

**Vision:  
Elimination of hepatitis  
by 2030**



**Screening of the  
population**



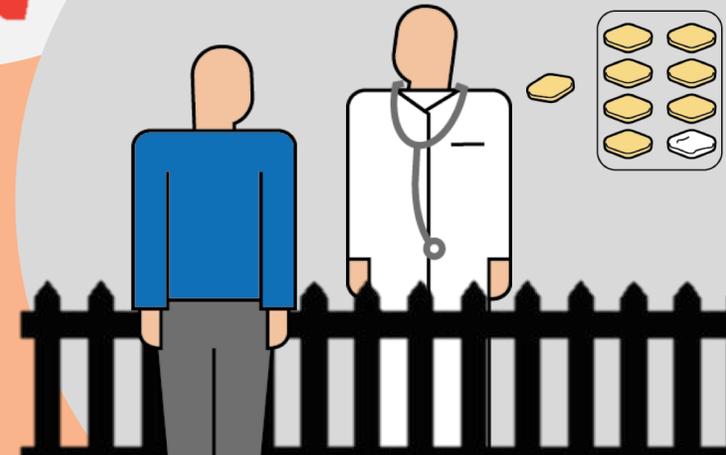
**Integration  
into the national  
HIV program  
and HIV structures**



**Swiss  
hepatitis strategy**



**Removal  
of limitation**



# Policy entrepreneur

**Until 2015**



- Gastroenterologist/hepatologists
- Employees of the FOPH

# Policy entrepreneur

Since 2017



- Hepatologists
- Infectiologists
- Patient representatives
- Professional office with general manager

"A media release must always have a certain 'touch' in order to be taken up by the media – I think that is a double-edged sword. Because everything we finally published still had a certain inaccuracy. Sometimes you can make false hopes."

# Political Stream



**Federal Council and senior official at FOPH:**

→ no major changes in leadership



**Federal Commission on Sexually Transmitted Infections (EKSI)**

→ change in presidency

# Policy window and "coupling"



## Parliament (Council of States)

- **Interpellation**  
Federal funds for the fight against viral hepatitis
- **Motion**  
Elimination of hepatitis should be part of a national HIV program



## Federal Commission on Sexually Transmitted Infections (EKSI):

- Joint Roadmap on HIV and hepatitis elimination

# Summary

**Problem Stream** New therapy → reassessment of the issue:  
HCV moved from being a «condition» to being a «problem»



**Policy Stream** New research and evidence  
→ different picture of the disease  
→ called for new approaches  
Feasible solutions (integration into HIV structures)



**Political Stream** Politicians who were willing to become engaged in this matter  
→ counterbalance to the administration



**Policy Window**  
Renewal of the national HIV program

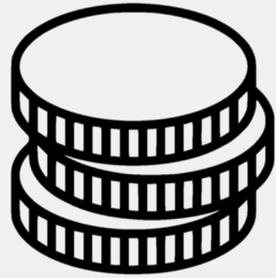


**Policy Entrepreneur**  
From expert to advocacy organization

# Conclusion



**Sound  
epidemiological data  
as a prerequisite**



**Funding and a FOPH  
that is committed**



**Crucial role of  
a policy entrepreneur**

"The data do not speak  
for themselves."

Thank you  
for your attention!

Julia Kind

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