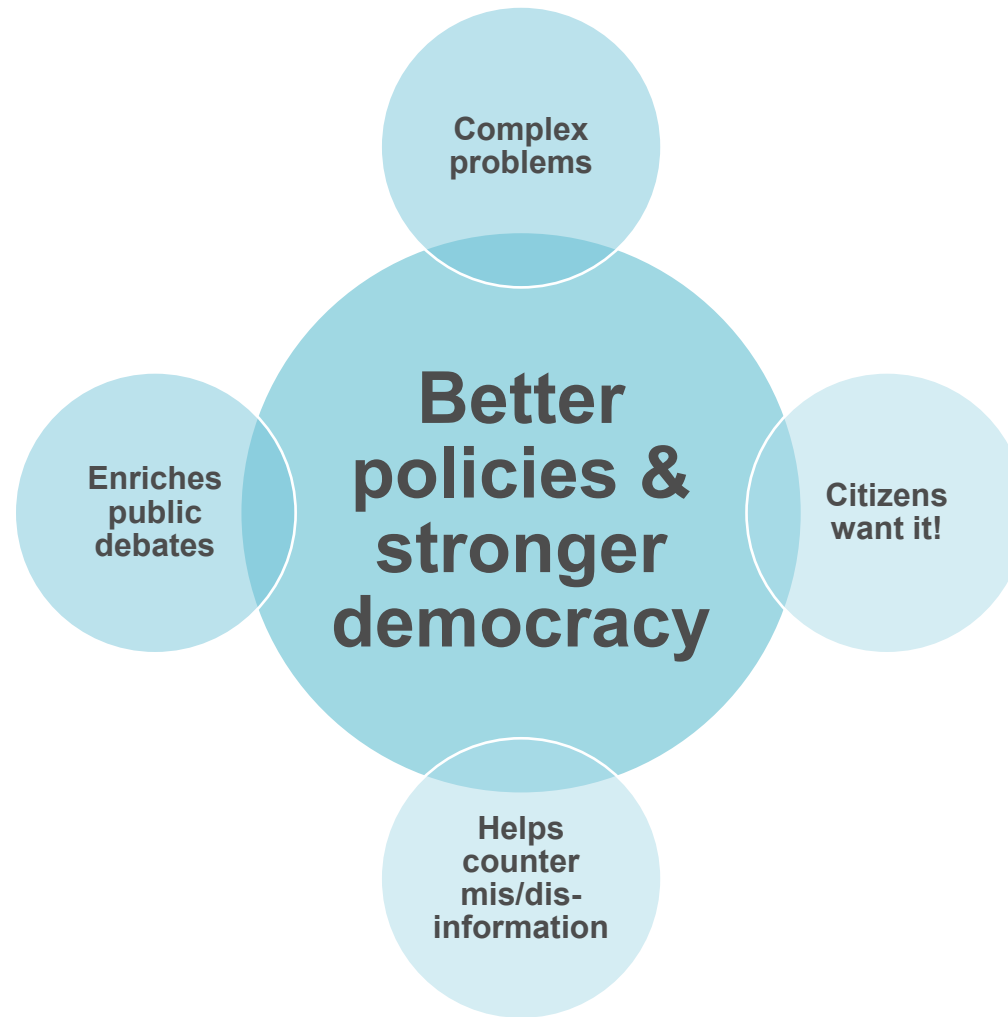# From evidence-informed policymaking to Science for Policy ecosystems

David Mair, Joint Research Centre
Unit S.2 Science for democracy and evidence-informed policymaking
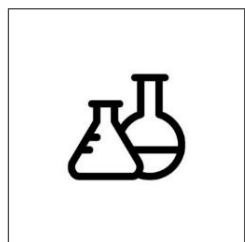
Why (better) evidence for policy?

What is evidence-informed policymaking?

Evidence-informed policymaking: an approach to policymaking that informs policy deliberations and decisions with the **best available evidence**.
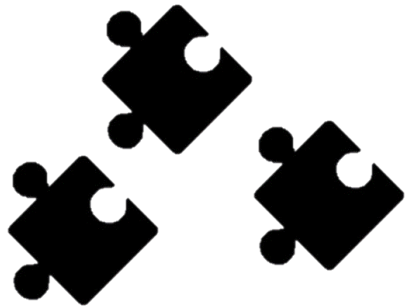
Evidence in general refers to "*data, information, and knowledge from multiple sources, including quantitative data such as statistics and measurements, qualitative data such as opinions, stakeholder input, conclusions of evaluations, as well as scientific and expert advice*"
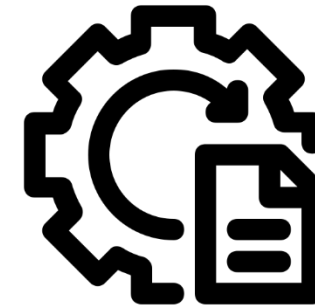
Research communities

European Commission

Three challenges to EIPM

Institutional environment: connections & coordination
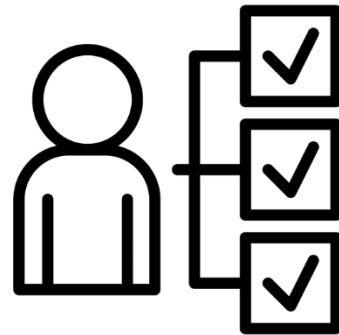
Individual capacities: competences and inter-sectoral understanding

**Good governance of evidence use:** Limits of science and policymaking

European Commission

Need for a system's perspective – actors

Academics, universities, and research institutes

Individual scientists acting as advisers

Academies and learned societies

Brokering programmes and policy fellowships

Think thanks and consultancy

Circulation & adoptation of scientific evidence for policymaking

Government research laboratories and units

Expert commissions, councils and committees

Chief science advisers and government employed scientists

Units, teams, and advisers within regulatory agencies

Parliamentary advisory units and libraries

Unique funding programmes

System's perspective – policies, processes, and principles

Sectoral policies

Better Regulation

Research policies

Public Administration Reform…
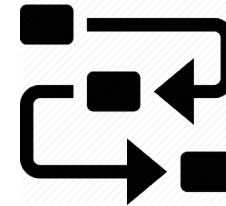
Impact Assessment

Training

Foresight
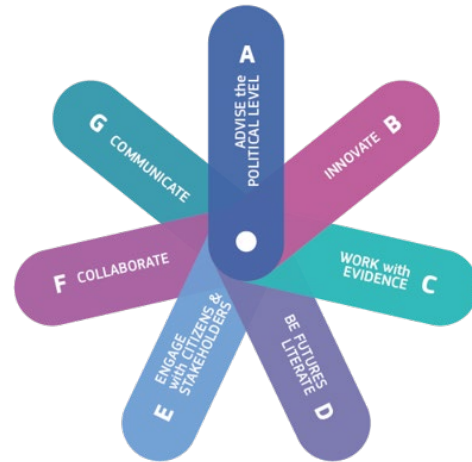
Recruitment

Research funding

Consultation

Evaluation…

Recognizing the limitations of EIPM

Identifying normative foundations of EIPM

Embedding EIPM in democratic processes…

European Commission

JRC support for science-for-policy systems

Institutions, e.g.

Individuals, e.g.

Research, e.g.
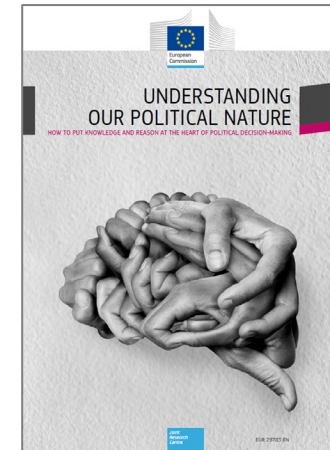
Society, e.g.

JRC support for specific EIPM practices

- Innovating the policy making process – EU Policy Lab

- Data, methods and tools for robust evidence

- Helping policy departments making better laws more efficiently

Composite Indicators & Scoreboards

Microeconomic Evaluation
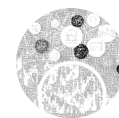
Modelling

Text Mining & analysis

Technology Transfer

Foresight

Behavioural Insights

Participatory and Deliberative Democracy

2016

2020

EU POLICYMAKING CYCLE

Policy development and revision

Commission proposal

Negotiation and adoption by the European Parliament and Council

Draft acts

Implementation on the ground

Evaluation

Better Regulation
Joining forces to make better laws

Specific EIPM practices #1: Foresight

- **Systematic participatory process**

- Looks forward into the **medium- to long-term future**

- Creates **collective intelligence** about the future

- Builds **plausible rationales** of possible future developments
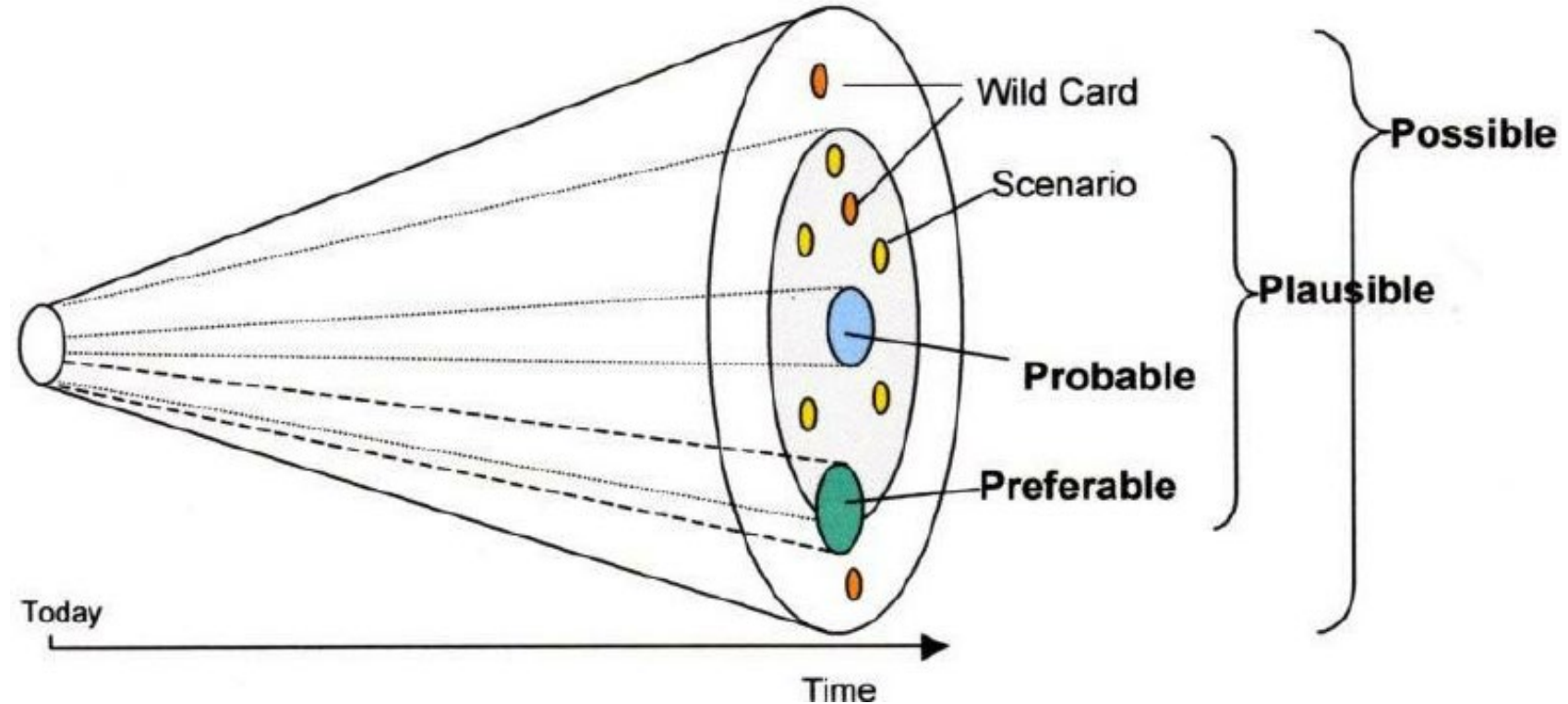
Source: J. Voros, A generic foresight process framework

Key actors at a glance in the EU foresight process

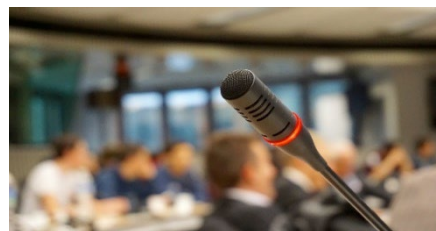**Executive Vice-President Šefčovič**

Leading EC work on strategic foresight

Strategic Foresight Network

Network of directors and experts across EC

EU Policy Lab JRC.S1

Competence Centre on Foresight

European Strategy and Policy Analysis System

ESPAS: inter-institutional foresight network

Strategic Foresight SG.A5

Coordination and Strategic Foresight Report

EU-wide Foresight Network

Network of ministers from each Member State

Citizens, businesses, think tanks

Involved in foresight process, Call for Evidence, consultations

European Commission

Strategic Foresight Report(s)

Underpinned by Science for Policy Report

2020

2021

2022

Commission Communication

Science for Policy Report

2023

European Commission
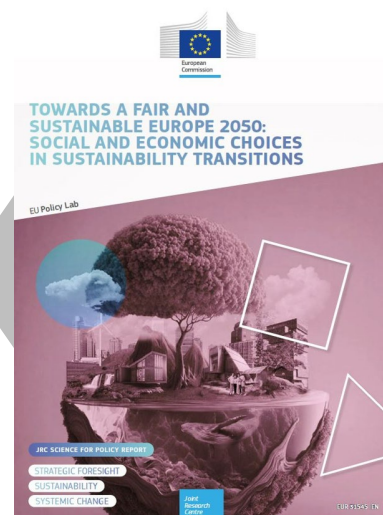
Foresight tools - Reference foresight scenarios

- A set of four foresight scenarios

- Explore possible world developments & the EU standing by 2040

- Developed through desk research + participatory workshops + interviews

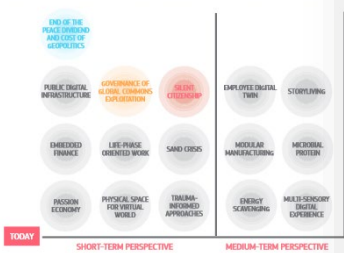- Used for stress-testing policies, discussing implications for specific issues such as food security

- Available online:

https://publications.jrc.ec.europa.eu/repository/handle/JRC132943

Foresight tools - Horizon Scanning

Foresight Capacity Building

- Online foresight training: **Futures Ministries** – Foresight Skills development, accessible via EU Academy (to be developed in 2024)

- **Future Forward** – 20 online lessons to support (young) people in their exploration of the future (in collaboration with DG EAC and RTD) and TED-Education)

- **Futures4Europe platform** for information and interaction

- CC Foresight website with information and tools

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Specific EIPM Practice #2: How behavioural insights (BI) inform EU policy

When we identify a **behavioural element**, can we afford to ignore **BI?**

JRC SCIENTIFIC AND POLICY REPORTS

Applying Behavioural Sciences
to EU Policy-making

2013

René van Bavel
Benedikt Herrmann
Gabriele Esposito
Antonios Proestakis

EUR 26033 EN

©EU

No Vax
No Mask

Smoking causes
fatal lung cancer

HETFIELDS

European Commission @EU_Commission · 1h
Bye, bye:
A+
A++
A+++

And welcome: a new, simpler A to G scale for #EnergyLabels! They will make it easier for you to choose the household appliances that consume less and reduce energy bills.

#EUGreenDeal @Energy4Europe

Bye bye A+
and other +++?

A NEW
GENERATION OF
EU ENERGY LABELS

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How do we inform policymaking?

Understand the behavioural factors affecting the policy problem

Problem definition

Policy design

Policy implementation

Monitoring & evaluation
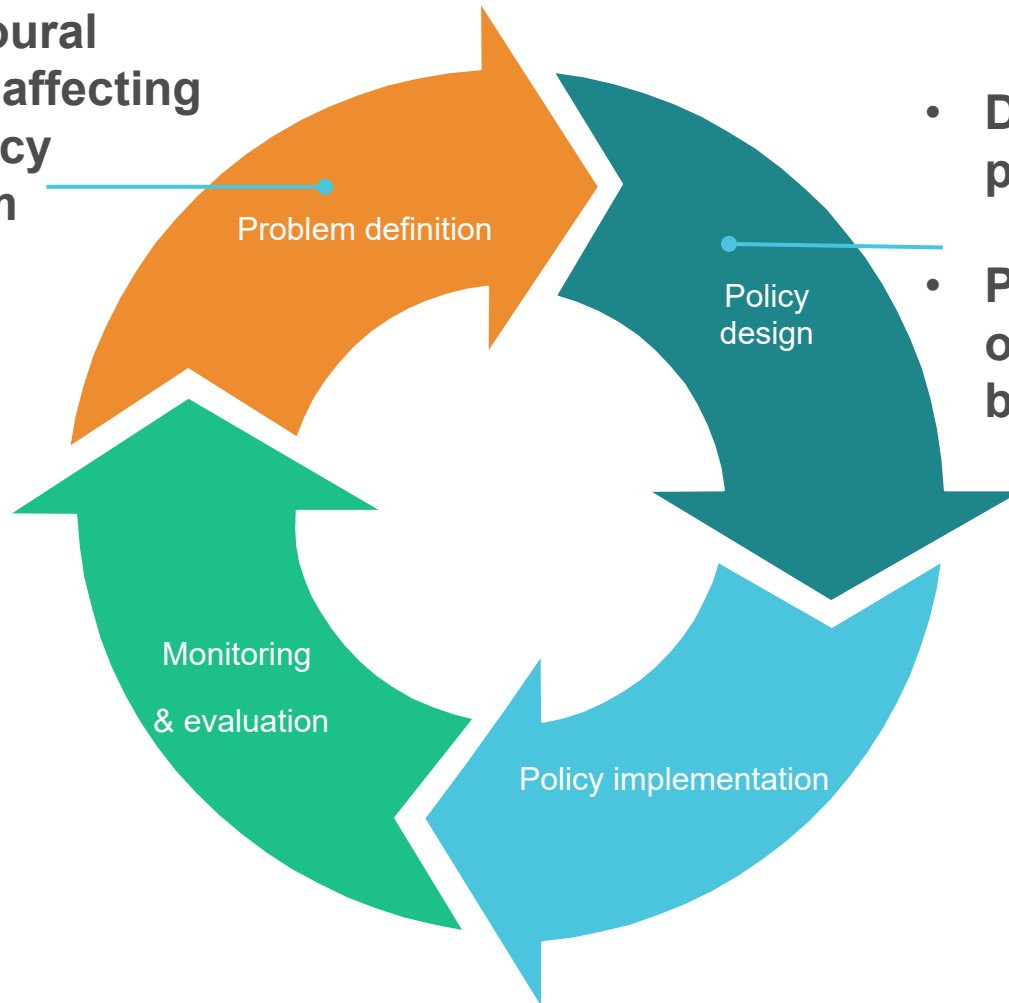
- **Design BI-informed policy options**

- **Pre-test their impact on people's behaviour**

Main challenges:

- Be informed and involved <u>early on</u> in the process

- Be able to provide <u>timely</u> support to policy DGs

About the Competence Centre on Behavioural Insights:
https://knowledge4policy.ec.europa.eu/behavioural-insights_en

If you wish to contact us: **JRC-CCBI@ec.europa.eu**

European Commission

Specific EIPM Practice #3: Policy evaluation

Tools for policy evaluation:

- Ch 3: Identifying impacts in evaluations, fitness checks, and impact assessments
- Ch 6: How to carry out an evaluation and fitness check
- Ch 8: Methodologies for analysing impacts in impact assessments, evaluations, and fitness checks

JRC support to policy DGs and others working in the field.
E.g. the **Competence Centre on Micro-economic Evaluation (CC-ME)**

- Focus on data-driven micro-econometric analysis and causal evidence on what works
- Provides advice and capacity building on data collection, evaluation design and methodology

Better Regulation
TOOLBOX

July 2023

European Commission

Counterfactual Impact Evaluation (CIE): why is this needed?

- Counterfactual impact evaluation is a particular type of evaluation that allows to establish a **causal link** between policies and their effects.

  - ➢ Informs on whether a program has **achieved** its desired outcomes

  - ➢ Assesses whether the changes can be **attributed** to the policy under scrutiny

- CIE compares the outcome for units who benefitted from a programme (the "**treated group**") with the one of similar units (the "**comparison/control group**"), not participating in the programme.

- This addresses the question: "***what would have happened to the treated had they not participated to the programme?***", known as the counterfactual.

Key take aways

1. EIPM relies on a broad set of actors and mechanisms. A system's perspective allows for coordination among different activities and initiatives, increasing effectiveness and transparency.

2. We support EIPM not only for better policymaking but also to reinforce democracy. It is important to build normative foundations into capacity building work.

3. Europe is full of innovations as regards EIPM. Let's foster exchange and connect activities.

European Commission

Key questions

- To what extent has your Member State identified the evidence-informed policy-making as a priority for public administration? To what extent do you view EIPM as a systemic challenge?

- Could you share any relevant practices and/or experiences, especially those linked to the presented specific practices?

European Commission

Thank you

E-mail: David.Mair@ec.europa.eu