Barriers in EU Green Policy Implementation

WORKSHOP - 1st October 2024

Collaborative Space (Ispra) · 14:15 -16:45

Marion Dupoux
A workshop session designed by David Martens

The Joint Research Centre

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- As a Directorate General of the European Commission, the JRC plays a key role at multiple stages of the policy cycle.

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- The EU Policy Lab is a collaborative and experimental space for innovative policymaking.
- We experiment with the new, the unprecedented and the unknown.
- We seek to augment our understanding of the present, challenge and reinvent the way we think about the future.
- policy-lab.ec.europa.eu

FORESIGHT

Eyes to look
at the future

DESIGN

Hands to draw
the world together

BEHAVIOURAL INSIGHTS

Brain to understand
choices and behaviours

miro

Workshop Agenda

What we are going to talk about today

14:15 – 14:25	Introduction of the session
14:25-15:05	**Interactive Session 1: Barriers to Implementation of EU Green Policies**
15:05-15:15	*Short break*
15:15-15:40	**Presentation of Behavioural Insights and their Role in Public Policy and Organisational Change**
15:40-16:40	**Interactive Session 2: Exploring the Behavioural Drivers of Implementation Barriers**
16:40-16:45	Closing Words

Workshop Agenda

What we are going to talk about today

In-person workshop & Online workshop
Together

14:15 – 14:25	Introduction of the session
14:25-15:05	**Interactive Session 1: Barriers to Implementation of EU Green Policies**
15:05-15:15	*Short break*
15:15-15:40	**Presentation of Behavioural Insights and their Role in Public Policy and Organisational Change**
15:40-16:40	**Interactive Session 2: Exploring the Behavioural Drivers of Implementation Barriers**
16:40-16:45	Closing Words

Barriers in EU Green Policy Implementation, Consent

Data Collection to conduct Scientific Research

Two Research Areas:

- Focus on implementation related to green transition policies
- Innovative policy-making with focus on behavioural insights

Data collection

- Outputs produced during activities
- Note-taking
- Recording for our research purposes exclusively
- Post-workshop reports based on our observations

Anonymity

- What you say and do during this workshop session will be used anonymously.
- *Your contribution won't be associated with your name, institution or country.*

Scope and Goals🎯

Barriers in EU Green Policy Implementation

Definitions and scope

EU Green Policy

Definition: A collective term for EU initiatives aimed at environmental sustainability and combating climate change.

Inclusions:

- Policies under the European Green Deal
- Sector-specific legislation (e.g., energy, transport, agriculture) with environmental impact

- *Examples of themes:*
  - *Climate action*
  - *Energy efficiency and renewable energy*
  - *Biodiversity*
  - *Circular economy*
  - *Sustainable agriculture and forestry*
  - *Water consumption and conservation*

Implementation

Definition: The process from the adoption of EU Green Policies (both directives and regulations) through to their practical application, enforcement, and compliance within member states.

Focus Areas:

- *Transposition of Directives*: Legal incorporation into national laws
- *Application of Regulations*: Adjusting national practices to comply
- *Enforcement Mechanisms*: Monitoring and ensuring adherence

Barriers in EU Green Policy Implementation

Workshop goals

1. **Collectively identify barriers to policy implementation** of EU green policy in Member States

2. **Learn about what behavioural insights** can bring to public policy and organisational change

3. **Explore behavioural drivers**: Develop and discuss hypotheses on how behavioural factors might contribute to implementation barriers

Barriers in EU Green Policy Implementation

Why Your Participation Matters

Our Shared Goal

- ★ *Collective Improvement*: We are here to collaboratively identify and address the root causes of implementation barriers in the context of EU Green Policies.

The Importance of Your Experiences

- ★ *Valuable Insights*: Your firsthand experiences—both successes and challenges—are crucial for understanding the real-world factors affecting policy implementation.

Why Openness is Key

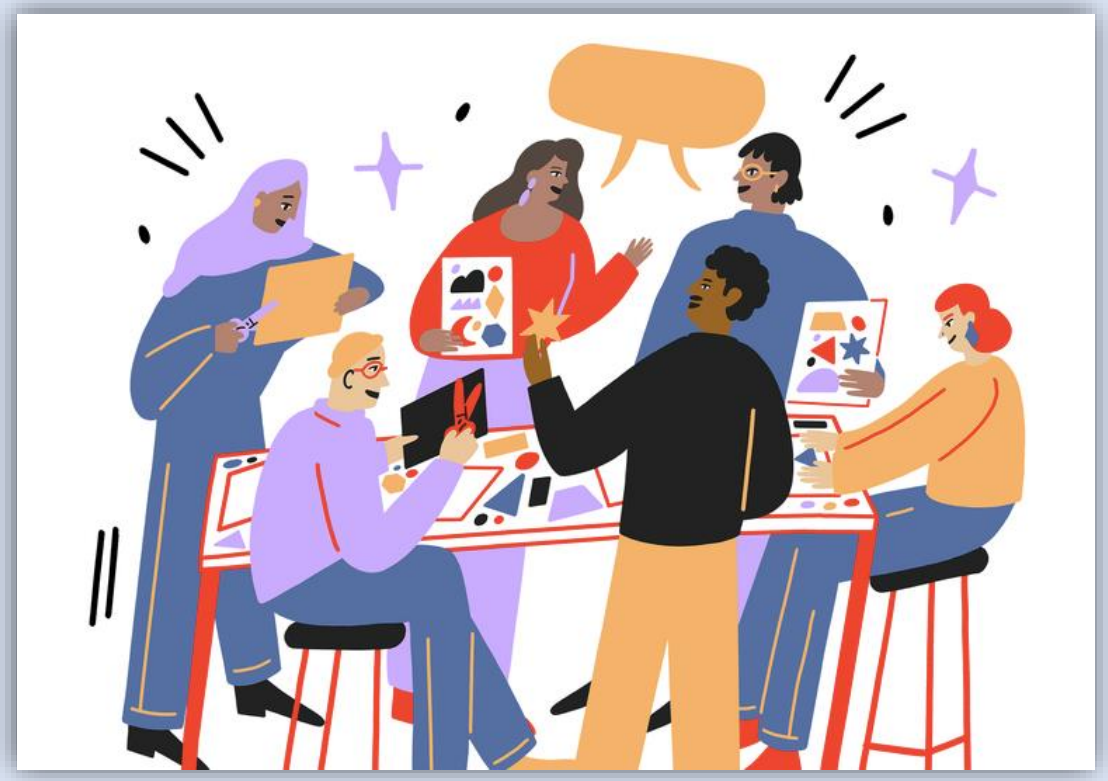
- ★ *Effective Solutions*: Honest and open dialogue allows us to develop practical strategies to overcome barriers.
- ★ *Enhanced Support*: Your input will help the European Commission better support member states in implementing green transition policies.

Your Role

- ★ *Active Participation*: We encourage you to share your insights and perspectives openly.
- ★ *Collaboration*: By working together, we can make significant strides toward our shared environmental goals.

Barriers in EU Green Policy Implementation

Interactive Activities



INTERACTIVE SESSION 1

Please form groups of 5 to 6 people

There are 4 tables (groups) in total

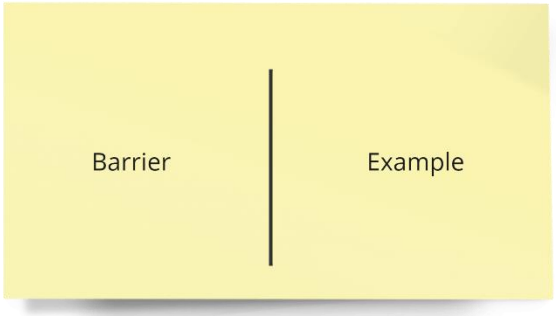
Interactive Session 1.1

8 min

Step 1

Think individually about the two following questions:

1. *"What barriers have you encountered in implementing EU green transition policies in your country?" "What barriers do you know of in implementing EU green transition policies?"*
2. *"Can you provide specific examples of how these barriers manifest in practice?*



To fill in the post-its:

- One idea per post-it
- Barrier description to the left
- Barrier example, context, practical aspects to the right

12 min

Step 2

Share the barriers you've identified with your group

Cluster them on the A3 blank sheet when you notice any similarities

Name clusters when relevant

Interactive Session 1.2

1 min

Step 1

Choose a spokesperson for your group

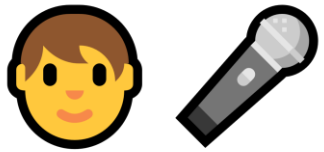
This person's role is to place the barriers your group identified on a commonality scale.

19 min

Step 2

Report the barriers identified in your group

How common do you find the barriers your group has identified?



Place the barriers/clusters **on the map**

Discuss in plenary the positioning of barriers/clusters on the map

Place your barrier on a scale from less to more common.

less common — *more common*

Dot Voting - Impact

Take 3 stickers per person

Come to the board

Allocate your 3 stickers to the barriers that mostly impact/impede the implementation process according to you.

Dot Voting - Impact

Take 3 stickers per person

Come to the board

Allocate your 3 stickers to the barriers that mostly impact/impede the implementation process according to you.

PRESENTATION

Behavioural Insights: What is it? What role in public policy and organisational change? What link with the implementation process?

Behavioural Insights (BI) 🧠

What is it?

Pre-Workshop Survey – Your Replies

Loss Aversion

The prompt

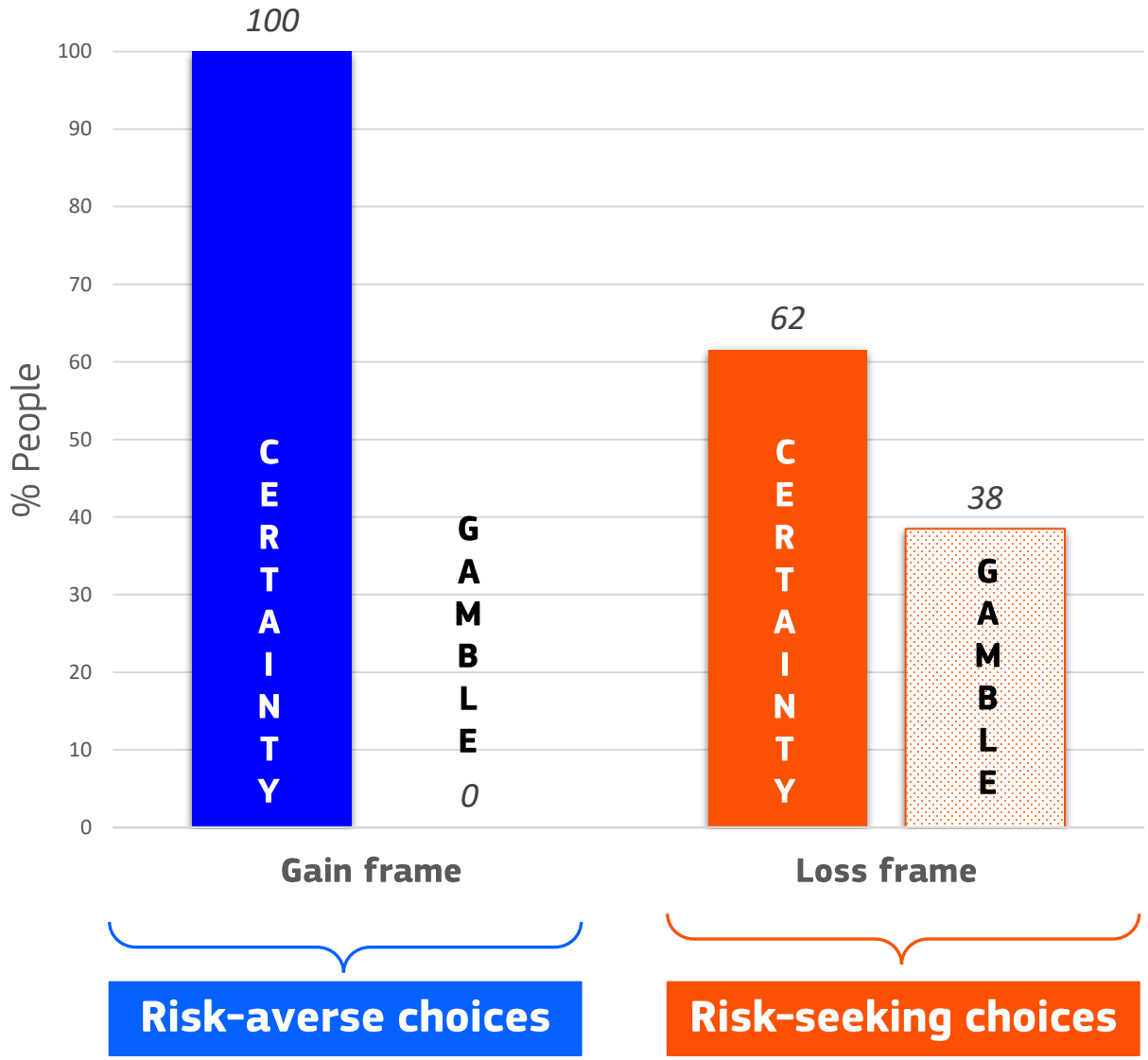
Please imagine you are the Health Minister of an EU Country. A lethal virus is spreading rapidly. Your services tell you that you will have to choose between two options, (a) and (b). Which one do you choose?

CERTAINTY OPTION

Undertaking measures which will definitely save 33% of the population

GAMBLE OPTION

Undertaking measures adding up to a gamble: a 33% chance of saving everyone and a 66% chance of saving no one



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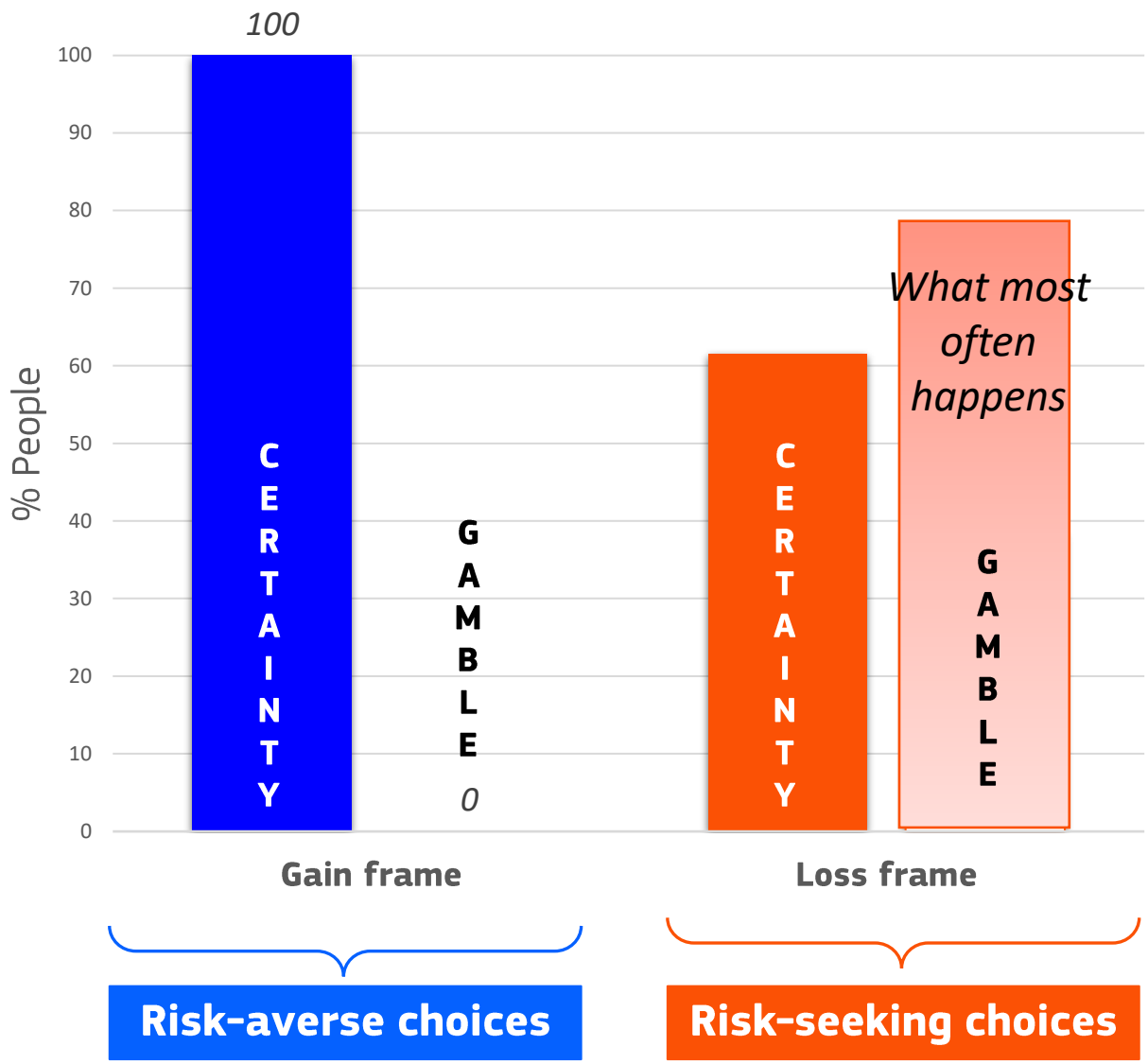
CERTAINTY OPTION

Undertaking measures which will definitely save 33% / entail the definite death of ~~33%~~ 66% of the population

GAMBLE OPTION

Undertaking measures adding up to a gamble: a 33% chance of saving everyone / that no one would die, and a 66% chance that / of saving no one / everyone would die.



Pre-Workshop Survey – Your Replies

Sunk costs fallacy

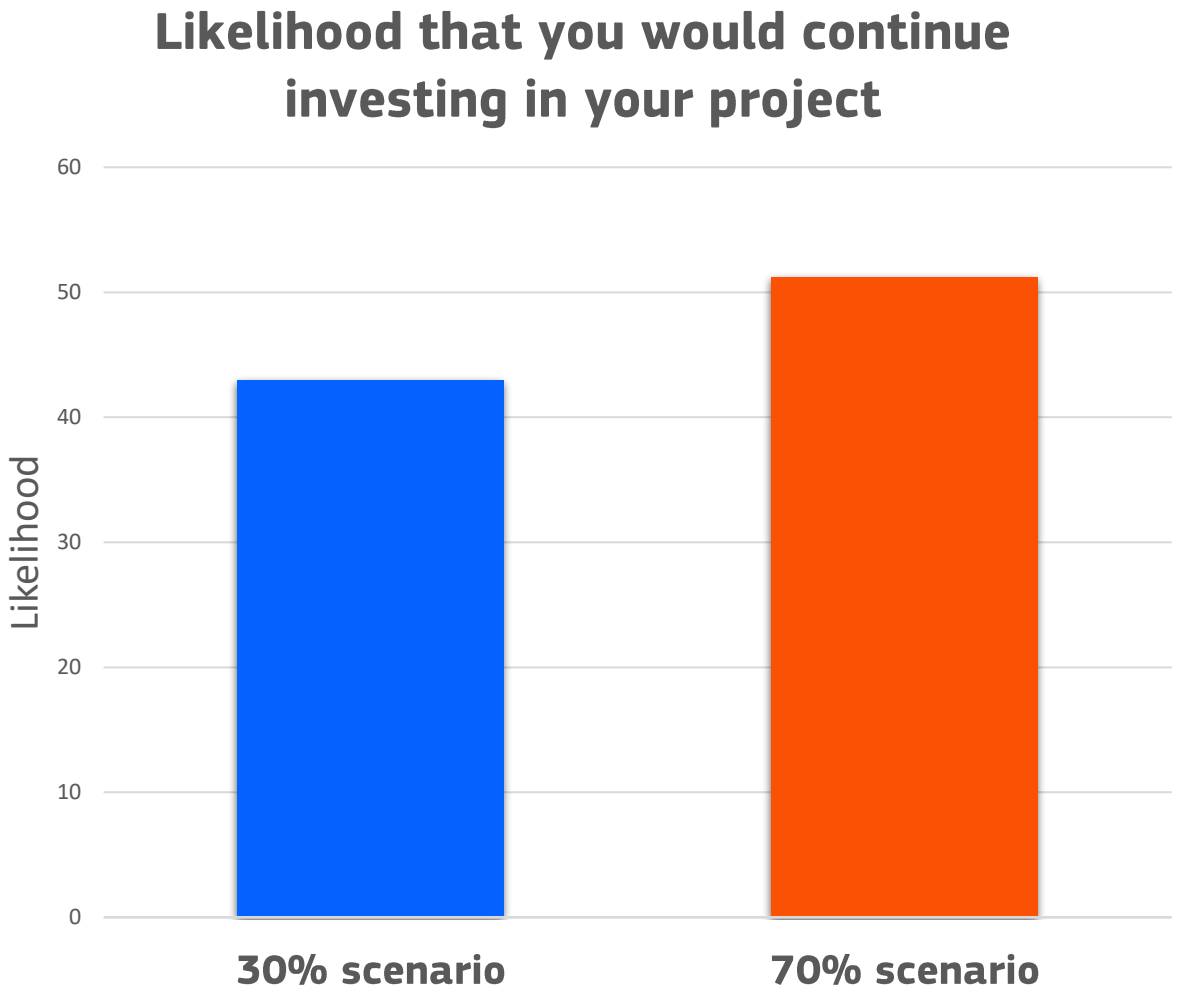
The prompt

Please imagine you work at the Ministry of the Environment of an EU country and consider the following scenario: you are the team leader managing a 5-year €500 million land management, conservation, and biodiversity program focused on the forests of your country. The program has been active for 4 years.

You have just learnt that there is a plan to develop hydropower on the main river of the forest, requiring major resettlement. However, the government still wants the original project completed, despite the inconsistency of these two goals. You know that **30%** / **70%** (**€ 150M** / **350M**) of the funds had been spent.

What is your perceived likelihood of the following?

(a) I would continue the project by committing additional funds.



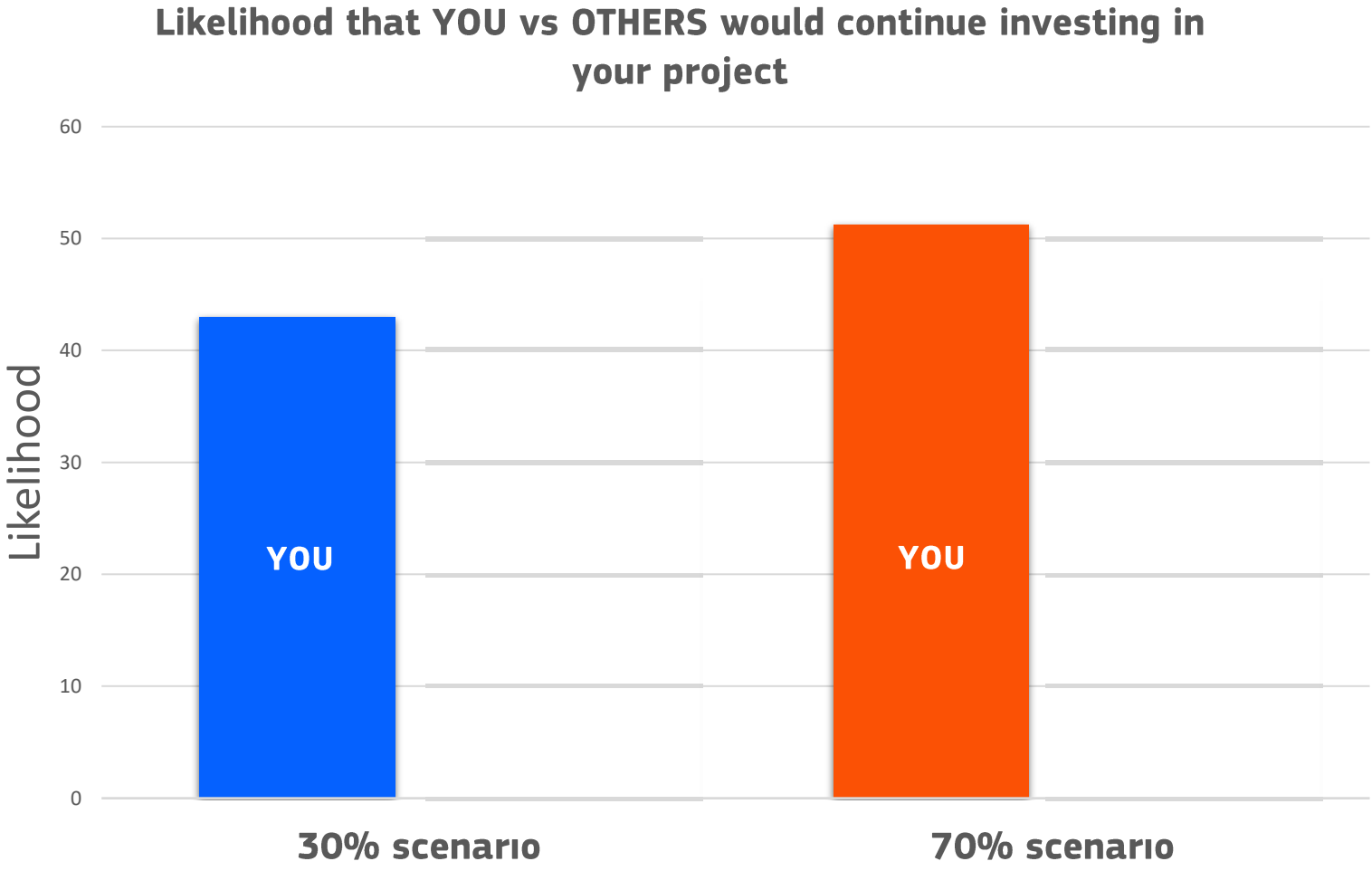
Pre-Workshop Survey – Your Replies

Overconfidence bias

Prompt

In the same scenario as in the previous question, what is your perceived likelihood of the following?

(b) I believe other colleagues at my place would continue the project by committing additional funds



Pre-Workshop Survey – Your Replies

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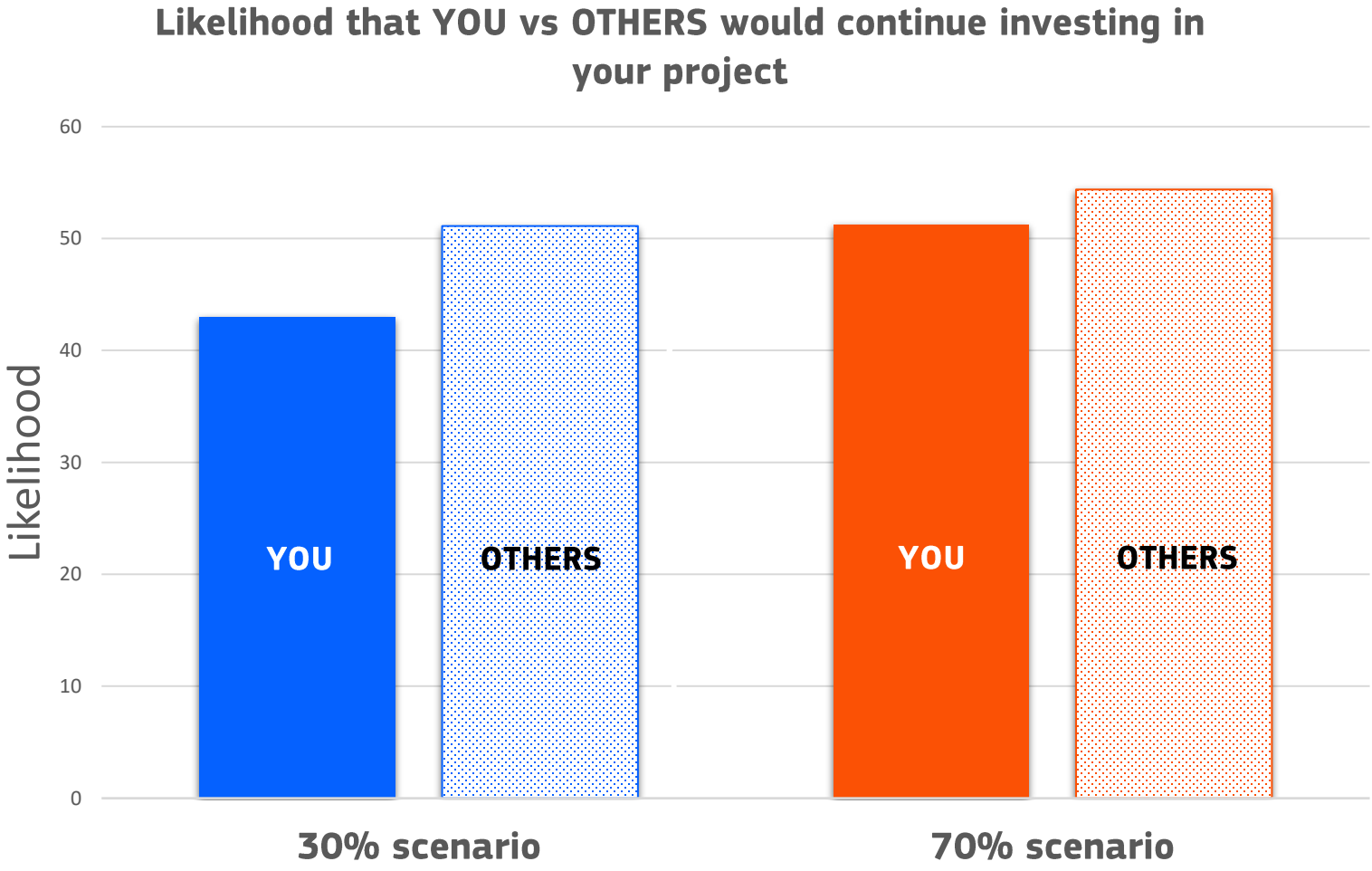
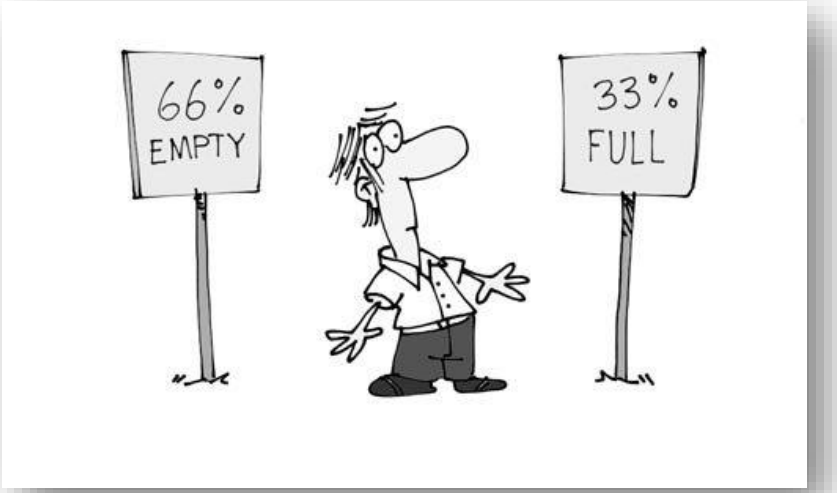


Pre-Workshop Survey – Take-away messages

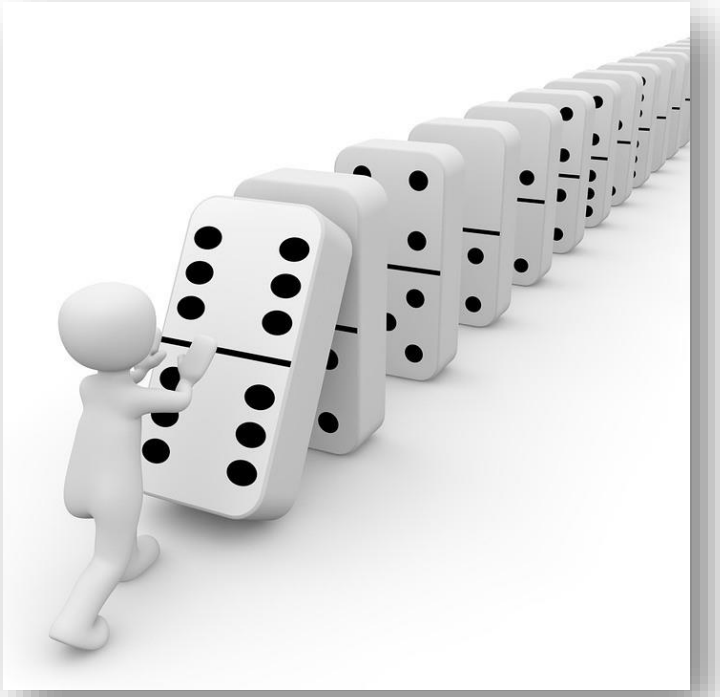
Human behaviour vs Rationality assumption



The way information is presented can significantly affect decision-making.

People often deem themselves better than others or above average.

People are reluctant to "waste" sunk costs.



- ★ Universal human tendencies: behavioural insights apply to all of us.
- ★ Causal relationships is fundamental in behavioural experiments

What's the Work of Behavioural Scientists?

What, why and how

What?

- Understand human behaviour: studying how people think, feel, perceive, make decisions and act
- Influence behaviour by means of interventions

Why?

- Go beyond the rationality assumption. Deal with observed human behaviour
- Improve policies: inform the design of both behavioural (nudges, boosts) and traditional interventions (bans, taxes, regulations) and enhance communication strategies

BEHAVIOURAL INSIGHTS

Brain to understand choices and behaviours

The Work of Behavioural Scientists?

What, why and how

How?

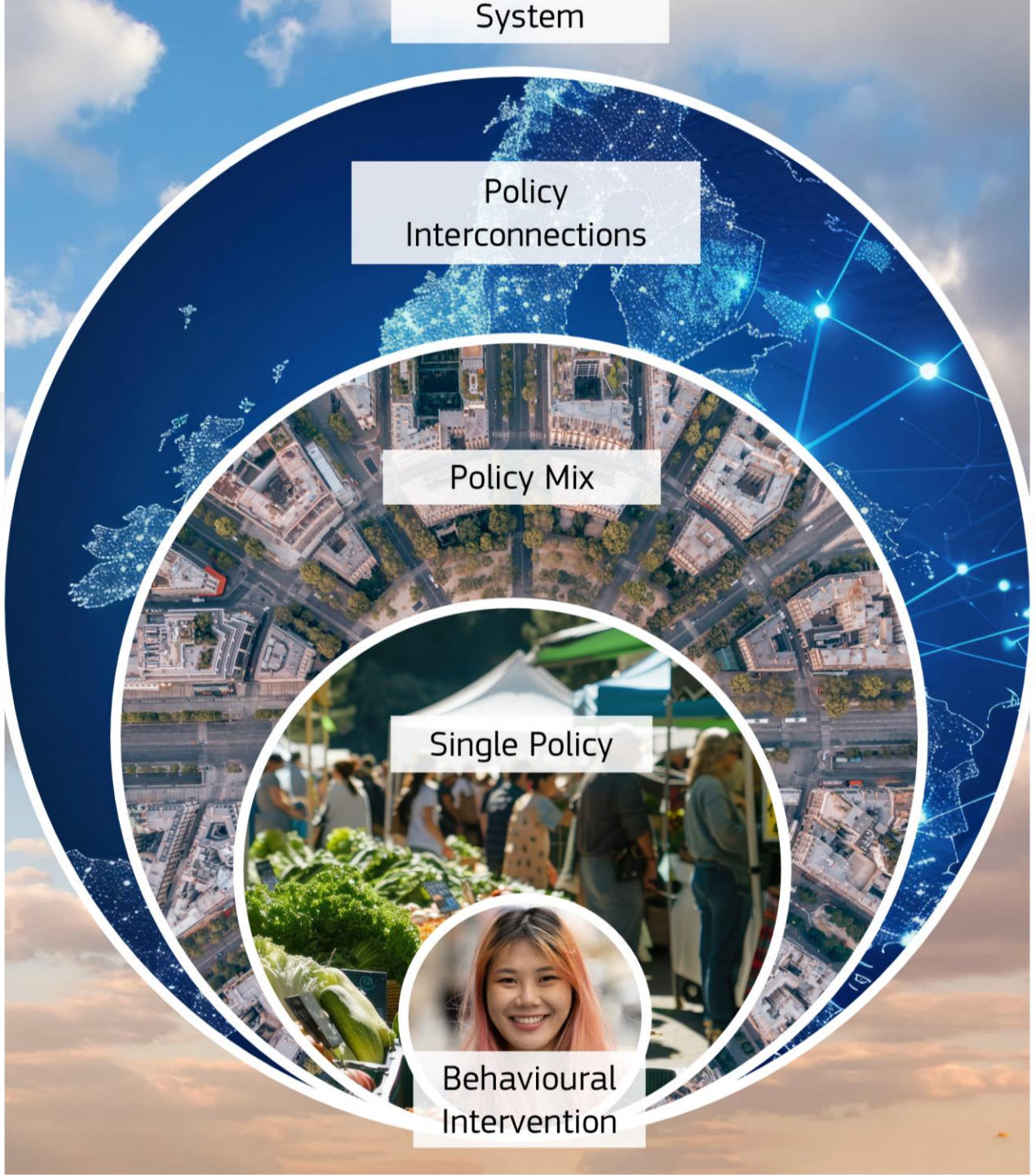
- Study cognitive biases: identify mental shortcuts and errors that affect choices
- Analyse incentives: understand motivations that drive actions
- Develop and test interventions: apply research findings to craft tailored interventions and policies. Often using experiments.

Behavioural Insights (BI) 🧠

What role in public policy and organisational change?

Behavioural insights: in which policy context?

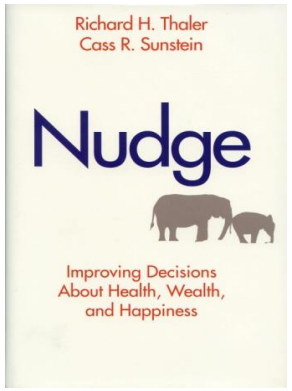
Behavioural Insights (BI) *informing*



BI in which policy context?

Behavioural Insights

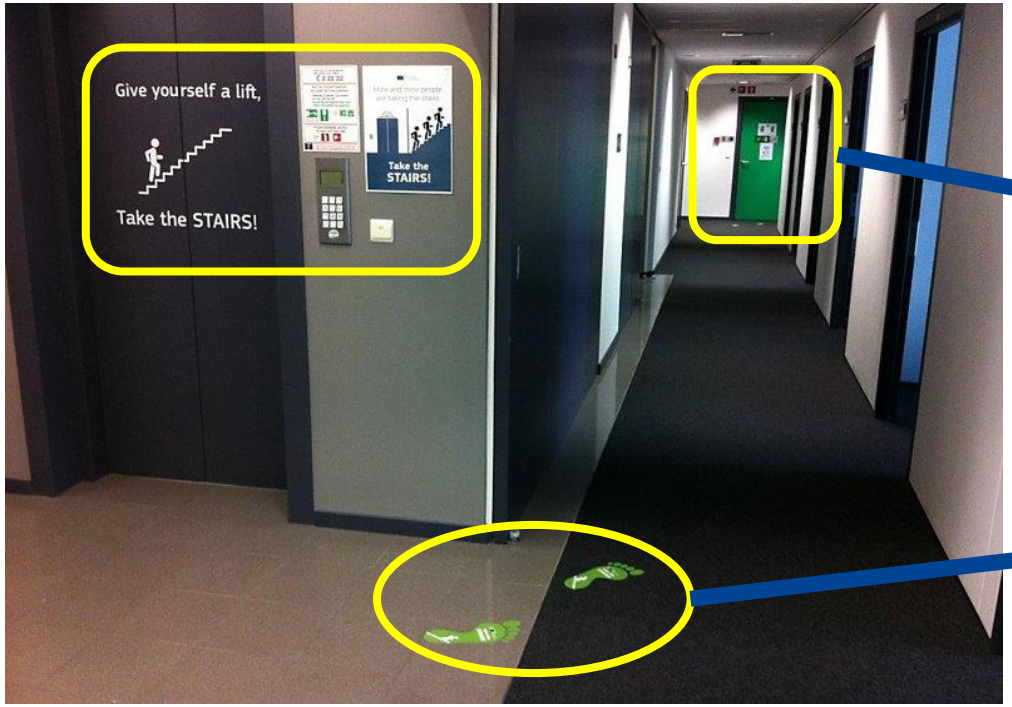
developing



"any aspect of the choice architecture that alters people's behavior in a predictable way without forbidding any options or significantly changing their economic incentives."

"To count as a mere nudge, the intervention must be easy and cheap to avoid. Nudges are not mandates. Putting the fruit at eye level counts as a nudge. Banning junk food does not."

Example of a nudge



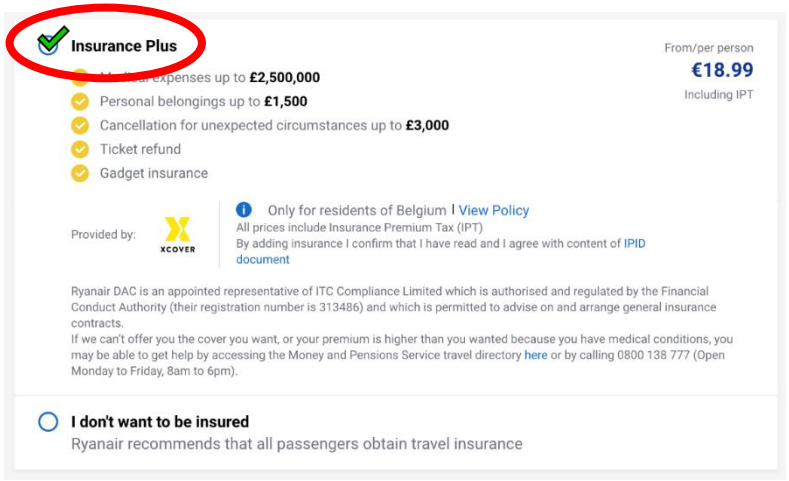
- You can still take the lift if you want to but, after the change, you are relatively more likely to take the stairs

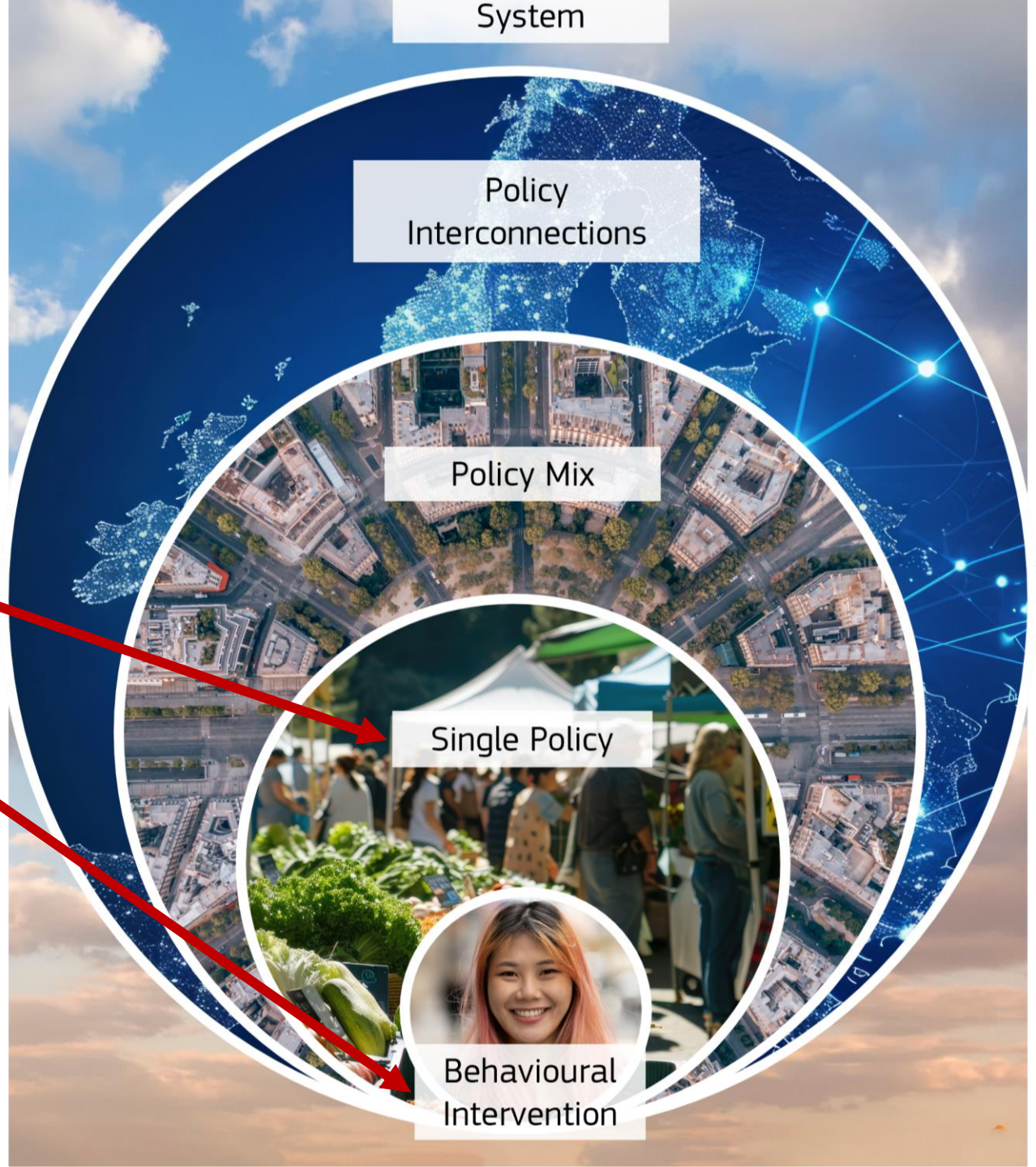
BI in which policy context?

Behavioural Insights

grounding & informing

developing





Ban of online pre-ticked boxes

- Grounded and informed the EU Consumer Rights Directive (2011)
- Countering the power of defaults used online

BI in which policy context?

Behavioural Insights

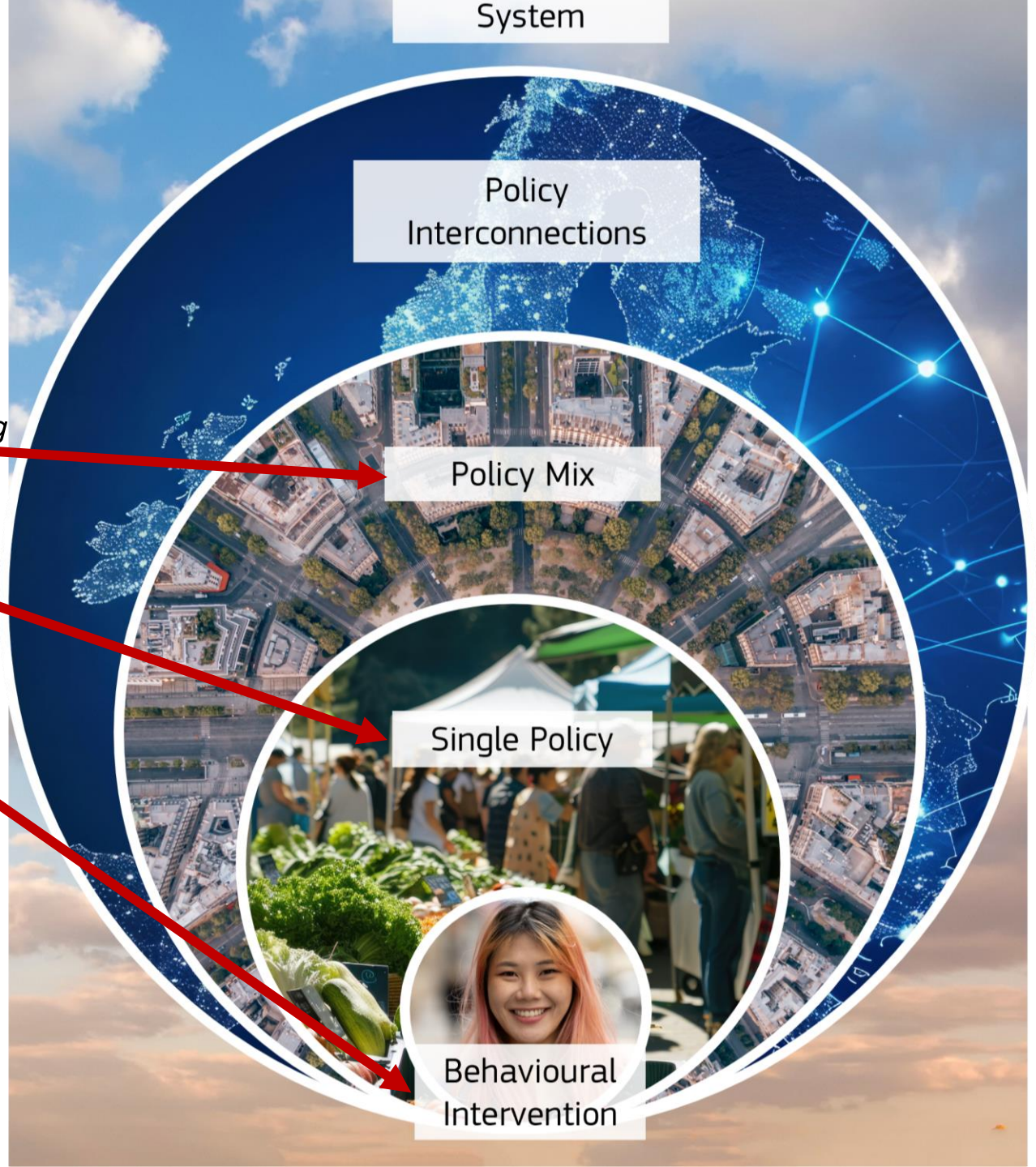
informing & coordinating

grounding & informing

developing

Smoking cessation programs

- Informed the Tobacco Control Directive (2014)
- Informed warning labels with emotionally impactful images informed by BI
- Complemented taxes on cigarettes not informed by BI



BI in which policy context?

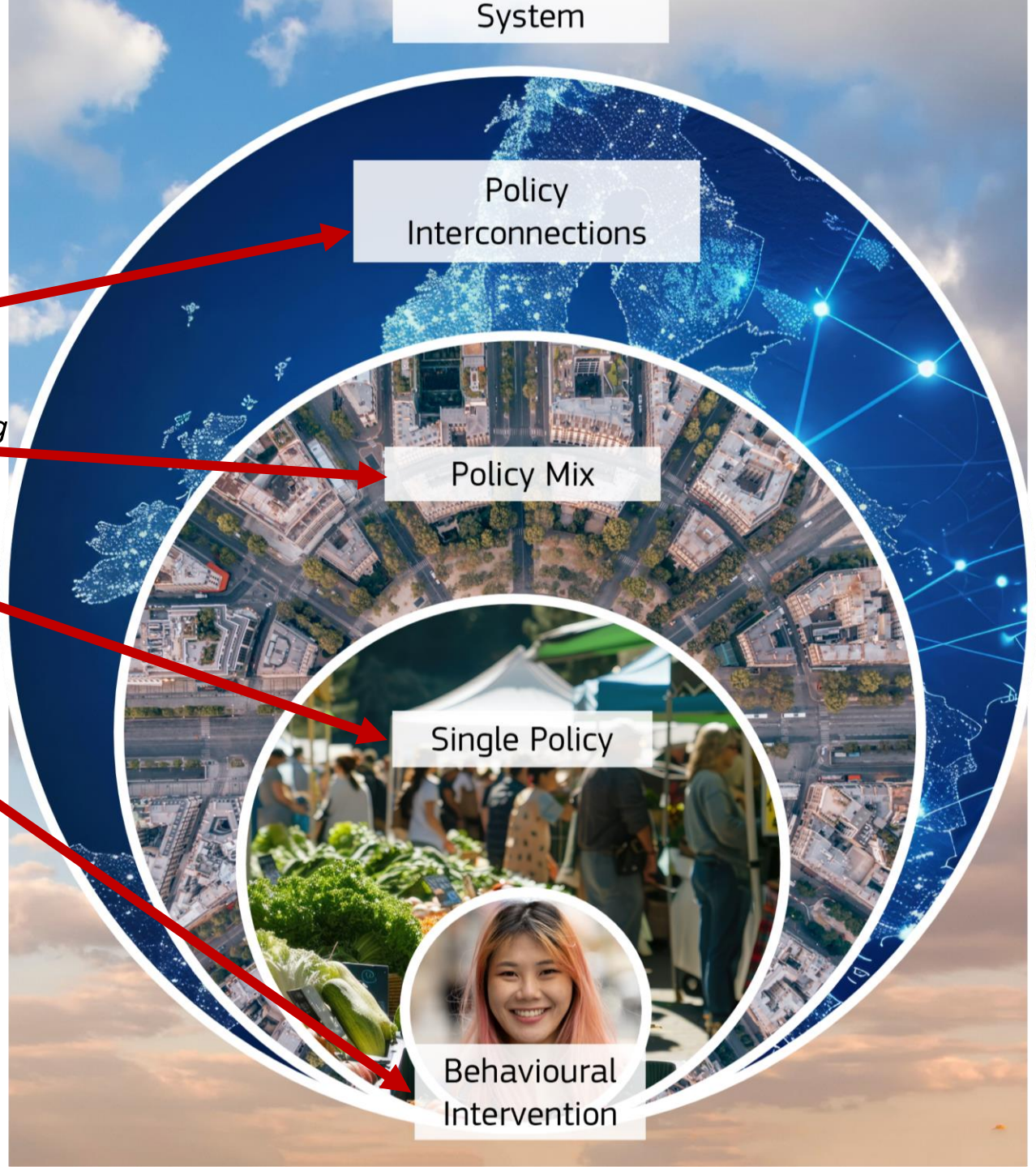
Behavioural Insights

leveraging synergies

informing & coordinating

grounding & informing

developing



BI in which policy context?

Behavioural Insights

identifying leverage points

leveraging synergies

informing & coordinating

grounding & informing

developing

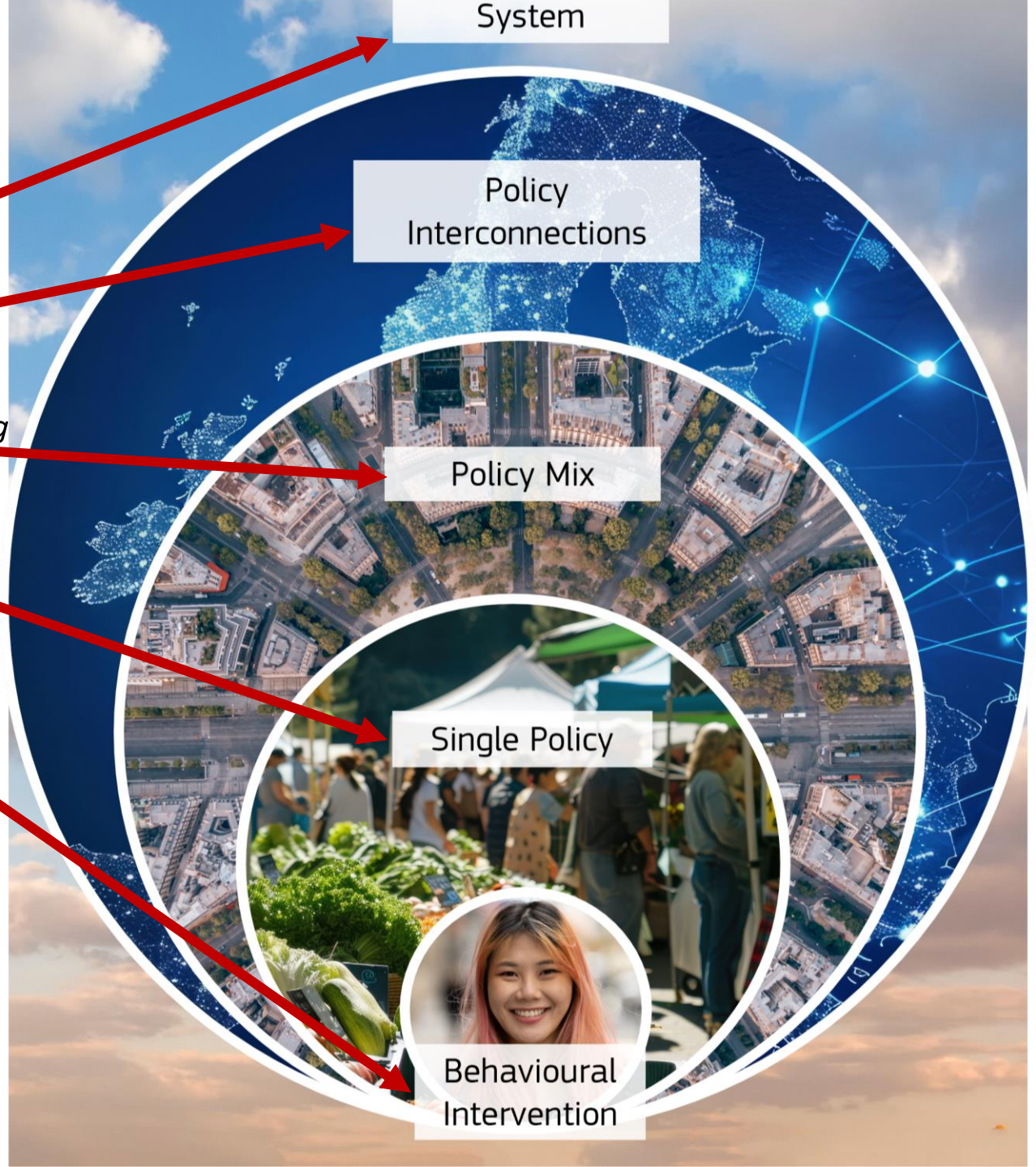
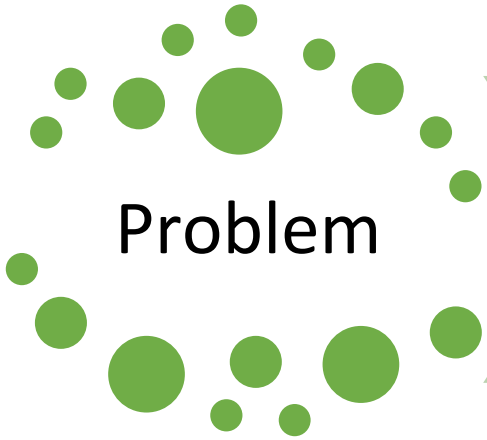


Illustration will be given at the end of this session
Future project on implementation of EU green policies

Energy



High energy consumption in households contributes to climate change

Usual Approach

Raise environmental awareness, carbon pricing, insulation

Behavioral Issue

Failure in **social learning**, slow diffusion of best practices

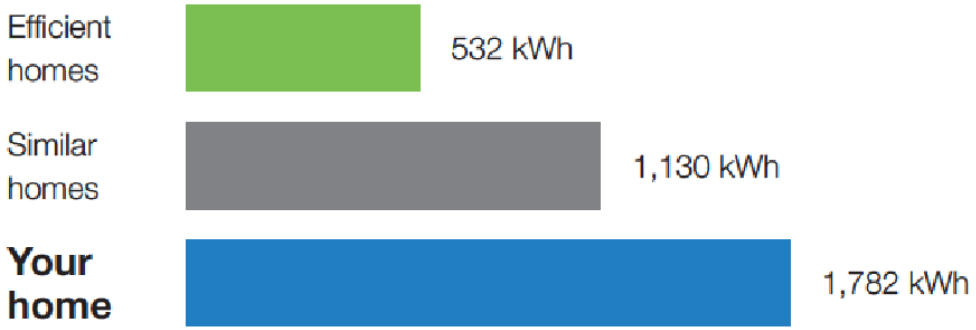
Solution

Send reports comparing own energy consumption with neighbourhood averages

Ayres, I., Raseman, S., & Shih, A. (2013). Evidence from Two Large Field Experiments that Peer Comparison Feedback Can Reduce Residential Energy Usage. Journal of Law, Economics, & Organization, 29 (5), 992-1022

O-Power home energy reports

Here's how you compare



Feb 13, 2016 - Mar 14, 2016

This is based on 100 similar homes within approx. 1 mi. Efficient homes are the 20% who use the least amount of electricity.
See back for details.

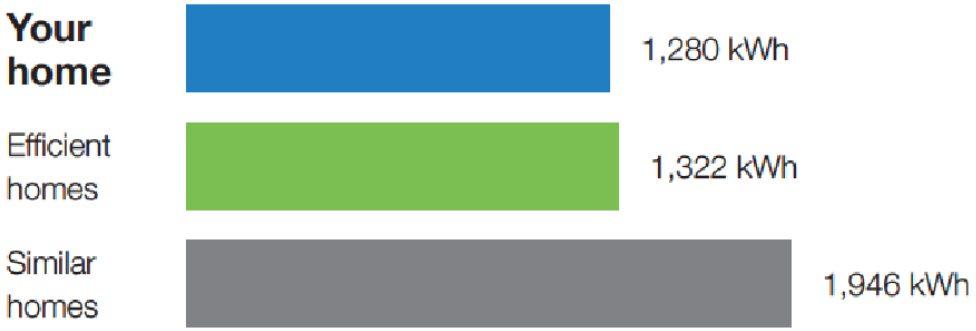
You're using more than similar homes.

58% more electricity
than similar homes

Short description of the project here.

O-Power home energy reports

Here's how you compare



Feb 10, 2016 - Mar 9, 2016

This is based on 90 similar homes within approx. 2 mi. Efficient homes are the 20% who use the least amount of electricity.
See back for details.

Great

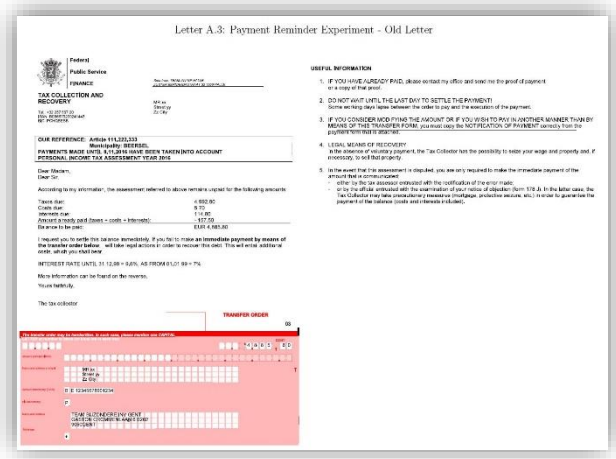
Good

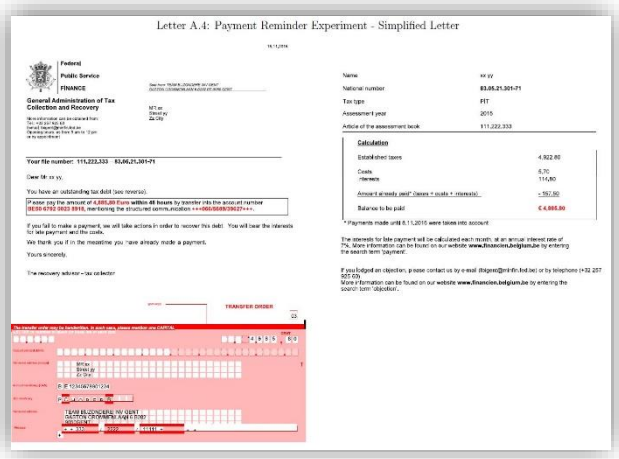
Using more than average

3% **less electricity**
than efficient homes

Interesting read:
Schultz et al. (2018): The Constructive, Destructive, and Reconstructive Power of Social Norms: Reprise. In *Perspectives on Psychological Science* 13 (2), pp. 249–254.

Tax compliance


Letter A.3: Payment Reminder Experiment - Old Letter


Letter A.4: Payment Reminder Experiment - Simplified Letter

Problem

People do not pay their taxes on time

Usual Approach

Simple reminder letters

Behavioral Issue

Lack of clarity in communication, procrastination, forgetfulness

Solution

Simplified, personalized and framed letters

Jan-Emmanuel De Neve, Clément Imbert, Johannes Spinnewijn, Teodora Tsankova, and **Maarten Luts** (2021) How to Improve Tax Compliance? Evidence from Population-Wide Experiments in Belgium. Journal of Political Economy, 129(5): 1425-1463. https://doi.org/10.1086/713096

Motivation for today’s session

Barriers to EU Water Policies Implementation

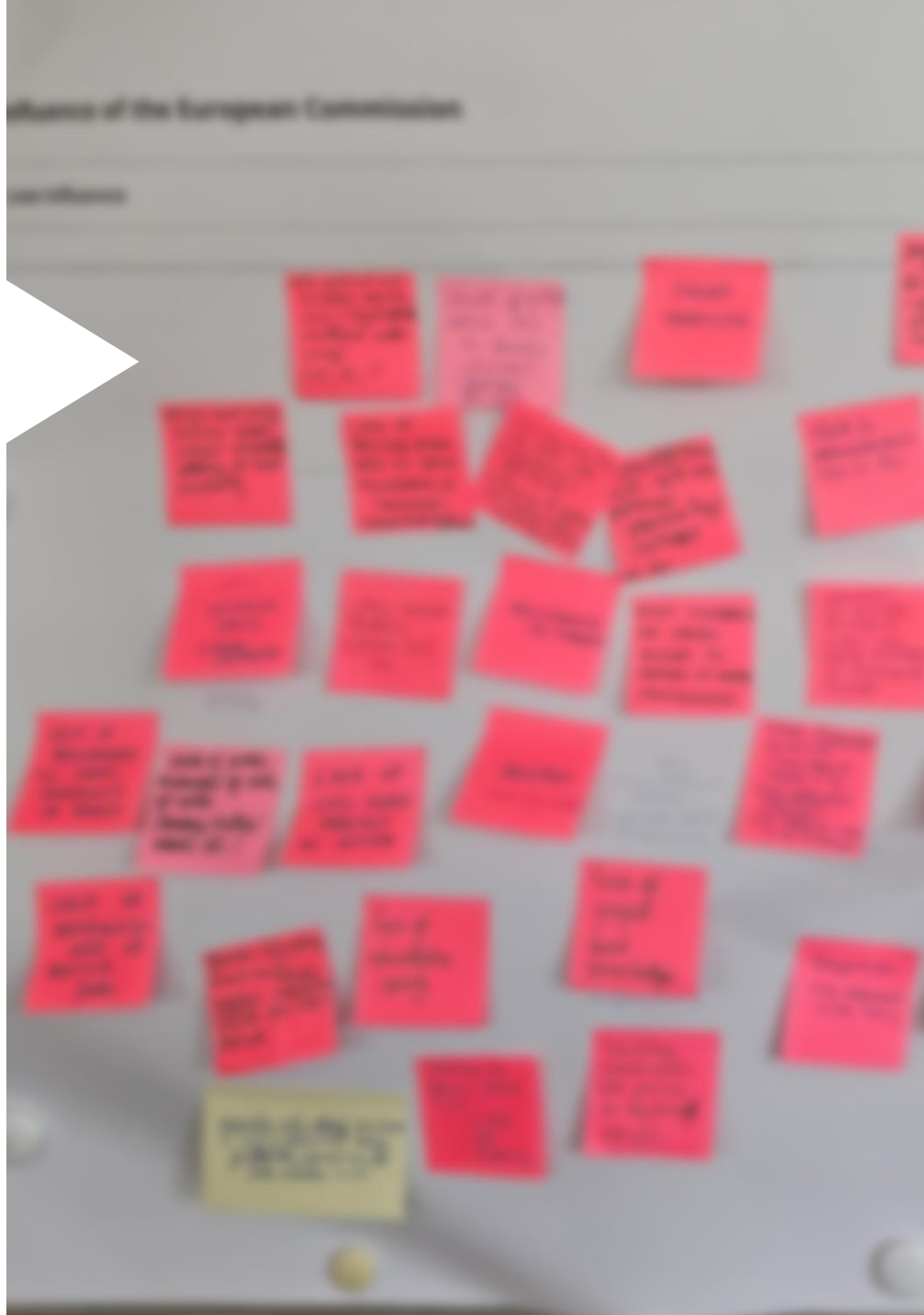
Water Resilience, What EU policymakers perceive

What we did in a workshop with EU policymakers:
Identified barriers to implementation of EU water policies in Member States.

Insights:
Barriers could be grouped into 5 categories:

- ***Financial***
- ***Behavioural***
- ***Political***
- ***Knowledge***
- ***Administrative***
- ***Sectoral conflicts***

The cluster on behavioural barriers was particularly strong.



Water Resilience, What official reports tell us

What we did:
Read official reports of the Water Framework Directive and the Food Directive implementation (“implementation obstacles” section)

Insights:
Barriers could be grouped into 8 categories:

- ***Governance***
- ***Delays***
- ***Lack of finance***
- ***Lack of mechanism***
- ***Lack of measures***
- ***Not cost effective***
- ***Extreme events***
- ***Other***

Barriers have no explicit link with behavioural factors

Table 2: Obstacles to the implementation of the POM. Member States report the number of RBDs where obstacles are relevant.

		Obstacles							
Member State	RBD	Governance	Delays	Lack of finance	Lack of mechanism	Lack of measures	Not cost effective	Extreme events	Other
AT	3								
BE	8		3	3	2				2
BG	4		4		1	1			
CY	1								
CZ	3	3	3	3	3		3	3	
DE	10		10	4	10	9	7	4	10
DK	4		4						4
EE	3		3	3	3				
EL	14		14						
ES	25	25	25	25	25				
FI	8			8	8				
FR	14	14	14	14	14				14
HR	2		2	2	2				
HU	1	1	1	1	1	1		1	1
IE	3	3		3			3		3
IT	8	5	5	8	7	1	2	6	
LT	4								
LU	2							1	2
LV	4			4				4	
MT	1		1						
NL	4		4	4			4		4
PL	10	3	3	3	3	4	4	2	5
PT	10		8	9			8	8	
RO	1		1	1	1		1		1
SE	5				5				
SI	2			2					
SK	2		2	2			2		2

Water Resilience, Perceptions vs Reports

Recommendation from the report:

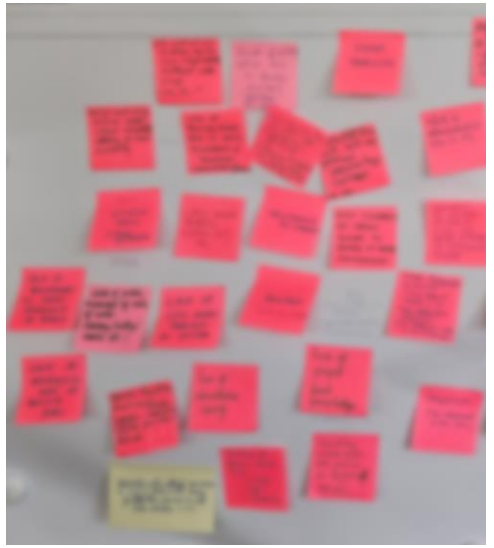
- ★ Filling the gap by exploring Member States' perspective on obstacles to EU green policy implementation
- ★ Digging into the behavioural drivers of the obstacles to implementation

What behavioural driver(s) could explain **financial barriers?**

What behavioural driver(s) could explain **institutional barriers?**

What behavioural driver(s) could explain **administrative barriers?**

What behavioural driver(s) could explain **governance barriers?**



VS

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BE	8		3	3	2				2
BG	4		4		1	1			
CY	1								
CZ	3	3	3	3	3		3	3	
DE	10		10	4	10	9	7	4	10
DK	4		4						4
EE	3		3	3	3				
EL	14		14						
ES	25	25	25	25	25				
FI	8			8	8				
FR	14	14	14	14	14				14
HR	2		2	2	2				
HU	1	1	1	1	1	1		1	1
IE	3	3		3			3		3
IT	8	5	5	8	7	1	2	6	
LT	4								
LU	2							1	2
LV	4			4				4	
MT	1		1						
NL	4		4	4			4		4
PL	10	3	3	3	3	4	4	2	5
PT	10		8	9			8	8	
RO	1		1	1	1		1		1
SE	5				5				
SI	2			2					
SK	2		2	2			2		2

9 Behavioural Cards

What could explain our decisions?

Seeking information that confirms beliefs

What? We tend to focus on information that supports our existing views while ignoring contradictory evidence.

Example: Highlighting challenges of renewable energy while overlooking its benefits.

Think of: How might this affect political support and delay the incorporation of directives?

Could this bias reinforce knowledge-related or political barriers, hindering effective implementation?

Avoiding uncertainty

What? A preference for options with predictable outcomes over those with unknown results.

Example: Hesitating to adopt new technologies due to perceived risks, despite potential long-term benefits.

Think of: How might this contribute to delays or resistance in adopting new policies?

Could uncertainty strengthen technical or financial barriers during implementation?

Valuing past investments

What? Continuing with a course of action because of previous investments, even if better options exist.

Example: Persisting with outdated infrastructure instead of transitioning to greener alternatives.

Think of: How does the sunk cost fallacy influence decisions to update national laws with new directives?

Might existing investments in certain sectors contribute to financial or sectoral conflicts during implementation?

Focus on immediate concerns

What? We sometimes prioritize short-term wins over larger long-term benefits.

Example: Choosing projects that deliver immediate results rather than those offering sustainable long-term environmental gains.

Think of: How might a focus on short-term political wins delay the incorporation of EU directives into national laws? Could prioritizing immediate economic concerns over long-term sustainability reinforce financial or political barriers?

Group dynamics influencing decisions

What? Group consensus can sway individual opinions, sometimes suppressing dissenting views.

Example: Agreeing with the majority to maintain harmony, even if they have reservations.

Think of: How might this delay or alter the incorporation of directives into national laws?

Could group dynamics contribute to administrative barriers or reinforce

Influence of information presentation

What? The way information is initially presented and framed can heavily influence our decisions.

Example: Early perceptions that a policy is expensive might deter its adoption, even if later evidence shows cost-effectiveness.

Think of: How might initial negative framing of EU policies impact their acceptance and timely incorporation into national laws?
Could biased framing reinforce financial or political barriers during implementation?

Misunderstanding costs, risks or benefits

What? Incorrect perceptions about the potential impacts of policies.

Example: Overestimating the costs or underestimating the benefits of green technologies.

Think of: How might misperceptions hinder political support and slow down legislative incorporation?

Could misunderstandings reinforce lack of finance or technical barriers during implementation?

Preference for familiar approaches

What? A tendency to stick to existing practices and resist new methods.

Example: Continuing traditional regulatory practices instead of adopting innovative environmental policies.

Think of: How does resistance to change affect the willingness to integrate new EU directives into national legislation?

In what ways might a preference for the status quo contribute to sectoral conflicts or financial or administrative barriers during implementation?

Information overload

What? When people are presented with too much information, it can lead to difficulty in processing data, resulting in decision paralysis or oversimplification.

Example: Policymakers receive extensive reports, data, and stakeholder inputs on environmental policies, making it challenging to identify key actions or priorities.

Think of: How might an overwhelming amount of information delay the incorporation of EU directives into

INTERACTIVE SESSION 2

Please form new groups of 5 to 6 people

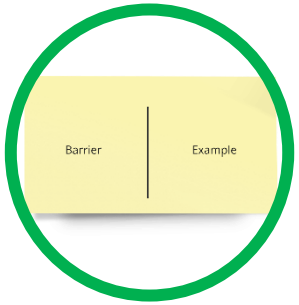
Interactive Session 2.1

10 min

Step 1

Which of the barriers are primarily behavioural? These barriers are directly linked to human attitudes, perceptions, or decision-making processes without any intermediary factors.

Discuss in plenary

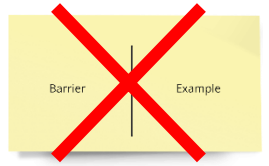


10 min

Step 2

If it's not primarily behavioural, does this barrier have no significant link to human behaviour? Is this barrier purely related to legal, technical, or financial constraints? Does it seem unaffected by any cognitive, social, or political behaviours?

Discuss in plenary



Interactive Session 2.2

20 min

Step 1

Discuss in your group how your barrier connects to human behaviour

Discuss whose behaviour is involved

Fill in the template as you exchange

Give your barrier a good name:

Please describe the barrier:

How is this barrier connected to behaviour?

You can take inspiration from the behavioural barrier cards and the barriers you identified as "primarily behavioural"...

Whose behaviour is involved?

Think of the behaviours of key stakeholders involved in the implementation process.

Interactive Session 2.3

1 min

Step 1

Choose a spokesperson for your group

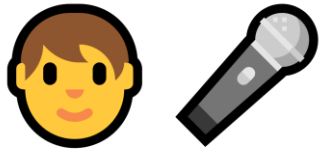
This person's role is to explain the hypothetical scenario your group developed to explain how behavioural factors may explain or influence the barrier you worked on.

19 min

Step 2

Report the hypothetical scenario in plenary

Discuss any aspect you agree or disagree on



Complement scenarios

Give quick feedback on the session

Barriers in EU Green Policy Implementation

Next Steps

Barriers in EU Green Policy Implementation

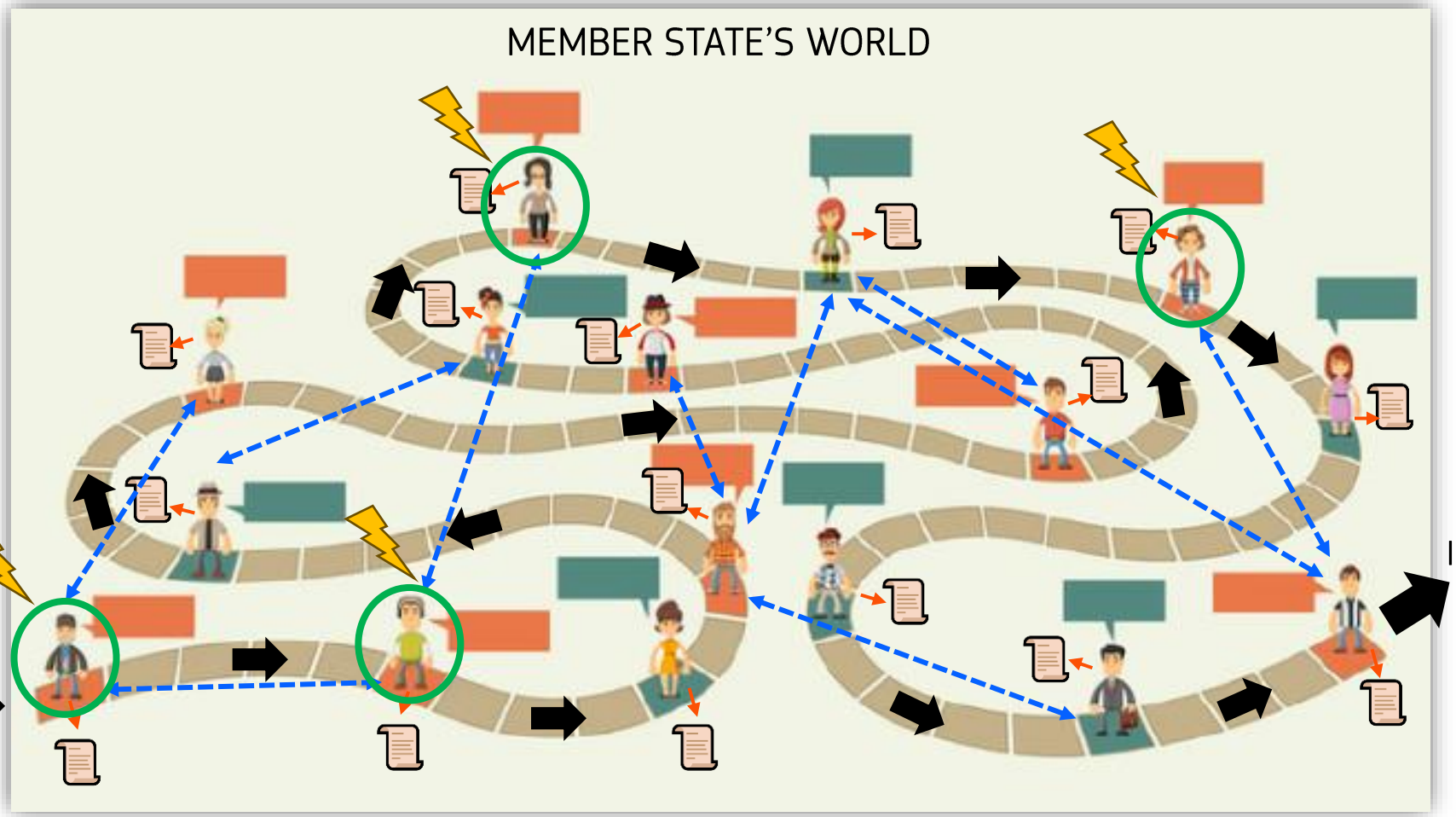
What we are going to do next

Behavioural analysis and intervention development

To improve the implementation process

Leverage points

where an intervention would lead to a smoother and faster implementation



ADOPTION

IMPLEMENTATION COMPLETED

Very quick poll before you leave

If no QR code scan, please send an email to marion.dupoux@ec.europa.eu with your answers to the following questions:

1- For our upcoming project on mapping key implementation steps, would you agree to help us reach out to key implementation stakeholders in your network? (e.g for interviews, survey dissemination, maybe experiments)

2- How interesting did you find this session? Please rate on a 5-star scale

3- Were the explanations clear enough to grasp the behavioural concepts and do the activities?

4- Would you be interested in joining a Behavioural Insights training we give at the Commission?

5- Any comment or suggestion you would like to give on the session/project before you leave?

Join at

slido.com

#2842 398

Thanks

On this project, please reach out to marion.dupoux@ec.europa.eu