

Building capacity for evidence-informed policymaking in governance and public administration in a post-pandemic Europe

*Challenges, opportunities and way
forward*

12-13 October 2023

5th Meeting of the Expert Group on Public
Administration and Governance



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Shared goals, different approaches

JRC (Czech Republic, Estonia, Greece, Lithuania, Netherlands)

- Standardised online survey to beneficiary organizations, selected line ministries, universities and relevant stakeholders
- Fact-finding missions (both in person and online)
- Combining JRC and national teams of experts

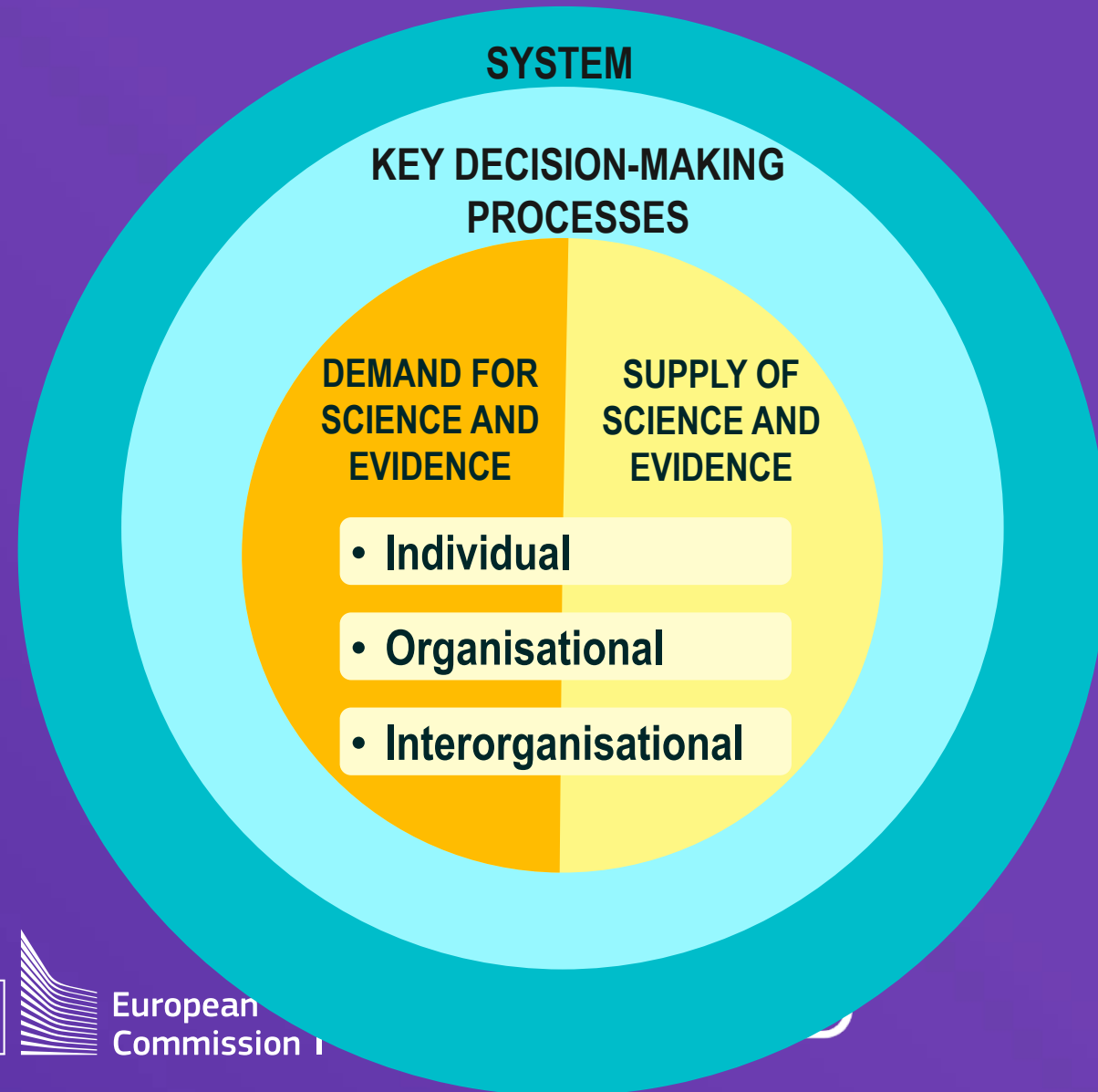
OECD (Belgium and Latvia)

- Open-question surveys to beneficiary organizations, selected line ministries, universities and relevant stakeholders
- Fact-finding missions (both in person and online)
- Internal management of the research

SHARED GOALS/LESSONS:

- Trust building and encouraging EIPM “champions” to act as such
- Value of combining **analytical** with **policy change objectives**
- Unique value of a **systemic, cross-country approach** about evidence-informed policymaking

JRC - OECD Analytical Framework for EIDM



What common challenges in the **supply** of evidence?

- **Availability of skills inside ministries:** not always sufficient to conduct systematic/ high quality analyses due to challenges with attracting these staffs
- **Low incentives for academic researchers to produce policy-oriented research:** professional recognition and funding
- **Organisation of analytical capacities:**
 - inside government > often spread across departments, with variable impact; few formal science advice networks, often lacking resources;
 - outside government: lack of intra-organisational support and inter-organisational coordination
- **Access to data:** challenges with GDPR; no mapping/overview of available data; interoperability; not enough valorisation of existing data, etc.

What opportunities in strengthening **supply** of evidence?

- **Growing interest in competence building:** growing interest among knowledge producers & training opportunities
- **Mix of established and innovative organisational set-ups to learn from:**
 - Inside government: Newly formed innovative units
 - Outside government: some well-established settings at arm's length of governments
- **Innovations in cross-organisational collaboration:**
 - Inside government: Networks of analytical units inside government
 - Outside government: newly formed consortia and participatory processes
- **Policies favouring research for policy:** EU funding programmes; new co-creation approaches to research funding; Knowledge valorisation policy



Good practices / innovations shaping the supply side

Lithuanian network of Research and Innovation Advisers

- Aim: strengthen EIPM in the country + coordinate and implement strategic R&D policy measures
- Approach: 15 positions of advisors foreseen (1/ ministry), centrally managed by the Research Council

Belgium's BELSPO Programming Committee

- Aim: Ensuring policy relevance of research programme
- Approach: Committee composed of staff from ministries and BELSPO co-creates research programme

Czech Republic's BETA2 Programme

- Aim: Allows Ministry to define and finance their own research interests
- Approach: Earmarked funds in each ministry for research purposes. Technology Agency helps ministries formulate funding calls.

Latvia's State Research Programme by the Ministry of Education and Science

- Aim: forward plan research needs of line ministries and to directly fund policy-relevant research
- Approach: Line ministries consult with the Latvian Academy of Sciences and the Latvian Council of Science & Programme approved by the Cabinet of Ministers



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What common challenges in the **demand for evidence**?

- **Ability to work with evidence:** very heterogeneous across public administrations, few systematic approaches to evidence championing
- **Political interest and incentive to use evidence:** short-termism inherent to decision-making
- **Understanding evidence needs at the organisational level:** insufficient forward planning of evidence needs (role of foresight)
- **Inter-organisation spaces for discussion:** siloed approaches to evidence demand and thus supply, few systematic approaches to evidence championing

What opportunities in strengthening **demand for evidence?**

- **Skills of policymakers to use evidence:** skills are historically present in some policy fields (health, environment)
- **Organisational level:** actors with the role to champion S4P/ EIPM
- **Efforts to adopt whole-of-government approaches to fostering demand:** Initiatives to build capacity to support EIPM at the centre of government
- **At the system level, greater demand for evidence than ever :** COVID-19 has revealed the need for quality and trusted evidence/ advisory systems, tightening fiscal space, need to tackle long term challenges (green transition, etc.)

What common challenges at **the interface**?

- **Heterogenous use of evidence along policy cycle:** ex ante impact assessment are more developed than ex post evaluations, use of evidence in RIA is heterogenous across countries
- **Limited trust between policymakers and scientists:** due to lack of clear rules for commissioning and use of evidence
- **Difficult to export some best practices occurring for EU funds:** silos in evaluation of EU funds with respect to other evaluations

What opportunities at the **interface**?

- **Growing understanding of the importance of connecting evidence to policymaking**
- **Increased systematisation of RIA in several countries:** Including investment in new structures, supporting guidance, and formalisation
- **Investment in foresight:** New services established in several participating countries



Good practices / innovations strengthening the demand side and the interface

The Netherlands' Policy Compass

- Aim: System-wide policy framework asking policymakers to explore the evidence base for policies they design
- Approach: Guidelines and toolbox for impact assessment and policy evaluation

Greece's M.E.K.Y. expert unit in the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs

- Aim: Provide expertise on social impact of policy measures
- Approach: Expert team undertaking analysis of redistributive consequences of policy measures, often in the context of policy evaluation and impact assessment

Estonia's Foresight Centre

- Aim: Develops evidence-based scenarios of the future and presents them to parliament and the wider public
- Approach: Administratively tied to Government Office but hosted by Parliament



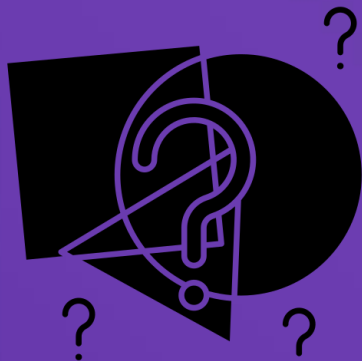
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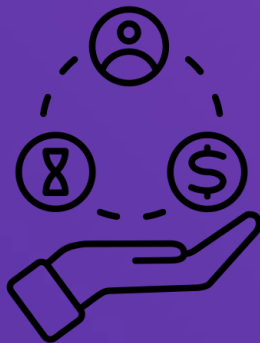
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The "big picture"



Complex challenges & crises



Fiscal/resource pressures

Some **shared roadblocks** across countries...

- often innovations at early stage and still isolated
- very variable capacity and practices across government
- external supply organisations lack incentives and structures for systematic science for policy

....But there is **light at the end of the tunnel!**

- Increasing awareness for EIPM
- Lots of innovations to learn from across seven countries



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The way forward – some questions

- **Who should be your EIPM champion?** To mainstream isolated innovations and good practices across whole-of-government!
- **How can you create a generation of EIPM pros?** To make sure your staff and staff in EIPM organisations have the incentives and support to develop EIPM competences!
- **Who could be your bridge builder?** To strengthen trust between knowledge producers and users!
- **Which policies need change, which can be used better?** So that EIPM is more deeply integrated in research and policymaking processes!

Thank you!

DG Reform

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