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Policy innovation by design: understanding the role of design in the development of innovative public policies

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Policy Innovation by Design

Understanding the role of design in the
development of innovative public policies.

A DOCTORAL THESIS

by

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Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the award of Doctor of Philosophy in
Design Innovation Management
of Loughborough University

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Abstract

This investigation departed from the premise that there is increasing interest in introducing design approaches for public policy innovation worldwide. To date, this has been primarily achieved through the use of design at the policy implementation stage, typically resulting in new public services. Moreover, the introduction of design for policy has been associated with the creation of ad-hoc structures termed ‘policy labs’ in which design thinking is utilised to explore and co-create policy solutions.

Although the literature on policy innovation has recently started to shift, the focus has historically been determined by the novelty of the policy content instead of the process through which policies come into being. In innovation management theory, this is represented by the product vs process innovation perspectives. Design, on the other hand, has been associated with the development of innovative products and services in the private sector. In order to exploit creativity to produce these innovative outcomes, the most successful organisations have integrated design at more levels than just product development. However, this has not been reflected in its integration in the public sector. Thus, this constrains its potential for contributing to policy innovations.

The overall purpose of this research is to respond to the primary question concerning the role of design in innovative public policymaking, as the effects and requirements of this role remain mostly unexplored. After building a conceptual framework to provide a rationale for introducing design-led approaches into public policymaking, the inquiry first of all explores the design practices which are currently being utilised in the policymaking process; secondly, it describes how design is instilled in public policymaking; and thirdly, it explains the conditions for the successful integration of design in the policymaking process.

The research design adopted for this investigation is based on a pragmatist approach through which qualitative data was obtained by online surveys, participant observations, and in-depth semi-structured interviews with key informants. Three studies which addressed recursively the research aim were implemented in different settings. The first study maps the design activities of policy labs in Europe against the stages of the policymaking cycle. The second study relies on participant observations to explore the introduction of design thinking in policymaking by a UK government team of policy designers. The third and last study consists of a set of interviews with policy analysts, policymakers, and design scholars participating in a project examining the future of governments in the EU. The analysis of the data gathered was primarily conducted through a framework and thematic analysis. Additionally, minor descriptive statistics were used to assist in drawing comparisons within the dataset.

The key findings reveal that the introduction of design faces resistance to reach mainstream policymaking due to cultural differences between the two professional fields. To overcome some of these barriers, design is introduced in different guises, often as the operationalisation of the open policy government agenda.

The main conclusions drawn from this study are the need for specific design tools and techniques for intervening in the public sector, as well as specific design training programmes to equip policymakers with the appropriate skills and mindsets. The contribution to knowledge of the research presented in this thesis is the provision of a new understanding of the role of design as a mode of inquiry and the part it plays in bringing about policy innovation by participating in either reactive, coactive, or proactive policymaking.

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Glossary

Keyword	Description
Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC)	The AHRC is a British research council supporting research and postgraduate study in the arts and humanities. It is one of the seven councils that, together with Innovate UK and Research England, comprise UK Research and Innovation (Arts and Humanities Research Council, 2018).
Coding	Coding is a frequent feature of many qualitative analysis approaches that involve generating concise labels for salient data elements of relevance to the research question guiding the analysis. Codes capture both a semantic and conceptual reading of the data (Clarke & Braun, 2013).
Co-design	In a broad sense, co-design refers to the collective creativity of designers and people not trained in design, working together across the whole span of a design development process (Sanders & Stappers, 2008). In this thesis, no significant distinctions were made between the terms <i>co-design</i> and <i>participatory design</i> .
Design Thinking (DT)	Design thinking (DT) is a controversial term used to refer to different aspects of the professionalised design activity, and the way designers move from identifying to solving problems. It has acquired a renewed momentum due to the influential work of Tim Brown (2008) and others which suggests non-designers could benefit from it, especially towards the realisation of innovation. Kimbell (2011) identifies three accounts of DT, which respectively describe it as a cognitive style, a general theory of design, and an organisational resource.
Design Thinking mindset	The Design Thinking mindset refers to the specific behavioural and cognitive components identified in design thinking practitioners, be they professional designers or not.
Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)	The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) is the UK's largest public service department. Supported by 15 agencies and public bodies, this ministerial department is responsible for welfare, pensions and child maintenance policy. It administers the State Pension and a range of benefits to around 20 million claimants and customers (GOV.UK, 2013).
DS_n	Acronym utilised in this thesis to refer to the participants from the Design Schools interviewed for Study 3, where <i>n</i> is the ordinal denoting the interview's chronology.
EU Policy Lab	The EU Policy Lab is "a collaborative and experimental space for innovative policy-making... [which utilises] design thinking to explore, connect and find solutions for better policies" (EU Policy Lab, 2016). It sits within the European Commission Joint Research Centre.
EUPL_n	Acronym utilised in this thesis to refer to the participants from the EU Policy Lab interviewed for Study 3, where <i>n</i> is the ordinal denoting the interview's chronology.
F_n	Acronym utilised in this thesis to refer to the facilitators from the Department for Work and Pensions' Policy Exploration Team delivering the workshops captured in Study 2, where <i>n</i> is the ordinal denoting the chronology of their participation.
Framework Analysis	"Framework analysis is a qualitative method that is aptly suited for applied policy research. Framework analysis is better adapted to research that has specific questions, a limited time frame, a pre-designed sample and a priori issues. In the analysis, data is sifted, charted and sorted in accordance with key issues and themes using five steps: familiarization; identifying a thematic framework; indexing; charting; and mapping and interpretation" (Srivastava & Thomson, 2009, p. 72).

Human-centred Design (HCD)	Human-centred design “is based on the use of techniques which communicate, interact, empathize and stimulate the people involved, obtaining an understanding of their needs, desires and experiences which often transcends that which the people themselves actually realized. Human-centred design is thus distinct from many traditional design practices because the natural focus of the questions, insights and activities lies with the people for whom the product, system or service is intended, rather than in the designer’s personal creative process or within the material and technological substrates of the artefact” (Giacomin, 2014, p. 610)
Institute for Design Innovation (IDI)	The Institute for Design Innovation is one of the seven institutes that conform the academic offer of Loughborough University London. Its research agenda builds on the idea that design enables innovation through positive change in the context of users, organisations, ecosystems, and society (Loughborough University London, 2016).
Loughborough University London (LUL)	Loughborough University London is the East London campus of Loughborough University established exclusively for postgraduate study and research (Loughborough University London, 2015).
Mindset	Mindsets are generally associated with a set of assumptions and notions influencing behaviour and decision-making processes held by one or more people or groups of people. According to French (2016), they represent the cognitive processes activated in response to a given task.
Open Policy Making	Open policy making is about developing and delivering a more informed and better-designed policy for both the government and users through 1. Collaborative approaches, including a broad range of input and expertise that help meet user needs; 2. The application of new analytical techniques, insights, and digital tools; 3. Testing and iterative improvement to ensure successful implementation (Cabinet Office, 2017).
OPM_{n,m}	Acronym utilised in this thesis to refer to the Department for Work and Pensions Policy Exploration Team’s <i>Open Policy Making</i> workshops. The <i>n</i> and <i>m</i> respectively refer to level (1 and 2) and order (1 to 5) in which these workshops were delivered.
PDS_{n,m}	Acronym utilised in this thesis to refer to the Department for Work and Pensions Policy Exploration Team’s <i>Policy Design Sprint</i> . The <i>n</i> refers to chronology in which they took place during the research’s observation period.
PDW_n	Acronym utilised in this thesis to refer to the Department for Work and Pensions Policy Exploration Team’s <i>Policy Design Workshops</i> . The <i>n</i> refers to chronology in which they took place during the research’s observation period.
PL_n	Acronym utilised in this thesis to refer to the participants from the Policy labs interviewed for Study 3, where <i>n</i> is the ordinal denoting the interview’s chronology.
Policy Exploration Team (PEX)	The Policy Exploration team is a unit within the UK Department for Work and Pensions’ Strategy Directorate operating at the interface between policy officials and staff. The team has led the introduction of design thinking and open policy-making within the department’s work. Their approach is based on a set of core values, including the belief that human-centred design-led approaches can bring about innovative ways to deliver outcomes to citizens.
Policy cycle	The policy cycle is a conceptualisation of the policymaking process model. It represents the process as a recurrent set of discrete interrelated stages with a logical flow. In most representations, policy problems initiate government actions that after evaluation feedback to the policy problem stage in a cyclical manner.
Policy Lab (UK)	The Policy Lab is a team within the UK Cabinet Office. It aims at bringing a human-centred design approach to policymaking, providing policy teams with “practical support to better understand the people they are trying to reach, and work with them to co-design new solutions” (GOV.UK, 2017).
Policy labs	Policy labs are experimental environments in which to develop and test policy. They are considered “emerging structures that construct public policies in an innovative, design-oriented fashion, in particular by engaging citizens and companies working within the public sector” (Fuller & Lochard, 2016, p. 2).

Policymaker	Policymaker is a broad term that covers a range of people tasked with the formulation of policies. Their responsibilities vary from country to country and typically include Ministers, their advisers, civil servants, members of parliament and parliamentary committee members, and officially appointed advisers, amongst others.
Prototype	A prototype is a question rendered as an artefact. According to Hartmann et al. “prototyping is the pivotal activity that structures innovation, collaboration, and creativity in design. Prototypes embody design hypotheses and enable designers to test them” (2006, p. 299).
Thematic Analysis	Thematic analysis is “a method for systematically identifying, organising, and offering insight into patterns of meaning (themes) across a data set” (Braun, Clarke, & Terry, 2014, p. 57).
Theme	“A theme is a coherent and meaningful pattern in the data relevant to the research question” (Clarke & Braun, 2013, p. 121).

Chapter ①

Introduction

This introductory chapter starts by exploring the background and context of the thesis. It then justifies the significance of this investigation and introduces its aim and research questions. Additionally, it provides a brief outline of the findings and structure of this research. This thesis examines the contribution of design for policy to the development of innovative public policies. The research focuses on the European context and on no specific policy area since its emphasis is on the policymaking process instead of on the policy content. The research looks at novel government structures termed ‘policy labs’ because of their explicit design-led approach to public policymaking, which makes them a well-defined target to study the phenomena. Furthermore, the thesis considers the attitudes comprising the design thinking mindset to shed light on which factors, other than design tools and methods, constitute a design-led approach to policymaking.

1.1. Background

Dissatisfaction on how governments deal with contemporary issues has increased across the globe (Rosenqvist, 2017). Due to the growing number of interdependent actors within society adding complexity to the formulation and implementation of policy solutions, policymakers are facing increasing difficulties to evaluate alternatives and determine the impact of policy interventions (Janssen & Helbig, 2016). Nonlinear interactions amongst system components leave space for the emergence of unanticipated behaviour, thus further increasing complexity and leaving little room for optimal policy solutions (Janssen & Helbig, 2016). Furthermore, globalisation and “the accelerating flow of ideas, information, goods and money across national borders has affected the nature of policy problems, [and] reshaped the attempts to engage these problems” (Perl, 2013, p. 44). This growing complexity in the issues governments face has also brought an increasing awareness of the inefficacy of the current policy instrument and processes to tackle them (Brookfield Institute, 2018). It is at present widely accepted that governmental bodies’ structures may not be particularly appropriate to address current societal issues (Sangiorgi, 2015). For instance, the British Government had already recognised in 2011 that “decades of top-down prescription and centralisation have put bureaucratic imperatives above the needs of [public] service users” (HM Government, 2011, p. 7). Additionally, budget reduction has meant the need for revising public services, often re-assessing user needs to obtain gains in effectiveness and better user experience (Whicher, 2015). Rebolledo (2016), refers to this situation in which there is a disparity between what people need and what government does, suggesting that the latter also requires greater effectiveness in designing and delivering policies as a two-folded innovation imperative. A profound reconsideration of the role of the State, where public organisations focus on learning and are permitted to experiment and fail, is crucial for governments to embrace innovation

(Mazzucato, 2015). Junginger (2017) adds “we are at a moment in time where many governments are desperately looking for new approaches to policy making and policy implementation” (p. 5). Although the need for doing things differently regarding how public issues are tackled and how public services are provided has been largely recognised, the process of policymaking remains essentially unchanged.

Against this backdrop of increasing complexity design has gained a renewed momentum for its potential to enhance economies’ competitive advantage (Raulik-Murphy, 2010), but also as a strategic tool to promote innovation in the public sector (Junginger, 2014). Since at least 2008, policymakers worldwide have been trying to develop innovative ways for sustainable growth (Bason, 2014). The rationale for this is that design offers some potential to overcome the limitations of conventional policy methods in fostering public and social innovation by developing creative solutions (Mulgan, 2014).

In this context, design has become central to some public organisations, employing designers and introducing notions of design thinking across the stages of the policymaking cycle (Junginger, 2017). This has led to a growing number of design-based approaches, including but not restricted to design thinking, service design, and content design being implemented within government and policy making stemming from their recognition as helpful in tackling public policy problems (Vesnic-Alujevic, Stoermer, Rudkin, Scapolo, & Kimbell, 2019). According to van Buuren, Lewis, & Peters (2020), “[r]ecent applications of design methods involve the use of design or policy labs, design charrettes and other experimental and exploratory approaches” (p. 4). At present, several design-based approaches are increasingly being deployed within policymaking and government services as a result of growing recognition of their capacity to address and aid understanding of complex societal issues, while recognising the value of service providers’ and users’ insights into the process (Bason, 2014). These participatory policy developments are driven by the necessity to understand stakeholders’ needs and wishes and gather their opinions about policy directions (Janssen & Helbig, 2016). Yet the dominant approach to policymaking remains expert-based, where stakeholders are minimally involved (Janssen & Helbig, 2016). However, these new methods and organisational arrangements have the potential to impact the policymaking process through their shift from problem to human-centric and creative approaches, which differs from the traditional policy process (van Buuren, Lewis, & Peters, 2020).

Moreover, it is argued that policy-making can be conceived as a design activity (Johnson & Cook, 2014), and the implementation of such policies is subject to the design of services and products (Junginger, 2013). Particularly in Europe, central governments and local authorities alike are increasingly working with design managers and incorporating in their organisational structures multidisciplinary innovation units using design approaches (Whicher, 2015). Conceived in a global setting where the limits between public and private sector are becoming blurred, these organisations look to integrate interests and ideas from various policy communities (Perl, 2013). Such organisations are frequently referred to as ‘policy labs’ and are described as emerging organisations tasked with the devising of public policies in an innovative and ‘designerly’ manner (Fuller & Lochard, 2016). Although some of the organisations incorporating this approach have reached supra-national levels, a comprehensive investigation of the ways in which design is applied in the public policymaking process has not yet been carried out.

Despite the increasing academic research and growth in design for policy practitioners, a recent Arts and Humanities Research Council report states that design for policy “currently

lacks strong conceptual, theoretical, epistemological, methodological and empirical groundings” (Whicher, 2020). On this basis, this research set out to gain an understanding of how design can be used to innovate in public policymaking. To achieve this, three studies were conducted on the European context. These studies have been planned to progressively build on each other according to the premise of *exploring, describing, and explaining* the phenomenon. Likewise, this investigation targets ‘policy labs’ as these are organisations consisting of multi-disciplinary teams who explicitly utilise design methods to involve a variety of users in the development of innovative public policies and services.

1.2. Research relevance

The relevance of this research stems from the novel but scarce theoretical work on design for policy, which also emphasises the need for more research to understand how and in which conditions design is adding value to public policy innovation (Junginger, 2014; Buchanan C. , 2014). During the course of this research, the investigator actively participated in the academic community who are shaping the understanding and research direction of design for policy. This included participating in international conferences, events, and communities such as the Design Research Society’s Special Interest Group on Design for Policy and Collaborative Governance. Similarly, in partaking in the 2018 piloting of the first doctoral course in design in/for government in London, the convenors manifested:

We have observed significant shifts and convergence in discourses around design, policy, and governance often under different but connected guises: design for policy, design for government, "design-led" government innovation, design for behavioural change and behavioral sciences approaches or "nudging", social design or civic design, or governance design, all which describe new territories, norms, and roles of design in relation to governance, democracy, and civil society. Design is often nested together with public, social, and civic innovation labs or policy labs -however there seem to be stark differences in models and organizational focus, not to mention the different practices and competencies and multiple meanings of designing. The research in this area is limited. We are not only interested in simply describing design in this area -the roles and actions of design - but in querying its limits. As design extends towards or overlaps with the domains of other social/political disciplines and roles, new questions arise about the claims, politics and ethics of design.

(Kimbell, et al., 2018)

Design has permeated the public sphere in many ways, however, considering ‘policy labs’ as the preferred vehicle for studying design for policy is justified by their explicit use of design approaches to drive innovation (Fuller & Lochard, 2016). These represent a very targeted opportunity to research how design intervenes in the public policy innovation process, because, unlike other organisations already established in government structures, these tend to have higher public exposure, making them more easily identifiable.

Similarly, as the policy lab phenomena is rooted in the European context, the study is situated within this region. In this regard, Bason (2014) states experimenting with design methods in the public sphere has firstly appeared more than a decade ago as an Anglo-Saxon and Nordic practice. Consequently, the most longstanding policy labs find their roots in Europe, allowing the study of design for policy beyond the initial experimental stages, as is the case of more novel initiatives taking inspiration from the European experience.

Moreover, and supported on various and diverse levels of integration in the form of multilateral agreements¹, knowledge transfer amongst European countries is especially dynamic. Archetypically, the European Union (EU) “advocate[s], and at times enforce similar policies across diverse countries” (Dolowitz & Marsh, 2000, p. 7). Other examples of this are the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development’s (OECD) Observatory of Public Sector Innovation², the SEE Project Platform³, the Design for Europe initiative⁴, and industry associations such as the Bureau of European Design Associations (BEDA), to name a few. It is acknowledged that policy transfer across different nations has not only increased in the last decades, but policymakers worldwide seem to be increasingly dependent on it (Dolowitz & Marsh, 2000). On this matter, Perl (2013) asserts that “state-specific ideas on the role of government no longer provide a clear and consistent policy orientation... [and] instead, virtual communities of interest spread ideas and values across social networks that span the globe at the same time that supranational institutions develop explicitly global values that foster convergence in policy-making” (p. 46).

Therefore, what might appear as national learning processes are nowadays lessons for policymakers across the globe. This has, for instance, led to the creation of the EU Policy Lab, a supra-national level organisation seen as “a collaborative and experimental space for innovative policy-making... [which utilises] design thinking to explore, connect and find solutions for better policies” (EU Policy Lab, 2016). It is important to highlight that to date, only two of these organisations operating at a supra-national level have been identified: the EU Policy Lab and the Nordic Food Policy Lab.

Furthermore, public policy making is considered to be a complex process with profound context-dependent differences. For this reason, Europe presents a unique opportunity to construct a more relatable dataset, since supranational structures (namely, the European Union) foster policy transfer across national borders. Similarly, the European context allows us to study policy innovation at three levels: locally (cities or regions within a country), nationally (entire countries), and supra-nationally (e.g., through European Commission projects).

1.3. Overall research aim and research questions

The purpose of this research is to contribute to the theoretical and practical basis for the utilisation of design approaches in developing more innovative public policies. By this is meant the implementation of design-led governmental practices and processes that would allow the development of novel and more suitable policy solutions to address current wicked policy problems. In other words, the overall aim of this research is to understand **the role of design in innovative public policymaking**.

To attain this aim, the first step was to develop a literature-driven conceptual framework that could provide a rationale for introducing design-led approaches into public policymaking. After establishing a set of constructs that supports the utilisation of design in public

¹ European Union (EU), European Free Trade Association (EFTA), Schengen Agreement (Schengen), European Economic Area Agreement (EEA), Euro Area Monetary Union (Eurozone) (Busquets Guàrdia, 2017).

² Co-funded by the Horizon 2020 European Union Funding for Research & Innovation (OECD, 2014).

³ Networking project of “11 European partners sharing knowledge and experience on how design can be integrated into regional and national policies to boost innovation, sustainability, social and economic development” (Cardiff Metropolitan University, 2016).

⁴ EU co-funded programme to support design-driven innovation across EU member states (Design for Europe, 2015).

polymaking, the inquiry looked at iteratively exploring, describing, and explaining the phenomenon through three research questions:

1. What design practices are currently being deployed in the polymaking process?
2. How is design being instilled in public polymaking?
3. Why does the introduction of design for policy affect the polymaking process?

Exploring the field: This first exploratory question takes well-defined theories and applies them in a specific area. In this case, public polymaking, design, and innovation management theories discussed in the literature review were used to interpret *what* design practices are being deployed at each stage of the public policy making process to innovate its output.

Current application and integration of a design-led approach: The descriptive question, building on the previous exploratory inquiry, looked at *how* a design mindset is being introduced in public polymaking to address specific policy needs.

Potential for further integration: Lastly, and building on both the exploratory and descriptive research, the third question looked at explaining *why* integrating design to produce innovations impacts the established policy process.

By answering the research questions, this investigation's objective was to explain how a design approach could be better integrated into the polymaking process to make it more responsive towards contemporary societal issues. The research contribution and potential impact is threefold, considering design as the outcomes it produces, the processes it involves, and the capabilities it requires. From this perspective, the contributions of this research project are the strengthening of the theoretical and managerial basis for the use of design for public policy innovation at different levels of government. Likewise, it was expected to articulate recommendations for government adoption of design for public policy innovation.

1.4 Key findings

The research findings offer a range of insights for the integration of design for policy in mainstream polymaking.

1. A mapping of the most usual tools and methods utilised in design for policy;
2. The identification of the aspects of the design thinking mindset most recurrent in introducing a design-led approach to polymaking;
3. The main barriers in the policy cycle to introducing a design-led approach;
4. Design thinking can be understood as the operationalisation of open policy making.

The first study showed the relevance of the process perspective in understanding public policy innovation. The mapping of methods utilised by policy labs offered a picture of the needs and challenges faced in innovating public policies. Contrasting the findings with the literature on design methods showed a significant gap in the awareness of the methods' nature.

The second study found that some of the practices and aspects of the professional culture of the public sector (e.g., its norms and expectations) are detrimental to the integration of design thinking. However, at its best, design for policy assists in bridging the policy implementation gap that often produces policies which either are difficult to implement or fail to achieve their purpose.

The third study found that policy co-design grants access to people's lived experiences and their expectations by offering a richer and more vivid understanding of the policy problems and the values to be pursued in the formulation of policies to address them. In addition, by exploiting imagination and with the aid of visualisations and artefacts, design can contribute to the development of shared visions of the future by aligning people behind them and helping in the development of strategies to their attainment.

In sum, the value of the research has been to:

1. Further the theoretical understanding of the use of design as a process for policy innovation.
2. Explain how the role of design in policymaking relates to its implementation as a mode of inquiry into policy issues.
3. Create a maturity model of design for policy adoption according to reactive, coactive, or proactive policy work.

1.5. Structure of the thesis

Following this introduction, the thesis is structured in three major parts and eight chapters (see Figure 1).

The first part consists of Chapters 2 and 3 and describes related theory and the research methodology respectively. Within this, Chapter 2 sets out the theoretical analysis which underpins the thesis. Public policy innovation is introduced as a distinct policy problem and an area of public intervention. The primary purpose of this chapter is to establish the academic and research areas which are of relevance to the subject of the research. This chapter follows a thematic format under three main headings: the policymaking process, public policy innovation, and relevance of design for public policy innovation. Chapter 3 is divided into six sections and offers an account of the researcher's philosophical positioning, the research design adopted, the data collection and analytical methods, discussion of issues of validity and reliability, and ethical considerations.

The second part is contained within Chapters 4, 5, and 6. These chapters present the data obtained and findings drawn from each study through which the research objective was progressively attained. Each of these builds sequentially on the previous study and bring new theoretical and empirical elements to recursively investigate the phenomenon from three different perspectives. Likewise, the three research questions previously defined frame each study, in the attempt to *explore*, *describe*, and *explain* the phenomenon. Chapter 4 presents Study 1: Mapping design practices in European policy labs. This chapter discusses the emergence of design approaches for policy innovation in Europe, mobilized through specialised governmental bodies known as policy labs. The purpose of this study is to map how policy labs in Europe are incorporating design practices at distinct stages of the policymaking cycle. It does so by surveying a sample of 29 policy labs in Europe operating at various levels of government. The surveys inquire into the policy labs' understanding of public policy innovation, and based on the public policymaking process model, explore which specific design methods are currently being deployed at each stage.

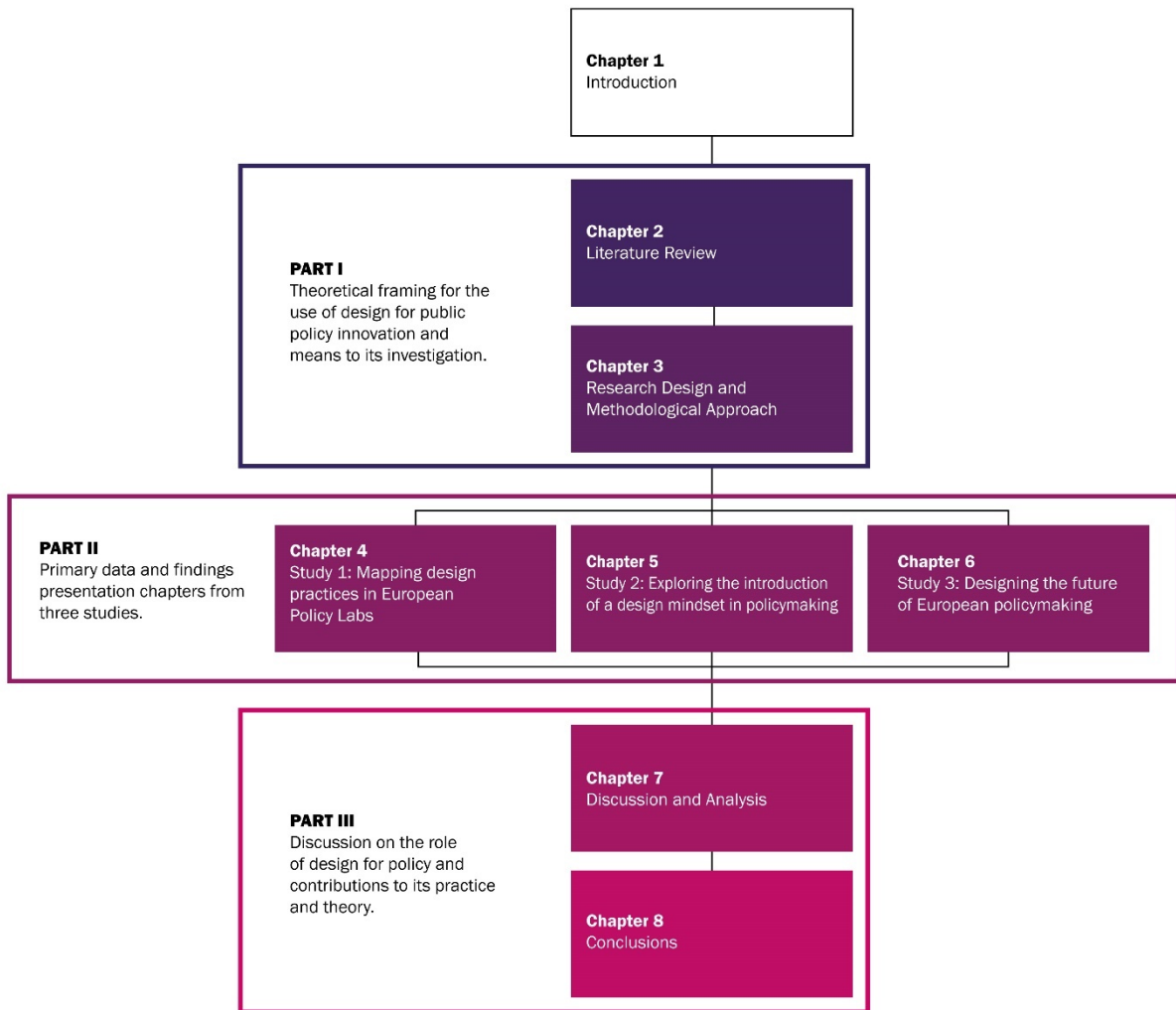


Figure 1: Structure of the Thesis and Chapter Layout.

Chapter 5 presents the second study, which aimed at describing design's introduction into public policymaking beyond the utilisation of design tools and methods. The identification of other factors, such as design capabilities or an overarching design-oriented fashion for policy development, is problematic to capture through surveys, even when these allow for open responses. Therefore, this study relied on participant observation as its main data collection strategy. The insights gathered throughout 21 months of direct interaction with the team of policy designers shed light on the difficulties of integrating these novel approaches with mainstream policymaking, how they understand their role in the policymaking process, and how they interact with their parent entities and other government bodies.

Chapter 6 presents the third study, an investigation that took place in the context of 'The Future of Government 2030+' project; an EU Policy Lab initiative exploring emerging societal challenges and future government models through citizen engagement, foresight, and design approaches. Study 3 presented an opportunity to examine a particular configuration of the phenomenon in which several policy labs operating at national and supra-national level collaborated with design schools to design futures of European governance and policymaking. Through in-depth semi-structured interviews with key actors, namely, those delivering the project at the EU Policy Lab and the participant organisations, this study offered rich insights about future integration of design for policy.

Lastly, Chapters 7 and 8 comprise the third part which discusses the findings and suggests a conceptual framework for the introduction of design in innovative public policymaking accompanied by perspectives for practice and research. The discussion of findings in Chapter 7 answers the research questions and brings together insights from all three studies to address the research aim of the role of design in policy innovation. Chapter 8 concludes the thesis, where the attainment of the research aim is summarised, implications for design for policy are drawn, limitations of the study are discussed, and reflections on the investigation and future research outlined.

1.6 Summary

This research departs from the premise that governments around the world are increasingly interested in design-led approaches to bring about innovation in the public sector, principally through the development of more efficient and effective public services. In particular, the introduction of design thinking—in what is known as ‘design for policy’—through specialised government bodies is seen as an opportunity to foster an experimental approach in the public sector and adopt a citizen-centric perspective to policy development. Likewise, this research has aimed at bringing together academic theory on policy science and design-driven innovation to drive policy innovation. The pragmatic approach adopted in this investigation manifested in the design of three studies and through the collection and analysis of (primarily) qualitative data informing its findings. These studies involved surveying ‘policy labs’ in Europe, conducting participant observation with a UK government team introducing design for policy, and semi-structured interviews with members of policy labs and design schools across Europe. The key findings reveal that the policymaking process presents several barriers to producing policy innovations and to the adoption of a design-led approach. The results also indicate that there are opportunities for further and better integrating design for policy with the aim of enhancing policy outcomes whilst strengthening the public bodies that produce them. The upskilling of policy designers and the development of more refined design tools for the public context open the prospect for the adoption of design in mainstream policymaking and the systematic development of public sector innovations.

Chapter ②

Literature review

This investigation is situated at the intersection between design, innovation, and public policymaking. Whilst there is an established body of knowledge that focuses on public policymaking —especially, from a policy analysis perspective— there is relatively limited research that addresses the more recent uses of design approaches for public policymaking. Moreover, the rationale and means to introducing design methods, techniques, and mindsets to attain policy innovation are scarcely referred to by political scientists and design researchers alike. In light of this, this literature review integrates three bodies of literature: the policymaking process, public policy innovation, and relevance of design for public policy innovation.

The first topic reviews the public policymaking process to provide an understanding of how public policies are developed and which are some of the fundamental issues identified in the process models.

The second topic, public policy innovation, is pertinent to this research as it seeks to identify what is implied by public policy innovation and which strategies governments are using to its attainment.

Thirdly, the relevance of design approaches for aiding in the development of innovative public policies will be discussed. This last section spans from explaining the different perspectives on design thinking and its role in innovation to the logic behind understanding policymaking as an inherent design activity.

Through reviewing these topics together, emerging issues are identified. Amongst them are policymaking process barriers for policy innovation, policy innovation as an innovation process, and design for policy as a distinctive approach to public policymaking. These lay the basis for the analytical framework and inform the research methods described in Chapter 3.

2.1. The policymaking process

This first section of the literature review focuses on well-established concepts from the political science studies, such as the policymaking process model, but not without controversy due to their applicability beyond policy analysis. However, since most of the notions considered here belong to knowledge fields such as policy and political science, it is important to establish working definitions as a starting point. These will set the basis and define a conceptual framework for understanding the policymaking process.

2.1.1 Public Policy

As a starting point, it is crucial to establish a definition of *public policy*. This relatively trivial-looking task is not so, to the extent that scholars express that reaching consensus on one definition of public policy has so far proved impossible (Birkland, 2015). However, there are certain definitions which have had a more profound impact than others. Notably, Dye's overtly comprehensive definition states that "public policy is whatever governments choose to do or not to do... [and they] may regulate behavior, organize bureaucracies, distribute benefits, or extract taxes—or all of these things at once." (Dye, 2013, p. 3). As pointed out by Howlett, Ramesh, & Perl (2009), this definition may be too simplistic for analytical means, since it equally considers all features of governmental behaviour. Still, it does point out a crucial fact about public policies, which is that they are based on decisions made by governments (Howlett, Ramesh, & Perl, 2009). In this regard, Howlett et al. (2009), implicitly refer to Weber's definition of the State⁵, while explaining that the unique role governments enjoy in public policy-making is owed to their exceptional ability to enforce their decisions. Mintrom and Williams (2013) developed Dye's definition a step further by asserting public policies are "any actions taken by governments that represent previously agreed responses to specified circumstances" (p. 4). Besides moving from 'choices' to 'actions', this definition brings two new dimensions to public policies: the need to agree on the decisions to be taken, and the need for having recognised specific circumstances to act upon. This had been indicated previously in Jenkins's (1978) definition, in which he proposes public policy is "a set of interrelated decisions taken by a political actor or group of actors concerning the selection of goals and the means of achieving them within the power of those actors to achieve" (p. 15). Although fundamentally similar, the latter definition stresses the purposive selection of specific objectives and the means to reach them, thus shifting the focus from 'circumstances' to 'goals'. We can appreciate in this definition a relationship between the actions a government will consider and its capacity to implement them (Howlett, Ramesh, & Perl, 2009). Other definitions explicitly describe the means by which governments or its representatives in fact deliver their public policies, these being the creation of a system of laws, courses of action, regulatory measures, and funding priorities (Kilpatrick, 2000).

Howlett et al. (2009) explain that *democracy* is one of the two —the other being *capitalism*— 'meta-institutions' informing the structures in which public policy processes largely develop in contemporary societies. With this consideration, we could also contemplate Schneider's definition, in which it is argued that "from a normative perspective, public policy in a democracy is charged with the task of creating democratic institutions; encouraging and promoting an active, engaged, and informed citizenry; promoting justice as fairness for all people; and solving collective problems in ways that are efficient and effective" (Schneider, 2013, p. 222). Although this is not in line with every model of public policy —namely, elitism— it does support Mintrom & Williams' (2013) idea of governments designing public policies with the ambition of growing the public good. This argument is also raised by Birkland (2015) when he argues that public policy is made on the "public's" behalf. Birkland's list of key attributes for public policy also includes other worthwhile features, such as perceiving policy as the solution of a problem or oriented toward the achievement of a desired state, the notion of public policy ideas originating not only from inside government, and that these are interpreted and implemented by actors, both private and public, with their own motivations, who may have

⁵ "... a state is a human community that (successfully) claims the monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force within a given territory." (Weber, 1965)

different understandings of the problems to be addressed and what constitute suitable solutions (Birkland, 2015).

As can be observed, defining public policy is not only about a government's ability to do its work, but also its ability to grasp the problems. As expressed by Lasswell (1936), one of its fathers, political science is the study of "who gets what, when, and how?". Moreover, Dye (2013) stresses that political science is the study of public policy in the attempt to describe and explain the causes and consequences of governmental activity, both intended and unintended. However, it is acknowledged that policy scholars have mostly rejected the exclusion of values from their analyses, and have continuously assessed the process of policy-making itself, as well as the goals and the means of policy (Howlett, Ramesh, & Perl, 2009). For this reason, definitions of public policy cannot be separated from the analytical framework in which they were conceived.

2.1.2 Public policy analysis

Policy analysis is used to develop a better understanding of the policymaking process and to provide policy decision makers with relevant and reliable knowledge about the issues they need to deal with (Araral, Fritzen, Howlett, Ramesh, & Wu, 2013). Deductive and inductive methods of analysis have been used in policy studies, in which the former is largely based on the application of general assumptions, concepts, and principles to specific phenomena, whereas the latter develops generalisations based on the observation of empirical phenomena and its subsequent testing (Howlett, Ramesh, & Perl, 2009). Policy analysts utilise several analytical tools, techniques and skills ranging from organisational methods and economics, to law and budgeting, to generate such knowledge and gain an understanding of policy problems (Howlett, Ramesh, & Perl, 2009). Mintrom & Williams (2013) support this idea by indicating that studies on public policies may be conducted in several disciplinary or even cross-disciplinary settings, with the aid of analytical techniques created to understand public policy design, implementation, and evaluation. Furthermore, it is also acknowledged that other — perhaps softer — skills are also required, such as solid interpersonal skills, in-depth political knowledge and perceptiveness (Mintrom & Williams, 2013).

Political science has developed several models to facilitate the analysis of public policies:

- **Institutional model:** policy as the output of institutions;
- **Process model:** policy as the result of political activity;
- **Rational model:** policy as the quest for maximum social gain;
- **Incremental model:** policy as incremental variations of past policies;
- **Group model:** policy as the equilibrium in the power struggle of diverse groups;
- **Elite model:** policy as the preferences of governing elites;
- **Public choice model:** policy as the collective decision made by self-interested individuals;
- **Game theory model:** policy as the outcome of rational choices in competitive situations.

(Dye, 2013)

These models present policy analysts with different perspectives from which to analyse public policies, and perhaps more importantly, establish certain hypotheses which will impact on the results of the analysis. For instance, the *elite model* views public policies as the interests,

preferences and values of a ruling elite, without echoing the demands of the people (Dye, 2013). When studying public policy innovation, this model may be of interest, since elitism implies that transformation and innovation in public policy are the results of redefinitions in elite's own —generally conservative— values, and that these occur when the established system may be threatened (Dye, 2013). Other models, such as the *incremental* model, are based on the idea of public policy as a continuum of previous governmental activities with only minor alterations over existing programs, policies, and expenditures (Dye, 2013). Whilst considered to be an appropriate approach in maintaining political stability, the conservative nature of its decision-making process severely restricts the occurrence of public policy innovation (Dye, 2013). This indicates that within this model, preserving the stability of the system is often valued above the resolution of potential social problems, or at least in the cases where policies effecting radical change may be needed.

In Dye's (2013) view, regardless of which model assists the analysis, every public policy conceptualisation should attempt to:

- Offer simplification and clarification of the real world, to better understand its relationships, whilst maintaining an appropriate degree of accuracy and reliability. This also implies being congruent with reality by offering empirical referents.
- Give direct attention to and help to identify the most important aspects of policy problems, through avoiding irrelevant aspects, variables or circumstances of policy life.
- Provide a helpful way to communicate with different stakeholders by concentrating on meaningful features of political life.
- Be operational, by directing our efforts to understand real-world phenomena that can be observed, measured, and verified.
- Not only describe public policy, but also suggest hypotheses about the causes and consequences of verifiable public policy-hypotheses.

Although this review does not intend to factor in theoretical debates around positivist vs post-positivist approaches to public policy analysis, it is important to highlight that these strands of thought exist and have significant implications on how public policy analysis is conceived and carried out. Nonetheless, Howlett et al. (2009) identify the following three essential elements where every policy theory converges:

- **Actors:** whether they are subjects pursuing their own agendas (e.g., *public choice theory*), or objects influenced by the circumstances of their context (e.g., *institutionalism*), understanding public policies demands knowledge about the actors playing a role in it.
- **Ideas:** appreciation of the ideas that outline policy negotiations, ranging from the most specific and self-interested points of view (e.g., *elitism*) to extensively held belief systems (e.g., *rationalism*).
- **Structures:** policy-making occurs within a number of political and social structures which influence the discussions about what is to be done. These may vary from structures that set the logic for the competition between diverse interests and ideas (e.g., the *game theory model*), to providers of themes of political initiative on diverse areas (e.g., the *group model*).

Since its origins, policy analysis has been closely linked with a perspective that considers the policy process as developing over a sequence of distinct phases or stages (Jann & Wegrich, 2007). In this study, we will mainly focus on how policies are made rather than on their

content or their causes and consequences. Therefore, the *process model* will serve as conceptual guide since it is considered to be a useful model in helping to understand the various activities involved in policymaking (Dye, 2013).

2.1.3 Public policymaking

Considering public policy as the result of many interconnected decisions, public policy-making is a dynamic process (Howlett, Ramesh, & Perl, 2009). On their definition, Howlett et al. (2009) suggest it is a bi-dimensional process (*technical* and *political*) regarded as ‘applied problem-solving’ by constrained social actors, in the attempt to tie policy goals with policy means. Whereas the *technical* dimension is seen as a rational quest for the optimal relationship amongst goals and tools, the *political* one implies that not every actor in the process will necessarily agree on what configures a policy problem, or what is its suitable solution (Howlett, Ramesh, & Perl, 2009). This process is understood to have an identifiable pattern of activities, although rarely as orderly and systematic as the model portrays it (Howard, 2005; Dye, 2013). Although one is the theoretical representation of the other, whilst revising definitions of public policy-making, the discussion about the policymaking process model is almost inevitable.

This model is considered to be one of the most widespread means of simplifying public policy-making (Howlett, Ramesh, & Perl, 2009) by disaggregating the process into a set of discrete interrelated stages with a logical flow (Hallsworth, Parker, & Rutter, 2011). In this staged process, policy issues and deliberations are seen as sequentially moving from policy problems (inputs) to actual policies (outputs) (Howlett, Ramesh, & Perl, 2009). Nevertheless, Howlett & Giest (2013) argue that this general framework for understanding policymaking does not help to answer some crucial questions about the content of policy, the quality and quantity of involved actors, nor whether pattern variations exist depending on the policy area. Furthermore, Lejano (2013) asserts that in the deconstructed process certain aspects such as where and at what stage policy is designed are not clearly represented, since in practice the stages of this conceptual model blur in various ways.

2.1.4 The public policymaking process perspective

As expressed by many scholars (Birkland, 2015; Dye, 2013; Howlett & Giest, 2013; Jann & Wegrich, 2007; Lasswell, 1936; Mintrom & Williams, 2013), utilising a staged model of the policy-making process has proved convenient to, among other things, reduce complexity by breaking down the process and investigating every stage individually or systemically in its interaction with other stages. Particularly, the policy cycle framework (see Figure 2) has been acknowledged to provide a template which makes it easier to identify the actors—and their actions—at every stage, at bottlenecks in the process, together with providing the most effective tools for each stage (Howlett & Giest, 2013). It has also been recognised as being useful for exploring which factors motivate a demand for policy analysis (Mintrom & Williams, 2013). Overall, the staged framework is understood as useful for gaining an analytical understanding of how policies are made (Dye, 2013). However, the policy-making cycle framework is not without its critics.

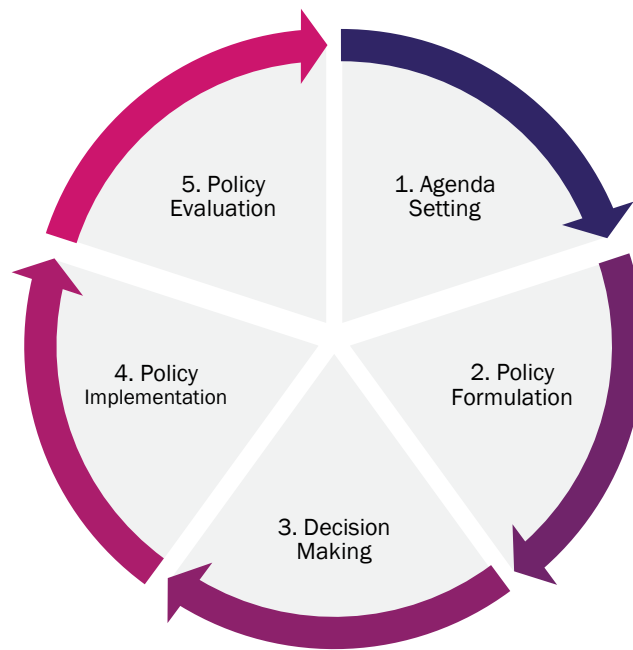


Figure 2: The policy design cycle, adapted from Howlett, Ramesh, & Perl (2009).

In particular, the policy-making cycle is criticised for not accurately depicting reality. Dye (2013), for instance, asserts that in the real world the stages in the process often overlap and collapse into each other, in a far from neat and orderly sequence. Similarly, the framework has often been disproved with regard to its empirical legitimacy and theoretical construction (Jann & Wegrich, 2007). While scholars have long argued about the policy-making cycle shortcomings as a model for producing testable hypotheses, the relevance of the stages as units of analysis remain well established (Birkland & DeYoung, 2013). However, in order to remain a valuable model, the policy-making process model has undergone several modifications since it was first developed by Lasswell in the 1950s. In recent work, a five -stage model has been predominantly utilised to represent the policymaking process (Howlett & Giest, 2013). This model, which comprises stages of issue identification, alternatives creation, evaluation, decision, and enactment, is often seen as the hypostatisation of the rational model (Lejano, 2013).

In previous models of the process, some stages were subdivided. Such is the case with Dye's (2013) model, in which problem identification and agenda setting, are considered respectively as the first two stages of the process (see Table 1), thus creating a 6-stage process.

	Stage	Activity	Participants
1	Problem Identification	Policy problems identification through demand from individuals and groups for government action.	Mass media Interest groups Citizen initiatives Public opinion
2	Agenda Setting	Focusing the attention of the mass media and public officials on specific public problems to determine what will be decided.	Elites Parliament Candidates for elective office Mass media
3	Policy Formulation	Development of policy proposals to tackle problems.	Think tanks Executive office Parliamentary committees Interest groups
4	Policy Legitimation	Selection and enactment of policies through specific actions.	Interest groups Executive office Parliament Courts
5	Policy Implementation	Implementation of policies through governmental bureaucracies, public expenditures, regulations, and other executive activities.	Executive office Executive agencies Independent offices Government corporations
6	Policy Evaluation	Evaluation of policies' impact and reforms proposition.	Executive agencies Parliamentary committees Mass media Think tanks

Table 1: Dye's policy-making model (Dye, 2013)

In a more recent and widely diffused version, Howlett et al. (2009) looked to make explicit the underlying rationale of applied problem solving intertwined in previous policy-making models (Brewer G. D., 1974; Jones, 1984), and created a five-stage model where problem identification is merged with the agenda-setting stage (see Table 2). Interestingly, although there is an effort to link policy-making to problem solving, by eliminating the label *problem identification*, the focus on *agenda-setting* instead makes room for dealing with other situations which are not necessarily 'problems', as we have seen in public policy definitions which moved the focus from 'circumstances' to 'goals' (Jenkins, 1978).

	Stages in Policy Cycle	Applied Problem Solving	Key Actors Involved
1	Agenda-Setting	Problem Recognition	Policy Universe
2	Policy Formulation	Proposal of Solution	Policy Subsystem
3	Decision-Making	Choice of Solution	Government Decision-Makers
4	Policy Implementation	Putting Solutions into Effect	Policy Subsystem
5	Policy Evaluation	Monitoring Results	Policy Universe

Table 2: Five stages of the Policy Cycle and their relationship to Applied Problem-Solving (Howlett, Ramesh, & Perl, 2009).

As is evident from Tables 1 and 2, these two models of the policy-making cycle are similar. A second important distinction lies in the level of detail dedicated to the actors involved in every stage. Howlett et al.'s (2009) decision to only describe the actors in terms of proportions of the

policy universe could relate to their idea of policy-making as often an idiosyncratic and ad hoc process. Another notable difference is found in the 4th and 3rd stage, respectively, which Dye labelled *Policy legitimization* while Howlett et al. denominated it as *Decision-making*. However, this stage remains largely the same in essence and for clarity, in this study, we will follow Howlett et al.'s designation.

2.1.4.1 Problem identification and agenda-setting

This first stage in the policy-making cycle is concerned with the way in which policy problems emerge (or not), and is considered to be “perhaps the most critical stage of the policy cycle” (Howlett, Ramesh, & Perl, 2009, p. 92), since “deciding what will be the problems is even more important than deciding what will be the solutions” (Dye, 2013, pp. 33-34). It is also said that without understanding this stage where policy issues compete for consideration there will not be understanding of policy-making (Green-Pedersen & Mortensen, 2013). In essence, agenda-setting refers to the stage in which issues are initially ‘sensed’ by policy actors (Howlett & Giest, 2013). In other words, the agenda is the set of issues that matter to a society in a specific moment. There are, at any given time, different concurrent agendas which do not necessarily overlap. In a country or region, for instance, there may simultaneously be:

- A government agenda;
- A civil society agenda; and
- A media agenda.

However, it is important to note that the identification of a policy issue does not mean it will be addressed, much less resolved by the government, but only that it has been put forward for consideration as a public issue (Howlett, Ramesh, & Perl, 2009). In this regard, Green-Pedersen and Mortensen (2013) add that increasing attention on a public issue will eventually lead to policy measures. According to Kingdon (2003), who heavily influenced the study of policy decisions from an agenda-setting perspective (Green-Pedersen & Mortensen, 2013), a policy issue is not included in the agenda solely due to recognition but rather when a solution becomes available and there is a timely political climate.

Although in early academic work it was often assumed that policy problems factually existed and could therefore be objectively recognised, it was later—and under a post-positivist paradigm—acknowledged that problem identification is based on a socially constructed process (Howlett, Ramesh, & Perl, 2009). This is why some scholars posit that policy-problem recognition is based on social indicators which raise concern about undesirable conditions or when salient events present an urgent situation (Mucciaroni, 2013). Others suggest that recognising a policy-problem is more a normative judgment than it is an objective factual observation, hence it cannot be analysed neutrally (Birkland, 2015). Dye (2013) goes further, by asserting policy issues are tactically created and dramatized by influential groups, individuals and corporations to pressure the government into taking specific courses of action. All in all, it is acknowledged that both, the positivist approach, emphasising the role of facts, structures and institutions, and the pure post-positivist approach, based on ideas, present difficulties in identifying a sole basis of factors driving public policy agenda-setting (Howlett, Ramesh, & Perl, 2009).

Howlett and Giest (2013) discuss the difference between what is known as the officially institutionalised agenda, and an unofficial or ‘systemic’ public agenda, consisting of the totality of issues generally perceived by members of the policy universe, of which only a small

amount is considered for policy development. Cobb, Ross and Ross (1976), developed a model to help in the understanding of the dynamics between the two, which identifies three patterns, depending on the origins of the issue and the resources applied to enable its inclusion on the agenda:

- Outside initiation pattern: issues arise outside the governmental sphere and grow, moving from the systemic agenda to the institutional agenda;
- Mobilization pattern: certain decision-makers look to expand issues from inside the official agenda to the systemic agenda;
- Inside initiation: arguing technical or political reasons, influential groups with exclusive access to decision-makers initiate a policy from the inside without necessarily wanting it to be public knowledge.

Interestingly, Dye (2013) argues that there are three main reasons why public opinion is typically shaped by public policies, rather than the other way round:

1. The general public tends not to have an opinion on most of the matters decision-makers are facing;
2. Leaders and the media can have an enormous impact on a generally very unstable public opinion;
3. Conversely, leaders and decision-makers do not generally have a clear perception nor do they communicate to the public; rather, they address other elite groups, and when they do they tend to have an elite bias.

Moreover, Green-Pedersen and Mortensen (2013) assert that although political parties and their competition for electoral support play a role in setting political agendas, changes of party governments are not strongly related to shifts in policy agendas but are rather better explained by competition amid government and opposition parties in between elections. These could perhaps be better understood by studies under the *incremental* or *elite* models.

2.1.4.2 Formulating policy

Policy formulation refers to the developments of policy alternatives for dealing with problems on the policy-agenda (Dye, 2013; Howlett & Giest, 2013). Formulating a set of alternatives comprises the identification of a wide range of approaches to the problems to be addressed, the design of the set of policy tools that constitutes each approach, the outlining of correspondent regulation, articulation of whom or what is affected, and when it will take effect (Sidney, 2007). It occurs at various levels of governmental bureaucracy, legislative committees, think tanks and interest group offices, and its details are typically formulated by staff members following their leaders' ideas (Dye, 2013). However, at times policy proposals may be formulated while simultaneously placing the policy issue in the policy agenda (Howlett, Ramesh, & Perl, 2009).

As the second major stage in the policy-making process, policy formulation involves an initial feasibility assessment of policy options, although different to that of the decision-making stage (Howlett, Ramesh, & Perl, 2009). This assessment largely consists of narrowing down the range of possible choices for a specific public issue, whilst several participant actors make efforts to promote their solutions to the next stage (Howlett & Giest, 2013). To select a subset of viable solutions, alternatives are assessed by their political acceptability, feasibility, benefits,

and costs, among other criteria (Sidney, 2007). Thus, involving the identification of both political constraints and technical limitations (Howlett, Ramesh, & Perl, 2009).

At this stage, the number of actors involved dramatically decreases, since “the relevant policy actors are restricted to those who not only have an opinion on a subject, but also have some minimal level of knowledge of the subject area” (Howlett & Giest, 2013, p. 19). Taking place out of the public eye, policy formulation becomes the dominion of experts, technocrats, and knowledge elites (Sidney, 2007). This critical stage of the policy process will allocate power amongst political, economic, and social interest, whilst the decisions taken by these actors will directly influence the choices decision-makers can later take (Sidney, 2007).

Most recently, the term *policy design* has been used by policy scholars to refer to the activities of this stage, which, they argue, contributes significantly to the success or failure of policies at the implementation stage (Sidney, 2007). In this regard, Schneider (2013) claims that policy design still requires considerable study, as either it is understood as the verb to describe policy formulation (a rationalist approach), or as the noun denoting public policy substance.

2.1.4.3 Decision-making

The third stage in the policy-making process is known as the decision-making stage, and it is at this point where governments decide to take a particular course of action, based on the many options proposed in the preceding stages (Howlett & Giest, 2013). It is considered as the most political stage of the process, and due to its nature, it creates both winners and losers, even when the decision is not to adopt any solution (Howlett, Ramesh, & Perl, 2009). It is important to note that instead of addressing problems with a single decision, a number of interrelated decisions which aggregate towards the outcome are taken by different individuals and institutions at government level, adding to the complexity of the overall process (Howlett, Ramesh, & Perl, 2009). Likewise, it is argued that there is “increased uncertainty about the dynamics and interdependencies in global networks and the power-sharing characteristics or that ‘network society’” have augmented public decision-making complexity (Teisman & van Buuren, 2013). Through the years, several models have been devised to aid in the analysis of this stage:

- **Phase model:** this model, in which phases of policy development, adoption and implementation are distinguished, is the most common approach. It assumes that decision-making is problem oriented.
- **Stream model:** unlike the phase model, this is where problems, solutions, and participants are considered as simultaneously coexisting streams, whose configuration at a given moment results in a decision. This is the second most accepted model.
- **Round model:** in this representation, interactions amid a variety of actors in consecutive rounds result in the definition of problems and solutions. This model has been increasingly accepted as the approach for decision-making analysis in a context of complex networks.
- **Tracks model:** here decision-making is represented as the result of three co-evolving tracks of fact-finding, framing and will-forming. This model emphasises the role of normative and subjective perceptions (frames) of the actors involved at this stage of the policy-making process.

(Teisman & van Buuren, 2013)

Additionally, Forester's studies on rationality and power (as cited in Howlett & Giest, 2013) suggest that a number of factors influence public decision-making:

- Organisational structure;
- Level of problem definition;
- Information availability;
- Time availability;
- The problem's causes and consequences;
- The number of agents involved.

In relation to the last factor, Howlett et al. (2009) state that the number of actors participating at this stage is the smallest of the entire policy-making process, being limited to only those with the authority to take binding public decisions. However, this does not imply that all other excluded actors will not engage in the process, since they are likely to participate in several other activities intended to influence and even coerce those in power to adopt or avoid certain decisions (Howlett, Ramesh, & Perl, 2009). Although rationalist approaches to decision-making modelled the process as being carried out by 'impartial technocrats' (e.g., the phase model), empirical examination have shown that rational debates are habitually outweighed during political negotiations, to the extent of finding the involved actors lacking neutrality or competence for the task (Howlett & Giest, 2013). Moreover, it has been "argued that this is not an accidental situation but rather an inherent and unavoidable characteristic of the policy-making exercise" (Howlett & Giest, 2013, p. 20). Schneider (2013) warns against mistaking this stage as a "benign process of efficient decision-making, [since] cognitive biases may operate at the expense of policy that would serve democratic ends" (p. 217).

2.1.4.4 Policy implementation

The policy cycle's fourth stage is when governments put their energy, knowledge, and resources into effect to translate their previously taken policy decisions into actions. By doing this, it is expected to "alter the distribution of goods and services in society in a way that is broadly compatible with the sentiments and values of affected parties" (Howlett & Giest, 2013, p. 17). In order to make a policy work, responsibilities need to be distributed and staff need to be allocated, assets and resources assigned, and procedures established (Howlett, Ramesh, & Perl, 2009). This implies that regardless of policy decisions usually being accompanied by the means to attain their goals, at this stage it is still necessary for subsequent choices to be made.

Some of these decisions relate to the tools considered at this stage to enact the public policies; these "provide the substance or content to what was planned in the formulation stage and decided upon afterwards in the decision-making stage of the policy process" (Howlett & Giest, 2013, p. 22). This approach in which policy implementation is seen as the application of a policy tools' mix —also called policy instruments— is referred to as *policy design* (Howlett, Ramesh, & Perl, 2009). Based on Hood and Anderson's studies, Howlett et al. (2009) developed a taxonomy of basic policy instruments used as building blocks for policy mixes (see Table 3).

The instruments categorised as 'substantive' or 'procedural' differ from one another in that the former's impact on policy outcomes is much more direct (Howlett & Giest, 2013). In any case, the selection of the instruments is recognised as a complex activity which is influenced by several factors, including the participating policy subsystem and its capability to integrate new actors and ideas (Howlett, Ramesh, & Perl, 2009). Furthermore, Dye (2013) states that these

activities involving decisions about the tools and means that determine policy are largely taken by bureaucrats.

General principle governing use		Resource used			
		Nodality	Authority	Treasure	Organisation
	Substantive	Advice	Regulation	Grants	Administration
		Training	Self-regulation	User charges	Public enterprise
		Reporting	Licenses	Loans	Policing
		Registration	Census-taking	Tax credits	Record-keeping
	Procedural	Provision / withdrawal	Advisory committees	Interest group funding / creation	Commissions of inquiry
		Information	Treaties		Government reorganisations

Table 3: Taxonomy of basic policy instrument components, adapted from Howlett, Ramesh, & Perl (2009).

As explained by Poocharoen (2013), *bureaucracy* is often used interchangeably with *bureaucrats*, the term utilised to describe those in the public sector who, in different degrees, take part in the public policy making process. Although not formally authorised to engage in policy questions, in practice bureaucrats do take innumerable decisions while executing their tasks, such as developing specific regulation and formal rules (Dye, 2013). Kaufman (as cited in Howlett, Ramesh, & Perl, 2009) goes further to emphasise that bureaucrats' participation is in many cases key to the policy process. Specifically, at this stage, Dye argues that "bureaucratic agencies receive only broad and general policy directions in the laws... [therefore] they must decide themselves on important details of policy" (Dye, 2013). Howlett et al. (2009) maintain that increased complexity in modern governments is the reason why bureaucracy is nowadays performing more activities than before in the policymaking process. Apart from supporting the complexity argument, Dye (2013) also points out that by delegating responsibilities to the bureaucrats, the political elites have a scapegoat in case a policy 'fails' or becomes unpopular. On the other hand, Dye (2013) explains that bureaucrats, with the intent to protect their authority, budgets, and public functions, contribute to the expansion of their role and responsibilities in the policymaking process. There is an important distinction between the two groups, as on the one hand politicians are seen as the policy designers, whereas public servants are perceived as the policy executors: whilst the latter are recruited, the former are elected (Poocharoen, 2013).

2.1.4.5 Policy evaluation

The final stage in the policymaking process consists of evaluating the implemented policies to understand to what extent these are reaching their proposed outcomes, with what intended and unintended effects, and at what cost (Dye, 2013). According to Howlett et al. (2009), at this stage the entire policy universe participates in monitoring the policy results, frequently ending in both policy and problems being reconceptualised. This link to the first stage, which Dye labels as a more "sophisticated version of the model" (2013, p. 58), is what generates the feedback loop, thus originating the idea of a 'cycle'. However, it is also acknowledged that the feedback loop might be shortened, linking back to any previous stage in the cycle, and not necessarily the agenda-setting stage (Howlett, Ramesh, & Perl, 2009). This is explained by DeLeon (as cited in Howlett, Ramesh, & Perl, 2009) by being dependent on the level of reconceptualization the policy problem/solution may go through, ranging from an essential

reformulation of the issue to some minor changes in the solution, without discarding the possibility of policy termination. Nevertheless, Howlett and Giest (2013), expand on Pierson's notion of the feedback loop not necessarily being operationalised when they argue that policy evaluation may not lead nor result in major policy change.

The degree to which a policy may be altered after evaluation will depend on how satisfactorily it is considered to be meeting its objectives. This is very much in line with Nachmias's definition, in which he argues that "policy evaluation research is the objective, systematic, empirical examination of the effects ongoing policies and public programs have on their targets in terms of the goals they are meant to achieve" (Nachmias, 1979, p. 4). As, Howlett and Geist (2013) explain, this means that after objective assessment, it is possible to develop actions to eliminate the barriers impeding the policy attaining its objectives. However, Dye (2013) warns that since policy evaluations are generally formulated as complaints coming from different stakeholders, they are often impressionistic and unsystematic. Although it is acknowledged that these evaluations can and often stimulate change in existing policies (Dye, 2013), it contradicts the positivist idealisation of unbiased policy evaluation.

Post-positivist approaches to policy evaluation, on the other hand, offer quite a different image of the process. To begin with, policy objectives require subjective interpretation since they are generally not explicit nor clear (Howlett, Ramesh, & Perl, 2009). Furthermore, when dealing with socially constructed problems and subjective claims, the likelihood of establishing objective standards by which to evaluate a public policy's degree of success is severely compromised. Consequently, determining policy success (or failure) "is neither so simple nor certain... [and] often highly subjective and reflective of an individual's goals, perception of need, and perhaps even psychological disposition toward life" (Ingram & Mann, 1980, p. 12). Although it is possible to go further with this train of thought until reaching the conclusion that there are purely political reasons or highly biased framings to assess a public policy, it is also argued that by combining elements of positivist and post-positivist approaches a policy learning stage can be reached (Howlett, Ramesh, & Perl, 2009).

In this regard, Halpern and Mason's (2015) Radical Incrementalism (RI) approach to policymaking is noteworthy. Although every policymaking process model includes an evaluation stage, this does not always occur in reality. Halpern and Mason (2015) argue that two essential factors preventing more effective policy evaluation are its perceived cost and time implications. Whilst the authors recognise the complexities associated with evaluating certain policies, they encourage their systematic evaluation, especially when this can be done inexpensively and with little disruption. Moreover, they claim when these conditions are given, obtaining buy-in to carry out a policy evaluation becomes more accessible (Halpern & Mason, 2015). At its core, the RI approach requires policymakers to embrace uncertainty by assuming that ex-ante it is at least very difficult —if not impossible— to determine a policy's outcome. Therefore, Halpern and Mason suggest policymakers should "instead seek to design a policy process that embeds the systematic testing of some of those options to figure out 'what works'" (2015, p. 145). Though their claims are drawn upon insights from behavioural economics and psychology, there is merit in considering other forms of systematic testing that could also be fed into the policymaking process.

2.2 Public policy(making) innovation

Having defined policymaking in terms of the process of developing and implementing policies, rather than their content, this section examines framing policy innovation in terms of the dichotomy 'product vs process' innovation, characteristic from the technology innovation studies. Furthermore, it looks to examine the need for innovating how policymaking is currently carried out in regard to the increasing complexity and the rise of wicked problems as policy issues.

The process model is one of the most widespread means of depicting public policy-making (Howlett, Ramesh, & Perl, 2009), and it does so by disaggregating it into a set of discrete interrelated stages with a logical flow (Hallsworth, Parker, & Rutter, 2011). As previously mentioned, an identifiable pattern of activities is presented in this process, though seldom as systematic as the model depicts it (see Figure 3).

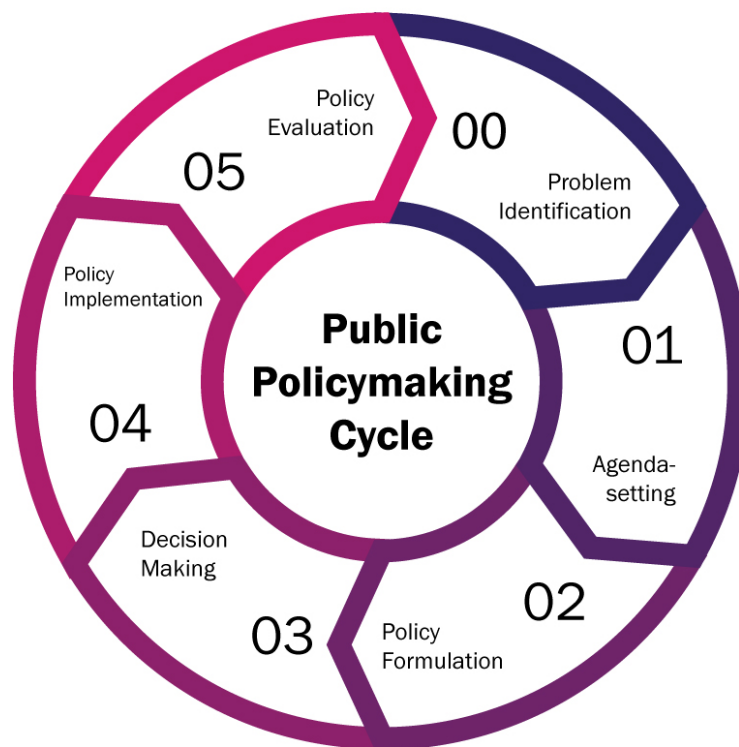


Figure 3: The public policymaking cycle, adapted from Howlett, Ramesh, & Perl (2009) and Dye (2013).

When it comes to policy innovation, political scientists have commonly focused on the innovation of the resulting product (the policy itself), ignoring the process by which innovative ideas make their way into government agendas (Mintrom, 1997). Policy innovation is then defined “as a policy that is new to the state adopting it” (Mintrom, 1997, p. 741). Borrowing from the economics of innovation, this definition could be understood as a case of product innovation, since it is based on the introduction of a new product or a qualitative change in an existing product (OECD, 2005). Others exclusively focus on the political aspect of policymaking, recognising policy innovations as those sought by politicians whilst looking for solutions which allow the attainment of conflicting policy objectives (Quiggin, 2006). Newer approaches define policy innovation as the “novel processes, tools, and practices used for policy design and development that result in better problem solving of complex issues”

(Brookfield Institute, 2018, p. 6). Doing so emphasises the complex nature of the issues at hand and the need for new ways of policymaking to attain improved results. Similarly, an EY (2017) report on public sector innovation, claims “policy innovation is about identifying the needs of constituents and shortening the time required to develop, test, implement and diffuse a policy” (p. 8). Here, the focus is set on providing the citizens with timely answers to their needs, in what could perhaps be considered a more client-provider relationship. Additionally, the process of policymaking and its distinct stages is made explicit. By stressing the need for reducing production and delivery times, the efficiency of the process is also highlighted. Again, stretching the definitions from the economics of innovation, we could consider these two definitions as examples of process innovation, in which innovations are oriented to the effectiveness and efficiency in which the organisation (in this case, the State) produces and delivers its products and services (Schilling, 2016). From this, a parallel between how innovation occurs in the private and public spheres can be drawn. As described by Utterback and Abernathy (1975), the outputs of an organisation embody the organisation’s innovation at a product level, whereas those innovations in the manner in which it conducts its ‘business’ — including how the outputs are produced— represent process innovations (see Figure 4).

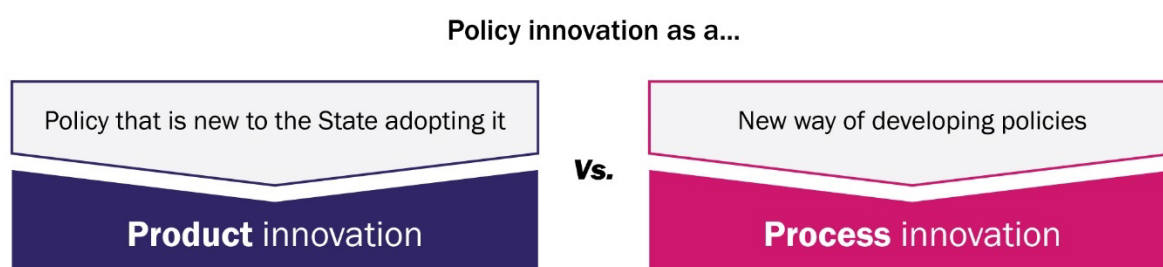


Figure 4: Policy innovation as product Vs. process innovation.

This policy innovation tension could then be described in terms of product-process dimensions. On the one hand, the innovations could be considered as the policies themselves, and the products and services they result in at the implementation stage. On the other, the focus could be on the innovation of the process of developing new public policies. In this respect, Schilling (2016) stresses that product-process innovation’s dynamics frequently take place in ‘tandem’, meaning that innovative products may allow for the development of innovative processes, whereas innovative processes may also enable the development of innovative products.

Following the above, and in the face of new and more complex societal issues, it becomes clear why looking for novel and experimental ways of arriving at innovative solutions has turned into an imperative for many governments. The rationale seems to be: if current policy instruments are not satisfying societal needs, innovating the process of policymaking may prove crucial to arriving at more adequate solutions. It is, therefore, key to rethink the processes through which public policies are conceived, implemented, and evaluated.

2.2.1 Process barriers for policy innovation

In this section the stages of the policymaking process presented in the previous sections will be analysed in terms of their capacity to act as inhibitors for policy innovation.

As can be inferred from section 2.1.4, the policymaking process as described in the cycle presents diverse barriers to policy innovation rooted in its very nature. All policymaking modelling stems from the need to analyse public policy, and this is based on the notion of policy analysis as a practical discipline with the explicit purpose of advising policy-makers on how best to address public problems (Howlett, Ramesh, & Perl, 2009). This approach to public policy is commonly labelled as ‘positivist’ or ‘rationalist’ and often criticised by ‘post-positivists’. One of the main arguments is that this ‘technocratic form’ of governance was intended to serve managerial practices of public bodies, and systematically fails to understand that “policy goals and means are products of constant conflict and negotiation among policy-makers guided by their values and interests and shaped by a variety of contingent circumstances” (Howlett, Ramesh, & Perl, 2009, p. 27). More importantly, academics state that policy cycles do not precisely represent the realities of policy making (Hallsworth, Parker, & Rutter, 2011). In this regard, Colander & Kupers (2014) argue that “the problem with scientists structuring frames for policy is that generally they put too little emphasis on intuitive understanding, and too much focus on quantitatively tractable models” (p. 7). Moreover, they claim that the model for economic and social policy has seen no advancement, whilst economic and social theory, has, in fact, done so (Colander & Kupers, 2014).

For instance, the UK represents a clear example of the above. In 2011, the UK’s Institute for Government published the report *Policy Making in the Real World: Evidence and Analysis*, in which it is recognised that during the first decade of the 2000s, governmental commitment to innovation was significant and shown in many ways, including budget allocation (Hallsworth, Parker, & Rutter, 2011). However, the authors posit that the systemic barriers to making policy innovatively have not been addressed by these efforts (Hallsworth, Parker, & Rutter, 2011). In this report, they recognise three issues of special relevance in hindering innovative policymaking. Firstly, as public servants’ work is largely around managing risk, they often act as a counter-balance for ministers trying to challenge well-established practices (Hallsworth, Parker, & Rutter, 2011). Secondly, the UK government’s emphasis is on ideas and problem-solving for pre-existing issues, whilst deterring other approaches such as experimentation and prototyping (Hallsworth, Parker, & Rutter, 2011). Thirdly, the understanding that new ideas which lead to policy innovation may come from external sources may get policymakers locked into a diversity of contradicting stakeholders’ positions (Hallsworth, Parker, & Rutter, 2011). Moreover, the report also points to the inadequacy of the policy cycle developed and utilised within the British government⁶ by describing it as “being divorced from reality” (Hallsworth, Parker, & Rutter, 2011).

In particular, the *policy formulation* and *policy implementation* (see Figure 3) stages of the cycle present features worth discussing. Whereas the former refers to the process of creating policy options to resolve the issues identified during the agenda-setting stage, the latter entails the translation of policy decisions into concrete plans of action (Howlett, Ramesh, & Perl, 2009). Sidney (2007) argues that besides a rational process of search and discovery, designing policy at the formulation stage involves some degree of creativity. Moreover, it is claimed that “[t]he variety of instruments available to policy-makers is limited only by their imaginations” (Howlett, Ramesh, & Perl, 2009, p. 114). The issue of creativity in policymaking, although present in the policy science literature and in political manifestos, has historically

⁶ ROAMEF (Rationale, Objectives, Appraisal, Monitoring, Evaluation and Feedback) cycle (HM Treasury, 2018)

been dismissed. Evidence of this is the lack of mechanisms devised to foster and promote creative thinking within mainstream policymaking practices as the response to policy issues.

During the *formulation* and *implementation* stages subsets of the policy universe —policy subsystems— are involved (see Table 1). The subset acting at the formulation stage typically comprises only those actors with enough knowledge of a problem area (or a stake), whilst the one participating at the implementation stage is predominantly established by bureaucrats (Howlett, Ramesh, & Perl, 2009). This leads to a policy formulation stage where the knowledge and information considered necessary to devise policy solutions is either that of policymakers, or specific groups of experts that at times influence policy alternatives (Howlett & Giest, 2013). Scholars agree that unlike other stages, such as agenda-setting, the public is not actively involved in the formulation nor implementation of policies (Howlett & Giest, 2013). From an elitist perspective, however, the demands of the public are contingent to the values and preferences of the elites, whose general conservatism implies merely incremental changes to public policies (Dye, 2013). Dye explains that consequently, “change and innovations in public policy come about as a result of redefinitions by elites of their own values” (Dye, 2013, p. 24). Conversely, Rixecker (1994) encourages the participation of excluded people in the design process since it is the inclusion of those voices in the policy dialogue which will warrant creativity and innovation.

Moreover, formulation and implementation are not only presented as separated stages but also divided by the decision-making stage. This transitional stage is “the most overtly political stage” (Brewer & DeLeon, 1983, p. 10), and, significantly, limits the range of actors implicated to those at a Governmental decision-making level (Aberbach, Putnam, & Rockman, 1981). Stages carried out by actors with different interests, tools, and mindsets may deepen the causes of gaps between policy formulation and implementation. Likewise, the transition from a techno-political subsystem to a political one may imply policy choices are predominantly based on political interests and not on technical reasons.

This gap in the policymaking process is not only well-documented but acknowledged by many governments. The British public sector, for instance, has undergone a series of reforms to allow for an approach that boosts the participation of public service users whilst empowering front-line providers to raise the service’s quality (Cooper & Starkey, 2010). One such initiative is the UK Cabinet Office’s 2008 report ‘Engagement and Aspiration’, which looks at “how to ensure better engagement and connection with front-line professionals in the design and development of policy” (Adebawale, Omand, & Starkey, 2009, p. 11). This suggests an initiative to create a policy-making process capable of ensuring policies are grounded in professional experience, granting front-line staff the power to innovate to enhance policy outcomes. Moreover, it proposes creating ‘front line insight’ required for Ministers and Officials to evaluate the capacity of the front-line to manage change, organise policy teams, and deliver as expected (Adebawale, Omand, & Starkey, 2009). Nevertheless, organisational inertia and everyday realities often get in the way of such plans. For instance, the UK Civil Service Reform Plan (HM Government, 2012) required senior officials to raise a warning in cases where a political decision presented implementation concerns. However, practically, such central level mechanisms are often triggered only after an established policy is severely off track (Hudson, Hunter, & Peckham, 2019).

Linder and Peters (1990) assert that it is undeniably easier to consider implementation hurdles earlier in the policy-making process. However, Junginger (2014) states that the transferring of responsibilities and tasks from policymakers to policy-implementers, as seen in the stages of

the policy cycle, reveals a fragmented design approach. To avoid facing unexpected challenges during the implementation stage, more sophisticated policy design processes have been taken into consideration (Spence, 1999).

A *public service-dominant* approach has been introduced by some governments to compensate the effect of policy being formulated, selected, and implemented by different actors. Scholars promoting the adoption of this approach claim “both the citizen and user are situated as essential stakeholders... [placing] the experiences and knowledge of the service user at the heart of effective public service design and delivery” (Osborne, Radnor, & Nasi, 2012, p. 143). Junginger and Sangiorgi (2013), however, warn that government agencies are bonded to complex structures and legal procedures and typically not characterised for being flexible organisations, which may pose difficulties for the adoption of a service management orientation. The development of new competences and educational programmes for public managers, which include design as part of the curriculum, have been suggested to introduce a citizen-centric culture in public management (European Commission, 2012; Design Commission, 2013; Junginger, 2014; Bason, 2017).

2.3 Relevance of a design approach for public policy innovation

Defining design is always a contentious matter. Although in this review the issue will not be addressed, some aspects of interest will be introduced to present the reader with this research’s framing of it. It is important, however, to clarify what is meant by design in the context of policymaking. Besides establishing the working concepts for this research, this is important because the term ‘policy design’ in political science and policy studies has historically differed from the understanding of design scholars and practitioners. Moreover, it also differs from the current understanding of ‘design for policy’ a more recently coined term aimed at bridging these interpretations.

As a discipline of practice, design has historically been associated with the artificial environment and defined as the process of planning, creating, and implementing ideas for its improvement (Simon, 1992). Norman (2016) claims that although it finds its origin as a craft, “design has evolved into a way of thinking and problem discovery to enhance individual human lives, to vitalize the experience of work, and even to improve the health of the planet” (p. 343). Within this evolution, the author recognises human-centred design (HCD) –a process that begins with observation and rigorously attempts to determine the subjacent issues afflicting people— as one of the most significant developments (Norman, 2016).

In defining HCD, Norman (2016) identifies four fundamental principles:

- Its outcome is aimed at improving the quality of life for those for whom it is intended.
- It focuses on ensuring that the underlying causes and needs are correctly understood, and the right problem is being addressed.
- Meticulous observations and analyses are used to determine evidence-based needs and the experimentation of possible solutions in an iterative cycle of observation, ideation, prototyping, and testing.
- Its action-oriented approach focusses on learning by doing through iterations of making, testing, and observation.

With the adoption of HCD, Norman (2016) claims the design profession has not only equipped itself with methods for discovering people's and society's needs and developing, testing, and refining solutions, but it has also transitioned from being an opinion-based field towards an evidence-based one.

Moreover, Norman (2016) maintains the HCD process to focus not on 'problem-solving' but on 'problem-defining', going deeper into the solution space with each iteration cycle. In this regard, Dorst and Cross (2001) claim that defining and framing the design problem is a fundamental aspect of creativity. Furthermore, simultaneously and iteratively developing and refining the formulation of a problem and the ideas for a solution (moving between problem and solution space) appears to be the key to understanding creative design. Likewise, they argue that the creative event is the result of 'problem-framing': the insightful moment when a problem and solution are paired. This is of relevance since the authors claim that "this framing ability is crucial to high-level performance in creative design" (Dorst & Cross, 2001, p. 435).

This suggests that there are cognitive abilities specific to creative design. Cross (2001) supports this by claiming that "there are forms of knowledge special to the awareness and ability of a designer, independent of the different professional domains of design practice" (p. 53). Dorst adds to this by delving into the reasoning patterns of designers. In doing so, the author identifies two types of thinking associated with designers' cognitive processes, namely Abduction-1 and Abduction-2 (Dorst, 2011). Three elements make up these processes:

- What: object, service, system;
- How: working principle;
- Value: aspiration.

Abduction-1, Dorst (2011) explains, is frequently associated with traditional problem solving. In this type of abductive reasoning the value to be created and the working principle to achieve it are known. In defining the 'what', designers would typically create a design to operate the known working principle to achieve the aspired value (Dorst, 2011). To exemplify, if the value were to be the exchange of air in a dwelling at certain times in the day and its walls are provided with window openings, the design of a specific window for that house and those openings offers a solution to the problem that delivers the sought value. Conversely, in Abduction-2, the aspired value is the only known element in the equation, which results in the need for defining the 'what' and the 'how'. Following on from the previous example, that would mean that the value sought remains the exchange of air in a dwelling at certain times in the day. However, because there is no pre-defined working principle to achieving this value, a potential solution could involve the design of an automatic ventilation system consisting of fans and vents to exchange indoor and outdoor air. Dorst (2011) explains that this type of abductive reasoning where two unknowns are to be simultaneously resolved is more closely associated with conceptual design, and "best represents the open, complex problems for which organisations are seeking new approaches" (Dorst, 2011, p. 523).

These forms of reasoning are what Dorst (2011) considers to be the core of a designerly way of thinking or 'design thinking'. Norman (2016) states that even though the term 'design thinking' has been used for the past fifty years, it remains controversial. Moreover, he explains that the term has seen a resurgence due to IDEO's⁷ use of it as a marketing slogan, but also

⁷ IDEO is a global design and innovation consulting firm founded in Palo Alto, California, in 1991.

acknowledges it “designates the use of human-centered principles in applying design to new domains” (Norman, 2016, p. 345).

2.3.1 Design Thinking and innovation

Design thinking is nowadays a widely used term and its definitions vary substantially. It is a concept utilised in practice and theory, as well as in the management domain, where it has also permeated (Johansson-Sköldberg, Woodilla, & Çetinkaya, 2013). Although there is currently an extensive body of literature, both academic and practitioner-oriented, it has been the popular press and semi-academic literature that has elevated the concept, presenting it as a cure-all antidote for the economy (Johansson-Sköldberg, Woodilla, & Çetinkaya, 2013). On this subject, Kimbell (2011) states that having been dissociated from disciplinary boundaries, the implementation of design thinking is expected to comprise all the benefits and advantages from the design practices.

The previous section presented design thinking as a cognitive style. However, in reviewing the term, Kimbell (2011) identifies two other accounts, namely, a general theory of design, and a resource for organisations (see Table 4).

	Design thinking as a cognitive style	Design thinking as a general theory of design	Design thinking as an organisational resource
Focus	Individual designers, especially experts	Design as a field or discipline	Businesses and other organisations in need of innovation
Design's purpose	Problem solving	Taming wicked problems	Innovation
Key concepts	Design ability as a form of intelligence; reflection-in-action, abductive thinking	Design has no special subject matter of its own	Visualisations, prototyping, empathy, integrative thinking, abductive thinking
Nature of design problems	Design problems are ill-structured, problems and solutions co-evolve	Design problems are wicked problems	Organisational problems are design problems
Sites of design expertise and activity	Traditional design disciplines	Four orders of design	Any context

Table 4: Three accounts on design thinking, adapted from Kimbell (2011).

As already mentioned, design thinking's most recent conceptualisation is attributed to the innovation firm IDEO and presents it as an organisational resource. In defining the concept, IDEO's former chief executive officer claims it brings to problem-solving the approaches, methods, tools, and principles of designers (Brown, 2008). Liedtka (2015) asserts that in the business setting, design thinking is seen as follows:

[It is a] hypothesis-driven process that is problem, as well as solution, focused. It relies on abduction and experimentation involving multiple alternative solutions that actively mediate a variety of tensions between possibilities and constraints, and is best suited to decision contexts in which uncertainty and ambiguity are high. Iteration, based on learning through experimentation, is seen as a central task. (p. 927)

Likewise, she claims that design thinking offers a framework that brings together analytical and creative modes of reasoning supplemented by a process and a distinctive set of techniques and tools (Liedtka, 2015). Similarly, IDEO's (2012) five-phases design process, which according to the company “is what puts Design Thinking into action” (p. 14), presents a set of twelve

discrete steps to practising design thinking (see Figure 5). This process perspective is relevant because models of the design process are recognised to “have had a profound impact on both practice and scholarship in design” (Wegener & Cash, 2020, p. 11).

The British Design Council’s Double Diamond framework for innovation is one that has had a significant impact in shaping the understanding of a design process approach to innovation. To a large degree this has been the case due to the Design Council’s recognition of the model’s capacity to convey a design process to designers and non-designers alike (Design Council, 2015). Moreover, the model is said to be based on four design principles needed for its effective implementation:

- User centrality;
- Visual and inclusive communication;
- Collaboration and co-creation;
- Iteration of its stages.

(Design Council, 2015)

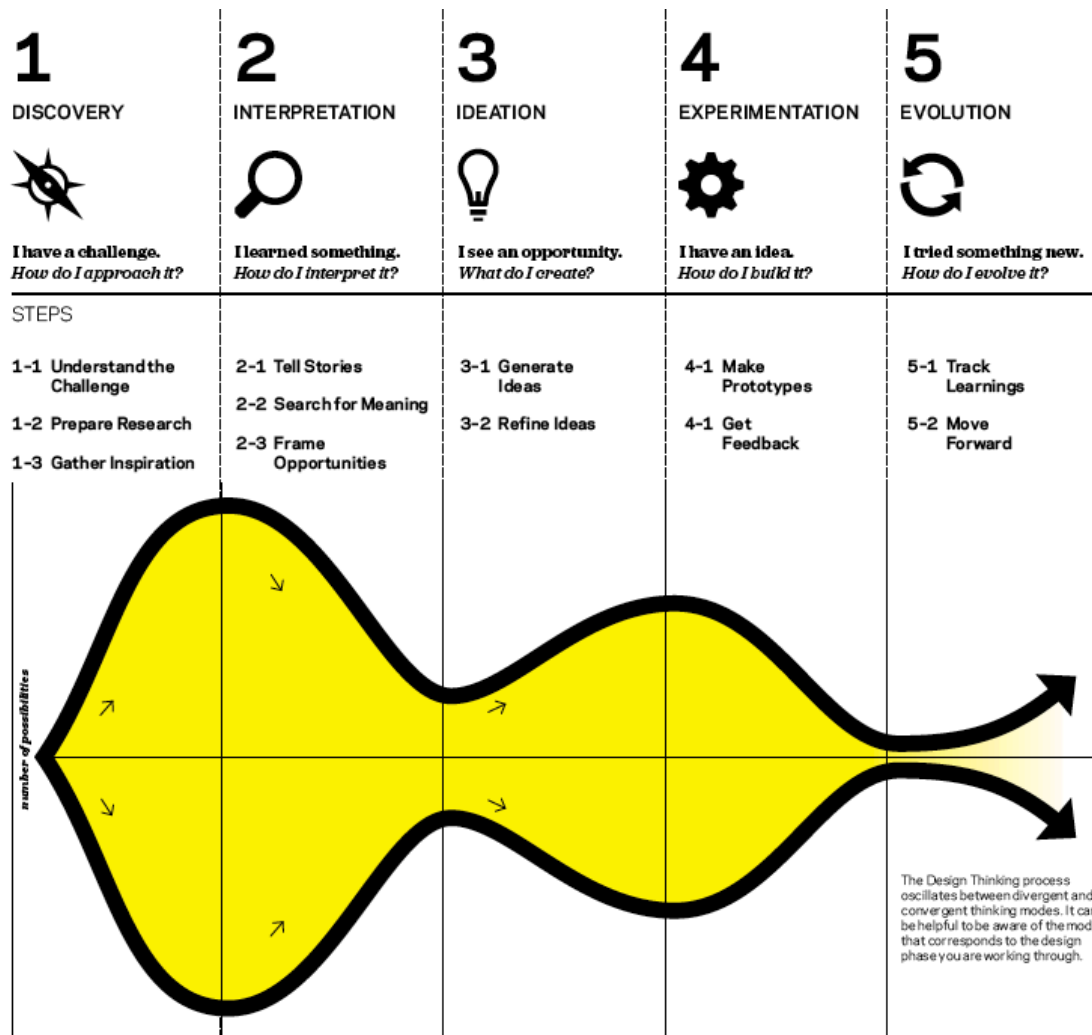


Figure 5: IDEO's Design Thinking process (IDEO LLC, 2012).

When comparing different models of the design (thinking) process, it is noteworthy that regardless of slight variations (e.g., four vs. five stages) the basic structure is consistent:

- Discovery and capturing insight into a problem/challenge;
- Definition of a focus area (framing);
- Development of potential alternative solutions;
- Realisation/concretion of a particular solution.

Appendix 1 presents a comparison of several design (thinking) and innovation staged processes, as well as policymaking processes:

- Design Thinking IDEO (Brown, 2008);
- Design Thinking d.school / Design tools (d.school);
- Design Council's Double Diamond (Design Council, 2015);
- Darden Business School (Liedtka, 2015) / Tools for design thinking (Liedtka & Ogilvie, 2010);
- Design Innovation Process & Design tools (Kumar, 2012);
- Innovation Process Danish Mindlab / Danish Mindlab tools (Mindlab, 2016);
- Design Process UK Policy Lab / UK Policy Lab tools (Cabinet Office, 2017);
- Policy-making stage model (Dye, 2013);
- Five stages of the Policy Cycle (Howlett, Ramesh, & Perl, 2009);
- Applied Problem Solving (Howlett, Ramesh, & Perl, 2009).

All design process models expressly indicate the iterative nature of both the cycle and each stage. This feature of the process, it is argued, gives its users permission to fail and learn from their mistakes (IDEO LLC, 2012). Unlike other models previously seen in this review, such as the policymaking process cycle (see Figure 3), some variations of the design process are particularly prescriptive, indicating options of tools and techniques to be deployed at each stage.

This is of particular interest in exploring the possibilities of strengthening the design orientation in public administration and policy studies since, as Hermus et al. explain, “one of the most challenging avenues for doing so is to explore how a more ‘designerly’ way of thinking and current ideas about design-thinking can be applied in public policy and public administration research as a way to come to actionable knowledge” (2019, p. 16). From this, it follows that understanding the policymaking process (see Section 2.1) as a design process could be an avenue for exploration. This warrants a question about the association of specific tools and techniques at each stage in the policymaking process since this is the case with the design thinking process stages.

Dorst (2011) highlights that even though many of the activities designers perform are not exclusive to their professional practice —and therefore cannot be considered ‘design thinking’ practices— some have been professionalised within the design disciplines. Furthermore, he claims that their value “is not so much to be found in a general adoption of something as amorphous as ‘Design Thinking’, but it lies in the application of these specific professional design practices” (Dorst, 2011, p. 526). Norman (2016), for instance, claims that the most valuable contribution to outsiders of the design profession by the adoption of design thinking is the ability to reconceptualise issues and consider substantially different perspectives on them, instead of immediately trying to address them.

However, design thinking —as a cognitive style— has been associated with diverse features, to which different authors assign different value. In this regard, Dosi, Rosati, & Vignoli's (2018) work on metrics to measuring the design thinking mindset provides a useful set of attributes and features associated with the practice of design thinking. In their work, they define 'mindset' "as the set of attitudes, opinions, beliefs and behaviors that characterize an individual, a group, or an organization, mostly developed by experience" (p. 1992). By conducting a comprehensive review of literature, the authors identified 19 constructs which form the design thinking mindset:

- **Tolerance for /Resilience of – Being comfortable with Ambiguity/Uncertainty:** This construct refers to an individual's capacity to deal well with ambiguity and feeling at ease in a context of uncertainty. For instance, by keeping options open and considering solutions even when these are inconclusive or imprecise. Moreover, it implies partaking in processes where neither the required volume of iterations, time to reach the outcome, nor the outcome itself are undetermined.
- **Embracing Risk:** This construct indicates an inclination for risk taking to allow a profound exploration of the conditions of a problematic situation and its potential solution, regardless of how unorthodox they might seem for the context. Furthermore, it implies embracing risk of failure and failing fast mentality, since risk-taking is considered a necessity to achieving innovation.
- **Human centeredness:** This construct entails prioritising the understanding of people's needs, values, and behaviours as the guiding principles to solving the problems affecting them. It implies an effort to unearth the real needs of individuals in a co-creating fashion.
- **Empathy / Empathic:** The empathic approach represents the capacity to understand an issue from multiple perspectives, by being open and comfortable with people of different walks of life, avoiding preconceptions, and ultimately creating bonds of trust with them to comprehend their behaviours.
- **Mindfulness and awareness of process:** This implies that individuals are conscious of the stage in the design process at which they are. This means the capacity to determine whether to move toward a diverging or converging phase.
- **Holistic view:** Relates to the capability of understanding not only that problems are multi-faceted but also to consider all the identified factors in the attempt to address it.
- **Problem reframing:** The ability to look beyond the given framing of a problem, challenging it, and offering a holistic and meaningful reformulation that allows for new interpretations.
- **Team working:** Refers to the propensity and affinity to collaboratively address problems in teams with diverse members and skillsets, where knowledge is developed and shared amongst them, and visuals are used to foster better communications.
- **Multi/inter/cross-disciplinary collaboration:** The integration and exploitation of perceptions, perspectives, insights, and ideas arising from the exchange with people of different backgrounds working towards a common goal, despite their formal affiliation.
- **Open to different perspectives/diversity:** This means the inclusion and integration of diverse external perspectives throughout the design process. It also implies openness towards people and their ideas despite their skills, expertise, or hierarchy. In practice this construct is often reflected in the pursuit of collaboration and insights

beyond the usual fields of knowledge, industries, and sectors, to understand how others resolve similar problems.

- **Learning oriented:** A key feature of design thinkers, the learning orientation reflects the eagerness and desire to acquire new knowledge. This also means the active pursuit of new contexts from which to learn and the challenging of existing frameworks. It is primarily carried out through learning by doing, consisting of hypothesis formulation, observations, testing and trialling.
- **Experimentation or learning from mistakes or from failure:** This is the preference towards iteratively trialling and testing ideas and options whilst moving between divergent and convergent ways of thinking. To Design Thinkers, failure is seen as a means to learning and discovering new opportunities. It is encouraged under the premise of 'fail often and fail soon'.
- **Experiential intelligence / Bias toward action:** This construct is characterised by the ability to 'bring to life' or make tangible ideas and concepts with the purpose of better understanding, scrutinising, and testing them. It implies a preference toward action-oriented behaviour instead of abstract analytical behaviour.
- **Critical Questioning ("beginner's mind", curiosity):** This construct is reflected in the ability to keep an open mind about unconceived or out of scope possibilities, whilst questioning the validity of what are given as facts. Having a beginner's mind, moreover, implies inquiring about the origin and foundations of a problematic situation, without losing sight of the team's objective.
- **Abductive thinking:** Embracing abductive thinking means favouring the exploration of alternative solutions instead of what is already known. Furthermore, it implies a future orientation in the pursuit of 'what might be' even on the basis of incomplete information.
- **Envisioning new things:** The ability to envision new possibilities through the use of diverse media and resources such as mock-ups, illustrations or enactments. It also includes the skill to visualise ideas, concepts, and results before these take any sort of material form.
- **Creative confidence:** This construct refers to an individual's confidence in their creative problem-solving skills. It is demonstrated by individuals who believe in their capacity to tackle a problem for which there are no known solutions or for which the solutions are unknown to them.
- **Desire to make a difference:** Reflected in the determination and yearning to develop the skills and competences to generate value from insights. It also involves the determination to persuade others in the pursuit and realisation of a valuable idea.
- **Optimism to have an impact:** The skill to advance ideas and confidence to affect change. It also implies remaining positive in the face of failure, by experimenting and conducting midcourse corrections when needed.

(Dosi, Rosati, & Vignoli, 2018)

It is noteworthy to mention that Dosi et al.'s (2018) presented here is not the only DT mindset framework. For instance, previous work by Hassi and Laakso (2011) and Schweitzer, Groeger, & Sobel (2016) had also attempted to identify and define key components of a DT mindset from literature and practice and thus distil a DT mindset framework. However, Dosi et al.'s (2018) present a more nuanced framework that acknowledges these and other authors' work.

Kimbell (2011) explains the main reason behind design thinking's publicity is that the approaches employed by professional designers are valuable to both firms looking to innovate and societies aiming to affect change.

In that regard, Liedtka (2015) claims that design thinking can be linked to innovation outcomes by improving the novelty, value, range of ideas generated, and the quality of their evaluation through the reduction of cognitive biases. This, she contends, relates to some specific characteristics of design thinking, amongst them:

- in-depth collection of user data, including their concerns and perspectives as a key aspect of the need-finding stage;
- improvement of the decision-maker's ability to empathise with others' experiences during the need-finding stage;
- assistance to decision-makers in testing their hypothesis;
- development of multiple options to address an issue;
- implementing multi-disciplinary collaboration throughout the design process stages;
- use of qualitative methods and prototyping that enables users to better assess their needs.

(Liedtka, 2015)

Moreover, Prud'homme van Reine (2017) asserts that “[d]esign thinking for innovation should be seen as a mindset (at individual level) and as a culture (at organizational level)” (p. 75). This argument is important because it brings together two of the design thinking accounts identified by Kimbell (2011), namely, ‘design thinking as a cognitive style’, and ‘as an organisational resource’ (see Table 4).

In their book ‘Design in business: Strategic innovation through design’, Bruce and Bessant (2002) identify design with human creativity applied to a purpose through the systematic transformation of ideas into reality. Moreover, they claim at its core “is the application of creative problem-solving capabilities to deal with a particular challenge in a new way” (Bruce & Bessant, 2002, p. 3). It is precisely this emphasis on the novelty of the solutions which is of interest, as it paves the way for linking design with innovation. In making the case, the authors go as far back as 1979⁸ in their pursuit of evidence supporting the notion of design as being central to innovation.

This conception of the discipline has had significant impact on how design is seen and understood by non-designers, and also governments. An example of this is the prominent ‘Cox Review of creativity in business’ where former British Design Council Chairman, Sir George Cox, claimed “[d]esign is what links creativity and innovation. It shapes ideas to become practical and attractive propositions for users or customers. Design may be described as creativity deployed to a specific end” (Cox, 2005, p. 2).

Although this is not an exhaustive collection of arguments, it presents some of the reasons why professional designers now operate in more diverse and increasingly complex fields of action, including strategic and managerial positions in firms, the third sector, and the public sector (Kimbell, 2011; Rosenqvist, 2017).

⁸ See Caldecote, V. (1979). Investment in new product development. *Journal of the Royal Society of Arts*, 127(5279), 684-699.

2.3.2 Design in the public sector

As previously shown, design has earned a central place in the private sector because of its ability to lead innovation. In recent years it has also received increased attention for its promise to enhance user satisfaction and the effectiveness of public sector innovation (Kimbell, 2015; Rosenqvist, 2017). It is argued that design growth in the public sector has to do with the way in which design-oriented companies (e.g., Google, Apple) have successfully provided satisfactory customer experiences for new services (Kimbell, 2015). This perhaps neo-liberal approach to government-provided services has been explained by “hyper-connected citizens who are more educated, better informed and empowered, demand[ing] better and differentiated public services that are on par with the ones provided by the private sector” (Rebolledo-Bustamante, 2016). This creative human-centred approach to service innovation has been praised for its co-participative nature, stimulating public engagement (Sangiorgi, 2015). The case for design approaches in the public sector at a service-provision level is supported by the differences between citizens’ expectations and the services governments provide (Mintrom & Luetjens, 2016).

Moreover, technology-pushed innovations and other global trends, such as government digitisation, have furthered the introduction of design into the public sector. For instance, after a pilot run in 2019, the UK Government Digital Service (GDS) launched the online course ‘Introduction to Content Design’ in their pursuit of teaching “public sector professionals the digital skills they need to transform public services” (Government Digital Service, 2017). This, they claim, is one of the crucial disciplines within user-centred design helping them to interpret policies and services into content that users can interact with and understand (Downe, 2019). More recently, the global pandemic caused by the novel CoVid-19 has precipitated governments to migrate services online and re-think their face-to-face interactions with citizens; thus, catalysing the former.

The design promise has been presented as creating user-centred services, which ultimately will enhance the user’s (the citizen’s) experience. However, these features and expected results are primarily drawn from experiences within the private sector. In this regard, Mulgan (2014) warns about the lack of specific design approaches for the public sector by stating that “[m]ost of the work of designers in public services and social issues has used methods associated with product design and applied them directly to very different problems” (p. 2). In transferring knowledge from the private to the public sector—as design in policymaking implies—Kimbell (2015), highlights that skills and tools cannot be imported from one realm to another without bringing with them their norms and assumptions.

Junginger (2013) claims that one of the consequences of the successful penetration of service design into public sector organisations has been the adoption of design in policymaking. As briefly mentioned in Section 2.1.4.2, the policy formulation stage of the policymaking cycle is referred to as ‘policy design’ in the political sciences. Mintrom and Thomas (2018) claim that in policy studies design has traditionally been considered a component of policy development. As an area of investigation, policy design has seen an uneven development until recently, when the nature of design thinking and the role of experimental designs—amongst others—has re-emerged as leading-edge issues (Howlett, 2014). This is because, understood as a process that enables the use of design methodologies to achieve business innovation, design thinking has begun to be used in many public policy contexts (Kimbell & Vesnić-Alujević, 2020).

Today, many governments are applying design thinking and design methods to their main policymaking processes, service delivery, and decision-making (van Buuren, Lewis, & Peters, 2020). Characterised by a process of creativity and participation, this new use of design has been termed *design for policy*, “a creative, user-centred approach to problem-solving engaging users, stakeholders and delivery teams at multiple stages of the policy process” (Whicher, 2020, p. 4). Reference to this term already appeared in the 2013 ‘Design for public good’ report (Design Council, Design Wales, Danish Design Centre, Aalto University, 2013) which introduced the ‘Public Sector Design Ladder’ (see Figure 6), a diagnostic tool for public sector bodies to identify their level of design use and help in defining a roadmap for progress.

Since then, a plethora of reports from organisations as diverse as the EU, the World Bank, and the UN, and a growing number of academic articles, discuss and praise the benefits of design in public policymaking. For example, a 2014 UNDP Global Centre for Public Service Excellence report titled ‘Design Thinking for Public Service Excellence’ claimed “the goal of design thinking is to equip governments with innovative approaches to face contemporary challenges such as inter-connected and diffused economic and social patterns, more complex problems, blurred governance boundaries, and reduced trust in public action” (Allio, 2014, p. 4). The report states that this rather demanding set of tasks is based on design thinking’s core principles:

- human and user-centredness;
 - empathic, co-creative, and iterative process; and
 - experimental (testing and prototyping) approaches.
- (Allio, 2014)

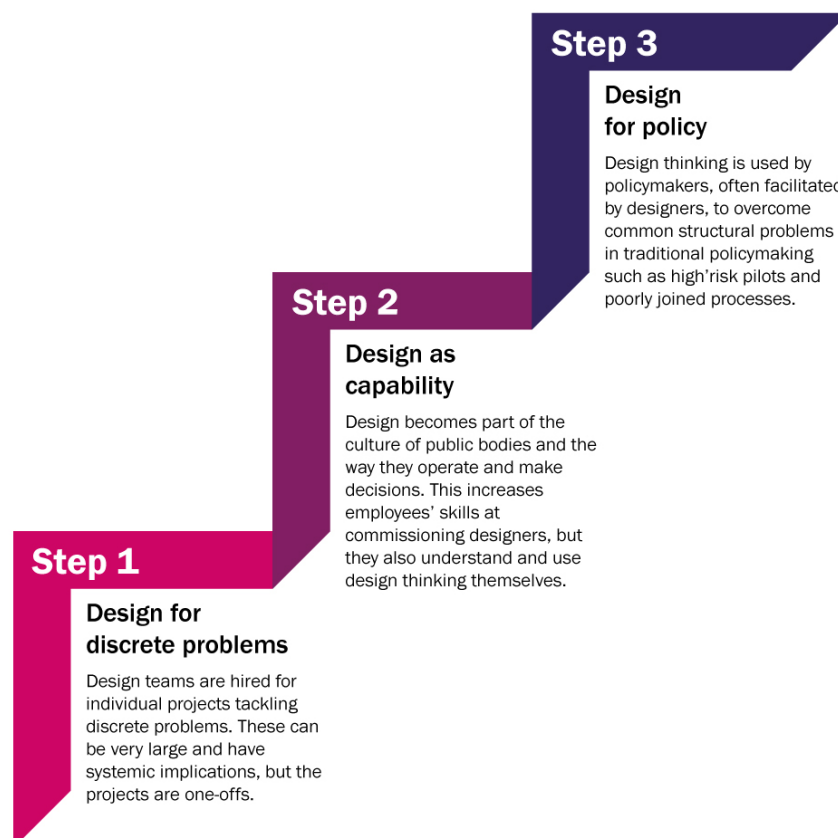


Figure 6: The Public Sector Design Ladder (Design Council, Design Wales, Danish Design Centre, Aalto University, 2013).

Junginger (2013) argues that, while not generally understood in design terms, policy-making is essentially a design activity. In essence, both design and policy-making share the ambition of changing existing conditions into preferred ones (Simon, 1992). However, it is argued that whilst policy-making pursues this from a normative position, the design approach is based on an exploratory and systemic manner aimed at offering prospective scenarios by means of creativity and experimentation (Rebolledo-Bustamante, 2016). The benefits of introducing a design approach in policymaking, Junginger (2017) argues, are deeper than the potential gains in efficiency, by (for instance) enabling the development of more meaningful policies. Moreover, the utilisation of design methods is expected to produce policies that are based on a human-centred approach to problem-solving (Junginger, 2013).

The notion that designers are well-equipped to address wicked problems (Buchanan R. , 1992) is of special interest for the development of public policies aimed at tackling complex societal issues. Likewise, Reiter-Palmon and Robinson (2009) argue that more creative individuals engage in problem identification and generally present higher problem construction capabilities, making them better suited in the face of intractable wicked problems. Dorst (2011) poses that dealing with these types of complex problems over the years has resulted in the advancement of sophisticated professional practices within the design disciplines. Frame creation, for instance, is a core design practice by which a problematic situation can be tackled from an original standpoint (Dorst, 2011). This is highly significant because it positions designers —and the use of design methods— in a privileged place to aid in the development of such policy issues.

Furthermore, some of its promoters claim that “design thinking puts end-users’ needs — rather than legacy and policy— at the centre of the policy formulation system, shifting paradigms and creating a new decisional process” (Allio, 2014, p. 6). This feature is crucial in reducing the negative effects path-dependency has in policy innovation.

Moreover, there is growing agreement that design can play a major role in restructuring governmental processes as well as the government’s specific structures (Rosenqvist, 2017). Tunstall (2007), for instance, points out that design contributes to making governance tangible to every citizen, by giving them a voice in co-participatory policymaking processes. Nevertheless, policy science scholars are uncertain about the methods policy designers utilise in identifying problems, defining design criteria, and in the overall process (Mintrom & Luetjens, 2016).

Although references to design within public policy-making literature are today more frequent, its application has been largely perceived as only relevant to the implementation stage, paying little attention to the use of design methods in broader aspects of the policy-making process (Junginger, 2013). Design thinking, however, is claimed to be useful for better problem definition, enhancing decision-making, and reducing a policy’s unintended consequences, whilst achieving more legitimised and effective policies (Allio, 2014).

At the problem identification stage, design thinking can be beneficial since it “does not start with a presumption of a known answer or even a well-defined problem. Through iterative ethnographic methods, design thinking can reduce gaps between the goals of policymaking and the experiences of citizens as they interact with government funded services” (Mintrom & Thomas, 2018, p. 313).

Although not typically associated with the decision-making process, some authors argue that design can “be viewed as an integral part of decision-making [since] the choice between alternative courses of action, always taken to be the focus of the decision, cannot take place without a set of options among which to choose” (Alexander, 1982, p. 280). Design thinking is also claimed to enhance help in producing more effective and efficient policy solutions by promoting creative thinking within the decision-making process (Allio, 2014).

At the policy implementation stage, the benefits of introducing design seem more evident, since policy implementation, it is argued, depends on the design of products and services (Mintrom & Thomas, 2018), which the design discipline (product and service, respectively) is naturally well-placed to address.

Similar to the development of specific training developed by the UK Government Digital Service on Content Design, as the interest in design for policy grows, there has been increasing demand for capacity building programmes for ‘policy designers’ (Whicher, 2020). As a relatively novel design specialisation, the skills, knowledge, and competencies of a policy designer are still very much in flux. Based on interviews with government, academics, and UK government job descriptions, Whicher (2020) suggests a framework of the required skills of a policy designer (see Figure 7).

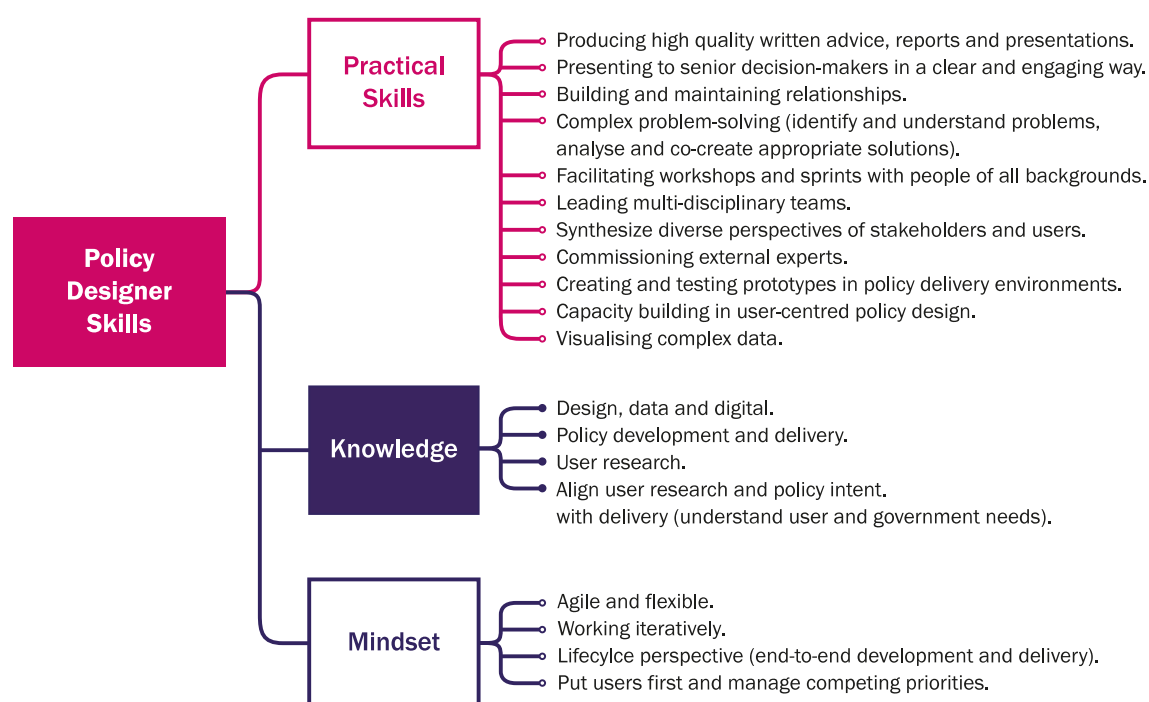


Figure 7: Skills of a Policy Designer, adapted from Whicher (2020).

Although some authors have voiced concerns about the implications of design’s introduction in the public sector —such as Julier’s (2011) claims that designers may be shifting responsibilities from government to citizens— for the most part, the discourse about design for policy seems to fall into the rationalist view, defining it as the pursuit of efficient and effective public policy to alleviate public problems. What is often missing is the contrasting view:

[Policy design is] not just the systematic and rational in terms of clearly stated public policy goals, but also the cognitive biases embedded in the policy as well as attributes

damaging to the linkage between public policy and democratic principles, such as the intentionally manipulative, deceptive, illogical, mean-spirited, and unscientific factors that influenced the choice of design elements [...] Policy-makers have both political and policy goals, as well as personal goals that influence their choice of design elements. (Schneider, 2013, p. 218)

Besides the seemingly ever-growing list of benefits that design can bring to public policymaking, some authors caution about the confidence in what government can actually do and the limits of public policy. In this regard, Dye (2013) has expressed that, although confidence in the capacity of public policies to deal with societal problems —especially wicked ones— might be inspiring in the pursuit of solutions, there is a need for recognising policy limitations in affecting these conditions.

2.4 Conclusions of Chapter 2

Chapter 2 has identified and reviewed the relevant public policy and design-focused literature to ensure that the research problem's background and context are clearly defined. In doing this, it has covered:

- The nature of public policymaking;
- The policymaking process perspective and policy cycle;
- Challenges in the policymaking process for policy innovation;
- Design thinking and its role in innovation; and
- Design in the public sector and design for policy.

The review has shown how policy analysts have developed various constructs that model governments' activity for their analysis. Three elements are common to all these models: actors who fulfil different roles, the exchange of ideas, and a set of political and social structures that influence discussions about what should and can be done.

One such model is the public policymaking process perspective. This model represents public policymaking as a set of discrete interrelated stages with a logical flow in which diverse social actors attempt to link policy goals with policy means. Moreover, these stages have been linked to those of the problem-solving process. Interestingly, though the problems governments face have significantly changed, the policymaking process model appears to remain relatively unaltered.

Although the policy science tradition has seen policy innovation as those new to the government adopting them, current conceptualisations see this as the combination of novel processes, tools, and practices used for policy design and development that result in better problem solving of complex issues. Moreover, policy scientists recognise that the policymaking cycle presents barriers to the development of policy innovations: namely, that the staged process inhibits the systemic view required to address complex issues. Similarly, policy problems, policy solutions, and their implementations are carried out by a different set of actors, further increasing the risk of misalignments across the process. Furthermore, the public servant culture is focused upon managing risk, consequently preventing the flourishing of policy ideas perceived as not sufficiently safe. Also, the policy structures in place typically restrict experimentation and the inclusion of external sources of knowledge and insights. A public service-dominant approach to public policymaking has been suggested as a potential remedy. However, not only the barriers to producing policy innovations appear to outweigh

the enhancers, but the mechanisms through which innovative policies can be formulated and implemented remain largely unexplored.

Conversely, the review has also shown how design, mostly through design thinking, has been utilised to foster innovation in the private sector. Through a set of attitudes defined as the design thinking mindset (a cognitive style) and a particular approach to problem-solving (a process), design thinking has been introduced into the public sector. Today, governments worldwide include design teams deploying design tools and methods for the development of public services and the digitisation of government operations and interface with citizens. The design thinking principles of human centricity, empathic, co-creative, experimental, and iterative processes have also started to be implemented in the policymaking process: firstly, in aiding to instrumentalise policies, but more recently as a distinctive approach to policymaking. This suggests that: 1. As a process with its tools and methods, design thinking is being deployed at different stages of the policymaking cycle; 2. Some policymakers may have adopted a design thinking mindset to foster policy innovations. 3. The policymaking process is being altered by introducing design dynamics that comprise their own logics.

These premises, however, are still to be substantiated. Therefore, an empirical enquiry is needed to determine a more detailed understanding of the role design plays in developing innovative public policies.

The findings highlighted in this review have led to the development of three research questions to aid in this understanding:

1. What design practices are currently being deployed in the policymaking process?
2. How is design being instilled in public policymaking?
3. Why does the introduction of design for policy affect the policymaking process?

These research questions form the basis of the empirical work conducted during this research project. In order to address them, three studies with specific characteristics were carried out. The following chapter delves into the research design and methodological approaches that defined each study and allowed answering the research questions.

Chapter ③

Research design and methodological approach

“Because the subject of design research, then, is not only products but also the human response to them, the research techniques for design must of necessity be diverse.” (Margolin, 2000)

The previous chapter aimed to show the relevance of introducing design approaches for public policy innovation, as well as the framework for its study and the core conceptual ideas framing this research. Likewise, it focused on the policymaking process, public sector innovation, and the process perspective of innovation theory, thus bringing together three separate bodies of knowledge whose joint understanding can be beneficial in explaining and achieving public policy innovation. Even though a design approach appears to be relevant to achieve such outcomes, the lack of consistent knowledge on how design adds value to the policymaking process has also been pointed out. This gap in the literature motivates the empirical inquiry and consequent collection and analysis of primary data to understand how design can contribute to the development of innovative public policies. As such, this chapter will describe key aspects of the work presented in this thesis.

Firstly, this investigation is concerned with design. As Merriam (2009) explains, broadly, research is a systematic process to acquire knowledge of a subject. However, the understanding of design research in this context has not yet been explicated. In elucidating this, Frayling’s (1993) typology, which derives from British art historian Herbert Read, characterises three types of (art and) design research and is instructive:

- Research **into** design;
- Research **through** design;
- Research **for** design.

Each of these three research positions underline fundamental epistemological differences between their approaches regarding design research’s value, purpose, and meaning. Helpful in understanding their differences are Jonas’s (2007) ‘trinities’ of design research concepts shown in Table 5.

	Into	For	Through
Frayling (1993)	<p>Research about design. It covers a wide variety of theoretical perspectives on art and design (social, economic, political, ethical, cultural, iconic).</p> <p>Aesthetic, historical perspective.</p> <p>Focused on technical, formal, structural aspects.</p> <p>Collection of procedures and rules.</p>	<p>‘Research where the end product is an artefact – where the thinking is, so to speak, embodied in the artefact, where the goal is not primarily communicable knowledge in the sense of verbal communication, but in the sense of visual or iconic or imagistic communication. ...’</p>	<p>Focused on technical aspects and inquiry of materials, on aspects that nobody had previously considered, nor communicated the results.</p> <p>‘Action research – where a research diary tells ... of a practical experiment in the studios, and the resulting report aims to contextualise it. Both the diary and the report are there to communicate the results, which is what separates research from the gathering of reference materials. ...’</p>
Findeli (1998)	<p>Separation of design research and design practice (weak theory).</p> <p>Little or no contribution to a design theory, or to the field of design studies.</p>	<p>Design as applied science (no theory), complex, sophisticated projects (Research and Development).</p>	<p>Conciliation of theory and practice (strong theory).</p> <p>Embedded, implicated, engaged, situated theory.</p> <p>‘Such research helps build a genuine theory of design by adopting an epistemological posture more consonant with what is specific to design: the project.’</p>
Jonas (2004)	<p>‘Research about design operates from without, thereby keeping its object at a distance. The researchers are observers who work scientifically and try, wherever possible, not to change their object.</p> <p>Examples include design philosophy, design history, design criticism...’</p>	<p>‘Research for design also operates from without, supporting the process selectively.</p> <p>The researchers serve designers as “suppliers of knowledge”. The knowledge supplied is valid only for a certain period of time, because it is related to a reality that design aims to change. Examples include market research, user research ... product semantics ...’</p>	<p>‘Research through design refers to a research and design process intrinsic to design. Designers / researchers are directly involved in establishing connections and shaping their research object.’</p>

Table 5: Research into/for/through design, adapted from Jonas (2007) ‘trinities’ of design research concepts.

Since this investigation’s aim is to contribute to the theoretical basis for the use of design approaches within public policymaking, it can be situated at the intersection between research *into* and *for* design. On the one hand, it can be considered research *into* design because design is its object of study; in particular, design practice within a specific context to obtain certain outcomes. On the other, this inquiry can be deemed as research *for* design since its purpose is “to make sure that the various parameters on which the output of the design process depends [...] are adequately handled”, as defined by Findeli et al. (2008, p. 70), which in this case is the implementation of a design approach into public policymaking. However, for both perspectives the definitions in Table 5 present inconsistencies. For instance, according to Findeli (1998), if considering this inquiry as research *into* design it should offer little or no contribution to design theory. The author goes further to explain that this is a matter of producing relevant knowledge, which those trained in a non-design discipline will be unable to do when conducting research about design because their central purpose is contributing to the progress of their own discipline (Findeli, Brouillet, Martin, Moineau, & Tarrago, 2008).

Conversely, Findeli et al. (2008) deem research *for* design as highly relevant for design practice although it does not stand up to the usual scientific standards, thus lacking rigour. Interestingly, both arguments miss the obvious case where the researchers carrying out research *into* design are designers themselves —as in this case. For Findeli (1998; Findeli & Bousbaci, 2005), it is in conducting research *through* design that theory and practice come together in a way that combines research *into* and *for* design. However, Jonas (2007) acknowledges this hybrid nature by asserting design research's dual aims are to develop new knowledge whilst aiming at real-world improvements. A way of reconciling the two is to understand an integrated research *into* and *for* design approach as an activity operating from the outside (unlike research *through* design) which simultaneously attempts to develop theory about the phenomena (embedded and situated) whilst informing future design practice.

With these considerations, this chapter will provide the particulars of the research design implemented to address the research aim of contributing to the theoretical basis for the use of design approaches for public policy innovation. Firstly, the research philosophy the researcher adheres to will be explained, as it constitutes a key aspect to understanding the methodology. Secondly, the research approach to the different parts of the investigation will be described, followed by the research strategy. Thirdly, the means of data collection will be discussed. Subsequently, the analytical framework utilised to examine the data will be explained. Lastly, the limitations of this research are addressed, touching upon validity and reliability issues.

3.1 Philosophical positioning

All research is positioned on fundamental philosophical assumptions about what constitutes 'valid' research, and the research methods most appropriate for the attainment of new knowledge. Essential to conducting any research is to make explicit these assumptions. Therefore, before moving further in describing the methodological approach, it is important to articulate the researcher's beliefs and positioning regarding the nature of reality (ontological foundation) and the nature of knowledge (epistemological foundation).

To begin with, once more the aim and question driving this inquiry takes the centre. Up to this point, it has been established that design approaches can be beneficial in the pursuit of innovation in certain settings. Furthermore, it has been shown how public sector innovation (often through innovative public policies) plays a role in enhancing societal wellbeing. Lastly, the matter of innovation as a product and as a process has been presented and has determined that the latter perspective is useful in understanding how to achieve public policy innovation. Considering those premises, the question this research is set up to answer is *what is the role of design in the development of innovative public policies?* In answering this question, the research aims at contributing to the theoretical basis (by providing a rationale) for the use of design approaches within public policymaking.

Notably, the nature of the question calls for a predominantly qualitative research approach. It is important to note that qualitative and quantitative approaches to research should not be seen as a dichotomy but rather as different ends of a continuum (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). However, qualitative research puts the focus not on the predictive capabilities of its findings, but on gaining an understanding of the nature of specific situations and the particularities of its contextual interactions (Patton, 1985, as cited in Merriam, 2009). Moreover, Aspers and Corte's (2019) definition of qualitative research "as an iterative process in which improved understanding to the scientific community is achieved by making new significant distinctions

resulting from getting closer to the phenomenon studied” (p. 155) seems appropriate to frame this investigation. As explained by Creswell and Poth (2018), there are several reasons for conducting qualitative research:

- Because a problem requires exploration and the variables are difficult to capture or not easily measurable (i.e. interactions amongst people);
- Because a complex and detailed understanding of the issue is needed, and this thoroughness can only be achieved by talking directly with those involved;
- Because the aim is understanding the settings and contexts in which participants in a study address an issue;
- Because the aim is developing theories when existing theories do not capture sufficiently the complexity of the issue under examination.

It follows from the above that a qualitative approach is suitable for the aim of this research. As such, the investigation will, for the most part, conform to the characteristics of qualitative studies: the researcher is the primary instrument of data collection and analysis; emphasis is on meaning, understanding, and process; and the product of this inductive process is deeply descriptive (Merriam, 2009; Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Moreover, adopting a qualitative approach involves specific philosophical assumptions as well as distinct methods and procedures (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

The philosophical positioning refers to the set of beliefs concerning the nature of the reality being investigated, and it is generally examined in terms of ontology and epistemology. As Creswell and Poth (2018) explain, the researcher always carries beliefs and philosophical assumptions into their work, but unlike the theories framing it, these are often less apparent. These philosophical assumptions of the researcher together with the procedures of inquiry, methods for data collection, analysis, and interpretation, and the nature of the problem itself inform the research approach (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Mason (2017), differentiates the ontological perspective (the nature of reality and its characteristics) from the epistemological position (knowledge and evidence) with the aid of two questions. Whereas for the former she asks the researcher to enquire *what is the nature of the phenomena, or entities, or social ‘reality’, that they wish to investigate*, for the latter she recommends investigating *what might represent knowledge or evidence of these entities or social ‘reality’*. However, Crotty (1998) warns us that ontological and epistemological issues tend to emerge together. Furthermore, he observes that ontological positionings imply specific epistemological stances, and vice-versa (Crotty, 1998). In answering these questions, it could be said that ontologically researchers conducting qualitative inquiry embrace the notion of multiple realities. Moreover, in studying individuals in their settings, qualitative researchers utilise multiple forms of evidence in themes, employing the words of different individuals with the purpose of reporting these multiple realities and perspectives (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Epistemologically, conducting qualitative research means the assembling of subjective evidence based on individuals’ views and experiences, whilst the researcher attempts to get closer to the participants being studied (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

To Denzin and Lincoln (2011), the researcher’s philosophical assumptions –such as ontology, epistemology, and methodology— are basic principles entwined into different interpretive frameworks utilised in qualitative research. Creswell and Poth (2018) describe these interpretive frameworks as paradigms, beliefs, theories, and/or theoretical orientations that the researcher brings to the process and which guide the practice of research. Qualitative

research is most frequently located within a *constructivist* (often used interchangeably with *interpretivist*) paradigm, that assumes reality is socially constructed (Merriam, 2009). Conversely, the positivist orientation accepts that reality exists independently of the researcher, and as such it is observable, stable, and measurable (Merriam, 2009). Another such important interpretive framework in relation to design is *pragmatism*. Much like in the interpretivist paradigm —where social phenomena cannot be studied separately from the researcher’s viewpoint— “pragmatism insists on treating research as a human experience that is based on the beliefs and actions of actual researchers” (Morgan, 2014). Table 6 shows the philosophical assumptions of qualitative research integrated within a pragmatist interpretive framework.

Assumption	Qualitative research			Interpretive framework
	Questions	Characteristics	Implications for Practice	Pragmatism
Ontological	What is the nature of reality?	Reality is multiple as seen through many views.	The researcher reports different perspectives as themes develop in the findings.	Reality is what is useful, is practical, and “works.”
Epistemological	What counts as knowledge? How are knowledge claims justified? What is the relationship between the researcher and that being researched?	Subjective evidence is obtained from participants; the researcher attempts to lessen the distance between himself or herself and that being researched.	The researcher relies on quotes as evidence from the participant as well as collaborates, spends time in the field with participants, and becomes an “insider”.	Reality is known through using many tools of research that reflect both deductive (objective) evidence and inductive (subjective) evidence.
Methodological	What is the process of research? What is the language of research?	The researcher uses inductive logic, studies the topic within its context, and uses an emerging design.	The researcher works with particulars (details) before generalizations, describes in detail the context of the study, and continually revises questions from experiences in the field.	The research process involves both quantitative and qualitative approaches to data collection and analysis.

Table 6: Philosophical assumptions of qualitative research approach and the pragmatist interpretive framework, adapted from Creswell and Poth (2018) and Lincoln, Lynham, and Guba (2011).

According to Creswell and Poth (2018), researchers working under pragmatism as their interpretive framework basis focus on the research outcome (situations, actions, and consequences of inquiry) instead of the antecedent conditions as postpositivists do. In the pragmatist framework the focus is set on solutions to problems and applications; the so-called “what works” model (Patton, 1990). Goldkuhl asserts that “foundational in this pragmatist attitude is a search for what might be; an exploration into social and technical potentials and opportunities” (2011, p. 87). Moreover, the pragmatist attitude seeks the construction of a better world by intervening into the future in what epistemologically can be called ‘prospective knowledge’ (Goldkuhl, 2011). Practically, this means that researchers seeing through a pragmatist worldview will use multiple methods and sources of data collection to best answer their research questions, emphasising the importance of addressing the research problem (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Of special interest for this research is a growing body of literature that locates design research within the pragmatist paradigm (Melles, 2008; Goldkuhl, 2011; Rylander, 2012; Dalsgaard, 2014). Particularly, Goldkuhl (2011) identifies five design research essential traits that are best explained under pragmatism's epistemological foundations, as follows:

- A focus on usefulness, utility, and contribution to practice;
- Knowledge development through building and intervention;
- Problematic situations as a starting and driving point for inquiry and research design;
- The pursuit for what is desirable and possible;
- An aim for prospective, normative, and prescriptive knowledge that goes beyond description.

Considering the above, it can be argued that this research project is based on a pragmatist paradigm with an emphasis on qualitative approaches. However, quantitative tools and descriptive statistics were also implemented to a lesser degree. These methods were utilised when a quantifiable attribute would enhance the understanding of the phenomenon (e.g., the distribution of organisations deploying design at regional vs. national level) or when hypotheses were tested (e.g., design thinking mindset constructs are represented in diverse loads in design for policy). The section below describes and justifies the choices for the research strategy and design.

3.2. Research design

This investigation has been structured in three iterations —three distinct but complementary studies— which aim to progressively address the question of the role of design in the development of innovative public policies. In this way, each study looks at gradually advancing the understanding of the issue whilst simultaneously refining the approach. This goes in line with Merriam's (2009) belief that a qualitative research design should preferably be flexible and emergent, as well as responsive to the shifting requirements of the study in progress. Thus, the design of this research was conceived in terms of the questions that framed the overall research aim:

1. What design practices are currently being deployed in the policymaking process?
2. How is design being instilled in public policymaking?
3. Why does the introduction of design for policy affect the policymaking process?

Figure 8 depicts the overarching methods, order and types of studies, their key activities, and their link to each research question.

Gaining an understanding of the rationale for introducing design approaches in public policymaking was set as a prerequisite to the data generating activities. This was largely achieved through a review of literature, both in the form of academic and grey literature, as shown in Chapter 2. After this preliminary stage, three studies were conducted to address the remaining research questions.

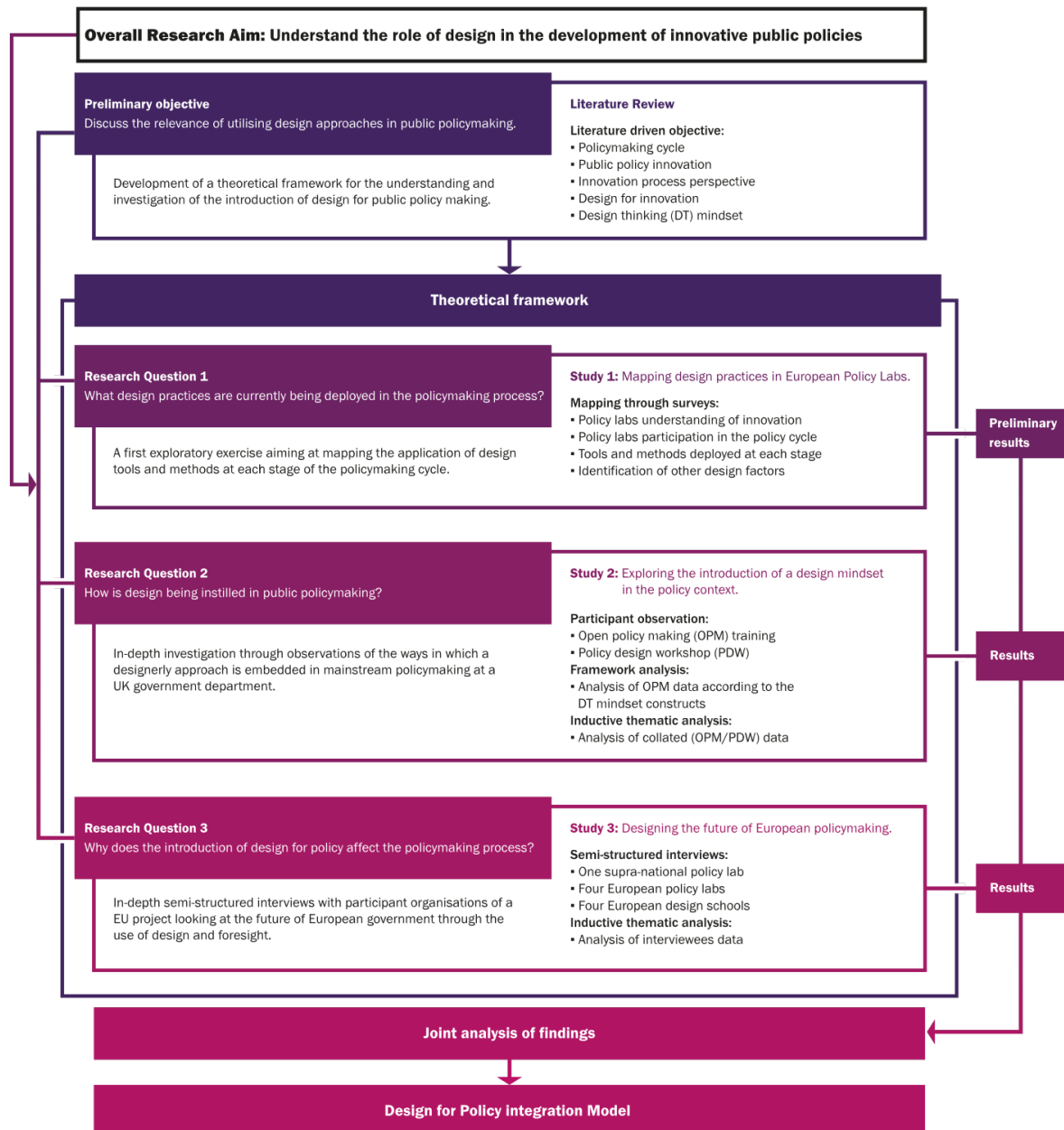


Figure 8: Research Design.

3.2.1 Study 1 – design

Research question 1 sought to explore the premise of understanding public policy innovation through the lens of the process perspective of design, public policymaking, and innovation. For its realisation, Study 1, 'Mapping design practices in European policy labs', aimed at understanding the design approaches being deployed at each stage of the policymaking cycle to achieve innovation.

Through two online surveys opened through January to December 2018 (see Section 3.3.1), the study mapped the design methods/tools that policy labs in Europe utilise when intervening in public policymaking. Adopting a process perspective, these design methods/tools were identified at different stages of the policymaking cycle. The sampling was based on that presented in the European Commission Joint Research Centre–commissioned report 'Public

Policy Labs in European Union Member States' (Fuller & Lochard, 2016), and expanded from the original 13 countries to cover all 46 UN recognised states in Europe. In addition to the four-level classification (City, Metro, Regional, National) used in the above-mentioned report to identify the organisations' reach, the supra-national level category was also considered.

Surveying a sample of policy labs in Europe was conceived as the first step in the multi-study research project, in what can be called an exploratory study. Typically, exploratory studies — also referred to as “pilot studies” — are limited in scope and their main objective is to help the researcher gain a greater understanding of the problem, thus, seldom standing alone (McNabb, 2018). Furthermore, exploratory research may involve a combination of quantitative or qualitative strategies for data gathering, and its findings often offer guidance to the researcher in rephrasing the study question (McNabb, 2018). Although “[t]he procedures of qualitative research, or its methodology, are characterized as inductive, emerging, and shaped by the researcher’s experience in collecting and analyzing the data” (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 78), this first exploratory study falls more accurately within a deductive approach, where the theory guided the inquiry. In this case, it meant critically testing existing theory to determine whether the propositions are correct or more relevant alternative explanations may exist. This allowed for gaining a broad understanding of the empirical context before going into Studies 2 and 3.

After the first exploratory study, two further studies were conducted to understand how design is being instilled in public policymaking, and to explain why and how design integration for policy innovation affects the policymaking process respectively. According to Yin (2018), more explanatory questions, such as the “how” and “why” type, typically deal with the tracing of operational processes over time. Moreover, the explanatory nature of the questions aims at providing meanings as well as descriptions of the phenomenon (McNabb, 2018). Therefore, each subsequent study was conceived from a progressively more inductive perspective, showing how both inductive and deductive approaches were implemented depending on the research question being addressed. Not only is this coherent with the pragmatic approach but also it may be advantageous to do so (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2016).

3.2.2 Study 2 - design

Study 2 comprises an in-depth investigation of the phenomenon with the Policy Exploration team (PEX), a recently created unit (2017) within the UK Government Department for Work and Pensions' Strategy Directorate who deploy design for policy (see Section 5.1). To overcome the most important limitations of the first study and to complement its findings, this second study pursued an ethnographic-style research approach. This is best described by Brewer (2000):

The study of people in naturally occurring settings or 'fields' by methods of data collection which capture their social meanings and ordinary activities, involving the researcher participating directly in the setting, if not also the activities, in order to collect data in a systematic manner but without meaning being imposed on them externally (p. 6).

Study 2 looked at capturing the conditions and circumstances of a representative situation because of the learnings it may provide regarding the social processes related to the research's theoretical interest (design introduction into public policymaking).

In practice, this implied accompanying the team from February 2018 to November 2019, as they carried out 'design thinking workshops' with diverse stakeholders to inform and devise

social policy in the UK. In doing this, the researcher utilised a selection of methods such as participant observation, interviews, and the study of current public documents, since these are recognised as well-suited to address this type of inquiry (Lutz, 1981).

This second study utilised both a deductive and inductive approach. It looks, firstly, at deductively identifying evidence of the 19 constructs of the design thinking mindset —as defined by Dosi et al. (2018) (see Section 2.3.1)— in the training the PEx carried out for the DWP. Secondly, it looked at developing themes concerning the implications and issues of introducing design for public policymaking across all the observational data.

The adopted research strategy was well suited to enable an in-depth study of a current issue, allowing the collection of varied stakeholder perspectives to gain a wide-ranging understanding of the actual phenomenon in an environment of complexity.

Noteworthy is the process through which access to this government team was gained. As a way to communicate the research project, the researcher opened a social media account on Twitter (@policyxdesign). Through this social media platform, the former (then current) Head of the PEx contacted the researcher to know more about the project. As the relationship evolved, the researcher offered the possibility of hosting some of the PEx's design thinking workshops at LUL in exchange for the possibility of observing the sessions. As part of the confidentiality agreement, the researcher committed not to report on any policy content. Instead, the focus would be on the PEx members as they facilitated their design thinking workshops. This first materialised on March 6, 2018 and continued until late 2019. Further details are presented in Chapter 5.

3.2.3 Study 3 - design

The third study examined a foresight and design-led project developed by the European Commission's Policy Lab with the aim of speculating on future paradigms for governance and public policymaking in the EU. For the project 'The Future of Government 2030', the EU Policy Lab collaborated with six policy labs and six design schools in different EU member states. Because of this particular feature, the project allowed for the study of the interactions between design schools and policy labs at national and supra-national level, as they implemented diverse design approaches. This situated investigation is appropriate for a qualitative study of this nature since it aims for in-depth understanding of a contemporary phenomenon that is affected by real-world contextual conditions.

Study 3 then collates and synthesises the insights from the two project reports, blog posts from the participating organisations, and interviews with referents from these organisations. The data collection process was carried out —as described in detail in section 3.3.3— through in-depth semi-structured interviews with key actors, namely, those delivering the project at the EU Policy Lab and the partner organisations (policy labs and design schools) across EU member states. The reason for this was, firstly to elucidate the rationale for utilising a design and foresight approach to achieve the project's goals, and secondly, to fathom how these actors understand the role design can play in future policymaking. The rich qualitative data obtained from the interviews was analysed through an inductive thematic analysis. Besides facilitating the uncovering of meanings and patterns across all interviews, this process helped in validating the constructs developed during the inductive process in Study 2.

Lastly, whereas the first two studies aimed at respectively mapping the design practices currently deployed in the policymaking process and describing how design thinking is

introduced in public policymaking, this study sought to obtain a more prospective look into the phenomenon.

3.3. Data collection

This section expands on the types of data collected and the means used to gather and manage it. As indicated before, the emphasis of the research strategy was the gathering of qualitative data. However, since the researcher subscribes to a pragmatist paradigm of research, both, deductive and inductive approaches can be recognised in the data collection and analysis processes (see Table 7). In a deductive approach, a hypothesis is derived from existing theory and the empirical world is then explored and data are collected, in order to test the hypothesis. For this research it meant surveying a sample of policy labs to map their design methods against the policymaking cycle. This assumes, firstly, that the policy labs introduce design into policymaking by deploying distinctive design methods; secondly, that the activities of the policy labs can be assimilated to the process model of policymaking.

Study	Data collection	Data analysis	Approach
Study 1	Surveys	Descriptive statistics	Deductive
Study 2	Observations	Framework analysis / Thematic analysis	Deductive / Inductive
Study 3	Interviews	Thematic analysis	Inductive

Table 7: Approach to research of Study 1, 2, and 3.

Cross cutting the three studies was the search for documentary evidence, usually known as ‘grey literature’. This is defined as “that which is produced on all levels of government, academics, business and industry in print and electronic formats, but which is not controlled by commercial publishers” (GreyNet, 1999). Considering ‘grey literature’ as a source of relevant data is motivated by the immense value of documents in emerging or rarely studied phenomena. In this case, grey literature meant publicly available reports and blog entries of the organisations involved and other organisations shaping the ‘design for policy’ narrative, such as the OECD’s Observatory for Public Sector Innovation, NESTA, the EU Commission’s Joint Research Centre, UK Policy Lab, and FutureGov.

3.3.1 Mapping through surveys

Surveys, as a data collection method, utilises lists of questions collected together in questionnaires or ‘survey instruments’ (McNabb, 2018). Questionnaires are extensively employed in research studies and are helpful instruments for collecting survey information, as they provide structured data and are frequently relatively straightforward to analyse (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2018). Furthermore, these can be administered without the presence of the researcher (*self-administered*) and by several means, including email and through online platforms. Amongst their many advantages, questionnaires offer considerable flexibility, as they can be designed specifically to meet the objectives of a large variety of research projects and collect information from a broad array of respondents in various different situations (McNabb, 2018). Moreover, they can be inexpensive, reliable, and valid for the researcher, whilst quick and easy to complete for the participants (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2018).

In questionnaires, the question formats can take two basic forms: open-ended and closed-ended. Whereas the first form allows respondents to provide answers freely and in their own

words, the second limits the respondents to a set of pre-defined responses (McNabb, 2018). Typically, descriptive research designs employ closed-ended questions in their surveys, whilst “open-ended questions are used most often in a small sample, in an exploratory research design, or as a component in an otherwise completely qualitative design.” (McNabb, 2018, p. 162). Study 1 implemented both open and closed-ended questions.

Although a survey could be aimed at an entire population (such as in a national census), they often target samples of the population. The researcher then, makes inferences about the population based on the sample data (McNabb, 2018). In qualitative research, data collection on a population subset (or sample) is typically considered to be sufficient (Mack, Woodsong, MacQueen, Guest, & Namey, 2005). Likewise, probabilistic samples are not a requisite in qualitative research, thus samples with no statistical representativeness are suitable for these studies (Ritchie, Lewis, Nicholls, & Ormston, 2013). A widely used sampling strategy in qualitative research is purposive sampling, a selection approach based on a preselected relevant criterion (Mack, Woodsong, MacQueen, Guest, & Namey, 2005). Its main aim is the identification and selection of information-rich cases related to the phenomenon of interest (Palinkas, et al., 2015).

In this study it meant that the sample consisted of 69 organisations across Europe identified as of interest from an original list of 81. This depuration occurred for a few reasons, namely, that some of the organisations listed in the report ‘Public Policy Labs in European Union Member States’ (Fuller & Lochard, 2016), were no longer operational by the time the first survey was sent, or further desk research showed these initiatives were small-scale projects rather than established governmental units. The resulting sample showed that there was at least 1 organisation of interest in 17 out of the 46 European countries (see Section 4.2).

The online survey consisted of two questionnaires. Whereas the first one was sent to all 69 organisations in the sample, the second one was only distributed to the 30 organisations which completed the first one. These produced 17 responses.

Questionnaires were distributed using the web-based service *Online Surveys* (formerly *Bristol Online Survey - BOS*), under a license provided by *Jisc* (formerly the Joint Information Systems Committee) to Loughborough University. This online survey tool provides a range of question types and allows for complex data flows to be built up with the use of filter questions. It also includes simple data analysis tools such as survey merging, comparison, benchmarking, and cross-tabulation. Survey respondents accessed and completed the questionnaires by following links to dedicated webpages.

First questionnaire – ‘Policy Labs - first survey’:

- Opened on 17 Jan 2018, 17:02 (GMT)
- Closed on 31 Dec 2018, 17:02 (GMT)
- Public URL: <https://lboro.onlinesurveys.ac.uk/policy-labs-first-survey>
- Number of questions: 8 (see Appendix 2)

Second questionnaire – ‘Policy Labs - follow-up survey’:

- Opened on 1 Feb 2018, 17:00 (GMT)
- Closed on 30 Nov 2018, 17:00 (GMT)
- Public URL: <https://lboro.onlinesurveys.ac.uk/policy-labs-follow-up-survey>
- Number of questions: 9 (see Appendix 3)

These questionnaires inquired about the organisation's understanding of policy innovation in terms of the dichotomy 'product vs process innovation', at which stage of the policymaking process they intervene (according to the six-stage model presented), and the methods/tools utilised at each stage to innovate public policies. Whilst the first survey asked about broader aspects of the organisations, the follow-up survey opened a month after and focussed on the respondents' understanding of public policy innovation and the methods/tools they utilise to achieve it.

3.3.2 Participant observations

As previously stated, Study 2 looked at gaining an in-depth understanding of the conditions and circumstances in which design (thinking) is instilled into public policymaking.

This approach allows researchers to unobtrusively gather information and identify patterns of activity without manipulating participants' behaviour (McNabb, 2018). On account of the organisation conducting 'design thinking workshops' as a key component in their policymaking process, the study focused on the observation of those instances as the main source of data collection. The observations were carried out for 21 months, following the team in different activities, from exploratory workshops to design sprints. As "ethnography centres on the participant observation of a society or culture through a complete cycle of events that regularly occur as that society interacts with its environment" (Lutz, 1981, p. 108), data collection concluded with the last of a workshop series which was part of the Open Policy Making training programme for policymakers, developed and delivered by the DWP Policy Exploration team.

The qualitative observation occurs when the researcher takes field notes on the activities and behaviour of people in their context (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The researcher subsequently, documents in a semi-structured or unstructured manner the activities at the research site, based on questions relevant to their inquiry (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). These observations are usually open-ended since the researcher "asks" questions of the participants permitting them to freely provide their answers (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). These observations are summarised into larger descriptive generalisations that aim at describing their context and interactions. Having collated this information, the researcher develops subjective descriptions, based on a number of generalisations, in the attempt to move from the specific to the general (McNabb, 2018).

This method was selected because implementing observations as the main mean of research has the potential to produce more valid data than through inferential or mediated methods (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2018). Conducting studies in the field is then important to understanding contextually what participants are saying. Moreover, the amount of time spent is crucial, since "[t]he longer researchers stay in the field or get to know the participants, the more they "know what they know" from first-hand information" (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 77). In public administration, spending extended periods conducting fieldwork is either too expensive or no longer possible for other reasons (McNabb, 2018). However, nowadays ethnography has become a widely implemented method for qualitative research in public administration as it has proved valuable in identifying and improving administrative options for decision-making in public policy matters (McNabb, 2018). Moreover, "the purpose of the research is to improve the practice of administration in the public sector, while ethnographic research is a way of acquiring the information that makes such improvement possible" (McNabb, 2018, p. 324). An important distinction is that qualitative observers may adopt roles

ranging from nonparticipant to complete participant (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). In this study, although varied roles were assumed depending on the circumstances, the researcher was always presented as such to the participants.

These observations were primarily carried out in two settings:

- **Open policy making training workshops** delivered by the Policy Exploration team for colleagues within the Department for Work and Pensions (see Table 8);
- **Policy design workshops** where the team engaged with a number of stakeholders identified as key to the development of diverse social policies (see Table 9).

Throughout these observations, field notes and photographs were taken. Also, the material utilised by the PEx in facilitating the workshops (including slide decks, cards, worksheets, and templates) was collected. From each workshop a report including the different sources of data was compiled (see example in Appendix 7).

Level	Title	Date	Location	Facilitators	Participants
Level 1 - Understanding Open Policy Making	What it takes to be an Open Policy Maker – OPM1.1	August 21, 2019	Loughborough University in London	F1, F2 & F3	26
	Practical Open Policy Making tools and techniques – OPM1.2	September 4, 2019	Loughborough University in London	F1 & F2	18
Level 2 - Becoming an Open Policy Maker:	Engaging with people – OPM2.1	September 12, 2019	Loughborough University in London	F1 & F2	21
	Finding the problem – OPM2.2	September 26, 2019	ODI, Leeds	F4, F1 & F2	25
	Generating innovative ideas – OPM2.3	October 10, 2019	Showroom and Workstation, Sheffield.	F1 & F2.	20
	Prototyping and iterating ideas / Prototyping for policy – OPM2.4	October 24, 2019	Friends House, London	F5, F1 & F2	20
	Advanced facilitation skills – OPM2.5	November 7, 2019	ODI, Leeds	F2 & F5.	16

Table 8: List of DWP's PEx Open Policy Making training workshops.

Workshop code	Date	Location	Facilitators	Participants
PDW1	March 6, 2018	Loughborough University in London	F6 & F7	24
PDW2	April 19, 2018	Loughborough University in London	F6 & F7	23
PDW3	November 22, 2018	Loughborough University in London	F6 & F7	26
PDW4	April 4, 2019	Loughborough University in London	F2 & F5	18

PDW5	April 11, 2019	Caxton House, London	F2 & F5	6
PDS1.1	September 24, 2019	Loughborough University in London	F8 & F9 (Behavioural Insights Team facilitator)	17
PDS1.2	September 25, 2019	Loughborough University in London	F8 & F9 (Behavioural Insights Team facilitator)	14

Table 9: List of DWP's PEx Policy Design workshops.

3.3.3 Open-ended interviews

Additionally, for Study 2 a number of open-ended interviews were conducted with key participants to clarify certain aspects of the observations or to answer specific questions. These qualitative interviews typically involved unstructured questions intended to elicit views and opinions from the participants, and are usually conducted face-to-face, by telephone, or in focus groups with a small number of participants (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). For this study, all three types were conducted, including telephone focus group interviews:

- Simultaneous phone interview (*telekit*) with members of the DWP's PEx: F6, F7, and members of Strategy Disability Employment & Support. Duration: 47'. Discussed the PEx's activities and interaction with the DWP at large from a policymaking perspective - 14th September 2018.
- Phone interview with PEx Head. Duration: 55'. This conversation follows the discussion with a group of PEx members in the previous week and looked at contrasting and complementing the responses previously obtained - 19th September 2018.
- Interview with two PEx members (F6 and F7) at Loughborough University in London. Duration: 45'. Discussed the planning of future policy design workshops - 22nd November 2018.
- Policy Exploration team meeting at Department for Work and Pensions, Quarry House, Leeds. Duration: 60'. Investigator presented results of Study 1 to PEx members and gathered feedback - 27th November 2018.
- Meeting with PEx members (F6 & F7) at Loughborough University in London. Duration: 45'. Discussed the outcomes of past and planning of future policy design workshops - 29th January 2019.
- Debrief and analysing of the outputs from policy design workshop with policy team at Caxton House, London. Duration: 120' - 11th April 2019

As can be observed from the list above, other non-interview events also informed Study 2. These consisted primarily of meetings in which the researcher had the chance to participate and exchange ideas with the DWP PEx in different settings. Moreover, these opportunities not only broaden the understanding of the team's work but also helped in deepening the researcher's relationship with the team.

Additionally, on the 24th of April 2019 the investigator with colleagues from the Institute for Design Innovation at LUL developed and delivered a workshop for the DWP on the uses of foresight and design for strategizing. This 'Foresight & Design for Strategy Workshop' took place at LUL and aimed at providing the PEx and other participants from the DWP with tools for engaging diverse actors—including frontline staff and general public—into prospective thinking that could inform long-term strategy making. This 4-hour workshop although noteworthy in various aspects (e.g., strengthening the relationship with the PEx) was not considered as part of data collection.

3.3.4 Interviews

Data collection for Study 3 was carried out through a mix of online and face-to-face semi-structured interviews with design scholars and referents at policy labs in Europe.

As in other forms of qualitative research, this study had the researcher as the primary instrument of data collection and an inductive analysis of the meaning and understanding of the phenomenon (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). This was mainly carried out through individual interviews, one of the most extensively applied methods in qualitative research (Ritchie, Lewis, Nicholls, & Ormston, 2013), with key actors involved in the project in nine out of the thirteen participating organisations. Although a total of thirteen organisations were involved in the project, two out of the six policy labs and two out of the six design schools declined partaking in the study. That meant a total of ten interviews informing the study.

Interviews constitute a major source of primary data as they yield “significant amounts of information from an individual’s perspective” (Hancock & Algozzine, 2015, p. 39). Moreover, it is claimed that besides allowing the interviewees to use their words for expressing their views in a ‘less biased manner’, the semi-structured interviews offer a source of comparable and reliable qualitative data (Cohen & Crabtree, 2006). Therefore, interviews were aimed at collecting in-depth information in a one-on-one setting that could be used to better understand the ways in which design could play a role in future policymaking.

3.3.4.1 Interview protocol and transcription

Prior to conducting qualitative interviews, researchers develop an interview protocol for asking questions and recording answers which needs to be used consistently in all of the interviews (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). For this study, the protocol presented some differences according to the type of interviewee. Firstly, three distinct interview guides were considered subject to the interviewee affiliation: respectively, to the EU Policy Lab, the collaborating local policy labs, or the design schools. These different guides looked at adapting to the different roles of each type of organisation during the project. These interview guides can be found in appendixes 4, 5, and 6. Secondly, with the exception of three interviews that were conducted face-to-face, the remaining interviews were carried out through online video-calls. The main reason for this was the geographic dispersion of the interviewees since the project involved organisations located in ten EU Member States⁹. All interviews lasted between 45 minutes and 1 hour and 15 minutes and were conducted in English. For accuracy purposes, these were recorded with the approval of participants. In those cases where the interview was conducted through video-calls, the interviewees automatically received a copy of the video once the call ended.

All interviews were transcribed for effective codification of the qualitative data. Transcription was completed in two rounds utilising automatic and manual means. In the first automatic round, IBM Watson’s Speech to Text service was utilised. This software implements speech recognition capabilities that convert speech into text, and is performed in real-time, allowing the researcher to follow the process and make notes whilst familiarising themselves with the data. The second round of transcription was manually done utilising Audacity, a free and open-source digital audio editor and recording application software, that allows audio quality

⁹ Austria, Belgium, Ireland, Italy, Malta, Poland, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and the UK.

enhancement (e.g., noise reduction, volume gain, etc.) to guarantee a more accurate transcription.

On one occasion, verbatim transcripts were returned to the interviewee to check for accuracy under the interviewee request. Interview transcript checking can be used as a way of enabling participants to reconstruct their narratives whilst enabling the researcher to make claims about the transcription's accuracy; however, it does not support assertions about the reliability of the analysis (Birt, Scott, Cavers, Campbell, & Walter, 2016).

3.4 Data analysis

This section describes the methods used for analysing the data acquired in each study. After the observations concluded, the interviews were completed, and all documentary evidence was collected, the data needed to be arranged for its analysis. Often in a qualitative analysis, it is necessary to implement some form of data reduction, for instance, by contracting statements to their essential meaning and categorising data sets (Ritchie, Lewis, Nicholls, & Ormston, 2013). Likewise, there are numerous analytic strategies to organise and analyse qualitative data, including content analysis, thematic analysis, discourse analysis, and narrative analysis (Liamputtong, 2019). However, one fundamental principle of qualitative data analysis is that of pattern identification (Archer, 2018). The process implies breaking down the data into their essential components (codes) to then re-group them into meaningful categories (themes) (Archer, 2018).

The first data obtained was from surveys in Study 1. As previously explained, the main objective of Study 1 was to explore what design practices are being deployed in the policymaking process. Specifically, it looked at matching the design tools and methods utilised by the organisations surveyed with the distinct stages in the policymaking cycle. The *raw data* produced by the responses to the questionnaires only becomes information once it has been coded, tabulated, and interpreted (McNabb, 2018). However, due to its nature, this study did not require a sophisticated method for data analysis. Furthermore, because of the low density of the data, its organisation, tabulation, and analysis were manageable without implementing quantitative methods. The 'code and count' approach, which involves 'coding' the data into different categories and counting how many responses are in each category, was helpful in understanding the recurrence of particular responses. This type of 'supplementary' counting is not intended to produce the research's main contribution nor to confirm findings, but to build on them, "enabling researchers to develop new insights into their phenomena of interest" (Hannah & Lautsch, 2011, p. 16). Section 4.2 in Chapter 4 offers a detailed account of Study 1's data and its analysis.

Although the first exploration was completed in an exploratory preliminary stage, the analysis for Study 2 and 3 was conducted once the data from both studies 2 and 3 was gathered in full. However, the cumulative experience of conducting participant observations with the Policy Exploration Team in Study 2 informed the development of the interview guidelines for Study 3. Contrasting the first study, the data obtained from Studies 2 and 3 was abundant and dense. Therefore, a method for conducting a systematic and thorough analysis was necessary.

3.4.1 Framework analysis

The data obtained from Study 2 was analysed both deductively and inductively. For the deductive process, the framework analysis method was implemented.

Developed by Jane Ritchie and Liz Spencer at NatCen, a British leading centre for independent social research, Framework Analysis offers clear steps in qualitative analysis. It is particularly helpful when dealing with large datasets as it reduces data through summarisation and synthesis but retains links to original data, which increases the findings' reliability. The framework analysis follows a five-step process:

1. Familiarisation: reports for each workshop were written including comments, pictures, and transcripts (see example in Appendix 7).
2. Identifying a thematic framework: in this case Dosi et al.'s (2018) Design Thinking mindset's constructs were utilised (see section 2.3.1).
3. Indexing (coding): the data is indexed by generating codes assigned to specific themes (see Appendix 8).
4. Charting/summarising: once indexed, the codes under each theme are summarised, highlighting the most salient aspects.
5. Mapping and interpretation:
 - a. Description;
 - b. Creating typologies (case based); or
 - c. Creating categories (theme based);
 - d. Mapping linkages;
 - e. Developing explanations.

Srivastava and Thomson (2009) explain that during the analysis stage the collected data is sifted, charted, and sorted according to key themes and issues. For Study 2, the thematic framework was developed utilising Dosi et al.'s (2018) 19 Design Thinking mindset's constructs (see Section 2.3.1), namely:

- Human centeredness;
- Learning oriented;
- Open to different perspectives/diversity;
- Empathy / Empathic;
- Experimentation or learning from mistakes or from failure;
- Experiential intelligence / Bias towards action;
- Problem reframing;
- Abductive thinking;
- Multi- / inter- / cross- disciplinary collaboration;
- Critical Questioning ("beginners mind", curiosity);
- Team working;
- Mindfulness and awareness of process;
- Envisioning new things;
- Embracing Risk;
- Holistic view/considering the problem as a whole;
- Tolerance for - Resilience of - Being comfortable with Ambiguity – Uncertainty;
- Creative confidence;
- Desire to make a difference;
- Optimism to have an impact.

Utilising these constructs to create a thematic framework aimed at validating the hypothesis that the introduction of design in public policy making was associated with specific designerly

traits, in particular those associated with design thinking. Therefore, the constructs of what constitutes a design thinking approach were utilised as the basis for interpreting the data.

Moreover, this method was selected as it provides a very systematic approach to large qualitative dataset analysis. The findings obtained from using this method can easily be traced back offering consistency and robustness.

Additionally, when utilising this method, the researcher typically opts for creating either typologies or categories with their interpretations. This largely depends on the nature of the data. In analysing the data obtained from Study 2, the decision was to create *categories*, as all data was produced within different instances of a single case. Section 5.3.2 presents the categories (themes) created from the analysis.

3.4.2 Thematic analysis

The framework known as *thematic analysis* (TA), “the corner stone of most qualitative data analysis” (Archer, 2018, p. 3) was utilised to analyse the data from Studies 2 and 3. According to Braun, Clarke and Terry (2014), the thematic analysis is “a method for systematically identifying, organising, and offering insight into patterns of meaning (themes) across a data set” (p. 57). It pursues the extraction of significant themes at different levels of a text (Attride-Stirling, 2001). Furthermore, it offers a number of advantages, such as:

- it works appropriately with research questions derived from people’s experiences and with those concerning the depiction and creation of particular phenomena in specific contexts;
- it is useful to analyse data collected from secondary sources;
- it can be used with datasets of any size;
- it can be utilised to produce both, theory and data-driven analyses.

(Clarke & Braun, 2013)

Coding, the first step, entails assigning succinct labels to text passages (in the dataset) to organise the data in what will later develop into patterns of meaning. Themes, then, reflect a pattern of shared meaning found across the dataset around a core idea or concept (Braun, Clarke, Hayfield, & Terry, 2019). It is argued that this method is theoretically flexible because it can be applied to a range of theoretical frameworks (Clarke & Braun, 2013). However, because of its theoretical independence, Terry et al. (2017) claim researchers must be explicit in their theoretical approach. For this research this has been done in Section 3.1.

Step	Action	Description
1	Data collection	Data gathering and population of data sets
2	Identify all data relating to the already classified patterns	Discriminate the data that fits under a specific subject and place it within the corresponding pattern
3	Combine and catalogue related patterns into sub-themes	Themes are defined as units derived from patterns
4	Build a valid argument for choosing the themes	Referring to the literature to make inferences from the raw data

Table 10: Thematic Analysis pragmatic view, adapted from Aronson (1994).

In practice, the four steps suggested by Aronson (1994) to conduct a thematic analysis (see Table 10) were followed. These guidelines are also in agreement with the 5-step iterative

process (*Organising, Coding, Writing, Theorising, Reading*) framework proposed by Tuckett (2005).

Perhaps the first decision the researcher should make regarding the coding is whether it will follow a deductive or inductive approach as the dominant mode of engagement. Whereas deductive coding ('top-down') begins with theoretical concepts as the lens to interpreting the data, the inductive approach ('bottom-up') starts with the data as the basis for the development of codes and themes (Terry, Hayfield, Clarke, & Braun, 2017). As previously shown (see section 3.4.1), the framework analysis followed a deductive approach. Conversely, the thematic analysis followed an inductive process, allowing for the creation of meanings and explanations from the data. For instance, this meant that in Study 3, which pursued a data-led analysis, the themes were developed without preconceived categories. As Terry et al. (2017) explain, there is always a theoretical lens informing the analysis, but in this case the inductive approach focusses on identifying meaning by interpreting the data.

In reflexive TA, the approach developed by Clarke and Braun (2013) and adopted in this research, the themes are "conceptualized as meaning-based patterns, evident in explicit (semantic) or conceptual (latent) ways, and as the output of coding" (Braun, Clarke, Hayfield, & Terry, 2019, p. 848). These themes do not aim at summarising the data but rather to provide a convincing and coherent interpretation of the data through extensive dedication in exploring and developing an understanding of meanings throughout the dataset (Braun, Clarke, Hayfield, & Terry, 2019). Moreover, the themes should aim at providing meaning from the dataset in relation to the research question (Archer, 2018).

Notably, in this research, the coding was carried out digitally but manually. That means, without making use of a Computer-Aided Qualitative Data Analysis (CAQDAS) software application (e.g., NVivo). The digital transcripts of interviews and other textual data (e.g., slide decks) were coded by highlighting and colour-coding excerpts and collating them into a new document where they could be grouped and re-arranged under different headings. A preliminary stage of this process can be appreciated in Appendix 9. Similarly, Appendix 10 presents the transcript of one Study 3 interview in which the passages that inform the themes appear highlighted, and excerpts are colour-coded according to the generated thematic. After several iterations, a structure of themes and sub-themes was generated according to the patterns of meaning within the codes. Additionally, thematic networks — "web-like illustrations (networks) that summarise the main themes constituting a piece of text" (Attride-Stirling, 2001, p. 386)— were used to present the thematic analysis code arrangement (see Sections 5.3.2 and 6.3). By breaking up the text and organising it in hierarchical levels of meaning, the thematic network helps in exploring the understanding of an issue whilst allowing arguments to be presented intelligibly (Attride-Stirling, 2001).

3.5 Limitations, validity, and reliability

In the previous sections of this chapter, the emphasis was put on offering the rationale for the methodological decisions made, as well as justifying how those decisions fit the researcher's philosophical positioning. Although the research strategy, data collection methods, and framework for data analysis were chosen for their suitability for the proposed studies, there are still inevitable limitations. Thus, this section discusses the inquiry's limitations and what was attainable with the chosen research strategy and analysis framework and the data gathered.

Firstly, the purpose of splitting the research aim into three questions with their corresponding studies pursued the goal of not only being able to offer answers to each specific aspect identified in the overall research aim, but also to contributing towards the process's validity by utilising multiple methods and sources of data in what is known as method triangulation and data source triangulation respectively (Denzin N. K., 1978).

In Study 1, although the survey was mainly of a qualitative nature, a supplementary count of the codes was conducted. It is important, however, to bear in mind that this counting does not allow for generalisation. Likewise, the frequency of a response may not be an indicator of its importance, especially when there are no control variables for such responses. Furthermore, the study's sample was small in size and not probabilistic. Because design activities in government tend to be scattered across levels and departments and not always made public, in this investigation it was not viable to be exhaustive in the analysis of all initiatives in every European country. Examining 'policy labs' in EU member states served, to some degree, as a proxy for identifying organisations experimenting with new approaches to policymaking, and in particular with design approaches. However, as was shown in this thesis, the 'policy lab' label is not always representative of the organisations employing design approaches in the public sector. This limitation mostly affected the first iteration at attaining the research aim, where a mapping of the design practices in European policy labs was attempted. Lastly, the questionnaires' design (see appendices 2 and 3) allowed for limited flexibility of response. Because of the survey instruments' unsophistication, further refinement and additional data-collection are required to assess more comprehensively the integration of design methods in the stages of the policymaking cycle.

Creswell and Creswell (2018) claim that the process of examining data from different sources for theme development can be claimed as adding to the study's validity. Therefore, this approach was followed in Studies 2 and 3. As well as this, spending prolonged time in the field is seen as a validity enhancing strategy because it allows the researcher to develop an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). It is because of this that for Study 2 the researcher followed the DWP's Policy Exploration team in their activities for 21 months from February 2018 to November 2019.

3.6 Ethics

This research complies with Loughborough University's Code of Practice on Investigations Involving Human Participants'. Accordingly, an 'Ethical Clearance Checklist' was completed in September 2017 before commencing the data collection activities. Furthermore, a 'Risk Assessment' following Loughborough's 'Health and Safety Guidance' protocol was completed in due time.

For Study 1 surveys, an invitation to participate in the research project was sent to all respondents (see Appendix 11). This document clearly stated that "individual responses will be anonymised, and all organisation level data will be held in confidence". According to Merriam (2009), "[t]he question of anonymity is not particularly problematic in survey or experimental studies, when data are in aggregated form" (p. 233). Therefore, all data in Study 1 was presented aggregated.

For the observations in Study 2, the Policy Exploration team was given a research information sheet and asked to sign a consent form. A clause indicating that the policy content discussed during the sessions will be kept confidential was added at the request of the PEx. Moreover, in

reporting the findings the facilitator's identities were preserved and all names were codified and replace according to the criteria 'Fn' (n= 1... 10). Additionally, since the participants of design workshops and activities were not necessarily familiar with nor aware of the researcher, the Team made sure the researcher was introduced at the beginning of each workshop.

Similarly, Study 3 interviewees were briefed in advanced with a clear understanding of the study's purpose and aims of the research. Briefings included a clear outline of what partaking in the study entailed for the individual participant.

Lastly, all participants were given the corresponding information sheet (see Appendix 12) and required to sign a consent form (see Appendix 13) to partake in the study.

3.7 Summary of Chapter 3

This chapter has discussed and explained the philosophical positioning, research design, strategies, and methodologies employed in the inquiry. The data collection and analysis methods have also been described. The philosophical positioning adopted for this research is that of pragmatism at the intersection between research *into* and *for* design. The research design is based on three studies aimed at progressively attaining the research aim. Study 1 consists of a mapping of design tools and methods at each stage of the policy making cycle through online surveys. Study 2, the richest of the three, is based on participant observations of a UK government team introducing design for policy. Lastly, Study 3 examined the views of design scholars and referents from policy labs across Europe who participated in a design-led EU project looking at the future of European government. Likewise, these studies, were analysed primarily through qualitative methods utilising framework analysis and thematic analysis. Additionally, descriptive statistics were utilised in Studies 1 and 2 to complement the findings. Lastly, issues of the research validity, reliability, and its inherent limitations were addressed. The following three chapters present the primary data obtained from each study conducted as part of this research.

Chapter ④

Study 1:

Mapping design practices in European policy labs

As previously described, this thesis addressed its research aim in an iterative manner through three different approaches. The first study, presented in this chapter, introduces the initial approach to contributing to the research aim on the role of design in the development of innovative public policies. Furthermore, it is an initial step into understanding how design is being introduced for public policymaking. Four premises frame the study:

1. Public policy innovation can be understood as a novel process for policy development;
2. The introduction of design practices into the policy development cycle could produce policy innovation;
3. Policy labs are specialised units which explicitly utilise design methods in their practice;
4. Policy labs' design methods can be mapped against the policymaking process model.

The study's objective is to respond to the research's first question of exploring *what design practices are being deployed in the policymaking process*.

4.1 Policy labs as the vehicle for public policy innovation

Focusing the study on a geographic region responds to this phenomenon (the emergence of policy labs) finding its origin in Europe (Bason, 2014), thus offering the possibility to inquire into the implications of using design for policymaking beyond government pilots. Although organisations incorporating these approaches have reached a supra-national level, systematic understanding of how design is being used to innovate public policymaking remains unclear. Even though there is a growing body of literature on design in policymaking, there is still scarce knowledge of the specific design activities that ultimately produce innovative policies. Understanding how design is currently being deployed in the making of public policies will aid in understanding the potential for developing innovative policy solutions. Furthermore, it will also allow us to understand its potential to modify deeply rooted policy practices and its subsequent impact in the larger socio-political system.

In the last decade, public administrations worldwide have built organisations often known as 'policy labs' in the pursuit of increasing the engagement of diverse and pertinent stakeholders, whilst facilitating experimentation in the public sector (van Veenstra & Kotterink, 2017). Williamson (2015) affirms that "the 'labification' of the policy field has rapidly accelerated

since 2010, with policy innovation labs ‘applying the principles of scientific labs – experiment, testing and measurement – to social issues’ (p. 252). While different in form, structure, scope and origin, these organisations are broadly defined as “emerging structures that construct public policies in an innovative, design-oriented fashion, in particular by engaging citizens and companies working within the public sector” (Fuller & Lochard, 2016, p. 2). Williamson (2015) argues that through the use of design-based research, data science, and digital methods, policy labs are introducing their own agendas and redefining the nature of policy problems, while prescribing the solutions to tackling them.

Setting-up new organisations in order to introduce these concepts into the public sector responds to a number of reasons. When it comes to the culture of public sector organisations, it is recognised that a more systematic approach that institutionalises a culture of innovation as a core value is currently required (Junginger, 2013). Also, to creatively respond to complex problems, policymakers should develop the ability to envisage new scenarios (Considine, 2012). However, this clashes with the traditional notion of policymaking as a reactive activity, in which policies respond to past and present scenarios, rather than imagining future ones (Junginger, 2014). It is due to the scale and complexity of the challenges faced by the public sector that governments are in need of introducing new non-incremental ways of framing issues and developing solutions (OECD, 2017). These novel approaches to creating public value are the means for public sector innovation and imply a shift in how the public sector operates (OECD, 2017).

Although most policy labs do not focus on a specific policy area, a commonality across them is their interest in the participation of citizens and other stakeholders in the policy-making process (van Veenstra & Kotterink, 2017; Junginger, 2017). The 2016 report by the European Commission’s Joint Research Centre (JRC) recognises that policy labs play a vital role at every stage of the policy cycle, though their primary objective is supporting innovation in the design of public policies (Fuller & Lochard, 2016). Though not every EU member state features a policy lab, governments from those without one have expressed the aim of creating their own, based upon others’ experiences in the EU (Fuller & Lochard, 2016). These “special organizational units created at local, regional or national level have begun to explore how new design methods and new approaches can help them address concrete problems” (Junginger, 2017, p. 6). The need to create special organisations for adopting such methods could be explained by the description of public sector organisations as bureaucratic, hierarchical and risk-adverse structures (Sangiorgi, 2015), who find some design methods to be inappropriate due to their ‘playfulness’, or tendency for “short-circuiting the traditional decision-making structure by circumventing the political arena” (Bailey & Lloyd, 2016, p. 10). Although only a handful of studies on specific policy labs provide accounts of bespoke design approaches for specific contexts (Bailey & Lloyd, 2016), there is currently no overview on how this “design-oriented fashion” for public policy innovation is being interpreted.

The former Head of the UK Policy Lab clarified that “Policy Lab broadly uses the Design Council’s Double Diamond innovation model in our approach to projects” (Siodmok, 2020). Her statement not only makes it explicit that Policy Lab uses a design-led approach to their policy projects but also that this widespread model is intended for innovation purposes. Similarly, the Danish Mindlab, a blueprint for many public sector innovation labs around the world, conceptualised a model for their innovation process (see Figure 9). Within their publicly accessible reports, Mindlab also introduced the methods they utilised throughout this

process. From these, the approaches deployed at each stage of their innovation process can be identified (see Appendix 14).

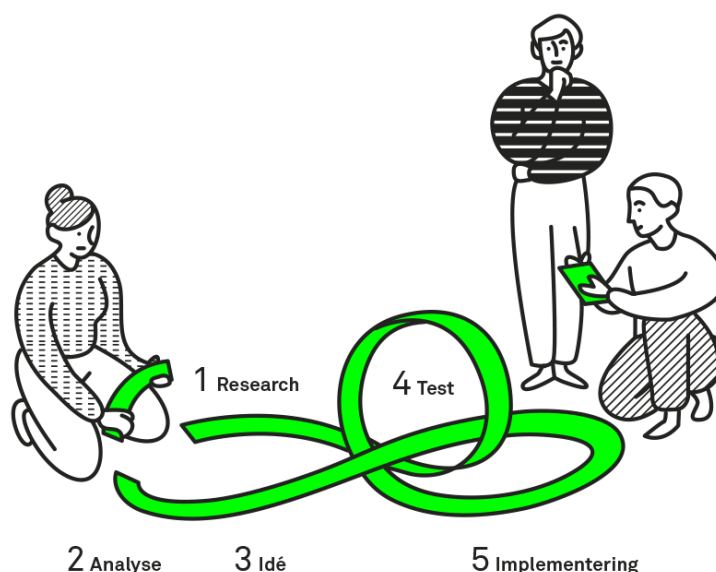


Figure 9: Visual representation of Mindlab's innovation process (Mindlab, 2016).

4.2 Study 1's findings

This section presents the results of the mapping of policy labs in Europe. It begins with the description of the sample selection and continues with the results of each of the two questionnaires.

This study mapped the design methods/tools that policy labs in Europe utilise when intervening in public policymaking. Adopting the process perspective as a framework, these design methods/tools were identified at different stages of the policymaking cycle in the attempt to replicate the exercise conducted with the process and tools from the Mindlab.

As described in section 3.2.1, data was collected through online surveys conducted between January and November 2018. The original sampling was based on different reports and documents with special emphasis on the EU report 'Public policy labs in European Union Member States' (Fuller & Lochard, 2016). Since the publication of the report, the situation seems to have evolved to a much larger number of organisations in 17 countries across Europe only a year later (see Table 11). In addition to the four-level classification (City, Metro, Regional, National) used in the above-mentioned report to identify the organisations' reach, the supra-national level category was also considered.

The policy labs sample (see Figure 10) consisted of:

- 81 organisations identified as of interest;
- 46 UN recognised states in Europe;
- 17 states with at least 1 organisation of interest.

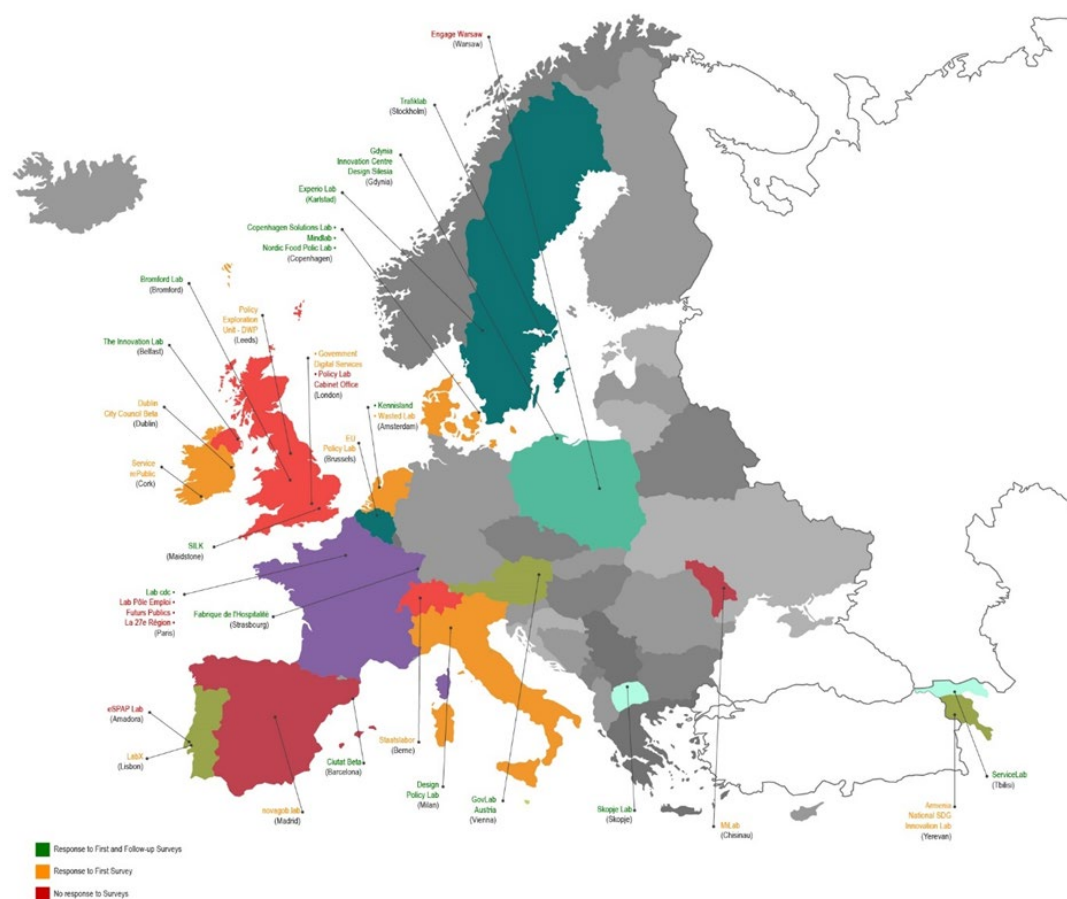


Figure 10: Mapping of surveyed organisations.

Country	# first survey respondents	# second survey respondents
Armenia	1	0
Austria	1	1
Belgium	1	0
Denmark	3	2
France	3	2
Georgia	1	1
Ireland	2	0
Italy	1	1
Macedonia	1	1
Moldova	1	0
The Netherlands	2	1
Poland	2	1
Portugal	1	0
Spain	2	1
Sweden	2	2
Switzerland	1	0
United Kingdom	5	3

Table 11: Surveys' respondents' distribution.

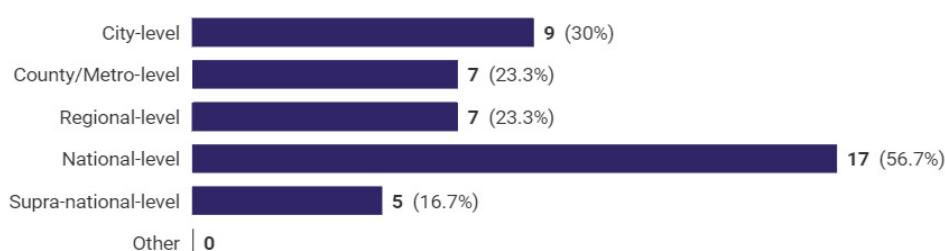
As detailed in Section 3.3.1, the online survey was divided into two parts. The first part was sent to the 69 organisations in the sample, whereas the second part only to those organisations which completed the first part. This resulted in:

- **First questionnaire – ‘Policy Labs - first survey’:**
 - First survey: 69 contacted (85%) out of 81 organisations;
 - 30 valid responses (42% of all 69 organisations contacted);
 - Responses from 16 countries (89% representation of all 17 countries with at least 1 organisation of interest).
- **Second questionnaire – ‘Policy Labs - follow-up survey’:**
 - Sent to 30 organisations;
 - 17 responses (60% response rate).

4.2.1 First Survey

4.2.1.1 At which level is your organisation operating?

In regard to the reach of these organisations, the largest proportion (56.7%) of the respondents indicated they operate at a national level (see Figure 11). At the other end of the spectrum, 16.7% claim to be doing so at a supra-national level. However, when looking at the individual responses, only two of these organisations have decision-making power at a supra-national level, whereas the other three are foundations and academic-based organisations whose work is commissioned by foreign governments and organisations.



Multi answer: Percentage of respondents who selected each answer option (e.g. 100% would represent that all this question's respondents chose that option)

Figure 11: Distribution of the sample's reach. Based on 30 responses.

4.2.1.2 Is your organisation formally or informally known as a 'Policy Lab'?

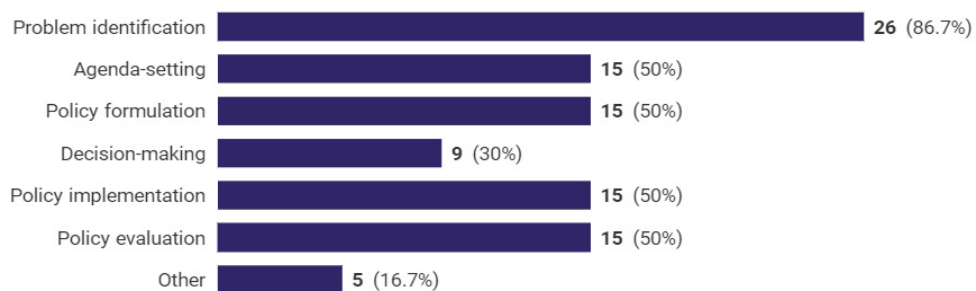
The initial survey tried to elucidate to what extent using the term 'Policy Lab' as a proxy for 'organisation developing public policies in a design-oriented and innovative fashion' serves as an all-embracing label. The results showed that although 56.6% of the surveyed organisations are either formally or informally known as a 'policy lab' (see Figure 12), over 40% of them are not. This negative response includes organisations which had been labelled as such in previous reports (e.g., Sweden's Experio Lab considered a 'County/Metro-level Policy Lab' by Fuller & Lochard (2016)). Moreover, less than a fourth of all respondents are formally known as 'policy labs', suggesting that the current label does not effectively encompass all organisations working under the definition.



Figure 12: Sample's identification as Policy Labs. Based on 30 responses.

4.2.1.3 Considering the following 6 stages in the policy-making process, in which of these does your organisation intervene?

The main objective of the survey's first part was to map the organisation's activities with reference to the policymaking cycle (see Figure 3). Respondents were asked to indicate at which stage their organisations intervene, allowing for multiple responses. As can be seen in Figure 13, there is a consistent response regarding the agenda-setting, policy formulation, policy implementation, and policy evaluation stages, with over half of the respondents indicating their participation at those stages. Perhaps the most noteworthy stages in the cycle are the problem identification and decision-making stages, with 86.7% and 30% responses respectively. Whereas organisations from all the spectrum seem to be engaging in the former, the latter is almost exclusively reserved for organisations embedded in the public sector, with the only exemption being a Policy Lab with origins in a public university. Also, three organisations described their participation in policymaking outside the stages of the cycle, either indicating they "...also participate in policy piloting at smaller scale", or they participate in "policy making process design & innovation" or simply stating that they do policy "experimentation". Moreover, another remark of interest relates to the inability of one organisation in accomplishing its mission due to what seems to be meagre political will, stating they "should be part of the agenda-setting stage, but this would require a higher buy-in from our partners in Government".



Multi answer: Percentage of respondents who selected each answer option (e.g. 100% would represent that all this question's respondents chose that option)

Figure 13: Organisation's intervention at each stage of the policy-making cycle. Based on 30 responses.

4.2.2 Follow-up Survey

The second part of the survey focused on the organisation's understanding of public policy innovation in terms of the 'process vs. product innovation' dichotomy presented, as well as the methods and tools utilised by them in the pursuit of policy innovation. Unlike the first part of the survey, this second part was only sent to the 30 organisations which completed the first part. Therefore, the results are based on 16 responses.

4.2.2.1 To your organisation, public policy innovation refers to...

In regard to their view on public policy innovation, participants were asked to indicate whether the organisation understands it as “a policy that is new to the government adopting it”, “a new way of developing public policies”, both approaches, or none of them, this last one being under the option “other” (see Figure 14). Interestingly, although no organisation understands public policy innovation exclusively in the traditional terms, half of the respondents reported that public policy innovation refers to both approaches, with the remaining seven participants responding that it is solely about a new way of developing public policies.

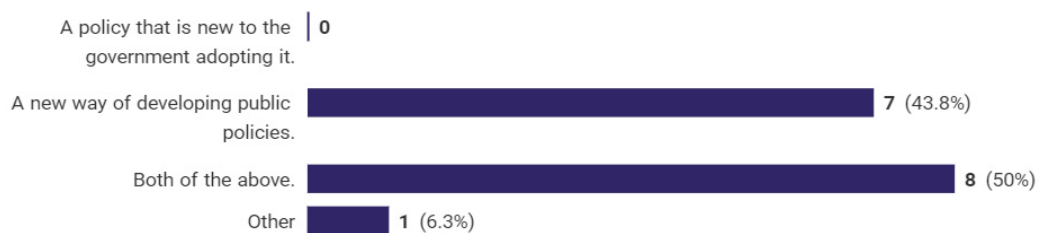


Figure 14: Organisation's understanding of public policy innovation as product vs process innovation. Based on 16 responses.

4.2.2.2 Does your organisation look to innovate on how public policies are made?

In a follow-up question, participants were asked if their organisations aim at innovating how public policies are made, with 62.5% responding affirmatively (see Figure 15).



Figure 15: Organisation's aim to produce public policy innovation from a process perspective. Based on 16 responses.

4.2.2.3 Why is innovation relevant to public policy-making?

Although there was no restriction on who could respond, this open-ended question was answered by those who had previously asserted that their organisations were looking at innovating how public policies are made. Specifically, some participants argued that innovation is relevant to public policy-making “to create more effect”, as well as “to ensure effectiveness of the policies”, while others explicitly recognised complexity and the nature of current issues as the most important reason for innovation in public policy-making:

“To address complexities of our time and to solve wicked problems new approaches to policy making are needed (stakeholder involvement, evidence-based decision making, ...)”

or

“Because it helps policy makers find more relevant solutions for the challenges of the modern time like climate and economic challenges, improve the governance and respond effectively to the changing context of complexity and uncertainty.”

Another participant pointed out that the current policymaking process does not necessarily consider the user’s needs in its development, hence the need for innovation:

“Public policies are supposed to work for people, each with specific needs. One can never expect one policy to work for each individual, but one may expect the policy-making processes to start with the needs of people. To incorporate the lived realities of people in policy making means to continuously involve people in the process – something that rarely happens on a structural basis.”

4.2.2.4 Does your organisation utilise different methods/ tools at different stages of the policymaking process to innovate public policies?

With the aim of mapping the methods/tools utilised when intervening in the policymaking process, the survey asked participants firstly if their organisations utilised different methods/ tools at different stages of the policymaking process to innovate public policies, and secondly, if their organisation made use of design methods/tools (i.e.: persona creation, user journey mapping) to innovate public policies. The results showed that 14 of the 16 organisations employ different methods/tools at different stages of the policymaking cycle, and 12 of those organisations utilise design methods. This arises from the construction of the survey, which first asked participants about the use of different methods for different stages, and then enquired which of those they considered to be design methods (see Appendix 3). The remaining two organisations which do not use different methods/tools at different stages of the policymaking cycle do claim to use design methods/ tools in their activities.

4.2.2.5 Utilised design methods/tools

Regardless of the high rate of positive responses about the use of design methods/tools to innovate public policies, the respondents were not always clear on what those methods are. Similarly, the notion of method/tool was not clear for all participants. For instance, one participant who explicitly responded that “co-design workshops” are used at the policy formulation stage clarified that “probably none of [the] mentioned... are really a tool or a method (in strict sense)”. This view was echoed by another respondent who explained that:

“The task... [of the] Lab as part of public healthcare is to grow design capabilities and capacity to better integrate the resources of patient/relatives in delivery, development, service innovation and policy making. We are there to create a meeting between Healthcare and Design where both worlds can learn from each other. Design or service design for us is a mindset and the approach we use in all projects and work. Therefore we use and adapt a variety of design methods/tools and adjust to the project at hand. In early stages of course more anthropological tools to investigate user needs/behaviors, etc. Later on journeys/personas, etc. to describe insights. Prototyping to explore and implement solutions.”

Table 12 shows the participants’ responses when asked to identify the methods/tools their organisations used to innovate public policies at each stage of the policymaking cycle.

	Policy Cycle Stages					
	Problem Identification	Agenda-setting	Policy Formulation	Decision Making	Policy Implementation	Policy Evaluation
Methods & tools	Ethnographic fieldwork	System Dynamics Modelling	User Centred Design	Agile method	Service design, monitoring systems	Data harvesting (monitoring phases)
	Digital ethnography	Prototyping/testing	Co-design enabling	Prototypes	Spend time with the team who has to use new tools or spaces	Ad hoc valuation approaches
	Scenarios	Strategic conversation	Co-design workshop (preliminary phase)			
	Data analysis-interpretation	W's (concept design)	Design thinking			
	User journey mapping	Scenario-based techniques				
	Design Thinking	Agile method				
	Sociology	Foresight				
	Psychology					
	Qualitative interviews					

Table 12: Mapping of design and non-design methods/tools utilised at each stage of the policymaking cycle. Based on 16 responses.

Some of the responses in Table 12 —such as ‘Ethnography’ or ‘Prototyping’— were used as examples for more than one activity, as design and non-design methods/tools. Some other responses seem to be representative of specific practices (e.g., “Spend time with the team who has to use new tools or spaces”) rather than standardised methods. In this regard, it is important to mention that definitions of ‘method’, ‘tool’, and ‘design method/tool’ were not provided.

4.2.2.6 Which [...] are considered design methods/tools?

Although most respondents recognised the use of different methods across the policymaking cycle, some were unsure when asked to identify at which each stage they were used. However, respondents were still able to provide examples of these design methods/tools, namely:

- Ethnographic research;
- (Rapid) Prototyping;
- Experimentation;
- Co-Creation;
- Personas;
- User journeys
- Design Thinking;
- Gamification;
- Human-centred design.

One respondent, who claimed their organisation does not use different methods/tools at each stage, did mention the use of “design thinking [and] design driven innovation” throughout the cycle. On the other hand, one respondent said they “use so many [methods and tools] and at different points. It very much depends on the question we are trying to address”.

4.3 Summary of Chapter 4

This first exploration investigated the emergence of design approaches for policy innovation in Europe, mobilised through specialised governmental bodies known as ‘policy labs’. Its purpose was to map how policy labs in Europe introduce design approaches at distinct stages of the policymaking cycle. This has been achieved through an initial review of grey literature to identify a preliminary list of policy labs in Europe, its subsequent refinement, and the distribution of two online questionnaires surveying their views on the meaning of public policy innovation and the practices they deploy to achieve it.

Described as units developing public policies in a design-oriented manner, policy labs are tasked to innovate to gain in policy effectiveness and efficiency. In general, definitions of policy labs describe them as safe havens for policymakers and frontline staff alike to propose and test new ideas, emphasising their exploratory approach to finding solutions to public problems, and conducting small-scale iterative experiments.

However, as public policymaking is a context-dependent activity, the way in which these novel organisations operate differs significantly. For this study, 30 organisations in Europe operating at various levels of government were surveyed. Based on the public policymaking process model, the study investigated which design methods are deployed by policy labs to innovate public policies.

The first exploration exposed a gap in the awareness of the nature of the methods utilised by the policy labs. This is evident in responses that identify ‘sociology’ or ‘psychology’ as design methods. Perhaps an important point is that the survey did take account of the ‘design literacy’ of the respondents. Moreover, the notions of ‘user-centredness’, ‘co-creation’, and ‘exploration’ —typically through prototyping— appear as key aspects of the innovative approach associated with a ‘designerly’ manner. This may suggest that the use of design methods is of less importance than the adoption of attitudes associated with the design mindsets. These findings are discussed in detail in section 7.1.

Chapter ⑤

Study 2:

Introducing a design mindset in a policy context

This chapter explores the introduction of design approaches within the Policy Exploration team (PEx) at the UK Department for Work & Pensions (DWP) through an ethnographic study involving participant observation and unstructured interviews.

The study aimed at describing the phenomenon of introducing design into the policymaking process beyond the utilisation of design tools and methods. This refers to the mindsets, soft skills, and other specific competences which constitute the design approach. To achieve this, the study centred on accompanying a UK government organisation as they explore novel approaches to public policymaking. Furthermore, it aimed at developing an understanding of the organisational arrangements required to successfully integrate design within policymaking activities.

As described in detail in Section 3.3.2, this study relied on participant observation as its main data collection strategy. Since the DWP's PEx heavily depends on what they describe as 'design thinking workshops' for their policymaking activities, these activities were used for conducting observations to gain an understanding of the ways in which a design approach is instilled in public policymaking.

This study is significant because there is limited academic research building on the insights of a government organisation deploying design approaches for policymaking. The following premises frame this study:

1. A design approach consists of more elements than the utilisation of design methods/tools;
2. The introduction of design approaches into the government sphere assumes specific challenges since the professional cultures significantly differ from each other;
3. An ethnographic style of research will result in the gathering of valuable information which cannot be acquired by other means whilst producing significant insights.

Moreover, the study aimed at addressing the project's second research question by describing how design (thinking) is being instilled in public policymaking.

The following sections present the findings of a 21-month long process through which a series of design activities were carried out by the DWP's PEx to inform policy and design

competences were introduced within the government department. Insights on how a design approach is introduced and applied to public policymaking are presented. Section 5.1 introduces in detail the PEx. Section 5.2 describes the open policy making training and the policy design workshops during which the participant observations were carried out. Section 5.3 presents the findings of the study divided according to the method of data analysis employed, which were framework analysis and thematic analysis, respectively.

5.1 The DWP's Policy Exploration Team

The Department for Work and Pensions “is the UK’s biggest public service department, and administers the state pension and a range of working age, disability and ill health benefits to over 22 million claimants and customers” (GOV.UK, 2020).

The Policy Exploration team is a unit within the UK Department for Work and Pensions’ Strategy Directorate. Describing their position within the DWP’s organogram (see Table 13), one member explained they operate at the interface between policy officials and staff.

Political level	PM / N° 10
	Ministers / Secretary of State (Cabinet)
Technical level	Permanent Secretary
	Director General
	Director
	Department Director
	Officials
Policy Exploration Team	
	Staff

Table 13: Policy Exploration Team location within Government structure.

Consisting of circa ten members distributed across England (primarily Leeds, London, and Sheffield), the PEx is a small group introducing a design-led approach to provide practical early-stage support to policymakers (Bruckshaw, 2017). The former Head and founding member of the Policy Exploration Team, who spent most of his career in digital and frontline delivery roles, explains that the PEx “job is to tell policy officials to bring more of design thinking and design techniques and open policy making into their work” (OPM2.1)¹⁰.

¹⁰ The references OPM correspond to a session of the Open Policy Making training. See Table 8 in section 3.3.2.

The team's approach can be defined through six core values:

- Belief in collaborating with colleagues across the department and across government to deliver policy outcomes successfully;
- Belief that a problem cannot be solved until you understand it fully;
- Belief that design-led approaches can bring about innovative new ways to deliver outcomes to citizens. In practice, this means their methods are based on human-centred design tools and techniques;
- Belief in understanding the lives and needs of citizens by walking in their shoes;
- Belief that idea generation is a team sport and that creativity has no limits;
- Belief in a culture of experimentation, learning and proper testing to develop workable policies and services.

(Slide 6, PDW1)

Since its foundation, the PEx have played a leading part in bringing together 'policy design' teams from across the UK government to share ideas and experiences (GOV.UK, 2020).

However, it remains essentially a government inward-looking organisation. Evidence of this is the lack of publicly available information on the team. Regardless, the PEx include a logo (see Figure 16) that identifies the team in the material they produce and use in their activities.



Figure 16: Policy Exploration team logo.

Covering the full range of DWP policy areas, the PEx bring design techniques into the policy-making process through specific projects (GOV.UK, 2020). Central to their work is the running of workshops with diverse groups of stakeholders with the aim of avoiding silo working and increasing the overall commitment towards jointly defined problems and their respective solutions. It is not unusual for the PEx to facilitate "visioning" exercises during their workshops, with the intention of prompting participants to think about the possible outcomes of the policy at hand. Such exercises, could for example, entail the creation of a newspaper headline about a new service for the target group, or a briefing for the Ministry's Permanent Secretary. This study allowed for observing first-hand how these activities are deployed in a policy context.

Selecting the DWP's PEx to understand how design is introduced into public policymaking is based on their explicit use of design to develop innovative policy solutions. Unlike other organisations using design in the public sector, the PEx embraces design as its main approach to public policy making. In the words of one of its founding members, "[i]ncreasingly in government, design is public policy and public policy should be (great) design" (Bruckshaw, 2017).

5.2 Observing design for policy in action

The PEx aims at creating neutral spaces to collaborate across teams and engage with the public and external experts (GOV.UK, 2020). To provide the participants with these 'neutral spaces' separate from government settings, the PEx often run workshops hosted at external venues. In the last couple of years, these have included the Open Data Institute (ODI Leeds),

‘Showroom and Workstation’ creative workspace (Sheffield), and ‘Friends House’ (London). These locations are not only chosen for being external venues to the government setting and providing the material requirements for running the workshops but also for their symbolic value as spaces where innovation takes place. For instance, in describing the venue to workshop participants, one PEx member said, “... in here, people are generally looking to use design thinking and data to solve social policy problems. It's usually a coalition of government departments, charities, local groups put together” (F1, OPM2.2).

Amongst these places was Loughborough University in London. The university’s location in Here East, a dedicated campus for innovators and start-ups in the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, offered the PEx a suitable atmosphere to immerse workshop participants in the innovation mind frame.

The observations of these ‘design workshops’ —as referred to by the PEx— constitute the bulk of the data gathered for this study. Formal and informal conversations with members of the PEx contributed to providing complementary information. Likewise, the dataset is built with data from two sets of workshops: Open Policy Making training workshops and Policy design workshops. The first set of workshops belongs to a training programme on Open Policy Making devised and delivered by the PEx to the DWP. The second set corresponds to different projects where the PEx engaged with diverse stakeholders to contribute to the policy development process.

Both these sets of workshops were primarily facilitated by members of the PEx. On specific occasions, however, workshops were co-facilitated with other experts, such as members of the Behavioural Insight Team (see Section 5.2.2). As described in section 3.6, to preserve the facilitator’s identities, all names have been codified. In the following, they will be referred as ‘Fn’ ($n= 1... 10$).

5.2.1 The Open Policy Making Training

In describing how they operate, the PEx claims to “use open policy making tools that put people at the centre of policy making – specifically people that are affected by policy decisions and people that are responsible for delivering policy outcomes on the front line” (GOV.UK, 2020). Moreover, the team emphasises that it is not a practice to be mastered but rather a mindset that implies continuous growth and a forward-looking attitude (GOV.UK, 2020).

However, the PEx also claims that amongst its tasks is to make it easier for policy makers to practise Open Policy Making, and that they achieve this principally via practical facilitation and coaching, as well as through ad-hoc learning and development events¹¹.

The training, developed by two PEx members, comprised a series of workshops organised over two levels with the aim of providing policymakers at DWP with the skills to match the civil service professional expectations regarding open policy making. The first level, consisting of two workshops, aimed at providing a basic understanding of open policy making and targeted 100 policymakers from across the Department. In their own words: “This level is equivalent to

¹¹ Extracted from Policy Exploration document ‘Proposal for PPSG to consider: A new Open Policy Making training programme for policy makers’.

the learning that underpins policy apprenticeships and Fast Stream learning¹². It is knowledge based and suitable for anyone working in a policy role”¹³.

Level two, on the other hand, was “practice based and designed for current or aspiring practitioners (people who lead a policy area and often a policy team too)”¹⁴, and thus was originally aimed at 20 people.

Besides the two PEx members who developed the training (F1 and F2), another three members helped in facilitating the sessions (F3, F4, and F5). Four of them carry the job title ‘Senior Policy Designer’ and one is a ‘Policy Designer’.

The training took place in Sheffield, Leeds, and London, with the majority of the workshops in London (three out of four) delivered at Loughborough University’s London campus.

Level 1 - Understanding Open Policy Making:

- **What it takes to be an Open Policy Maker (OPM1.1):** August 21, 2019 - Loughborough University in London. Facilitators: F1, F2 & F3. Participants: 26.
- **Practical Open Policy Making tools and techniques (OPM1.2):** September 4, 2019. Loughborough University in London. Facilitators: F1 & F2. Participants: 18.

Level 2 - Becoming an Open Policy Maker:

- **Engaging with people (OPM2.1):** September 12, 2019 - Loughborough University in London. Facilitators: F1 & F2. Participants: 21.
- **Finding the problem (OPM2.2):** September 26, 2019 - ODI, Leeds. Facilitators: F4, F1 & F2. Participants: 25.
- **Generating innovative ideas (OPM2.3):** October 10, 2019 - Showroom and Workstation, Sheffield. Facilitators: F1 & F2. Participants: 20.
- **Prototyping and iterating ideas / Prototyping for policy (OPM2.4):** October 24, 2019. Friends House, London. Facilitators: F5, F1 & F2. Participants: 20.
- **Advanced facilitation skills (OPM2.5):** November 7, 2019 - ODI, Leeds. ODI – Leeds. Facilitators F2 & F5. Participants: 16.

While requesting the space at Loughborough University in London to run the training, one PEx member stated:

“I’m getting in touch because F1 and I have been developing a training programme for policymakers to improve their skills, confidence and expertise in the use of design skills. In the policy world, these come under the umbrella of Open Policy Making” (F2).

This is a salient point since in defining open policy making, the UK government mentions ‘user-led design’ as one of its twelve constituent elements (see Figure 17).

To understand how open policy making links to design and how this is instilled into public policymaking the first part of the study (see Section 5.3.1) followed a deductive process. In it,

¹² The ‘Civil Service Fast Stream’ is the UK Civil Service’s leadership development programme (Civil Service, 2020).

¹³ Extracted from Policy Exploration document ‘Proposal for PPSG to consider: A new Open Policy Making training programme for policy makers’.

¹⁴ Extracted from Policy Exploration document ‘Proposal for PPSG to consider: A new Open Policy Making training programme for policy makers’.

the observational data from the Open Policy Making training was analysed according to a set of constructs with which the Design Thinking mindset is characterised in the literature (see Section 2.3.1). Likewise, to understand how a design approach is embedded in the policy practice, the data from the Open Policy Making training was inductively analysed together with that of the policy design workshops.

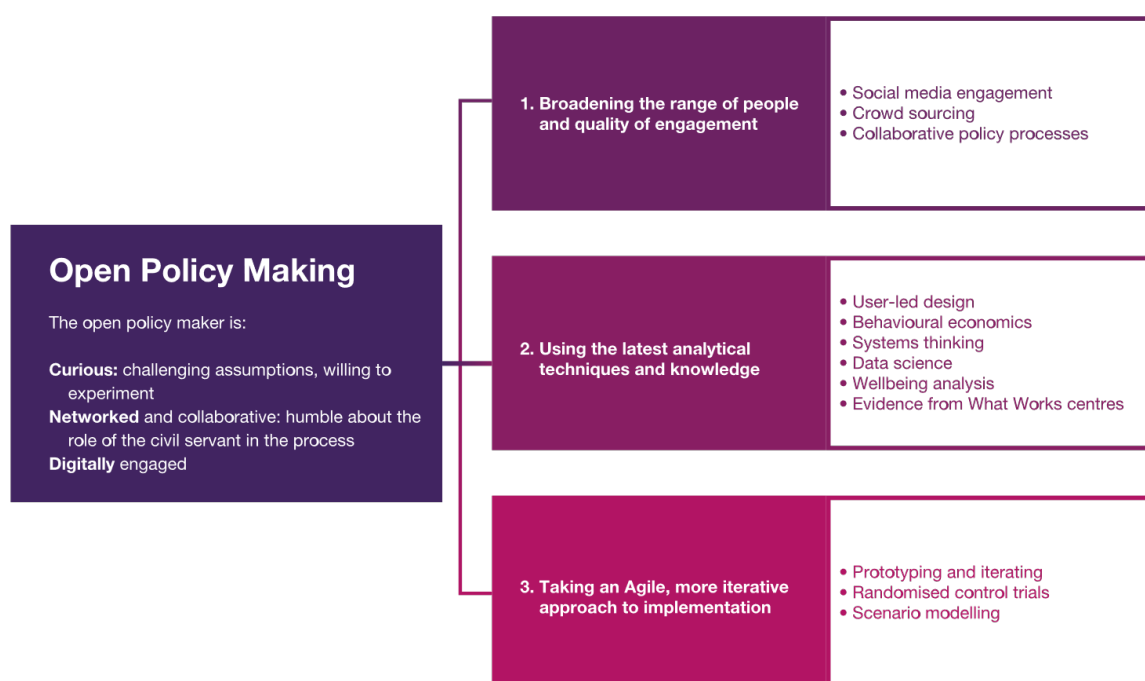


Figure 17: The open policy maker, adapted from GOV.UK (2015).

5.2.2 Policy Design Workshops

From March 2018 to September 2019 the DWP's PEx held a number of 'design workshops' to assist in their policy development process. As with the Open Policy Making training, some of these were hosted at Loughborough University London where participant observations were carried out. Additionally, the researcher participated in other activities such as team meetings and debrief sessions with senior policymakers after the design workshops.

The output of a policy design workshop was frequently the input for a follow-up workshop. In this iterative process the workshop facilitators shared the outputs with the participants to refine and confirm the insights gathered were correctly understood and processed. Typically, at the end of each policy design workshop, the facilitators would reassure participants about the zeal with which their inputs would be treated:

We are not losing anything of what has been generated today. We're keeping all the material plus the pictures we took from what you've created. The idea is to synthesise all of your ideas for the next workshop.

(F6, PDW₁)

Likewise, these outputs were often referred to as 'considerations in design' for policy interventions or public services. Moreover, when asked about the strategy for their workshops, one facilitator explained they "don't have an overarching plan, but rather a set of goals. We

develop every stage of the workshops as we go, feeding back on what we learnt. After each workshop we might need to debrief all the insights gathered, reflect on them, and come up with a plan and a set of tools for the next workshop” (F6, PDW1).

The PEx describes their approach to public policy innovation (see Figure 18) in terms of the Double Diamond model (Design Council, 2015).

THE APPROACH

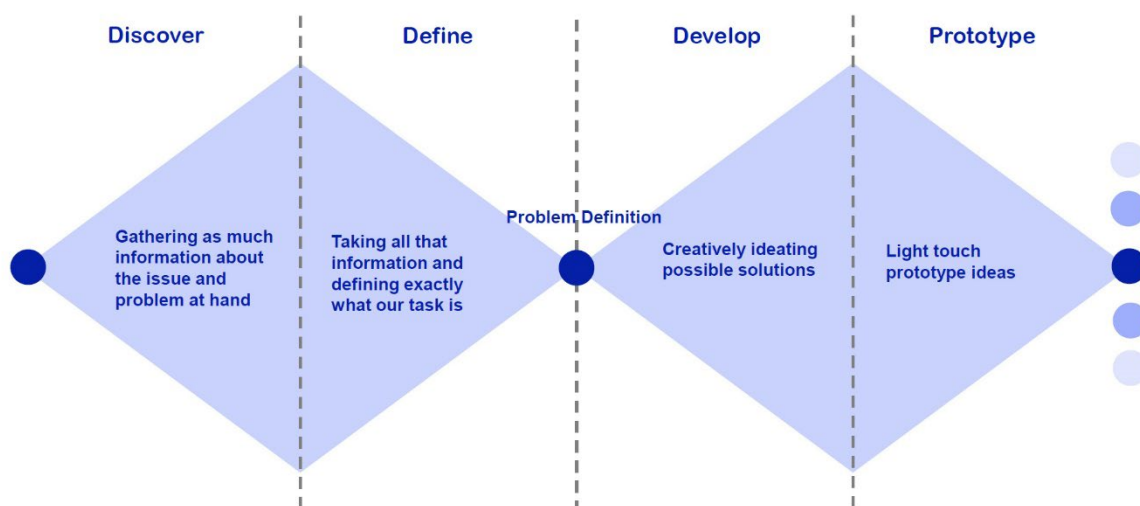


Figure 18: PEx approach to design for policy based on the Double Diamond model (Slide 9, PDW6).

In practice, this meant workshops were structured around different activities that the facilitators referred to as ‘exercises’. The following list corresponds to the agenda for PDW1, the first workshop held at Loughborough University in London which aimed at exploring a pressing policy issue faced by the DWP¹⁵. The Department had publicly committed to designing a large-scale trial to see what engagement methods and interventions may work best for the specific citizen’s group affected by it:

1. Introductions and set the scene – explanation of policy exploration and activities for the day.
2. Policy challenge – context and explanation of why the work is important.
3. EXERCISE 1 - Hopes and fears – what expectations do you have for this initiative and what are the undesirable outcomes you don’t want to happen?
4. EXERCISE 2 - Assumptions and user needs – what do you know about the target group? Who are they? What does success look like for the policy beneficiaries?
5. EXERCISE 3 - Visioning – what are the key features you would like to see incorporated in the trial?
6. Retrospective and next steps – what did you like about the workshop, what didn’t you like and what happens next?

¹⁵ The researcher has committed to maintain confidentiality on the policy content due to its sensitive nature. The appropriate consent form had been signed by all parties.

(Slide 4, PDW₁)

Similarly, the facilitators would begin each workshop by sharing with the participants the objectives for the day:

- **Problems and challenges** – through the eyes of a person in the [...] highlighting what the issues are with current policy and services.
- **Better insights** – informed assumptions about the people in [...] for whom we are designing the trial – emotions/feelings, background, needs and goals, and behaviours?
- **Think about the future** – what does ‘good’ look like for this [...] group?
- **Learn** – hopefully you will learn something new today that you didn’t know before the workshop.
- **Have fun** – get involved, work together, be creative and enjoy yourself.

(Slide 5, PDW₁)

Besides, the PEx informed the participants about the following steps in the policymaking process, regardless of their involvement in future activities (see Figure 19).

POLICY EXPLORATION PLAN.

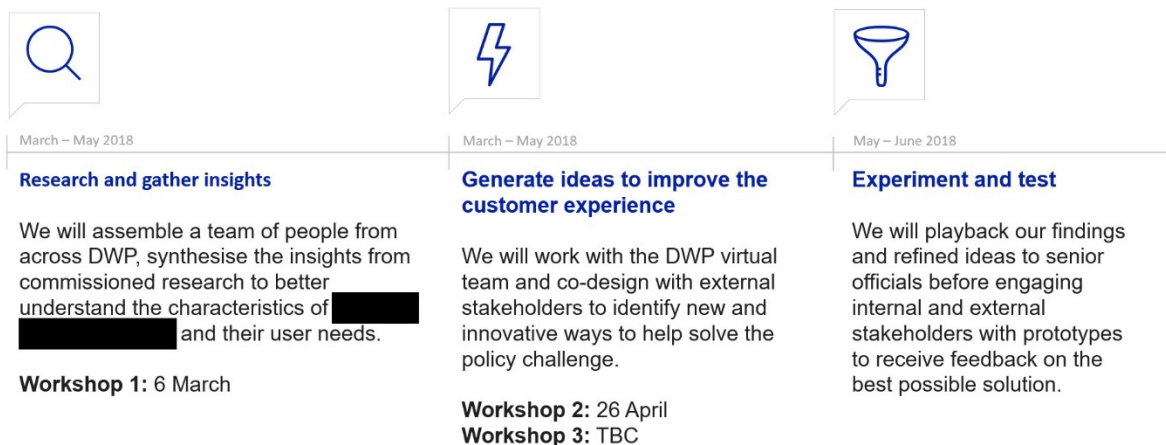


Figure 19: Slide 7 from Policy Design Workshop 1.

Successive workshops on a policy challenge would look at:

- Problems and challenges – deeper understanding of the policy challenge and problem based on evidence and user insights.
- Understanding user needs – what do we know about the target group based on commissioned research and existing evidence? What does this tell us about their needs?
- Creating ideas – list of good, well thought out ideas that will meet end-user needs and address the issues they face.
- Learn – workshop’s takeaways.

(Slide 5, PDW₂)

Unlike the Open Policy Making training, the Policy Design Workshops took place within a considerably longer timespan. Likewise, these workshops correspond to different projects in which the PEx was involved:

- **PDW₁ - 6th March 2018:** First ‘exploration’ workshop at Loughborough University in London. Room LDN 1.03. Time: 11 to 15hs. Facilitators F6 & F7. Participants: 24.
- **PDW₂ - 19th April 2018:** Second workshop at Loughborough University in London. Room LDN 1.03. Time: 11 to 15hs. Facilitators F6 & F7. Participants: 23.
- **PDW₃ - 22nd November 2018:** Third workshop at Loughborough University in London. Room LDN 1.02. Time: 11 to 15hs. Facilitators F6 & F7. Participants: 26.
- **PDW₄ - 4th April 2019:** Fourth workshop at Loughborough University in London. Room LDN 1.02. Time: 10 to 17hs. Facilitators F2 & F5. Participants: 18.
- **PDW₅ - 11th April 2019:** Debrief and analysis of the outputs of workshop PDW₄ with senior policymakers. Caxton House, London. Time: 12.30 to 14.30hs. Facilitators F2 & F5. Participants: 6.
- **PDS_{1.1} - 24th September 2019:** DWP and Behavioural Insights Team Design Sprint – Day 1. Loughborough University in London. Room LDN 2.05. Time: 10 to 16hs.
- **PDS_{1.2} - 25th September 2019:** DWP and Behavioural Insights Team Design Sprint – Day 2. Loughborough University in London. Room LDN 2.05. Time: 10 to 16hs.

5.3 Study 2 findings

This section presents the findings of the exploration with the DWP’s PEx. These are organised in two main parts. The first part shows the results of analysing the Open Policy Making training for evidence of the Design Thinking mindset developed according to the Framework Analysis methodology described in section 3.4.1. The first part of the analysis aimed at eliciting from the observations conducted with the DWP’s PEx how design thinking is being introduced in their policy activities. In looking for a framework to aid in the data analysing, Dosi, Rosati, & Vignoli’s (2018) work on metrics to measuring a design thinking mindset proved useful. As presented in section 2.3.1, the authors distilled from the literature a set of 19 constructs that conform to the Design Thinking ‘Mindset’. The framework analysis consisted of identifying elements of the PEx’s discourses and materials utilised while training colleagues at DWP that conform with the design thinking mindset’s constructs.

The second part uses an inductive thematic analysis approach (see section 3.4.2) which collates the data from the Open Policy Making training and the policy design workshops (see Figure 20). Unlike the first part, this inductive process began without preconceived categories and allowed for the development of themes and sub-themes regarding the introduction of design in public policymaking.

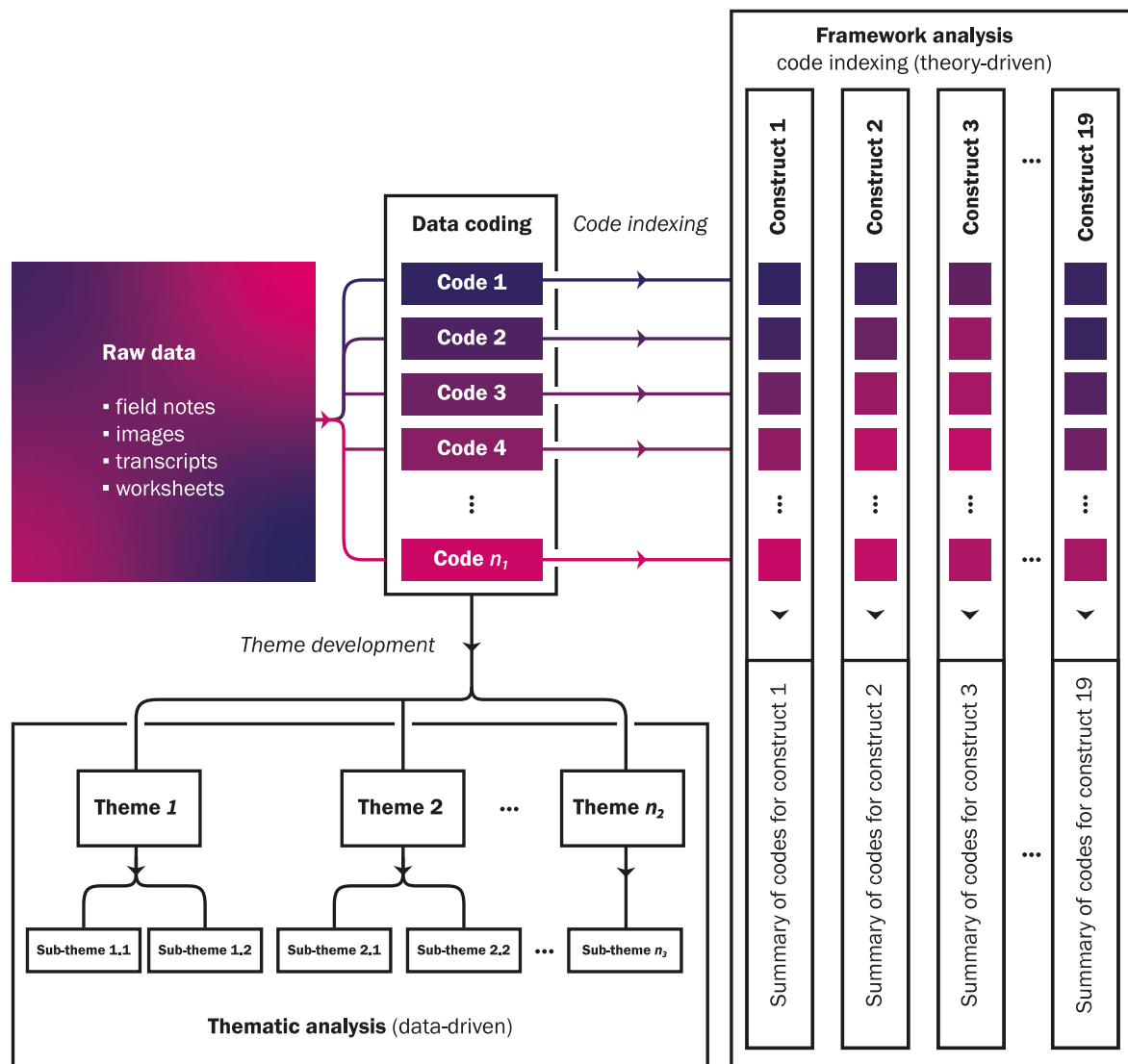


Figure 20: Analytical approach in Study 2.

5.3.1 Framework Analysis results: Open Policy Making training

This section presents the high-level findings from analysing the data gathered during the observations with the DWP's PEx, utilising Dosi et al.'s (2018) 19 constructs of the Design Thinking 'Mindset' to build a thematic framework.

The analysis of the Open Policy Making training offered abundant evidence of direct and indirect references to the development of a design thinking mindset. Table 14 describes the data regarding the facilitators' code contribution per workshop. Codes were indexed from material used during the workshops, such as slides, pictures, and worksheets, as well as the facilitators' interventions. Although ample overlap existed between the two as facilitators would, for instance, read out loud slides shown to the participants, the overall code contribution is split evenly. From a total of 1,337 codes indexed, 674 codes (50.4%) correspond to facilitators' contributions, whereas 663 codes (49.6%) were extracted from support material.

Fcltr.	WS	OPM1.1	OPM1.2	OPM2.1	OPM2.2	OPM2.3	OPM2.4	OPM2.5	Agg.	%	Avg.
F1	6	35	79	37	17	6	7	-	181	26.85	25.9
F2	7	44	54	57	5	24	0	75	259	38.43	37.0
F3	1	11	-	-	-	-	-	-	11	1.48	1.6
F4	1	-	-	-	48	-	-	-	48	7.12	6.9
F5	2	-	-	-	-	-	168	8	176	26.11	25.1
Codes		90	133	94	70	30	175	83	674		

Table 14: OPM training facilitator's codes contribution.

From Table 14 it can be observed that F2, who participated in all seven OPM workshops contributed the most codes to the analysis. However, F5, the third major code contributor, offered the largest number of codes in a single workshop (OPM2.4). F5's substantial contribution is based on their participation as the main facilitator for OPM2.4, a workshop fully dedicated to 'prototyping and iterating ideas' and 'prototyping for policy', as its name indicated. Moreover, this workshop offered the most facilitator-contributed codes with 175 (25.96%) of 674 codes. Likewise, with 313 codes (23.4% of the total) OPM2.4 was the workshop where most codes were indexed when also considering those indexed from the supporting material (see Table 10). This is relevant since prototyping —associated to an 'experimental' approach to policymaking— already appeared as a key attribute to a designerly mindset identified through the mapping exercise (see Chapter 4).

The second and third places for code contribution are OPM1.2 and OPM1.1, respectively. These two belong to the first level of the training ("Understanding Open Policy Making") and, as their titles indicate, focussed respectively on 'Practical Open Policy Making tools and techniques' and 'What it takes to be an Open Policy Maker'.

Table 15 presents the occurrence and distribution of codes indexed for each of the Design Thinking mindset's constructs across all seven Open Policy Making training workshops.

Although evidence for all DT mindset constructs was found, the code distribution amongst them varies significantly. It can be observed that the first five constructs (see Table 16), amounting to 616 codes, represents 46.07% of all codes, whilst the first three constructs (430 codes) represent 32.16% of total codes. This shows the constructs that appeared the most throughout the training were human centredness, learning orientation, and openness to different perspectives.

The codes indexed showed variations on how the constructs are presented and highlight different features and aspects of their definition according to the emphasis of each specific workshop. The following sections offer a summarised account of how each of the Design Thinking mindset constructs were introduced during the Open Policy Making Training.

Construct	Open Policy Making Workshops							Codes	
	OPM 1	OPM1.2	OPM2.1	OPM2.2	OPM2.3	OPM2.4	OPM2.5	Agg.	Avg.
Human centeredness	28	32	33	39	3	22	8	165	23.57
Learning oriented	17	21	18	23	6	41	10	136	19.43
Open to different perspectives/diversity	18	15	40	7	3	22	24	129	18.43
Empathy / Empathic	24	26	23	13	0	0	16	102	14.57
Experimentation or learning from mistakes or from failure	17	12	2	1	5	43	4	84	12.00
Experiential intelligence / Bias towards action	7	14	4	4	0	41	8	78	11.14
Problem reframing	11	14	1	42	1	4	5	78	11.14
Abductive thinking	5	13	0	8	28	12	7	73	10.43
Multi- / inter- / cross-disciplinary collaboration	16	17	12	5	3	7	8	68	9.71
Critical questioning ("beginners mind", curiosity)	15	17	5	3	1	11	11	63	9.00
Team working	9	9	11	2	2	27	2	62	8.86
Mindfulness and awareness of process	0	12	1	9	12	21	0	55	7.86
Envisioning new things	4	8	1	7	6	18	2	46	6.57
Embracing risk	3	5	1	0	0	27	6	42	6.00
Holistic view/consider the problem as a whole	8	14	8	10	1	0	0	41	5.86
Tolerance for - Resilience of - Being comfortable with ambiguity – uncertainty	11	6	6	2	2	10	1	38	5.43
Creative confidence	2	7	0	0	17	2	6	34	4.86
Desire to make a difference	7	4	2	3	3	2	2	23	3.29
Optimism to have an impact	3	3	0	0	3	3	8	20	2.86
Total codes	205	249	168	178	96	313	128	1,337	

Table 15: Code distribution in OPM training workshops.

#	Construct	Code frequency	Overall contribution	Relative contribution
1	Human centeredness	165	12.34%	32.16%
2	Learning oriented	136	10.17%	
3	Open to different perspectives/diversity	129	9.65%	
4	Empathy / Empathic	102	7.63%	46.07%
5	Experimentation or learning from mistakes or from failure	84	6.28%	

Table 16: Top five constructs by codes indexed.

Human centeredness (165 codes)

The training started with facilitators claiming Open Policy Making is “all about people” (Slide 5, OPM1.1). To justify the need for Open Policy Making, they introduced a quote from the Director General of the Policy Group, Jonathan Mills, in which he claims that policymakers “need to be better connected and more informed, so that we properly understand the way customers behave [as well as finding] new and different ways of engaging with those who use our services” (Slide 9, OPM1.1). Similarly, one facilitator asserted in open policy making “the main outcome is that it brings us back to the person again. It helps us build a better understanding and more empathy, it's not just a cold problem like some sort of calculation, it's actually somebody... we're trying to help somebody to do something” (F1, OPM1.2).

Many sessions within the seven workshops aimed at making participants aware of ways in which they were not considering a human centred approach to their policy work and how to include it. For instance, during OPM2.2 the facilitators explicitly addressed the topic of “User Centred Design” and asked participants “What sources of evidence that you've talked about will help you understand the problem from the perspective of one of our service users? What if it is a brand-new problem?” (Slide 21, OPM2.2).

Moreover, facilitators stressed “it's important to identify policy options/solutions in collaboration with others who have different perspectives to our own, and in particular the people affected by our policies —be they users, customers, or citizens, or frontline staff who will have to operationalise and deliver” (comments on Slide 42, OPM1.1). In this way, facilitators emphasised the need to consider a larger set of stakeholders in the policymaking process that go beyond ‘the usual suspects’. Codes for this construct were abundant in all workshops with particularly high occurrences in the workshops ‘Practical Open Policy Making tools and techniques’ (OPM1.2), ‘Engaging with people’ (OPM2.1), and ‘Finding the problem’ (OPM2.2) (see Table 15).

Learning oriented (136 codes)

Codes associated to the learning orientation were plentiful across the training with only one workshop (OPM2.3) presenting less than ten. Learning was explicitly referred to as a mindset necessary for open policy making: “the mindset that we need to get for open policy making is that we are here to listen, to learn, and then to act” (F2, OPM2.5).

During OPM1.1 the ‘learning oriented’ construct was framed in terms of the need for gaining more knowledge to better understand problems: “To understand a problem requires us to gain new knowledge, but when we are sure we already know something, new information can't get in” (comments on Slide 24, OPM1.1). During this and other workshops, the emphasis was largely put on being open and receptive to new knowledge and ideas as a driving principle to open policy making: “First of all, make sure you are ready to learn new things. Being open to the possibilities that may arise from that new knowledge” (F1, OPM1.1).

In OPM1.2, learning was explicitly differentiated between that concerning the experiences of people affected by the policies and learning about the policy ideas and their potential effects. Regarding the former, facilitators explained that this is important because “when we're speaking with users, we focus on capturing information that we can't learn about through looking at raw data” (comments on Slide 26, OPM1.2); thus, implying the limitations of quantitative data to make in-depth sense of societal issues. In explaining the need for learning

about policy ideas and their effects facilitators discussed the need for policy prototypes. They stressed that a prototype fails when no learning outcome is reached, and not when the hypothesis by which it was conceived was wrong: “is it just concept validation you want, or to know about a nitty gritty aspect of it? e.g., whether the phrasing of a regulation makes sense” (Slide 54, OPM2.4). Additionally, one facilitator explained that their main reason for conducting primary research is the potentially unexplored nature of some policy issues, “what if it's a brand-new problem? What if nobody's done it before? How do you do desk research on something that isn't there?” (F4, OPM2.2).

On the one hand, facilitators looked at evidence-based policymaking which was reflected in questions to the participants around: “Which piece of data or research finding makes you think this idea will work? [or] “How will you fill your knowledge gaps?” (Slide 49, OPM2.3). On the other hand, they looked at ‘inspiration’ from other fields to learn how others deal with and tackle similar issues: “...when we're doing this inspiration phase it's not that we want to copy these ideas, it's about what can we learn [...] Those kinds of concepts can be imported or learned from for our own policy solution” (F2, OPM2.3).

Lastly, the need for establishing spaces for learning activities as part of the policy process was highlighted by facilitators claiming, “open policy making is about creating the right environment to learn from experts so you should design your engagement activity accordingly” (Card 1, OPM2.1).

Open to different perspectives/diversity (129 codes)

Once more, in direct reference to the required mindsets to successfully conduct open policy making, one facilitator assured policymakers of the “need to be open” (F2, OPM2.5).

The first code indexed for ‘Open to different perspectives/diversity’ quotes ‘A Brilliant Civil Service’ vision statement (see Figure 21): “In everything we do we will encourage openness, challenge, innovation and excellence” (Slide 8, OPM1.1). This quote repeats across the workshops (and constructs) because of the ambiguity of the concept and how facilitators utilise it to leverage different arguments throughout the training. Similarly, a quote from Sir Chris Wormald, Head of the Policy Profession, was shown in which he claims:

...the era of policymaking where tremendously clever people went into a dark room together, had a brilliant idea, and then announced it to a grateful nation [is over]. We're not that clever anymore, and the world has changed. The job of the policymaker has to be the person who sits at the centre and reaches out... So, the job of the civil servant is not to be the personal expert, but it is to know who are the personal experts, and to know what do they think and how do I bring them in.

(comments on Slide 10, OPM1.1)

These statements frame the understanding for being open to different perspectives in OPM1.1 and in much of the training observed.

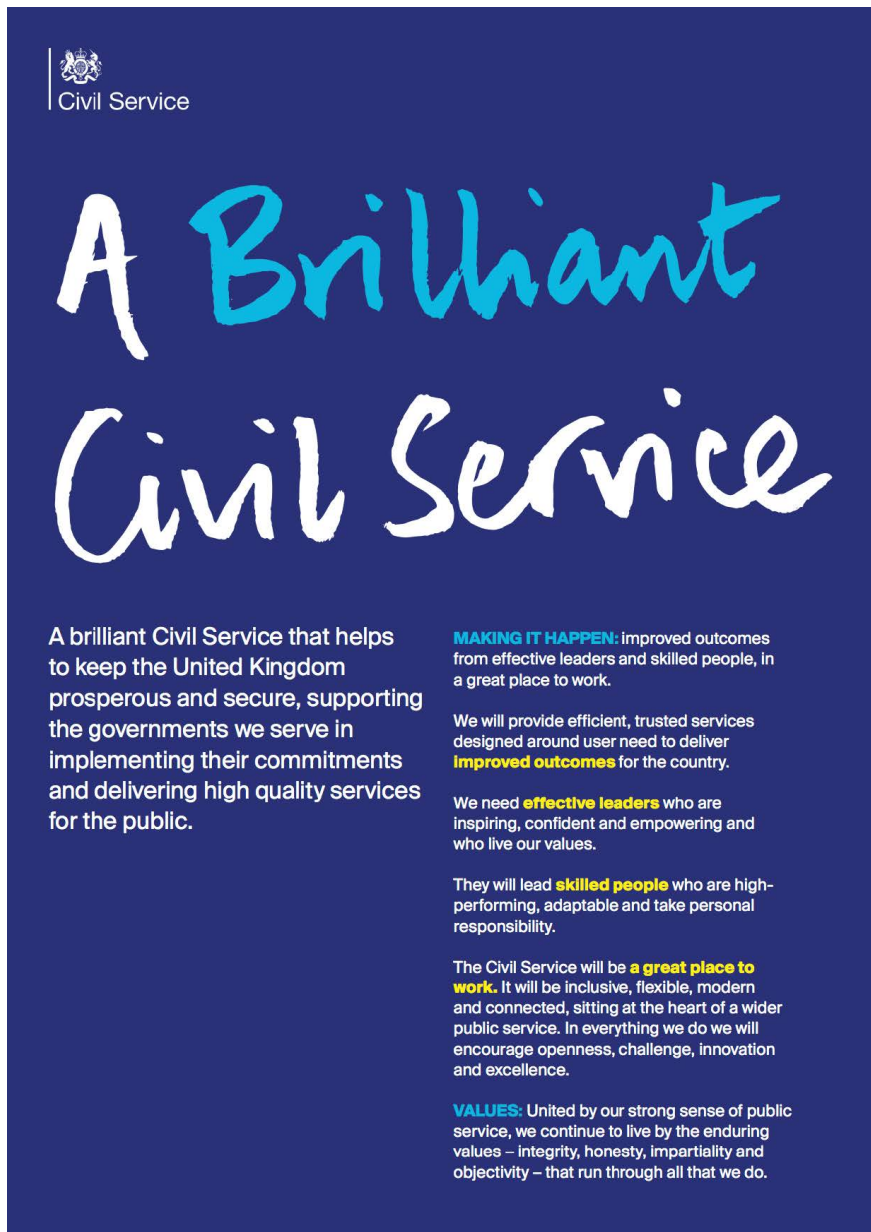


Figure 21: A Brilliant Civil Service (Slide 8, OPM1.1).

From there, facilitators repeatedly highlighted that engaging with people is “the foundation piece of all the open policy making” (F1, OPM2.1) and that “[w]hen gathering evidence you should use a variety of sources to help you build a picture” (comment on Slide 22, OPM2.2).

Facilitators also stressed “it’s important to identify policy options/solutions in collaboration with others who have different perspectives to our own, and in particular the people affected by our policies – be they users, customers, or citizens, or frontline staff who will have to operationalise and deliver” (comments on Slide 42, OPM1.1). In illustrating this point, facilitators described that, for instance, “the expert of homeless issues, of being homeless, is the homeless person, not necessarily the chairman of a refuge or something [and that policymakers] need to include all people who are experts and learn how to bring them into our conversation, our work rather than just trying to be experts ourselves and filling our knowledge gaps” (F1, OPM1.2). Likewise, they also highlighted “the link between policy and

delivery [stressing] the importance of us actually sharing some of these ideas with operations” [especially] at the very start so we can flag up where issues may happen” (F5, OPM2.4).

Furthermore, the need for dissenting voices was also raised, as facilitators of open policymakers they “want people to challenge those perspectives, we want people to get together from diverse backgrounds to make sure we are not actually operating or designing for ourselves” (F2, OPM1.1).

Empathy / Empathic (102 codes)

The concept of empathy appeared represented in three forms across the codes; related to facilitating stakeholder engagement, developing a sensitivity towards citizen’s problems, and the need for establishing human connection as part of the policy work.

Likewise, empathy was another concept explicitly discussed during the OPM training. For instance, during OPM1.1 the facilitators made direct mention of it and its importance for open policy making:

By developing empathy for - and a deep understanding of - the people impacted by our work, we are more likely to design policies that meet their needs and fit with how they behave in reality. (Design policy that aligns with peoples’ behaviours, rather than trying to change their behaviour). We may believe that we make evidence-based policy, but assumptions are rife.

(comments on Slide 22, OPM1.1).

To illustrate how assumptions operate in policymaking and having an empathic approach can help in overcoming it, the facilitators shared well-known vernacular stories where policy decisions were based on politicians’ unfounded beliefs. These powerful anecdotes reinforced the idea that policymakers often struggle with a political power somewhat detached from the mundane issues citizens face. It appeared policymakers often see themselves distanced from the lay citizen and the political power. In a code about carrying out stakeholder mapping, one facilitator attempted to explain the balance they need to achieve in understanding all parts:

We probably just need to be slightly careful about thinking ‘yes, we need to talk about/to the very powerful people’, but typically people affected by our policies aren’t very powerful. Collectively they could be, that’s why politicians care too. But individually, service users don’t have much power, but they’re still a voice we absolutely need to hear.

(F2, OPM1.1)

As part of the open policymaking approach, the facilitators underlined the importance of “being in service of others, [...] Caring about the context of other people, [...] Understanding their needs and desires, [and] Doing things to improve their lives” (Slide 15, OPM1.1).

Moreover, facilitators emphasised that when “working with people who support the public, particularly those who work to support vulnerable people or if you’re working directly with vulnerable people, we just need to be really sensitive about their needs and try to view everything that we are planning through their eyes” (F2, OPM2.1). Participants were asked to be careful about how they ask questions to vulnerable people as they “don’t want people leaving at the end of the day traumatised and distressed because you’re asking to bring up all of the horrible things that ever happened in their lives” (F2, OPM2.1).

Other workshops, such as OPM2.2, had a much more practical emphasis, by for instance, focussing on user research. Therefore, most codes indexed for the 'Empathy / Empathic' construct relate to the idea of being empathetic while engaging in user research activities to obtain the best results.

Experimentation or learning from mistakes or from failure (84 codes)

The rationale for experimentation was consistently explained through the need for testing policy options before deployment. Already in OPM1.1 nine out of seventeen codes addressed the idea of testing the feasibility of policy options early on: "testing early, failing fast is really, really valuable" (F2, OPM1.1).

Many of the codes for this construct relate to what the training facilitators described as the cultural and operational disconnect, in which policymakers base their policy proposals on assumptions about how people live or how a policy could be delivered. Avoiding these 'disconnections' the facilitators argued, is crucial as "these pose risks to the success of our policy work [...] It's a really practical need to test assumptions and validate them" (F1, OPM1.2). This process of 'trial and error' was described in three steps: "we have an idea, we develop a prototype of it, and we test it, before you go to the minister for a national rollout of an idea, we test it first and iterate it" (F1, OPM1.2). The key being the constant improvement based on feedback from those with which the prototypes are being tested.

Prototyping was defined during the training as "a way of project and team working which allows you to experiment, evaluate, learn, refine and adapt" (Slide 19, OPM2.4). Policy prototyping was intensively encouraged. Moreover, the facilitators explained that

Prototyping is an approach to developing, testing, and improving ideas at an early stage before large-scale resources are committed to implementation [...] by taking the time to prototype our ideas, we avoid costly mistakes such as becoming too complex too early and sticking with a weak idea for too long.

(F5, OPM2.4).

In urging the adoption of policy prototyping as a core activity, the facilitators stressed that "what makes it different from piloting and testing, is that you wanna see whether your idea was wrong" (F5, OPM2.4). This concept, although understood by the participants, encountered some resistance, as policymakers often see themselves as needing to provide certainties, to which a falsifiability approach to policymaking seemed counter-intuitive.

In fostering an experimental approach to policymaking, during OPM2.3 participants were asked to allow themselves to think of different ways in which a certain policy intent can be achieved, "rather than only ever thinking of the things you know and feel comfortable with" (F2, OPM2.3). To help in this exercise, the participants were introduced to Siodmok's (2017) 'Styles of Intervention framework' (see Figure 22). Additionally, facilitators told participants they "don't have to be radical, but thinking about one of these other levers or styles of intervention that you have identified a gap and it's not really typically legislation, how might you do it differently?" (F2, OPM2.3).



Styles of government intervention*

	Early stage intervention	Framing, piloting and market forming	Scaling, mainstreaming and market building	Acting in mature markets and policy ecosystems
Government as a... Steward	Champion Build a case for change and alliances for action.	Convening power Applying government's convening power to draw together expertise.	Connecting networks Fostering a nexus where government, experts and citizens can co-create change.	Co-producing Co-deliver by steering different actors from across the system to deliver outcomes.
Leader	Agenda setting Build awareness and confidence in new opportunities by providing thought leadership.	Strategy and skills planning Prepare for changing workforce demands and consequences of change.	Educating and informing Ensure regulation is sufficiently agile and permissive to enable innovation.	Collaborating Providing platforms for citizens to protect vested rights and interests.
Customer	Catalyst Review, identify and prioritise key opportunities with strategic value.	Standard setting Develop standards for data collection and presentation.	Intelligent customer Utilise public procurement to encourage investment and innovation.	Consumer, and supply-chain, protection Protection of consumer rights and upholding of standards.
Provider	Innovator Create test beds, sandboxes and trials in real world settings.	Reformer Establish legitimacy, harnessing political will for change.	Service provider Provide services directly or indirectly through funding and target setting.	Choice architect 'Nudging' behaviour so that the default is both attractive and easy.
Funder	Early adopter Explore, experiment and trial new opportunities with strategic value.	Fiscal incentives Direct finance to stimulate new thinking that can drive future opportunities.	Grants and subsidies Incentivise behaviour change through grants or other incentives.	Platform provision Scale up proven ideas through existing infrastructure and public services.
Regulator	Encourage voluntary codes Self-regulation, without legislating, allowing for greater flexibility.	Governance Ensure regulation supports the conditions for change and delivers the policy intent.	Building regulatory environment Ensure regulation enables the intended policy outcomes.	Compliance Support enforcement and harmonise regulatory compliance environment.
Legislator	Green papers Publish proposals for discussion with stakeholders and the public.	White papers & draft bills Publish proposals for consultation and pre-legislative scrutiny.	Primary and Secondary Law Support a bill through parliament and enact legislation.	Amend rules Statutory Instruments: rules, orders, created by delegated authorities (e.g. Secretary of State).

* Examples of different formal and informal powers and levers for government policy-makers

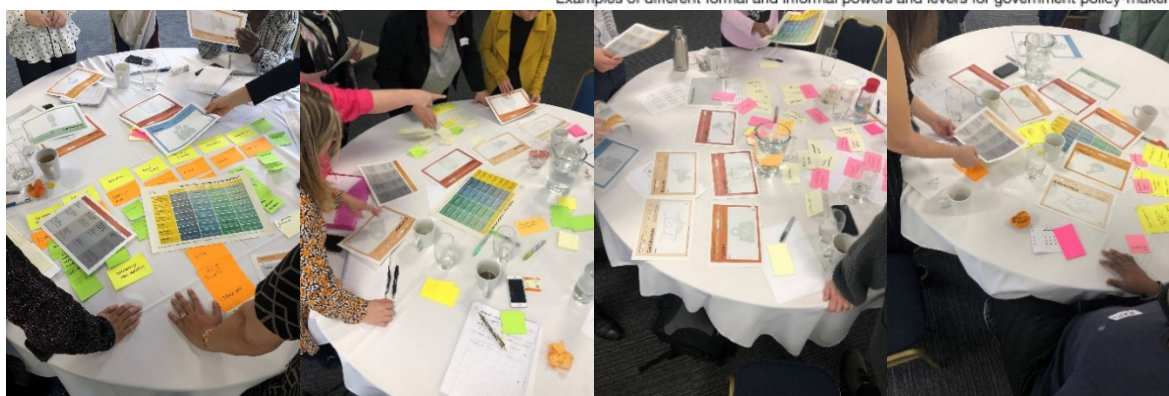


Figure 22: Groups using Policy Lab's Styles of Intervention matrix during OPM2.3.

Experiential intelligence / Bias toward action (78 codes)

As presented in 5.3.1.2, participants were told that in order to do open policy making they should embrace the mindset of acquiring new knowledge and act on it (F2, OPM2.5).

Moreover, throughout the training the facilitators emphasised the 'hands on' spirit of the workshops:

While we explain the practicalities of how to deploy each technique effectively, we also believe in the power of learning through doing. That's why today we'll be practising simplified versions of each tool in the context of a policy problem.

(comments on Slide 16, OPM1.2)

During the training, the facilitators often assumed the role of the open policy making representatives and spoke on behalf of them about its values. For instance, regarding this particular construct, facilitators would state:

In open policy making we believe actually it's really valuable to take these ideas and turn them into something and then take them to the people they're designed for and learn whether they actually work.

(F2, OPM1.2)

It can be observed this code also links to the 'Learning oriented' construct. This link consistently appeared across the codes for the 'Experiential intelligence / Bias toward action' construct. Time and again the facilitators asserted that the open policy maker's job "is about getting on the street, finding people and talking to them [and when] there's something that we haven't got our heads around, we don't know anything else about this, we've never looked into it. We need to go away and find out" (F4, OPM2.2). Furthermore, the facilitators explained that they carry out these activities "for different reasons and not just to keep in touch out of courtesy, we do it to really learn about their experiences, test things out, develop ideas together" (F1, OPM1.2).

A variation on this construct's representation was found in codes referring to prototyping although those also link to the learning mindset: "As I said, I see prototyping before piloting, and it focuses on that create and learn mindset" (F5, OPM2.4).

In workshops where prototyping had a relevant role, such as OPM1.2 and OPM2.4 (see Table 15), most codes indexed for the 'Experiential intelligence' construct mostly refer to the materialisation of ideas:

Sounds quite digital but actually it's just about bringing our policy ideas to life. Instead of telling someone what it is, it's showing them whether it is with a video or... making something tangible.

(F2, OPM1.1)

Similarly, with 41 codes (52% of the total) OPM2.4, offered the most codes for the 'Experiential intelligence' construct. A total of 23 codes directly referred to this idea, including synonyms such as 'representation', 'visual representation', 'visualisation', 'symbolisation', 'draft', 'sketch', 'drawing': "It's basically just trying to create a thing that potentially symbolises or represents your idea" (F5, OPM2.4).

Problem reframing (78 codes)

Throughout much of the training, codes for the 'Problem reframing' construct could be associated with two main perspectives:

- Deeply "understanding the problem" (Worksheet 3, OPM1.1); and
- Questioning their nature: "Why is it a problem?" (Slide 27, OPM1.1)

Regarding the latter, facilitators asked participants to question themselves about their policy areas "what is it that we are trying to achieve and why are we not satisfied with the current position?" (F1, OPM1.1). In the majority of those codes the facilitators explain that their job was to change their "perspective and take a lead in changing people's perspective about that

because it affects how we think about problems [and it] affects the way people think and talks about the problem and the way they look at people involved” (F1, OPM1.1).

The facilitators highlighted the importance of questioning current problem framings as a fundamental part of open policy making:

This is a key part of being an open policymaker, to be open-minded about the issues that you are seeing and not get too attached to an issue, to a particular diagnosis of a problem that you can't see any other potential issues.

(F1, OPM1.2)

During OPM1.2 a method for problem reframing called ‘How Might We’ that would later be used in other workshops was introduced. ‘How Might We’ was presented as a “tool that we use to help us reframe the problems and challenges we have identified” (comments on Slide 43, OPM1.2). Its potential was explained in dialectical terms by stating that “the kind of questions that we ask influence what kind of answers people give. By reframing the problem, we can see it from a positive perspective and it allows us to open our mind to new possibilities” (comments on Slide 44, OPM1.2). Facilitators added that when facing a policy problem “the question you ask is directly related to the solution that you'll generate. The language we use really affects how we think about our problem” (F1, OPM1.2). Moreover, they understood it as a tool to tackle complex problems in which an issue “rather than being a problem, it's something that we reframe in our minds to solve” (F2, OPM2.5).

OPM2.2 was called ‘Finding the problem’, and with 42 codes, was unsurprisingly the workshop that provided the largest amount for the ‘Problem reframing’ construct. At the beginning of this workshop participants were shown a quote attributed to Albert Einstein that reads: “If I had only 1 hour to save the world, I would spend 55 minutes defining the problem and only 5 minutes finding the solution” (Slide 1, OPM2.2). In doing this, the facilitators asserted this is where “that kind of human-centred way of looking at problems [appears] ... it's about making sure that we're looking at it through the right lens and not tipping too much, accepting what the problem is, accepting the framing of the problem as it has been given” (F1, OPM2.2). The facilitators also considered OPM2.2 to be “slightly more technical [than other workshops] but trying to help you [understand] how we approach framing problems and finding problems, and some techniques and tools you could use” (F1, OPM2.2).

However, the ‘finding the problem’ perspective could be understood as somehow contradictory with ‘problem reframing’. The reason for this is that ‘finding’ may leave room to understand problems as naturally occurring, instead of socio-culturally created as in the perspective adopted in some codes. In this vein, some other codes indexed asked participants to “Find the right problem” (Slide 8, OPM2.2). Although this still refers to problems as discoverable entities, some of the constructivist elements are brought back by denoting an evaluative action in categorising problems as right or wrong.

Abductive thinking (73 codes)

The ‘Abductive Thinking’ construct was often reflected in codes referring to innovation for policy development. As seen within the ‘Open to different perspectives/diversity’ construct, the facilitator used quotes from ‘A Brilliant Civil Service’ vision statement to frame the OPM training: “In everything we do we will encourage openness, challenge, innovation and excellence” (Slide 5, OPM2.2).

In addition, in some workshops the codes for this construct referred to 'generating innovative ideas'. Interestingly, in other workshops the facilitators explained that "idea generation just means coming up with ideas" (comments on Slide 51, OPM1.2), removing the concept of 'innovativeness' from them. Moreover, they clarified they "crossed out 'innovative' on the slide, because first of all, to explore what we mean by innovation, and what's innovative. You hear that all the time, people talking about innovative ideas. [...] We want to explore a bit about what we think innovation is and what innovative ideas are" (F1, OPM1.2). This was the first time where the concept of innovation was directly addressed (see Figure 23). Later in the training, the facilitators would return to the issue of disruptive innovation and assert that "great innovation is built on existing ideas, repurposed with vision" (Slide 38, OPM2.3).

By removing the word 'innovation', the facilitators attempted to ease the pressure on the policymakers to come up with totally novel and disruptive policy ideas. During OPM2.3, a workshop titled 'Generating innovative ideas', a session on idea development that specifically looked at creativity was held. The majority of codes indexed for this construct during OPM2.3 refer to the generation of novel ideas to solve policy problems. Similarly to OPM1.2, facilitators looked at demystifying the creative process.

Creation, facilitators explained, "is a result – a place thinking may lead us. So, before we can know how to create, we must know how to think" (comments on Slide 13, OPM2.3). To achieve this, participants were told that "observation, evaluation and iteration solve problems and lead us to creation" (comments on Slide 17, OPM2.3). Moreover, facilitators explained that "the act of creation usually starts with one of two questions: "Why doesn't it work? What should I change to make it work?" (Slide 18, OPM2.3).

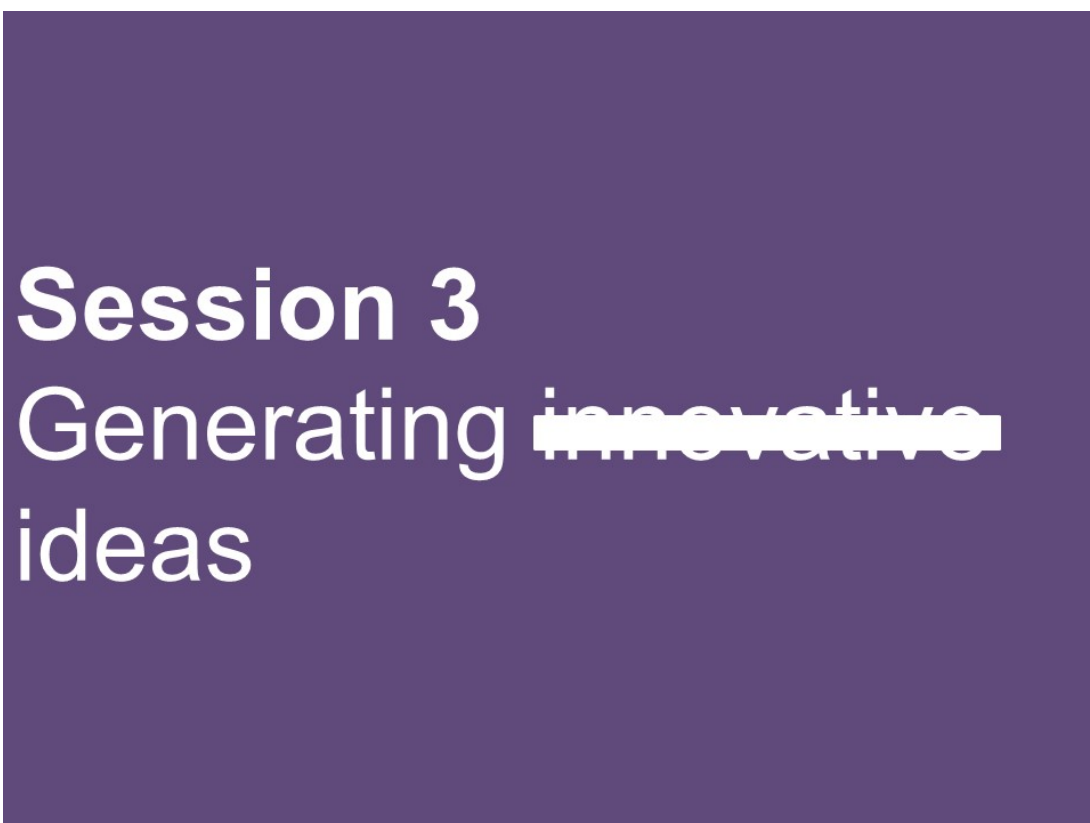


Figure 23: Slide 40, OPM1.2.

From a different perspective, some codes indexed for the ‘Abductive thinking’ construct invited participants to venture into prospective and systemic thinking, asking them to “learn whether the policy options you’re proposing have any unforeseen implications that you haven’t considered” (Scenario 2, OPM1.1).

Multi- / inter- / cross- disciplinary collaboration (68 codes)

The first mention of collaboration appeared in the Head of the Policy Profession’s quote seen in 5.3.1.3, where it is stated that “the job of the civil servant is not to be the personal expert, but it is to know who are the personal experts, and to know what do they think and how do I bring them in” (Slide 10, OPM1.1). The facilitators expanded this notion later in the training by asserting that “one of the key points of open policymaking is that things are better when we collaborate widely and for the right reasons” (F2, OPM1.2). The ‘right reasons’ were often presented in terms of the need for reaching out for help, expertise or advice from different stakeholders, including the citizens and service users. Early during OPM1.2, participants were asked about the ways in which they collaborate with others (see Figure 24) and reminded of the need for ample collaboration whilst practising open policy making.

How do you collaborate?

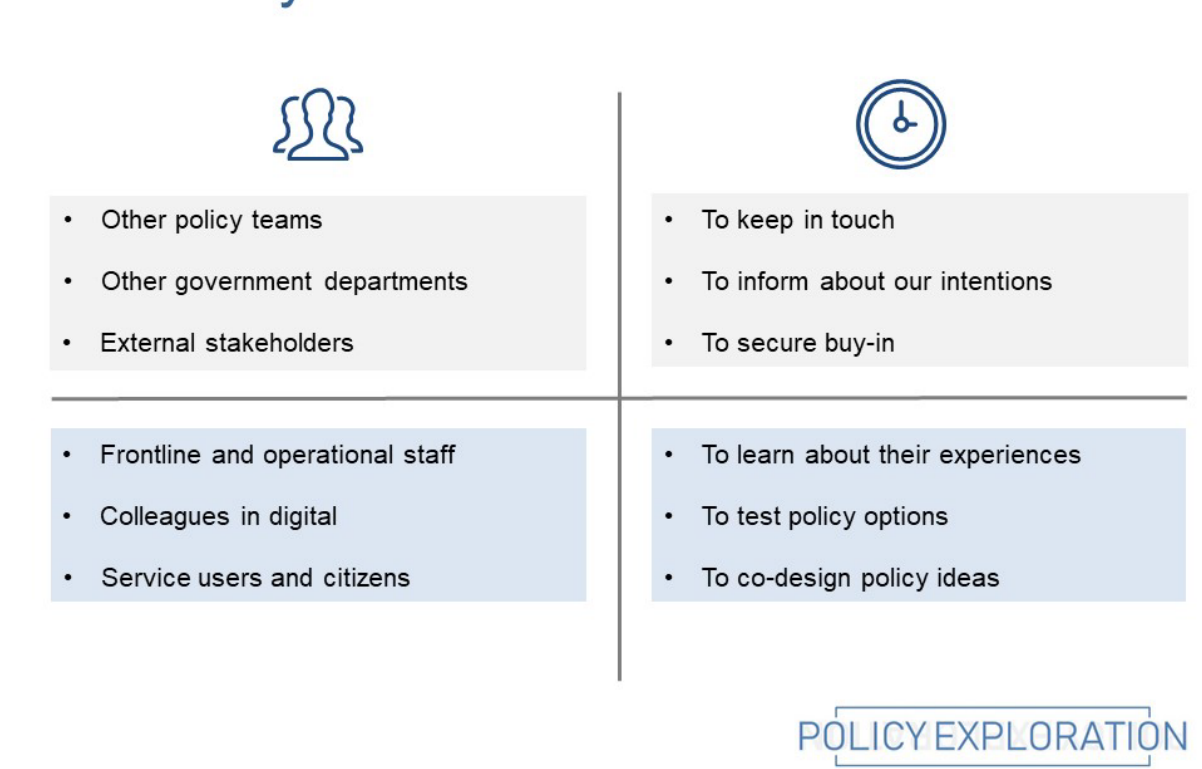


Figure 24: Slide 10, OPM1.2.

During the training, participants agreed that organisational boundaries rarely stop policy makers from reaching out to fellow policy professionals and analysts across Government for their input. However, facilitators emphasised the need for further engagement “to gain new knowledge, which then improves our ability to understand a topic or a situation from a different perspective that we originally started with” (F1, OPM2.1). It can be observed that this perspective on the construct feeds back on ‘problem reframing’.

To exemplify this need for further engagement, facilitators asked participants,

Is this deliverable? Or do we need to develop new capabilities, new products or new services to make it happen. Avoid the temptation to answer this on behalf of the delivery people – bring them in to the conversation!

(Slide 49, OPM2.3).

Additionally, the concept of collaboration was presented in terms of its advantages for achieving innovative policies. In one opportunity facilitators used the example of Thomas A. Edison to illustrate how multidisciplinary collaboration can contribute to innovation:

The thing that sets Edison apart from his contemporaries wasn't his skills as an inventor, wasn't even a single moment of inspiration. It was his ability to bring multidisciplinary teams together and use their combined skills to create new possibilities. So, Edison didn't work on this thing alone, he had his team, essentially people like mathematicians, craftsmen, machinists, not inventors or anything to do with electricity. Just people with different skills that could look at a problem and come with ideas to solve it in new and different ways.

(F1, OPM1.2)

With this example, facilitators once more aimed at demystifying innovation as grounded in individual genius or a spark of inspiration, but rather as collaborative multidisciplinary work: “When we talk about innovation that's what it is. It's more these kinds of things: hard work, bringing people in together, bringing new voices and new ideas into policy development conversations” (F1, OPM1.2).

Team working (63 codes)

Codes in the ‘Team working’ construct presented considerable overlap with those indexed for the ‘Multi - / inter- / cross disciplinary collaboration’. For instance, facilitators illustrated the work of open policy makers as a team activity which requires collaboration with experts in different fields: “Open policy making resembles that perfectly orchestrated heist. You assemble your team and put your talents, time and energy to best use, taking on an overwhelming challenge and using your wits and expertise to overcome every obstacle in your path” (Slide 19, OPM1.1). This caricatured image of the open policy making team aimed at inspiring participants, although it mostly reflected the structure of the Policy Exploration Team and not necessarily the working arrangements of the participants.

However, this view could be motivated by new organisational arrangements within the Department allowing the formation of ad-hoc teams to tackle specific challenges. In this regard, one facilitator claimed that DWP’s Director General for Policy Group “sees creating virtual teams to solve problems as innovation” (F1, OPM1.2). In exploring this, participants were asked how they can “get a look at across our entire group, our department, or across the government system, to bring people together to solve a problem?” (F1, OPM1.2).

The facilitators also stressed that teamwork is not necessarily naturally occurring in their context and open policy makers should explore ways to adopt this approach to policy development. Furthermore, they gave practical advice on how to foster creative thinking within teams:

...it is unrealistic to put a group of individuals in a room and expect equal, creative participation from them all. More often than not, part of the group will include passive individuals that are happy to let others take over, whilst other group members may naturally want to take the lead. By having people write down their ideas individually at the same time, you are giving everyone a chance to contribute and share their thinking. In a group brainstorming session only one person can share one idea at a time. This way, 100% of the group is actively engaged.

(comments on Slide 51, OPM1.2)

Critical Questioning (“beginners mind”, curiosity) (62 codes)

As shown in section 5.3.1.7, the notion of questioning what is given was stressed during the training. Facilitators put emphasis on critical questioning as a key feature of open policy making:

The Open Policy Maker learns to develop a beginner’s mind. Our most precious ability as open policy makers is to see things objectively and uncover deep insight. To do this well you need to develop a beginner’s mind. A beginner’s mind is a useful state of being to make sure you are a) ready to learn new things, and b) open to new possibilities that may arise from that new knowledge.

(Slide 23, OPM1.1)

The use of this this quote as early as OPM1.1, reveals the importance facilitators assigned to critical questioning in the practice of open policy making. Similarly, they explained that “certainty is often one of the biggest risks to a beginner’s mind and that also means it is one of the biggest risks to Open Policy making” (F1, OPM1.1). Although it was not explicitly named, the facilitators attempted to explain how, cognitively, certainty can be reflected by the confirmation bias: “When we are sure we already know something then nothing else can get into our heads; unless it’s something we already know about we have a tendency to ignore it” (F1, OPM1.1).

In developing this notion further, facilitators stated that the concept of ‘beginner’s mind’ “focuses on seeing things fresh, free from your biases, your past experiences and your expertise. It sounds counterintuitive but in policy we are regularly working with insights and ideas, and to engage with them fully we need to keep our minds open” (comments on Slide 12, OPM1.2).

Interestingly, the facilitators added a system thinking perspective to the ‘Critical Questioning’ construct by explaining that to comprehensively understand a policy problem, open policy makers should aim at unearthing root causes: “This is where you look for the causes of a problem, rather than the problem that immediately presents itself” (Slide 27, OPM2.2). Another two mentions in this regard look at dedicating time to understanding what the problem is, and utilising a technique called ‘five whys’ to expose root causes of a given problem.

Lastly, codes relating to critical thinking were also indexed in relation to prototyping, since participants were asked to allow the evidence to change their views on issues: “You want to go about prototyping with a mindset of open and available for challenge and being prepared to

actually change your idea as you go and try to build those prototypes collaboratively” (F5, OPM2.4).

Mindfulness and awareness of process (55 codes)

The ‘Mindfulness and awareness of process’ construct appeared reflected differently to those previously presented. Unlike those above, this construct was not presented to the participants as a mindset they needed to acquire to practice open policy making. Although at no point during the training was a process for open policy making presented, codes reflecting the facilitators’ awareness of the different stages they transit while practising it could be identified. However, the ‘Double Diamond’ (see Figure 25) was utilised as a model of reference: “Double Diamond – Indicates that we can go backwards and iterate as many times as possible” (Slide 77, OPM2.4).

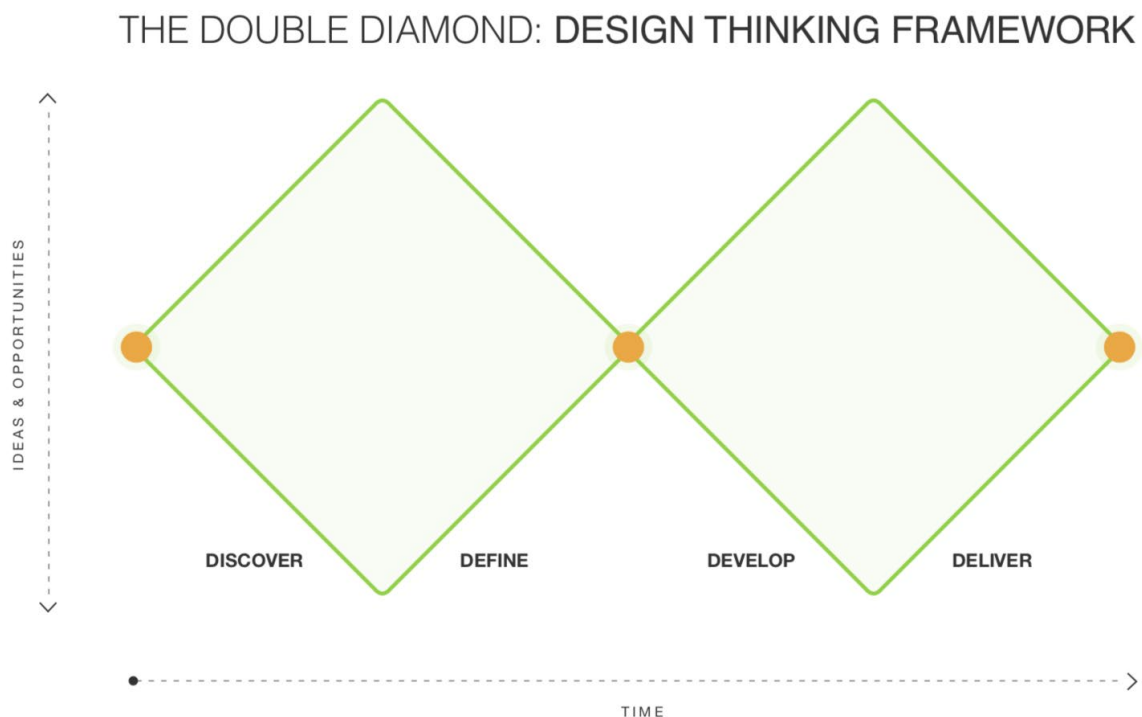


Figure 25: The Design Council's Double Diamond innovation framework (Slide 11, OPM2.2).

For instance, at the beginning of OPM2.2, one facilitator stated that “[i]n terms of the process, we find the problem, then generate ideas, then prototype those ideas. So, it feels more linear perhaps, the journey from now on” (F1, OPM2.2). In this case, as in others, there was no explicit indication as to which model they were referring.

Similarly, facilitators stressed how some stages in the ‘process’ are generative whereas others look at narrowing down the policy options (F4, OPM2.2). Moreover, they “[e]mphasise that no idea is wrong or out of scope or out of bounds at this stage of the idea generation process. [...] We’re trying to separate idea generation from evaluation” (F2, OPM1.2). Here again, although a link to the Double Diamond model could be traced, no explicit reference was made to any specific process.

OPM2.4, which focussed on policy prototyping, offered some interesting codes regarding this construct. Amongst these, the facilitators emphasised the need to recognise at which stage of the process policymakers are. Five codes directly addressed the need for planning the iterations, that is to say, allocating time and resources to iterate ideas and solutions: “we talked about how the iteration feeds in the process. [...] The first thing to say is that it has to be planned at the very start” (F5, OPM2.4). A particularly illuminating code referred to *design sprints*, a method used by the DWP’s PEx (see section 5.2.2):

You could do it fairly faster in a sprint process, but I would like to spend a good week or so really fleshing out these questions and getting the right share of talking to people, making sure we've covered all basics and got as much input as possible.

(F5, OPM2.4)

This last code is of interest as it shows that the facilitators not only were aware of the process they embark on when developing public policies but were able to distinguish between different alternatives and utilise them as they see fit.

Envisioning new things (46 codes)

As with other constructs, the first code indexed for this construct elevates it to a value of open policy making: “In open policy making we believe it's really valuable to take these ideas and turn them into something and then take them to the people they're designed for and learn whether they actually work” (F2, OPM1.2). This, the facilitators explained, “can be any type of visual representation of your idea – it should be something that effectively explains your idea and can draw out assumptions, barriers. You might draw your idea, storyboard it, write a press release, etc.” (comments on Slide 64, OPM1.2). From OPM1.2 onwards, the idea of making policy ideas tangible occupied an important role in the facilitators’ discourse, despite the relative low code count in comparison to other constructs.

Some of the reasons to embrace this approach are relevant to the usefulness of visualisations when used during engagement activities with stakeholders who are unfamiliar with policy work or a particular policy issue:

When you're trying to explain something to somebody using spreadsheets or whatever, that could be quite a difficult thing for some to engage with. If you got something that's quite visual, then it can help with that [...] So, quite a lot of things I've shown you today are very simple ways to showing things.

(F4, OPM2.2)

It was repeatedly argued these tangible representations help those less familiar stakeholders engage because “it really helps the conversation flow and gets people to visually see what you're talking about if they've never been involved or been near that idea or service” (F5, OPM2.4).

On more than one occasion, participants were invited to make visualisations of their ideas as a valid way of sharing them: “You're welcome to sketch the idea. If it's difficult to verbalise sometimes a drawing is easier than trying to describe something” (F2, OPM2.3).

Likewise, policy prototypes were also presented as a means to make policy intent tangible:

I think that's a big thing about prototyping, making things visual, making things tangible, it means we can work more collaboratively rather than into a Word document, which is always very hard to sit and go through.

(F5, OPM2.4)

Prototypes were also praised for their engagement capabilities, as facilitators claimed they “can help bring the idea to life which helps a citizen engage with it, question it and tell you more about what they think” (Slide 64, OPM2.4). There is, therefore, a knowledge gaining component in visually sharing the policy ideas: “By visually plotting out elements of how your idea works, you can learn a lot about it” (Slide 61, OPM2.4).

Lastly, the facilitators explained that this ‘envisioning’ can be achieved in different ways, such as creating “something that represents your policy e.g., a letter explaining it to a citizen, the website page that introduces it, a draft newspaper article about the policy” (Slide 64 OPM2.4), etc.

Embracing Risk (42 codes)

The ‘Embracing risk’ construct appeared reflected in two different ways:

- Fail fast spirit is not a mistake and requires testing the policy ideas: “Better to learn that now rather when you got the Minister behind it... It's not doing it wrong, it's part of the design process” (F1, OPM2).
- Coming up with new innovative policy ideas requires risk assumption: “To get innovative ideas we need to go beyond the usual suspects. To enable this, we need to give people plenty of time and space for thinking and not limit their thinking” (comments on Slide 52, OPM2).

It becomes apparent that some of the codes indexed for this construct could also be linked to the ‘Experimentation or learning from mistakes or from failure’ construct presented in section 5.3.1.5.

Furthermore, in encouraging participants to embrace risk the facilitators resorted to one key concept of the *Lean Start-up* methodology (Ries, 2011) to reassure participants about seemingly unsuccessful attempts: “The key thing is to pivot. That doesn't mean that you're wrong, that doesn't mean that you failed, that all of the work that you've done up to that point is a failure. It means that you've learned and that you've done something good” (F2, OPM2.5). In this way policymakers’ risk aversion is nuanced with the promise of a learning reward.

Conversely, participants were reassured that by engaging with diverse stakeholders the risk of policy failure could be reduced. However, facilitators were forthright in asserting policymakers have a responsibility in acting on stakeholders’ insights despite any perceived risk: “There’s no point getting all the people together (and ultimately wasting their time) if you are not prepared to act on the things that you learn” (comments on Slide 45, OPM2.5).

Holistic view / consider the problem as a whole (41 codes)

Codes indexed for this construct reflected an understanding of the need for adopting a broader systemic perspective, firstly arguing that “we need to see how [the solution] fits into other systems” (F2, OPM1.1), to then arguing that policymakers should “want to learn whether

the policy options you're proposing have any unforeseen implications that you haven't considered" (Scenario 2, OPM1.1).

Moreover, facilitators asked participants to think of individuals in their social contexts when defining policy issues and developing solutions: "So often we design policies for individuals rather than individuals within family units. And how are our policies impacting behaviour as daughters, sisters, wives, mothers, friends... and not just to force us to act in an individualistic way" (F2, OPM3).

Tolerance for / Resilience of / Being comfortable with Ambiguity / Uncertainty (38 codes)

The majority of the codes indexed for this construct revolved around the idea of certainty as a barrier to open policy making and can be summarised by one of them: "Certainty is often one of the biggest risks to beginner's mind and that also means it's one of the biggest risks to open policy making" (F1, OPM1).

Some other codes referred to the need for venturing into the unknown to develop innovative solutions: "Between the problem and the solution is uncertainty. Takes us out of our comfort zone. Resilience and patience" (Comments on Slide 17, OPM2.3). In that way, facilitators tried to instil a sense of acceptance with uncertainty as a necessary step towards novel policy ideas.

Similarly, in attempting to foster policymakers' tolerance with ambiguity, the facilitators expressed that with many of the tools and methods of open policy making "[t]he point to make is that this is really to learn, not necessarily to lead to the answer straight away or even the second time" (F1, OPM1.1). However, facilitators also warned about the incapability of removing uncertainty altogether: "By doing that [asking users] we reduce the risk of failure: you can never completely eliminate it" (F1, OPM1.1).

Lastly, the only code for this construct indexed in OPM2.5 is interesting as it refers to a concept from the Lean Start-up methodology (Ries, 2011), the pivot: "The most important thing in the aftermath of workshops, once you have analysed your outputs and uncovered insights is being open to PIVOTING" (Comment on Slide 44, OPM2.5). What makes it interesting is that, in principle, 'pivoting' is not a radically different concept to that of iteration (Müller & Thoring, 2012), which the facilitators referred to throughout the training, but that "while lean startup is mainly targeting at startups, design thinking is seeking for innovations in general" (Müller & Thoring, 2012, p. 157). Thus, the use of this concept seems to be less accurate or at least more niche –perhaps even out of place– in comparison with that of 'iteration'.

Creative confidence (34 codes)

The issue of creativity was treated ambiguously during the OPM training. On the one hand, facilitators disregarded the need for policymakers to be 'creative'. However, they framed it as not being an impediment to the development of policy ideas: "It doesn't require to be especially creative. So, if you're not like a creative person it doesn't stop you to come up with ideas" (F1, OPM1.2). This, moreover, was aimed at avoiding discouraging participants who do not see themselves as particularly creative individuals. To overcome this, the facilitators push the idea that certain tools and methods have the potential to help anyone develop large numbers of ideas: "So, we're gonna show you a different way of doing idea generation. We're

talking about rapid idea generation. This is genuine, in this room we gonna end up with 120 ideas in the next 10 minutes. A lot of ideas to solve the problems you've got in front of you" (F1, OPM1.2).

OPM2.3, titled 'Generating innovative ideas', was of special interest for this construct and provided half of its codes (see Table 10). During this workshop facilitators focused, firstly, on looking for agreement amongst the participants on problem-solving as a skill needed for policymaking; secondly, on pointing out that creativity, on the other hand, does not typically appear as a key policymaking skill. In this way, the facilitators paved the way for introduction of the topic as participants agreed on the need to be creative to successfully achieve their full problem-solving potential. Creativity, the facilitators later explained, was key in developing solutions outside the pre-existing ones: "Look at it this way, creation is simply finding a way to achieve a goal that cannot be attained by an obvious action" (Comments on Slide 13, OPM2.3).

During OPM2.3, the facilitators insisted on fostering creative confidence amongst the participants, this time through what they labelled as the "creativity myth":

The creativity myth implies that few people can be creative. That any successful creator will experience dramatic flashes of insight, and that creating is more like magic than work. A rare few have what it takes and for them it comes easy. Anybody else's creative efforts are doomed. Of course, we know that everyone can create, and we can show that fairly conclusively.

(Comments on Slide 10, OPM2.3)

This approach to nurturing creative confidence continued in the following workshops, although conflicting messages were also given up to the end. Examples of these are telling participants "there is no such thing as creative thinking, just like there is no such thing as creative walking" (comments on Slide 13, OPM2.3) in one workshop, or implementing certain group exercises "just to get you into the creative mindset" (F5, OPM2.4) in the next one.

During the last workshops, the facilitators explicitly addressed the matter by telling participants "[y]ou might not feel that you have all the confidence in the world, but you have the abilities, and then you have the resources from us, and absolutely you have the right mindsets" (F2, OPM2.5).

Desire to make a difference (23 codes)

The "Desire to make a difference", averaging fewer than four codes per workshop, was one of the constructs for which the least evidence was found.

In OPM1.1, the workshop with the most codes for this construct, the two main messages alluded to persuasion and the ability to convince others:

- *You can tell the minister, or whoever, somebody who needs convincing, all you like, but if you show them a piece of video-ethnography, a video of someone talking about their experiences you can't argue with the video! They can argue with you as a civil servant, but you can't argue with those... and then you build up a more complete picture.* (F2, OPM1).
- *So, there are ways to convince people, but it can be incredibly challenging. But! The ways we can challenge is by collaborating with others. That's why it's important to identify policy options/solutions in collaboration with others who have different perspectives to*

our own, and in particular the people affected by our policies or who might have to live with them.
(F2, OPM1).

The remaining codes represent variations of these two ideas, the need for gathering visual and compelling evidence to support the case for a particular course of action, and co-creation of policy options to gain buy-in from the stakeholders involved.

The one code that to some degree escapes from these two categories looks at utilising certain tools to identify actors who might have a more relevant role in the decision-making process and thus should be targeted to gain buy-in:

Maps visualise this complexity in a simple way, they help us identify touchpoints and figure out who has responsibility for different aspects of an individual's journey. This helps us figure out who we might need to influence if we want to make our policies truly effective and helps us see clearly the areas that pose the most difficulty for individuals.

(Comments on Slide 32, OPM2).

Optimism to have an impact (20 codes)

With only 20 codes, the 'Optimism to have an impact' construct is the one with the least codes indexed during the OPM training.

One of the most salient codes, was expressed by one of the facilitators who claimed that open policy making is "really about trying to turn government issues into more optimistic and positive statements, rather than focussing on the problem we focus on what we need to do to solve it" (F1, OPM1.2).

During OPM2.5, the workshop where the most codes were indexed for this construct, 'Optimism to have an impact' was primarily reflected in the exercise called 'How might we', in which an issue "rather than being a problem, it's something that we reframe in our minds to solve" (F2, OPM2.5). The facilitators explained that "'how might we's' are great because 'how' implies there are lots of ways to address something, so it's not just 'what' can we do to solve this, it's 'how'. And 'might' implies there's a possibility to be solved. 'Might' is like, 'Aha! There's a possibility here'" (F2, OPM2.5).

5.3.2 Inductive thematic development

As part of the mapping and interpretation of codes, the Framework Analysis process suggests the creation of typologies (case based) or categories (theme based) to assist in the development of explanations (see Section 3.4.1). In this study, themes were created across the constructs and workshops, divided between themes and sub-themes.

Additionally, the data from the policy design workshops (see Section 5.2.2) was collated with that of the open policy making training. Although the thematic analysis followed an inductive approach, it looked at eliciting insights that could help understand the role of design in innovative public policymaking, as per the research's overall aim. More precisely, the data was scrutinised for indications of the ways in which design is introduced in the public policymaking process. Through the analysis of all observational data, seventeen themes were developed. Likewise, these were organised under more comprehensive categories. This resulted in three themes with seven, six, and four sub-themes, respectively:

- **Current policy challenges (seven sub-themes):**
 - Disconnection from people;
 - Lack of in-depth research and use of biases as evidence;
 - Ministers often base decisions on their limited (and biased) experience;
 - Focus on delivery and not on consequences;
 - Too big to fail;
 - Constrained by current context;
 - Inability to see the big picture.
- **Explicit design links (6 sub-themes):**
 - Design for user-centredness;
 - Policy prototyping;
 - Design to learn;
 - Qualitative research and the lived experience;
 - (Co-)design as a driver for policy innovation;
 - Design tools and methods.
- **Policymaking barriers to design adoption (four sub-themes):**
 - Inappropriate practice;
 - Co-design is not common practice;
 - Embracing failure;
 - Tolerating uncertainty.

Figure 26 shows the thematic network generated from the themes and sub-themes developed in this thematic analysis.

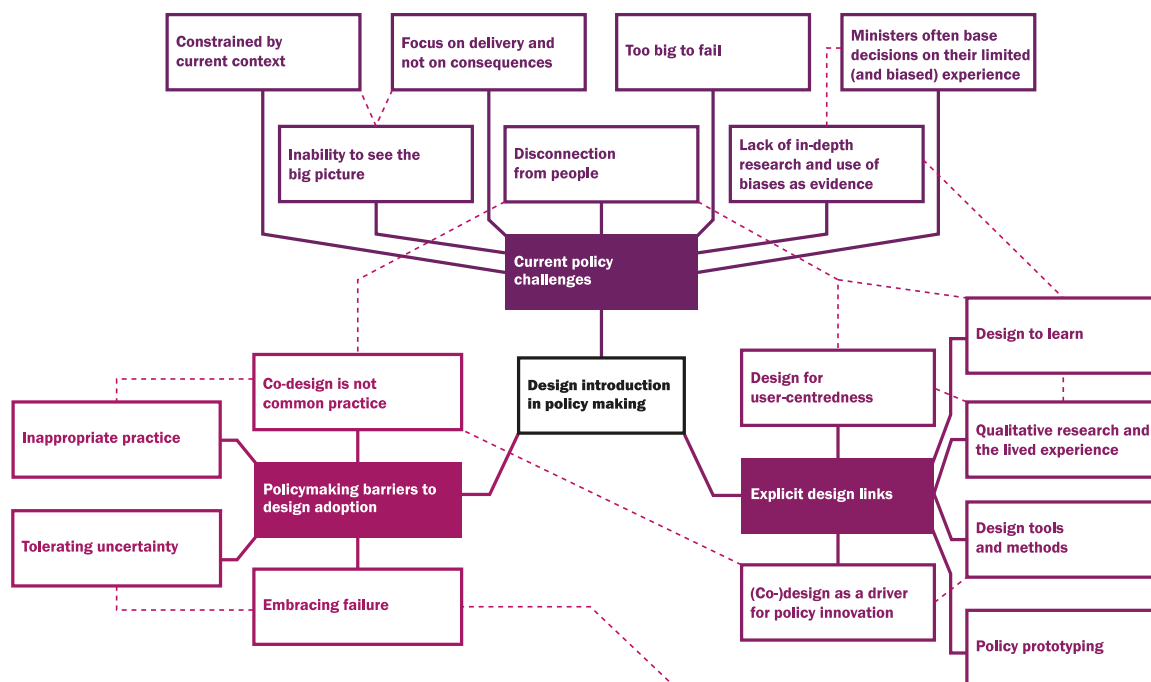


Figure 26: Study 2's thematic network

In the next section each of these themes and sub-themes are described in turn.

5.3.2.1 Current policy challenges

During the OPM training, once again facilitators mentioned several issues policymakers face in their everyday jobs.

Disconnection from people

Policymakers' jobs tend to be very task-focused and little attention is paid to the people involved in other aspects of the policymaking process or even those at whom the policies are targeted. Moreover, there is a perception that building 'human connection' in the policymaking context interferes with the job to be done, preventing policymakers from delivering on time and to a good standard. In addition, policymakers seem to be reluctant to directly engage with the people directly affected by their policies or those at the front-line delivering them. When input is sought from these groups, it is typically done through the official consultation process, which is usually centralised or 'owned' by individuals in senior roles. Likewise, the PEx identified policymakers' avoidance of engaging with the public for fear of being confronted with realities they will not be able to resolve. The PEx responded to this by saying that it is about observing, listening, caring about people's needs, and doing what is possible to improve their lives,

Some people working on this have never seen each other before. Most policymakers have never been into a Jobcentre. These situations force them to know each other and realise they share some of their views. Starting with [the exercise called] 'hope & fears' helps them to integrate and empathise with each other.

(F7, PDW1)

The PEx also claimed that open policymakers require a shift in their mindset, as well as the will and skills to 'connect with people' throughout the policymaking process. On some occasions, the workshop facilitators would ask policymakers to change their language, for instance by moving from "claimant" to "person" when referring to people in receipt of a policy or service. Moreover, they claim that due to the complexity of the adaptive systems in which they operate, avoiding this human connection is not only risky but short-sighted.

Furthermore, they explained that ensuring policies meet the needs of the people they are designed to support requires policymakers' in-depth learning, not only from those people but also from operational and frontline staff. Likewise, testing the policy ideas with these groups is seen as necessary although not commonplace in policymaking.

This problem appeared in codes indexed for the 'human-centredness', 'empathy/empathic', 'experimentation or learning from mistakes or from failure', 'embracing risk', and 'openness to different perspectives/diversity' constructs.

Lack of in-depth research and use of biases as evidence

A policymaker's understanding of people's problems is incomplete, inaccurate, and often based on assumptions. Likewise, enquiry about these problems is frequently shallow and used to confirm pre-existing biases about certain groups of the population, the issues they face, and the origins of these issues. These preconceptions about societal issues are disruptive across the policymaking cycle, affecting the problem definition as well as the implementation of policies to alleviate them. This problem affects all actors in the policymaking process, including ministers, policymakers, frontline staff, and other civil servants.

The PEx argues that policymakers should address these issues by cultivating a beginner's mind and deepening their research efforts to uncover richer insights into people's problems. They explain that by not doing this there is a higher risk of operating on assumptions that might lead to policy failure at operational or implementation levels, provoking diverse counter-productive effects such as low public trust, or even creating unintended negative consequences for service users.

Similarly, gaining new knowledge by engaging with people with different perspectives was presented as key to improve a policymaker's ability to better understand policy problems. Likewise, new knowledge was treated as indicative, often signposting areas which require in-depth exploration:

Insights will be used to help us work out where further research needs to happen.
(Slide 15, PDW6).

As a result, policymakers should be able to reduce the risk of policies failing during implementation (delivery) and also public unwillingness or inability to adopt the sought behaviours, which can lead to the need for enforcement. Prototyping with service users was also presented as a means to reducing risk.

During the OPM training, facilitators stressed the importance of distinguishing biases from facts in assessing a user's situations and needs. This was often presented as the 'cultural and operational disconnect'. Whereas the former was illustrated with quotes from ministers which revealed a failure to understand people's everyday problems, the latter was exemplified as the policymakers' assumptions that any policy can be delivered by operation and frontline staff. Likewise, participants were encouraged to attempt methodically to uncover the beliefs they would potentially embed in their policies at each stage of the process. Policy prototyping was suggested as a method for this.

This problem appeared in codes indexed for the 'learning orientation', 'empathy/empathic', 'critical questioning ("beginners mind", curiosity)', and 'risk embracement' constructs.

Ministers may base decisions on their limited (and biased) experience

Policymakers often face rejection of their ideas from ministers because they have opposing opinions on the nature of policy issues or contradictory experiences with certain groups of the public. Amongst the workshop participants it is believed that politicians are particularly prone to project their way of life onto large parts of the population and draw conclusions on the sources of other's problems based on this. Finding ways to convince them of the insights gathered from user research appears as a recurrent preoccupation. Similarly, senior policy officials often dismiss policymakers' input or reluctantly participate in user engagement activities, claiming they already know the problems they face (see Figure 27). When they do take part, the facilitators attempt to make other participants feel at ease and horizontally interact with them:

We are aware there are DWP officials in the room but please do feel free to openly speak your mind. We want to know as much in detail as possible what you think.
(F2, PDW4)

The policymakers suspect that much of the evidence is used by those in these higher ranks to subconsciously confirm pre-existing biases.

As a response, the PEx highlighted how entering the policymaking process with an open mind and allowing for different and diverse voices is crucial in gaining new knowledge that can contribute new perspectives on the policy issues and how to address them. Moreover, during the OPM training, facilitators repeatedly emphasised the need for gathering solid visual evidence to assist them in persuasively bringing their new insights to the policy discussion. Some seem to believe that, without robust proof to support their claims, these would be dismissed in favour of established prejudices. For instance, capturing visual (video and photographic) insights from ethnographic research appeared as key to lend their advice greater credibility whilst building a more complete picture. Moreover, these pieces of evidence can be used to show that policymakers have indeed done their work, and users and experts' views and opinions are considered in their recommendations.

Generating ideas in an inclusive and creative way is a rare skill.

POLICY EXPLORATION

Figure 27: Slide 51, OPM1.2.

It is crucial to mention that the research produced no evidence supporting these claims. Instead, it captured the opinions shared by facilitators and participants during the workshops. Although relevant in terms of its relative weighting, it remains anecdotal.

This problem appeared in codes indexed for the 'open to different perspectives/diversity', 'critical questioning ("beginners mind", curiosity)', 'envisioning new things', 'desire to make a difference', and 'holistic view/consider the problem as a whole' constructs.

Focus on delivery and not on consequences

Some policymakers share the view that in the civil service there is a prevalence of focusing on who will help in delivering the policy rather than those who will be impacted by it. Moreover, when looking at the latter, this is typically done through representative groups with the aim of influencing them instead of understanding the consequences of the policy on the individuals in receipt of the policy. Furthermore, policymakers are often required to develop multiple policy options quickly, which further decreases the time for understanding their implications.

Although the PEx repeatedly claimed that “[e]very insight will be taken, and we will reflect on them. Reflection is a very important part of this process” (F7, DPW₁), often the response to implementation problems receives little reflection,

“If a policy is not being delivered, we need to change the policy” (F8, PDS_{1.1}).

This problem appeared in codes indexed for the ‘human-centredness’ and ‘mindfulness and awareness of process’ constructs.

Too big to fail

Policymakers tend to get attached to their ideas. Likewise, the policy context often discourages dissenting voices, which implies that not many policymakers feel comfortable rolling back semi-developed policies. Moreover, during the development process, some policies become ‘too big to fail’ regardless of their cost. Therefore, deployment continues even if evidence against them has been found.

Against this, the PEx proposes a shift in mindset which borrows from agile methodology the principle of ‘testing early and failing fast’. Likewise, this, they claim, should be based in policy prototyping and ‘qualitative design research’, which would in exchange offer indicative findings to evaluate the potential of policy ideas early on in the development cycle.

This problem appeared in codes indexed for the ‘experimentation or learning from mistakes or from failure’ construct.

Constrained by current context

Established policymaking procedures and implicit codes of practice make policy innovation difficult. Policy professionals are seldom given time to reflect on their policy areas, or the freedom to develop radically innovative ideas. When this happens, it is under colleagues’ scrutiny and judgment. As a result, policy issues and instruments are limited to known formulae and group-thinking. This also extends to the methods through which policy options’ viability is tested.

The PEx understands that an important part of Open Policy Making relates to policy innovation. However, for this to occur, policymakers require sufficient time and space. Moreover, the pressure to resolve urgent issues makes prospective thinking difficult for some policymakers and frontline staff. In this regard, one PEx member commented

They know about trend analysis and they are used to working with data, the problem is when it comes to think of possible futures, then the engagement drops. They find it difficult to think about what could happen 30 or 50 years down the line. They would typically ask “How do you know this will happen?”, and we don’t but that is part of the exercise. (F5, DPW₃)

This problem appeared in codes indexed for the ‘experiential intelligence / bias towards action’ and ‘abductive thinking’ constructs.

Inability to see the big picture

Due to the vast complexity of current societal issues, policymakers are unable to comprehend it all by themselves. Likewise, their policy ideas reflect this inability to encompass the intricacies of people’s problems and the sophistication of modern bureaucracies.

The PEx suggested ongoing collaboration with stakeholders at all stages in the process, to confirm insights whilst validating the compatibility of the proposed solutions with current systems and procedures. In cases where evidence is contradictory, the team suggest jointly exploring avenues to gather deeper evidence and new knowledge about the issues and users.

This problem appeared in codes indexed for the ‘multi- / inter- / cross- disciplinary collaboration’ construct.

5.3.2.2 Explicit design links

Explicit links to design methods, tools and approaches were consistent throughout the observations. For instance, although the OPM training’s proposal did not mention the introduction of design as a key component, it regularly appeared intertwined with the concepts and examples facilitators employed throughout the seven OPM workshops.

Likewise, during the policy design workshops, the facilitators repeatedly called for the appropriation of the design-led approaches: “[A Design Sprint] isn’t just something that belongs to the big tech. Sprint gives us a framework to create some sort of product or prototype” (F9, PDS1.1)

Design for user-centredness

The facilitators claimed that engaging with people is “the foundation piece of all the open policy making” (F1, OPM2.1). Moreover, they argued that “open policy making is about creating the right environment to learn from experts so [open policymakers] should design [their] engagement activity accordingly” (Concern Card 1, OPM2.1). Due to their alleged suitability, facilitators suggested utilising specific design tools, such as personas, because “with personas, we’re trying to access people’s lived experiences. They’re built by learning about people’s lives” (comments on Slide 25, OPM1.2). In practice, this is often done through or with the help of specific methods and activities: “Put yourself in the shoes of the user, use the personas you’ve created” (F6, PDW2).

Moreover, one facilitator explained that by using these design tools “the main outcome is that it brings us back to the person again. It helps us build a better understanding and more empathy, it’s not just a cold problem like some sort of calculation, it’s actually somebody... we’re trying to help somebody to do something” (F1, OPM1.2).

Similarly, another facilitator explicitly identified as a human-centred design practitioner while explaining the need for using design approaches: “in human-centred design we talk about the value of using diagrams and maps, and working visually, because it helps to see things differently” (F2, OPM2.1).

Policy prototyping

Policy prototyping appears as a salient activity with those of the PEx. During the Design Sprint, a significant amount of time in relation to the rest of the activities was allocated to prototyping early-stage policy ideas (see Figure 28). This was for the reasons given below:

- Prototyping is developing tangible mock-ups of a potential solution to a problem and iterating on them – going through several different versions of the prototype as you learn from and develop each one
- Lets you examine potential issues/uncover user needs before committing to a final design or pilot – it saves time, effort and money later on by working out kinks before building something more substantial
- Uncovers more than purely logical consideration on paper – a physical mock up provokes more thoughts, critiques and challenges that might not be apparent looking at a bullet point list or in a conversation
- Lets you quickly try, refine, discard or keep lots of different variations – explore all the various facets or options that might come up in a design process. Which bits of information are you going to collect and when? What will your sorting criteria be? Are you giving users prompts – if so how? When? Can you translate administrative needs into something that is accessible and intelligible for humans?

Figure 28: Defining prototyping during the Design Sprint (Slide 19, DS1.2).

Prototyping also played a significant role in the OPM training to the extent that one workshop (OPM2.3) was entirely dedicated to it. In defining prototyping (see Figure 28), the leading facilitator for the session explained that “there’s a quote from some design academic that says, ‘a prototype is a question turned into a thing’” (F5, OPM2.4). Moreover, prototyping was described as “a collective activity that many people can contribute to – a core design principle” (Slide 27, OPM2.4). A prototype, then, is “something to be used in a collaborative and collective activity that many people can contribute to [since] the main thing about it is getting out there and talking to someone else who isn’t you. Someone who’s not stuck in your mindset” (F5, OPM2.4).

Thus, the main aim for prototyping “is getting out there and talking to people who are influenced or have a role in our idea, service, or product, to actually get their views and advice and answers to some of the core questions” (F5, OPM2.4).

To achieve this, policymakers need to embrace the ‘fail fast spirit’ as it is “better to learn that [a policy idea will not work] now rather when you got the Minister behind it... It’s not doing it wrong, it’s part of the design process” (F1, OPM1.2). It can be observed that this reflects the ‘Experimentation or learn from mistake or from failure’ construct as defined by Dosi et al. (2018).



Figure 29: Examples of prototypes (Slide 32, OPM2.4).

However, and contradicting the initial conceptualisation of prototyping, at some point one facilitator added that when prototyping “just going to test your ideas with end-users often flags things that you may not have thought about” [as] “it’s about finding out the things you didn’t know you didn’t know a lot of the time” (F5, OPM2.4). This *Rumsfeldian* connotation breaks from the notion of the prototype as a deliberate question to become a probe into the unknown. From this perspective, the limits between the prototype and the pilot become blurrier.

Prototyping methods described include (see Figure 29):

- **Sketching:** “Simply draw a visual representation of your idea that can be understood by lots of people. They can feedback, draw on your sketch, cross things out, add things in. This can be much more accessible and tangible than a paragraph in a word document. The level of detail can increase with each iteration” (Slide 60, OPM2.4).
- **Storyboarding:** “A quick, low-resolution prototype, a storyboard can help you visualize your concept from start to finish. By visually plotting out elements of how your idea works, you can learn a lot about it. Don’t worry too much about how good the drawings are, there just needs to be enough to help the citizen see how the idea works” (Slide 61, OPM2.4).
- **Table Top:** “If you’re creating a new service or offering for a citizen, using lego, cardboard or other bits and pieces can help visualise how it will work. It may seem silly, but it helps people understand how the option would work, and most importantly challenge it, or raise potential issues we may not envisage” (Slide 62, OPM2.4).

- **Role Play:** “Again, it may seem silly, but it works. You can do it yourselves, or work with stakeholders to do it. Role play exactly what your policy looks like. Take for example a new ‘one-stop service’ offering housing, benefits, health advice. Someone could pretend to be the citizen, someone the ‘advisor’. How do they interact, does it work? What information does the advisor need to have? All of these questions could be answered, or triggered, through role play” (Slide 63, OPM2.4).
- **Artefacts:** “Create something that represents your policy e.g., a letter explaining it to a citizen, the website page that introduces it, a draft newspaper article about the policy. This can help bring the idea to life which helps a citizen engage with it, question it and tell you more about what they think” (Slide 64, OPM2.4).

Facilitators tell participants that they can prototype:

- A concept
- A service
- A product
- Anything

(Slide 28, OPM2.4).

A code that stuck out regarding this last concept is one in which one facilitator uses the term ‘design’ in a stylistic way: “sometimes when we're going through our projects we take our storyboards, we take our tabletops and make them a bit more high-fidelity, make them look a bit nicer and design them up to try and help people engage with them” (F5, OPM2.4). This is interesting as it is the first and only time when design was presented from a cosmetic perspective. In addition, this is interesting because it implies the need for having the abilities to ‘design up’ the prototypes to increase their engagement.

This link appeared in codes indexed for the ‘Learning oriented’, ‘Experimentation or learn from mistake or from failure’, ‘Experiential intelligence / Bias towards action’, and ‘Team working’ constructs.

Design to learn

Linked to the notion of prototyping to engage with people is that of doing it to acquiring new understandings about a policy issue. In presenting this aspect of design, facilitators stressed that by prototyping “the point to make is that this is really to learn, not necessarily to lead to the answer straight away or even the second time. There are some really great stories about products that are around now and took years and years and hundreds of prototypes to get right” (F1, OPM1.1). As in the previous quote, facilitators did not hesitate in comparing the design of public policies with that of consumer products. Similarly, design was linked to problem-finding: “design research is indicative and not definitive. In other words, getting input from relatively small numbers of well-placed people helps us find problem areas to explore further. This helps us focus our policy thinking more precisely” (Card 5, OPM2.1).

Furthermore, they explicitly suggested using design methods to learn about the policy issues: “if you want to learn about something, why not create journey maps, bring prototypes as provocations, do some speculative design?” (comments Slide 19, OPM2.5). A noteworthy remark about this is that other than by this swift mention there was no deeper explanation of what speculative design is or how it can help policymakers in learning or achieving their objectives.

Qualitative research and the lived experience

A notable aspect about the learning through design perspective shared by the facilitators is its qualitative nature. Repeatedly throughout the training, facilitators claimed “*quali[tative]*”¹⁶ research can give you the why and help you understand your users better [since it is] particularly good to help you understand users’ problems and needs” (comments on Slide 22, OPM2.2).

“We really need to increase our understanding, in terms of social research, if we really want to make a change and have an impact” (F6, PDW1).

Furthermore, they provided specific advice on how to conduct this sort of research:

- “The core of collecting good qualitative data is discussion guides and note taking” (comments on Slide 38, OPM2.2).
- “Note taking is a really important role as you’re capturing what users think, do and say, and the notes are the central tool of doing analysis” (comments on Slide 39, OPM2.2).

This ethnographic approach to user research was suggested as useful to develop user journey maps. On this, it was stressed that “journey maps should be based on research and not made up by what you think you know. This is a qualitative-research process” (Slide 61, OPM2.2).

A similar rationale was presented for the development of personas: “Why do we bother with personas? Well, they help us build everything and challenge our assumptions. If we don’t, we risk designing policies that are informed by our own assumptions and our biases. And I think we spoke last time as well about how we often believe that the civil service makes evidence-based policy. And so, of course, we have assumptions” (F2, OPM1.2).

(Co-)design as a driver for policy innovation

During the second OPM training workshop, facilitators shared insights from an interview they did with the Policy Group’s Director General, in which he claimed that innovation can be achieved by “using futures thinking and horizon-scanning more actively in our policy work” (F1, OPM1.2). Although they recognised these are “perhaps more difficult” (F1, OPM1.2) than other techniques, they agreed that “there are loads of tools and techniques out there for creative problem-solving and innovative idea generation” (comments on Slide 54, OPM1.2). One such technique, they asserted, is to “facilitate workshops with a broad range of stakeholders to co-design innovative policy ideas” (Slide 9, OPM1.2).

Throughout the training, participants were asked to expand their engagement to “a broad range of stakeholders to design policy ideas” (Slide 17, OPM1.1) to complement “the usual stakeholder engagement, speaking with CEOs of large companies and the trades unions” (Scenario 3, OPM1.1) to gather insights.

Co-designing was repeatedly conceptualised as a critical factor to achieve innovation. In explaining this, the facilitators resorted to the anecdote of Edison’s lightbulb invention: “Just people with different skills that could look at a problem and come with ideas to solve it in new and different ways... this is a different interpretation of Edison’s story, which isn’t the eureka moment. It’s actually about the hard work of lots of people doing different things. More a story of working together with different people rather than the creative person having a creative moment [...] It’s really about how can we find people who’ve got different perspectives

¹⁶ Italics in original

and bring them together to work around a problem” (F1, OPM1.2). This framing is of high relevance to the study as it describes how innovation in policymaking is seen by the PEx: “When we talk about innovation that’s what it is. It’s more this kind of thing: hard work, bringing people in together, bringing new voices and new ideas into policy development conversations” (F1, OPM1.2). In exemplifying this, one facilitator narrated their personal experience of participating in co-design workshops for the development of consumer goods. This is of interest as it assimilates the experience of co-designing in the private sector with the public sector. Moreover, it proposes that the tools and methods utilised in the private sector are legitimate means for co-designing in the public sector.

All in all, a policy of co-design, it was argued, serves at least three purposes:

1. To jointly generate policy ideas with people from different backgrounds and include people affected by the policies, and those who will be delivering them, early in the process.
2. To help policymakers in ‘convincing’ ministers and stakeholders of certain policy options by identifying them in collaboration with others who have different perspectives, and, particularly, those affected by the policies.
3. Co-design allows policymakers to understand the interrelations of their work,

‘I’d like to run a workshop with colleagues from across the business to understand how their work interacts with my policy area’
(Scenario Card 3, OPM3).

This notion of doing things in a ‘designerly’ fashion was also reflected in the selection of the venues for the training. For instance, when describing the venue for OPM2.2, facilitators mentioned it as a place where “people who are generally looking to use design thinking and data to solve social policy problems [come together to form] a coalition of government departments, charities, local groups” (F1, OPM2.2).

Design tools and methods

Besides the idea of utilising a design approach for public policy innovation, facilitators consistently introduced design tools and methods as some of the ways in which open policymakers should operate.

Asked about the tool choices and selection for each workshop, one facilitator explained that they looked into various sources, including online blogs, apps, and exchanges with colleagues and design practitioners:

We look for tools and techniques that can help us achieve different goals we have in mind. Look for those online and in different workshops we attend to. We then test the tools amongst ourselves within the team before trying them out in a workshop setting.

(F7, PDW1)

The PEx is explicit about the use of design tools and methods and presents these to the wider audience as such. For instance, in one policy design workshop, an ‘evidence wall’ was used, and facilitators introduced it as “a design technique to present data and insights in a format that can be easily read and digested” (Evidence Wall Themes handout, DPW2).

Throughout the training, facilitators stated that certain tools such as a user journey map and personas (see Figures 30 and 31) “are incredibly helpful to help us delineate and untangle how

an individual interacts with a range of support services across departments, the public sector, and third sector” (comments on Slide 32, OPM1.2), allowing policymakers to visualise complexity in a simple way.

PERSONA QUESTIONS.

- Who are they?
 - What is their name?
 - Where do they live?
 - How old are they?
 - What are their skills?
 - Who do they live with?
 - Do they have children?
 - Are they happy, sad, do they still have ambitions?
 - Do they have hobbies?
 - What newspaper do they read?
 - Do they want to work?
 - Do they volunteer?
 - Do they have views on JCP / DWP?
-
- Describe their health condition – is this a long term condition or was it the result of an accident?

Figure 30: Slide 12, PDW1.



Figure 31: Persona output (1 of 6) from Policy Design Workshop 1.

The facilitators showed a certain degree of mastery over the tools and used them in different ways according to the stage in the process and the specific questions they looked at answering. For instance, regarding the persona exercise run in PDW1, they explained:

These are proto-personas, we are making them up, but they are based on our experiences. We would like to know what are the assumptions about the [target public]. What are the barriers we are facing to help them?

As more research comes in, we will hopefully be able to counteract or confirm some of the assumptions.

(F6, PDW1)

Grappling with complexity repeatedly appeared as a reason to utilise some of these tools: “Maps visualise this complexity in a simple way, they help us identify touchpoints and figure out who has responsibility for different aspects of an individual’s journey. This helps us figure out who we might need to influence if we want to make our policies truly effective and helps us see clearly the areas that pose the most difficulty for individuals” (Comments on Slide 32, OPM1.2).

Whilst introducing user journey maps as a tool for policymaking, facilitators cited Nielsen Norman Group’s User Experience Specialist Kate Kaplan in defining it as “a visualisation of the process that a person goes through in order to accomplish a goal. It’s used for understanding and addressing customer needs and pain points” (slide 54, OPM2.2). This validated the introduction of a design terminology that was subsequently used throughout the training.

Similarly, facilitators introduced design tools to specifically address issues around bias-based policymaking: “Personas build empathy and challenge our assumptions” (Slide 22, OPM1.2).

Moreover, participants were introduced to the idea generation method from Google Ventures’ Design Sprint¹⁷, and asked to follow the inspiration phase, which “is about collating and synthesising great ideas to inform the design of our own solutions” (comments on Slide 39, OPM2.3). Similarly, facilitators explained the ‘Lightning Demos’, an exercise from Google Ventures’ Design Sprints to share within a team products or services to spark inspiration for their concepts in the next phases of their design sprints: “Get into broad policy areas. Briefly explain the issue you’re seeking to solve, and then present your favourite solutions. In a real-world context, you would potentially demonstrate the solution by showing, and you would have 3 minutes per solution to describe” (comments on Slide 43, OPM2.3).

Despite this prescriptive approach to design, participants were encouraged to appropriate the tools, techniques, and methods presented to them and develop “more relevant versions you can make of this for your own team, for your own organisation” (F1, OPM2.3).

During the OPM training, one facilitator made a reference to the look and feel of the tools used in engagement activities:

There’s a danger of making something look too pretty, and we’ll talk about that when we come to prototyping, but this looks very pristine and people are generally more followers, so you go around saying, ‘you can change this, you know? Scribble it out if it’s not right’. And sometimes doing it on a sheet of flipchart makes people feel more willing to change it and adapt it and make it right than something that looks like it has lots of money spent on it, and it hasn’t really, but still. So, it doesn’t have to be ‘professional-looking’, something like this can be just as valuable. (F2, OPM1.2)

¹⁷ See Knapp, J., Zeratsky, J., & Kowitz, B. (2016). *Sprint: How to solve big problems and test new ideas in just five days*. Simon and Schuster.

Similarly, in other workshops the facilitators would tell participants they “know these sheets look pretty, but these are just tools to help in the conversation so do feel free to edit and modify them” (F2, PDW4). These codes are of interest as it reflects that part of the feedback given to the facilitators by the researcher regarding the handouts the PEx used in their workshops. Before this discussion, the facilitators would make explicit their desire for participants to appropriate the worksheets and tools with little success (see Figure 32).

What are an individual's housing needs?	
<p>The Individuals</p> <p>Using your knowledge, create some examples of the individuals you may have worked with. Please use fake names and examples. This is to help give us a better understanding of who we are designing policy for.</p>	<p>The top 3 needs in their role</p>
<p>Name: Tommy</p> <p>Location: Haringey</p> <p>Role: Housing Officer</p> <p>A bit about them:</p> <p>Tommy has been a Housing Officer for 2 years now.</p> <p>He works closely with local DV services to assess housing needs of their clients. He is looking for promotion soon.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To support victims into suitable housing 2. Weigh up the risk the individual is in, compared to others 3. Ensure housing is used appropriately


 **Feel free to change/edit/amend/challenge this worksheet**

Figure 32: Worksheet utilised during PDW6.

5.3.2.3 Policymaking barriers to design adoption

Inappropriate practice

On several occasions during the OPM training, the facilitators made clear that certain practices from the design world are not yet familiar in the policy context. They expressed different reasons for this, such as the policy environment not being prone to playful behaviour or activities, policymakers needing to preserve a solemn image of the political leaders, or simply the dissonance between what is accepted within their community of practice.

For instance, facilitators emphasised that policy “prototyping means bringing our policy ideas to life and making them tangible so that they can be tested with the people they’re intended for” (Comments on Slide 44, OPM1.1). In convincing the participants that prototyping is a valid and suitable way of envisioning policies one facilitator said it “sounds quite digital but actually it’s just about bringing our policy ideas to life. Instead of telling someone what it is, it’s showing them whether it is with a video or [...] making something tangible” (F2, OPM1.1).

As can be observed, participants were asked not to disregard policy prototyping just because it might not resonate with their usual practices.

Similarly, and despite facilitators' insistence on embracing prototyping with whatever means are available, not "worry[ing] too much about how good the drawings are [because] there just needs to be enough to help the citizen see how the idea works" (Slide 61, OPM2.4), many participants did not feel confident doing it. The main argument was their lack of confidence in their skills to develop prototypes. Moreover, facilitators recognised in some forms of prototyping, such as role playing, they "feel a bit silly doing this in this way, and I think as policy people there's always a bit of worry doing it, but it helps people really engage" (F5, OPM2.4). They also conceded that "the whole thing about it is that it feels silly, it feels stupid but ultimately really engages people and allows them to say really how this works" (F5, OPM2.4).

This aversion to adopting a practice that might make them feel or look ridiculous appears to be extended to the political roles to which they respond. In this regard, one facilitator explained that although they tend to like sessions where outlandish ideas were developed as they "would get lots of people talking and get people involved" (F5, OPM2.4), "there's something about what happens if something gets out earlier, an idea that's off the wall on purpose to provoke responses gets leaked out and makes the Minister look stupid" (F5, OPM2.4).

This represents an important barrier to adopting generative tools and methods, even though policymakers seem to recognise the need for creative problem-solving: "All the ideas everyone's ever got about your work you've already heard ten times already. There are not many new ideas in the normal course of our work. We're gonna try to show you how to get into that" (F1, OPM1.2). To achieve this, however, the facilitators warned that these new techniques might seem out of place to policymakers but are indeed valid means of developing new solutions for policy problems: "So, you might think. 'oh, Legos, it's for schools, it's a bit too creative, it's for Google, it's for Apple'" (F2, OPM1.2).

To overcome this, during policy design workshops the facilitators attempt to make participants feel they "are in a creative bubble" to get their "creativity flowing" (F6, PDW2). In practice, this means asking participants to avoid thinking within their existing constraints by, for instance, thinking of solutions "if you suddenly have all the financial resources you can ask for" (F6, PDW2) or "[w]hat would Apple do?" (Slide 19, PDW2).

As we have previously seen, policymakers are well aware of limitations that might be specific to the policy context and that seem to hinder a fully-fledged embracing of the Design Thinking mindsets.

Co-design is not common practice

Although the notion of developing policies involving a range of different stakeholders – especially those not typically included— was highlighted throughout the OPM training, it was also acknowledged that it is often difficult to put into practice. Facilitators explained that "in an ideal world, we might come up with policy options in collaboration with the people the policy is aiming to support. This is known as co-design. In policy contexts, this is not necessarily straightforward" (comments on Slide 43, OPM1.1).

"Teams are pre-arranged to mix up the people and their expertise. In general, what happens is that people from different backgrounds try to run a reality check with what they already

know. We don't want that but rather we look for them to exchange their knowledge" (F6, PDW1).

Similarly, in achieving successful policy co-design, OPM facilitators recommended the use of certain tools and methods, such as policy prototyping and user journey mapping. However, they acknowledged "prototyping maybe doesn't feel natural, or that's not the term that feels natural in the policy context, but you can see that it's possible to do. It comes from the design world, the product design world and obviously, in product design people are desperate to get people to use their products or their websites, and things like that, so they test all the things to make sure that actually they're the ones people want in their lives, that work for them" (F2, OPM1.1).

Embracing failure

Allowing policymakers to fail was a core concept that facilitators tried to introduce: "You must be open to getting it wrong" (Slide 46, OPM2.4). However, they also recognised it is not yet embedded in the working spirit of their policy context, "and it's something that we as a Department need to work on a bit more. How can we be more open to failure and change?" (F5, OPM2.4).

Whilst explaining the foundations of policy prototyping, the facilitators emphasised the need for getting rid of policy ideas that were unsuccessful as soon as they reached the conclusion. However, they were prompt to warn participants that this mindset is not necessarily embedded in mainstream policymaking practices. They explained that by prototyping policy ideas "the idea is that we're testing them. We're trying to bin four of them and everyone hates the idea of binning them. They go, 'let's try to iterate one more time'. Nobody likes the idea of going, 'I've tried that for six months now and it's just not working'. It's just against our natural way of doing things" (F1, OPM1.1). Moreover, they explained that "this whole [prototyping] culture is 'let's just chuck it in and see, it might add something to some people'. So, there is a natural push back against some of these things" (F1, OPM1.1).

Interestingly, even when introducing these concepts, the facilitators could not help but fall into statements that reinforced the apparent policymakers' risk aversion: "Prototyping and testing with service users reduces risk" (Slide 14, OPM1.2).

Tolerating uncertainty

The conundrum presented by the facilitators is about the clash between what is typically expected from policymakers and how open policy makers should approach their work:

You're gonna put something up for the minister, you got to be certain about what you put in there, you need to make sure the data is correct, you need to make sure it is cleared from a million people [...] Dealing with ambiguity or learning to deal with ambiguity is one of the key things within open policy making and design thinking as well. And being comfortable with that is a skill that we need to learn if we want to be doing this stuff successfully.
(F2, OPM2.1)

Throughout the OPM training, facilitators attempted to instil a more uncertainty-tolerating mindset, while being well aware that "certainty is demanded of us, so, when we are learning things and we're not sure what the answer is that's good, you shouldn't go into something knowing what the answer is already. It's very different from what we're typically expected" (F2, OPM2.1).

As a way to explore potential future outcomes, in some workshops the facilitators ran ‘visioning’ exercises where participants aimed at encompassing prospective thinking in the policy being developed to anticipate potential negative outcomes: “We are trying to make you think ahead. Think about the risk, about the impact of the solution at hand” (F7, PDW1).

Knowing that certainty is demanded from policymakers, brings up the question about the impact this sort of training can have in changing such an entrenched mentality.

5.4 Conclusions of Chapter 5

This chapter has advanced the research aim by contributing to answering research question 2: How is design being instilled in public policymaking?

The findings presented in this chapter have achieved three results:

Firstly, they have helped establish a clear link between the design thinking mindset constructs—as defined by Dosi et al. (2018)—and the way in which DWP’s PEx conduct their activities. The framework analysis carried out on the Open Policy Making data provided an abundance of evidence about the adoption of the design thinking mindset as a critical step towards the introduction of design for policy. Moreover, it has shown the variation in the loading of the different constructs. In particular, human centricity, learning orientation, openness to diversity, an empathic attitude and experimental approach construct showed a significantly larger occurrence of codes, which denotes the emphasis put into them. This suggests that, at least in the examined context, certain aspects of the design thinking mindset are purposely emphasised.

Secondly, the study suggests that with the imperative of adopting open policy making as a mainstream policy practice and in the absence of specific guidelines on how to do it, design thinking becomes the operationalisation of the open policy making spirit. Although ‘user-led design’ is explicitly referred to as one of the twelve open policy making elements—as defined by the UK government (GOV.UK, 2015)—the analysis indicates that several other of its characteristics are also introduced through design thinking. Namely,

- Broadening the range of people and enhancing the quality of engagement;
- Pursuing a collaborative policy process; and
- Prototyping and iterating.

Therefore, the open policy making mandate operates as an enabler to introduce design in open policy making beyond the specific requirement to produce user-led policies.

Thirdly, the study has highlighted some of the issues preventing policy teams from adopting a design-led approach to policymaking, thus hindering their ability to produce policy innovations. Policy co-design, for instance, is seldom practised. This does not seem to conflict with the open policy making’s invitation to broaden the range of people and enhance the quality of engagement or pursue a collaborative process, suggesting engagement is seen in a more consultative manner. Likewise, some of the design practices implemented (and often celebrated) in the private sector are deemed inappropriate for policymakers or the public sector at large. Public scrutiny and a strong drive to avoid making headlines prevent policymakers from engaging in activities that could be seen as playful or ‘out of place’ because of the solemnity associated with public servants’ work. This is particularly so when dealing with social policies and vulnerable groups. Similarly, some aspects of the design thinking

mindset appear to be at odds with the policymaker's *modus operandi*. This is evident in policymakers' resistance to embracing failure or tolerating uncertainty, features associated with design thinker's capacity to iteratively test hypothesis and working with ill-defined problems, respectively.

These findings are further analysed and discussed in Chapter 7.

5.5 Summary of Chapter 5

Chapter 5 presented Study 2 and its findings. This second study adopted an ethnographic approach where the main source of data collection was conducted through participant observations of a policy unit within the UK Department for Work and Pensions called 'Policy Exploration team'.

This team looks at integrating design thinking and design techniques into mainstream policymaking within their department. Likewise, within their remit is also the promotion of open policy making which they do through specific training programmes. Moreover, the team collaborates with colleagues in the DWP by taking on policy challenges through what they describe as 'policy design' or 'design thinking' workshops.

In order to understand how this team is introducing design thinking into their work, this study aimed at collecting observational data by participating in the policy design workshops and a training programme on open policy making. A total of 14 workshops were observed, producing a significant amount of rich qualitative data consisting of field notes, recordings, photographs, and copies of support material utilised by the team in the delivery and facilitation of their workshops.

The data analysis was conducted in two parts. Firstly, the data originating from the open policy making training was scrutinised through a framework analysis in search for evidence of the design thinking mindset. As described in section 3.4.1, the framework analysis matrix was developed based on the design thinking mindset constructs defined by Dosi et al. (2018) (see section 2.3.1).

Secondly, the data from all fourteen observation (open policy making training + policy design workshops) was jointly analysed in a thematic manner. This resulted in three themes with seven, six, and four sub-themes respectively. Namely,

- **Current policy challenges:**
 - Disconnection from people;
 - Lack of in-depth research and use of biases as evidence;
 - Ministers often base decisions on their limited (and biased) experience;
 - Focus on delivery and not on consequences;
 - Too big to fail;
 - Constrained by current context;
 - Inability to see the big picture.
- **Explicit design links:**
 - Design for user-centredness;
 - Policy prototyping;
 - Design to learn;
 - Qualitative research and the lived experience;
 - (Co-)design as a driver for policy innovation;

- Design tools and methods.
- **Policymaking barriers to design adoption:**
 - Inappropriate practice;
 - Co-design is not common practice;
 - Embracing failure;
 - Tolerating uncertainty.

The themes and sub-themes highlight specific design aspects that the Policy Exploration team considers to be key for policy development, as well as current policy challenges where the introduction of design could help in overcoming them, and barriers to the adoption of design for policy as a mainstream policy practice.

Chapter ⑥

Study 3:

Designing the future of European policymaking

This study is situated within the context of a project carried out by the EU Policy Lab at the European Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC). The project called 'The future of government 2030+' (2017–2019), *a citizen centric perspective on new government models* (Joint Research Centre, 2017), implemented foresight and design approaches to foster a multi-stakeholder debate on future government models with the support of six 'policy labs' and six design schools from EU member states. This project is grounded on the EU Policy Lab claim that rapid changes in contemporary society are shifting power relations and influencing modes of governance and democracy at large, leading to the need for rethinking how future governments should be and operate in the future (Joint Research Centre, 2017). In total, the project involved circa 150 citizens, civil society organisations (CSO), think tanks, public sector and business representatives, and more than 100 design students. The design students developed a total of 40 concepts inspired by the four scenarios created based on the insights distilled from the policy lab's workshops. The project also included the development of an engagement tool in the form of a game, used to initiate a debate with diverse actors including CSOs, businesses, civil servants, and policymakers (Vesnic-Alujevic, Stoermer, Rudkin, Scapolo, & Kimbell, 2019). Within this setting, the third study looked at the implications for public policymaking of imagining a future government through a design process.

As described in Section 3.2.3, interviews with referents from the participating organisations, including the EU Policy Lab, the local policy labs, and the design schools, were conducted as the main source of data collection. Likewise, an inductive thematic analysis was implemented to examine the interviewees' responses.

This chapter is presented in four sections. Firstly, the rationale for governments utilising foresight and design in policymaking is briefly introduced. Secondly, background is provided on the EU Policy Lab and their 'Future of Government 2030+' project. Thirdly, the findings from the semi-structured interviews (see interview guides on appendices 4, 5, and 6) are presented in a thematic manner. The last section offers a summary of the findings.

6.1 Foresight and Design

As previously discussed, in times of accelerating societal changes and increasingly uncertain political landscapes, the need for better approaches to policymaking appear as central for

governments to attain their goals. In this context, policymakers often function as ‘policy-fixers’ constantly patching existing policies in response to ever-changing conditions (Kimbell & Vesnić-Alujević, 2020). This sense of urgency operates as a barrier for long-term thinking and may also hinder the development of policy innovation. At the same time, government strategies, plans of action, and policies frequently originate at high political levels, excluding participation of those at lower levels of the policymaking hierarchy. Far too often this leads to policy failure due to what is generally referred to as the ‘policy-implementation gap’ (Hudson, Hunter, & Peckham, 2019), examined in section 2.2.1.

As a response, there seems to be an increasing interest in the introduction of novel approaches in diverse government settings, such as service design and design thinking, but also futures thinking and foresight (Kimbell & Vesnić-Alujević, 2020). The latter involves an array of activities related to the development of knowledge about potential futures (Dreyer & Stang, 2013). More specifically, Fuerth (2009) defines foresight as

[...] the capacity to anticipate alternative futures, based on sensitivity to weak signals, and an ability to visualize their consequences, in the form of multiple possible outcomes. It is a means to visualize, rehearse and then refine in the mind, actions that would otherwise have to be tested against reality, where the consequences of error are irrevocable.
(p. 16)

As a discipline that employs future analysis to address complex issues, foresight is well placed to support long-term planning by creating strategic options for future society. Futures research has long been acknowledged as holding the potential to contributing to better policies, and strategic foresight in particular, has been institutionalised in policymaking in diverse ways in many countries (van Dorsser, Walker, Taneja, & Marchau, 2018).

Fuerth (2009) argues that to successfully implement anticipatory governance certain ‘cultural characteristics’ should be in place, namely, open-mindedness, continuous interrogation of assumptions, and a commitment to investigate alternative possibilities. This is a salient aspect as these three characteristics can be respectively identified in the ‘open to different perspectives/diversity’, ‘critical questioning’, and ‘abductive thinking’ design thinking mindset constructs as defined by Dosi et al. (2018) (see section 2.3.1). Interestingly, Kimbell and Vesnić-Alujević (2020) claim the growing reciprocal interest between foresight and design researchers and practitioners is blurring their disciplinary boundaries. They argue “futures and design can be seen as a capacity to bring public and policy issues into view and open them up [...where...] the material practices of futures and design pluralize and problematize understandings of issues and uncertainties, raising questions about different ways forward” (Kimbell & Vesnić-Alujević, 2020, p. 99).

Nowadays, supra-national bodies have also incorporated these approaches. For instance, in 2010, the EU introduced the ‘European Strategy and Policy Analysis System’ (ESPAS), a joint foresight capacity to assess long-term global trends and help bolster policy planning at European level (Dreyer & Stang, 2013), whilst “providing a platform for cultivating foresight capabilities in future policy-makers” (European Strategy and Policy Analysis System, 2015). Moreover, according to Kimbell and Vesnić-Alujević (2020), the EU’s Joint Research Centre has been employing foresight for more than 35 years building on numerous futures projects commissioned by the EU. However, the inclusion of knowledge produced by future research in policymaking—or even policy analysis—remains problematic (van Dorsser, Walker, Taneja,

& Marchau, 2018). As van der Steen & van Twist (2013) explain it, “the problem does not seem to be a lack of interest in future developments by policy makers, but a mismatch between anticipatory knowledge and policy-making” (p. 33). New policymaking practices might enable the assimilation of these sources of knowledge. The EU Policy Lab project ‘Future of Government 2030+’, which through a combination of design and foresight approaches aimed at exploring how future relationships between citizens and government would evolve in the coming decade, could be one such case.

6.2 The EU Policy Lab and the ‘Future of Government 2030+’ project.

The EU Policy Lab operates within the EU Commission’s science and knowledge service known as the Joint Research Centre (JRC). With a strong focus on research and innovation, the JRC has amongst its duties the creation, management, and sense-making of knowledge to support European policies, as well as the development of innovative tools to make them available to policy makers (European Commission, 2017). Likewise, the anticipation of emerging issues at EU level and the sharing of know-how with EU countries is also within their remit. In their own words, the EU Policy Lab is:

[...] a space designed to foster creativity and engagement, and to develop interactions, processes and tools able to bring innovation into European policy-making. Our work is articulated around four complementary dimensions:

Foresight, Modelling, Behavioural Insights, and Design for Policy.

As in other policy labs, our emphasis is on testing, experimenting and co-designing, by using tailor-made frameworks with a strong visual focus. We like to think about the Lab as both a physical and conceptual space to open up the conversation and facilitate collaboration between policy-making and stakeholders. Here, we explore, we connect and we find solutions for better policies.

(European Commission, 2020)

Within the EU Policy Lab, design is utilised for three main reasons:

- To be people-centred: purposely engaging diverse groups of stakeholders;
- To address and navigate complexity: responding to evolving and interconnected issues through people’s experiences;
- To visualise and prototype ideas: trialling innovative modes of knowledge creation and representation.

(Vesnic-Alujevic, Stoermer, Rudkin, Scapolo, & Kimbell, 2019)

Its explicit use of design for policy innovation makes it a valuable source of insights for this investigation. Moreover, the EU Policy Lab is one of the few organisations of its kind operating at a supranational level. Likewise, the EU Commission has actively looked at integrating different approaches to public sector innovation. Amongst other actions, it has co-financed the establishment and activities of the OECD’s Observatory of Public Sector Innovation (OPSI), through which it has been able to capture insights and experiences beyond EU

member states.¹⁸ (Karakas, 2020). In terms of this investigation's overall research aim, this is of importance as it complements the nationally bounded insights gathered in Study 2. From the above it is clear that the EU Policy Lab's institutional mandate allows for a project experimenting with foresight and design to look at future forms of government within the EU.

The EU Policy Lab project 'The Future of Government 2030+' (*FuturGov*¹⁹) aimed at bringing citizens to the centre of the scene with the objective of exploring emerging societal challenges, and analysing trends in a rapidly changing and increasingly digitised world, to promote an EU-wide debate on possible models for future government (Vesnic-Alujevic, Stoermer, Rudkin, Scapolo, & Kimbell, 2019). Based on this, the EU Policy Lab utilised citizen engagement, foresight, and design to answer the question of 'how will citizens, together with other actors, shape governments, policies and democracy in 2030 and beyond?'. In this context, the EU Policy Lab referred to foresight as "a discipline that offers a structured, systematic and systemic approach to gain valuable insights into the mid-to-long term future possibilities" (Vesnic-Alujevic, Stoermer, Rudkin, Scapolo, & Kimbell, 2019, p. 11).

According to Dreyer and Stang (2013), the output of foresight activities typically includes the development of future scenarios to be examined in their potential impact and probability of occurrence. In this regard, the 'Future of Government 2030+' project was no exception since it produced four scenarios based on the insights from the policy labs' citizen engagement workshops (Vesnic-Alujevic, Stoermer, Rudkin, Scapolo, & Kimbell, 2019). To develop these scenarios, a bottom-up approach to foresight was undertaken, where design thinking methods were used to elicit user insights (Vesnic-Alujevic & Scapolo, 2019, p. 14).

The *FuturGov* project recognised the need for adapting traditional public administration and government roles to emerging and future societal demands. To achieve this, the project intentionally sought to move away from path-dependency and foster imagination as a legitimate source to explore new forms of interactions between government and citizens (Vesnic-Alujevic, Stoermer, Rudkin, Scapolo, & Kimbell, 2019).

Additionally, two reports were published as part of the *FuturGov* project's output:

- Vesnic-Alujevic, L., Stoermer, E., Rudkin, J. E., Scapolo, F., & Kimbell, L. (2019). *The Future of Government 2030+: A Citizen Centric Perspective on New Government Models*. Publications Office of the European Union;
- Vesnic-Alujevic, L. and Scapolo, F. (2019). *The Future of Government 2030+: Policy Implications and Recommendations*. Publications Office of the European Union.

The first of the two focus on providing a detailed account of the project. It also succinctly recommends governments to systematically introduce new practices and innovative strategies to face emerging challenges. In order to do this, the authors advise the introduction of integrated design approaches and forward thinking, since these can improve the work of the public sector and government (Vesnic-Alujevic, Stoermer, Rudkin, Scapolo, & Kimbell, 2019). Likewise, they suggest that "[t]he development of a highly participatory culture with the inclusion of citizens in co-creation and co-design of policies could increase the legitimacy and

¹⁸ Amongst other resources, the OECD's OPSI offers an online compendium of toolkits for public sector innovation and transformation, which includes design and foresight tools and methods (<https://oecd-opsi.org/toolkit-navigator/>).

¹⁹ Not to be mistaken with the UK-based consultancy 'FutureGov', owned by The Panoply Holdings PLC.

efficiency of the government and consequently contribute positively to our democratic societies” (Vesnic-Alujevic, Stoermer, Rudkin, Scapolo, & Kimbell, 2019, p. 7).

The second report, as its name indicates, offers more detailed policy implications and a set of 57 recommendations organised in nine policy areas. Of particular interest to this study are:

1. The creation of strategies for full adoption of open government and digital governance;
2. The development of a framework for policy experimentation;
3. The upskilling of public administration for the systematic inclusion of citizens in decision-making processes and active co-creation of solutions to public problems;
4. The development of new participatory mechanisms to foster citizens’ trust in EU governance, including the creation of safe spaces for citizens to freely think and ideate;
5. The redesign and co-creation of public services with a user-centred approach;
6. The redesign of public administration with a focus on the agile and efficient development of more creative, innovative, and future-oriented solutions.
7. The increase in public-private collaborations to tackle future challenges and develop new technologies and public services.

(Vesnic-Alujevic & Scapolo, 2019)

It can be observed that collaboration and citizen engagement occupy a prominent place within the authors’ recommendations. Moreover, the report emphasises the development of “more collaborative ways of working through design-oriented workshops, as well as serious games” (Vesnic-Alujevic & Scapolo, 2019, p. 46). While the majority of these recommendations are intended for policymaking at EU level, the authors make clear that their implementation could gain in effectiveness if realised through lower levels of governance (Vesnic-Alujevic & Scapolo, 2019). This is of relevance, as it can imply their adoption at national or local government level within (and outside) EU member states.

Besides the relevance of examining the EU Policy Lab’s use of design for policy, conducting the inquiry through this particular project also offered other distinctive advantages. In developing a participatory process that engaged more than 150 citizens in six European Member States, the EU Policy Lab partnered with six ‘policy labs’ (as referred to in the official reports). In collaboration with the EU Policy Lab, these organisations (see Figure 33) carried out a series of citizen engagement workshops held from November 2017 to March 2018. Therefore, inquiring into this project allows simultaneous capture of the insights of policy labs deploying design methods at national and supra-national level.

Furthermore, in implementing *FuturGov* the EU Policy Lab also collaborated with six ‘top design schools’ in EU member states (see Figure 33) to “enable creative speculations and out of the box thinking on possible alternative models of government” (Joint Research Centre, 2017). As part of this collaboration, more than 100 design students and research faculty participated in producing a wide array of design concepts encapsulating possible future citizen-government interactions (Vesnic-Alujevic, Stoermer, Rudkin, Scapolo, & Kimbell, 2019). Through this combined process “more than 20 stories emerged from citizen workshops held in 6 EU Member States and 40 concepts were produced by students” (Vesnic-Alujevic, Stoermer, Rudkin, Scapolo, & Kimbell, 2019, p. 7). Likewise, the project included a participatory workshop with 19 stakeholders from different European institutions and other organisations,

including the OECD, local and national authorities, academia, Think tanks, CSOs and businesses (Vesnic-Alujevic & Scapolo, 2019).

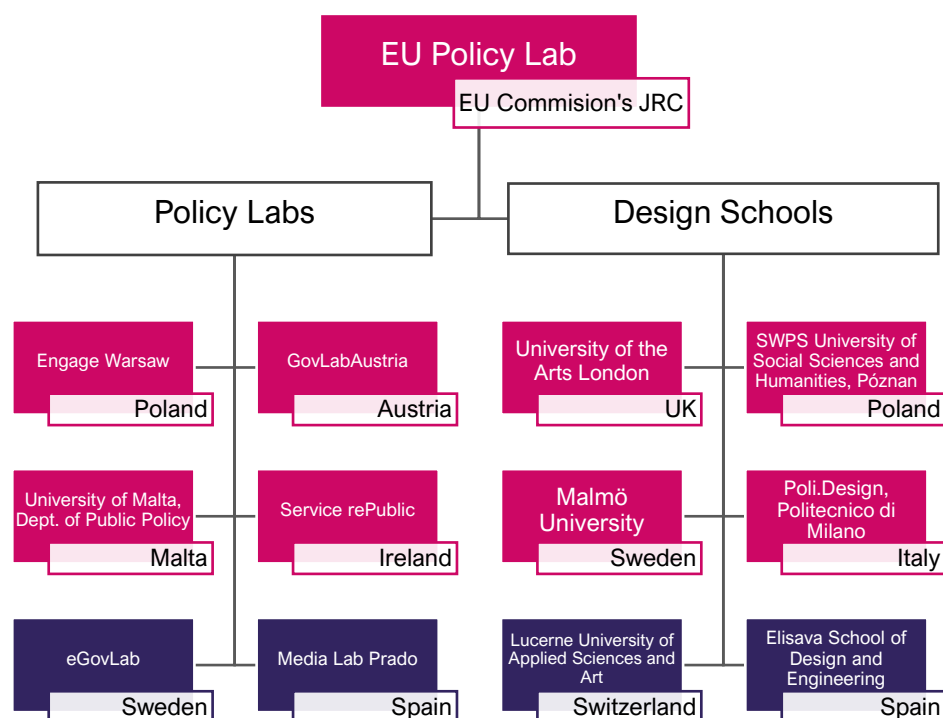


Figure 33: Partner organisations in the EU Policy Lab project 'The Future of Government 2030+'. Magenta denotes the organisations where at least one participant was interviewed for this study.

As previously mentioned, semi-structured interviews were conducted with referents from the participating organisations. Two interviews were carried out with representatives of the EU Policy Lab: the first with a senior team member, and the second with the design consultant who informed the project. Interviews were also conducted with the referents from Engage Warsaw, the University of Malta's Department of Public Policy, GovLabAustria, Service rePublic, University of the Arts London, SWPS University of Social Sciences and Humanities Póznán, Malmö University, and Politécnico di Milano's Poli.Design. For this last organisation, the interview was conducted simultaneously with two team members. All interviews were further transcribed, coded, and analysed. The thematic analysis of these interviews is presented in the following section.

6.3 Interviews - thematic findings

For this study ten interviews with public administrators and political science and design academics were conducted. Three interview guides (see appendices 4, 5 and 6) were used to account for the different types of organisations to which the interviewees belong, namely, the EU Policy Lab, policy labs in EU member states, and design schools in EU member states. The interviews were anonymised, and the interviewees' responses codified according to table 17.

Within each category, the numbering relates solely to the chronological order in which the interviews were conducted.

Irrespective of the variations in the guides, the interviews aim at understanding, from the perspective of each interviewee:

- Their grasp of design for policy;
- The role design played in the project;
- The potential impact of this project in future public policymaking.

EU Policy Lab (EUPLn)	Policy Labs (PLn)	Design Schools (DSn)
Interviewee 1: EUPL1	GovLabAustria: PL1	Politécnico di Milano's Poli.Design - Interviewee 1: DS1.1
		Politécnico di Milano's Poli.Design - Interviewee 1: DS1.2
Interviewee 1: EUPL1	Engage Warsaw: PL2	SWPS University of Social Sciences and Humanities Póznán: DS2
	University of Malta's Department of Public Policy: PL3	Malmö University: DS3
	Service rePublic: PL4	University of the Arts London: DS4

Table 17: Interviewee codification per type of organisation.

The findings presented below were collated in a thematic manner. From this process, a set of thirteen themes were developed based on the interviewees' responses and the study's research question:

- Design for future policymaking:
 - Developing design capabilities;
 - Knowledge transfer;
 - Working with design schools;
 - Accessing people's experience;
 - Design methods and tools;
 - Prototyping;
 - Design beyond problem-solving;
 - Design to learn from people's experiences;
 - Design for imagining;
 - Making (political) space for innovation;
 - Political implications.
- Not a 'policy lab'.

Figure 34 shows the thematic network generated from the themes and sub-themes developed in this thematic analysis. As it can be observed, from a total of thirteen themes, eleven are sub-themes to the global theme 'Design for future policymaking', whilst 'Not a 'policy lab'' appears as an independent global theme.

Likewise, these themes were inductively developed, that is to say, theme construction took place as the analyses unfolded, and these were not predefined as is the case in a deductive process (see section 3.4.2). To provide evidence and support each theme, illustrative quotes have been selected to accompany the themes' description.

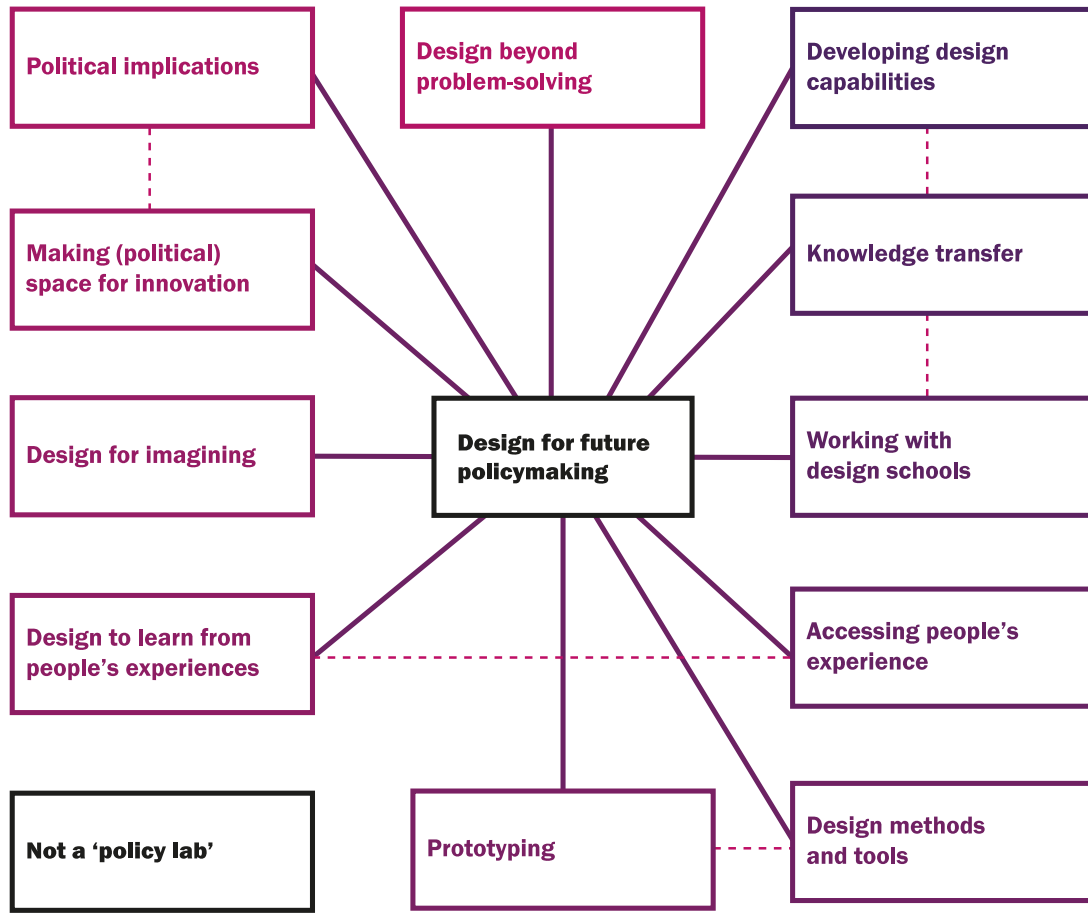


Figure 34: Study 3's thematic network

6.3.1 Design for future policymaking

All participants agreed that design is well-placed to play a role in future policymaking. In this regard, one of the interviewees from the EU Policy Lab stated they “are absolutely sure that this [design] is relevant [for policymaking], that this opens a new form of communication. Communications either to participatory design approach, reframing the real, rethinking what are really the questions” (EUPL₁).

The integration of design for future policymaking is seen as necessary to overcome some of the issues of the current policymaking process. In the EU setting, this is portrayed as a lethargic process that occurs behind closed doors:

...and you can imagine how the typical, the official policy making, they are sitting on screwed tables, which are screwed to the floor with microphones, talk to press and usually they come with their statements, they put their statements, and at the end they have some minutes to discuss. Maybe somewhere in the backrooms, in the cafés also, they are making the policy.
(EUPL₁)

Moreover, they expressed that they see design playing a role in changing some of this logic towards more open and exploratory dynamics:

...we want to have the space for open discussion, experimentation, understanding the user needs, taking them at the centre of policy making. This use for citizen experience is one element. Experimentation, broadening the variety of options that are possible beyond the one which is re-doing this thing that was done somewhere else in the world or that was done 40 years before. For us it's also explanatory, it's about explaining what are these concepts, the ideas, the evidence, in a more visual way to run this. So, we are working on these different elements with participatory design.
(EUPL1)

According to one interviewee who investigated how utopias changed throughout the 20th century, design is well-placed to shape future visions of society:

...the very definition of design, which is very prospective, design is always about betterment. So, in that way, design is not nostalgic, it always tries to go forward. So, it's optimistic in a way. It believes that life and the world could be better. And I was really interested in the modernist utopias, how they prevailed in speculative design and participatory design...
(DS2)

Likewise, another interviewee claims that design represents a good complement when working with foresight:

...the tradition of scenario planning I have seen practiced and read about through journals like foresight and futures [...] those people are very macro. They think at a very high conceptual level, whereas design, in general, thinks at a more micro-social level. What is this actor, this human as they interact with this future, or experience this future?
(EUPL2)

On a more practical note, an interviewee from a design school pointed out that when speculating about the future it is impossible to arrive at a very accurate forecast, as “all you can do is to try to capture it in a moment, present it to other people and have a discussion about it [and] design does that very well” (DS4). That often means “taking all the material, putting it in a form that can be presentable, and then bringing in experts, talking about that, and iterating it again, to end up with a service or a concept that could actually hold in together all those little elements about the future and have a conversation about that future. And I think that's something only design can do, actually” (DS4).

In terms of the recommendations made in the *FuturGov* reports about the creation of strategies for the adoption of open government, digital governance, and frameworks for experimentation (see section 6.2) for future government, one interviewee offered the following explanation:

These are drivers, drivers and opportunities and agendas to which some governments have committed themselves to, like the open government partnership. And then individual countries have their own drivers about institutional change and so. And obviously it's tied to technology and ideological agendas, in some case about having a small state. So, there's sort of multiple reasons for the origins of open government have created this space, an opportunity for these design-like activities to emerge.
(EUPL2)

Regarding the timeliness of introducing design for policymaking, an interviewee from a design school asserted that this is “clearly because of the economic crisis. [...] I have no doubt. They [the government] have no money, so they have to innovate properly <<laughs>>. They have to innovate; they have to be more creative” DS4. They went on to explain that in a context of financial constraints, creativity acquires a more salient role:

Yeah, it's not like they can throw money at everything like they could do maybe ten years ago: 'Have a problem? Hire more people'. Now we don't have the money, we need to create better services for real. So, that's one of the reasons why they're reaching out to these kinds of collaborations. And I think they're looking at design because we can do, I mean, we can deliver a service with no money for example. Or we can try at least. We have different strategies like, again, if you look at social design, to build on the community.
(DS4)

In the words of one interviewee, “the reason why I think they [the government] need design is because they keep getting it wrong and late. They are reacting. You can't really... you shouldn't create policies in a reactive way. So, I think we can help, as designers, to change a little bit that cycle and be less reactive” DS4.

One policy lab interviewee acknowledged that in terms of public policy innovation, “we have new concepts coming on board and we have new ways of developing public policies” (PL3). However, they explain that the introduction of design can affect the policymaking process, for instance, in the way policies are implemented. When asked specifically about how they see future policymaking changing as a result of design’s introduction they explain that “the implementation process will be affected by certain designs. It could be much more efficient, maybe” (PL3).

Importantly, the EU Policy Lab understands design literacy as part of the skillset of future policymakers:

...there is a process on skills of civil servants. So, this was the beginning call, future skills of civil servant, not so much the future is already there <<laughs>> And our results were taken as an inspiration, as part of the dialogue on what are the skills of the civil servants of the future. Now our own Director General... they are giving member states support mechanisms, they are helping to improve their administration and their policy making processes and so on. And they were quite keen on working with us and learning from our experiences, and I assume that this was quite inspiring to them. But this is not really a measurable element.
(EUPL1)

Developing design capabilities

A salient theme amongst the discourses of all interviewees is the need for developing capabilities within the public administration for future policymaking. One interviewee commented as follows on the need for creating training programmes:

Innovation for many people equals digitisation. So, due to a limited amount of knowledge, time and financial resources, organisations tend to focus on digitalising certain processes instead of rethinking the processes. And if you digitalize a bad process you will have a bad digital process in the end, that is even harder to change in the future. So, apart from providing resources, it's a lot about competence development in the public

sector in the field of change management and digitalization. And that's why we developed GovLabAustria training to provide the skills needed in times of rising complexities.

(PL1)

This need for upskilling the internal competences is the reason why the EU Policy Lab worked with an external consultant to develop their *FuturGov* project. This consultant explained that developing internal design competences is a priority for the JRC:

They already have the capability in doing foresight, [EU Policy Lab member] has that background. Design is not something they have, so, in the original call for support, [...] they wanted to develop this capability and they approached me [...] And why did they want to bring design? That I don't know but I imagine it's the same reason than everyone else, you know? They observe it's becoming more visible and that other government entities are trying to use design in different ways. They didn't have the capability, and then they started to set a couple of different projects. So, this was one.

(EUPL2)

The interviewee further explains that in this context, developing design capabilities relates to the need for acquiring new methodologies for experimenting. Similarly, developing innovation capabilities is also a driver for which design is valued. According to one interviewee,

in business, we've seen the development of design thinking and service design as capabilities in organisations, as innovation capabilities, at least that's the claim, that they will lead to innovation. And with design thinking we've seen the development of managers and entrepreneurs who didn't go to design school who then feel very confident and fluid in doing this thing called 'design thinking' as a practice but they are not from the 'culture'. They are not rooted in the culture of design. So, my view is it's a different kind of design practice. It's an organisational expertise that has some clear relationships to design and elements of practice but it's culturally different, it's got different institutional drivers and barriers, and it's a different kind of expertise. So, perhaps we will see the same kind of thing inside government.

(EUPL2)

Interestingly, most of the policy labs participating in *FuturGov* have limited internal design capabilities. One interviewee explains:

Designers are not really part of our projects. But we hired designers to create our website and we hire designers for our seminars as we try to provide our civil servants, with knowledge, inspiration, and ideas. Our aim is to enable the civil service and to reduce the power of external consultancies. Over a hundred and forty thousand people work in the Austrian public sector, and I know we have a lot of motivation and a lot of expertise, that we have to identify and make the most of it.

(PL1)

In a similar vein, the interviewee from the Irish policy lab explained that the direction public service innovation has taken in Ireland is “less unit driven” (PL4) than in other contexts. Their strategy has been “less about setting up specific teams and more trying to build capacity across existing staff and existing teams” (PL4).

The idea of cultivating design capacities within existing public administration teams seems to have some traction in opposition to the notion of introducing designers in government. Supporting this, an interviewee claimed:

...it's more recognising new professional capacities and expertise are developing through this agenda of open governments and digital governments, and so on. Policy labs are one expression of that. Do they need to have, you know, 'true design' people in there? Who knows? Because you need to be able to operate in the environment you are in. [...] So, does it matter if it's really truly design-led? I mean, it's design-led in the sense that... design thinking is design-led in the sense that it is bringing in some of the characteristics of design that you and I would be familiar with. Does it have to be done by people who went to design school? I'm not so sure. [...] However, there is a research question about when you create this organisational capacity to do design-like workshops and, yes, these are methods and tools which can move, they can travel between domains, do you lose something when you don't have design people and it's done by others?
(EUPL2)

One interviewee expressed that the change in the public sector regarding the adoption of design is palpable. In the past years they have experienced public servants utilising 'designerly words' as part of their speech, something they interpret as the penetration of design into mainstream culture (DS4).

Some of the interviewees are aware of consultancies doing training in the design for policy space, while some have done it themselves. However, there are concerns that a robust base of knowledge that justifies larger education programmes on the matter is still lacking. One interviewee expressed that they are aware of some programmes:

...one or two master's [are] emerging specifically, but I think [it] is really problematic because we don't have the research basis. [...] we don't actually have the research base anyway. So, I think it would be premature to have shiny new courses when we don't have the research.
(EUPL2)

At the same time, the same interviewee asserts that part of the project's impact is symbolic by showing policymakers and other policy stakeholders that certain design approaches are valid complements to the policy development process. Likewise, the other EU Policy Lab interviewee stated that nearly all the projects they run are part of a learning process in which to experiment with new ways of working. Moreover, the collaboration with design schools has already been implemented for another EU project (EUPL1).

Knowledge transfer

Besides developing internal design capabilities and competences, the project seems to have fostered knowledge transfer between the participating organisations. In this regard, one of the interviewees from the EU Policy Lab shared that although they had a rough structure in place for the citizen engagement workshops, they "were also learning from how the policy labs adapted it. Some did things quite differently. Some made a proposal, this was really enriching for us and we also took this up for our approach, or our workshop concept" (EUPL1). To achieve this, members of the EU Policy Lab went to different locations where the workshops were taking place to either observe the process or co-host the workshops (EUPL1).

The prospect of crosspollination appeared as an incentive for many of the organisations to partake in *FuturGov*. Some even used the opportunity to establish themselves and gain traction. As one interviewee puts it, “Service rePublic was very new at the time, so it was just, you know, they wanted to learn from us, and we wanted to learn from them” (PL4).

The EU Policy Lab acknowledges that when it comes to foresight for policy the “UK is really the forerunner and for design for policy it's more or less the same” (EUPL1). Moreover, they recognise that UK organisations such as the Cabinet Office’s Policy Lab and Nesta are “extremely inspirational” for their work at different levels. Similarly, another interviewee mentioned that an important part of running projects such as *FuturGov* should be their evaluation, and for that they suggested looking at the work of Nesta’s Innovation Growth Lab.²⁰ (DS1.1).

Similarly, the organisations working at a local level (the policy labs and design schools), also looked at integrating knowledge and expertise from local actors. For instance, the University of the Arts London proposed that to develop their concepts they would work with Public Collaboration Lab, a social innovation lab that since 2016 exists as “a collaboration between the University of the Arts London and Camden [Council] to work together to deliver better services, better policies, but at the same time, they work always with design students” (DS4).

Working with design schools

In their *FuturGov* reports, the EU Policy Lab explains that the motivation for collaborating with design schools was twofold. On the one hand, and since the project was future-oriented, they looked at having the input of young people (i.e. the design school students). On the other, the project leaders assumed it would provide them with an “outside-in view”, as opposed to working with political science or public administration students (Vesnic-Alujevic, Stoermer, Rudkin, Scapolo, & Kimbell, 2019). Moreover, one EU Policy Lab added that the idea was that the design schools would “operationalise” the future scenarios by producing artifacts, thus making them more tangible and showing creatively how these futures could look (EUPL1). This, moreover, would not disrupt the design schools’ curriculums, as “it’s very common in design school pedagogies to do practical experimental projects between the students and a partner organisation” (EUPL2).

When consulted about this, some interviewees understood the “mission for all these schools, as they call it, the design school, was to actually design... In order to actually make the design of the future... So, future models of governance and services relating to that” (DS1.2)

However, some of the interviewees shared other views on why working with design schools is helpful. One interviewee expressed that “a lot of organisations want to work with students because they access places that no one else can. [...] That’s one reason, kind of a selfish one. But then there is another one, that you are creating real advocacy for working in the public sector” (DS4).

Another interviewee argued that the choice of working with design schools is in opposition to working with design consultancies, which are often not fit for purpose when dealing with public sector issues:

²⁰ “The Innovation Growth Lab is a global collaboration of governments, foundations and researchers, led by Nesta, that develops and tests different approaches to support innovation, entrepreneurship and growth” (Nesta, 2019)

Because all design consultancies, avoid complexity. They don't have in mind or they want to solve, often in a kind of stereotyped way, all the interpretation of what is existing and of the transformation [needed]. So, the idea is they use tools, tools for everything. I think that if you're dealing with producing images, direction, strategy for a complex future, you could not limit yourself to 'toolification', 'stereotypization' of phases, things, deliverables. They try to usually repeat things, simplify things, avoid complexity, avoid diversity, being stereotyped in terms of being cosy, cool. This kind of thing. So, probably, it's an impression, but probably they really don't fit the problem. [...] So, if you are not choosing the right consultants, because there are consultancies that are more trained within this kind of culture, that specialise in terms of dealing with this kind of process, dealing with this kind of, again, expectation of results, they are working on this. So, the social matter is the main thing. And they are less functional. If you're not choosing this kind of consultant, probably you are entering this 'tool, blah, blah, blah, very quick, very smart thing, technology push, blah, blah, blah'. It's a kind of buzzword, just more buzzwords. (DS1.1)

The critical understanding about design consultancies tapping into design for policy may relate to their expertise in the area. Interviewees from the design schools participating in the project not only were familiar with design for policy but have a legacy within participatory design and co-design, as well as a focus on social innovation. For instance, the Design Department at Politecnico di Milano runs an initiative called 'Design Policy Lab': a lab that focuses "on researching, implementing, and evaluating policy through design and design through policy" (Politecnico di Milano, 2016). Similarly, another interviewee coordinates a research platform called 'Collaborative Future Making' and defines their faculty as "a group that are engaged in social innovation, and also that have been working quite as much with the public sector" (DS3).

The EU Policy Lab's external consultant played a crucial role in identifying the design schools to collaborate in the *FuturGov* project, due to their professional network and knowledge of the academic institutions working with design for policy in EU member states. They explained that up until then, the EU Policy Lab did not normally involve design schools in their projects, thus, this opportunity "gave them a window on to that and also access to the capacity of the students to think differently" (EUPL2). The selection criteria specified design institutions with active researchers in design in government or design for policy. It also considered schools with different pedagogical and academic emphases, so as to cover those with "a more social science-driven [approach], strongly speculative design, [and] industrial design" perspective (EUPL1). Although it could not be achieved, the original plan meant involving design schools from the same EU member States where the citizen engagement workshops took place.

Accessing people's experience

The *FuturGov* project looked at engaging with diverse stakeholders. The reason for this is that the EU Policy Lab recognises stakeholder engagement (in the broadest sense) as being important to developing new ideas and, particularly for this project, developing understandings of citizens and businesses (EUPL2). Therefore, the project was designed to bring in new perspectives and voices including the individual voices of citizens and stakeholders in workshops and through the engagement tool game (EUPL2). Wanting to capture these voices relates to what they refer to as the disconnect that exists between policymakers and lay people:

...for our project it was important that we are trying to tackle one of the big critiques of the European bubble, or the Brussels bubble, [which is] flying somewhere up there and having no connection with the citizen. So, our issue was to try and think how to really work together with citizens and get their insights and get their assumptions on how the future could look, and how they assume that the future of government or governance –in the broader sense— might look. [...] And this is why we were working with these policy labs, to really reach out of this bubble.
(EUPL1)

Some policy labs share this view and appreciate that EU projects that look at integrating citizens' views are crucial for the European project since many people are not only far away from Brussels geographically but in their understandings of its institutions (PL1).

The EU Policy Lab hypothesis was that by engaging with local policy labs, their project would more easily grant access to the citizens, business representatives, and civil servant's insights in each of the selected EU member states. Additionally, the EU Policy Lab explicitly asked the participating policy labs to include in their workshops a mixture of people from different backgrounds, professions, and walks of life, to create cohorts as diverse as possible. However, since they did not have much control on how the local policy labs selected the participants, they recognise this did not always work as planned (EUPL1).

Paradoxically, the policy labs did not find the task particularly easy. One interviewee explained that their organisation typically engages with their "community, consisting of many academics, our stakeholders, and well-informed participants, but we struggle to really get citizens on board" (PL1). Moreover, they expressed similar concerns about engaging with the public:

...for us, as GovLabAustria, it's kind of difficult to address citizens directly. As we are at the federal government level and we cannot... we need other partners to really integrate citizens' opinions in our projects.
(PL1)

They also explained that this is a particularly difficult situation they have faced in the past:

And that's an issue with the whole 'citizen participation' thing; you always get the same stakeholders who are very involved in the whole policymaking, have big political interest, and are part of your network, but it's always very difficult to get external, completely fresh stakeholders on board. We tried it, we had some, but it was really hard, and it was not the majority of the participants.
(PL1)

To overcome this, the Austrian policy lab resorted to their partnership with Impact Hub Vienna²¹, which allowed them to take advantage of their extensive network (PL1). All other local policy labs utilised some sort of network to recruit citizens for their workshops, with one resorting to a recruitment agency to facilitate this process. They argued that recruiting a group of people following the precise description given by the EU Policy Lab was in fact the most difficult to implement from the entire project (PL2).

²¹ According to interviewee PL1, Impact Hub Vienna "is an international network of co-working spaces for companies and small enterprises focusing on social innovation. They have over 100 hubs worldwide and a huge network across civil society".

On the other hand, some interviewees stated that engaging with these stakeholders also has a transformative effect on them. For citizens, engaging with policymakers and civil servants allows them to gain a better understanding of how government operates and why certain issues exist in their current state. For civil servants, on the other hand, it is not only an opportunity to view these issues from the citizens' perspective but also to obtain new ideas on how to tackle them (PL1). The interviewee from the Austrian policy lab expressed that it is not only striking to witness how these workshops contribute to the participants' shift in their mindsets but also that in their experience, there is no other dynamic with such power (PL1).

FuturGov is not the only EU project that looks at collaborating with different local stakeholders. A previous experience from the digital policymaking team partnered with local policy labs to collect insights and opinions across the EU on citizen perspectives on e-government and e-governance. This was considered a successful experience, since the Tallinn Ministerial Declaration on e-government included the key points arising from those citizen engagement instances (EUPL1). Furthermore, these recommendations contributed to establishing "common user-centricity principles to improve the digital experience and interaction of users when accessing public services" (EU Commission, 2019) as the declaration's foundation.

Design methods and tools

The interviewees were able to identify a number of design methods and tools that they utilised during the project (see table 18).

For the citizen engagement workshops, the policy labs were requested by Brussels to utilise 'personas' and 'scenarios'. Whereas these were an output requirement of the citizen engagement workshops, they were the input for the design schools. As one EU Policy Lab interviewee explained, these tools were aimed "to step into the shoes of a different person and tell the story from there" (EUPL1). Also, they mentioned that, in their terms, scenarios are plausible, consistent future stories developed from the bottom up; therefore consistency may not be the key issue, but rather thinking in alternative future stories, asking 'what if?' questions (EUPL1).

	EU Policy Lab	Policy Labs	Design Schools
Methods and tools	Personas	Personas	Personas (given)
	Scenarios	Scenarios	Scenarios (given)
	User journey map	'Ice-breakers' and 'energiser'	User journey map
	Stakeholder mapping	Stakeholder mapping	Sketching
	Exploratory sessions	Collage of the future	Double diamond
		Storyboards	'Rehearsing the future': mock-ups, role playing

Table 18: Methods and tools utilised during *FuturGov* by type of organisation.

Besides these two methods, all organisations were given the freedom to develop any other tools and/or resources that they deemed necessary. Interestingly, all of the policy labs' interviewees mentioned 'designing the workshops' and the resources needed to run them (worksheets, templates, props) as a design activity. In this regard, one interviewee mentioned that "the people who are involved in delivering the workshops would be designers to a certain degree" (PL4). However, as the workshops include non-designers, some facilitators avoid the

term since the multiple interpretations of what design means might not necessarily be for the workshop's development (PL4).

Additionally, some interviewees mentioned other tools and methods they use in their activities beyond *FuturGov*, namely, rapid prototyping and design thinking. For instance, one interviewee from the EU Policy Lab commented that they typically use a “tailored design process to answer the question of a research project or a policy making project” (EUPL1). Some were, however, explicit on not being nor wanting to be a “design thinking lab” (PL1), as they argued they would choose the tools and methods that best suited specific circumstances. Moreover, the point was raised that design methods were not necessarily the most suitable for every intervention. As one interviewee pointed out,

even in design thinking we have to take the culture into play. It's not just about using design methods, which is great, we use design methods and tools, but we try to choose those that would have an outcome.

(PL3)

This seems to be the norm, since most policy labs mentioned having adaptive processes depending on the requirements and goals of each project. To achieve this, some policy labs have what they described as an ‘open structure’, which allows them to bring in experts and practitioners with specialised know-how to address specific challenges.

The nature of these tools and methods, however, is not definite. The interviewee from the Irish policy lab, for instance, asserted that the tools and methods utilised (personas and scenarios) can be used for design activities but are indeed simple ‘research’ or ‘exploration’ tools that can also be used for non-design activities (PL4).

When asked about the *FuturGov* report recommendation suggesting the development of more collaborative ways of working through design-oriented workshops (see section 6.2), one EU Policy Lab interviewee responded that the key is plurality:

So, having different voices, about trying to bring in situated understandings of people in their day-to-day life, and to activate and capture the future imaginings of participants. So, this is what the design part might bring to complement and possibly challenge and enrich the analytical perspective developed through other methods to develop future scenarios.

(EUPL2)

Supporting this interpretation, another interviewee asserted that engaging with citizens always brings “high qualitative results” (PL1) from individuals that not only have great ideas but also deep knowledge of specific topics.

One interviewee, however, presented a critical view on the policy labs which claim to do design but do not include designers in their teams. They explained that this is problematic because this type of organisation bases their design approaches on toolkits whereas professional designers operate fluidly and therefore do not rely on tools. Moreover, they asserted that this tool-based approach to design often oversimplifies socio-economic issues which are much deeper than those tools are able to capture:

We are not saying 'no tools', we're saying 'why are we using tools?' 'What kind of tools are appropriate for different things, explore, understand, do, everything?'. We avoid tools for tool's sake, or as is the normal thing now, just as a way to aid some lack of

knowledge, of specific knowledge, and also to produce kind of stereotyped, again, situations that could be very different from the point of view of revenues. [...]

So, the boots on the ground part in which they go and see what's happened with citizens but with a clearer grounding, just because we really see things without knowing really what they were doing with the citizens. So, if you don't know what the question is you could not really interpret the answer. We don't have sufficient information, in my opinion, to interpret them in a very profound, in a very deep way. [...] And it is not clear, that's because you need a more profound grounding in terms of why what you are doing sustains. Why are you doing workshops with citizens? Why? If you are not able to tell me why, I really doubt that this could be part of a very appropriate reflection on what we're doing. It's the kind of standard type, everything could be solved in the same way. But is it true? I'm not sure.

(DS1.1)

The interviewee from one of the design schools explained that the designerly way of working went beyond specific tools. For instance, they claimed that 'sensemaking' was the first step the students took by "bring[ing] to life all the material that we had that was in a report form" (DS4). This process involved mapping out all the data, synthesising it, and making connections between the different bits by "zooming out and zooming in between the bigger picture that was given by the European Commission and the local one [...] something that design does very well" (DS4).

Prototyping

The notion of prototyping or iterating ideas based on the feedback obtained from users appeared in all the interviews with representatives from the design schools. This took different forms in each setting. For instance, in order to develop their ideas further, Malmö University organised a number of workshops with civil servants and policymakers working on a local and regional level (DS3). On the other hand, the students from the 'School of Form' in Poland utilised a public event as a forum to test their concepts:

There's, not far from here, a big square that is called 'Freedom Square', so during this festival, it's like a space where all social initiatives take place. And so, we presented our prototypes and invited people to comment on the ideas. And that was really nice. Because that was the moment when I've seen the students already involved and getting feedback.

(DS2)

One interviewee asserted that working with designers in general, and design schools in particular, is "because we prototype all the time, we test, we trial, we fail really small. So, we minimise the risk. And I think that's what they need if they want to be innovative" (DS4).

Design beyond problem-solving

Understanding and exploiting the potential of design beyond its problem-solving capabilities appeared recurrently during the interviews. The main reason for this is that the *FuturGov* project did not aim at providing answers nor solutions for governance in 2030+ but rather to explore potential forms of interaction between citizens and governments. However, it also appeared that escaping the temptation of looking at the issues identified with a problem-solving lens was not particularly easy for many of the actors involved in the process.

To successfully combine design and foresight, many of the students had to shift their mindsets and the faculty adapt their courses. One interviewee explained that for them it meant shifting their focus from service design to speculative design, so that students felt more comfortable opening up discussions about the future instead of attempting to resolve a problematic situation (DS4). This might have proved difficult since, as one interviewee stated, their usual focus is on learning “how to do it, not to know it in theory, because their first language is their hands and their second language is words” (DS2).

On a similar note, they mentioned that typically “the designer's task is to do things differently and in innovative ways. [...] So, we actually tried to and encouraged them [the students] not to use that much innovation and just to really think about problems, societal problems, political problems, so see the theme they chose in the broader context and to identify actors, and really think about the future” (DS2).

Although this posed a challenge mostly for the design students, some of the policy labs also had to adjust to limit themselves to only one part of their typical innovation processes:

We were asked to discuss with the people factors of the change, potential factors of the change, and like, positive and negative sides of it [...] but how I felt it, it was more about discussing about hopes and fears of people about the future. How they imagine it, how they would like to see it, and not the creation of solutions. It was more discussion than creating solution. [...] I think it was, maybe not more difficult to facilitate, but it only one part of the process. It was a very small part of it. Yeah, so it was maybe difficult for us. We'd like to have some more concrete result of this”.

(PL2)

Design to learn from people's experiences

According to one of the EU Policy Lab interviewees, “the whole point of the *FuturGov* project was to try and understand citizen perspectives [...] through a co-design methodology” (EUPL2). To accomplish this, the citizen engagement workshops aimed at creating personas of citizens in the future by, in some situated way, drawing on those participants' understandings and imaginings. With this unorthodox policymaking approach, the EU Policy Lab hoped to illuminate aspects of people's experiences of the future.

Moreover, the interviewee expressed that public servants in Brussels “were absolutely fascinated with these concepts [developed by the design students, and] very open to getting a new insight. And they took them very seriously [...] There was a genuine intellectual curiosity amongst these public servants to access new insights via a route they would not ordinarily do, which was resulting from this project” (EUPL2). Although they do not discard the possibility of having gained similar insight from more traditional means, the project did prove to the policymakers that a co-design approach could contribute and be considered a valid source of data.

All policy labs involved agreed that eliciting participants' lived experiences –whilst being aware of the limitations this implies— was crucial to develop both personas and scenarios that reflected the views of the future citizens. In this regard, the interviewee from the Maltese policy lab was explicit in asserting that the role of design in the process was to elicit citizens' insights and then to produce concrete outcomes from those (PL3).

Design for imagining

As previously mentioned, the *FuturGov* project aimed at utilising a co-design approach. This also allowed for some other particular features of design to manifest, such as visual representations of the concepts and ideas discussed.

In this regard, the Polish policy lab interviewee commented that in their case, utilising a design thinking approach proved particularly beneficial for participants to digest otherwise very abstract concepts. Likewise, this also contributed to making the discussion more vivid and allowing participants to better empathise with other's experiences with government and public services (PL2).

The design schools, on the other hand, were specifically tasked with producing visualisations and artifacts that embodied the concepts developed by the students. To some this meant adopting a service design approach which could help them in materialising future government-citizen interactions (DS1.1). One design school interviewee expressed that the translation from future scenario to policy intent to public service was enhanced by the construction of prototypes and artefacts that made these futures tangible and therefore easier to imagine (DS4).

The EU Policy Lab intention was to utilise these artefacts to spark the civil servants' (and other stakeholders in Brussels) imagination and foster an open discussion about the topics and issues captured in the future scenarios. For the design schools this posed an interesting challenge since the objects had to communicate a certain sense of the quotidian instead of the solution to a given problem, as indicated in the following comment from one design school interviewee:

...how we think about design and objects is really the idea of the active [sic] network theory. Bruno Latour's object's embodiment of relationships, and of different social actors. And we, in theory, were more interested in how the object may somehow show these complex relationships. But the tangibility of the object was really important in the sense that if you want to involve people in discussions, it's really nice to bring something to the table, to show something. Because words are really tricky, and people have different understandings of what they're saying.
(DS2)

In agreement with this, one policy lab interviewee expressed that they typically work with visual recorders and graphic designers beyond this particular project, because it enables the sharing of knowledge and the visualisation of outcomes in more tangible and clear ways (PL1).

Making (political) space for innovation

Organizations trying to innovate in the public sector face several difficulties in making their voice heard. Even for the EU Policy Lab, grabbing the attention of Members of the European Parliament (MEP) can be challenging. One of the EU Policy Lab interviewees claims "there are different rules to work together [with EU policymakers], which are sometimes a bit complicated. And the MEPs are super busy all the time. They are rushing around" (EUPL1).

Workshops and activities in which policy makers can participate for a limited period of time and without major commitments appear as a possible solution to gain buy-in. This was explained by an interviewee who claimed that "what really those kinds of workshops, those kinds of processes help is to give us, "experts" in a certain field, the power we need to bring this idea to the next level to find political support to implement" (PL1).

Political implications

Although the political implications of the tools, methods, and process involved in the FuturGov project are not highlighted in the reports, some of the interviewees shared their views on this.

For instance, the interviewee from GovLabAustria showed concern about the political implications of not knowing who was partaking in co-creative exercises:

...[when] hiring external people there might be also always a hidden agenda in the process. And we try to reduce the hidden agenda of different stakeholders, also different owners of GovLabAustria, as much as we can but [...] there might be some issues inviting completely unknown people to a process... Especially, if it is a very small group of people. I think it's easier to have a fair distribution when you have a big number of people in a survey. [...] that's the hidden agenda that you have to take into account in every innovation when people are involved. [...] What would be an improvement for 'the project itself: clear framework conditions, guiding principles and quality assurance for the engagement process. I think that would support the quality of such a process.
(PL1)

Another interviewee who moderated one of the citizen-engagement workshops commented on the inevitability of addressing political concerns:

Even though the discussion started with citizen needs, what that might look like in the future, the types of services that might be required, very quickly the discussion moved on to, well, how does policy actually provide the correct context for these services. What are the political decisions around funding and budgets for these particular services? Why don't they currently exist? I think most of the groups probably would have made quite quickly the connection between making decisions around the delivery of services and policy and then politics.
(PL4)

Conversely, the interviewee from Engage Warsaw was explicit in their efforts to avoid the topic as they thought it could be detrimental: “We didn't want people to think about government in context of the political, which is right now [prominent] in Poland. So, we wanted them to understand that policy is not only the government they see on TV, but it has impact in their lives” (PL2). Moreover, they emphasised the role of design methods and participatory design in understanding people’s needs “to solve real problems, not the issues that sometimes are created by politics” (PL2).

Distancing themselves from this conception, another interviewee questioned the political role designers play by participating in policy processes:

I don't see a problem with the discipline being there. I see a problem with designers being there, which is different. We're not elected members. We can't really say what's right or what's wrong, you get a priority set, and you're working in that direction. But we're not even public officers, you know, so they have to, because they're working in an office, but we don't have to, and design is a highly political practice. So, we're not only using design to improve politics, the pressures of politics, but also... then you have certain decisions that are highly political. [...] when you work with a local authority, because they have no money to keep delivering their services and they want, they need to redesign their services in a way that they're less resource-intensive, so they can keep delivering them for

the public good, to what extent are we pleasing their political agenda of devolution, and of the cuts? Fuck, we're helping them, aren't we? Because maybe if we left everything to collapse, they would realise that that doesn't work. But at the same time, we're making some positive change. So, you put yourself in a real difficult political position? And I don't have an answer, but I know it's risky. So, at least, I mean, talk about that openly. That's the best I can think of.

(DS4)

The issue does not go unnoticed in the EU Policy Lab. In the first *FuturGov* report, the authors claim that the development of future scenarios “along with the design concepts of new interactions with government produced by design students, are used as tools for reflection to explore new possibilities and challenge preconceived ideas about government today. This allows us to assess the redistribution of power relations between societal actors and political institutions.” (Vesnic-Alujevic, Stoermer, Rudkin, Scapolo, & Kimbell, 2019, p. 7).

6.3.2 Not a ‘policy lab’

The concept of policy labs remains elusive. Although the term ‘policy lab’ has been used liberally in this chapter to describe some of the organisations collaborating in conducting *FuturGov* –as has also the EU Policy Lab in their reports—, when asked about it the interviewees refuse the label. Perhaps even more interesting is that one interviewee from the EU Policy Lab, when asked about the term, responded that “JRC is kind of the in-house Think Tank of the European Commission... so, I don't know what we call us... ‘policy knowledge management’? Something like this. We are trying to transform scientific knowledge into edible bits and pieces for policy makers” (EUPLi).

Another interviewee mentioned they call themselves “a public sector innovation lab because our primary focus was to develop an innovation lab for public sector reform. But public sector reform also brings in other stakeholders and it has a wider frame than policy, but we would not call our lab a ‘policy lab’” (PLi). Similarly, the interviewee from the Warsaw-based organisation refusing the policy lab label explained they are a “group of service designers, researchers, facilitators, a group of enthusiasts of service design, participatory design and design in general. [...] We started this organisation [...] because we are also very interested in public services. We made this community to try to help to solve some issues that public services aim at, and [...] we were working on some projects for NGOs, and the city hall” (PL2).

The four organisations also differ greatly in nature. Whereas two of them are public sector organisations, another one is a department within a public university, and the fourth one a private sector design agency. Likewise, whereas GovLabAustria is a central government organisation co-founded by the Austrian Federal Ministry for Arts, Culture, the Civil Service and Sport²² and Danube University Krems, the Irish Service rePublic sits in the County Council of Cork. The interviewee from the latter explains the appellation might be problematic since the term “lab” has implications that often go beyond what many of these organisations do:

if they described themselves as a lab, they would be thinking that they should be doing more experimentation, trialling, and prototypes, but I think they sort of see themselves as a service design unit. [...] But if we use ‘lab’ in the very broad sense of a unit that sits

²² In German: *Bundesministerium für Kunst, Kultur, öffentlichen Dienst und Sport (BMKÖDS)*

within a government, entity or agency or local authority and delivers projects across units and offices, then they would be a lab. But if we're using the term to mean an entity that runs projects, but also trial and experiment, they might not describe themselves as a lab.

(PL4)

However, when asked specifically about experimentation, some organisations do claim it is within their remit. The EU Policy Lab, for instance, although “an advice body inside the European Commission, [that] doesn't develop policy” (EUPL2), aims “to test and to see how to adapt policies in ways that they are really having an impact on creating a behavioural change, testing these with randomised controlled trials” (EUPL1).

6.4. Summary of Chapter 6

This third study looked at investigating the role and inputs of design in devising future policymaking. This study is situated within an EU project delivered by the EU Policy Lab in collaboration with six policy labs and six design schools in EU member states. This project looked at utilising a multi-method approach, consisting of design, foresight, and citizen participation to imagine the future of governance in the EU and its members. The EU Policy Lab, the project owner, belongs to the EU Commission's Joint Research Centre and is one of the few policy labs operating at a supra-national level. For the project called ‘The Future of Government 2030+’, they aimed at engaging other policy labs and design schools in EU member states. From the former they expected to gain access to insights from the countries where they operate, as the EU Policy Lab assumed it would be difficult for them to disembark in each country to deliver the project themselves. From the latter, the EU Policy Lab intended to engage with a wide-ranging cohort of design students that could help in bringing to life the insights gathered in the citizen engagement activities.

This study presents features of special interest in terms of the relationship between design and public policymaking. Whereas the first two studies examine the introduction of design approaches for public policymaking under the premise of contributing towards more innovative outcomes, this study considers the policymaking process as a product of design. Furthermore, this is of significance since the EU Policy Lab claims that “the outcomes of the student work will influence thinking of how government might need to change” (Joint Research Centre, 2017). This implies the project recommendations have the potential for implementation at the EU level. Moreover, and considering the rapid diffusion effects of policy transfers across national borders (see Study 1), such conceptions of future governance and public policymaking could have widespread implications.

In alignment with the third research question of the investigation, this study aimed at explaining the impact of further integrating design into the policymaking process to produce innovative policies. To elicit insight in this regard, data was collected through semi-structured interviews with key informants from the participating organisations. A total of ten interviews were conducted.

In the process of analysing the interviews thirteen themes were identified:

- Design for future policymaking:
 - Developing design capabilities;
 - Knowledge transfer;

- Working with design schools;
- Accessing people's experience;
- Design methods and tools;
- Prototyping;
- Design beyond problem-solving;
- Design to learn from people's experiences;
- Design for imagining;
- Making (political) space for innovation;
- Political implications.
- Not a 'policy lab'.

These themes present considerable overlap with the those developed in Study 2. For instance, the emphasis on collecting and analysing qualitative data for policy design in Study 2 corresponds with the desire to access people's experiences identified in this study. Likewise, policy prototyping as a distinctive and sought-after design activity was also highlighted during the interviews. However, the interviewees from this study offered more critical views about the use of design for policy. This was palpable in some interviewees' disdain for the use of standardised design tools to solve policy problems. Although it was possible to elucidate a range of design tools and methods utilised in the delivery of the project, some voices found the systematic use of toolkits as a one-size-fits-all for addressing complex societal issues was contrary to the spirit of design. Conversely, the potential of design in eliciting and visualising people's desires and expectations beyond its use as a problem-solving approach was underscored.

Chapter ⑦

Analysis & Discussion

This chapter analyses and synthesises the analytical concepts and findings presented in the thesis so far. The discussion focuses on bringing together each study towards the attainment of the research aim, and is structured according to their individual research questions:

1. What design practices are currently being deployed in the policymaking process?
2. How is design being instilled in public policymaking?
3. Why does the introduction of design for policy affect the policymaking process?

Moreover, it will look at particularities which have been enhancing/limiting to the introduction of design approaches in each of the three contexts investigated.

On this basis, this research set out to answer the question about the role of design in the development of innovative public policies. To achieve this, the investigation has aimed to firstly, map the design practices deployed in the policymaking process; secondly, to explore how design (thinking) is being instilled in public policymaking; thirdly, to explain why the application of design for policy affects the policymaking process.

A preliminary objective of this research was to discuss the relevance of utilising design approaches for public policy innovation. In Chapter 2, a framework for understanding these concepts was developed. Firstly, and regardless of the well-founded critiques of the process model perspective, policymaking was considered as a process through which diverse stakeholders in specific geographic, cultural, political, and regulatory frameworks develop policies that will, in one way or another, affect people's lives in a given society. It is acknowledged that economic, technological, environmental, and societal changes put increasing pressure on governments to provide for the wellbeing of their citizens. Similarly, the accelerated pace of these changes does not allow governments to reach their goals, as their resources and instruments do not adapt at the same rate. Secondly, the existing literature on policy science and innovation management allowed for the development of a conceptual framework to understand public policy innovation from a process innovation perspective (section 2.2). This meant that, instead of considering public policy innovation as a policy which is new to the government adopting it, it could be conceived as a novel process to develop public policies through which new/different results are expected to be realised. Thirdly, the literature showed that the introduction of design approaches at a strategic level in private sector organisations has proven beneficial in their pursuit of competitive advantages. This has mostly been achieved by producing innovations (in products, services, marketing strategies, and business models) that firms can successfully exploit. With reference to more pressing societal issues, governments have started to consider alternative ways of developing new solutions, such as design. The assumption then, is that the public sector can also benefit from design-led approaches to produce innovations that better satisfy public needs and

demands. Whereas the integration of design-led approaches for the development of public service has been more easily translated due to the very nature of the object of design, in this context the articulation of design for the development of innovative public policies is a less trivial task.

Study 1		Study 2		Study 3
Themes identified	User-centredness	Current policy challenges	Disconnection from people	Design for future policymaking
	Co-creation		Lack of in-depth research and use of biases as evidence	Developing design capabilities
	Exploration		Ministers often base decisions on their limited (and biased) experience	Knowledge transfer
			Focus on delivery and not on consequences	Working with design schools
			Too big to fail	Accessing people's experience
			Constrained by current context	Design methods and tools
			Inability to see the big picture	Prototyping
		Explicit design link	Design for User-centredness	Design beyond problem-solving
			Prototyping	Design to learn from people's experiences
			Design to learn	Design for imagining
			Qualitative research and the lived experience	Making (political) space for innovation
			(Co-)design as a driver for policy innovation	Political implications
			Design tools and methods	Not a 'policy lab'
		Policymaking barriers to design adoption	Inappropriate practice	
			Co-design is not common practice	
			Embracing failure	
			Tolerating uncertainty	

Table 19: Thematic findings from Studies 1, 2, and 3.

Design then is dually understood as a process for innovation and as a mindset that allows for the development and implementation of creative ideas to solve problems. Under the first premise, section 7.1 discusses the procedural perspective along with the utilisation of design tools and methods for public policymaking, reflecting the focus of study 1, and this is also identified as a key thematic in studies 2 and 3. Table 19 summarises the thematic findings from each of the studies presented in chapters 4, 5, and 6, that together contribute to the discussion in this chapter.

7.1 Utilising design tools and methods in public policymaking

As previously shown, considering policy labs as the unit of study to inquire into how design is introduced for public policy innovation is justified by their explicit use of design approaches to drive policy innovation. This does not imply that policy labs are the only organisations that introduce design approaches into public policymaking, much less government in general. Nevertheless, these organisations represent a clear target to research how design intervenes in the public policy innovation process. However, although the term ‘policy lab’ has served as an umbrella designation encompassing all organisations working in the development of public policies innovatively, only a limited proportion of the surveyed organisations are formally known as such. Whereas less than a quarter of the organisations surveyed in the first study identified as policy labs, none of those interviewed for the third study did. During the interactions with these organisations —especially in conducting Studies 1 and 3— this research has been able to confirm that organisations labelled as policy labs in previous publications and reports (e.g., those in Fuller & Lochard (2016) and Vesnic-Alujevic et al. (2019)) do not identify as such. The denomination ‘public sector innovation lab’²³, also used extensively to refer to these organisations, appears as a broader, more inclusive option. However, some of the organisations surveyed in Study 3 and the DWP’s PEx are wary of calling themselves ‘labs’, since they associate this designation with spaces where experiments take place. The term ‘experiment’, it seems, has different connotations to ‘exploration’, a term with which some organisations are more comfortable.

Although trivial in appearance, the implications of this misnomer might be important in assessing how these organisations understand their role. Similarly, this warrants reflection on what it implies for design’s use for policy innovation. For instance, Dye’s (2013) definition of public policies asserts that these are anything a government decides to do (or not). Thus, the creation of a space to explore new ways of conducting state business is indeed a public policy. Likewise, this newly created space will then form part of the public sector.

On the other hand, individuals working on this space —or in any other branch of the public sector, for that matter— do not necessarily form part of the government, although they work for it. Therefore, their activities, including the explorations and the tools, methods, approaches they use, take place within the public sector but not necessarily in government. This discussion may seem dialectical, yet it poses the question about the ownership of public policy. As was shown in Section 2.1.4, scholars attribute different actors to each stage of the policymaking cycle. Furthermore, according to Howlett et al.’s (2009) policymaking cycle model (see Table 2), it is only at the decision-making stage where government alone participates in the process. The lack of both decision-making power over the policies to be implemented and the authority to deploy them might explain why many of these organisations are reluctant to adopt the ‘policy lab’ designation. Although this hypothesis requires further evidence to be confirmed, the fact that those organisations at the EU Commission and the UK Cabinet Office —epicentres of central government at supra-national and national level, respectively— are called ‘policy labs’, whereas those at a departmental level (and below) prefer other terms, might be indicative.

²³ This expression is extensively used in social media platforms often under the hashtag ‘psilab’.

The mapping of design tools and methods deployed by these organisations offered a first look at how design is used in practice for public policy innovation. Table 12, presented in section 4.2, shows several design and non-design methods and tools utilised at different stages of the policymaking cycle by the organisations surveyed. Expanding from this, Table 20 summarises the methods and tools associated with design approaches elicited in each study against the stages of the ‘double diamond’ innovation process.

The first study, however, highlighted a lack of coherence on which methods and tools are specifically useful and where the role of a design approach becomes most effective in achieving policy innovation. One evident aspect of the responses to the survey is the interpretation of what constitutes a design method/tool. For instance, and without delving into what makes a design method, ‘design thinking’ or ‘user-centred design’ are seldom referred to as design methods/tools in the literature (see Section 2.3.1). Although the surveys did not encompass the ‘design literacy’ of the respondents, it is difficult to conceive a trained designer claiming ‘sociology’ or ‘psychology’ as design methods. Nevertheless, participants did want to express that design is being used in their organisations. At least two reasons could be attributed to this discrepancy:

1. The survey respondents are not professional designers; thus, some of the nuances between a design-led approach and specific design methods are ambiguous to them;
2. There are other, more relevant factors that characterise a design-led approach to public policymaking that go beyond the tools and methods utilised.

The findings of Studies 2 and 3 help in elucidating this matter. In Study 3, for instance, some interviewees were very much aware of the tools and methods they were using in engaging with different stakeholders. Some of them, professional designers, argued that many of these tools, such as personas or stakeholder mapping, are not necessarily design tools but rather research tools designers eventually utilise when they suit a particular need of the project at hand. However, it became clear that those interviewees that did not have a background in design were more prone to use the term design as an umbrella for many tools and techniques that include or require specific characteristics, such as visual representation skills.

Likewise, some of the interviewees were critical about non-professional designers utilising design toolkits to address complex social and policy issues. It was argued that the ‘toolification’ of the design-led approach —as described by one interviewee in Study 3— could be detrimental not only to the institutionalisation of the discipline in a recently conquered field, such as the public sector, but also inadequate at providing solutions for the problems being addressed. The concern is that with the advent of design in the public sector, and the attractiveness this supposes as a potential client, agencies and consultancies could start offering their services to provide solutions to wicked problems by implementing so-called design methods, for which they do not possess the experience nor the competences. Although there could be merit to consider these cases, some interviewees were also explicit in claiming that currently many people utilising design, especially design thinking, are not rooted in the design culture but are fluid in its practical application.

Regardless of the mastery of the individuals in these organisations to deploy design tools and methods for policy innovation, the research can confirm that some, such as personas and user journey mapping, consistently appear as part of a design-led approach.

Stage	Study 1	Study 2	Study 3
Discover	Ethnographic research	Speculative exercises: newspapers headlines	Speculative design workshops
	Qualitative interviews	Hopes and fears	Personas
	Digital ethnography		Scenarios
	User journey maps		User journey maps
	Five Whys		Stakeholder mapping
	Co-design enabling / Co-design workshop		Exploratory sessions
Define	Scenarios/ Scenario-based techniques	How Might We	Scenarios
	(Rapid) Prototyping	Prototyping (sketching, storyboarding, tabletop, role play, artefacts)	Prototyping (sketching, artefacts)
	Personas	Personas	Personas
	Co-design enabling / Co-design workshops	Design Sprint	Co-design workshops
	Foresight	Styles of government intervention matrix	Future-rehearsal
			Collage of the future
			Service blueprint
			Brainstorming
Develop	Human/User-centred design	Design Sprint	User journey-mapping
	User journey-mapping		Speculative design workshops
	Prototyping		Prototyping (sketching, role playing, mock-ups)
			Personas
Deliver	Experimentation		
	Gamification		
	Service design		

Table 20: Design tools and methods used for policy innovation.

It can be observed that at the centre of the majority of these tools lies the user. This reinforces the notion that the design tools and methods act as devices that aim at bringing the voices and experiences of diverse users front and centre of the policymaking process.

Since some respondents claimed professional designers would adopt a more fluid, less method-reliant approach to dealing with policy problems, it might be tempting to interpret that those organisations who are heavily and systematically relying on a set of design methods possess amongst their ranks fewer professional designers or they are not embedded in a ‘design culture’. However, one organisation surveyed in Study 3 not only identifies as a service design agency but bases its approach on the utilisation of specific service design tools and methods. Therefore, what appears to be more consistent evidence of a strategic positioning of design within this organisation is the mixture of professional profiles which allow for the utilisation of diverse methods (design or otherwise) according to the requirements of the challenge. Moreover, organisations with both more robust internal design capabilities and

understanding of the policy process nuances and complexities move beyond the prescriptive use of off-the-shelf tools to develop their own specific design for policy tools.

7.1.1 Developing design tools

The mapping activities allow for reflecting on the specific use of design means, such as visualisation, for the development of new policy tools. One such example is the UK Policy Lab's *Styles of government intervention matrix* (see Figure 22). This matrix presents the reader with 28 ways in which policymakers can operate at different levels of government intervention. Although the tool does not propose new ways of government intervention, it aims at making policymakers aware that their decisions "early in policy development shape how a policy is delivered and the kind of results that can be achieved" (Siodmok, 2017). However, this tool has also been identified for use in a different way, to stimulate creative thinking within policy teams. This is the case with the DWP's PEx, which promotes the use of the *Styles of government intervention matrix* as a generative tool, as shown in section 5.3.1. This works by allowing policymakers to consider the different perspectives a policy can take based on the problem they face and the results they strive to achieve. While there is merit in assuming that the tool does not necessarily offer policymakers new policy options, it is noteworthy that having such a visual aid facilitates the exploration of diverse alternatives, such as moving from the offering of fiscal incentives for the development of public innovation to providing new services.

It can be argued that it reduces the complexity of each government intervention by offering a comparative framework between them, thus allowing for a clearer evaluation of their pros and cons for each case. In this regard, scholars have argued that whereas consultation of wide-ranging lists of policy instruments can be beneficial in systematising the formulation of policy, the development of genuine policy innovations entails the design of policies that respond to specific organisational and political contexts (Weimer, 1992). However, presenting a gamut of government interventions visually could aid younger or less experienced policy teams, as it allows them to expand their knowledge of the policy levers they can utilise. This was observed during the PEx Open Policy Making training, where teams deployed the matrix to explore different approaches to solving policy problems they had previously worked on. Similarly, the use of this tool could reduce entry barriers for other stakeholders, allowing for better informed and more fruitful co-design activities, by offering non-government literate participants an overview of the ways in which governments intervene in society.

Irrespective of the talent of both the team developing the policies, and those using the matrix as a generative device, it is the ability to think visually and to offer tangible and compelling tools that reduces the complexity of what can be linked to a design-led approach.

As shown in Section 5.3.2.2, in some cases the teams working with design tools would encourage participants to appropriate them and adapt them to their specific needs. Moreover, some of the worksheets utilised by the PEx would include a footnote reading "Feel free to change/edit/amend/challenge this worksheet" (see Figure 32). The workshop facilitators were aware that the look and feel of this worksheet often deterred participants from modifying them since they look 'too pristine', thus the invitation to doing so generally had little effect. This allows the reflection upon the worksheets and other material utilised as objects of design. These artefacts, designed with the intention of facilitating interactions amongst policy stakeholders in co-creative policy sessions, do not always achieve their full potential due to flaws in their designs. In observing this, the difference between those with the practical skills

to craft effective tools and those who understand (and perhaps master) the principles but lack these skills is more evident. This does not mean to imply that professional designers should be the ones in charge of the introduction of design for policy, but rather that certain practical skills are needed to exploit the design principles, such as the ability to communicate visually and inclusively (see Section 2.3.1).

7.1.2 Design approaches and the stages of the policymaking cycle

The mapping activity in Study 1 also aimed at matching specific design tools with stages in the policymaking cycle. However, this task proved challenging. The assumption that mapping the deployment of design methods against the policymaking cycle could be conducive to comprehending design's integration in this cycle was based on the understanding that its stages are identifiable with those of the design process (see Section 2.3.1). Instrumental to this analogy are the comparisons made by Howlett et al. (2009) and Herbert Simon (1992), between the policy, the problem-solving, and the design processes. Howlett et al. (2009) conceive the policy process as 'applied problem-solving', a techno-political process where stages can be matched one-to-one with those of problem solving, as shown in Table 2. The reasoning goes as follows: if the policymaking process stages can be identified with those in the problem-solving process, and likewise, these can be identified with the design process stages by transitive relation, the policymaking and design process stages can be matched. However, this analogy proved problematic.

To better explain this, it is necessary to consider the initial stages of each process (see Appendix 1). Although both the policymaking and design process begin by interrogating the problem space, these two approaches are fundamentally different. Unlike design problems, societal problems are in a constant state of flux and reach the policy agenda only when enough pressure is exercised by a set of policy actors. At this stage, the policy problem has been recognised and the government will have a policy response to it, even when the response is not to act upon it. Conversely, for a design problem to be formulated, there needs to be an explicit effort by a team or individual to address the problematic situation. Therefore, a policy problem needs to have been formulated and introduced in the policy agenda before it can be considered as a design problem.

This reflects reality considerably more accurately because all design interventions in policymaking originate with a brief of some sort to the team leading the design process. Thus, the design approach can only be deployed once a government has decided to act upon a defined issue. This does not mean that the problem reframing process through which design leverages much of its innovative potential would not take place. However, this is an ex-post activity that in practice means looking back at the problematic situation to develop new understandings which might prompt the design of new solutions. The results from the different studies provide evidence for this idea.

During the mapping exercise, a majority of the surveyed organisations (86.2%) claimed to be intervening at the problem identification stage of the policymaking cycle, which resonates with the use of a design approach. This is because a design approach is centred on the ability to create frames which might help in tackling wicked problems; a key skill in addressing complex societal issues. Moreover, this skill is well-established as a core professional design practice which allows for the development of original solutions. Furthermore, the need for

innovating and bringing new approaches to public policymaking has been explicitly connected to the need to address the complexities of current policy challenges. This is indicative of the ways in which contemporary complex societal issues, alongside the need for policy innovation, are being approached through the introduction of design as a mean to foster such innovation. Furthermore, one implication of these organisations operating at the problem definition stage (as opposed to only or mainly at the policy implementation stage) is a shift from the origins of the uses of design in the public sector, where design was employed to operationalise solutions which had not necessarily resulted from a design-led process.

By exploring how a team within the UK government utilises design in their policy exploration activities in Study 2, it was possible to establish that policy problems (or ‘challenges’ as these are often described) are typically given to the team. Since the team’s main task is to offer support to policy groups within a government department, the most common interaction takes a consultative form. This means the team is typically tasked with exploring a policy area which is already deemed problematic. More specifically, the team’s typical role implies that a problem has already been identified and the exploration moves around finding new ways of tackling this problem since the department has exhausted their usual policy instruments. This is a much more problem-solving oriented approach to policymaking than the policy innovation process conceptualisation developed before. Regardless, in PEx projects, a considerable amount of time goes into researching the problem area. This allows better understanding of the systemic implications of the issue faced and where there are levers to transform the current situation into a preferred one. Although in general terms this approach can be linked to the Abduction-1 form of productive thinking, as described by Dorst (2011), it is clear that it involves exploring different standpoints from which to tackle the problem—thus, generating new ‘frames’ is a key aspect of their *modus operandi*.

The third study, on the other hand, shows a different perspective. Whereas in the projects in which the DWP’s PEx participates the problem space is normally pre-defined and it is the solution space where the exploration occurs, in the EU Policy Lab’s project on the future of government the exploration took place in the problem space. However, it is certainly important to note that the objectives of these two examples are indeed different. Whereas the DWP PEx’s projects usually require a solution, the ‘Future of Government 2030+’ project was primarily a research endeavour. This allowed the EU Policy Lab, and the other participating organisations, to develop more novel ideas on how the future relationships between citizens and government would evolve in the coming decade. Once more, following Dorst’s framing of design reasoning, it can be observed that the EU Policy Lab’s approach was much closer to his Abduction-2 productive reasoning, as the only ‘known’ was the end value to be achieved.

What became clear is that the decision-making stage of the policymaking process is still confined to a limited set of policy actors, most of whom do not typically belong to these organisations. That is to say, most of the introduction of design for policy occurs as an ad-hoc effort to explore alternative explanations and potential solutions to policy problems for which the traditional means have not provided satisfactory answers. Likewise, this means the design process does not adjust to the realities of the policymaking cycle but rather takes place within it.

7.2 Instilling design (thinking) in public policymaking

Beyond the conception of design as a process, the introduction of design in public policymaking can be associated with specific attitudes described as a design mindset.

During Study 1, the recurrent identification of ‘agile methods’ as design methods suggests that specific approaches are not the most relevant aspect of these organisation’s practices. As the Agile Manifesto (Beck, et al., 2001) expresses, the focus should be more on individuals and interactions instead of processes and tools. It appears that non-traditional approaches to policy work such as design, agile, and lean methodologies are being conflated in these organisations as they explore new ways of developing public policy. Interestingly, ‘new’ in this case, means novel to the public sector context, since agile, lean, and design methods are well-established practices in the private sector, particularly in the information communication technology industries. Although the translation of methods and processes from one sector to another can indeed be considered innovation, the adoption of these approaches in the public sector is problematic since the very structure of their organisations is more reliant on processes and tools than individuals and interactions. Amongst other reasons, this is due to issues of representation, democracy, and accountability with which public sector organisations ought to be compliant. Therefore, the introduction of design through a set of attitudes that shape the ways in which policy problems are dealt with is promising.

In Study 1, the notions of ‘user-centredness’, ‘co-creation’, and ‘exploration’ —typically through prototyping— appeared as key aspects of this innovative approach, linked to a ‘designerly’ way of policymaking across the responses (Table 19). With this consideration, the subsequent study (Study 2) pursued the hypothesis that it is not the use of design methods and tools that constitutes the design-led approach to public policymaking, but rather that this could be based on the mindsets a design approach entails. In turn, this could explain the broad definition used thus far, in which public policymaking is addressed by these organisations in a ‘design-oriented fashion’, without necessarily resorting to specific design methods or tools.

During the observations with the PEx, the focus was on further investigating the specific characteristics that shape these design-led approaches. As previously explained, Dosi et al.’s (2018) Design Thinking mindset constructs were instrumental in understanding how a design approach is introduced in public policymaking. The study provided evidence for the presence of all the DT mindset constructs in the activities and rhetoric utilised by the PEx. Moreover, these were present and emphasised during the Open Policy Making training programme the PEx designed and delivered for the Department for Work and Pensions.

Design thinking, it appears, makes design accessible to non-designers, whilst simultaneously enabling those who appropriate its ways to develop a professional practice according to specific mindsets sought after for their innovative potential. In the policy arena, design thinking has played an important role in introducing design approaches to policymakers, civil servants, and, to a lesser extent, frontline staff. However, the Design Council (2020) highlights that the design mindset is being used in the public sector without formal design training. Perhaps because of this is that not all aspects of the design thinking mindset are treated with the same emphasis. Analysing which specific features have most influenced the introduction of design for policy can help in understanding its role in policy innovation.

7.2.1 Not all Design Thinking mindset aspects are created equal

Integrating design approaches in the making of public policy seems to hold the potential for promoting policy innovation. Nevertheless, the insights from the different studies indicate specific conditions and requirements for this to occur. The responses from the participants surveyed in the first study suggest the introduction of design in the public policymaking process is related to certain ‘designerly’ attitudes, namely, ‘user-centredness’, ‘co-creation’, and ‘exploration’, rather than to the use of specific design tools and methods. In this context, user-centredness is tied to the shifting of the policymaking process’s focus towards the ‘main’ users affected by the policy problem. This does not mean other aspects should be disregarded but it does imply maintaining a constant feedback loop with this particular group of stakeholders throughout the process. Accordingly, ‘co-creation’ implies the joint development of policies and their implementation (e.g., public services) by a range of stakeholders which may usually be excluded from these activities. This comprises, but is not limited to, those directly affected by the policy being developed (the ‘users’) and the civil servants at the frontline delivering them. Likewise, the exploratory attitude is characterised by a willingness to consider solutions that do not necessarily resemble the existing policies, thus breaking away from legacy and path-dependency tendencies so frequent in policymaking. It also indicates several iterations of a potential solution are tested against assumptions with a number of stakeholders, in what can be considered a positive attitude towards failure, thus reinforcing the user-centred and co-creative attitudes.

Moreover, organisations striving for innovative public policymaking are promoters of the introduction of design mindsets in this realm. Arguably, the design capacities in these organisations may not be particularly robust, since, for instance, their understanding of specific design tools and methods is notoriously fuzzy. However, this does not necessarily imply a detrimental effect on the outcomes they can produce because, on an individual level, the most important aspect may be the adoption of the design thinking mindset. Furthermore, the design mindset employed by these organisations can be learnt and appropriated beyond the use of design methods and tools. The intertwined relationship between the design tools/methods and design mindsets, whereby design tools/methods are nominally the procedure for the development of a given policy but are in practice the vehicle for transference of this design mindset, in turn appears to be linked to the mindset of open policy making. Most notably, this transfer of specific attitudes associated with a design mindset appears to occur in the form of design thinking.

During the exploration with the DWP’s PEx it became apparent that whilst introducing design thinking to colleagues within their department, some features of design were systematically reinforced and specifically highlighted as essential to their policy work.

In utilising the framework analysis deductive approach to understanding how the constructs of the design thinking mindset are introduced in public policymaking, some features appear to hold preponderant importance. Although evidence for all 19 design thinking mindset constructs, as defined by Dosi et al. (2018), was identified during the exploration with the DWP PEx (see Table 15), five of these concentrated almost half (46.07%) of all the codes produced. These constructs (‘human centredness’, ‘learning orientation’, ‘openness to different perspectives and diversity’, ‘empathy’, and ‘experimentation or willingness to learn from mistakes or failure’), represent the design thinking features that the facilitators reiterated with the greatest emphasis.

Furthermore, when comparing the results from Studies 1 and 2, it is possible to establish a link between the findings from the first study's surveys and the results obtained from the analysis of the DWP PEx's Open Policy Making training. This is due to overlap between the definitions of the DT mindset constructs as per Dosi et al. (2018) and the 'designerly' attitudes identified during the mapping exercise (see Table 21).

'Designerly' attitudes	DT Mindset constructs (Dosi, Rosati, & Vignoli, 2018)
User-centredness	Empathy / Empathic
	Human-centredness
Co-creation	Open to different perspectives/diversity
Exploration	Embracing risk
	Abductive thinking
	Creative confidence
	Experimentation or learn from mistake or from failure

Table 21: Comparison of design attributes in Studies 1 and 2.

For instance, the 'user-centredness' attitude identified in Study 1 appears to be represented in Dosi et al.'s (2018) 'empathy / empathic' and 'human-centredness' constructs. Whereas for the former the authors claim it is the foundation of a human-centred design process, in the former's very definition they interchangeably use the expression "user centredness" (Dosi, Rosati, & Vignoli, 2018). This last definition also explicitly refers to the co-creation notion by asserting it is a key and unavoidable requirement to genuine human-centredness (Dosi, Rosati, & Vignoli, 2018). Besides the evident overlap between the two, the interchangeable use of the terms 'human', 'user', and even 'customer' that can be found in both Dosi et al.'s (2018) definitions and the DWP PEx discourse is noteworthy. Although it is outside the scope of this research, an inquiry into the social and political implications of the interchangeable use of these terms —especially in the context of policy design— is needed.

Similarly, the notion of 'exploration', as per the initial conceptualisation in Study 1, appears to be embedded in four of the design thinking mindset constructs defined by Dosi et al. (2018), namely, 'embracing risk', 'experimentation or learning from mistakes or from failure', 'abductive thinking', and 'creative confidence'. Regarding the 'embracing risk' construct, Dosi et al. (2018) explain that the construct includes the "inclination to take risks in terms of process (energy, time, ...) that allow a deep exploration of the context and of new solutions, however crazy/foolish/mad and unconventional" (p. 1995). Equally, in defining the construct 'experimentation or learning from mistakes or from failure', Dosi et al. (2018) claim design thinkers are confident in experimenting as a way to discover new opportunities and to learn from unsuccessful attempts. Additionally, the authors claim designers are aware of exploration as a means to expand their knowledge without excluding risk-taking (Dosi, Rosati, & Vignoli, 2018). Likewise, they claim 'abductive thinking' implies the exploration of alternative solutions (Dosi, Rosati, & Vignoli, 2018). Lastly, references to exploration can also be found in their definition of the 'creative confidence' construct, where the authors quote that "creativity is critical to DT [design thinking] as a mode to explore and express less tangible and more

subjective content by making the abstract or non-experienced come to life” (Schweitzer, Groeger, & Sobel, 2016, pp. 80-81).

Utilising the DT mindset constructs (Dosi, Rosati, & Vignoli, 2018) proved useful in assessing how a design-led approach is introduced in public policymaking, beyond the use of design tools and methods. However, contrasting their constructs with the results from the mapping undertaken during Study 1, it appears that Dosi et al.’s design thinking mindset constructs could be disaggregated and re-configured as a different set of constructs sharing some of the features of the different definitions utilised in their characterisation. Regardless of the discrepancies and the vagueness in definitions, it appears that certain elements and features of design thinking are more intensely pushed in the pursuit of public policy innovation, namely:

1. The ability to empathically understand an issue from the perspective of all human actors involved, and willingness to attempt to address it to ameliorate their life conditions.
2. The push for and need to conduct hands-on explorations and experiments for the promise of new and valuable insights into a problematic situation or its resolution, regardless of the experiment’s outcome.
3. The capacity to integrate and negotiate diverse and often contradictory inputs to co-creatively arrive at novel solutions with those involved in the problem at hand.

Likewise, the studies suggest that how design for public policy innovation is introduced is more related to the mindset with which policy problems are framed and the solutions developed and deployed, rather than the tools and techniques employed to do it. This opens questions about the skills required for policy designers and the ways in which those skills and competences are acquired. This is a timely insight as the community of practice acknowledges:

“Design can be a part of the public sector as a mindset, as a way of thinking, not only as a process or a myth. So, it won't really matter if you follow the double diamond, a sprint, or any structured design method, as long as you work with a user-centred, collaborative, empathetic and creative mindset, you mostly end up doing design”
(Rizardi, 2020)

In a similar vein, ‘Design in innovation strategy 2020-2024’, a recent report from a UK innovation agency, states that the unique characteristics of design in innovation is in its user-centredness and “[m]uch of design’s value lies in the mindset and professional skillset of those who do it well: a combination of critical thinking and applied creativity” (Innovate UK, 2020). This research has been able to validate these observations and discern which specific aspects of the design mindset are of especial importance in aiding with the development of innovative public policies.

Nevertheless, some of the core ‘design skills’ considered crucial in the ability of developing innovative solutions, such as problem framing, are sophisticated professional practices which are understood to require in-depth knowledge and long-standing experience to be fully and effectively deployed (Dorst, 2011; Van der Bijl-Brouwer, 2019). As a result, low performance due to limited design expertise may undermine these organisations’ legitimacy. Moreover, lack of framing or empathic skills may mean more unintended consequences arising from poorly designed policies, thus having a detrimental effect on the expansion of design for innovative public policymaking. To alleviate this situation, some practitioners promote the idea of incorporating more designers into the public sector (Rizardi, 2020). However, bringing

specialised design expertise into this sector may require specific knowledge that enables professional designers to deal with its realities and challenges, something that at the moment is not catered for in the design curriculums (Whicher, 2020).

Study 3, although it did not cover this thematic substantively, also offered relevant insight. Knowledge transfer, for instance, appeared as a recurring theme during the interviews with policy labs and design schools' participants. This transfer is often associated with the development of internal design capabilities and competences, but also with the attitudes required to successfully adopt and implement them in policy work. This was reflected in some of the themes:

- 'Design to learn from people's experience' and 'design beyond problem-solving' which link to the ability to empathically understand an issue from the perspective of all human actors involved.
- 'Prototyping', linking to the push for and need to conduct hands-on explorations and experiments.
- 'Design for imagining', which relates to the capacity to integrate diverse inputs to co-creatively arrive at novel solutions with those involved in the problem at hand.

In Study 3 design thinking also appears as the vehicle for achieving these principles.

7.2.2 Design and its many trojan horses

As shown in Chapter 2, design as a discipline has permeated the public sector in diverse ways. However, design introduction into public policymaking, even when in the guise of 'design thinking'—its most well-accepted form— faces resistance. Largely, this is related to a natural resistance to change by the incumbent forces operating in this arena along with a certain degree of incompatibility between the professional cultures.

Regardless, in the past decade design has made its headway into a novel field. As briefly discussed in Section 2.3, the rationale for stretching design as innovation-enabler from the private sector to the public sector can be traced back to other governmental agendas such as government digitisation and a turn towards a service orientation. Also, Section 4.1 offered a glimpse into the role of policy transfer across national borders and policy labs as a replicable model for integrating design activities in policymaking. For instance, the OECD's (2014) 'Recommendation on Digital Government Strategies', although non-binding, requests from governments the implementation of strategies that promote participation of civil society, public, and private actors in the design and delivery of public policies and services. Similarly, the open governance agenda (pushed by international organisations such the OECD, the Open Government Partnership, and others) has opened a gap for design infiltration into government structures. In line with the digital government agenda, open government has engagement and participation of citizens in governmental policy processes as a pillar (Vesnic-Alujevic, Stoermer, Rudkin, Scapolo, & Kimbell, 2019).

As shown during the exploration with the PEx in Study 2, enhancing policymakers' open policy-making understanding, skills, and competences is a priority to which government departments allocate time and resources. However, in the view of the PEx, open policy making is an umbrella term government uses in referring to design. Although this stance is not representative of the official understanding of the UK government on open policy making, it appears that a design-led approach to policymaking encompasses and articulates the values and attitudes attributed to it. Moreover, by analysing the PEx's OPM training it was possible

to verify that the constructs defining a design thinking mindset are consistently taught, often as elements of open policy making but also explicitly as design attitudes.

What appears to depict these dynamics more accurately than the explanation of government's alleged conflation of the open policy making and design for policy concepts is the operationalisation of the former by the latter. That is to say, under the mandate of adopting more transparent, engaging, and inclusive policy practices, and in the absence of practical guidelines on how to achieve this, design for policy becomes the armed wing of open policy making. Whereas in government digitisation design plays an important but accessorised role by giving form and translating state-citizen interactions to the virtual world, in its deployment as open policy making design becomes its very indivisible essence.

This leaves the policy and public sector innovation labs with the task of operationalising open policy making through the introduction of design for policy at different levels of government. From this standpoint, it is interesting to see how many of these labs, including the iconic Danish Mindlab, have disappeared after a relatively short lifespan — the average policy lab life cycle is of three years according to Fuller & Lochard (2016). Although inquiring into this aspect is beyond the scope of this research²⁴, their ephemeral existence could be explained by the successful building of capacities within a government body. Supporting this, the PEx Head explained one of the reasons for running the OPM training:

...trying to find more open policymakers, more open policy making practitioners in policy groups to broaden and getting the abilities out there in the group to do this more regularly without needing someone from my team all the time to help out, although they're willing to do that.

(F1, OPM2.1)

In the light of this premise, the 'labs' and other government bodies working in a design-oriented fashion are to a large extent providing the competences to practice open policy making as a mainstream practice. Thus, their objective, once this skills and mindset have been adopted, is completed.

Conversely, and perhaps even more important than understanding what are the trojan horses through which design is introduced into public policymaking, is to understand whether design is being a trojan horse for other agendas. This is an important consideration because of two main reasons. Firstly, as Schneider (2013) asserts, "public policies have increasingly been used for political and ideological purposes rather than to find the best solution to a collective problem" (p. 227). Secondly, it is because of Kimbell's (2011) claim that when mobilised within a managerialist framework, design is presented as a de-politicized practice. However, if policymaking is a techno-political process (Howlett, Ramesh, & Perl, 2009), and design can be understood as a social technology (Liedtka, 2020), what are the political components of design for policy?

For instance, the EU Policy Lab understands that "[d]esign's added value is to crystallize change by generating material and digital objects that enable stakeholders to explore, assess and decide between competing interpretations of social issues and potential solutions." (Vesnic-Alujevic, Stoermer, Rudkin, Scapolo, & Kimbell, 2019, p. 12). However, little is said about the role design plays in presenting those competing interpretations of social issues to

²⁴ See Tõnurist, Kattel, & Lember (2017) review on innovation labs in the public sector for a detailed account of these organisations' life cycles.

the stakeholders. Therefore, how can one be sure that design (and designers) is not playing a role in tilting the scale towards specific viewpoints of the issues at hand as well as to the preferred solutions?

Similarly, during the third study (see section 6.3) one interviewee linked the opportunities through which “design-like” activities have emerged in the government sphere with ideological agendas, specifically about reducing the size of the State. Although more evidence is needed to draw a clear link between the introduction of design for policy and the pursuit of neoliberal agendas, it appears that this new form of governance necessarily implies underlying interpretations of society, government, and their interactions which are not always made explicit. It also becomes apparent that some designers are not necessarily aware of the political implications of introducing design in public policymaking. In a similar vein, considering the EU Policy Lab chose to work with design students in their *FuturGov* project to get an “outsider view” on government models (see section 6.2), perhaps the assumption is that designers (and proto-designers) do not add a political layer to their design work. However, the interviewees from the design schools expressed that while they do not adopt very clear political stances, they recognise their role as political actors. Therefore, the collaboration with design schools in the materialisation of the future scenarios can hardly be seen as a technocratic activity by which design students and the academics guiding those processes added no political component to their outputs.

7.3 Design and the policymaking process

Creating new public policies better suited to deal with current societal problems, as well as devising the means to developing these policies, is a necessity for many governments. However, the former appears to be largely dependent on the latter, often requiring the implementation of changes in the ways in which public bodies operate. Previously an analogy with the product versus process model for technological innovation was drawn. However, during the course of the research it became apparent that certain features of these dynamics, such as the ‘tandem’ dynamic —where innovative products may allow for the development of innovative processes— are not necessarily met in the policy context.

When it comes to public policymaking, it seems its process may need extensive revision in order to enable the systematic fostering and development of innovative solutions. Conversely, the introduction of design in the policymaking cycle affects certain changes within it, such as shorter, more recurrent feedback loops between the stages. Although it has been shown that the policymaking process models only partially reflect the realities of a much more complex undertaking, current practices appear to be detrimental to the achievement of policy innovation. The idea that making things differently is required in order to address current challenges has gained traction amongst some policy actors and groups, especially those trying to integrate design for policy.

During Studies 1 and 3, none of the participants subscribed to the traditional view of policy innovation as exclusively the introduction of a new policy by a government. On the contrary, the idea that the process by which policies are developed needs to be reconsidered consistently appears as of utmost importance. This seems to indicate that novel public policies can hardly emerge from the processes through which they have been traditionally developed, signalling its exhaustion for providing radically new solutions. Two main arguments appear crucial in supporting this. Firstly, the different governments’ urge for innovation to address

the complexity of current social policy issues, suggesting the traditional processes fail in doing so. The staged model represented in the policy cycle, mainly conceived in a reductionist manner, limits the capacity to integrate a systematic approach to the development of solutions. Secondly, including the inputs from a larger set of stakeholders throughout the policy development process is imperative in developing meaningful and appropriate public policies. The literature is explicit in recognising that during most stages of the cycle, only subsets of the policy universe are involved (Howlett, Ramesh, & Perl, 2009). Furthermore, key stages of the process, such as the decision-making stage, remain in control of limited policy subsets, thus a comprehensive co-creative approach to public policymaking can only be partially implemented. Retaining the decision-making power within a portion of the stakeholders has been found to hinder exploratory approaches, by, for example, interfering in the feedback loops and policy development's timescale.

At the beginning of Chapter 2, concepts and notions of the policymaking process were discussed. This was conducted for two main reasons. Firstly, to set common definitions that would allow for an investigation in three distinct academic fields: policy science, innovation management, and design studies. Secondly, to identify possible spaces for design intervention in the pursuit of policy innovation. Likewise, in reviewing the literature on public policymaking, the process model offered rich insights about the barriers for achieving public policy innovation (see Section 2.2.1). These were, namely, a disjointed process where distinct policy subsets address different parts of the policy development, the exclusion of policy actors that hold key knowledge and expertise —such as the citizens and the frontline staff— and the lack of specific means to foster and exploit creativity within government structures.

Likewise, findings from the second study (see Section 5.3.2) highlighted a number of policy issues hampering the development of innovative policies, namely:

- Policymakers' disconnection from people;
- Lack of in-depth research and use of biases as evidence;
- Ministers basing decisions on limited knowledge;
- Focus on delivery and not on consequences;
- Commitment to policy ideas because they are too big to fail;
- Professional and cultural constraints;
- Lack of systemic view.

Many of these factors appear as endemic issues related to the way in which government departments and ministries operate. This is key because although the aspiration is for policymakers to be “better connected and more informed, so that [they] properly understand the way customers behave [...] to find new and different ways of engaging with those who use [public] services [and to be] at the forefront of innovative solutions to policy problems, with bold new ideas embedded in [their] thinking” (quote from Jonathan Mills, DWP's Director General, Policy Group - Slide 9, OPM1.1) the cultural and procedural realities of the policy work prevent these from becoming the norm. Consequently, the introduction of design practices in public policymaking has not yet acquired mainstream diffusion.

Similarly, four specific issues with design integration in public policymaking were also identified during Study 2:

- Co-design as an uncommon practice;
- Inappropriate practice for the policy setting;

- Policymakers are not open to embracing failure;
- Policymakers present a low tolerance of uncertainty.

The following sections discuss the consequences of these policy issues from a design for policy perspective, as well as the need for in-depth research and the reliance on assumptions to inform policymaking.

7.3.1 Co-designing policy to foster human connection

With the advancement of service design at the policy implementation stage, the introduction of the user's perspective in the development of policy-related services has gained traction, due to its extensive use of co-creative methods. However, in a more holistic view of the policymaking process, devising a public service may not be possible to disaggregate from the framing of the problem being addressed. This becomes clear when considering the prototyping of solutions, an aspect highlighted by the surveyed organisations. Prototyping will necessarily mean a non-linear process where several iterations of the solution, including the further reframing of the problem, are likely to occur.

During Study 2, policymakers were suggested to be 'disconnected from people' to the extent that building 'human connection' with other stakeholders, especially those affected by the policies being devised, was portrayed as potentially disruptive to current policymaking dynamics. This reluctance to engage with the public for fear of being confronted with realities which policymakers will not be able to address reveals how much of a priority it is to perform the tasks and duties associated with the role rather than effecting positive change, or any change at all for that matter.

Moreover, the PEx was explicit in pointing out that a shift in policymakers' mindsets, as well as in their will and skills to 'connect with people' throughout the policymaking process is required for the success of their policies. This sense of human connection goes beyond the incorporation of citizens' voices in the definition of policy problems by encompassing a wide range of policy actors throughout the policymaking stages. This also means including frontline staff and senior policymakers across the process. Although this does not reflect how different policy actors currently interact in the policy cycle today, Liedtka (2015) asserts that the insistence on conducting design thinking with diverse, multifunctional teams is crucial for the mitigation of cognitive biases hindering innovation.

Furthermore, by avoiding connection with people outside of their immediate context, policymakers risk producing policies which are inefficient and ineffective, and wasting valuable public resources as a result. The remedy for this was said to be the embrace of open policy making as an extended practice amongst policymakers. However, some respondents from 'policy labs' in Study 3 also raised worries about directly engaging with the public. As organisations operating at central government level, some are concerned about the signals they might be giving to the public, the media attention this sort of engagement can gain, and its political consequences. To avoid this, some organisations resort to external partners that can more liberally engage with the wider public, thus increasing the atomisation of the process. This may suggest that developing more appropriate regulatory frameworks for policymakers to engage with different stakeholders could help in bridging this issue. Nevertheless, attempts to achieve this have not necessarily resulted in enhanced policy co-design.

For instance, since 2012 the UK government has successively updated their terms for conducting public consultation as part of the civil service reform. In the most recent iteration, the government commits to “use more digital methods to consult with a wider group of people at an earlier stage in the policy-forming process [and] also reduce the risk of ‘consultation fatigue’ by making sure we consult only on issues that are genuinely undecided” (Cabinet Office, 2018). However, besides the PEx reluctance to utilise consultations as their main way of engaging with the public because of their centralisation in senior roles, the procedure presents a more basic issue. If the consultations are only carried out when issues are undecided there is little room to engage with the public as a systematic practice for the development of public policies. Therefore, a framework allowing for the integration of diverse voices throughout the stages of the policymaking process may need to be considered in order to effectively deploy design for policy.

7.3.2 Policy context constraints and the appropriateness of design practices

As presented in Section 5.3.1, the inductive analysis of the codes emerging from the exploration with the DWP’s PET showed that many design practices are perceived as inappropriate in the policymaking arena. The perceived playfulness of many design activities, such as sketching, role playing, or even some ice-breaker dynamics utilised at the beginning of co-creative workshops, is seen as incompatible with the sober image of government and policy institutions.

This is recognised by Mcinnis (2020) who insists that although making choices with imperfect information has always been a common policymaking practice, insight based on imagination, experience, learning, and observation are seldom utilised as valid sources. However, she claims that to address current wicked problems it is necessary to exploit creative and holistic thinking, for which creative tools and methodologies ought to be embraced by the public sector (Mcinnis, 2020).

Although its defenders claim “[t]his conventional view of a boring, lethargic State versus a dynamic private sector is as wrong as it is widespread” (Mazzucato, 2015, p. 4), this research has found consistent evidence that adopting some of the practices that the private sector utilises in fostering innovation is often difficult.

The institutional and work culture of government bodies appear to be a hurdle for the integration of design thinking, as Prud’homme van Reine (2017) asserts:

Copying design practices from other organizations as ‘a secret weapon for innovation’ is not a viable option – how to maintain a dynamic balance on each of the tensions depends on the existing culture of the organization, its history and its environment. The analysis of how the tensions are handled will reveal the strengths and weaknesses in the capacity of the organization to apply design thinking for innovation and the organizational culture challenges that can be expected.
(p. 75)

Therefore, the translation of practices between different institutional cultures, such as design thinking as conceived and cultivated in private sector organisations, naturally offers resistance to its integration into an organisational culture with different values, norms, and drivers.

Whereas a private sector organisation requires innovation to stay competitive, a public sector organisation needs it to better serve citizens. Unlike the former, it is unlikely that the latter will stop existing if innovations are not attained. Naturally, the political echelons of public bodies —especially in liberal democracies— can suffer from failing at providing citizens with effective policies and services, but the bureaucracies within them have different incentives to change their long-standing professional practices. Therefore, adapting and developing specific ways of integrating a design-led approach for mainstream policy development is critical to its success.

The third study showed that running small scale design interventions with senior policymakers could be a solution for including these actors in the formulation stage whilst gaining buy-in for the subsequent filtering of policy options during the decision-making stage.

Conversely, one Study 3 interviewee was particularly vocal in expressing the need for reforming the state bureaucracies in order to allow for innovative processes to take place. Particularly at supra-national level, they argued, replicating the governance structures of nation-states generates more distance between government and those being governed. Moreover, they expressed the need for the State to re-think its role and approach to policy issues:

When it comes to management and tools and processes we maybe should focus also a bit on designing a nice narrative and spread the word [...] Like we did in the 1920s with Taylorism, when it was all about efficiency. So, let's maybe talk about effectiveness and let's try to build a new narrative somehow.

(PL1)

In sum, the findings from Study 2 and 3 seem to suggest that the successful adoption of design in mainstream policymaking for policy innovation necessitates reaching a middle ground between current policy practices and design thinking. That is to say, embedding a culture of innovation in the public sector requires revisiting its norms and drivers, whilst at the same time refining and adjusting the design-led approaches to facilitate public policy innovation.

7.3.4 Embracing failure and uncertainty tolerance

The second study found that policymakers often resist the idea of embracing failure. Similarly, they tend to have a low tolerance for uncertainty. This, of course, is problematic to anyone attempting to adopt design as their approach to innovation since these two concepts are associated with the design thinking mindset (Dosi, Rosati, & Vignoli, 2018). Moreover, when observing the results from the Framework Analysis conducted during the PEx's OPM training (see Section 5.3.1), the constructs associated with these two concepts presented a low average of 6 and 5.43 codes per workshop, respectively. This not only indicates that policymakers have an aversion towards these attitudes but also that —at least in the setting observed— for those who attempt to instil design thinking into policymaking these do not appear as critical.

However, according to Dosi et al.'s (2018) definitions (see Section 2.3.1), both constructs play a significant role in the development of innovation. Embracing risk, for example, is considered to be determinant for deep exploration of both the problem and solution spaces, regardless of how unconventional or unorthodox these may be (Dosi, Rosati, & Vignoli, 2018, p. 1995). As shown in 7.3.2, the cultural barriers around the acceptance of certain ideas which do not conform with what is expected by the policy environment tends to favour, in the best cases, incremental innovations. On the other hand, being comfortable with ambiguity means

embarking on projects with more unknowns —as in Dorst’s (2011) type 2 Abduction. Although the PEx facilitators were explicit in acknowledging that certainty is expected from them, “[s]ome societal problems are incapable of solution because of the way in which they are defined. If problems are defined in relative rather than absolute terms, they may never be resolved by public policy” (Dye, 2013, p. 78). Therefore, developing spaces for policymakers to work free from the constant demand for certainty is not only desirable for attaining policy innovation, but is also necessary to effecting change through policy altogether.

Moreover, these two constructs relate to the notion of prototyping, something that is consistently praised in the design for policy discourse. As can be observed, these are mutually exclusive: prototyping requires detachment from one’s ideas as the outcome of this activity often results in the invalidation of the working hypothesis. Likewise, the mere act of prototyping implies not having the certainty of success. Therefore, policymakers need to welcome wholeheartedly the idea that “the policymaking *process* is by its nature messy, so it is important for public institutions to welcome the process of trial and error” (Mazzucato, 2015, p. 10).

7.3.4 Lack of in-depth research and use of biases as evidence

The need for in-depth data of the policy problems and the people affected by them is crucial for the development of better policies in general and the implementation of design for policy in particular.

During the Open Policy Making training, the PEx facilitators insisted on the need for acquiring rich data that could counteract the biases on which policy problems, instruments, and decisions are based. This was largely associated with qualitative data, often collected through ethnographic work. Likewise, the interviews from Study 3 confirmed that qualitative data is sought-after when implementing design for policy work since it is regarded as providing access to people’s experiences.

However, besides being considered a lengthy process which does not always adjust to the pace of the policy work, the policy cultural tradition appears to be grounded in the use of quantitative data to justify the pursuit of courses of action based on the number of people being affected. It should be said that the urge for using qualitative data is not founded on the representativeness of its insights, but rather on explaining the underlying reasons of a policy problem and providing an understanding of the living conditions of the individuals affected by it. Additionally, it looks at validating or debunking the assumptions often used as justifications for policy decisions.

Moreover, Study 2 highlighted policymakers need for convincing pieces of data that could help in supporting insights that contradict the biases of decision-makers. In this regard, the use of qualitative data was seen as stronger and more effective in making a case for specific courses of action, since it more easily conveys the complex realities of some policy problems and the lives of those affected by them. However, policymakers are aware that decision makers may still use these pieces of evidence as confirmation of their biases and assumptions, thus alternatives ways to influence the decision-making process may need to be considered. Again, horizontal and cross-departmental policy teams could be a potential solution to developing common understandings of the policy problems across hierarchies, whilst introducing internal checkpoints to validate policy ideas.

Supporting the introduction of design thinking for innovation, Liedtka (2015) argues that decision-makers who conduct and reflect on the results of experiments and work with multiple options reduce cognitive biases, such as confirmation bias, planning fallacy, and endowment effect. This suggests that for the effective integration of design for policy, senior policymakers and decision-makers should actively and consistently participate in design activities. However, as it stands today, the hierarchical structures of government departments are unlikely to facilitate this sort of horizontal integration.

7.4 Design's role in the development of innovative public policies

Design integration into public policymaking plays several roles for the attainment of policy innovation. Firstly, it looks at the process from an integrative perspective, bringing together all its stages from the problem framing to the implementation of the designed solution. Secondly, it intends the systematic iteration of the proposed solution throughout the process, thus conducting an ongoing evaluation instead of a separated stage at the end of the cycle. Thirdly, it looks at transforming problematic situations into preferred ones by understanding how these problems are experienced by citizens and what betterment looks like for them.

In Chapter 2 a series of concepts and constructs about public policy making were elicited. At this stage, it is relevant to review them in a new light.

Regardless of the theoretical framework used to study public policies, three elements are common to all of them:

- Actors;
- Ideas;
- Structures.

(Howlett, Ramesh, & Perl, 2009)

Although not a framework for policy analysis, design for policy is traversed by these elements. In regard to the actors, design for policy pays special attention to what it regards as the most vulnerable voices in the policy universe, namely, the individual citizen (as opposed to representative groups) and the bureaucrats with low to zero decision-making power. The argument is that these often-neglected groups hold key information for the formulation and implementation of effective policies. However, little is known about other policy actors regarding the introduction of design in policymaking. The more recent yet incipient literature at the frontier between public administration and design for policy has largely focussed on the potentialities of design in the public sector, albeit with some exceptions²⁵. As has been argued previously, it is necessary to have a comprehensive body of knowledge that identifies leverage points for an effective introduction of a design approach (mindset plus adapted methods) across the policy ranks and subsystems. Similarly, as a framework for fostering public policy innovation, design for policy needs to build an explanation for the development and transfer of policy ideas. Currently, it is largely presented as a technocratic and postmodern version of the rationalist approach, where having moved from the promise of objectively better policy solutions, preferred alternatives to wicked problems are offered. Overcoming the rationalist

²⁵ See Ansell and Torfing (2014) 'Public innovation through collaboration and design', and Bason (2017) 'Leading public design: Discovering human-centred governance'.

approach is a significant step in itself, given the recognition that the political system does not allow for an entirely rational decision-making process:

The solution of societal problems generally implies a rational model, but government may not be capable of formulating policy in a rational fashion. Instead, the political system may reflect group interests, elite preferences, institutional forces, or incremental change, more than rationalism. Presumably, a democratic system is structured to reflect mass influences, whether these are rational or not. Elected officials respond to the demands of their constituents, and this may inhibit completely rational approaches to public policy.

(Dye, 2013, p. 80)

Equally, design for policy has not offered a clear blueprint for its integration within existing structures. If anything, the creation of ‘policy labs’ and similar units for its introduction speaks of the precarious and ad-hoc nature of these structures in relation to the existing ones. An organic adoption of these practices will require design to permeate mainstream policymaking structures instead of acting as a nice-to-have substitute when everything else has failed.

In understanding design as an innovation enabler for policymaking, this research has focussed on the process perspective. That has meant looking at design and the design thinking process as a model for explaining how innovators in the public sector could go about developing novel policy solutions. However, the findings have shown that the parallels between the policymaking process and the design thinking process are not always clear-cut. Instead, the integration of attitudes associated with a design-led approach (the design thinking mindset) appears as a better explanation for the role design can have in public policy innovation. Based on this, an alternative view of design for policy which is worth exploring is that of design as a mode of inquiry.

7.4.1 Design as a mode of public policy inquiry

Through the surveys, observations, and interviews the notion that design is used to develop situated understandings of policy problems appeared as a salient theme in all three studies. This is reflected in the pursuit of engaging different policy actors in open exchange, generating visualisations and artefacts that make policy problems tangible and ideas testable, and resorting to different forms of knowledge creation, worldviews, and skills (such as that of design students), amongst others. Especially from the results of Study 2, it seems that open policy provides the established rationale for the world view conveyed by the design thinking mindsets and practices. This led to the reflection upon design thinking, design research, and its application as a mode of inquiry for interrogating reality and acting upon it.

In defining the philosophical positioning of the researcher (see Section 3.1), a pragmatist stance was adopted for this investigation. The pragmatist paradigm is based on the principle that “the meaning of our conceptualizations of the world—ideas, theories, assumptions etc.—should be evaluated on the basis of their consequences and implications in practice” (Dalsgaard, 2014, p. 146). Moreover, an inquiry, as Ejlsing-Duun & Skovbjerg (2019) pose, begins with a doubt and the need for making sense of an undetermined situation that becomes problematic through the experience of doubt. For this research this meant trying to understand how design for policy operates in practice and explaining how it can be used to help in producing policy innovations.

In strengthening the pragmatic contribution to design thinking, Ejsing-Duun & Skovbjerg (2019) developed a theoretical model suggesting three modes of inquiry:

1. Process (reflective practitioner): directed towards the designer's own practice;
2. Research (design-based-research): directed towards a field, which is investigated through the design process, resulting in new knowledge about the domain and change produced through a design intervention;
3. Politics (critical design): directed toward exposing political issues and/or societal phenomena through the design process and design itself.

Likewise, the authors suggest considering a fourth meta-mode of inquiry, in which the *process*, *research*, and *politics* modes are combined in different degrees as part of the design process (Ejsing-Duun & Skovbjerg, 2019).

Building on these constructs, this research proposes that an essential part of the value of design for policy is in functioning as a mode of inquiry between the design-based-research and the critical design modes. This implies design for policy looks at exposing societal issues by making available new knowledge about the factors determining a policy problem, whilst also proposing interventions to ameliorate the conditions of the people affected by them.

As previously presented, the studies' results showed an important driver to learning and acquiring new knowledge. Prototyping, which appeared as an important theme throughout the thesis, is mostly used to test assumptions and ideas. Moreover, design thinking, through prototyping tools and qualitative methods, is said to improve people's ability to identify and assess their own needs and diagnose their own preferences (Liedtka, 2015). Design is not the only source of knowledge for policy innovation, as has been shown with the PEx's collaboration with the Behavioural Insights Team and the EU Policy Lab implementation of foresight. Likewise, Dye (2013) claims that policymakers occasionally recur to social scientists in the hope of finding solutions to policy problems, but more often than not they are unable to provide any because of the complexity of those problems and the absence of solid knowledge about them. Therefore, their role is often relegated to policy analysis by measuring the impact of public policies and making this knowledge available to decision makers (Dye, 2013). However, unlike other sources, due to the pragmatic nature of design thinking, the learning emerging from the design process is embedded in the artefacts, services, and systems it produces.

Similarly, the results also indicate the prominence of qualitative research and the lived experience as a source of crucial input for the development of public policies and services. This is in agreement with Mintrom and Thomas (2018), who argue that deep knowledge of the contexts for which policies are developed could bridge the gap between citizens' expectations and the services governments provide. In this regard, Liedtka (2015) asserts that through the collection of deep data on people's perspectives and concerns during the need-finding stage, design thinking supports innovation by diminishing the effect of certain cognitive biases.

Section 3.1 discussed qualitative research as the main form of inquiry for this research. The focus on qualitative research was based on its capability in gaining an understanding of the nature of specific situations and the particularities of its contextual interactions to the detriment of the predictive capabilities of its findings, a characteristic typically associated with quantitative research. Although this conceptualisation is useful in understanding why qualitative research is seen as a crucial part of design integration into public policymaking it

might not be sufficient. In bridging this gap, Aspers and Corte's (2019) inquiry into what is 'qualitative in qualitative research' is of assistance. The main difference between quantitative and qualitative research, the authors argue, is that whereas in the former the analysis is concerned with pre-determined variables and their relationship, the latter "investigates relations between categories that are themselves subject to change in the research process" (Aspers & Corte, 2019, p. 146). Therefore, in qualitative research the categories under examination are subject to modification, thus undergoing 'qualitative change'. This is paramount to understanding design introduction in the development of public policies, as it offers the possibility of creating new significant distinctions and achieving new understandings of a phenomenon by getting closer to it. From this perspective, it is easy to see how this links back to the notion of problem redefinition/reframing identified as one of the design thinking mindset constructs (Dosi, Rosati, & Vignoli, 2018), as well as a distinctive design activity (Dorst, 2011). This is in line with Norman's (2016) view that the most valuable contribution given by design thinking to non-design professionals is the ability to reframe issues and adopt a different perspective in addressing them.

Design introduction into public policy making can then be seen as a particular mode of inquiry, which in this study is one that is strongly linked to open policy making practices. It allows the re-interpretation of social constructs —especially social problems and their causes— and thus opens the door for novel approaches to address them, which conversely is critical to the attainment of policy innovation.

Naturally, design should not be seen as the sole producer of new or valid knowledge about or for policy problems, but rather as an enriching, complementary, and at times challenging perspective for its joint analysis.

7.4.2 Three timeframes to design for policy

Throughout this investigation evidence of the use of design for policy at different levels of government and in different governmental bodies has been collected and analysed. The literature review in Chapter 2 has shown how by extrapolating the use of design thinking for attaining innovations in the private sector (mostly in the development of products and services) to the public sector, governments expect to reap similar benefits. As supported by policy and design scholars, the implementation of public policies is bounded to the design of products and services (Junginger, 2013; Mintrom & Thomas, 2018). Understandably, design for policy has found a place to grow its roots at the policy implementation stage. Considering design as a mode of inquiry, in this context it would be reasonable to understand it as the inquiry about how best to implement a public policy; be it through the design of a product or a service (or even perhaps a system). From this perspective, design for policy acts in the solution space upon a predefined problem which has been affecting one or more groups of society.

There is, however, evidence of design integration across the stages of the policymaking cycle, as the findings of this research have shown. A number of organisations doing design for policy have travelled back in the stages of the cycle and contributed to the refinement of previously identified policy problems. Some even address their work in the form of 'policy challenges' for which the exploration of novel understandings and solutions is welcome. By tapping into the problem space, this type of design for policy integration aims at having a co-creative approach to the problem definition, where the original framing is contested by other voices in the policy universe. This type of integration has also led these organisations to look for ways in which

they can influence the decision-making stage, as they understand their newly acquired knowledge offers insights that should tilt the scale towards specific courses of action often overlooked by senior policy makers and other decision makers.

Moreover, a third and emerging level to design for policy can also be identified. As seen in Study 3, design in conjunction with foresight approaches has begun to enter the policymaking scene. Besides the experience reported in Study 3, the UK Policy Lab and other government bodies have also employed and/or experimented with prospective thinking (Whicher, 2020). These approaches to future thinking have been growing in the past years to the extent that the UK Government has recently hired its first speculative designer (Whicher, 2020).

Moreover, to date, design thinking in policymaking have been important mainly in understanding and acting upon current contexts and possible immediate outcomes. Yet introducing design-led foresight instances for open exchange amongst policymakers and other policy actors can help in bridging the policy formulation and implementation gap by, firstly, allowing for shorter feedback loops between the actors involved at these stages and, secondly, by fostering a common construction of the policy problem and roadmap towards a preferred future.

Unlike the two previous levels of design for policy, speculative design, and design and foresight do not necessarily look at the problem nor the solution spaces but move—in terms of Dorst's (2011) elements in a designer's cognitive processes (see Section 2.3)—towards the value definition.

In terms of design for policy as a mode of inquiry, it could be argued that knowledge gained through futures thinking enables the evaluation of different options, assessing diverse courses of action to invest in possible futures and developing informed strategies towards shared objectives. It facilitates the identification of the relevant forces influencing future developments, and how they interact to shape the future of a given system. In the face of increasing uncertainty, foresight can be used to augment an organisation's resilience and readiness. Furthermore, by utilising a range of tools such as personas, storytelling, and prototyping, design plays a significant role in imagining, understanding, and visualising futures. As stated by Mcinnis, in urging for the adoption of creative thinking for policymaking, “[k]nowledge without imagination can tell you where you are but not where to go” (Mcinnis, 2020). Design provides a creative and experimental space to explore and assess potential solutions by bringing people's experiences to the forefront as they interact with systems.

In conceptualising the above, a three-level model for design integration in policymaking is proposed (see Figure 35). The argument is that in the context of public policymaking, design can be used in three distinct time frames to address issues of the past, the present, or the future, according to its level of integration within the public sector organisation.

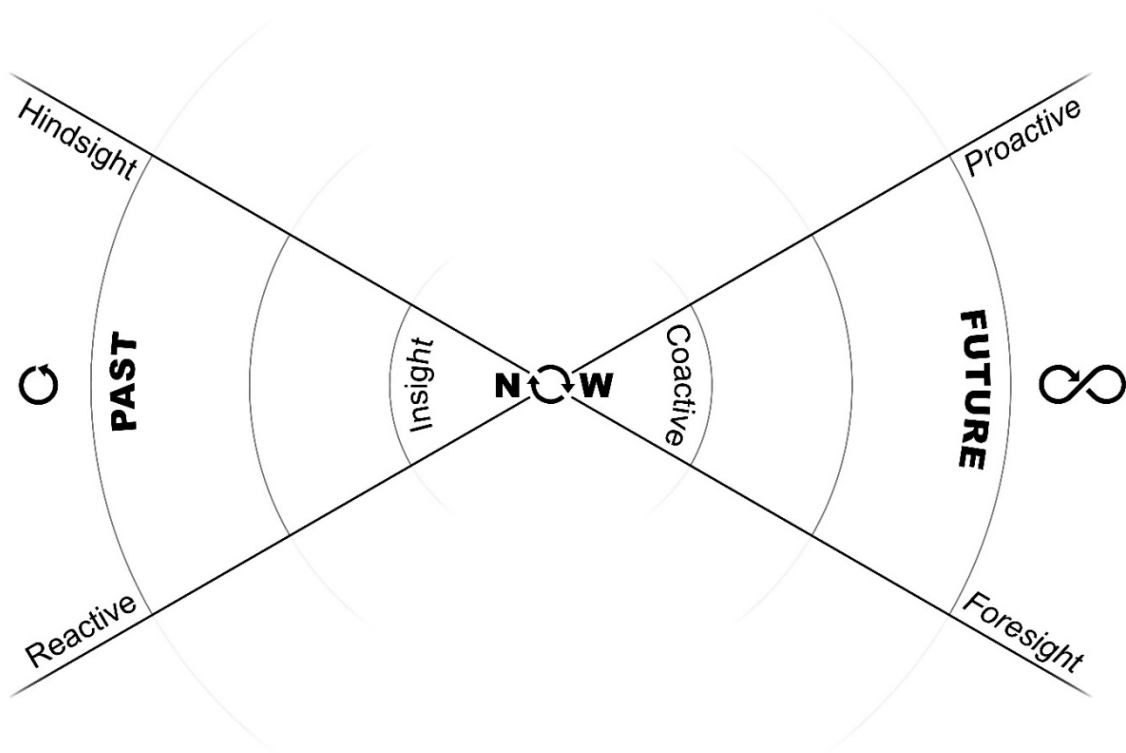


Figure 35: Integration of design approaches in public policymaking.

This model uses a graphic reference to the 'Janus cones', a foresight for innovation method that looks forwards and backwards in time to help in mapping events chronologically and identifying and their effect on innovation (Carleton, Cockayne, & Tahvanainen, 2013). This analogy was used to express how each subsequent level of design for policy moves from a focus on issues given, to co-defined issues, to issues to be defined:



PAST - Hindsight:
Reactive policymaking -
single-loop learning.

First level: Application of design at later stages of the policymaking cycle, typically, during the implementation stage. Design is accessory to the process and limited to the final form-giving stage, largely associated with public service development and product digitalisation.

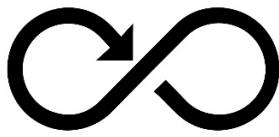
- Pre-determined problem.
- Utilises user involvement in a problem-solving manner.
- Incremental innovation at service provision level.



PRESENT - Insight:
Coactive policymaking -
double-loop learning.

Second level: Application of design methods and mindsets that focuses on iterative feedback loops for defining problems and solutions. Design as an integrated approach throughout the development process. The problem and the involved stakeholders drive the policy output.

- Implies the involvement of stakeholders with higher levels of political power.
- Looks at increasing policy legitimacy.



FUTURE - Foresight:
Proactive policymaking -
 continuous learning.

Third level: Design is integrated at the organisation's purpose level, completely or partially defining its vision and future role in the ecosystem. Futures visualisation guides the strategy while increasing the organisation's resilience.

- Looks at aligning diverse stakeholders towards a preferred future.
- Increases an organisation's readiness for contingencies.

Beyond the utility of the model as a tool for understanding the different levels of integration of design for policy, it proposes exploring design management at an organisational level to overcome some of the issues with its integration at the second level which have been identified in this research, such as disconnection with people, lack of in-depth research and decisions based on biases, as well as the adoption of a more systemic view which does not focus on policy delivery but on its outcomes. Beyond the adoption of a different mindset (one which is associated with the aptitudes found in design thinking), the regulatory frameworks within which public policies are developed would require a certain degree of adjustment to allow for the incorporation of a coactive approach, as seen in section 7.3.1.

The main idea here is that instead of utilising foresight for anticipating the inevitability of forthcoming events (as in anticipatory governance), governments can use these methods and tools to co-creatively devise preferred futures. This means that instead of bracing to receive the impact, the bureaucratic apparatus of the State should coordinate and mobilise to construct a shared vision. According to Senge (1990), this "involves the skills of unearthing shared "pictures of the future" that foster genuine commitment and enrollment rather than compliance" (p. 9). Moreover, achieving this level of integration requires adopting design from a managerial perspective.

In this regard, Buchanan (2015) argues that design, as a practice of management, focuses on the quality of the experiences of all stakeholders of the organisation and, as such, aims at the reform of the organisational culture. According to Prud'homme van Reine (2017), this shift is key since for design thinking to bring about innovation it "needs to be embedded in an organizational culture capable of continuously anticipating and adjusting to change" (p. 75).

It can be argued that in the face of increasing uncertainty, design-based foresight can be used not only to augment the public sector's resilience and readiness, but to foster government in shaping future society.

The introduction of design approaches alongside foresight methods and tools creates synergies that enable teams to articulate knowledge dispersed within the organisation, thus allowing for the formulation of more robust strategies to achieve governmental goals. For instance, by including in this process policy actors, such as frontline staff, government bodies will benefit from the knowledge they hold and how this could better inform the development of more robust policies and their implementation. Yet engaging diverse stakeholders inside and outside governmental structures for policymaking is not a trivial task and impromptu attempts could prove of little help, if not potentially more damaging to the policy dynamics. It is then key for engaging those not typically included in long-term oriented planning to have in

place the appropriate skills, tools, and methods to facilitate knowledge exchange and develop prospective thinking.

The conceptual shift does not imply a State capable of carrying out any sort of utopianism, but rather that it is to set course to achieve the goals it proposes. Of course, it will also need to plan for hindrances and vicissitudes accordingly. Here, design plays a dual role: on the one hand, it facilitates the visualisation of futures, enabling the conversations, eliciting aspirations and concerns, and making explicit points of dissent and agreement. On the other, it contributes to the conception of roadmaps to realise those futures.

Moreover, given the current turbulent political times, generating instances for open exchange amongst policy and frontline actors can help in bridging the policy formulation and implementation gap by, firstly, allowing for shorter feedback loops between the actors involved at these stages and, secondly, by fostering a common construction of the policy problem and roadmap towards a preferred future. Furthermore, such instances can contribute to building a more coherent and effective performance of public bodies.

7.5 Summary of Chapter 7

Chapter 7 presents the analyses and syntheses of the findings from Chapters 4, 5, and 6.

The discussion brings together the findings from each of the three studies and follows the structure of the research questions to gaining an understanding about the role of design for innovative public policies.

1. What design practices are currently being deployed in the policymaking process?
2. How is design being instilled in public policymaking?
3. Why does the introduction of design for policy affect the policymaking process?

Combining the inputs from all three studies, it provides a summary of all the design tools and methods identified at different stages of the policy design process. In doing so, it highlights the utilisation of these tools as devices that embody the practical application of the design thinking principles. Moreover, it examines how the introduction of design for policy allows for the development of specific tools that highlight certain aspects of the policy process whilst enhancing the participation of different policy actors by making tangible and accessible knowledge previously reserved for specific policy subsystems.

Likewise, design thinking is presented as the operationalisation of government agendas, especially the open policy making agenda. Within these, certain elements and features of design thinking are identified as predominantly in pursuit of public policy innovation:

1. The ability to empathically understand an issue from the perspective of all human actors involved, and willingness to attempt to address it to ameliorate their living conditions;
2. The push for and need to conduct hands-on explorations and experiments with the promise of new and valuable insights into a problematic situation or its resolution, regardless of the experiment's outcome;
3. The capacity to integrate and negotiate diverse and often contradictory inputs to co-creatively arrive at novel solutions with those involved in the problem at hand.

Organisations often referred to as 'policy labs' have played a prominent role in the introduction of design for policy due to their structural characteristics and ad-hoc nature

which allows them to explore and experiment at a safe distance from mainstream policymaking. However, the majority of the organisations surveyed do not identify with the term ‘policy lab’. Moreover, some of them claim not to work for the government, although they formally belong to the public sector. A potential explanation links to the authority and decision-making power of these organisation. Those with a relatively low capacity to interfere in the decision-making process do not recognise themselves as policy labs but as somewhat consultative bodies that complement the policy formulation process by bringing new situated knowledge about the policy problem at hand.

Furthermore, a number of barriers for both the adoption of design for policy and the realisation of public policy innovation are jointly discussed. These are:

1. The need for policy co-design to foster human connection;
2. The policy context constraints and the appropriateness of design practices;
3. The need for embracing failure and increasing tolerance to uncertainty;
4. The lack of in-depth research and use of biases as evidence for policymaking.

Finally, this thesis demonstrates that design for policy has the potential to foster public policy innovation by being understood as a mode of inquiry. This implies a pragmatic approach to the acquisition and treatment of new knowledge based on the lived experiences of those affected by a policy issue. Moreover, this can be applied at three levels according to a reactive, coactive, or proactive approach to policymaking. In the reactive approach, the problem and value to attain are given ‘knowns’. Thus, policy designers work mostly at the implementation stage, looking for the most effective and efficient way of delivering the determined value. In the coactive approach, the value is given to the policy design team based on a loosely defined problem space, and it is in the team’s remit to acquire new knowledge that helps in redefining the problem and exploring preferred situations for those affected by it. The proactive approach looks at helping social groups in imagining and visualising preferred situations and jointly articulates the resources of the organisation to aim at facilitating the attainment of those shared visions. However, this necessitates changes in the policymaking cycle to adapt to the particularities of a design thinking process. This implies allowing for the flow of information and ideas across the policy cycle in iterative feedback loops, the broadening of the actors involved at each stage, including new means of citizen engagement, and the formation of cross-departmental teams working in a project-based manner. Also, it requires the development of internal skills and competencies associated with those of designers (visualisation, facilitation) and the embrace of attitudes (human centricity, learning orientation, openness to diversity, empathic attitude, and experimental approach) that make up the design thinking mindset.

Chapter ⑧

Conclusions

The motivation for this investigation was defined by a growing interest in the application of design for policy and a gap in theoretical knowledge to substantiate this practice. More specifically, the introduction of design in policymaking has been linked to the need for developing novel solutions to wicked societal problems. This rationale has largely relied on the extrapolation of the benefits perceived of applying design thinking in the private sector. However, the dynamics, incentives, norms, and a plethora of other factors differ substantively between the private and the public sector. Consequently, understanding how design can help in fostering policy innovation requires new theoretical frameworks and the development of new professional practices that can better adjust to this field of action.

Therefore, this investigation has inquired into the role of design in innovative public policymaking. Theories from the political sciences, innovation management, and design thinking were instrumental in answering this question. The policymaking cycle, a policy analysis framework that explicates the stages of the policy process, was helpful in understanding points of leverage for the introduction of design. Moreover, the concept of policy innovation was treated from a process perspective, which allowed the research to focus on how policies come into being instead of their content. Furthermore, design thinking offered conceptualisations that contributed to understanding design's role in public policy making. Three such conceptualisations are the process perspective to design thinking for innovation, design thinking as a cognitive process, and as a mindset.

8.1 Meeting the research aim

This research set out to investigate the role of design in innovative public policymaking. Through a review of relevant literature and three subsequent studies, the investigation composed a clear picture of how design for policy contributes to the attainment of public policy innovation. It showed design does this by implementing a pragmatic approach to the generation of situated knowledge based on the qualitative experiences of the people impacted by policy issues. Through the movement between the problem and solution space in shorter iterations (compared to that of the policymaking cycle), design for policy contributes to the co-design of policies that are inherently novel because of the incorporation of new knowledge and the validation of ideas and solutions across the policy development process. This process, which often takes place in the form of participatory instances with diverse stakeholders and the rapid and early prototyping of policy options, requires the adoption of specific mindsets within the policy professionals.

To arrive at this conclusion, the research first defined a preliminary objective consisting of developing a framework for studying design in public policymaking. Likewise, it aimed at answering three research questions:

1. What design practices are currently being deployed in the policymaking process?
2. How is design being instilled in public policymaking?
3. Why does the introduction of design for policy affect the policymaking process?

The preliminary objective was attained through an in-depth review of literature that allowed for developing a framework to study the phenomena. This framework is based on the interpolation of the dichotomy between product versus process innovations (identified in innovation management studies) to the innovation of public policies. From this, it derives that policy innovations could be considered new policies adopted by a certain government (product innovation: policy content focus) or new ways of developing policies (process innovation: policymaking focus). With these considerations, the research focussed on understanding how the design process integrates with the policymaking process (as described in the policymaking cycle model) to produce novel policies. In this regard, the design thinking conceptualisation was instrumental as it offers a general theory of design. Likewise, it also presents design as a cognitive style (an ability associated with creative problem-solving) and as an organisational resource that diverse organisations can employ when in need of innovation.

What design practices are currently being deployed in the policymaking process?

There are currently a vast number of design practices being used throughout the policymaking process. The majority can be linked to design research and participatory design. This indicates design for policy's focus on generating alternative and richer understandings of the policy issues and its use to obtain those insights from diverse stakeholders. Likewise, a large number of these practices are typically associated with service design (e.g., user-journey maps, user personas, stakeholder maps, etc.). However, this relates to the level of design for policy integration of the organisation. That is to say, organisations working at the service provision level tend to focus on these tools and methods, whereas those integrating design at a strategic level are more likely to introduce speculative design and foresight approaches.

How is design being instilled in public policymaking?

Design has and is making its way into public policymaking through various interlinked pathways. Perhaps the main narrative that has facilitated its introduction is the notion of design thinking as a resource that enables organisations to develop innovations. From this perspective, design is only partially a set of skills that designers hold, becoming an asset that organisations in the public sector can possess and deploy to innovate —amongst other things— the public services they produce. This understanding is based on the apparent success of private sector organisations utilising design thinking and fostered by design consultancies eager to facilitate design thinking processes as part of their offering. Likewise, two other government agendas have played a crucial role in design's integration into public policymaking. The open policy making agenda, driven by governments' renewed need to show transparency and accountability, has been vital as it often becomes operationalised through elements of the design thinking mindset. Due to the lack of clear guidelines on how to implement open policy making processes, methods associated with co-design and participatory design have appeared as practical means of implementing this agenda. Lastly, the push towards the state's digitalisation has meant the need to introduce new ways of working within government. For instance, the introduction of digital services has implied hiring specialised staff and developing internal skills to create and support digital infrastructures. With this, agile methodologies associated with software development and profiles such as user, content, and experience designer have been introduced to the public

sector. These new skills and work cultures are altering how government business is conducted. Naturally, this has also affected the policymaking process, starting with the implementation of digital services.

Why does the introduction of design for policy affect the policymaking process?

From a process perspective, the policymaking cycle stages cannot be unequivocally matched to those of the design thinking process. The utilisation of design thinking (as a process) for policy innovation disrupts the policymaking cycle flow by, for example, introducing shorter feedback loops between stages. Moreover, understanding design thinking as a cognitive style, its introduction into policymaking implies adopting a range of mindsets not typically or necessarily found in policymakers. In particular, the ability to empathically understand a policy issue from all stakeholders' perspective, the push for and need to engage in hands-on explorations and experiments, the capacity to integrate and negotiate varied and often contradictory inputs to co-creatively arrive at novel solutions with diverse stakeholders. Likewise, because of the different professional cultures of designers and policymakers, the introduction of activities of the former in the latter's *modus operandi* generates frictions that need to be negotiated and resolved by the creation of a new professional culture around design for policy.

8.2 Contributions

Resulting from the aforementioned issues, the research looked at gaining insights from each perspective through three studies in different empirical settings and employing different methods. Firstly, the design practices (design methods and tools) deployed in different stages of the policy cycle were mapped through the survey of government units often termed 'policy labs'. Besides showing that the term generally does not reflect how these organisations refer to themselves, the mapping provided the following insights:

- An understanding of the main tools and methods utilised in implementing design for policy, as presented in Table 20;
- Design for policy transcends service design by moving from the policy implementation stage to previous stages of the policymaking cycle;
- User-centredness, co-creation, and exploration as the main attitudes associated with a design-led approach.

Secondly, the ethnographic study with the UK Department for Work and Pensions' Policy Exploration Team allowed for the investigation of the introduction of the design thinking mindset in a live policy setting. Through participant observations it emerged that:

- Not all constructs informing the design thinking mindset receive the same treatment or are emphasised in the same way. Human centeredness, learning orientation, openness to different perspectives and diversity, an empathic approach, and experimentation appear as the most relevant aspects, thus confirming one of the findings from the first study.
- The policymaking cycle and the professional culture of the public sector (e.g., its norms and expectations) threaten the integration of the design thinking mindset. Actions such as the creation of horizontal and cross-departmental policy teams, the development of specific and adapted design for policy methods, and the revision of the mechanisms for public engagement should favour the integration of design for policy.

- In practice, design (thinking) operationalises the ill-defined concept of Open Policy Making. This is critical to design's role in policymaking due to the commitment of governments around the world towards open policy agendas.
- Design for policy helps in bridging the policy implementation gap by moving backwards in the policy cycle and redefining the policy problem.

Thirdly, through a series of semi-structured interviews with referents from policy labs and design schools participating in an EU project looking at the future of European policymaking, different takes on the use of design and foresight were assessed. From this study the following insights were captured:

- Design plays a major role in developing and making accessible new knowledge that can be translated into policy innovations. It does this by facilitating the access to people's experiences through co-participative methods that elicit situated understandings of societal issues.
- Design for policy is useful beyond problem-solving by helping in the construction and visualisation of preferred shared futures. Thus, it enables conversations about the future and how to create it.

From these combined findings, this research developed two contributions. The first contribution is conceptualising an understanding of the role of design for policy as a mode of inquiry that aims at unearthing the root causes of societal issues whilst developing interventions that improve the conditions of the people affected by those problems. It is at the intersection between the development of new, situated, and co-created understanding of the policy problems and the preferred situations that design contributes to policy innovation.

The second contribution is the practical development of a model that explains the introduction of design for policy according to three timeframes/spaces: past, associated with the service and product design at the policy implementation stage; present, where design looks at redefining the problem space; and future, where design has permeated all levels of the organisation, and contributes to continuously revising its mission and vision to arrive at preferred futures.

8.3 Limitations of the investigation

Besides the methodological limitations addressed in Section 3.5, two further points are worthy of mention.

Although the investigation looked at design for policy in Europe, the data largely originated from and within the UK context. The main reason for this is that as this study was located in a UK university, gaining access to local data was significantly easier than elsewhere in Europe. Although the UK is recognised for being at the forefront of the introduction of design for policy, it is important to acknowledge that the findings and contributions could have varied had they emerged from the analysis of different contextual data. Conversely, this has been a primarily qualitative study for which generalisation was not pursued. Rather, it aimed at contributing to the development of situated knowledge about the role of design in the development of innovative policies.

Another point that needs to be mentioned is the strong reliance on Dosi et al.'s (2018) design thinking mindset constructs for developing the framework analysis matrix. As discussed in Section 7.2.1, there are grounds to argue that different definitions of the constructs can be

achieved by reconfiguring their elements. Nevertheless, the researcher could not find a more systematic and comprehensive definition of the elements that constitute the design thinking mindset. Moreover, by contacting and maintaining an open exchange with the lead author, the researcher was shown evidence for the robust methodology employed in developing the constructs. Furthermore, by utilising this framework, the researcher was able to conduct a systematic and replicable analysis of a large qualitative dataset. This is of utmost importance for the validity and reliability of this research since its findings largely rely on the analysis of the observational data collected during the second study.

8.4 Reflections and future research

The research questions answered in this thesis pave the way for a broad range of further investigations that can contribute significantly to the current understanding of design for policy.

The introduction of design in the public sector brings about changes in the ways of developing the public function. The more ground design gains in this area, the more profound will be the changes it causes. It is clear that these developments are motivated by the need to effect changes in the way that states relate to citizens. Likewise, we are witnessing a global crisis in the confidence in public institutions. This is a key and exciting time to study these issues, but it is no less important to understand that the promotion of design and other technologies (social and otherwise) will have effects that are not fully understood yet. The risk is overlooking these perspectives and failing to understand these events in a critical key since the consequences could be serious and profound for future generations, especially for those in more urgent situations whose well-being depends largely on a state that can provide for the satisfaction of their basic needs. The model for design integration in public policymaking presented in section 7.4.2 could be helpful in channelling new research in the field, provided its further synthesis and elaboration.

In this regard, this model presented three timeframes within which design for policy can be implemented. Perhaps the most trivial use of this feature is to assess the level of design integration in a public body's policymaking activities. Used in this manner, organisations could be categorised according to the characteristics of each level, as defined in section 7.4.2. This could be useful not only to map the integration of design for policy within the government (at different levels) but to devise strategies to move from one level to the next. This, however, would require further work since currently, the model focuses on describing each level's characteristics and does not indicate how to foster or enable them.

Furthermore, the model could help organisations deploy design for policy at each level by indicating which aspects of the design thinking mindset are more relevant at each stage and offering help in fostering them. Similarly, in a more prescriptive manner, it could suggest tools and methods that better serve the integration of design for policy at each level. Likewise, further research and fieldwork would be required to develop these features. Lastly, and although the focus for its development was set in implementing design for policy within public organisations, the model could also benefit the third sector. In this regard, organisations such as NGOs or think tanks could use it to understand how the different levels of design for policy integration play a role in their activities and interaction with the public sector. This could be particularly beneficial to organisations that already seek participatory

approaches to policymaking but whose place lays outside government structures. For this too, more research is necessary.

Although some authors have in the past years made claims about design for policy as trialling new modes of governance, and the potential encroachment of neoliberal agendas through its application, there is currently little understanding of the political implications of introducing design approaches in public policymaking. On the contrary, design for policy has largely been celebrated as a means to making the state more efficient and effective and has received relatively low resistance, other than the general push-back for belonging to a different professional culture.

This research has established that the open and digital governance agendas can be understood as drivers facilitating the incorporation of design into the public sphere. However, little has been said about the political agendas design is bringing with it or for which it is opening the door. Moreover, and despite the advent of social design, transition design, and other forms of critical design, the prevailing logic in the world of design is that of the private sector where the discipline finds its origin. It is, therefore, essential that policy designers receive the appropriate training to perform professionally in a field that, by definition, has specific values and drivers, which are in turn different from those in the private sector.

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Appendices

Note: Appendices 1 and 8 are matrixes containing large amounts of data. It is suggested that these files are opened independently to examine their content.

Appendix 1 - Comparison of policymaking, design thinking, and innovation staged processes

Models & Tools															
Stage	Policy-making stage model (Dye)	Five stages of the Policy Cycle (Vosslett, Research & Part)	Applied Problem Solving	Design Thinking (IDEO)	Design Thinking (Stanford)	Design tools (Stanford)	Design Councils Double Diamond	Darden Business School	Design tools (Stanford)	Design Innovation Process (Dartmouth)	Design tools (Dartmouth)	Innovation Process (Dartmouth)	Dartmouth Model Lab Tools	Design Process UK Policy Lab	OH Policy Lab Tools
0	Problem identification	1 Agenda setting	Problem Recognition	Discovery: I have a challenge. How do I approach it?	Empathize: learn about the problem.	Interviews, shadowing, seek to understand, Non-judgmental	Discover: insight into the problem	What is?	Revelation; Learning mapping, Value chain analysis, Mind mapping	Research	Sense intent	Rise Reports, Popular Media Search, Key Factor, Innovation Sourcebook, Trends Expert Interview, Hypecast, Misinformation, Ten Types of Innovation Framework, Innovation Landscape Trends Matrix, Convergence Map, From... To... Expansion, Initial Opportunity Map, Off wing/Activity-Culture Map, Intent Statement	Research Theory of Change, Project focus, Project journey, Target group, Interview, Film & sound, People shadowing, User journey, Cultural probes, Perspective cards, Workshops	Diagnose	Challenge setting, Data science, Evidence select, Hope and fears cards, Journey mapping, Personas, Policy canvas, User segmentation
	Know context										Contextual Research Plan, Popular Media Search, Publications Research, Bias Map, Innovation Evolution Map, Financial Profile, Analytical Models, Competence-Comprehensions Map, Ten Types of Innovation, Diagnostic, Industry Diagnostic, R&D Analysis, Subject Matter Experts Interview, Interest Group Discussion	Discover		Data science, Data visualization, Deliberative dialogue, Ethnography, Interviews, Social media engagement, User research, Scenario setting, Idea days and policy jams, Open Data, Social media and data analysis	
	Know people										Research Participant Map, Research Planning Survey, User Research Plan, Five Human Factors, POMS, Test Visit, Video Ethnography, Ethnographic Interview, User Pictures Interview, Cultural Artifacts, Image Sorting, Experience Simulation, Field Activity, Remote Research, User Observations Database				
2	Policy Formulation	Policy Formulation	Proposal of solution	Interpretation: I learned something. How do I interpret it?	Define: shape key questions.	Personas, Role objectives, Decisions, Challenges, Pain points	Define: the area to focus upon	What if?	Revelation; Reimagining, Concept development	Analysis	Frame insights	Observations to Insights, Insights Sorting, User Observation Database Queries, User Response Analysis, ERP Systems Diagram, Descriptive Value Map, Ethics Position Map, Tech Diagramming, User/Service Lattice Diagramming, Synthesis, Clustering Matrix, Approximate Clustering Matrix, Activity Network, Insights Clustering Matrix, Scenario Profile, User Group Definition, Competing Experience Map, User Journey Map, Summary Framework, Design Principles Generation, Analysis Workshop	Analysis Project focus, Target group, Film & sound, User journey, Personas, Future neighborhood, How might we?, Priority grid	Develop	Change cards, Countdowning, Hack days, Idea days and policy jams, Time development sheet, Storytelling
	3	Policy Legitimation	Decision-making	Choice of solution	Iteration: I see an opportunity. What do I consider?	Understand: limitations and create solutions	Share ideas, add ideas worthy of developing, "Yes and" thinking, Prioritize	Develop: potential solutions	What works?	Revelation; Reimagination, Testing, Rapid prototyping	Synthesis	Explore concepts	Principles to Opportunities, Opportunity Mind Map, Value Hypothesis, Persona Definition, Vision Session, Concept Brainstorming Matrix, Concept Ideation and Analysis, Role-Play Creation, Creation Name, Project Scenario, Behavioral Prototype, Concept Prototype, Concept Sketch, Concept Scenario, Concept Sorting, Concept Grouping Matrix, Concept Catalog		
4		Policy Implementation	Policy Implementation	Putting Solutions into Effect	Experimentation: I have an idea. How do I build it?	Prototype: build representations of one or more ideas.	Mockups, Storyboards, Map, Tailoring, Plan, Test, Iterate quickly	Deliver: solutions that work	What works?	Revelation; Customer Co-Creation, Learning Launch	Realization	Realize offerings	Strategy Roadmap, Platform Plan, Strategy Plan Workshop, Pilot Development and Testing, Implementation Plan, Consultative Plan, Team Formation Plan, Vision Statement, Innovation Brief	Testing Interviews, Cultural probes, Focus & prototypes, Future scenarios, Workshops, Test your ideas	Deliver
	5	Policy Evaluation	Policy Evaluation	Monitoring Results	Evaluation: I tried something new. How do I receive it?	Test: test ideas and gain user feedback	Understand: improvements, what works? Role play, Scenarios quickly			Implementation Theory of change, Project focus, Project journey, Effect focus					

Appendix 2 - First online questionnaire

**Policy
Innovation
by Design**



**Loughborough
University
London**

Policy Labs - first survey

1. Name*
2. Surname*
3. E-mail*
4. Position/role*
5. Organisation*
 - a. Parent entity (if applicable)
 - b. Country in which your organisation is based:
6. At which level is your organisation operating?*
7. Is your organisation formally or informally known as a 'Policy Lab'?*

Policy Labs are often defined as "emerging structures that construct public policies in an innovative, design-oriented fashion, in particular by engaging citizens and companies working within the public sector"
8. Considering the following 6 stages in the policy-making process, in which of these does your organisation intervene? Select all that apply.*

- City-level
- County/Metro-level
- Regional-level
- National-level
- Supra-national-level
- Other

- No
- Yes, formally
- Yes, informally

- Problem identification
- Agenda-setting
- Policy formulation
- Decision-making
- Policy implementation
- Policy evaluation
- Other

Appendix 3 - Second online questionnaire

**Policy
Innovation
by Design**



Policy Labs - follow-up survey

1. Organisation*

2. E-mail*

3. To your organisation, public policy innovation refers to*:

- A policy that is new to the government adopting it.
- A new way of developing public policies.
- Both of the above.
- Other → If you selected Other, please specify:

4. Does your organisation look to innovate on how public policies are made?*

- No
- Yes

5. Does your organisation utilise different methods/tools at different stages of the policymaking process to innovate public policies?

Info: The stages of the policymaking process are:

- 1- Problem identification
- 2- Agenda-setting
- 3- Policy formulation
- 4- Decision-making
- 5- Policy implementation
- 6- Policy evaluation

- No
- Yes

Appendix 4 - Interview guide for the EU Policy Lab participants

Policy
Innovation
by Design



The Future of Public Policymaking

RQ: How does the introduction of design affects the policymaking process?

EU Policy Lab's Project: *The Future of Government 2030+. A Citizen Centric Perspective on New Government Models.*

Questionnaire – guide for EU Policy Lab

Q1. Participant's name:

Q2. Position/role/function:

Q3. What was your role in the project 'The Future of Government 2030+'?

Q4. What were the reasons to engage six policy labs in the first part?

Q5. What were the reasons to collaborate with six design schools?

Q6. What was the criteria for selecting these organisations?

Q7. How was the project brief developed?

Q8.1. What was the relationship between the EU Policy Lab and the policy labs during the project?

Q8.2. And with the design schools?

Q9. How was the EU Policy Lab involved in the participant selection process for the citizen engagement workshops?

Q10. The report Policy Implications and Recommendations report provides insights stemming from a process based on interviews with 20 stakeholders and a participatory workshop with 19 stakeholders.

- How were these 20 interviewees selected?
- How were the 19 workshop participants selected?

Q11. How were the dynamics/activities carried out by/with the participants decided?

Q12. Did you aim at utilising design methods/tools (i.e., design thinking, user journey mapping) during the workshops?

Q12.2. What were the [design] methods/tools used?

Q12.3. Why these?

Q13. Are you aware of these methods/tools' origin?

Q14. What are the design capabilities within the EU Policy Lab?

Q15. One of the recommendations of the 2nd report looks at "Develop[ing] more collaborative ways of working through design-oriented workshops".

Institute for Design Innovation

Federico Vaz

Appendix 5 - Interview guide for policy labs' participants

The Future of Public Policymaking

RQ: How does the introduction of design affects the policymaking process?

EU Policy Lab's Project: *The Future of Government 2030+. A Citizen Centric Perspective on New Government Models.*

Questionnaire – guide for Policy Labs

Q1. Participant's name:

Q2. Position/role/function:

Q3. How would you define your organisation? Do you use the term "Policy Lab" to describe it?

Q3. What does your organisation do?

Q4. What is your organisation's relation to government? (Central, Municipal, Funding, Consultancy)

Q5. What was your experience with the EU Policy Lab Project: The Future of Government 2030+?

Q6.1. What, in your opinion, was the reason for the EU Policy Lab to select your organisation?

Q6.2. Considering that only six Policy Labs were selected to participate in this project: What was your institution/organisation able to offer to the project?

Q7. What was the brief given to you/your organisation by the EU Policy Lab?

Q8. What was the relationship between your organisation and the EU Policy Lab during the project?

Q9. What was the relationship between your organisation and the other Policy Labs during the project?

Q10. What was the relationship between your organisation and the participating Design Schools during the project?

Q11. Could you tell me how were the citizen engagement workshops organised?

Q12. How was the project introduced to the participants?

Q13. How were the participants selected?

Q14. What were the dynamics/activities carried out by/with the participants?

Q15. Did you utilise design methods/tools (i.e., design thinking, user journey mapping)?

- No
- Yes

Q16. What are the [design] methods/tools your used?

Q17. Do you know where do these methods/tools come from?

Q18. What do you think was the role design played in the project?

Appendix 6 - Interview guide for design schools' participants

Policy
Innovation
by Design



The Future of Public Policymaking

RQ: How does the introduction of design affects the policymaking process?

EU Policy Lab's Project: *The Future of Government 2030+. A Citizen Centric Perspective on New Government Models.*

Questionnaire – guide for Design Schools

Q1. Participant's name:

Q2. Position/role/function:

Q3. What was your experience with the EU Policy Lab Project: The Future of Government 2030+?

Q4.1. What, in your opinion, was the reason for the EU Policy Lab to select your organisation?

Q4.2. Considering that only six design schools were selected to participate in this project: What was your institution/organisation able to offer to the project?

Q5. What was the brief given to you/your organisation by the EU Policy Lab?

Q6. What do you think was the role design played in the project?

Q7. What was the relationship between your [design school] and the other Design Schools during the project?

Q8. What was the relationship between your [design school] and the EU Policy Lab during the project?

Q9. What was the relationship between your [design school] and the participating Policy Labs during the project?

Q10. How was the introduction of the project to the students?

Q11. What were the dynamics/activities carried out by/with the students?

Q12. What were the concepts generated?

Q13. Were these prototyped? How?

Q14. While developing the project, was the concept of public policymaking addressed? How?

Q15. In running the project, did you look at innovating how public policies could be made?

- No
- Yes → Why is innovation relevant to public policy-making?

Q16. How do you think design can affect the policymaking project?

Q17. What was [your design school]'s most important/singular contribution/insight to the project?

Q18. In your opinion, what is the potential impact of this project? And in public policymaking?

Institute for Design Innovation

Federico Vaz

Appendix 7 - Sample report from DWP PEx workshop (OPM1.1)

DWP Open Policy Making – OPM1.1

Level 1: “What it takes to be an Open Policy Maker”

21st of August 2019 - 10.30 to 16hs

Loughborough University in London – Room LDN0.17/0.18

Participants: 21 participants organised in 4 tables of 4 + 1 table of 5. Participants belong to policy area or operations.

Materials: Participants are given a six-page worksheet handout (“Worksheets pack”). Additionally, the facilitators brought a slide-deck that guides the workshop, five printouts describing scenarios (“Persuading others: Scenario 1 to 5”), post-it notes, sharpies, and person-shaped papers.

What it takes to be an Open Policy Maker

Worksheets

POLICY EXPLORATION

Worksheets pack page 1

Delivered by three Policy Exploration Unit members: (Head of Policy Exploration), (Senior Policy Designer), (Policy Designer).

Slide 3

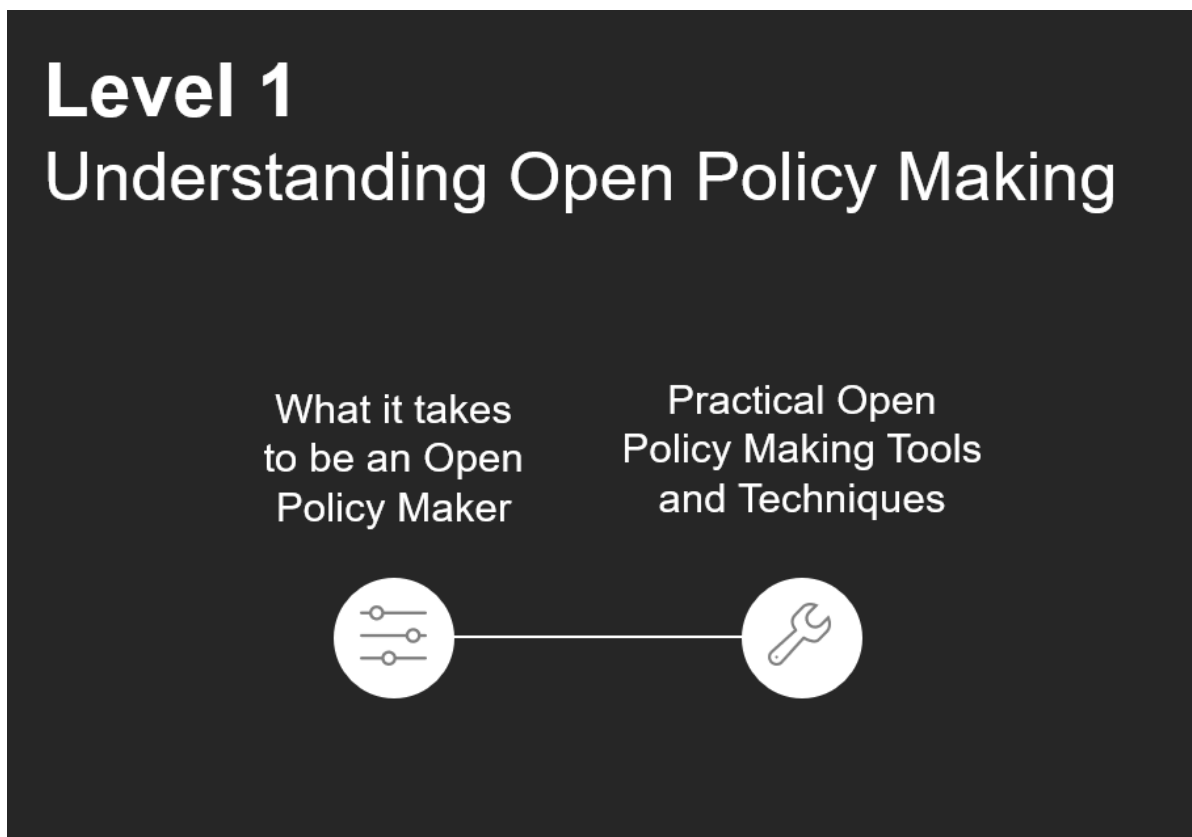
The team uses a slide (3) showing their pictures, names and positions.

A Policy Exploration Team logo is used throughout the presentation (30 out of 56 slides) at the slides bottom-left corner.



Policy Exploration Team logo.

Facilitators welcome the participants and explain this workshop is part of the Level 1 training on Open Policy Making. Level 1, named “Understanding Open Policy Making” comprises two workshops: ‘What it takes to be an Open Policy Maker’ and ‘Practical Open Policy Making Tools and Techniques’.



Immediately afterwards, the agenda for the day is presented.

Morning structure

Session 1 - 11:00 – 12:00: It's all about people

Session 2 - 12:00 – 13:00: Understanding policy problems better

Afternoon structure

Session 3 - 13:30 – 14:30: Invite challenge

Session 4 - 14:30 – 15:30: Persuading others

Session 5 - 15:30 - 16:00: Evaluation and close

Before the Session 1, facilitators go through a short introduction about why this training is necessary.

Open Policy Making is about opening up the policy development process to new voices, ideas and techniques.

And in government we talk about it all the time.

Slide 7



Civil Service

A Brilliant Civil Service

A brilliant Civil Service that helps to keep the United Kingdom prosperous and secure, supporting the governments we serve in implementing their commitments and delivering high quality services for the public.

MAKING IT HAPPEN: improved outcomes from effective leaders and skilled people, in a great place to work.

We will provide efficient, trusted services designed around user need to deliver **improved outcomes** for the country.

We need **effective leaders** who are inspiring, confident and empowering and who live our values.

They will lead **skilled people** who are high-performing, adaptable and take personal responsibility.

The Civil Service will be **a great place to work**. It will be inclusive, flexible, modern and connected, sitting at the heart of a wider public service. In everything we do we will encourage openness, challenge, innovation and excellence.

Slide 8

Slide 8: Highlighted: “In everything we do we will encourage openness, challenge, innovation and excellence.”



Slide 9: “We need to be better connected and more informed, so that we properly understand the way customers behave”

“We need to find new and different ways of engaging with those who use our services”

“[We will be] at the forefront of innovative solutions to policy problems, with bold new ideas embedded in our thinking”

Jonathan Mills
Director General, Policy Group

Slide 11: “Session 1 It’s all about people”

Slide 12: “One way or another our work is formed by people or in service of people”

Slide 12 comments: “One way or another our work is formed by people or in service of people.

But our work is very task-oriented. We move from task to task, meeting to meeting and we don’t pay enough attention to who is actually in the room, on the phone or on the screen.

We are so focussed on the task in hand that we forget to establish a connection with the people we are working with and for.

Having the will and the skill to build connections with people is a fundamental part of being an open policy maker. And that’s where we are going to start.”

Slide 13: “Build human connection.”

Slide 13 comments: “You might think that it is hard to build human connection in a work context, or that it will get in the way of doing your work.

It is possible to do good work by focussing on what tasks need to be done and delivering them on time and to a good standard. No doubt about it.

But in a policy context, when we are working with complex adaptive systems working in that way is risky and in many ways short-sighted.

Example of links with Operations

Slide 14: “We do our work in service of others.”

Slide 14 comments: “I just want to come back to this statement which I have mentioned a couple of times already because it is really important part of being an open policy maker”

Being in service of others.

- ✓ Caring about the context of other people
- ✓ Understanding their needs and desires
- ✓ Doing things to improve their lives
- ✗ Ignoring your own needs
- ✗ Making things hard for yourself
- ✗ Doing what everyone asks you to do

POLICY EXPLORATION

Slide 15

Slide 15 comments: “Highlight the point about consultation not being a shopping list”

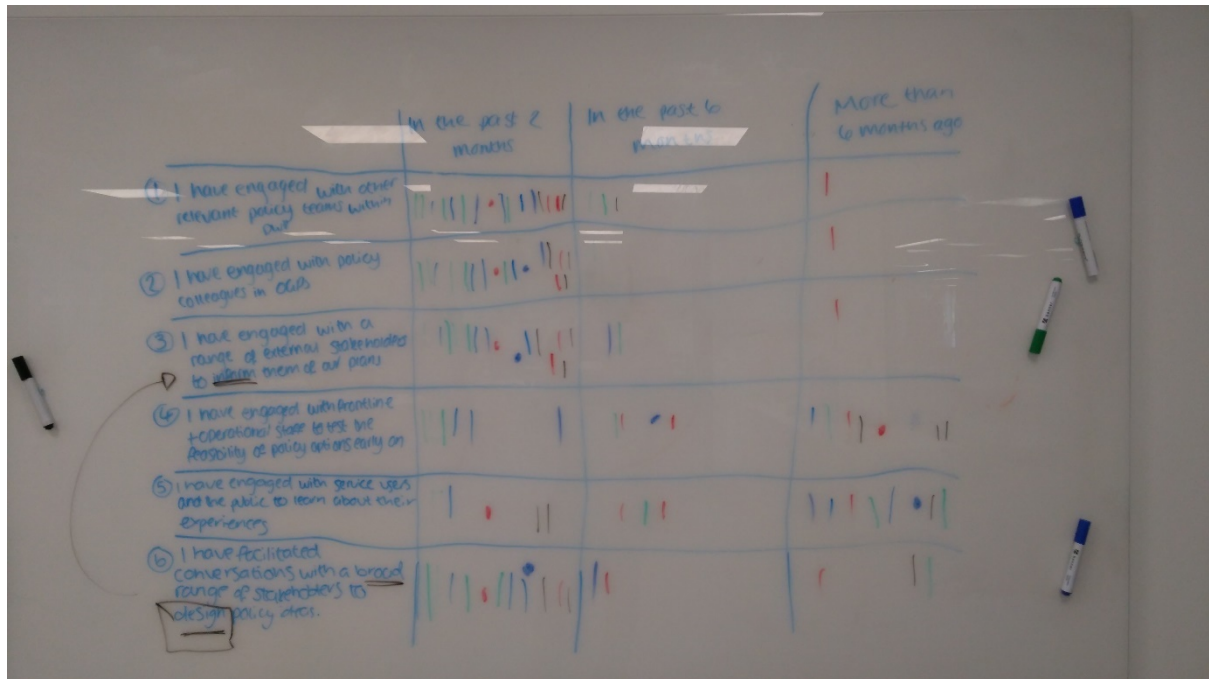
Exercise 1: At some points during the beginning (Session 1) participants were asked to assess their knowledge on Open Policy Making.

How do you collaborate?

	In the past 2 months	In the past 6 months	More than 6 months ago
1. I have engaged with other relevant policy teams within DWP			
2. I have engaged with policy colleagues in other government departments			
3. I have engaged with a range of external stakeholders to inform them of our plans			
4. I have engaged with frontline and operational staff to test the feasibility of policy options early on			
5. I have engaged with services users and the public to learn about their experiences			
6. I have facilitated conversations with a broad range of stakeholders to design policy ideas			

POLICY EXPLORATION

Worksheet pack page 1 comment: “Fill the sheet in individually then put dots on a big version to show the pattern?”



How do you collaborate?



- Other policy teams
- Other government departments
- External stakeholders



- To keep in touch
- To inform about our intentions
- To secure buy-in

- Frontline and operational staff
- Colleagues in digital
- Service users and citizens

- To learn about their experiences
- To test policy options
- To co-design policy ideas

POLICY EXPLORATION

Slide 18

Slide 18 comments: “Explain the difference and describe the risk of disconnects.”



Slide 19

Slide 19 comments: “Who here has seen Ocean’s Eleven?”

Those that have will know it is one of the all time great caper movies.

In the film, Danny Ocean, played by George Clooney organises a band of career criminals for a once-in-a-lifetime heist.

Their target is a Las Vegas casino on the night of a big prize fight, when \$150m will be in the casino vault.

The odds are against them, the clock is ticking, and it takes an intricate strategy and every special skill the team possesses to pull it off.

There’s a pickpocket, and explosives expert, even an acrobat!

Open policy making resembles that perfectly orchestrated heist.

You assemble your team and put your talents, time and energy to best use, taking on an overwhelming challenge and using your wits and expertise to overcome every obstacle in your path.

F2 to give real life policy example

Slide 21: “What can you do to build better connections?”

Slide 21 comments: “WORKSHEET

Solo 2 mins

Pair 3 mins

Table 5 mins

Playback (5 tables/3 mins each) 15 mins”

Exercise 2: Making better connections

Three things I will try in order to build better connections:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

POLICY EXPLORATION

Worksheets pack: page 3

<<Session 2 started at 12.15>>



Slide 22: "Session 2: Understanding Policy Problems"

Slide 23: "The Open Policy Maker learns to develop a beginner's mind."

Slide 23 comments: "Our most precious ability as open policy makers is to see things objectively and uncover deep insight. To do this well you need to develop a beginner's mind."

This concept focuses on seeing things fresh, free from your biases, your past experiences and your expertise.

It sounds counterintuitive but in policy we are regularly working with insights and ideas, and to engage with them fully we need to keep our minds open.

A beginner's mind is a useful state of being to make sure you are a) ready to learn new things, and b) open to new possibilities that may arise from that new knowledge."

-F1: First of all, make sure you are ready to learn new things. Being open to the possibilities that may arise from that new knowledge. Develop the capacity to take advantage of different things and new possibilities. The opposite of a beginner's mind is certainty; it's one of the biggest barriers to cultivating a beginner's mind. And when seeking insights to coming up with a new idea ... sometimes we work with people who seem to have a lot of certainty about the direction of a particular initiative or they pop with the solution already to the problem that they thought of... 'we already know that a website is the answer, we already know that developing that thing is gonna solve the problem', and working with people in that frame of mind can be a challenge but it happens to all of us all the time.

Slide 24: "Be careful of certainty."

Slide 24 comments: "One of the biggest blockers to cultivating a beginner's mind is certainty.

When we are seeking insight or coming up with a new idea, we are not certain of anything – and that is completely okay!

Sometimes we work with people who have a lot of certainty about the direction of an initiative or they come up with a solution very early in the process.

This needs to be navigated carefully – certainty can be one of the biggest risks to open mindedness.

To understand a problem requires us to gain new knowledge, but when we are sure we already know something, new information can't get in."

-F1: We need to navigate it quite carefully. Certainty is often one of the biggest risks to beginner's mind and that also means is one of the biggest risks to Open Policy making.

So, understand a policy problem requires us to gain new knowledge. When we are sure we already know something then nothing else can get into our heads; unless it's something we already know about we have a tendency to ignore it.

We are gonna look at a different exercise now which is looking at an scenario where we are placed in a position where we often find ourselves in, where we are being asked a question, and we will try to find out what kind of things we might do to understand that question.

Slide 25: "Exercise 3"

Slide 26: "Scenario

Too many people are winning appeals against DWP decisions. Why?"

Slide 26 comments: "Let's pretend you were asked this question by a minister. What kind of things would you do to understand the problem better?"

9 box grid – write one thing per box if you can.

Get someone to should one out. Everyone tick yours off if you have the same.

Repeat.

Write a list on a white board.

Explore what each of the responses will tell us about the problem.

And where are the gaps?

Mapping/Observing tribunals/focus groups with staff/

Too often we don't go deep enough into our enquiry. For example, we know that 74% of appeals against DWP decisions are successful. We also know that one of the main reasons for that is people provide evidence to the court that they haven't provided to DWP. These are findings.

As you can see from this list, Open Policy Makers dig much deeper to understand why these things happen."

-F1: So, here is the scenario, the Minister has asked you the following question: Too many people are winning appeals against decisions that we made. Why's that?

In your worksheet, we're gonna try and find. Individually, write down the actual route you would take to understand this issue more. Pretend you now need to understand this issue more... what are you gonna do to answer this question?

If you can find nine, great, if not, don't worry about it. In the next few minutes, write in the grid the things that you would do to understand this question and this issue better. Is that clear? Brilliant. Thank you very much. So, do that for a few minutes and then we'll bring it back together.

Exercise 3: Understanding the problem

POLICY EXPLORATION

Worksheets pack page 4.

Too many people are winning appeals against DWP decisions. Why?

Look at existing regulations and policy intent

Talk to lawyers

Find out if the policy is being implemented properly

Look at the data

Listen to decision makers

Look for international comparisons

Map the journey to see who is involved

Listen to appeal writers

Clarify the question. Why is it a problem?

Listen to work coaches

Look at the reasons for successful appeals

Check direction at senior level

Consult community groups and third sector

Do anonymous sampling

Talk to the judiciary

Listen to the experiences of appellants

POLICY EXPLORATION

Slide 27

Slide 27 comments: “Let’s pretend you were asked this question by a minister. What kind of things would you do to understand the problem better?”

9 box grid – write one thing per box if you can.

Explore what each of the responses will tell us about the problem.

And where are the gaps?

Mapping/Observing tribunals/focus groups with staff/

Too often we don’t go deep enough into our enquiry. For example, we know that 74% of appeals against DWP decisions are successful. We also know that one of the main reasons for that is people provide evidence to the court that they haven’t provided to DWP. These are findings.

As you can see from this list, Open Policy Makers dig much deeper to understand why these things happen.”

-F1:

- Look at existing regulation of policy intent: what are the levers or potential constraints.
- Listen to decisions makers: people making decisions often understand more of what their job is like.
- Look at the data: understanding more from policy analysis what the data is telling us.
- Listen to the people who write appeals: you could talk to layers.
- You could map the journey: to see who is involved. You can go: Here is a person claiming a thing, here is their journey when they’re making an appeal. You can map all the steps they take and who is involved from the Department in that particular process.
- Clarify the question: why is it a problem? What is it that we are trying to achieve and why are we not satisfied with the current position?

- Do work to find out if the policy is actually implemented properly: how is it being delivered for real vs. how it was intended when the policy was written.
- We can look at why appeals succeed. If you consult community groups in the third sector who often offer to help people with their appeals. The people our costumers go to for help, so we can understand how they perceive this things and deal with them.
- We can check the direction of MOC: what is it that we are trying to achieve in the next few months that will help the ministry feel more comfortable.
- Talk to the judiciary: those are the ones who make the decisions about the appeals.
- Listen to experience of people who make the appeals: we can understand more about their journey and why they don't feel particularly happy about the decision we've taken.
- We can make some anonymous sampling: do some studies to take all other variables and see what that tells us.
- And finally, international comparison: are there similar processes happening in other countries that we can learn from or compare ourselves with.

-F1: Have anybody got anything we didn't mention?

<<F1 opens the floor for other strategies that have not been mentioned>>

-Participants: Observe an appeal.

-Another participant: it is important to establish "is this a root cause or an effect?"

-Another participant: "Can I just say, because there is lots of 'listen to decision-makers and the different people in the process', I think the thing I've found more useful when looking at these kind of issues isn't just sit down with people in a room and ask them to talk me through it but rather sit with them. Sit with somebody making a decision and see what they actually do, see they are copying and pasting common phrases which are the, you know... I think it can be really easy to get somebody in a room and ask them to talk to you about something and that's it, but actually physically seeing in their workplace doing what they do, I think you get another level of insights.

-F1: thank you for that. I think that's a really positive point to make. More observing rather than listening

-Another participant: what works for me is not taking anything for granted. Look at the existing regulation that's in place is not enough. You just have to see if there are updated versions of that regulation was being used to make the decision and if there are any policy changes in place. Look at the communication and the language that's been used. Go through everything again not taking anything for granted.

-F2: I would like to illustrate with an example..." *She goes on to illustrate with an example from her previous position as a teacher, where Ofsted changed regulations for evaluating schools, but schools kept doing what they were doing plus adopting the requirement from the new regulations.* I used to be a teacher, we have Ofsted in teaching... and every few years Ofsted updates what they are assessing teachers on, and Ofsted assumed... for instance, there is something in teaching we call triple-marking: the teacher would mark a book, the student responds to the feedback, and the teacher would mark the thing again all in different colour pens. Teachers said that was a burdensome thing, so Ofsted said, "don't do it then anymore, we don't need to see that to see progress being demonstrated". But new regulations came in and the schools kept doing it because in their minds everything build on top of each other to show that you are fantastic, whereas Ofsted were under the impression that the old stuff was going and the new stuff was coming instead but actually it was just building on top of each other".

-Participant: “my thought was, you don’t want to overcomplicate, so you might want to do all of these things but I’ve also seen one when effectively what they did was look at the policy intent, look at the volume of appeals, and thought, ‘hang on, what’s fundamentally going wrong here is that case workers are just not doing enough at the point that would someone complaint, and the management reconsideration step was to back up and the problem went away. That was a fairly sort of simple one because if at an early point you spot that there is a solution in here that’s just about doing some stuff in a slightly different way you can cut off a lot of the trouble and get straight into the knot of it... you need to spot the step at which the problem is occurring”.

-Another participant: “I think it just builds on that in terms of really spending time thinking of policy and implementation for unintended consequences. The realities between policy vs. implementation.”

>>F1 illustrates with an example after participants had their saying: He goes back to the “listening” point which was rebutted by one participant in favour of doing what can be considered “participant observation”. In his example, F1 explains how the general assumption (for which they had no evidence) was that applicant were holding to key pieces of evidence and only submitting those in their appeals which would guarantee winning it. He explains that this “adversarial” understanding of the situation sent the department into looking for ways to force people into submitting those key pieces of information, instead of questioning why would they be behaving in such a way. F1 finishes the example by asks participants to be “open-minded”.

-F1: In this piece of work, one of the myths that existed was... “myths”? The common understanding was that the reason people kept winning appeals was that they hold onto the key piece of information and evidence and then play it at the last minute, they play it at the tribunal and they’d win the case. None of the evidence supported that was the issue but because some people were certain, had the certainty that was happening... and this sort of inherited certainty that they believed... An existing certainty that something is happening... we can hear something without listening to it... are you listening for the thing that you already know... there was no evidence people were holding to that information to then play it last minute. So, we changed our perspective and take a lead in changing people’s perspective about that because it affects how we think about problems really: how can we stop them doing that rather than how do we give them more time to give all we need of them or ask them for fewer things? But as long as we all think they are playing it last minute there is a kind of adversarial thought process. Whereas it’s right or wrong it doesn’t matter but it certainly affects the way people thinks and talks about the problem and the way they look at people involved. Whereas if we said “we are not giving them enough time to get what we need” or, “they don’t like to admit ‘this thing’ until we force them to”. Until we start thinking about that... we can see things and hear things, but if we are not really open minded that changes my perception of a things. Which takes practice.

-F3: Thinking of all this stuff takes effort. Organise and taking a day of your calendar to go and sit in an appeal tribunal, that’s a lot of effort and time you put into that, so if you’re not really willing to listen to what you hear and how that might change how you think about the issue, then why would you put all that time and effort into doing that? If you are, then you are using that time and effort really wisely.

-F1: Now we’re gonna do a little table exercise... Would you mind introducing it?.

-F2: Of course. So now we’ll give you a piece of flip as a table and you’re gonna draw these lovely axes... the lines are allowed to be wiggly. What we want you to do is choose some of the activities that you listed as a table and put them on these axes. To what extent do these activities help us understand what’s going on? Vs why?

I think it's really important to raise the point here that doing open policymaking work isn't instead of all the other evidence you normally gather. Is not open policy making or traditional evidence gathering, analyst speaking, getting all of that data... both are incredibly important in policymaking and the activities that are advocated within open policy making just help us strengthen and broaden our evidence base. But it's really important to think about what do the different activities help us to learn. So, think, as a table, how many what's you've got vs how many why's. We'll give you about ten minutes as a table.



Slide 29

>>Groups map in a flipchart sheet what activities helps them to understand the “what” and which helps them understanding the “why”.

>>When going through the tables, F2 found out that one group did not understand the axes: participants were looking at establishing a hierarchy between the elements to be plotted in relation to the axes. E.g., to what extent a certain action that helps in understanding the “what” helps in understanding the “why”?

This was not intended by the facilitators and they had no use for such information. However, the graphic representation with the cartesian axes implied such a relation between the two variables.

>>F1 wraps up the exercise explaining the importance of going a “level deeper”: “ask why?”

Follows with a short 3-minute exercise on how to understand their policy area better.

Exercise 3: Understanding the problem

POLICY EXPLORATION

Worksheets pack page 4

Write down a personal list of reflections/inspirations: "If I do these things I would understand my policy area even better."

Exercise 3: Understanding the problem

Three things I will try in order to understand policy problems even better:

1.

2.

3.

POLICY EXPLORATION

Worksheets pack page 5

F2: "If there is anything you thought about as a result of today's session..."

<<Back from break>>

Slide 31: “Session 3: Invite challenge”

>>Individually, participants are asked to guess the percentage of people agreeing to certain statements.

How much do we really know?

“People who have enough money to buy the things they need, but not enough to buy the things most people take for granted are in poverty.”



POLICY EXPLORATION

Slide 32

Slide 32 comments: “Individually, in workshop booklet, rank own answers to questions.

These questions are from the British Social Attitudes Survey. Some of you will have come across this before, but it’s a survey that seeks to gather a representative sample of British adults aged 18 and above. Typically, this means surveying some 3000 people every year on a range of topics to measure and track changes in people’s social, political and moral attitudes, and it’s been going since 1983.”

Statements:

1. “People who have enough money to buy the things they need, but not enough to buy the things most people take for granted are in poverty.” → 28%
2. “Humans are mainly or entirely the cause of climate change.” → 36%
3. “A job is just a way of earning money – no more.” → 50%
4. “Government should reduce taxes and spend less on health, education and social benefits.” → 4%

Exercise 4: How much do we really know?

1. "People who have enough money to buy the things they need, but not enough to buy the things most people take for granted are in poverty."

strongly disagree disagree agree strongly agree

2. "Humans are mainly or entirely the cause of climate change."

strongly disagree disagree agree strongly agree

3. "A job is just a way of earning money – no more."

strongly disagree disagree agree strongly agree

4. "Government should reduce taxes and spend less on health, education and social benefits."

strongly disagree disagree agree strongly agree

Worksheets pack page 6

>>After showing the actual percentage of agreement with statements, facilitators ask participants to express how many guesses the figures (with a $\pm 5\%$).

"People who have enough money to buy the things they need, but not enough to buy the things most people take for granted are in poverty."

28%

POLICY EXPLORATION

Slide 36

Slide 36 comments: "People mark themselves – 5% leeway either side."

>>Slides 37, 38 & 39 show the results for the other questions.

Slide 39 comments: "Gather feedback. Let's check how many of us have our fingers on the pulse of the British public."

Raise hands if at least 1 answer correct. Keep hands raised if at least 2 correct. Etc.”

-F2: “No discussion yet, Doris” → participants laugh at the joke.

<<Participants gasp in awe at the results.>>

-F2: “Let’s check how many of us have our fingers on the pulse of the British public.

Raise hands if at least 1 answer correct. Keep hands raised if at least 2 correct. Etc.”

Slide 40: “Everyone makes assumptions and has biases”

Slide 40 comments: “We all, to a greater and lesser extent, assume that people think, act and live the way we do. The Behavioural Insights Team call this the illusion of similarity. Quite often, we overestimate what people know and what they are willing and able to understand (especially if it’s in relation to our own policy areas – after all, we’ve been immersed in the detail and it seems blindingly obvious to us and the colleagues who surround us).

We’re also overoptimistic in our estimates of how people will behave, often expecting people to make the most rationale choices, the choices that will lead to them accruing the most benefit. But people don’t always act according to economic rationality – take the transferrable marriage allowance, which allows married couples, where one partner does not earn enough to use their tax allowance in full, to transfer 10% of unused tax allowance to their partner. Some 4 million couples were eligible to save up to £200 per year, but only half this number bothered to apply. Policymakers overestimated people’s willingness and ability to apply.”

-F2: “We did this activity to really make the next point. Thank you all for engage and involve. We all make assumptions and have biases. And we all make assumptions about how other people live and behave. The Behavioural Insight Team, if any of you heard of them, they were introduced by the Cabinet Office initially and they call this ‘illusion of similarity’. We all make these assumptions. It’s really natural. We use it as shortcuts to get through our day to day lives, we assume people live, work, act in a similar way to us. Something else we do is overestimate what people know or their ability to understand things or their ability to understand complexity as well. So, think about our policy areas. We have been often so embedded in them for such a long time they are really complex but they are really straight forward to us... but to someone with that beginner’s mind set, to someone who doesn’t know the field it’s such an incredibly complexity, and naturally we assume and overestimate everyone else’s understanding of it... but also we’re overoptimistic in our estimate of how people will behave. Some of us are naturally optimistic, like me. But we often assume people will go for very rational choices, because that’s what’s gonna be good for them. Maybe it’s a bout money and they’re gonna do this economically rational thing, but actually no because maybe they don’t wanna work that extra hour or they don’t wanna put their child into childcare for an extra hour, even if that’s a bit more money, they rather spend the time with their child! And maybe that’s not economically rational. Often so much of economics is based on people acting rationally but we don’t necessarily act that way. So, there are a couple of examples that illustrate this point about assumptions and biases. One of them, potentially a bit controversial, Universal Credit. You know that it works really, really well for those people who are paid monthly? But Universal Credit paid on a monthly basis have your assessment periods. There’s been increasing amount of evidence ... to show that people who are paid more frequently than that can have a few issues. And there is an assumption underlying that policy that people are paid on a monthly basis. But actually the Resolution Foundation did some research into understanding people from poor background or people on lower income and how often or frequently they’re paid, and actually about 45% of these people are paid more frequently than on a monthly basis.

-Participant: Might not be the best example... we gave them that evidence at the time... and they ignored me.

<<Laughs>>

-F2: That also very beautifully illustrates our other point then, which is that we assume... when we want people to behave in a particular way, we overestimate their ability and willingness to behave in a certain way. This isn't about just policymakers, this is about the civil servants, this is about ministers, it's about everyone, absolutely. We have a fantastic example where in 2012, Francis Maude, in preparation for the fuel strike, suggested that everyone fill-up a jerrycan of petrol and storage in their garage. There were a million things wrong with this. One: the amount of fuel you can put into a jerrycan is more than it's legally allowed to be stored. It's a massive fire risk, but also... who's got a garage? Actually, two thirds of the population don't have access to a garage, their cars are parked on the road.

<<laughs>>

-F2: So, absolutely right for raising that point. We kind of overestimate people's willingness and ability to do things, their ability to understand complexity, and we often assume, as shown by the exercise from the beginning, that people are like us...

-Participant: the problem with this exercise is that it has confirmed my bias toward some people.

<<laughs>>

-F2: But alas, we need to design for everyone.

-Another participant: About that similarity bias. I think I've read something recently about that social media in the way that works is intensifying that effect, because at the time when the media we were consuming was all the same it was more difficult to make those assumptions, bizarrely because the fact they have to cover everything, whereas with social media you tend to have a bit of an echo chamber effect where you follow who are like you or you follow people who's got similar opinions to you. That's what you've got things like Trump happening. You just got completely parallel realities, where people would see things in such different ways that they never intersect in the way that they used to. And so, that effect intensifies and it's more important to us as policymakers to make sure we are not doing that in our work.

>>Another participant recommends watching Netflix's "The Great Hack".

-F2: Lovely. I think it's really important that point to be raised. If this kind of effect, illusion of similarity, is intensifying, we need to be so careful of operational and cultural disconnect. F1 spoke about this early: the cultural disconnect is the minister presuming that everyone's got a garage, it's us assuming that people think the way we do, and people live the way that we do. The operational disconnect is thinking, "oh, in operations they can just deliver this for me because that's what they do, it's their job to deliver things", without understanding all the other things that they do in their day to day lives.

Slide 41: "Beware of operational and cultural disconnect"

Slide 41 comments: "In this case, the consequences of the transferable marriage allowance not meeting its policy intent or hitting its expected take up targets are relatively insignificant.

But this isn't always the way. When we don't do anything to challenge our assumptions and biases, it can lead to operational and cultural disconnect. Ultimately, this can mean us devising policies that fail to deliver their intended outcomes, and worse, cause damage and suffering in the process.

Operational and cultural disconnect ...”

-F2: “One of the best ways to counteract this is to invite challenge. Remember the title of the session is “invite challenge”. So, we want people to challenge those perspectives, we want people to get together from diverse backgrounds to make sure we are not actually operating or designing for ourselves. Policy Labs uses something called video-ethnography, we use it in the Department as well, where you film different types of people. I’m sure people have been in a situation where you tell the minister something and they are “yes, but this is my experience”. The thing that we were talking about earlier, if you are not open minded to other possibilities you will only find the evidence that suits your hypothesis. You can tell the minister, or whoever, somebody who needs convincing, all you like, but if you show them a piece of video-ethnography, a video of someone talking about their experiences you can’t argue with the video! They can argue with you as a civil servant but you can’t argue with those... and then you build up a more complete picture. So, F1 and I devised this training after having conducted 50 different interviews with policymakers from across the government about their attitudes to open policy making, and one of the policymakers during the interview said that one of the most effective ways of challenging a minister for her was taking the minister, who had very firm views about drug abusers, to a rehabilitation centre in Oxford, where he spoke to an Oxford Don who was completely addicted to cocaine or heroin, I think it was actually, and up until then, the minister just assumed that anyone who is addicted to heroin is a down and out person who is already a waste of space, and why on earth do we want to support them in the first place? It’s just a particular portion of society. It was when he had that conversation with the person who was the Oxford Don, the Oxford Professor who was addicted to heroin, that the penny dropped. “It might not just be the down and out”. So, there are ways to convince people but it can be incredibly challenging. But! The ways we can challenge is by collaborating with others. That’s why it’s important to identify policy options/solutions in collaboration with others who have different perspectives to our own, and in particular the people affected by our policies or who might have to live with them.

Slide 42: “Collaborating with others is key”

Slide 42 comments: “That’s why it’s important to identify policy options/solutions in collaboration with others who have different perspectives to our own, and in particular the people affected by our policies – be they users, customers, or citizens, or frontline staff who will have to operationalise and deliver.”

Slide 43: “Collaborative idea generation”

Slide 43 comments: “There are a number of steps we can take to challenge our assumptions and biases.

In an ideal world, we might come up with policy options in collaboration with the people the policy is aiming to support. This is known as co-design. In policy contexts, this is not necessarily straightforward. In DWP in particular, our policies can be very politically sensitive and emotive. We may worry about raising expectations.”

>>Participant raises question “who can be in the room?”

-F2: So, there are a couple of things we can do. We’ve spoken about collaborative idea generation. That’s when you get lots of people from different backgrounds, people affected by the policies, or the ones that will be delivering it in the room to come up with the ideas for the policy themselves, rather than much further down the line... when the ideas are already quite well-formed. Can we get them from the beginning? Sometimes yes, sometimes no. Sometimes our work is actually very sensitive. So, thinking about who can be in that room, that’s a valid concern. Thinking carefully about who you can bring in is absolutely fine, as maybe, sometimes we can’t deal with people whose lives are affected. I was speaking earlier with someone in the

room about how we work while we were working with people victim of domestic abuse. You don't want to be having a victim of domestic abuse in the room talking about their experience of domestic abuse because that's retraumatizing. It would be ethically wrong for us to do that. But we were able to bring in independent domestic violence advocates who work on a one to one basis supporting them on their journeys, and asking them about the different people that they work with, the different challenges that they face to understand more about their lives and the barriers that they face. It doesn't stop me getting operations in ... we have to trust our partners that it's just about having the opportunity to test things quite early, which takes me to the next point.

Slide 44: "Prototyping and testing"

Slide 44 comments: "This is far less of a concern with prototyping and testing.

Prototyping means bringing our policy ideas to life and making them tangible so that they can be tested with the people they're intended for. It's not about spending a long time focusing on the intricacies of how the policy will work or taking months to design a new platform or portal. It's about pulling together something quickly so that we can learn fast, before we get too attached to the concept or spend lots of money developing an idea that simply will not work in reality, no matter how perfect or elegant it appears in a sub or on paper.

We're going to have a go now, in fact. Write down three needs – (1) I need a downstairs toilet (2) I need natural light and (3) I need plenty of storage.

- 5 mins, design house for partner – label
- 3 mins, how meet needs, how be improved (1 person explains without design, 1 person explains with)
- Iterate
- Compare again. Which better? Why?

Providing you choose your target group carefully to represent the people who are going to experience the policy idea, then you can acquire around 85% of the insight into how an idea might be – and the problems it might encounter – by testing prototypes with as few as 5 people. The findings will be indicative, rather than definitive, but they allow us to learn about the potential of an idea early on before it becomes too big to fail, no matter the cost."

-F2: "You might have a few ideas about what prototyping and testing is. Sounds quite digital but actually it's just about bringing our policy ideas to life. Instead of telling someone what it is, it's showing them whether it is with a video or... making something tangible. So, it's not about spending lots of time on the intricacies of how the policy is gonna work, so, it's not about developing something for two year in complete detail with the exact step by step that's gonna take and spending loads of money. Instead, just build something so that it can be tested as if it was real. It's about putting something together quickly so that we can learn fast before we get too attached to a concept or an idea, and then whatever we hear we'll find a way around it anyway, or we start spending lots and lots of money and we can't walk back from it. So, it's about putting something together to test the idea, or thing, or policy with someone so you can get lots of rapid information and iterate. We talked about iterations. We iterate all the time. Think about a [...] or a PQ... it goes from me to F1, to Duncan... they're all changing it... it's iteration. We're just making changes to make things better along the way. So, prototyping and testing with people affected by the policies or who are going to be delivering the policies, you can get some much value and information. Make sure to learn fast and then maybe even ditch it, get a second one, we talked

about... gets straight to the Minister, gets iterated or it goes into the bin! How often do we put our ideas in the bin? We are so attached to them

<laughs>

Slide 45: "Exercise 4"

>>Individually – 3 minutes.

>>Participants think of the 3 things you need in your ideal house.

>>In pairs, participants exchange the 3 features of their ideal houses. Each participant tries to draw the house according to the features in the post-it given by their colleagues without consulting. After 10 minutes, each pair present the drawings to each other and ask for feedback: how can be improved?

>>This exercise helped in showing that even providing the key features of a policy the way in which it should be fully developed is far from clear and can take many different shapes that have to do more with the designer than the "client" setting the requirements.

-F2: We're going to do an exercise. What we are going to do, on a post-it note, you're just going to write down the three things that you need in your ideal house. In my ideal house, I'd have a downstairs toilet, I'd have lots of natural light, and outdoor space. You're not gonna expand at all but write down the three things that you need in your ideal house. You've got about two minutes.

<<After two minutes>>

-F2: Take a piece of A4 paper and you're going to draw or design that ideal house. You must not... I can see some people starting. I'm gonna ask you to pause for two second for there are some more instructions. I love the energy and enthusiasm; desperately to go on, which is fabulous... but, you need to sit back to back, so that you cannot see what each other is doing. So, you're going to take this person's house needs, you're going to design that house, you don't have to be good at drawing at all, and there are lots of different ways, so you can do whatever you think it's best. You're gonna have six minutes to design that house on a piece of paper, switch over, you can't answer any questions to the other person, you can't get clarifications. You just want to put on your knees and get drawing. Ok? So, six minutes, back to back...

-F2: No suggesting ideas to each other either!

-F2: 30 more seconds. And don't worry because a prototype isn't meant to be perfect. It's somethings that's gonna get iterated. There's no such thing as perfection.

-F2: What we're going to do in a second, we're going to go back to our partner and we're going to reveal our designs, and we really want to understand whether what they've drawn for us meets our needs. It might meet a few needs that we're needing now, but actually, there might be more ... so, for instance, F1 has designed me a house that is over three floors, that has a lovely patio outside, that has steps. I would say, Actually F1, we love the work you've done in here, here and here, and that really works for me, but actually my mum is in a wheelchair so I need level access in the front door and the back door as well. So, we're just gonna get some feedback from our partners about how does this property meet their needs or not. So, you got about three minutes each to discuss how the design meets your needs.

-F2: Ok!

-F2: So, I've spoke to the gentlemen at the back but I also wanna get some feedback from the rest of you. So, [name] who was your partner?

>>Participant responds partner's name.

-F2: What did you learn speaking to [name] about his ideal house?

-Participant: I learnt... I draw some flowers because he said he wanted a quiet place at night, he didn't want too much noise, so interpreted it as being very green. So he liked the place and everything but he didn't really care much about the flowers.

<laughs>

-F2: So, [name] what about you? What did you learn about [name]?

-Participant: ah, well, her specs were wrong which she modified. She wanted two kitchens...

-F2: Had she risen that initially?

-Participant: No.

<laughs>

-F2: So, it was only by presenting her with something that she realised...

-Participant: exactly.

-F2: so, refined...

-Participant: or possibly I misread, because she wrote "separate kitchen". I didn't know she meant a separate kitchen as well as the other one.

<laughs>

-F2: Well, there you are! This is quite an enjoyable -I think- group activity. I think it illustrates the point that it's easy to misinterpret things. I had a conversation with the gentleman at the back of the room and [name] wanted a cinema room and [name] draw a lovely cinema room that had about 8 or so chairs, maybe 10, and [name] said, 'well, this is indeed a cinema room but actually I would prefer more of a personalised cinema room with fewer chairs, I don't want all of my mates over... I'm not Odeon'.

<laughs>

-F2: And I'm sure... well, you can tell me what is the value in doing this activity and how can we sit it fitting in a policy environment?

-Participant: requirements require iterations.

-F2: absolutely.

-Another participant: support into ask questions to get more detail. What does that actually mean to you? When you say you want this, what does it actually look like?

-F2: Absolutely. I agree with all of these points.

-Participant: ... we need to see things as part of the greater system. The point of feedback [name] gave me was, 'yeah, it looks nice, but where's the kitchen?'. When I took the brief I concentrated on those things that were on the brief and there's other parts of the house.

<laughs>

-F2: so, yeah, we need to see how it fits into other systems. Absolutely. [name]...

-Participant: I was just gonna say, we've been chatting over the day, so we both added things that weren't on the brief but that we knew about each other because we've been talking about it earlier. Actually, that worked out for both of us, but just have to be very careful if you're then

assuming things from your knowledge which aren't necessarily on the brief, checking those back before you go ahead.

-F2: Yeah, absolutely. And also, look at how each of you approached that task. I just said draw a house, so we've got some that are plans, if I would've done it I'd probably drawn a box, or how we imagine a house to be, the windows and things like that. In Leeds we had someone who's drawn that, and actually I think someone draw the house, and a cross section of the house, and they had a plan!


<laughs>

-F2: but we also just had someone who wanted a dressing room, big windows and something else, I can't remember. And her partner, just literally drawn the dressing room, the big windows and the other thing... before we just move on to the next session and you have a very short break, and then we'll have a longer lunch... think about how do you apply to a policy context. You've all learnt something about your partner and their needs as a result of that conversation... have we had more time this afternoon, we would ask you to have a go at re-drawing or adding a bit, or you could even start again. You can do that! You can add a bit, change a bit or re-draw, but in a policy context we can make prototypes quite simply, it doesn't have to be something built, so I'll show you some examples here. So, this is a storyboard of how a policy might work.



Slide 46

-F2: This has gone from a storyboard that a collaborative team devised to this.



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Slide 47.



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Slide 49

Slide 49 comments: “Produced by FWL and PEx to test with individuals at TPR. It was used to understand people’s broader reaction to the concept of a mid-life MOT, and the format it could potentially take, including whether an online guide would resonate with individuals and encourage them to change their behaviour in relation to retirement planning (the policy intention).”

-F2: So, they were thinking about how would people respond to, 1. The concept of a mid-life MOT; is that something they'd be inclined towards, would that be helpful for them? Bu also, how would they feel about it being online? So, right 'we need to get a web developer to make the MOT'. Let me show you something...

-F2: That's a screenshot, that's a textbox, that's a coloured inbox, that's a textbox... that's a line, that's a textbox in green, that's some more text, different box... that's a line, that's a line... oh, now it's a website! Now it looks like, I would imagine you would agree, it looks quite like a GOV.UK page. You can make this things, if people were using it as a screen on a tablet or on a computer, but these things "click" -you can add animation- so you can click on continue with the mouse and it will take you to the next screen as if you were doing it. But this is all done in power point. It doesn't take very much skills or knowledge, it's just about copying something that's already online. And people on this team were able to use this prototype which didn't take much time or money to create, to go and speak to people at the pension regulator to find who would be a fine audience, so people with the right age to learn how... a particular target audience at the pension regulator to test this with them and learn about their broader thinking about mid-life MOT and how they would respond to that being a website.

-F2: I suppose the final point I wanted to make, before letting you go, is that this is really cost-effective and powerful, and here it is... Prototyping maybe doesn't feel natural, or that's not the term that feels natural in the policy context, but you can see that it's possible to do. It comes from the design world, the product design world and obviously, in product design people are desperate to get people to use their products or their websites, and things like that, so they test all the things to make sure that actually they're the ones people want on their lives, that work for them. And Google, as some of the people that talk about some of the things you might do to test products, and they say that you can get... you can understand 85% of the issues by testing it with 5 people! I'm not saying that tomorrow you pull five people of the street... if you get five of the right people, five of the people influenced by your policy... that's not to say, so you'll learn so much by just speaking to a very small group of people. And this raises an important point, that's not to say those findings are definitive and that everyone else who responded on the same way that those five you will learn a lot. Those findings are indicative, they are not definitive. So they will indicate other areas, so, 'four of the five people really struggled to understand this part of the policy'. They wouldn't behave in that way. That's a clear indication to me that I need to go and think about how does this work in reality. It's not to say you got all of the people, it just gives you other areas to explore before finding out further down the line when it's already been implemented that actually, four out of five doesn't ... and it does not actually work. So, testing early, failing fast it's really, really valuable. F1.

-F1: You can't get this wrong, you learn from the person what they need. So, that kind of learning is the reason why you're doing it, it's not finished. So, even if the person you showed it to didn't want any of it, during the conversation you learnt more about why that is and what they like instead. So, that's actually successful, it's not a failure. Imagine building a house for the person before you've had asked them, if would have been worse than there's no kitchen or no toilet.... By doing that we reduce the risk of failure you can never completely eliminate it. So, try to think of it as being 'oh, we did this test and it was wrong'. We are doing this piece of work trying to get people with disabilities back into work and we're testing eight things in JobCentres at the moment that might help. They might not help as well, but the idea is that we're testing them. We're trying to bin four of them and everyone hates the idea of binning them. They go, 'let's try to iterate one more time'. Nobody likes the idea of going... I've tried that for six months now and it's just not working. It's just against our natural way of doing things. This whole culture is 'let's just chuck it in and see, it might add some to some people'. So, there is a natural push back against some of these things. The least fidelity or quality the better. When they look great, people think 'oh, that's a website ... The point to make is that this is really to learn is not necessarily to lead to

the answer straight away or even the second time. There are some really great stories about products that are around now and took years and years and hundreds of prototypes to get right.

-F2: we're gonna have five minutes.

<<BREAK>>

Slide 50: Session 4: Persuading others

Slide 51: "So you're ready to go!"

Slide 51 comments: *We're hoping you're feeling inspired and energised to go back to the office and start applying your learning in your roles and policy areas.*

Slide 52: "It's not as easy as we've led you to believe"

Slide 52 comments: "OPM isn't embedded in the fabric of DWP's culture yet, otherwise we wouldn't be here today. As we said at the beginning, there's plenty of rhetoric to support its existence as a more effective way of developing policy. But as we can see by the work currently being undertaken by CFD to raise the profile of the Family Test – a DWP owned policy that encourages policymakers to consider the implications of our policy ideas not only individuals, but on families and their formation – ensuring policies meet the needs of the people they're designed to support by learning as much as we can about their lives and testing our ideas with them is not commonplace or mainstream.

You will encounter challenge, face barriers, and even have your own fears. That's why, in this final session, we want to encourage you all to think about how you persuade others to give you the space and backing to carry out the OPM activities that you're hopefully eager to carry out..."

-F2: It's not like 'five ideas in one and we'll squeeze it all in'. Each challenge or barrier or worry on one post-it note.

<<Break>>

Slide 53: "But there are ways to convince people"

Slide 53 comments: "That's why, in this final session, we want to encourage you all to think about how you persuade others to give you the space and backing to carry out the OPM activities that you're hopefully eager to carry out..."

Slide 54: "Exercise 5"

Slide 54 comments:

"Activity:

- On post-its (individually), what are the challenges?
- Affinity sort post-its on wall beneath five themes (we don't have the time/ it's a waste of resources; that's not how it's done around here; you're meant to be the expert; our work is too sensitive; finding the right people to talk to is hard)
- Each group is given a scenario – what are your top responses/tips/lines to take? Write on flip
- Each group share with rest of participants (feedback). Participants listen and add anything missed.
- In groups, people use cards and challenge colleagues to respond."

-F2: On flip, you're gonna write down... what are the top things that would say...

>>Individually, participants present issues they face at work. Then, they are asked to group them under certain pre-defined categories.



>>Later, in groups, participants were given scenarios and they had to come up with ways of overcoming the issues.

-F2: We're gonna ask each group to read out their scenario, ideally, the top three lines or pieces of advice. [...] Feel free to chip in. Maybe if we go in numerical order? Scenario 1, who's got scenario 1? Would you kindly read up your scenario?

-Participants reads: "You're eager to run a workshop with staff from across the business to understand how their work interacts with your policy area.

You know diaries are busy and you're pressed for time - you need to give an update to your director next week.

How can you justify running the workshop?"

-Another participant from the group: So, we came with a number of solutions. Our top three, in no particular order: more holistic view of the work that you're doing; building relationships with external stakeholders and other people;

-Another participant from the group: I would suggest to use evidence of that working in the past.

-F2: demonstrating the value. A case study or... Yes. [...] Who's Scenario 2?

-Participant reads: "Persuading others: Scenario 2. You want to learn whether the policy options you're proposing have any unforeseen implications that you haven't considered.

You're sure that it would be valuable to hear the thoughts of the people who will ultimately be affected by the policies, but your DD is sceptical. She's never done anything like this before and it all seems a bit much.

How might you respond?"

-Participant: ...long-term savings on time and resource. 2. It may improve chances of successfully landing the policy. And, option 3: it may reduce risk of delivery failure and provides a ... level of scrutiny.

-F2: Brilliant. Well, if you go in such a concise fashion you get the cards, so it's entirely up to you.

-Participant: Sorry, I've just got one addition: if the person hasn't done anything like this before, you can go to the Policy Exploration Team and say 'are there examples of...?'

<laughs>

-F1: that's certainly when we started to get more traction...

-F2: Scenario 3?

-Participant reads: "You've been asked to look at drafting a new set of employer standards. You've done all of the usual stakeholder engagement, speaking with CEOs of large companies and the trades union, and have gathered a significant amount of insight.

You're eager to hear the views of smaller businesses, preferably in a different part of the UK than the South East. Your director thinks you've done enough though. Time is ticking on, and you've been working in this area for a long time. You're the subject matter expert, after all.

How do you respond to the challenge that you're meant to be the expert?"

-Another participant: So, we've have quite a few. The first one was a bit cheating, we challenged that we weren't the experts, but if we are the experts, this is what we would do.

<laughs>

-Participant continues: ...and depending on who you're talking to, that could go very wrong.

<laughs>

-Participant continues: so, the other one are more kind of things in the picture of what could go wrong if we don't do this and we linked that to... [inaudible]

-F2: Fantastic. I know F1 was going to say this, but something that he says quite often, certainly to us as a team, you often get lots of people who worked in Ops in the past and now are in policy roles, 'yeah, when I was in Ops'... 'well, you may've been in Ops ten years ago'. Or even two years ago, but the landscape and the context changes so fast. And even though I would be confident talking about the current context of UC childcare, for instance, given we did that work six months ago, we kind of need to challenge ourselves, so constantly do these kind of activities where you can be the expert even if you are the expert.

-Another participant: we've also talked about... we would use technology...

-F2: Fantastic. Yeah, thank you. F3, would you like to talk about your experience about actually prototyping in a private capacity... the use of technologies to test those ideas across the world.

-F3: Cool. So, I don't know if you've ever heard of this, but you can in your spare time quite rarely an opportunity comes up, sometimes you get invited to take part of market research for private companies. I've a friend of mine who's a market researcher, who ask me 'would you be available to come to this thing? You'd get paid for your time'. And I was, 'yes, sure'. I didn't know the company at the time but when I got there... I knew it was something about cleaning products basically... when I got there it turns out it was a huge multinational company, really big on cleaning products, and they were essentially... we had been brought, me and the other consumers, to be the users on a session. So, they had people from their innovation team, their

product team, their marketing team, their legal team, from all over the world... from three continents, they wanted London to be part of this co-design session. And what we did was work in little teams to come up with ideas for cleaning products for the future. And then, when we went away that night, during the day when we were doing the co-design, they had professional illustrators come in to illustrate our ideas and storyboard them for us. And when we went away that night, they took those illustrations of our ideas and tested them with other consumers in the USA and Brazil, overnight. And they did that through technology, so they scanned our ideas and sent them abroad for these consumers to give their ideas on them. So, we came back next morning, and we had feedback, and ranked the ideas the other consumers liked. And I suppose, I was aware about all these kinds of methods and stuff like that, obviously through working and knowing about design thinking and stuff which a lot of it comes from product design. But for me, that experience as a user, just showed me, and I think it's such an important message for everyone, that these huge companies, that must have cost them tens of thousands of pounds to do that co-design event, and these huge multinational companies are doing it for a reason. I suppose that's incredibly valuable. And whatever ideas, insights that they got over those two days... they do that because it is valuable, and the insights that they got is worth that input. So, it was really interesting for me to see it from the other side of it. So, it just goes to show us that the way we use technology today, and also for me it shows that it is valuable, and people pour lots of money into it because the insights you form it it's worth it. Although, you don't have to spend any money.

<laughs>

-Participant: that intellectual property rights you actually developed for them is very valuable.

-F2: That was purposely planned actually. I was really more about how you can use technology in novel ways that kind of test... that leads us to scenario 4, which I think it's about time and resources! No? Nevermind!

-Participant reads: "Persuading others: Scenario 4. You work on a policy area that is receiving sustained negative press coverage. A lot has been said online, and lobby groups have raised a number of issues that they believe need to be addressed.

You're keen to explore these issues further, but analysts hold limited qualitative data. You'd like to learn about the experiences of people affected by the policy and are looking to organise a small workshop with service users and their representatives.

Your DD needs more convincing though. She thinks that our work is far too sensitive and she's worried about raising expectations.

How might you respond?"

-Another participant: So, we've got two main things. One is how you frame the conversation, so explaining to the DD, that this isn't about going in and kind of opening absolutely everything up... this is about fact-finding and will be restrained and how you explain things, being clear on what you can and can't say before you go in. So, we've talked quite a lot about the fact that sometimes you might be able to say things like, we acknowledge this is a really important issue, we want to do more here, you know, we are constrain civil servants, so you might be going in a meeting saying absolutely we acknowledge this is an important issue, and it's something that we need to understand how is impacting you. I can't at this stage promise that I'm going to be able to change Government policy as a result of that, but basically being clear as to what you can and can't say before you go in, so that you're limiting those.

-Another participant: the other thing that we talked about is, when you're putting your workshop together is, putting quite a lot of thought into who you are going to ask for that workshop. And,

again, if you have somebody who is very nervous about you doing that, thinking about things like who are the people within your team's network already? Do you have some principal friends who you tested things with in the past and they not leaked it everywhere? You know, those kinds of things, so actually, again, you are helping to reassure somebody who is a bit nervous that this isn't going to end up in the wrong pages. But we talked about the risk there is that sometimes you grow up the list of two or three critical friends sometimes it could be a bit too imposing and a bit too close. So still, potentially, you might do it in two stages, test this first with a very close group of people, and then you might widen up a little bit. Those kinds of things.

-F2: But I think as well, your scenario talks ... how the policies are impacting or affecting someone's lives. We use the word testing, yes. Sometimes it is about testing and learning about a particular option. Also, sometimes is just really about understanding, as it was in the example, just 'can you tell us more about how is this affecting you?' Sometimes is just about having that open conversation: 'tell us how you feel about the policy, what are your ideas about it, how could it be different? And people, we found, the wch found as well, that there are certain groups that are 'we hate this'. They really don't wanna share their experiences.

-F1: the point we're trying to make when we do this kind of workshops is, people they're not... they're doing the talking, the idea is that we give them the stimulus and we ask the right questions and then we just try and listen to people, and we can figure out what to do with that later on. We try to help by pulling the right questions and listening rather than expecting ... 'no, that's not how it really works'. So, we are trying to change the balance of the conversation to be, we doing all the talking, kind of interviewing them...

-F2: and then we have the final group, last but not least.

-Participant reads: "Scenario 5. A member of your team is eager to run a workshop with service users and their representatives. They've got buy-in from senior leaders, and have secured a spacious room with good lighting in a local JCP.

They're struggling to figure out how to find the right people to invite. They've never done this before, and don't know where to start.

What advice can you give?"

-Participant: And we gave our advice in the form of a diagram.

-F2: Brilliant!

-Participant continues: It's call stakeholder mapping, and this is what we would advise them to do. And you have least important stakeholders, key players, and key people you need to keep informed, and you put them against influence and interest, in a scale of how powerful they are, and that is how...

-F2: Brilliant. It's how we discussed earlier about... to think who might be able to impact a policy. I suppose that is absolutely how we are taught to do stakeholder mapping. We probably just need to be slightly careful about thinking 'yes, we need to talk about the very powerful people', but typically people affected by our policies aren't very powerful. Collectively they could be, that's why politicians care too. But individually, service users don't have much power, but they're still a voice we absolutely need to hear.

-Participant: that is why we also talked about this snowball effect. Talking to people and getting to identify other relevant stakeholders laying outside the stakeholder map.

-F2: Fantastic. Thank you so much. It's just about half-past three, so it would be very helpful... we're not gonna chuck these in the bin, we'll take pictures first and we're gonna collect these in

a document for you... If you're not senior enough to be doing this kind of working, but if you have got a meeting with someone you feel you can influence... you can waive the main arguments and convince them.

-F1: the document that we're trying to put together, will essentially help people win the battles, we are not leaving it all to yourselves...

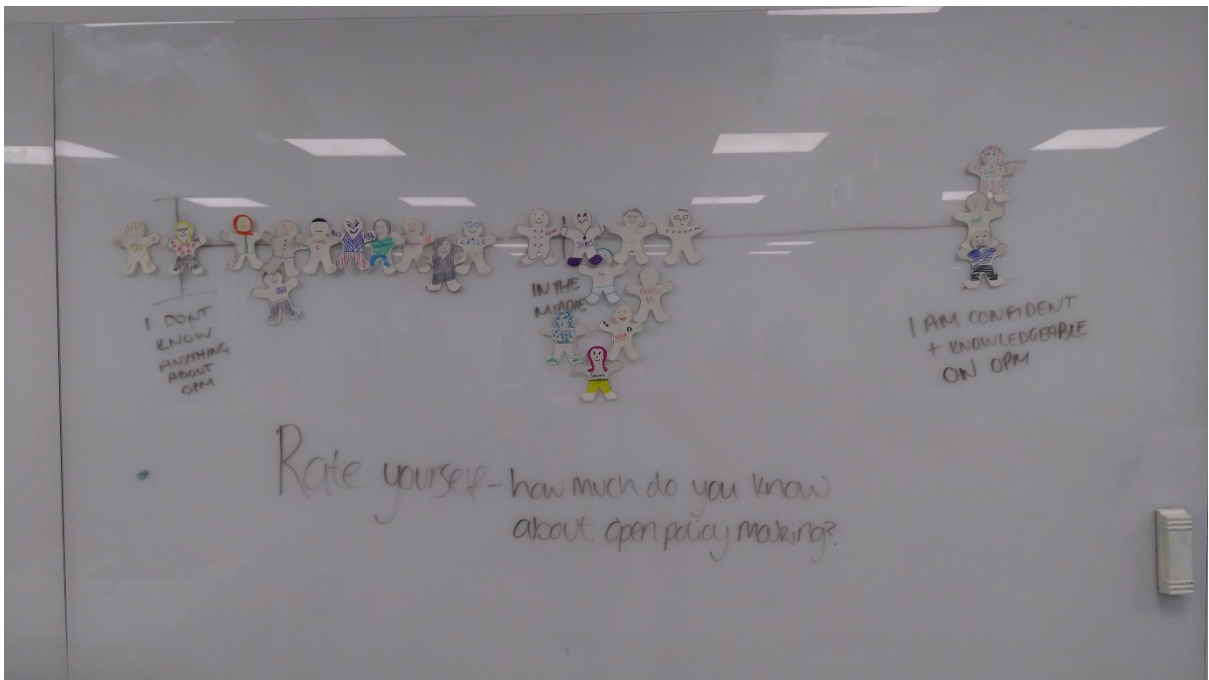
-F2: so, we're nearly there. F3 is gonna tell us a little about evaluation now.

-F3: Cool, so, F2 mentioned earlier that this is part of a programme training that we've devised and are delivering, so, we've already delivered a session in Leeds, and this one is even better. And the reason this one is better is because your colleagues in Leeds gave really comprehensive and helpful feedback on the session. So, as a well gesture to your colleagues in Sheffield, we are gonna ask you to do the same. So, I've set up a little evaluation station over the other side of the room, and there are three... five things that you need to do before you go, but they're super quick, I promise. You can start on the left-hand side, here, where there are two cups with questions in front of them. The first question is: would you recommend the training to others? And the second question is asking you to write down one word that tell us how you feel about the training today. Energised, respondent, bored, happy... So, those are the first two things, and on that table there is a piece of flipchart paper... 'what do you feel you need from us now?' So, we hope that you bought into open policy making now and are really exciting to go back and apply it on your teams, but we recognise that one day of training isn't enough to facilitate that, so, what else do you think you need in order to go back and do this in your day jobs? And then, I would like you to revisit your little [...] paper, that you drew earlier, and just think, have you learnt anything today? Have you moved up that scale about understanding open policy making and how much you know about it? And then the last thing is just thinking quite carefully about the day and give a constructive feedback on it. So, there are three questions there: what went well? Even better if you've got any questions. What was good? And what can be improved? And for that one, if you could please write your feedback on a post it, that's just easier for me when I go back to write all of this up. Please be really honest, like I said, today was so good because people that attended the Leeds one gave us such honest and constructive feedback. Think really carefully and write as much feedback as you want. And if yo've got any questions, I'll be around.

-F2: Once you are done, if you could please sit back at you tables, that would be very helpful. Thank you.



>>One of the “stations” started at the beginning of the training and asked participants to assess themselves in terms of how much they know about Open Policy Making.



Thank you!

<<END>>

Appendix 8 - Framework analysis

[illegible]

Appendix 9 - Study 2's thematic analysis preliminary stage

- Learning orientation
- Explicit design reference
- HCD
- Negative comment
- Prototyping
- Diversity

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The facilitators claimed that engaging with people is “the foundation piece of all the open policy making” (F1, OPM3). Moreover, they argued that “open policy making is about creating the right environment to learn from experts so [open policymakers] should design [their] engagement activity accordingly” (Concern Card 1, OPM3). Due to their alleged suitability, facilitators suggested utilising specific design tools, such as personas, because “with personas, we’re trying to access people’s lived experiences. They’re built by learning about people’s lives” (comments on Slide 25, OPM2).

Moreover, one facilitator explained that by using these design tools “the main outcome is that it brings us back to the person again. It helps us build a better understanding and more empathy, it's not just a cold problem like some sort of calculation, it's actually somebody... we're trying to help somebody to do something” (F1, OPM2).

Similarly, another facilitator explicitly identified as a human-centred design practitioner while explaining the need for using design approaches: “in human-centred design we talk about how the value of using diagrams and maps, and working visually, because it helps to see things differently” (F2, OPM3).

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Prototyping played a significant role in the OPM training to the extent that the sixth session was entirely dedicated to it. In defining prototyping, the leading facilitator for the session explained that “there's a quote from some design academic that says, 'a prototype is a question turn into a thing'” (F5, OPM6). Moreover, prototyping was described as “a collective activity that many people can contribute to – a core design principle” (Slide 27, OPM6). A prototype, then, is “something to be used in a collaboratively and collective activity that many people can contribute to [since] the main thing about it is getting out there and talking to someone else who isn't you. Someone who's not stuck in your mindset” (F5, OPM6).

Slide 24, OPM6: “They slow us down to speed us up. By taking the time to prototype our ideas, we avoid costly mistakes such as becoming too complex too early and sticking with a weak idea for too long.” Tim Brown CEO IDEO

Therefore, the main aim for prototyping “is getting out there and talking to people who are influenced or have a role in our idea, service, or product, to actually get their views and advice and answers in some of the core questions” (F5, OPM6).

To achieve this, policymakers need to embrace the ‘fail fast spirit’ as it is “better to learn that [a policy idea will not work] now rather when you got the Minister behind it... It's not doing it wrong,

it's part of the design process" (F1, OPM2). It can be observed this reflects the 'Experimentation or learn from mistake or from failure' construct as defined by Dosi et al. (2018).

However, and contradicting the initial conceptualisation of prototyping, at some point one facilitator added that when prototyping "just going to test your ideas with end-users often flags things that you may not have thought about [as] "it's about finding out the things you didn't know you didn't know a lot of the time" (F5, OPM6). This Rumsfeldian connotation breaks from the notion of the prototype as a deliberate question to become a probe into the unknown. From this perspective, the limits between the prototype and the pilot become blurrier.

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Linked to the notion of prototyping to engaging with people is that of doing it to acquiring new understandings about a policy issue. In presenting this aspect of design, facilitators stressed that by prototyping "the point to make is that this is really to learn, is not necessarily to lead to the answer straight away or even the second time. There are some really great stories about products that are around now and took years and years and hundreds of prototypes to get right" (F1, OPM1). As in the previous quote, facilitators did not hesitate in comparing the design of public policies with that of consumer products. Similarly, design was linked to problem-finding: "design research is indicative and not definitive. In other words, getting input from relatively small numbers of well-placed people helps us find problem areas to explore further. This helps us focus our policy thinking more precisely" (Card 5, OPM3).

Furthermore, they explicitly suggested using design methods to learn about the policy issues: "if you want to learn about something, why not create journey maps, bring prototypes as provocations, do some speculative design?" (comments Slide 19, OPM7). A noteworthy remark about this, is that other than by this swift mention there was no deeper explanations of what speculative design is or how it can help policymakers in learning nor achieving their objectives.

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A notable aspect about the learning through design perspective shared by the facilitators is its qualitative nature. Repeatedly throughout the training, facilitators claimed "qualitative research can give you the why and help you understand your users better [since it is] particularly good to help you understand users' problems and needs" (comments on Slide 22, OPM4).

Furthermore, they provided specific advice on how to conduct this sort of research:

- "The core of collecting good qualitative data is discussion guides and note taking" (comments on Slide 38, OPM4).
- "Note taking is really important role as you're capturing what users think, do and say, and the notes are the central tool of doing analysis" (comments on Slide 39, OPM4).

This ethnographic approach to user research was suggested to be used to develop user journey maps. On this, it was stressed that "journey maps should be based on research and not made up by what you think you know. This is a qualitative-research process" (Slide 61, OPM4).

A similar rationale was presented for the development of personas: "Why do we bother with personas? Well, they help us build everything and challenge our assumptions. If we don't, we risk, designing policies that are informed by our own assumptions and our biases. And I think we spoke last time as well about how we often believe that the civil service makes evidence-based policy. And so, of course, we have assumptions" (F2, OPM2).

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During the second workshop, facilitators shared insights from an interview they did to the Policy Group's Director General, in which he claimed that innovation can be achieved by “[using futures thinking and horizon-scanning more actively in our policy work](#)” (F1, OPM2). Although they recognised these are “perhaps more difficult” (F1, OPM2) than other techniques, they agreed on that “[there are loads of tools and techniques out there for creative problem solving and innovative idea generation](#)” (comments on Slide 54, OPM2). One such technique, they asserted, is to “[facilitate workshops with a broad range of stakeholders to co-design innovative policy ideas](#)” (Slide 9, OPM2).

Throughout the training, participants were asked to expand their engagement to “[a broad range of stakeholders to design policy ideas](#)” (Slide 17, OPM1) to complement “[the usual stakeholder engagement, speaking with CEOs of large companies and the trades union](#)” (Scenario 3, OPM1) to gather insights.

Co-designing was repeatedly conceptualised as a critical factor to achieve innovation. In explaining this, the facilitators resorted to the anecdote of Edison's lightbulb invention: “[Just people with different skills that could look at a problem and come with ideas to solve it in new and different ways...](#) this is a different interpretation of Edison's story, which isn't the eureka moment. It's actually about the hard work of lots of people doing different things. More a story of working together with different people rather than the creative person having a creative moment [...] It's really about how can we find people who've got different perspectives and bring them together to work around a problem” (F1, OPM2). This framing is of high relevance to the study as it describes how innovation in policymaking is seen by the Policy Exploration Team: “[When we talk about innovation that's what it is. It's more this kind of things: hard work, bringing people in together, bringing new voices and new ideas into policy development conversations](#)” (F1, OPM2). In exemplifying this, one facilitator narrated their personal experience participating in co-design workshops for the development of consumer goods. This is of interest as it assimilates the experience of co-designing in the private sector with the public sector. Moreover, proposes that the tools and methods utilised in the private sector are legitimate means to co-designing in the public sector.

All in all, policy [co-design](#), it was argued, serves at least three purposes. To jointly generate policy ideas with people from different backgrounds and including early in the process people affected by the policies, and those who will be delivering them. To help policymakers in ‘convincing’ of certain policy option by identifying them in collaboration with others who have different perspectives, and particularly, those affected by the policies. Lastly, to allow policymakers to understand how their work interacts with other policy area by running collaborative sessions with staff from across the *business*.

This notion of doing things in a ‘designerly’ fashion was also reflected in the selection of the venues for the training. For instance, when describing the venue for OPM4, facilitators mentioned it is a place where “[people generally looking to use design thinking and data to solve social policy problems](#) [come together to form] [a coalition of government departments, charities, local groups](#)” (F1, OPM4).

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Besides the idea of utilising a design approach for public policy innovation, facilitators consistently introduced design tools and methods as part of the ways in which open policymakers should operate. Likewise, the ‘Double Diamond’ was utilised as a public policymaking model: “[Double Diamond – Indicate that we can go backwards and iterate as many times as possible](#)” (Slide 77, OPM6).

Slide 11, OPM4: The double diamond: Design Thinking Framework.

Throughout the training, facilitators stated that certain tools such as [user journey map and personas](#) “are incredibly helpful to help us delineate and untangle how an individual interacts with a range of support services across departments, the public sector, and third sector” (comments on Slide 32, OPM2), allowing policymakers to visualise complexity in a simple way.

Grappling with complexity repeatedly appeared as a reason to utilise some of these tools: “[Maps visualise this complexity in a simple way](#), they help us identify touchpoints and figure out who has responsibility for different aspects of an individual’s journey. [This helps us figure out who we might need to influence if we want to make our policies truly effective and helps us see clearly the areas that pose the most difficulty for individuals](#)” (Comments on Slide 32, OPM2).

Whilst introducing [user journey map as a tool for policymaking](#), facilitators cited Nielsen Norman Group’s User Experience Specialist Kate Kaplan in defining it as “a visualisation of the process that a person goes through in order to accomplish a goal. It’s used for understanding and addressing customer needs and pain points” (slide 54, OPM4). [This validated the introduction of a design jargon that was subsequently used throughout the training.](#)

Similarly, facilitators introduced design tools to specifically address issues around bias-based policymaking: “[Personas build empathy and challenge our assumptions](#)” (Slide 22, OPM2).

Moreover, participants were introduced to the idea generation method from Google Ventures’ Design Sprint, and asked to follow the inspiration phase, which “[is about collating and synthesising great ideas to inform the design of our own solutions](#)” (comments on Slide 39, OPM5). Similarly, facilitators explained the ‘Lightning Demos’, an exercise from Google Ventures’ Design Sprints to share within a team products or services to spark inspiration for their concepts in the next phases of their design sprints: “Get into broad policy areas. Briefly explain the issue you’re seeking to solve, and then present your favourite solutions. In a real-world context, you would potentially demonstrate the solution by showing, and you would have 3 minutes per solution to describe” (comments on Slide 43, OPM5).

Despite this prescriptive approach to design, participants were encouraged to appropriate the tools, techniques, and methods presented to them and develop “[more relevant versions you can make of this for your own team, for your own organisation](#)” (F1, OPM5). On this, one code referred to the *look and feel* of the tools used in engagement activities: “[There’s a danger of making something look too pretty](#), and we’ll talk about that when we come to [prototyping](#), but this looks very pristine and people are generally more followers, so you go around saying, ‘you can change this, you know? Scribble it out if it’s not right’. And sometimes doing it on a sheet of flipchart makes people feel more willing to change it and adapt it and make it right than something that looks it has lots of money spent on it, and it hasn’t really, but still. So, it doesn’t have to be ‘professional-looking’, something like this can be just as valuable” (F2, OPM2). [This long code is of interest since it signals part of the feedback given to the facilitators by the researcher regarding the printed material they were using with external stakeholders was indeed assimilated.](#)

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A code that stuck out regarding this last concept is one in which one facilitator uses the term ‘design’ in a stylistic way: “sometimes when we’re going through our projects we take our storyboards, we take our tabletops and make them a bit more high-fidelity, make them look a bit nicer and design them up to try and help people engage with them” (F5, OPM6). [This is interesting as it is the first and only time when design was conceived from a cosmetic perspective.](#)

Appendix 10 - Study 3's coded interview transcript

EUPL2 interview

Online: 23/12/2019

- Design for future policymaking
 - Developing design capabilities
 - Working with design schools
 - Design methods and tools
 - Design to learn from people's experiences
-

Researcher:

I think so, okay, we are recording. Again, thank you very much for your time. So, the first question I wanted to ask you was, what was your specific role or function into this EU project, 'The future of government 2030'.

EUPL2:

Yeah, so, I was involved in the project as a paid consultant. This was through a consortium that to UAL was part of, led by Open Evidence, which is an independent research body based in Catalonia. So, they were the lead partner, but we did about the majority of the work on the project spread over, in total, a year and a half in the end more or less.

Researcher:

Right. So, I want to ask about the consortium because other than seen that on UAL's website, I've never heard of the consortium and nobody really mentioned that before. Do you know what's the link between the consortium and the EU?

EUPL2:

Yes. So, Open Evidence invited me personally to be part of a consortium about two years before that was in a... JRC had put out a tender for consortia to deliver particular future projects. So, we were successful. That consortium also included USCreates, which is a consultancy, and then in about August of 2018 EUPL1 contacted Open Evidence and there were two or three calls where we designed the project and then basically I lead on leading it but open Evidence did some work advising on the website, as I remember. And then, yeah, that was it. So, mostly it was me. So, it's an ongoing consortium, it may continue again. It's just a framework structure to allow JRC to buy in expert services.

Researcher:

Yeah, right, make a lot of sense. So, you were leading the project also for the EU in this case? For the EU Policy Lab?

EUPL2:

No, no, I wasn't leading the projects, I was leading... in fact technically Open Evidence... that's... [...]

No, I wasn't leading the project. EUPL1 was leading the project, in fact I wasn't technically leading our consortium delivery but more or less I was, in effect I was.

Researcher:

In effect.

EUPL2:

Our consortium was led by Open Evidence.

Researcher:

All right, understood. So, EUPL1 was leading the project and you were working as a consultant for that project.

EUPL2:

Yes.

Researcher:

To what extent were you involved in developing or helping in the briefing of the project?

EUPL2:

Yes, so, there's four different elements to the project. So, I had different roles in different bits of the project.

Researcher:

Right.

EUPL2:

In total how many days I did? I can't remember. Eleven, twelve? Something like this spread over more than one year. And then a couple of colleagues also helped. So, I think we did seventeen days maybe or twenty day I can't really remember. So, the project had four elements: desk research, so that was led by JRC and done by JRC. Then there was the development of stakeholder workshops, all of it led by JRC. Stakeholder workshops, so, I advise them and suggested to them particular ways to facilitate and run the workshops, which they ran. And I made very specific suggestions about how to bring sort of design like elements into that and creative elements, but they ran them. Then for the Design School work I played a bigger role because they really had no idea how to do this.

Researcher:

Right.

EUPL2:

So, we wrote the brief, draft brief, which more or less didn't change. So, the draft brief for the design schools, we researched a long list of design schools for them to work with and then they chose them. We briefed them, and then during the projects we had some online Skypes between all of the design schools, and I was in those and then I wrote up notes. Then I went to Brussels for a one day or two days where we looked at the results sent by all the design schools and I was in this kind of discussion group with JRC, looking at these, discussing them, and categorizing them, and deciding what to do with them. Then they were writing the reports and that included a little bit of everything, so I wrote some sections... I'd written those in briefing papers, so, I wrote them a couple of briefing papers and they used bits of that in the report. I then helped... I did some editing of that and suggestions which were accepted into the whole final report then when designed... preparing for this public event they had in March this year, I helped work out what that should be and how to organise it and so on, and the format. And then I spoke at it. And then finally the game, the final component, is not really a game, it is a participation tool. We wrote a little briefing paper about design games, and then I was involved... we did a little bit of, again, design work on the game. I don't mean the board, I mean the tool, actually the workshop experience. So, that was with a colleague... two colleagues helped with that and actually another colleague helped with the briefing of the design schools and the selection of the design schools. So, it was me,

Researcher:

Right.

EUPL2:

I think, so this was, yeah, in total a number of days... Somehow, I have a net twenty-one days maybe, spread out over one and maybe one and a half years more or less.

Researcher:

Right.

EUPL2:

So, it was one hour here, two hours here, and then... yeah, yeah...

Researcher:

Makes sense. So, maybe this going a bit back and linking back to the consortium, could you tell me a bit more of what was the idea of using design and foresight specifically for this project?

EUPL2:

Well, that's what they're trying to develop in JRC. they already have the capability in doing foresight, [REDACTED] has that background. Design is not something they have, so, in the original call for support, when we formed our consortium, they wanted to develop this capability and they approached me –Open Evidence approached me– to be in that consortium. And why did they want to bring design? That I don't know but I imagine it's the same reason than everyone else, you know? It has some... they observe it's becoming more visible and that other government entities are trying to use design in different ways, they didn't have the capability, and then they started to set a couple of different projects. So, this was one. They also had another project which was completed earlier which was about drones and... that was led by [REDACTED] and had a very different project design. So, I wasn't involved in that, but I did talk to them and visit them when they were... and saw some of the outputs of that project. Again, there is a printed report... No! it's about blockchain, it's not about drones, sorry. It's about blockchain. So, they are a research body whose remit is to –of the EU Policy Lab– to try out and develop new capabilities for exploring, for developing, for their advice, right? So, they are an advice body inside the European Commission, they don't develop policy. So, this is more methodology... experiments and methodology and therefore design is one of those.

Researcher:

Pretty much experimental approaches to do research or to gather information, I guess.

EUPL2:

Yeah, and they have now... they had during the course of the project, they brought somebody into the team, [REDACTED], who has a PhD in design research and so really this is very few people who were sort of very familiar with design so, I, you know, shared with them perspectives including summarising in a quick summaries of research.

Researcher:

Right, makes a lot of sense. So, do you know was explicitly, or do you have any idea, why it was important for this particular project to engage with other organisations, external organisations? As far as I understand, there were six Policy Labs –or similar organisations– and six Design Schools. Do you know why?

EUPL2:

Yeah, because stakeholder engagement in the broadest sense is something they recognise as being important to developing new ideas and, in particular for this project, developing understandings of citizens and businesses.

Researcher:

Right.

EUPL2:

So, the project was designed to bring in new perspectives and voices including really the individual voices of citizens and stakeholders in workshops and through the engagement tool game. And the design schools were specifically to... this wasn't actually in the very original meeting, I think I suggested it because, you know, they had some money for the project but not so much, and I talk to them about how design schools... I can't really remember, so I'm sort of slightly going backwards, but as you know, it's very common in design school pedagogies to do practical experimental project with the students, between the students and a partner organisation. So, we had these discussions about trying to activate that possibility across Europe and I gave examples, and then we researched in more detail for them 'here are the sort of schools who could do this work'. And so, the criteria for the selection was active researchers, so they specified the countries and then we gave examples of design institutions who had active researchers is design in government, design in policy. And so, we did this long list and then sometimes it was very clear that they were link to a course or, you know, they were in it. So, we did this list and then they confirmed which ones they wanted to work with and then we helped them. So, they contacted them but we... I was involved in the briefing. Yes, so, that was about involving students, well, design schools which they don't normally talk to.

Researcher:

Right.

EUPL2:

So, they don't normally talk to design schools they didn't really know about these researchers, this whole area of research, so this gave them a sort of window on to that and also access to the capacity of the students to think differently and so on.

Researcher:

Okay so in a way maybe, let's see if I got this right, so, for the design schools somehow, – or the design students– are ready familiarised with this sort of activities but the JRC and the EU Policy Lab were not.

EUPL2:

No.

Researcher:

And the idea was to somehow tap into the potential of having a larger pool of designers or design students working on this.

EUPL2:

Yeah.

Researcher:

But what is.

EUPL2:

So, as part of stakeholder engagement, and a different group they would normally talk to.

Researcher:

Right. Right. And in terms of the specific activities that the design schools were doing or even the policy labs around Europe, to what extent were you engaged or was the EU Policy Lab, if you want, engaged into the specific activities and tools and methods they were using?

EUPL2:

So, we wrote these details, we, [REDACTED], wrote this detail brief that they gave them saying that the course, whoever was the responsible academic in the institution was free to determine how to work with students, that just the request was to work with students and produce eight to ten concepts. So, if they wanted to work with PhD students, MA students, or BA students, all fine, up to them, if it was a one week project, you know, a three days sprint, or a bit of curriculums fine, up to them, or whatever they like. So, we had a mixture of those because it depended on what the institution was doing itself.

Researcher:

Right.

EUPL2:

So, all was like 'you decide, you know what you're doing, you're the experts, and you have your constraints but, please be available for a couple of kind of phone calls and meetings. And in some cases, the JRC, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] went to visit them or joined by Skype in the session. So, [REDACTED] was one of the institutions, MA Service Design, so, I went to one of those meetings, but I wasn't... I went just as an observer and that was easy for me to go to because it was in London, I didn't go to any of the others. But I... so, yeah, the design schools set it up in their own way but what they had then was to kind of report in a consistent format. So, we prepared a reporting framework for sharing the results and so the design schools then had to make a judgment about do they give us, you know, forty students results, which we didn't really want because we you would have to take a lot of time to process. We asked for about eight to ten, so, we asked the tutors to make a selection and then that stuff, which sometimes was physical, sometimes was videos, sometimes was posters got sent to JRC and then we had this one, two-day meeting where we looked everything.

Researcher:

Right, right. Okay, so, in terms of the policy labs, were they also given the freedom to do, in a way, or act as they wanted?

EUPL2:

No, no, that was different. So, for the stakeholder meetings, that was in the first phase of the project, they, JRC, gave, with my help, gave a detailed design of the workshop that they would like them to carry out. And, JRC went... I think they went to most of them.

Researcher:

Yeah, I think so. For what I understood, I think they did.

EUPL2:

Yeah, I think they went to certainly most of them, possibly all of them. So, there the policy lab, the local policy lab, which were very different and had a very different setup, but they had the invitees, right? So, JRC wouldn't know who to invite in Poland or Ireland.

Researcher:

Okay.

EUPL2:

So, the local policy lab was really important to identify the types of participants and then to host it, and so on. But I know less about this because I wasn't there. I just did the, sort helped with the design of the workshop, some discussions when they were talking about how to... what was working and so on, and then the results. But a lot of those ideas which were really stories and personas came out of that. Then informed the second stage which was the EUPL1's lead, which was the scenarios. So, this was a sort of what he would refer to as a bottom-up way of generating some of the content for the scenarios. This was a more diverse and people-centred way of generating scenarios than they would ordinarily have done. Was my understanding but I really wasn't involved in the scenarios.

Researcher:

Right, right. Do you have any idea the extent of the design or foresight capabilities of these policy labs?

EUPL2:

No.

Researcher:

But that wouldn't be an issue? Meaning that once they were brief and they knew what need to do...

EUPL2:

They weren't doing scenarios, yeah, no there was enough information. The facilitation... I mean, again, I can't remember if JRC was facilitating them directly, but you didn't need to be expert in design or futures.

Researcher:

Ok. So, the implementation was relatively easy for them to do.

EUPL2:

Yes, it's a one-day workshop. It was a one-day workshop, that's all.

Researcher:

Right. And in terms of these tools, the stories, the personas, and even the scenarios, what's your impression on those? What's the utility of using these tools specifically for this sort of project? Have you seen these being used for this sort of project before?

EUPL2:

Yeah. Yeah. So, the tradition of scenario planning I have seen practiced and read about through journals like foresight and futures, and some of the leading practitioners I have met because I helped organise something called the [REDACTED], which is a two-day event in [REDACTED] in 2014 and 2017, so those people are very macro. Macro, they think at a very high conceptual level, whereas design is, in general, think at a more micro-social level. What is this actor, this human as they interact with this future, or experience this future? And the intersection between these, or the movements between these –let's call the first one scenario and the second one design– is an area of research interest that I have. So, there seems value... JRC wanted, you know, also to have that insight and wanted to bring, you know... the whole point of the FutureGov project was to try and understand citizen perspectives.

Researcher:

Right.

EUPL2:

In a co-designed... through a co-design methodology. Therefore, getting people in workshops to create personas of citizens in the future in some situated way drew on those participants' understandings and imaginings, and that was not the regular way of doing it.

And we hope it would sort of illuminate aspects of people's experiences of the future and so on. So, that would be... yeah, so it is not original. That's fine, it wasn't trying to be original, it was trying to do something which JRC wouldn't ordinarily do.

Researcher:

Okay, because, I want to ask you, this is from the second report, so I guess that you were maybe not involved in that one, but one of the recommendations that they had was developing more collaborative ways of working through design-oriented workshops. And I wonder specifically what they meant by design-oriented workshop, and what explicitly are they trying to get. So, I guess it goes back to what you were...

EUPL2:

Yeah. Back to... if you read the first report, that's them trying to do that. That's them trying to do these things in a particular way with multiple non-experts. I mentioned the other project, that [REDACTED] led, which was on blockchain, there they worked with expert design people; they had five different working groups, as I remember, each group had about five people often a tech or blockchain person, a design person, and a professional consultant, and then some other. Some sociology-type person, you know, and so on, and then policy people. Those were experts who brought expert understandings and they made very, you know, they made scenarios actually but in a different way, whereas this project, FuturGov, was working with design schools, working with their students therefore, and then with the policy labs, the local policy labs, getting them to identify, recruit, and invite in local participants. So, it's much... probably a larger number of human beings and also more fluid really. And very much led by the expertise of the partner organisation. The expertise in the networks of the partner organisation. So, it was... Yes, sorry, I've forgotten your question.

Researcher:

I was wondering about why they want to have more design-oriented workshops.

EUPL2:

Oh, yeah, yeah, why. Well, so, that again, the other project... the blockchain had design-oriented workshops but with very expert people. So, they had quite a few workshops in a smaller, closed, intense, iterative working process for each of the five sub-projects. I think it's about plurality. So, having different voices, about trying to bring in situated understandings of people in their day-to-day life, and to activate and capture the future imaginings of participants. So, this is what the design part might bring to compliment and possibly challenge and enrich the analytical perspective developed through other methods to develop future scenarios.

Researcher:

Right. For the future, thinking of the projects to come, is it enough for them to resort to external design consultants or should they build internal capacity for these? This is more of a personal opinion question.

EUPL2:

Yeah, I think they are heading in that direction, so, they now have, I think two people in the team. So, they have [REDACTED] who works with [REDACTED]. She's now left, actually. And I may work with them on another project they're doing. So, led by this other person. So, yes, they are. Sorry, that's specific individuals. I think they should, and I gather they plan to build up this capability, but even if they have, you know, two, three, four, five experts, I think they still need to activate and work with design experts out in the world and design schools was one resource that is, you know, in every country more or less, with different levels of expertise and existing networks and young design students who for pedagogical reasons have maybe quite an open-ended approach to working on these kind of projects. So, even if they develop many, many people inside JRC, I think they're still potential to work with the design people, with design expertise, and the wider ecosystem. Design schools obviously was what happened in this project, not consultants, but consultants would be another route. But I think they're trying to pluralise who they work with and how they work with them, because Europe, you know, the European Commission, which I don't know it in detail at all, but they work with experts all the time. They know how to work with experts, and the expert... like I did, the expert comes in and does, you know, ten days, five days, but it's gone, right? So, they need some people inside to sort of identify and activate this. And

then there is outside... you get different things from people who are not professional, so, civil society organisations, and so on.

Researcher:

Right. I wonder because I've been trying to contact all policy labs involved and typically ask them about their design capabilities. And it is interesting for me to see that although they quite explicitly mention that they do sort of design-led activities, in terms of their internal capabilities, they don't seem to match that very well. So, they might not have one designer working for them, yet they still do some design activities. Do you think that is somehow problematical or that is not necessarily an issue? They could do design-led activities or carry design-led activities without having in professional knowledge or professional expertise.

EUPL2:

Yeah, that's a good question. So, I... out of governments, in business, we've seen the development of design thinking and service design as capabilities in organisations, as innovation capabilities, at least that's the claim, that they will lead to innovation. And with design thinking we've seen the development of managers and entrepreneurs who do not come, you know, he didn't go to design school who then feel very confident and fluid in doing this thing called design thinking as a practice but they are not from the culture, you know, they are not rooted in the culture of design. So, my view is it's a different kind of design practice. It's an organisational expertise that has some, you know, clear relationships to design and elements of practice but it's culturally different, it's got different institutional drivers and barriers, and it's a different kind of expertise. So, perhaps we will see the same kind of thing inside government. I don't think it's useful to talk about 'short <<unclear in the audio - 27:21>>, I think it's more recognising new professional capacities and expertises are developing through this agenda of open governments and digital governments, and so on. Policy labs are one expression of that. Do they need to have, you know, 'true design' people in there? Who knows? Because you need to be able to operate in the environment you are in, so, what I see in UK Policy Lab is, yes, it's led by [REDACTED] who, you know, has origins in product design, but she has been... she has developed a, you know, an organisational capacity. I don't know if it's useful to talk about her as a designer anymore. And she may choose to position herself –and I know she does position herself as that sometimes– but I think that's a symbolic positioning.

Researcher:

Right.

EUPL2:

So, does it matter if it's really truly design-led? I mean, it's design-led in the sense that... design thinking is design-led in the sense that it is, you know, bringing in some of the characteristics of design that, you know, you and I, would be familiar with. Does it have to be done by people who went to design school? I'm not so sure. I went to engineering school. So, you know, I mean, does that count? Where is it true designer? Is it only somebody who went to, you know, Central Saint Martins? Or can you be also an engineer? Or can it be somebody with an MBA? I've taught MBAs design thinking since 2006 because I'm interested in and believe in the capacity of management and leaders to recognise and implement this capability. So, however, there is a research question about when you create this organizational capacity to do design-like workshops and, yes, this is methods and tools which, you know, can float around –not float around– they can move, they can travel between domains, do you lose something when you don't have design people and it's done by others?

Researcher:

That's a very interesting one. And I wonder specifically if you are aware on an academic grounding, is there anybody or any institution preparing people to take on these roles nowadays? I mean are... is there any academic institution preparing people to be designers in the public sphere?

EUPL2:

I don't know if that's a good thing.

Researcher:

Okay.

EUPL2:

If that's the right question, let's say. So, all design is in the public sphere.

Researcher:

Okay.

EUPL2:

My view would be, if you are designing a bottle or you're designing a computer it is already in the public sphere.

Researcher:

Right.

EUPL2:

It's not a public service but the bottle or the computer is in a social world which has public dimensions, and it is... So, that is already part of some design pedagogies. The specifics of working inside governments, public administrations if that's what you mean by public sphere,

Researcher:

Yes, that's what I mean.

EUPL2:

Alright, to be more precise then, if you mean in public administration and institutions, I observe some consultancies doing training in this space. So, design thinkers academy has some courses work with and I know this from Twitter, basically. And I know them a little bit. And I have done some training with Policy Lab in the UK, for example, with civil servants. And I've done some with, personally with... through Oxford University with international civil service, and there is Nesta. There's some small-scale things I personally have seen or know about but I observe Design Thinkers Academy and also Nesta have an initiative called States of Change.

Researcher:

Right.

EUPL2:

In which [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] are involved in, at least. So, yes, there are things like that which take different institutional forms. And I know Andrea is involved, for example, with LSE has a Master's in public policy and she's doing some teaching in that. I don't know the detail of that but is highly likely. So, yes, there's multiple sort of formats but there is nothing... you know, I know of one or two... I feel like I've seen one or two Master's emerging specifically, but I think is really problematic because we don't have the research basis. You know with your own PhD and I have four PhD students directly supervised with politics and government scholars of whom you met some of them, I think, with King's College London, so, we don't actually have the research base anyway. So, I think it would be premature to have shiny new courses when we don't have the research.

Researcher:

Right. Makes a lot of sense. In that sense, you mentioned 'Open Governance', for example, what do you think is the relationship between introducing the design approaches, if you will, and things like open governance? Is there a clear link between the two?

EUPL2:

Can you hold on one second?

Sorry.

Researcher:

No worries.

EUPL2:

Sorry, your question was...

Researcher:

When I'm going through the reports, I see that questions such as open governance or fostering open governance comes as a recurrent issue.

EUPL2:

These are drivers, drivers and opportunities and agendas to which some governments have committed themselves to, like the open government partnership and then individual countries have their own drivers about institutional change and so. And obviously it's tied to technology and

ideological agendas, in some case about having a small state. So, there's sort of multiple reasons for the origins of open government have created this space, an opportunity for these design-like activities to emerge. I did one very primitive discussion of this in a paper with [REDACTED]. Something like, it's called [REDACTED] if you look at my [REDACTED] website...

Researcher:

I've seen that one.

EUPL2:

Yes, so I tried... but that's not a very detailed paper, but it's even in the introduction it's these things. I also have a new paper out with [REDACTED] in Design Issues, which is about social design but obviously it's related. So, that looks at some of the drivers for why 'social design' is emerging. So, I am somewhat interested in these things but currently don't have time to do anymore reading. So, they're linked. Yes, somebody should research why and how they, are they linked? And probably there are. But I have not time to look.

Researcher:

Right. Ok.

EUPL2:

I need to go soon to take my daughter to her friends.

Researcher:

Yes, in any case, I just wanted to thank you very much for your time. It's been great having this conversation with you.

EUPL2:

We can do one more question while she gets ready.

Researcher:

Yeah? Okay, so, if you have a minute.

EUPL2:

Hold on one second.

Researcher:

Yeah.

EUPL2:

Children are very slow to get ready. So, we do have five minutes.

Researcher:

I can imagine. Okay, yeah, so maybe to close.

Researcher:

What do you think is the potential impact of such a project like this one that you have been working on?

EUPL2:

So, I think some of it is symbolic. So, it's the symbolic impact of 'look we have tried a different thing'. Some of it is capability building. That EUPL1, [REDACTED], [REDACTED] have now, you know, understanding, expertise, knowledge of a domain they didn't know before, knowledge of a literature, and some kind of confidence to, and some grounds to explore it further.

Researcher:

Right

EUPL2:

Did the project really generate incredible new understandings about citizens? What I observed is when we were in Brussels looking at the students' outputs and that was those colleagues, I mentioned from JRC and also the project sponsor who was from the DG. So, we spend this very... it was one of those very hot days in the summer, you know, when it was very hot, so, it was this hot day looking at these things and then, how these public servants were absolutely fascinated with these concepts, and we had these texts written by the students or by their tutors, these very interesting and weird things, weird films. And, obviously, I'm from design and art, so, you know, I've seen decades of weird films and weird, strange objects and they were completely fascinated, very open to getting a new insight. And they took them very seriously. So, this was actually really exciting. That wasn't just symbolic. There was a genuine curiosity and intellectual curiosity amongst these public servants to access new insights via a route they would

not ordinarily do, which was through... resulting from this project. So, it wasn't just that it was in the object, so, in the film. When we discussed it together, not with the students, weren't there. Then we discussed it and try to understand the ideas. That was a kind of source of data let's say. And that did throw up some really useful questions for the overall project. So, it's... I mean, possibly they could have got those understandings and insights in a different way, but this way did produce some insights and understandings.

Researcher:

Right.

EUPL2:

Well.

Researcher:

That's it for me then, unless you have any final comment.

EUPL2:

Ok. No, no.

Researcher:

██████, thank you very much, especially for having this on this day. So, happy holidays.

EUPL2:

And to you, thank you.

Researcher:

All the best for the new year.

EUPL2:

Okay, alright. Bye, bye.

Appendix 11 - Invitation to partake in mapping

**Policy
Innovation
by Design**



Invitation to participate in Policy Innovation by Design Research Project

Dear Sir/Madam,

The Institute for Design Innovation at Loughborough University in London is pleased to invite your organisation to participate in Policy Innovation by Design research project.

This study aims to learn more about the use and role of design in public policy innovation, through the investigation of Policy Labs in Europe. We believe the results will not only be of value to Policy Labs but will also help policymakers at large to better identify opportunities for design in aiding their innovation processes.

Your organisation and you are part of a comprehensive sample of 65 European policy labs working at various levels of public administration. Your opinions and information of the organisation are critical to the success of our study. By taking part in this study, a summary copy of our results will be sent to you upon completion.

We recognize the value of your time, and sincerely appreciate your efforts on our behalf. Please be aware that individual responses will be anonymised, and all organisation level data will be held in confidence. Please take 10 minutes to complete [this online survey](#) and submit it at your earliest convenience.

Should you require additional information or have questions, please contact us at the emails listed below.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Prof Mikko Koria
m.koria@lboro.ac.uk

Dr Sharon Prendeville
s.prendeville@lboro.ac.uk

Federico Vaz
f.vaz@lboro.ac.uk

Policy Innovation by Design
Loughborough University in London

www.policyinnovation.design
www.lborolondon.ac.uk
contact@policyinnovation.design

Appendix 12 - Interview participant information sheet



Policy Innovation by Design Participant Information Sheet

Federico Vaz (main investigator), f.vaz@lboro.ac.uk
Dr Sharon Prendeville (supervisor), s.prendeville@lboro.ac.uk
Prof Mikko Korja (supervisor), m.korja@lboro.ac.uk

3 Lesney Avenue
The Broadcast Centre
Here East
Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park
London
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What is the purpose of the study?

The study entitled [Policy Innovation by Design](#), examines how design is being utilised in European Policy Labs to innovate public policy-making. We are currently looking into how governmental units at any level engage in diverse practices to develop innovative public policies. The aim is to understand what is the impact design can have in developing public policies and services which are better suit to address current societal issues.

Who is doing this research and why?

This study is part of a doctoral research project funded by the Institute for Design Innovation at Loughborough University in London. Dr Sharon Prendeville and Prof Mikko Korja are supervising this study conducted by Federico Vaz.

Once I take part, can I change my mind?

Yes. After you have read this information and asked any questions you may have we will ask you to complete an Informed Consent Form, however, if at any time, before, during or after the interview you wish to withdraw from the study please just contact the main investigator. You can withdraw at any time, for any reason and you will not be asked to explain your reasons for withdrawing.

Will I be required to attend any sessions and where will these be?

To take part in this study, participants will be asked to engage in an interview with the investigator. The form (personal, telephonic, etc.), date, and other details will be mutually agreed by the interviewees and the investigator.

How long will it take?

Appendix 13 - Interview participant consent form



Policy Innovation by Design

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

The purpose and details of this study have been explained to me. I understand that this study is designed to further scientific knowledge and that all procedures have been approved by the Loughborough University Ethical Advisory Committee.

I have read and understood the information sheet and this consent form.

I have had an opportunity to ask questions about my participation.

I understand that I am under no obligation to take part in the study.

I understand that I have the right to withdraw from this study at any stage for any reason, and that I will not be required to explain my reasons for withdrawing.

I understand that all the information I provide will be treated in strict confidence and will be kept anonymous and confidential to the researchers unless (under the statutory obligations of the agencies which the researchers are working with), it is judged that confidentiality will have to be breached for the safety of the participant or others.

I agree to participate in this study.

Your name _____

Your signature _____

Signature of investigator _____

Date _____

Appendix 14 - Mindlab's methods at each stage of their innovation process

		Research	Analysis	Ideation	Test	Implementation
Method	Theory of Change	×				×
	Project Focus	×	×			×
	Project Journey	×				×
	Target Group	×	×			
	Interview		×		×	
	Film & Sound	×	×			
	People Shadowing	×				
	User Journey	×	×			
	Cultural Probes	×			×	
	Portraits			×		
	Pattern Recognition		×			
	How might we?		×			
	Perspective Cards	×		×		
	Brainstorm			×		
	Priority Grid		×			
	Explore Your Ideas			×		
	Concept Poster			×		
	Proto- & Provotypes			×	×	
	Future Scenarios			×	×	
Mindset	Target Group	×				
	Workshops	×		×	×	
	Effect Focus					×
	Test your ideas			×	×	