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Behavioural Insights Applied to Policy

A report on the 2024 workshop by the Competence Centre for Behavioural Insights, EU Policy Lab, Joint Research Centre, European Commission

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Contents

Abstract

This report summarises key insights from the "Behavioural Insights Applied to Policy" workshop organised by the Competence Centre on Behavioural Insights (CCBI) on 23-24 September 2024, in Brussels. The workshop gathered policymakers, academics, and practitioners from a range of government bodies and international organisations, to explore the value of applying behavioural science to policymaking. Key discussions addressed behavioural strategies for individual and systemic behaviour change across various domains, including public health, environmental policy, and migration.

Despite the increasing demand for using behavioural evidence in policy, there is awareness that this requires early involvement in the policy process, oftentimes a fruitful collaboration with design (for policy) experts and should not be seen as an easy substitute for more structural/system interventions. The breadth of topics highlighted the critical need for integrating behavioural insights into policy design and implementation, reinforcing the importance of cross-country exchanges among behavioural experts to enhance policy impact.

Acknowledgments

The network of EU government and agency representatives interested in Behavioural Insights had gathered twice in the past before this workshop took place. After the COVID-19 pandemic, which delayed this event, we hope that the workshop in Brussels marks the beginning of a new phase of regular gatherings. We are happy to learn that the next one has already been announced and will take place in Copenhagen, with an exact date to follow soon. This network may play a pivotal role in the further promotion and application of behavioural insights in policy. We were delighted by the attendance from many Member States, EU agencies and international organisations, all of whom confirmed their engagement in the network. In drafting the agenda, we were equally happy with the number of those who wanted to share information about their work, their findings, and with the quality and depth of the planned interventions. This resulted in an inspiring agenda.

We are indebted to Jolita Butkeviciene for her constant support and remarks in the workshop. We are also grateful to Gabriela Tschirkova (DG REFORM) for agreeing to present in a session on the Technical Support Instrument, much appreciated by many attendees. We would like to mention the extremely active participation of Thomas Dirkmaat, who hosted the previous such event – and shared invaluable information and tips – and Catrine Normann, who already volunteered to host the next one. We are thankful to our fellow colleagues in the Unit, for their enthusiasm with the project, and specifically to David Martens and Elahe Rajabiani, who provided precious design insights before, during and after the event. We are also thankful to other JRC colleagues, for their active participation, especially to Nives Della Valle, Mario Scharfbillig, Marco Inchingolo, Jesus Barreiro Hurle, François Dessart and René van Bavel. Last but not the least, we are indebted to Teodora Garbovan for a fruitful collaboration throughout the event, ensuring effective promotion and communication around the workshop.

Notwithstanding the many contributors to the workshop, and to this report in particular, all final responsibility remains solely with the authors.

Thomas Hemmerlgarn
Head of the EU Policy Lab: Foresight, Behavioural Insights & Design for Policy

1. Introduction

On 23 and 24 September 2024, the Competence Centre on Behavioural Insights (CCBI) - at the Joint Research Centre (JRC), European Commission - hosted a workshop on 'Behavioural Insights Applied to Policy' in Brussels, Belgium. We invited academics, researchers, and policymakers, who work in the sphere of behavioural science, to share their knowledge and experience. The attendees included representatives from the European Commission, governmental bodies within European Union (EU), EU Member States, and international organisations.

1.1 Overview of behavioural sciences and policymaking

Over the last 15 years, behavioural insights (BI) have earned a more established role in the policymaking process. Behavioural scientists with diverse backgrounds such as economics, psychology, sociology, and other areas, have been tasked with applying their knowledge of human decision-making on shaping policies in a wide range of domains, including the environment, public health, finance, and agriculture.

In governments and governmental bodies, this has led to a newfound interest in behavioural insights and to the formation of dedicated teams. For example, in 2019, the Commission set up the Competence Centre on Behavioural Insights (CCBI), which is part of the EU Policy Lab at the JRC. CCBI's main role is to support and inform the Commission's services which have an interest in using behavioural insights.

The development of behavioural insights has naturally led to an increase in the number of scientists working within this area, and to the creation of a network of experts interested in sharing knowledge and exchanging good practices contributing to an even greater policy impact of behavioural insights.

1.2 The present workshop

The increased popularity of behavioural insights over the last decade, and the involvement of behavioural scientists in policymaking around the world, were the main drivers behind our decision to organise this workshop. The first time this Community of Behavioural Insights Practitioners gathered was back in 2016 in London, followed by a meeting in 2019 in The Hague. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic and its restrictions, the 2024 Workshop was the first chance to reconnect in person after five years. Therefore, the main goal for the 2-day activity was to bring together this community and exchange good practices, recognise priority areas, and explore possible collaborations.

The workshop was designed as a space where we could have open discussions, freely question each other, and interact productively in small groups. It was important to invite representatives working within different types of organisations as we believe that the successful application of behavioural insights into policymaking benefits from internal and external collaborations. This is why our workshop attendees had diverse backgrounds and experiences, stemming from their work in academia, governmental bodies, EU institutions, and international organisations.

The workshop was structured around individual presentations and panel discussions. This allowed for the participants to share the research results in various areas, discuss their direct applications into policymaking, debate over the challenges they were facing, and disentangle any possible solutions for these. In addition, we included interactive sessions with the idea of looking ahead into the future, identifying potential key areas for behavioural scientists to focus on, and foster pathways for possible collaborations among the workshop attendees.

1.3 Key areas covered in the workshop

The programme of the Workshop covered a wide range of themes and was divided into 10 sessions. We had a dedicated session showcasing the work our CCBI team and other JRC

researchers have been doing over the last few years, while two other sessions presented the work and experience in behavioural insights of representatives from EU Member States. Next, we had a dedicated session discussing the differences between policies framed towards individual behaviour change and those framed towards systemic changes. This session also included an interactive element allowing for participants to brainstorm, discuss, and present their ideas on the same topic.

We also included a panel discussion with representatives from various international organisations (World Bank, OECD, ECDC, FAO, ILO, WHO and WHO Europe) who shared their experiences of applying behavioural sciences and the related challenges. Another session was dedicated to the EU Technical Support Instrument (TSI) programme, which provides tailor-made technical expertise to EU Member States to design and implement reforms. This session included an introductory presentation by the Directorate-General (DG) Reform of the Commission, a presentation of a project implemented by the Belgian government, and an interactive session on the potential application of the TSI. Next, we also included a dedicated session presenting the i-bex platform which has been developed by the CCBI and is used to host online studies, including experiments, gathering behavioural and survey data. Finally, we had a session dedicated to the application of behavioural sciences into collaborative policymaking.

Overall, the breadth and variety of the sessions included in our programme allowed us to explore many topics where behavioural science is applied. Some of the areas covered included climate change and net-zero by exploring waste sorting labels, sustainable food systems, and energy use. There was also an emphasis on misinformation and disaster preparedness, as well as artificial intelligence and its application in education. Other contributions focused on health behaviours, such as prevention and monitoring, while other projects explored issues related to gender, migration, and refugees.

The plethora of topics covered during our Workshop is a testament to the breadth of application and impact of behavioural science into both research and policymaking. We believe that this showcases the importance of using and applying behavioural insights when designing and implementing policies. This also sends a powerful message to policymakers - not only in Europe, but also around the world - that behavioural science is a strong and prominent element in the policymaking process and calls for even deeper integration of behavioural insights teams within governments and international organisations.

The following sections provide a brief overview of the key insights from each session of the Workshop, while a detailed Agenda is annexed, at the end of the report.

2. Insights and Takeaways from the Event's Sessions

Opening Remarks

- *Jolita Butkeviciene, Director of Innovation in Science and Policymaking, JRC*
- *Emanuele Ciriolo, Head of the Competence Centre on Behavioural Insights, JRC*

Jolita Butkeviciene opened the workshop by welcoming participants and expressing her excitement for this gathering of the Community of Behavioural Insights Practitioners, including experts from various EU Member States and international organisations.

Leading the Directorate on Innovation in Science and Policymaking, Jolita emphasised the importance of integrating scientific research and innovation into policymaking processes. She described the Competence Centre on Behavioural Insights as a key asset within the Directorate and highlighted how behavioural science provides a necessary reality check in policy formulation. By recognising the complexities of real-world behaviour, policymakers can better address complex issues, such as health choices and climate action. Praising the JRC's contributions to consumer policy and environmental labelling, Jolita highlighted the importance of effectively using behavioural insights, and the need to continuously demonstrate their relevance in policymaking.

Emanuele Ciriolo, Head of the Competence Centre on Behavioural Insights, also provided welcome remarks and a brief overview of the workshop, stressing the value of the workshop as an opportunity for BI-for-policy experts to share knowledge, exchange on novel methods and BI application into new policy areas, and explore areas of common interest and possible collaborations. He then set the scene for the workshop, by expressing excitement for the upcoming sessions on topics such as energy, agriculture, artificial intelligence, disinformation, and migration, as well as new practical tools for BI experiments, such as the i-bex platform.

3. First session: CCBI on-going and prospective work

The first session of the event outlined past, present, and future CCBI work on waste sorting labels, mis- and disinformation, the transition to sustainable food systems, and the use of artificial intelligence in learning environments from a behavioural science perspective.

Presentations:

- Waste sorting labels, ***Hendrik Bruns*** *(CCBI, JRC)*
- Misinformation, ***Hannah Nohlen*** *(CCBI, JRC)*
- Fostering the transition to more sustainable food systems using behavioural insights, ***Jesus Barreiro Hurle*** *(Economics of the Food System, JRC)*
- AI and learning, ***Andrea Blasco*** *(CCBI, JRC)*

Hendrik Bruns presented an ongoing CCBI project on using behavioural and design science to design EU harmonised waste sorting labels, as part of the Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation[1]. The project tackles the current heterogeneity of waste sorting labels across EU countries (Figure 1). The work is based on understanding how people make waste sorting decisions – differentiating between their motivation, ability, and opportunity – and how waste sorting labels can influence some of these drivers. The project includes consumer surveys, participatory design workshops, and behavioural experiments to design these labels. He highlighted the importance of involving stakeholders along the way.

Figure 1. Waste sorting labels in the EU

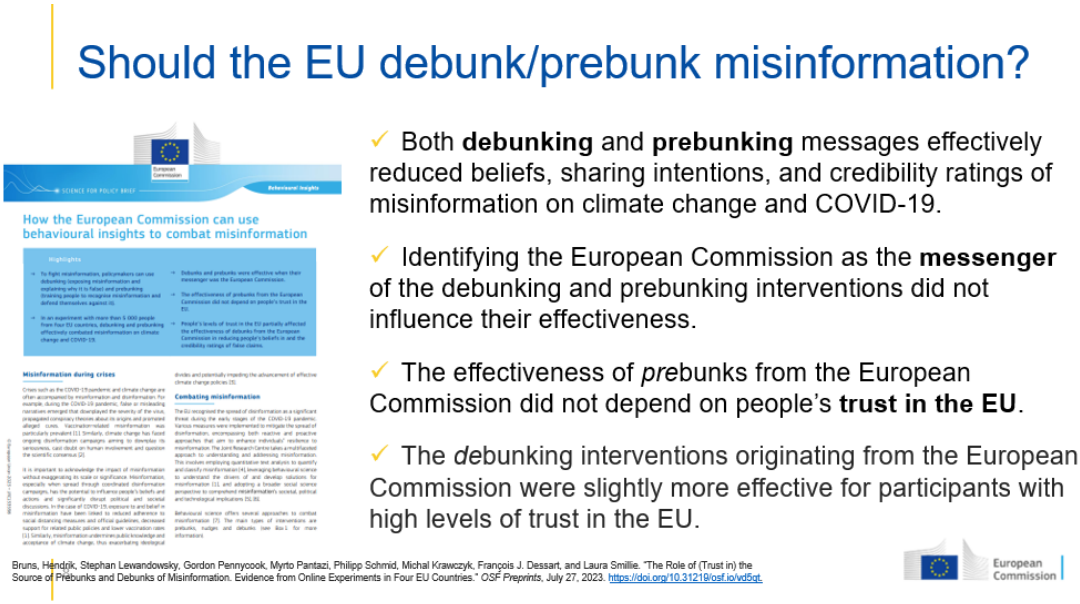
Source: CCBI Presentation at the Workshop.

Hannah Nohlen presented CCBI work on mis- and disinformation, including past work showing that prebunks and debunks of Covid-19 and climate change misinformation are effective - independently of whether their source is undisclosed or is "the European Commission" - and by and large regardless of people's level of trust in the European Union (Figure 2). She also presented work exploring the role of persuasion techniques in conveying misinformation and true information on

[1] The provisionally agreed Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation can be found at this link.

climate change. This experimental work found that persuasion techniques mostly decrease people's agreement with true claims, but that two techniques (black-and-white fallacy, and call to authority) increase agreement with misinformation. Lastly, Hannah highlighted future work that will explore the role of disinformation for disaster preparedness.

Figure 2. Selected findings from CCBI study on misinformation



Source: CCBI Presentation at the Workshop.

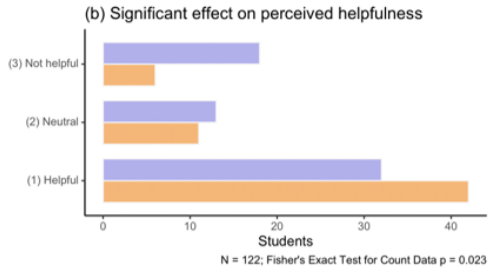
Jesus Barreiro Hurle shifted the focus to the role of behavioural interventions to accelerate the transition to more sustainable food systems. He highlighted the untapped potential of considering the capacity to modify how farmers and foresters manage land. Jesus presented work identifying relevant behavioural factors affecting the adoption of sustainable farming practices, and experiments investigating conditional payments to increase the environmental performance of farming. This work showed that farmers are in principle not against more sustainable production practices, as they are willing to contribute their own income to the environment. However, their intrinsic willingness to contribute to the environment could be crowded out if they are forced to give *mandatory* contributions. Moreover, he highlighted that one alternative way to obtain more environmental contributions is to guarantee higher incomes for farmers. He also discussed the limited impact of nudges on production decisions, highlighting predominant system-2 decisions by farmers and the lack of understanding on how farmers perceive and accept nudges. Behaviourally informed interventions to change production decisions might need to diverge from current mainstream design.

Andrea Blasco discussed the role of artificial intelligence (AI) in learning, asking how large language models can impact education and, also, policymaking. More specifically, Andrea presented a study investigating how students interact with an AI tutor to solve school-related problems. The AI tutor was either Socratic, helping students find answers themselves rather than providing the answer directly, or Non-Socratic. Surprisingly, the students found the Socratic tutor less helpful than the Non-Socratic (Figure 3). Andrea's study also explored differences between AI providing explanations (or not) for the answers it gave, showing that students made fewer errors when the AI provided explanations, but students who did not receive an explanation perceived it as more accurate. He also presented an ongoing study exploring university students' willingness to pay for AI integration into their courses.

Figure 3. Students' perceptions of Socratic AI, according to CCBI study

Results: No impact on student confidence, but fewer found the Socratic AI helpful

- Most students found AI useful, **but fewer students** found the Socratic AI helpful.
  - **Interviews**: Socratic "is frustrating" "doesn't provide the right answer" "it takes too many interactions"
- **Interpretation:** Embedding sound pedagogical principles into chatbots can be challenging.



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Source: CCBI Presentation at the Workshop.

4. Second session: Insights from Members States' experience

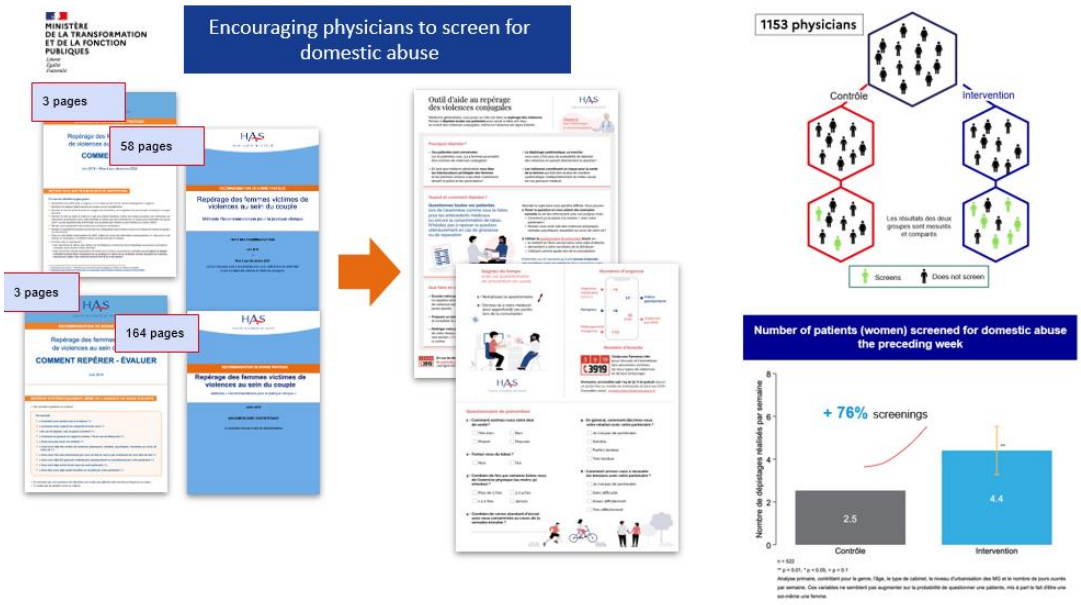
The second session of the workshop was the first of two sessions dedicated to providing an overview of the applied behavioural science work in EU Member States. This session included presentations covering work on behavioural insights for policy conducted in France, Italy, and the Netherlands.

Presentations

- Behavioural Insights applied to policy, France, ***Mariam Chammat***
- Behavioural Insights applied to policy, Italy, ***Riccardo Viale***
- Behavioural Insights applied to policy, The Netherlands, ***Thomas Dirkmaat***

Mariam Chammat presented the Behavioural Insights Team at the *Direction interministérielle de la transformation publique* in France. Initial work in the area of behavioural insights started in 2014 and the behavioural insights team was founded in 2018. Over the course of the last years, the team has grown into combining multiple competencies (Service Design, Behavioural Sciences, Co-construction with civil society, collaborative strategies and management practices) applying behavioural science across sectors (e.g. economy, justice/security, environment, education and sports, labour, health). She presented examples of their work, including encouraging physicians to screen for domestic abuse by default (Figure 4), reducing the use of wood heating, and encouraging the repair of electronic goods by conducting a large scale quasi-experimental evaluation of the repairability index on consumer choices.

Figure 4. Sample DITP study on encouraging doctors' screening for domestic abuse



Source: DITP Presentation at the Workshop.

Riccardo Viale presented the Team di Analisi Comportamentale (TAC), which is the Italian Behavioural Insights Team, housed at the *Dipartimento della Funzione Pubblica*, which aims to use insights from cognitive and behavioural sciences to improve the well-being and job performance of Public Administration employees. He stressed the concept of Organisational Citizenship Behaviour

(OCB), which encompasses four macro areas: helping colleagues, helping the organisation, following organisational rules (loyalty), and committing to improving them in a constructive way (voice). He presented a study on OCB and organisational nudges conducted between 2019 and 2023 in six public administrations in Italy. The study included a qualitative analysis of the organisational culture, an ex-ante survey on OCB, a nudge intervention, and an ex-post survey on OCB, and suggested that participants who were part of the project experienced higher levels of OCB. Other projects TAC is working on, in collaboration with other stakeholders, is a project on road security, behavioural tools on disinformation, AI tools to improve public administration problem solving, and nudges and boosts to reduce energy consumption in public administration.

Thomas Dirkmaat presented work from the Behavioural Insights Team at Netherlands Ministry of Economic Affairs. He focused on two recent projects and highlighted two current projects. The first project aimed to understand why small to medium sized enterprises (SMEs) do not make sufficient use of the sustainability subsidy provided to them. The results of the study showed that, in addition to other reasons, lack of trust in energy advisors and scepticism about the usefulness of the advice explained limited uptake. This analysis led to the subsidy being paused and improved. The second project was a large-scale phishing experiment among SMEs. This included sending phishing mails to companies and retested whether SMEs were more likely to fall for a phishing mail in the short, medium, and long term. They found a significant reduction in participants clicking on a subsequent phishing mail in the short term, but not in the medium to long term. After a year, 51% of participating SMEs had taken measures and 23% were planning to do so. Thomas also highlighted future projects entailing offering a guarantee on energy saving, to increase the intention to purchase a heat pump and work on flexible energy use of consumers. Additionally, the 2024 government programme in the Netherlands emphasises a citizen perspective, and better use of insights from citizen and experiential knowledge, which promised an increased use of behavioural science for policy.

5. Third session: i-frame vs. s-frame public policy

The third session of the workshop focused on the ongoing debate between the individual frame (i-frame) and the systemic frame (s-frame). It began with a presentation of a recent CCBI's position paper on this topic, which outlined the diverse roles that behavioural insights (BI) can play within policymaking. This was followed by a discussion led by Zeina Afif from the BI unit at the World Bank, who provided her perspective on the paper. In the final part of the session, participants engaged in a workshop where they shared examples of BI being applied optimally and sub-optimally. These stories were then analysed collectively to identify recurring patterns and highlight any outliers that stood out from the norm.

Presentations:

- Unlocking the full potential of BI for policy, ***Marion Dupoux and Alexia Gaudeul*** (*CCBI, JRC*)
- Discussion, ***Zeina Afif*** (World Bank)
- Interactive session, led by ***Marion Dupoux*** and facilitated by the CCBI

Marion Dupoux presented the CCBI's position paper, which primarily targets policymakers but also appeals to behavioural scientists and practitioners. She explained the key misconceptions the paper seeks to debunk:

- BI should not be limited to behavioural interventions like nudges or soft interventions.
- BI should not be perceived as inherently resulting in marginal or short-term impacts.
- BI is not solely focused on individual change.
- BI should not be systematically used only as a plug-in tool late in the policy cycle.

Marion highlighted the broad role of BI across various policy contexts:

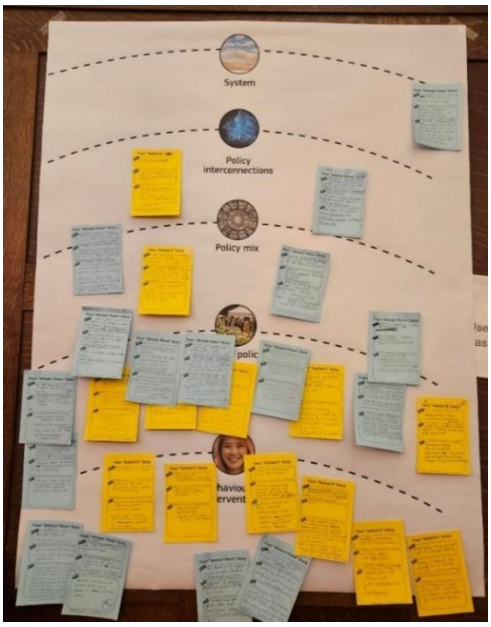
- **Behavioural interventions:** While BI can trigger systemic changes through small individual behaviour changes that cascade into broader societal shifts, these effects are uncertain.
- **Single policy formulation:** Early integration of BI can guide both traditional and behavioural policies, ensuring they are based on a deep understanding of human behaviour.
- **Policy mixes:** BI can enhance the coherence of different policies within a mix, ensuring interventions align and do not work at cross-purposes. It also addresses psychological and social barriers that may limit policy effectiveness.
- **Policy interconnections:** By examining how policies across different domains interact, BI can help identify synergies and conflicts, improving the coherence of the policy landscape.

- **Systemic change:** BI can identify leverage points within systems and dig deeper into them to develop interventions that improve system functioning. Behavioural system mapping is particularly useful in this context.

Marion also outlined CCBI's strategies to raise policymakers' awareness of behavioural insights, foster long-term collaboration with DGs, and ensure timely responses to DG requests.

Zeina Afif followed with a presentation mapping the World Bank's projects onto the policy contexts Marion described, demonstrating that the World Bank has developed BI projects across all these areas. For example, nudges have been employed to increase the adoption of solar home systems in Senegal, Ethiopia, and Uganda. Behavioural insights also supported existing energy policies in Poland, the Western Balkans, and Romania by identifying barriers to clean energy transitions and promoting the uptake of efficient technologies among households. Additionally, social norms were incorporated into a policy mix aimed at improving female labour force participation. In Kuwait, behavioural barriers to labour market diversification were examined, resulting in behavioural recommendations across the education and labour sectors.

In the interactive session, participants were divided into six tables. Half of the tables focused on cases where BI was used sub-optimally (the blue "Almost There" stories), while the other half worked on cases where BI was used effectively (the yellow "Nailed It" stories).



In the first step, participants wrote their stories individually and then shared them with their group. In the second step, they identified common patterns and noteworthy instances. The groups then reported their findings in plenary, mapping their stories across the different policy contexts that Marion had identifies (see image on the side).

Notably, more stories were concentrated in the lower part of the map, suggesting a need for more BI projects aimed at systemic change and improving policy coherence across different domains. The map also shows that successful stories span a wide array of policy contexts already, which is encouraging and promising.

6. Fourth Session: Current challenges, and collaborative policymaking

In the afternoon of the first day, the Workshop continued with a Panel Discussion with representatives from international organisations untangling the question 'What can a BI function achieve in your organisation?'. The session was chaired by **René van Bavel**, from the JRC, while the panel consisted of experts working in behavioural science across various organisations.

Presentations:

- **Sarah Earnshaw Blomquist**, European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC)
- **Cortney Price**, The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), United Nations
- **Claire Hobden**, The International Labour Organization (ILO), United Nations
- **Chiara Varazzani**, The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)
- **Zeina Afif**, World Bank
- **Elena Altieri**, World Health Organisation (WHO)
- **Tiina Likki**, World Health Organisation Europe (WHO)

Each panellist gave a short overview of their respective behavioural science team, of some of the research they conducted, as well as of the challenges faced when applying behavioural insights. One of the recurring points mentioned by panel members was the notable inclusion of behavioural science in high-level discussions within global institutions. A key example cited was the UN resolution affirming behavioural science as an important component in addressing some of today's most pressing global challenges. The endorsement of behavioural science at such an official level reflects its growing influence, and the recognition that it can play a pivotal role in policymaking and program development across a range of sectors.

However, the application of behavioural insights is more mature in some areas than in others. The panel noted that health is one area where behavioural science has gained significant traction, especially as a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic. During the global health crisis, organisations heavily relied on behavioural insights to understand public health behaviours. This was the case in tackling vaccine hesitancy and (lack of) compliance with safety measures, like mask-wearing and social distancing. Behavioural insights played a pivotal role in crafting policies and communication strategies that were more likely to resonate with diverse populations, thereby enhancing public health outcomes.

In contrast, the panel also acknowledged that in fields like agriculture or employment, the use of behavioural science is still evolving. These sectors have traditionally relied on more technical or economic approaches to problem-solving, and behavioural science is only now being integrated into these frameworks. As a result, the teams working in these areas are typically smaller, with more limited resources and capacity compared to sectors like health. This was highlighted as a key challenge for organisations that want to apply behavioural insights but face constraints in terms of expertise, funding, and time.

Despite these disparities, there is significant potential for growth in the application of behavioural insights across all sectors. One of the most promising avenues, discussed at the workshop, was how behavioural insights can help address systemic issues - such as poverty, inequality, and employment challenges - by understanding how people make decisions in these contexts. For example, in agriculture, insights from behavioural science can help farmers adopt more sustainable practices, while in employment, it can inform interventions aimed at reducing joblessness or improving workforce skills.

The panel also discussed the challenges that come with this expansion. One of the main hurdles is managing expectations. As behavioural science becomes more integrated into organisational functions, there is sometimes an unrealistic expectation that it will be the silver bullet for solving complex societal problems. This can place undue pressure on behavioural science

teams to deliver quick, large-scale results, even when the issues they are tackling are multifaceted and require long-term, interdisciplinary solutions. The panellists agreed that, while behavioural insights can be powerful, it is important to recognise their limitations and ensure they are used in conjunction with other tools and approaches.

Another challenge mentioned was the limited resources available to behavioural insights functions, particularly in smaller organisations or sectors where the discipline is still gaining ground. These teams often operate with constrained budgets, which limits their ability to conduct rigorous, large-scale experiments or gather extensive data. In some cases, this means that behavioural science functions are forced to prioritise short-term projects that can demonstrate immediate impact, rather than investing in longer-term research that might in time yield more profound results.

Looking ahead, the panellists were optimistic about the future of behavioural science within international organisations. They highlighted the need to continue integrating behavioural insights into new areas, such as environmental sustainability, digital governance, and economic resilience.

As behavioural science becomes more deeply embedded in organisational processes, there is an opportunity to develop more holistic approaches to problem-solving that take into account not just economic and technical factors but also human behaviour, emotions, and social dynamics.

In conclusion, the discussion underscored that, while behavioural insights have already made significant contributions in areas like health, their potential is still largely untapped in other fields. The panel expressed hope that, as more organisations invest in building their behavioural science capacity, the discipline will play an even greater role in shaping effective, evidence-based policies and programs for the future. However, this expansion must be approached with caution, acknowledging both the potential and the limitations of behavioural science in addressing today's complex challenges.

7. Fifth session: Tools for collecting behavioural evidence

This hands-on session was dedicated to presenting **i-bex**, a new JRC platform to run behavioural experiments online.

Presentations:

- The i-bex: a hands-on session, ***Michal Krawczyk*** (*CCBI, JRC*)

Michal Krawczyk (CCBI JRC) discussed the main features of i-bex and its advantages, as compared to popular tools to conduct online surveys. First, i-bex offers much greater flexibility in designing question formats. Second, it makes it possible to customise contents displayed to individual participants, depending on their earlier behaviour. For example, questions can be optimised to collect as much information as possible for each individual, conditional on their previous responses. In this way, researchers can minimise the total number of questions, as well as participants' frustration associated with having to respond to questions to which the researcher should already know their answer. Likewise, it allows real-time fine-tuning of texts, e.g. in the form of a conversation between a participant and a Large Language Model. Third, real-time interactions between participants (e.g. experiments played in groups) are possible. This was illustrated with some participants actually making a decision in a simple guessing game ("beauty contest game").

Michal explained that, for now, i-bex has been used for experiments with EC colleagues as participants. He shared the results of one such experiment, in which participants provided 90% confidence intervals for unknown quantities. This task typically reveals a form of overconfidence knowns as *overprecision*, where participants create intervals that are too narrow and fail to capture the true value often enough, suggesting they overestimate the accuracy of their judgments. The practical importance of such *overprecision* (e.g. resulting in projects costing much more and being completed much later than foreseen even in the pessimistic scenario) was discussed. In the reported experiment, two groups were compared. In the Feedback Treatment group, the correct value was displayed immediately after each question, along with an indicator of whether the participant's interval included it. Under Control Treatment, the correct values were only displayed at the end, thus limiting the scope for learning. As hypothesised, intervals given in the Feedback Treatment were wider, resulting in a significantly larger share of intervals covering the true value (lower *overprecision*). This study highlights the role of systematic, qualitative feedback in curbing policymakers' possible biases.

Michal also discussed benefits accruing to participants of experiments. He emphasised they represented an effective and enjoyable mode of learning of behavioural insights. From the researchers' viewpoint, employing i-bex allows full control over the data collection process; the registered pool of policymakers as participants allows cost-free collection of valuable data from a group of special interest. Finally, Michał briefly mentioned other on-going and planned studies utilising i-bex and discussed the possibilities of involving representatives of organisations other than the European Commission into i-bex, both as participants and researchers.

8. Sixth session: Insights from Members States' experience

The sixth session was dedicated to Member States by giving them the opportunity to share their experiences in applying behavioural insights within different governmental structures.

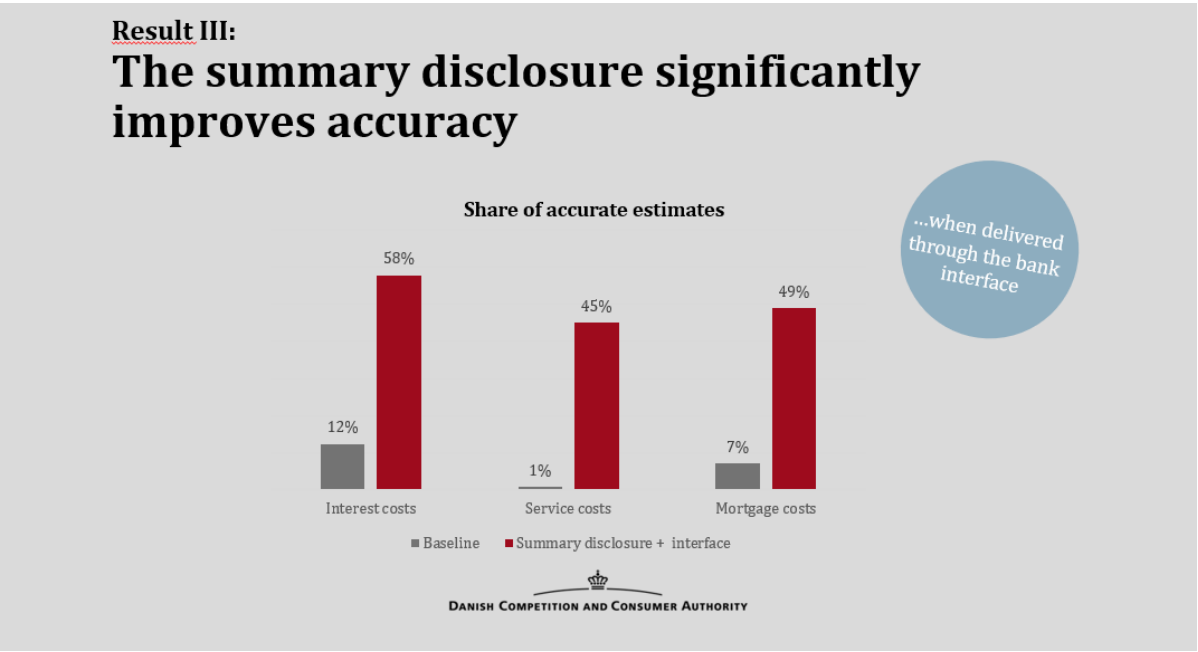
Presentations

- Behavioural Insights applied to policy, Denmark, ***Catrine Normann***
- Behavioural Insights applied to policy, Poland, ***Agnieszka Wincewicz***
- Behavioural Insights applied to policy, UNICEF, ***Kasia Kukula***

After a dense agenda during the first day of the workshop, **Catrine Normann** kick-started the series of presentations of the second day, and presented the behavioural work conduced at the Danish Competition and Consumer Authority. Catrine started by a description of the current decision context for consumers. She claimed that today information on banking costs is fragmented and opaque, and consumers must access several documents to gain a full overview. She then presented an experimental test of banking cost disclosures.

The experiment as run on a nationally representative sample of almost 1,400 participants, randomised in three groups: a control group with the baseline scenario, and two treatment groups, one benefiting from a summary disclosure (of banking costs) and one who also had access to a bank interface. The study clearly shows that current banking disclosures are fragmented and confusing, leading to a significant portion of consumers being unable to accurately estimate their banking costs (see Figure 5). A standardised summary not only would simplify and consolidate this information, making it more accessible and understandable for all banking customers, but would also improve consumers' level of confidence.

Figure 5. Results from the experimental test on banking cost disclosures

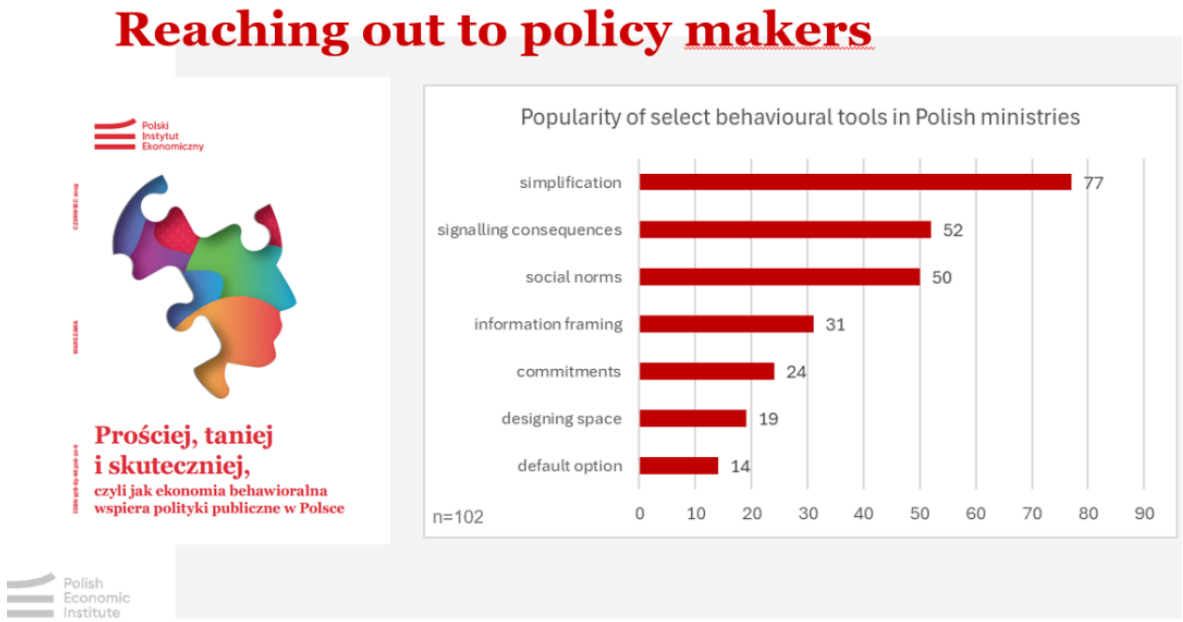


Source: Denmark's Presentation at the Workshop.

After Denmark, **Agnieszka Wincewicz** firstly introduced the Polish Economic Institute (PEI), founded by the previous Polish government in 2018, and until July 2024, supervised by the Prime Minister's Office. The PEI provides analysis and expertise for the central administration in Poland.

Within the Institute, the behavioural economics team is one of the Institute's seven analytical teams. In Poland, the behavioural economics team is the first publicly funded research unit of this kind, with direct relations to the government and public institutions. Its activities mainly aimed at raising awareness around the value added of behavioural insights, through a series of reports, policy- and working papers, articles in weekly newsletters and podcasts. The PEI complements such activity with occasional research providing a picture of the existing level of awareness of and knowledge of BI in the Polish government (see Figure 6).

Figure 6. Results from a survey with 35 Polish ministerial departments



Source: Poland's Presentation at the Workshop.

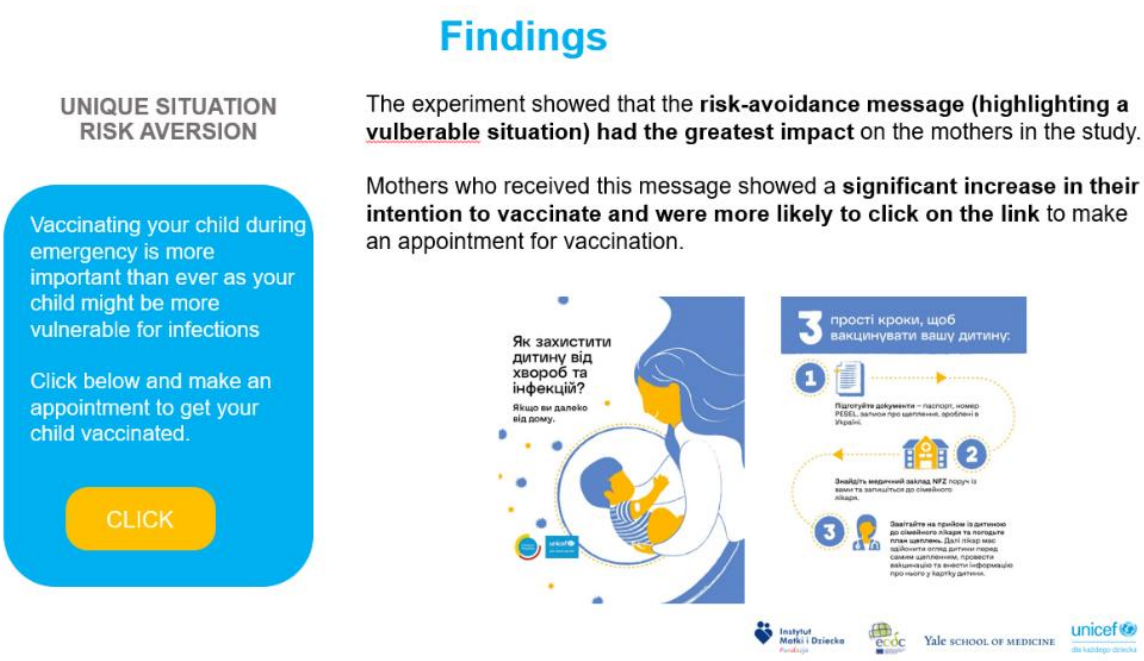
The session was closed by **Kasia Kukula**, from UNICEF. Kasia explained that UNICEF employs a holistic approach to reshape systems, ensuring positive influences on individual behaviours. Priorities include education, child development, child protection, nutrition, and water sanitation, with tailored interventions informed by behavioural insights for increased effectiveness. *Nudging* techniques are applied to guide individuals towards positive choices aligning with inherent biases.

At UNICEF, there is good awareness that the context in which people operate significantly influences their choices, encompassing cues, the visibility of options, perceived ease of actions, social influences, and persuasive attempts. However, direct inquiries about behaviour may not adequately unveil the underlying drivers essential for lasting social and behavioural change, and a sounder evidence-based approach is needed.

2024 UNICEF priorities include health, child protection and education. In each of these fields, behaviours do play a central role, and several factors (psychological, social and environmental) may have an impact on them. In particular, when it comes to health, Kasia briefly presented the results of an experiment on risk aversion linked to child vaccination (see Figure 7).

Both Agnieszka and Kasia concluded their respective presentations, mentioning some of the challenges for an effective application of behavioural insights in policy. Interestingly, these included limited evidence of what works, uncertainty about the results, misconceptions, limited funding, relative lack of expertise and capacity and time pressure.

Figure 7. Findings from a UNICEF experiment on child vaccination



Source: UNICEF Presentation at the Workshop.

9. Seventh session: Competences and DG REFORM Technical Support Instrument

The session on the European Commission's Technical Support Instrument (TSI) provided an in-depth look at how this unique EU program is helping Member States design and implement structural reforms across policy areas**.** The TSI is a demand-driven instrument, meaning that assistance is offered to EU countries upon request, allowing them to receive the technical expertise and resources needed to address their specific reform challenges. Since its creation, in 2020, the TSI has rapidly grown in popularity, with countries seeking support in a broad range of policy areas, including public health, sustainability, housing, as well as, more recently, applied behavioural insights.

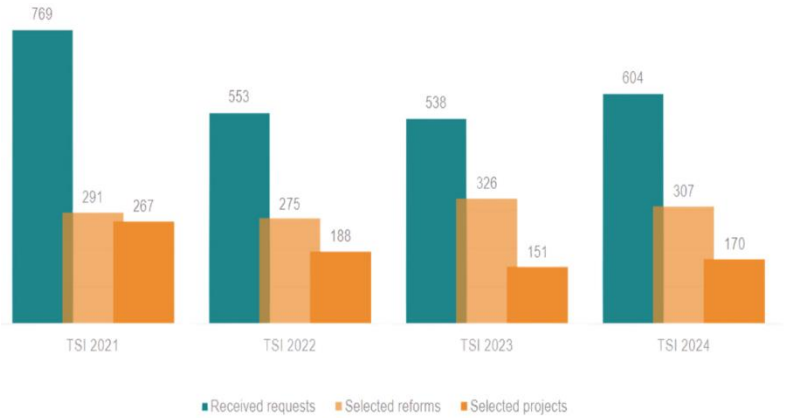
Presentations

- DG REFORM's Technical Support Instrument (TSI), ***Gabriela Tschirkova*** (DG REFORM)
- An example of a TSI project: JRC support to AT, BE, PT, on tax compliance, ***Jehanne Coumont*** (Federal Public Service Finance, Belgium)
- Interactive session on the potential use of the TSI, facilitated by the CCBI, led by ***Colin Kuehnhanss*** (*CCBI, JRC*)

The session was chaired by **Francesca Papa** (CCBI) and opened by **Gabriela Tschirkova** (*Deputy Head of Unit, Revenue Administration and Public Financial Management, at the Directorate-General for Structural Reform Support (DG REFORM))* with an overview of the TSI's objectives and features. With an overall budget of 864 million euros for the 2021-2027 period, the TSI represents a crucial resource to support public administrations in designing reforms but also with their implementation - completing the "last mile" of the reform process. The TSI's thematic flexibility to cover a wide range of policy areas has contributed to its growing success. Today, demand for TSI support exceeds supply, underscoring the instrument's impact (Figure 8). The green and digital transition represent key areas of TSI applications so far, with, respectively, 31% of projects supporting the green transition, and 27% supporting digitalisation.

Among recent developments, within the TSI, has been the integration of Behavioural Insights (BI) into projects. BI is now being used to diagnose policy issues, design solutions, and test the effectiveness of reforms before scaling them up in real-world settings. This shift towards evidence-based, behaviourally informed reforms has been particularly taken up in complex reforms across countries like Italy, Greece, and Finland. These projects, align with digitalisation efforts, intend to help address bottlenecks in public service delivery and policy implementation, for example by focusing on the unnecessary frictions ("sludge") of public services.

Figure 8. Demand for TSI projects continues to exceed supply (2021-2024 data)

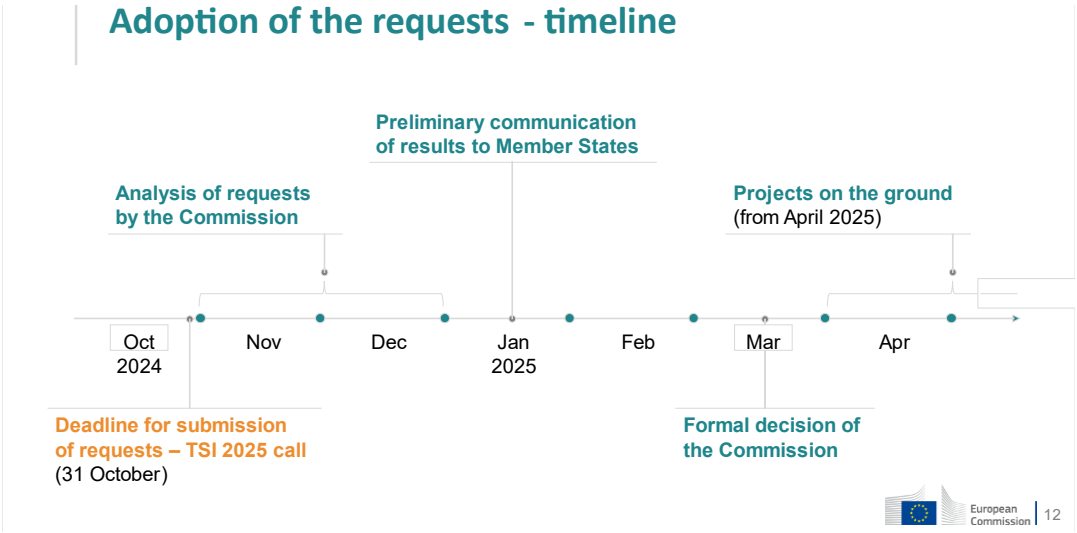


Source: DG REFORM Presentation at the Workshop.

The presentation also included examples of successful BI applications, including a project in Latvia aimed at reducing the country's high road mortality rate. Different types of imagery of traffic accidents were tested to assess their impact on driver behaviour. In the Netherlands, BI was used to address high levels of traffic congestion and emissions by testing car owners' behaviours and attitudes toward car sharing solutions in municipalities. The results were integrated into the national mobility plan. In Italy, a project focused on improving regional coherence in food safety regulations, using BI to study how food inspectors make decisions and understand variations in their judgements. These examples illustrate how the TSI is applying innovative BI approaches to address diverse challenges across the EU.

The session also provided an opportunity for participants to learn about the process and timeline for submitting TSI requests in 2025 (Figure 9), offering an avenue for exploring joint projects going forward.

Figure 9. Overview of process and timeline for submitting TSI requests



Source: DG REFORM Presentation at the Workshop.

The session also featured an in-depth presentation by **Jehanne Coumont,** representative of Belgium's Federal Public Service Finance, who introduced a concrete example of an ongoing multi-country TSI project aimed at improving tax compliance through BI in Belgium Portugal and Austria. In Belgium, around 30% of taxpayers fail to pay their taxes by the due date, a significant challenge for the country's tax administration. Recognising the need for a more nuanced and non-punitive approach, Belgium engaged with the TSI to explore behavioural strategies to improve compliance.

The core project team, consisting of experts in BI, data analysis, and tax administration, has been working with a private service provider to design and implement the project. This includes literature reviews, in-depth analyses of the current situation in each country, as well as empirical work including a citizen survey to better understand the barriers to timely tax payments, and intervention design and trialling, the latter set to launch next year. Overall, the project aims to better understand taxpayer behaviour and develop strategies that encourage compliance without resorting to punitive measures. The CCBI supports this TSI project by providing quality control and capacity building through training of the project teams and awareness raising for the benefits of such BI approaches with (senior) management.

Finally, this session also included an interactive element with the objective of identifying common areas of interest for structural reforms among workshop participants. The participants had to define the role BI can play in supporting reforms in those areas and explore new options for the collaborative application of BI across countries for structural reforms, while stimulating open exchange of ideas and discussion.

Workshop participants were split into six groups (6-7 participants per group) and initially asked to individually think about areas which they think require a structural reform across Member States of the EU (including their own), and whether those needs are unique to individual countries or similar across multiple countries. If they were similar, participants were asked to identify in what aspects. The participants then discussed these individual ideas withing their groups and collectively agreed on the three areas shown in the table below.

Table 1. Proposed reform areas with a strong behavioural element

	Proposed policy areas with a need for structural reform and a strong behavioural element			
1	Tax and subsidies	Life cycle of a person	Job formalisation	
2	AI, democracy and information space	Behavioural data infrastructure	Labour market, skills & demography	
3	Delivery of public services	Consumption of sugar and alcohol	Environment	Affordable housing
4	Green transition policies	Digital transformation (services for businesses & citizens)	Public health	
5	Online wellbeing	Financial choices of young adults	Life events	Voting
6	Public administration	Entrepreneurial behaviour	Food (meat consumption)	

Source: CCBI Elaboration.

As evident, a diverse set of policy areas were identified, environmental/'Green Deal' policies and public services/administration are recurring themes, in line with the current focus areas of the TSI. For each area, the participants were also asked to identify - first individually, and then in group discussion - how BI can make a meaningful contribution, either by identifying behavioural factors underlying the need for reform or by being part of the solution.

The participants not only collected a broad range of behavioural factors relevant to specific policy areas but also proposed the use of a diverse set of tools to identify and diagnose them. For example, mapping the incentives people face in making (consumption) choices or structural sludge audits for public administrations. In terms of BI being part of the solution, depending on the policy area, suggestions covered equally wide grounds. In some areas concrete behavioural interventions were proposed (e.g. altering default options, reminders, or information provision interventions), though many suggestions also took a broader scope and included capacity-oriented approaches such as specific training/education programmes or self-nudges. Many proposals also considered wider system changes (for instance in facilitating voting in elections or improving the social value of care-service work) and the role of traditional policy instrument. For instance, the role of certain subsidies (e.g. for cars) and taxes (e.g. on sugar) was raised.

This first part took 20 minutes, after which half the participants in each group were asked to switch to a different group. Those who stayed in their original groups were given a few minutes

to briefly explain their chosen areas and collected ideas on BI's contributions to the newcomers. Each group then had to choose one topic area and develop a problem statement which could be tackled (only/most effectively) through collaboration across multiple countries and for which BI are relevant. Finally, each group had to detail how BI could be used for the identified problem. The groups again had all together 20 minutes for this second block.

Table 2. Summary of group discussions

Group	Chosen Area	Problem statement
1	Tax and subsidies	Need to increase fairness and social justice
2	AI, democracy and information space	Lack of citizen agency and misinformation undermining social cohesion and social trust
3	Delivery of public services	Public services too often cumbersome, difficult, badly timed, and inaccessible (esp. for vulnerable groups)
4	Green transition policies	Non-green choices are more convenient than green choices
5	Online wellbeing	Reduce harmful screen time (addiction, mindlessness, exposure to online misbehaviour)
6	Public administration	Public administration is currently not designed with the final user in mind

Source: CCBI Elaboration.

For the contribution of BI in tackling the identified problems/structural reform needs, all groups stressed the role of diagnostics to understand barriers, drivers and levers of behaviour, often including audience segmentation. In the context of public services/administration the potential of 'user journeys' including the identification of touch points between citizens and public administrations was repeatedly noted. All groups also highlighted the benefit of BI in the design of specific solutions, with some groups stressing the need for taking a holistic and structural approach.

Despite the short amount of time, the interactive session stimulated very active discussions and participants developed a range of concrete ideas on how behavioural insights can contribute to structural reforms in the chosen policy areas, from problem identification to being part of the solution at various levels. In the discussion, the inclusion of system-level considerations and traditional instruments further supported the insights from the 3rd session of the workshop, on i-frame versus s-frame public policy.

10. Eighth session: Behavioural Insights applied to specific policy fields

This session focused on BI applications in two key policy fields: migration and energy. The presentations showcased the flexibility of behavioural insights to address complex policy problems, such as promoting energy citizenship behaviour or making attitudes towards migrants more welcoming. The discussion centred on the following presentations.

Presentations:

- A behavioural perspective on migration, ***Michal Krawczyk***
- The behavioural aspects of energy citizenship, ***Nives Della Valle***

The first speaker, **Michal Krawczyk**, presented three different studies on factors influencing the attitudes of EU citizens towards refugees. His presentation highlighted the potential and challenges of using psychological mechanisms for promoting more welcoming attitudes towards incoming refugees, particularly the role of interventions aiming at fostering a perspective-taking approach. The results suggest perspective-taking is effective, although this varies by country of residence and by individual characteristics. The second study was about an experimental intervention correcting people's belief about the gender composition of refugees, which is believed to be a factor influencing attitudes. The intervention successfully altered people's beliefs, pushing towards more correct perceptions. However, there was no evidence of the change influencing the underlying attitudes towards refugees.

The second speaker, **Nives Della Valle**, presented a series of studies about the factors influencing energy citizenship. Energy citizenship consists of taking a more "active" role towards energy sustainability, particularly consuming more efficiently, advocating for energy savings, and other sustainable behaviours. Promoting energy citizenships demands a deep understanding of the behavioural barriers and the levers that influence people. Nives presented a meta-analysis study that they conducted which provides evidence of what interventions "work" (nudges, boosts, etc) and how to successfully foster behaviour change. It also introduced an agent-based model that embedded behavioural insights to analyse the impact of thermal insulation, as another example of using BI for energy policy. Finally, it showed an experimental study that estimated the "behavioural spillovers" of behavioural interventions. Behavioural spillovers can be positive, bolstering the effectiveness of policy, or negative, lowering the impact. The study tested in the laboratory these effects, providing a valuable contribution to the literature.

Overall, the session successfully showcased the breadth of BI in two central policy areas, such as energy and migration. The presenters introduced a wealth of results and insights from various studies. They also highlighted the challenges of interpreting and turning these insights into policy advice, which is also the more general takeaway from this session.

11. Ninth session: Forward-looking and preparedness

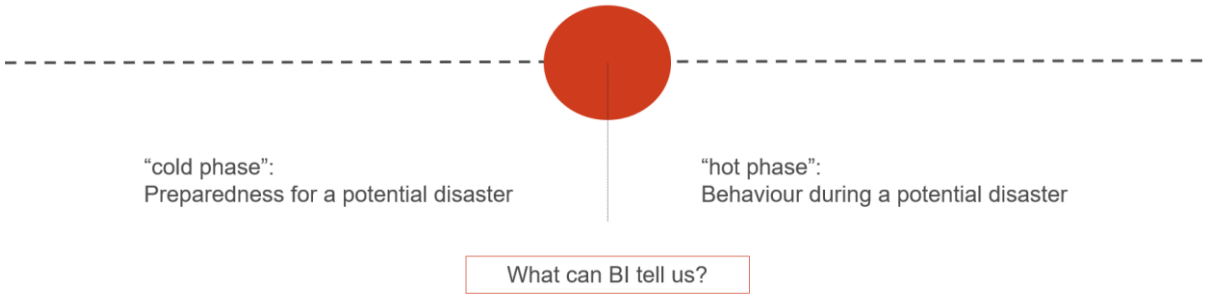
The ninth session focused forward-looking approaches and on issues that, despite being rare or intermittent, may have severe consequences. The scheduled presentations covered the general importance of behavioural science for establishing a forward-thinking culture on the one hand, and the utilisation of behavioural insights in supporting the specific areas of disaster and pandemic preparedness of the population on the other.

Presentations:

- Disaster preparedness, ***Hannah Nohlen,*** *Colin Kuehnhanss, and Kaloyan Mitev (CCBI, JRC)*
- Pandemic preparedness monitor, ***Mart Van Dijk*** *(Dutch National Institute for Public Health and the Environment)*

Looking at the role of behavioural insights in ensuring citizen preparedness for more specific areas of possible harm, **Hannah Nohlen** opened the session by highlighting the changing risk landscape in the EU. This includes the increasing frequency and severity of floods, draughts, and wildfires, but also the emergence of armed conflict in close proximity to the EU's external borders. Taking into account this shift in risks, the Commission issued a Recommendation and a Communication on five disaster resilience goals in 2023, addressing the need to improve the capacity of the Union and its Member States to 'Anticipate', 'Prepare', 'Alert', 'Respond', and 'Secure' for and in the event of disasters and crises. Behavioural insights are particularly important for increasing awareness and preparedness of citizens, as stated under 'Prepare', to improve individual and societal resilience. Behavioural factors are relevant both before (the 'cold phase') and during (the 'hot phase') a potential disaster.

Figure 10. Cold phase vs Hot phase of disasters



Source: CCBI Presentation at the Workshop.

In the cold phase, behavioural insights can explain why people do not take the necessary measures to prepare. For instance, people struggle to correctly perceive the risk of low-probability/high-impact events and consequently underprepare. Optimism bias – the belief that bad things are less likely to happen to oneself than to others, as well as an overestimation of one's own ability to respond – further exacerbate this tendency and may lead people to ignore public warnings. The evidence seems to suggest that the often-taken approach of simply advising people of the risks they may face in their region is insufficient to motivate preparedness behaviours.

During a disaster, i.e. in the hot phase, contrary to common belief, people can underreact, possibly driven by an inaccurate perception of the actual threat being faced. In uncertain situations, people also tend to orient their behaviour towards that of those they see as similar to themselves, possibly reducing the effectiveness of official or expert advice and instructions. In addition,

misinformation – whether spread deliberately or not – can further increase uncertainty and lead to wrong actions being taken. It is thus vital to reduce ambiguity and uncertainty in emergency events, which can already be supported by preparedness measures in the cold phase. Similarly, continued measures for building trust in relevant public authorities and emergency responders can facilitate the spread and uptake of correct information during the hot phase.

In this context, the CCBI is currently launching two studies in its resilient society work track. A proof-of-concept study seeks to identify factors to increase disaster preparedness and societal resilience, by testing the impact of self-relevant communication of disasters in a survey experiment across 5 EU countries, with representative samples. The second study aims to better understand people's behaviour in disaster situations by testing individuals' responses to (mis)information in simulated disaster events using an immersive virtual reality environment. This study will likely be conducted in two EU countries. The results for both studies are expected in 2025.

In addition, the CCBI collaborates with the Dutch National Institute for Public Health and the Environment (RIVM), proposing to include disaster preparedness in its work on pandemic preparedness. This was presented by **Mart van Dijk** in the remainder of the session.

The RIVM Corona Behavioural Unit was founded in 2020 to unlock knowledge and expertise useful during the Covid pandemic. It aimed to contribute to an effective COVID-19 response, with lower social and economic costs, by informing the process of policymaking on public support and negative side-effects of containment measures, as well as supporting policy implementation.

During the pandemic, the RIVM unit relied on a varied toolbox of research methods, including a 6-weekly survey of 50,000 participants for up-to-date data feeding publications and policy advice. The lesson learned from the COVID-19 pandemic is that behavioural insights were not sufficiently included in crisis response, motivating efforts for collaboration and dissemination of findings at national and international levels, but also engaging with municipalities and local authorities.

To better ground the work on pandemic preparedness going forward, a specific conceptual framework was developed. This aimed to identify which actors would need to perform what tasks and when in preparation of the next pandemic, as well as to define what factors constitute preparedness. Four different stages were identified. The cold phase before a pandemic, which is the time for preparation. The warm-up and acute phases, when a pandemic has run its course, and the recovery phase, afterwards. The framework covers all actors involved in a pandemic response, though the primary focus here is on individuals. To understand their behaviours, the popular COM-B model[4] was adapted to preparedness actions linked to mental, social, and physical health.

One of the limiting factors for behavioural research during the pandemic was the absence of pre-pandemic data on relevant behaviours, perceptions, trust, and well-being measures. To address this shortfall, the RIVM has launched a pandemic preparedness monitor. The goal is the continued observation of relevant behaviours and factors to be able to identify where interventions may be needed in the cold or acute phases of a pandemic, specifically for vulnerable groups. The RIVM is collaborating with international organisations and partners to allow comparison of data across countries and identify common challenges. The monitor covers a substantial number of topics, necessitating a split into two rounds per year. A stable survey round, in spring, and a more flexible round composed of varying modules, in autumn. In the Netherlands, a sample of 2,500 participants will take part in each round, with a pilot in March 2024, and data collection for the first full round under way at the time of this workshop. Ireland, Slovenia, and Spain are conducting the same survey.

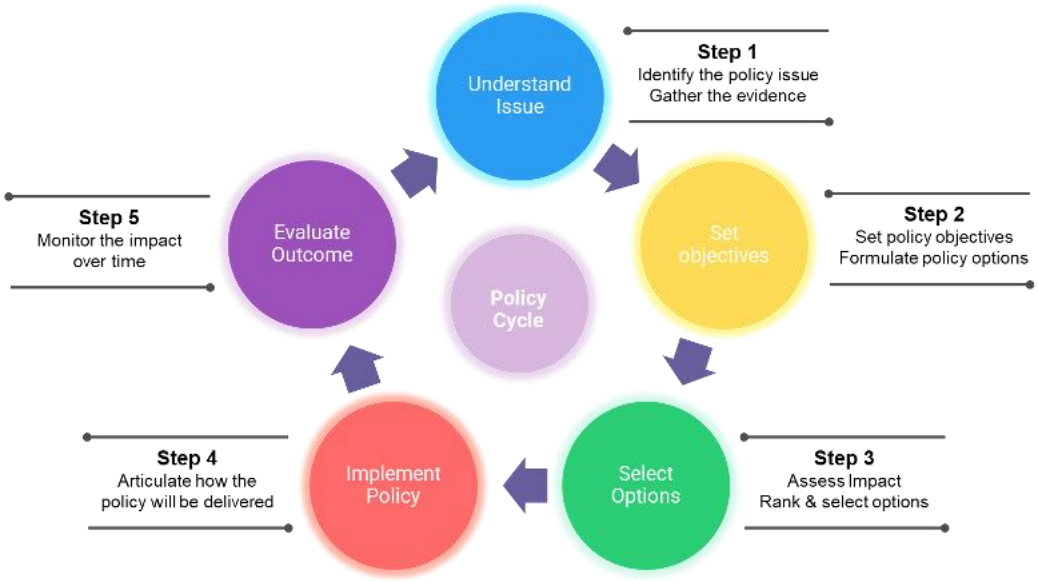
Currently the RIVM is analysing the first results and preparing a user guide for the survey, with the intent for further dissemination and implementation of the survey in other countries. Overall, this workshop session stressed the importance, already during the cold phase before a disaster or crisis occurs, of preparatory measures also based on behavioural factors influencing people's uptake and response. It also highlighted the need for the relevant behavioural research and data to inform policy choices in the different phases, and to enable appropriate testing and evaluation of measures.

12. Tenth session: Collaborative policymaking

While the previous sessions had a larger focus on the application of behavioural insights into informing policymaking, the main idea of session ten was to explore how behavioural science could be used to change the behaviours of policymakers themselves. Therefore, in this section of the report we summarise the insights gained on this topic.

The talk on 'Collaborative Policymaking' by **Marco Inchingolo** and **Mario Scharfbillig** from the JRC presented important insights on a topic, i.e. how behavioural science could be used to change policymakers' behaviours. The topic has received very little attention in the scientific literature so far but could have great impact on the policymaking process. The standard representation of a policymaking cycle (see Figure 11) convenes that working within policy is a coherent process with well-defined steps.

Figure 11. Representation of a policymaking cycle



Source: JRC Presentation at the Workshop.

In reality, policymaking is very complex and presents various challenges for the actors involved in it. For example, policy issues usually require an urgent reaction, i.e. making a decision with rather limited resources. In addition, the formulation of policies is often guided by political agendas and ideological reasons, rather than truth-seeking goals. Policymakers struggle to synthesise conflicting evidence from different sources or can only get to a partial and incomplete policy framing, due to factual limitation or political dynamics. Therefore, in order to make a decision, policymakers rely on experience, shortcuts, mental heuristics, simplification processes, and selective attention. It is important to acknowledge the use of these behavioural science techniques in the decision-making process, as this could lead to a better application of behavioural insights into changing the behaviour of policymakers themselves.

Another important element in policymaking is collaboration. For example, within the EU, different institutions - such as the EU Commission, the EU Council, EU Parliament, and the Council of the EU – bear responsibility for policymaking. This process certainly has its benefits, such as harnessing collective intelligence, overcoming individual biases, better quality policies, agreement on normative questions, and reduction of duplication. However, there are also a number of drawbacks, such as a high need for coordination, slower decision-making, more financial resources, and risk of groupthink.

Given the complexities in this area and the limited amount of literature on the topic, Mario and Marco presented a section of their research focusing on identifying crucial behaviours that they can target to improve collaborative policymaking, with a specific focus on a multiplicity of behaviours that can lead to systematic improvement. There has been a lot of research on teamwork within organisations, but it has limited validity for the policymaking context, as policymaking needs to represent all citizens, comply with legal frameworks, and have long-term benefits.

Some of the initial findings from a literature review and several interviews showed that building a collective identity can help overcome 'departmental' of 'local' ones (EU vs EC DG XYZ), it is important to clarify goals and responsibilities upfront to speed up execution, and requiring building a shared understanding of the issues at hand rather than jumping straight to policies helps overcome conflicts. Furthermore, effective meetings require good facilitation, would often be better situation in an in-person setting (with some exceptions), and allowing enough time for preparation before engaging in discussions is crucial for collective intelligence to emerge. Finally, evidence on effective co-drafting of documents is lacking, as there is no empirical literature on the issue despite its fundamental nature in many governing institutions. Thus, more work is needed to address this gap specifically.

13. Future steps

During the workshop, **Kaloyan Mitev** also conducted a survey to collect views on the future developments in behavioural insights, and preferences as to the role to be played by this very Network gathering at the workshop.

The survey included 11 open-ended and multiple-choice questions, some explored people's satisfaction with the Workshop, but the majority focused on identifying priorities areas, challenges, and pathways for collaboration within behavioural insights.

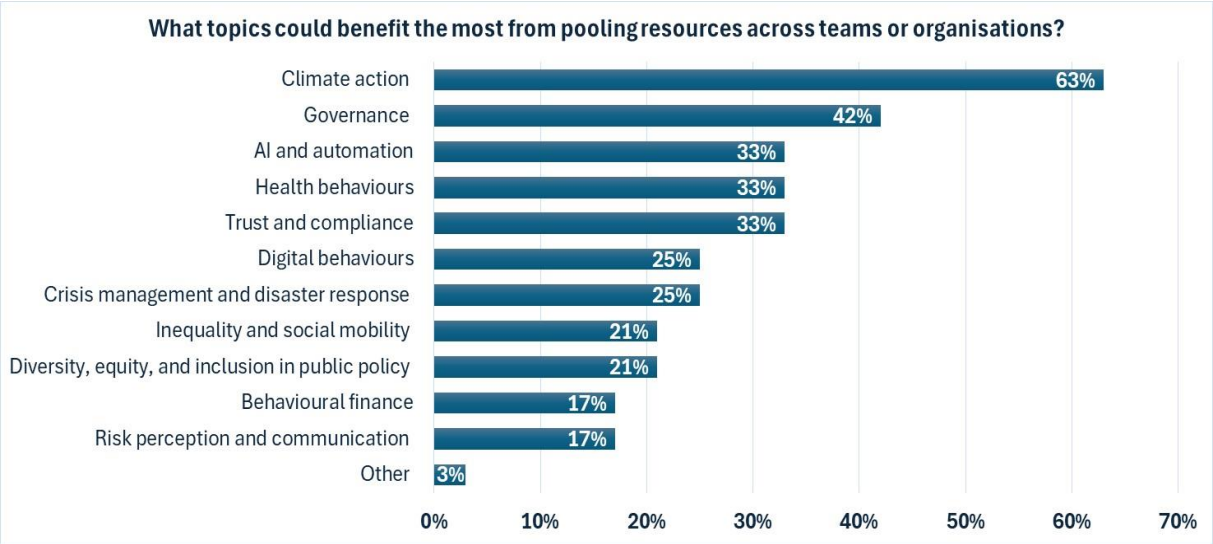
The results of the survey revealed that, according to the attendees of the workshop, the areas which should be prioritised in the context of policymaking are '*Behavioural insights into governance*', '*AI and automation's impact on human behaviour*', and '*Environmental behaviour and climate action*'. On the other hand, the categories related to '*Diversity, equity, and inclusion in public policy*', '*Crisis management and disaster response*', and '*Behavioural finance and economic policy*' were seen as less of a priority (see Figure 12).

Figure 12. Priority areas for behavioural insights in the context policymaking

Source: CCBI Elaboration.

We used the same categories of categories within behavioural science to ask about topics which could benefit the most from pooling resources across organisations or teams. The results were similar to the above ones, as the former three categories were seen as requiring the most collaboration, while the latter three were seen as requiring the least collaboration efforts (see Figure 13).

Figure 13. Topics requiring collaborative efforts

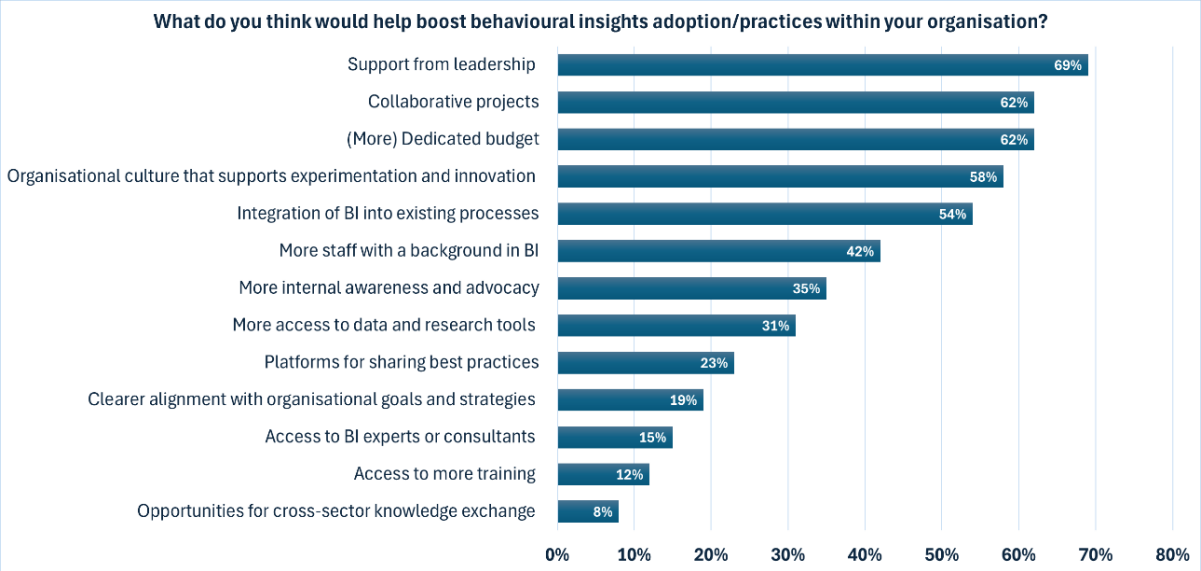


Source: CCBI Elaboration.

We also included an open-ended question '*How do you think behavioural science can be better integrated into the policy development process?*'. The survey suggests several key pathways to better integrate behavioural science into the policy development process. A common theme is the **decentralisation of behavioural expertise** across government organisations, moving beyond centralised teams to embed this knowledge into various policy directorates. Many respondents emphasise the importance of **early involvement of behavioural scientists**, advocating for their integration at the initial stages of policy design and at crucial decision points. Participants also call for **capacity building** within the workforce, with behavioural science seen as complementary to traditional policy approaches. Another strong recommendation is for **evidence-informed policymaking**, where social benefits and costs, informed by behavioural insights, become standard in ex ante evaluations. This could be supported by aligning behavioural research more closely with the policy agenda. Respondents also highlight the need for **practical tools, shared models, and better understanding of policymakers' needs** to enhance the collaboration between scientists and policymakers. Furthermore, securing **investment and political buy-in** is seen as essential to ensure long-term engagement, while training policymakers in behavioural science early in their academic careers would foster a deeper integration of this discipline into policy work.

Next, the survey revealed that our workshop attendees thought that the '*Support from leadership*', '*Collaborative projects with other teams or organisations*', and '*(More) Dedicated budget for behavioural science initiatives*' were the three most important factors which could boost the adoption of behavioural insights practices withing their respective organisations (see Figure 14).

Figure 14. Practices to support the adoption behavioural insights

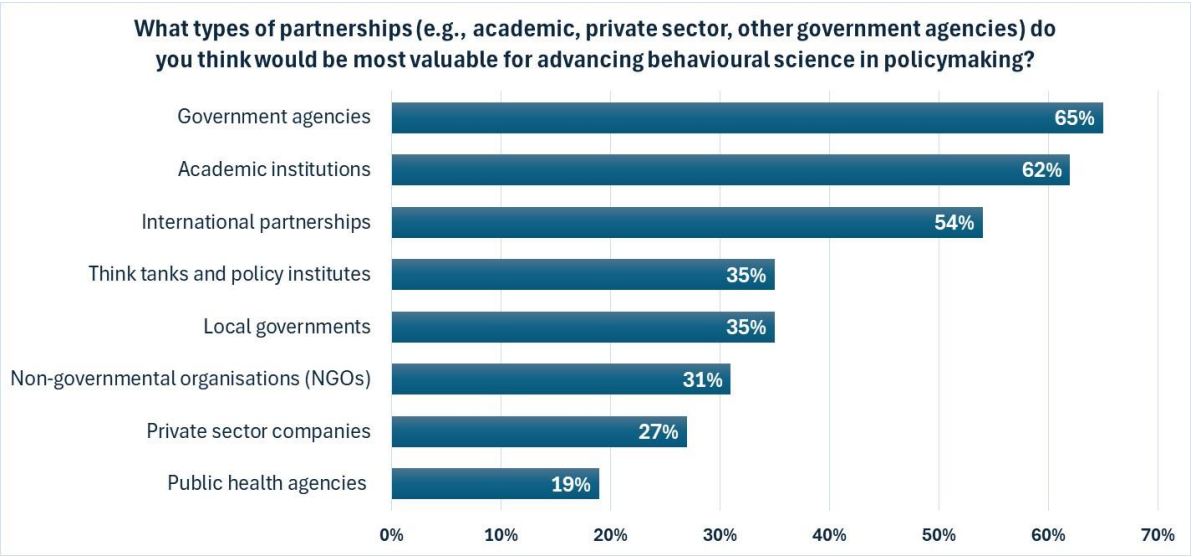


Source: CCBI Elaboration.

We also included a question on the types of partnerships that were seen as most valuable for advancing behavioural science in policymaking. The results revealed that *partnerships with government agencies*, *academic institutions*, and *international partnerships* were chosen as the most important by our attendees (see Figure 1).

Finally, we report the responses from an open-ended question '*What specific topics should the next workshop on behavioural sciences in policymaking cover?*'. Common themes include focusing on **climate transition, health, and digitalisation**, as well as **sustainable consumption** and **green transitions**. Participants also recommend exploring **behavioural insights (BI) in program development, policy communication, and resource mobilisation**. Other suggestions include **AI applications** and **cross-country cooperation**. There are also calls for more interactive sessions focusing on giving **feedback** on ideas/project, as well as discussions on **BI's unintended effects** and **theory-building**. Lastly, respondents emphasised the need for **tools, best practices, and funding opportunities**.

Figure 15. Partnerships for advancing behavioural science in policymaking



Source: CCBI Elaboration.

14. Conclusion

The 2024 workshop was the third gathering of this network of practitioners interested in behavioural insights. For a relatively new approach in policymaking, no matter how trendy and appealing this still is, it is crucial that we keep exchanging and learning from each other.

Today's policy challenges call for more and better behavioural evidence, and for us – in our various organisations and governmental bodies - to be ready and quick in providing it. Also, recent evidence on the relative effectiveness of *nudges*, and the i-frame vs s-frame debate, showed the extent to which excessive emphasis on individuals has distracted attention and resources from structural reforms.

All this is as challenging as exciting. The presentations, the panel, the interactive sessions, and discussions taking place during the workshop referred to such challenges, but also gave account of increased breadth and depth of the application of behavioural insights in policymaking. There continues to be an increasing demand for robust behavioural evidence to inform policy. This both explains the wide participation at this workshop as well as the reported interest in remaining engaged in this network which, we already know, will next be gathering in Copenhagen. The CCBI will certainly remain a committed member of the network.

There is significant room for reciprocal learning and collaboration, and we can only do more and better of it.

Annex: The Agenda of the Event

Behavioural Insights applied to Policy, 2024

Venue: University Foundation, Rue d'Egmont, 11 1000 Brussels

Research in behavioural sciences has made great progress over the last two decades, and its contributions to the understanding of human behaviour and decision-making are increasingly acknowledged, not only through the award of several Nobel memorial prizes in economics (2002, 2017 and 2019).

As science steps forwards, policymakers follow suit and now explicitly incorporate behavioural evidence into the policy-making process. Behavioural Insights teams are set up within some EU governments to guide policymakers and design new policies. The same applies to several international institutions. A whole community is acquiring ever more specific competences, is gaining expertise in various policy areas, is experimenting with novel methods and approaches. In short, a whole community is growing.

At the Joint Research Centre (European Commission) we thought it would be useful to gather and share knowledge, not only about our respective journeys so far, but also about our future respective work/research programmes, so to explore areas of common interest and possible joint or parallel work. The workshop programme reflects these objectives. Not only it is an opportunity for EU Member States and international institutions to present and discuss our respective work, but also to learn about new official opportunities for joint projects (see the session on the Technical Support Instrument by DG REFORM, Day 2).

In addition, we would also like to encourage a debate on recent developments in our field. Indeed, the way in which behavioural insights (BI) are being used in policymaking has recently come under criticism. Behavioural insights are too often superficially integrated as just a 'plug-in' policy tool to complement existing policies. Their use seems to encourage a view of individual behaviours as a driver of societal policy problems, thereby possibly distracting from systemic reforms.

Our community needs to take stock of such criticism and find ways of avoiding behavioural insights to be sidelined as "cherries on the cake", as something nice to have but not strictly necessary. We hope that such discussion and the workshop will be a further step towards fully realising the potential of BI in policymaking.

DAY 1: Behavioural Insights Applied to Policy, learning and sharing in the EU

8:30 – 9:00	Welcome Coffee/Tea
09:00 – 09:15	**Opening speech** *Jolita Butkeviciene, Director of Innovation in Science and Policymaking, JRC*
09:15 – 09:20	**Welcome and housekeeping info** *Emanuele Ciriolo, Competence Centre on Behavioural Insights, JRC*
	1st Session: CCBI on-going and prospective work
09:20 – 09:40	**Waste sorting labels** *Hendrik Bruns, CCBI, JRC*
09:40 – 10:00	**Misinformation** *Hannah Nohlen, CCBI, JRC*
10:00 – 10:20	**Fostering the transition to more sustainable food systems using behavioural insights** *Jesus Barreiro Hurle, Economics of the Food System, JRC*
10:20 – 10:40	**AI and learning** *Andrea Blasco, CCBI, JRC*
10:40 – 11:00	**Q&A** (2 questions are taken after each presentation)
11:00 – 11:20	Coffee/Tea
	2nd Session: Insights from Members States' experience
11:20 – 11:40	**Behavioural Insights applied to policy, France** *Mariam Chammat, Executive Advisor at the Behavioural Insights Unit at Direction interministérielle de la transformation publique, France*
11:40 – 12:00	**Behavioural Insights applied to policy, Italy** *Riccardo Viale, Scientific Coordinator of the Team di Analisi Comportamentale (TAC) of the Department of Public Administration, Italy*
12:00 – 12:20	**Behavioural Insights applied to policy, The Netherlands** *Thomas Dirkmaat, Ministry of Economic Affairs and Ministry of Climate Policy and Green Growth, The Netherlands*
12:20 – 12:40	**Q&A** (2 questions are taken after each presentation)
12:40 – 13:50	Lunch

	3rd Session: i-frame vs. s-frame public policy
13:50 – 14:15	**Unlocking the full potential of BI for policy** *Marion Dupoux and Alexia Gaudeul, CCBI, JRC*
14:15 – 14:30	**Discussion** *Zeina Afif, World Bank*
14:30 – 15:45	**Interactive session** *Facilitated by the CCBI, JRC*
15:45 – 16:00	Coffee/Tea
	4th Session: Current challenges, and collaborative policymaking
16:00 – 16:05	**Introducing the panel** *René van Bavel, JRC Scientific Committee*
16:05 – 17:20	**Behavioural Insights applied to Policy** *Sarah Earnshaw Blomquist, ECDC* *Cortney Price, FAO* *Claire Hobden, ILO* *Chiara Varazzani, OECD* *Zeina Afif, World Bank* *Elena Altieri, WHO* *Tiina Likki, WHO Europe*
17:20 – 17:30	**Q&A**
	5th Session: Tools for collecting behavioural evidence
17:30 – 18:30	**The i-bex: a hands-on session** *Michal Krawczyk, CCBI, JRC*
18:45 – 21:30	Drink reception, and live jazz music

DAY 2: Behavioural Insights Applied to Policy, learning and sharing in the EU

09:00 – 09:10	**Wrap-up of the 1st day and setting-the-scene for the 2nd day** *Emanuele Ciriolo, Head of the CCBI, DG JRC*
	6th Session: Insights from Members States' experience
09:10 – 09:30	**Behavioural Insights applied to policy, Denmark** *Catrine Normann, Competition & Consumer Authority, Denmark*

09:30 – 09:50	**Behavioural Insights applied to policy, Ireland** *Robert Mooney, Department of Environment, Climate and Communications*
09:50 – 10:10	**Behavioural Insights applied to policy, Poland and UNICEF** *Agnieszka Wincewicz, Polish Economic Institute* *Kasia Kukula, UNICEF*
10:10 – 10:30	**Behavioural Insights applied to policy, Germany** *(online presentation)* *Sabrina Artinger, Head of Citizen-Centred-Government at German Federal Chancellery*
10:30 – 10:45	**Q&A** (2 questions are taken after each presentation)
10:45 – 11:10	Coffee/Tea
	7th Session: Competences and DG REFORM Technical Support Instrument (TSI)
11:10 – 11:25	**DG REFORM's Technical Support Instrument (TSI)** *Gabriela Tschirkova, Deputy Head of Unit of Revenue Administration and Public Financial Management, DG REFORM*
11:25 – 11:40	**An example of TSI project: JRC support to AT, BE, PT, on tax compliance** *Jehanne Coumont, Ministry of Finance, Belgium*
11:40 – 12:30	**Interactive session on the potential use of the TSI** Facilitated by the CCBI, JRC
	8th Session: Behavioural Insights applied to specific policy fields
12:30 – 12:50	**The behavioural aspects of energy citizenship** *Nives della Valle, Energy Efficiency and Renewables, JRC*
12:50 – 13:10	**A behavioural perspective on migration** *Michal Krawczyk, CCBI, JRC*
13:10 – 13:20	**Q&A**
13:20 – 14:30	Lunch
	9th Session: Forward-looking and preparedness
14:30 – 14:50	**The importance of beh. science in creating forward-thinking culture** *Mary MacLennan, Senior Advisor on Behavioural Science to the Executive Office of the UN Secretary-General (via video connection)*

14:50 – 15:10	**Disaster preparedness** *Hannah Nohlen and Colin Kuehnhanss, CCBI, JRC*
15:10 – 15:30	**Pandemic preparedness monitor** *Mart Van Dijk, National Institute for Public Health and the Environment (NE)*
15:30 – 15:40	**Q&A** (2 questions are taken after each presentation)
15:40 – 16:00	Coffee/Tea
	10th Session: Bridging the gap between Science and Policy
16:00 – 16:20	**Collaborative Policymaking** *Mario Scharfbillig and Marco Inchingolo, Science for Democracy and Evidence-Informed Policymaking, JRC*
16:20 – 16:30	**Results from the workshop Wooclap survey** *Kaloyan Mitev, CCBI, JRC*
16:30 – 16:40	**Q&A** (2 questions are taken after each presentation)
16:40 – 16:50	**Closing remarks** Thomas Hemmelgarn, Head of Unit of the EU Policy Lab, JRC

List of Abbreviations

CCBI – Competence Centre on Behavioural Insights
JRC – Joint Research Centre
EC – European Commission
EU – European Union
BI – Behavioural Insights
OECD – Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
WHO – World Health Organisation
TSI – Technical Support Document
DG – Directorates-General
AI – Artificial Intelligence
TAC – Team di Analisi Comportamentale
OCB – Organisational Citizenship Behaviour
SMEs – Small to Medium Sized Enterprises
ECDC – European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control
FAO – The Food and Agriculture Organization
ILO – The International Labour Organization
RIVM – Dutch National Institute for Public Health and the Environment

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