



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Bundesamt für Energie BFE
Office fédéral de l'énergie OFEN
Ufficio federale dell'energia UFE
Uffizi federal d'energia UFE



KTT & INTEGRATION FOR SWEET – MEETING II 2026



AGENDA

13:00	Welcome and workshop objectives
13:15	PART I – The Swiss Political System incl. Q&A
14:00	<i>Coffee Break</i>
14:15	PART II – Roles for researchers in science-policy dialogue incl. Q&A and reflection on preparatory exercise
14:55	<i>Coffee Break</i>
15:10	PART III – Experiences and tips from public administration with Anne-Kathrin Faust (SFOE) and Boris Stolz (FOCA)
15:55	PART IV – Policy Brief incl. practical exercise What is a policy brief and formulating first core messages
16:50	Wrap-up



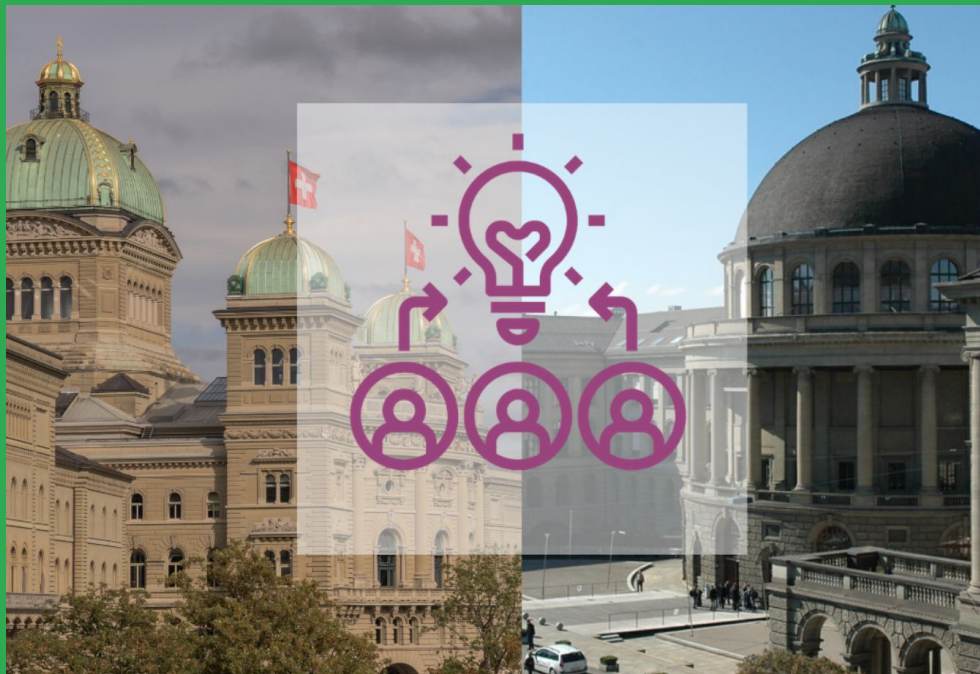
Reatch

Policy Brief Workshop

SWEET

02 June 2026 | Reatch

Learning Goals



- You understand the fundamental **roles of science and politics** and can reflect on your **personal role**.
- You know the basics of the **Swiss political system** and **develop a practical understanding** of it.
- You know **where, when and how you can contribute** effectively to the political process.
- You understand **what a policy brief is** and **are able to write one** within your own field of expertise when appropriate.

Programme Today

13:00-13:15

Welcome and Introduction

13:15-14:05

The Swiss Political System

Janik Mutter

Break

14:15-14:55

Roles for researchers in science-policy dialogue (+ reflect on preparatory task)

Hannah Schoch

Break

15:10-15:55

Experiences and tips from public administration

Anne-Kathrin Faust (BFE) and Boris Stolz (BAZL)

15:55-16:50

Policy Brief - what is it? (+ formulate key message)

Hannah Schoch

16:50-17:00

Check-out



Janik Mutter
Franxini Project



Hannah Schoch
Franxini Project

Programme Part II 08 October 2026

13:00-13:15 **Welcome and Introduction**

13:15-14:05 **Communicating research for political stakeholders**
Janik Mutter

Break

14:15-15:00 **Experiences and tips from parliament**
tbd

Break

15:15-16:50 **Policy Brief Writing Workshop**
Hannah Schoch

Peer Feedback and discussion of several examples

16:50-17:00 **Check-out**



Janik Mutter
Franxini Project



Hannah Schoch
Franxini Project

Pictures

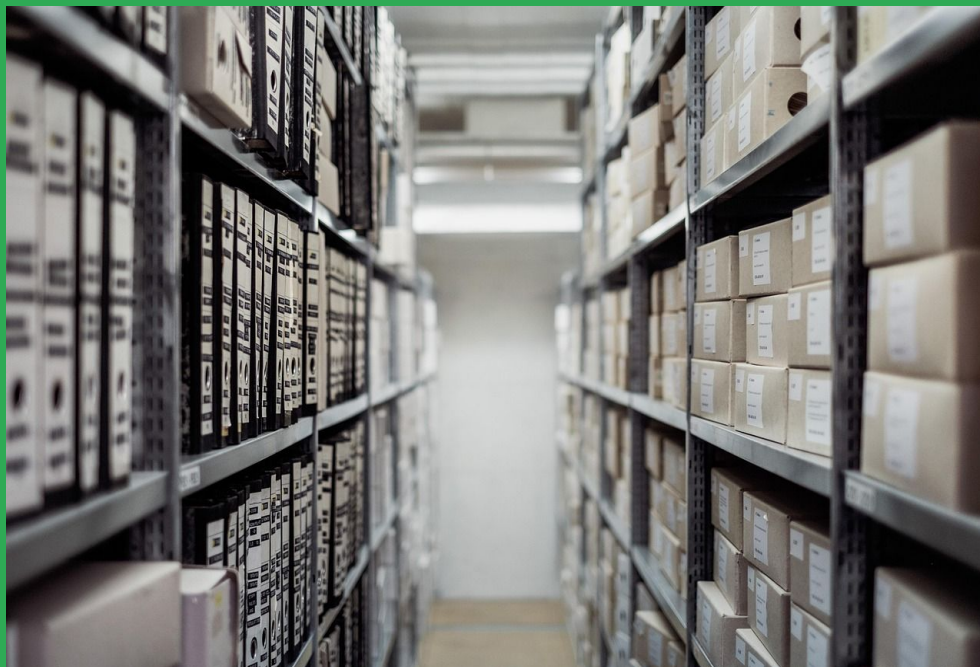


We will take photos and videos during the workshop for publication

- on the website and social media of Reatch.
- as well as in (print) publications

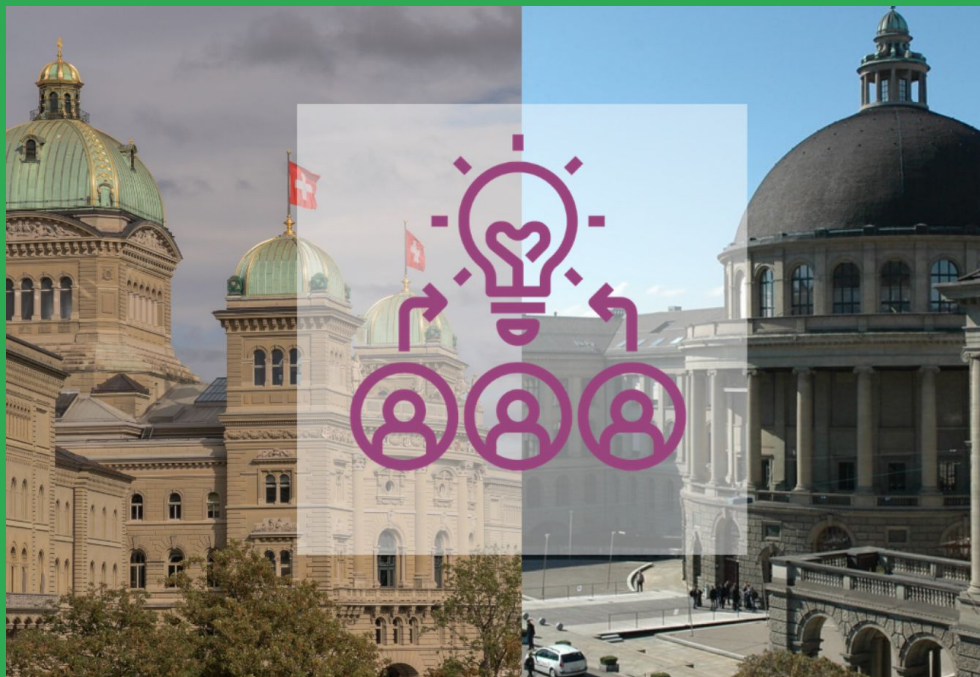
The photos are used exclusively for the public relations work of Reatch.

Further Material



- All presentations
- Franxini Boot Camp Reader
- Report Swiss Young Academy «Who gets heard?»
- «The Swiss Confederation: a brief guide»
- The European Commission's Joint Research Centre «10 Tips for Researchers: How to Achieve Impact on Policy»

Introduction Round



- Name, institution, consortium and field of research
- **In one word:** What is needed for a constructive exchange between science and politics?

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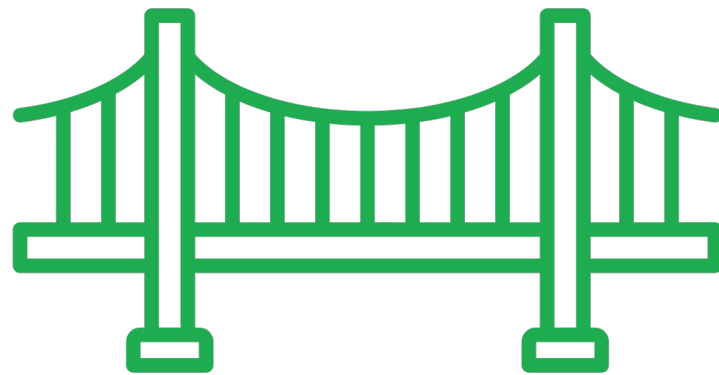


Reatch has been acting as an independent bridge builder at the interface between science and democracy for over ten years.

We create the conditions for scientific findings and expertise to be productively and responsibly incorporated into decision-making processes, broadening perspectives and enabling new approaches for tackling societal challenges.

Vision and Mission

A society that uses knowledge to drive progress.



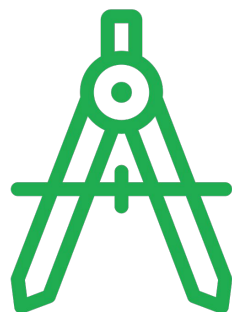
We enable the effective use of knowledge to meet societal challenges, guided by collaboration and a commitment to facts – through tailored learning, meaningful dialogue, and independent platforms.

Our Offer



Dialogue

Spaces where researchers, policymakers, and the general public can come together to learn about research topics, discuss them, and work on them



Further Education

Intensive training sessions including practical tips, in-depth background knowledge on the political system, and concrete methods for effective science communication and science-policy work



Coaching

Targeted, tailored support for researchers and research groups to ensure the successful transfer of knowledge to policymakers and society

Who supports Reatch?

Launched by **Reatch! Research. Think. Change.**

In partnership with / With the support of



ERNST GÖHNER
STIFTUNG

HASLERSTIFTUNG



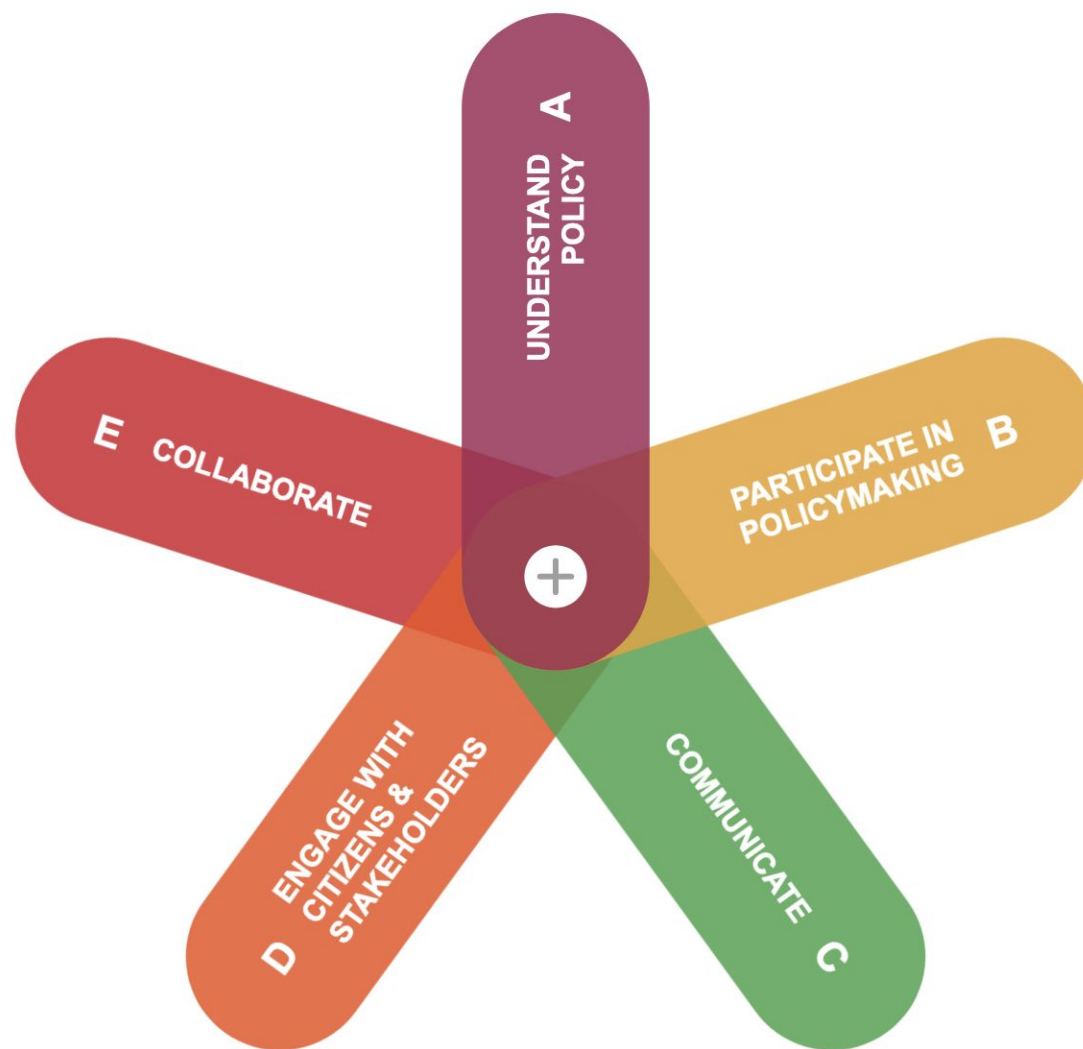
Why a policy course for researchers?

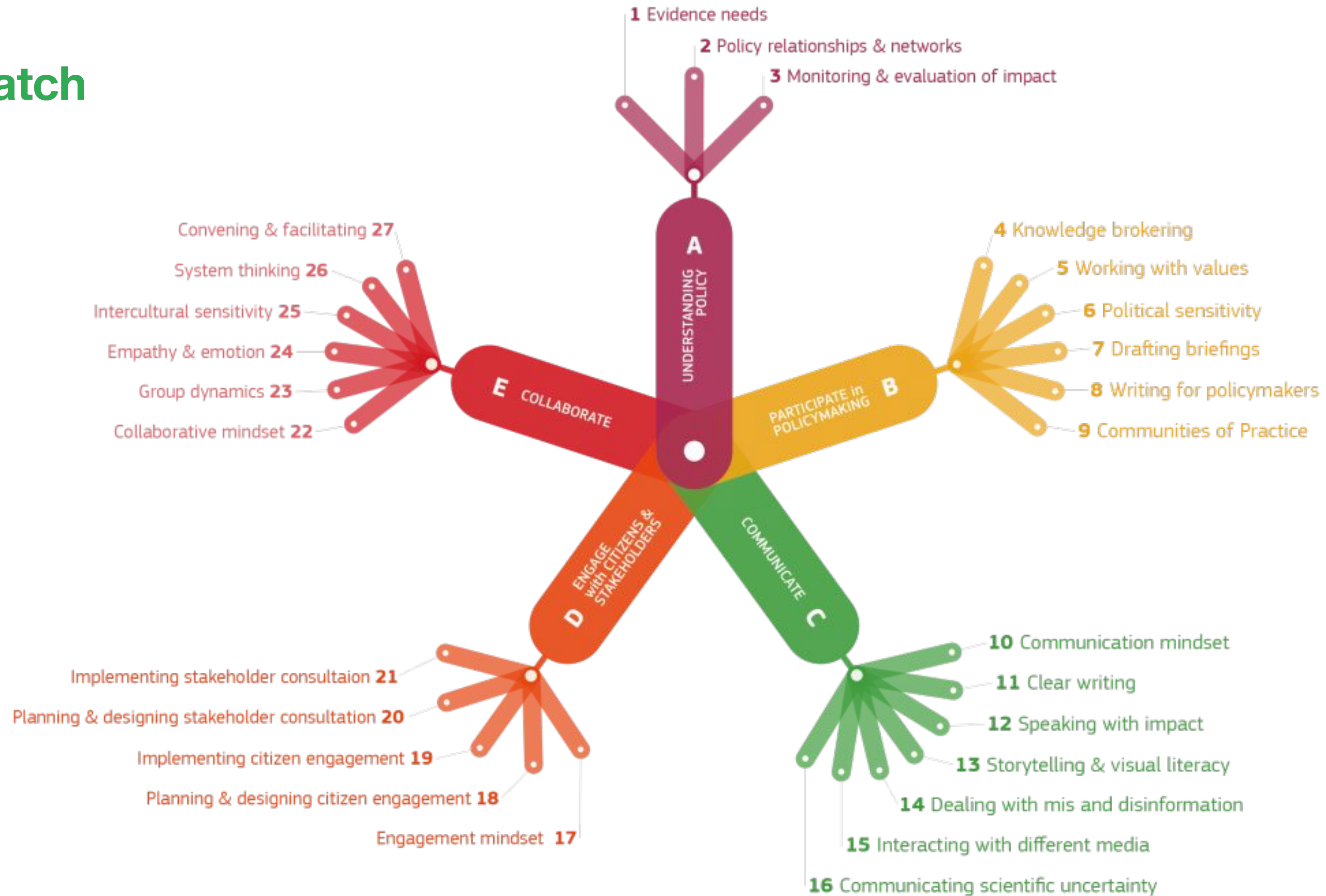
EU Competence Framework 'Science for Policy' for researchers

27 competences clustered in 5 groups for successful work at the science-policy interface:

- Understand Policy
- Participate in Policy Making
- Communicate
- Engage with Citizens & Stakeholders
- Collaborate

→ Smart4Policy - EU [Self-reflection tool](#)



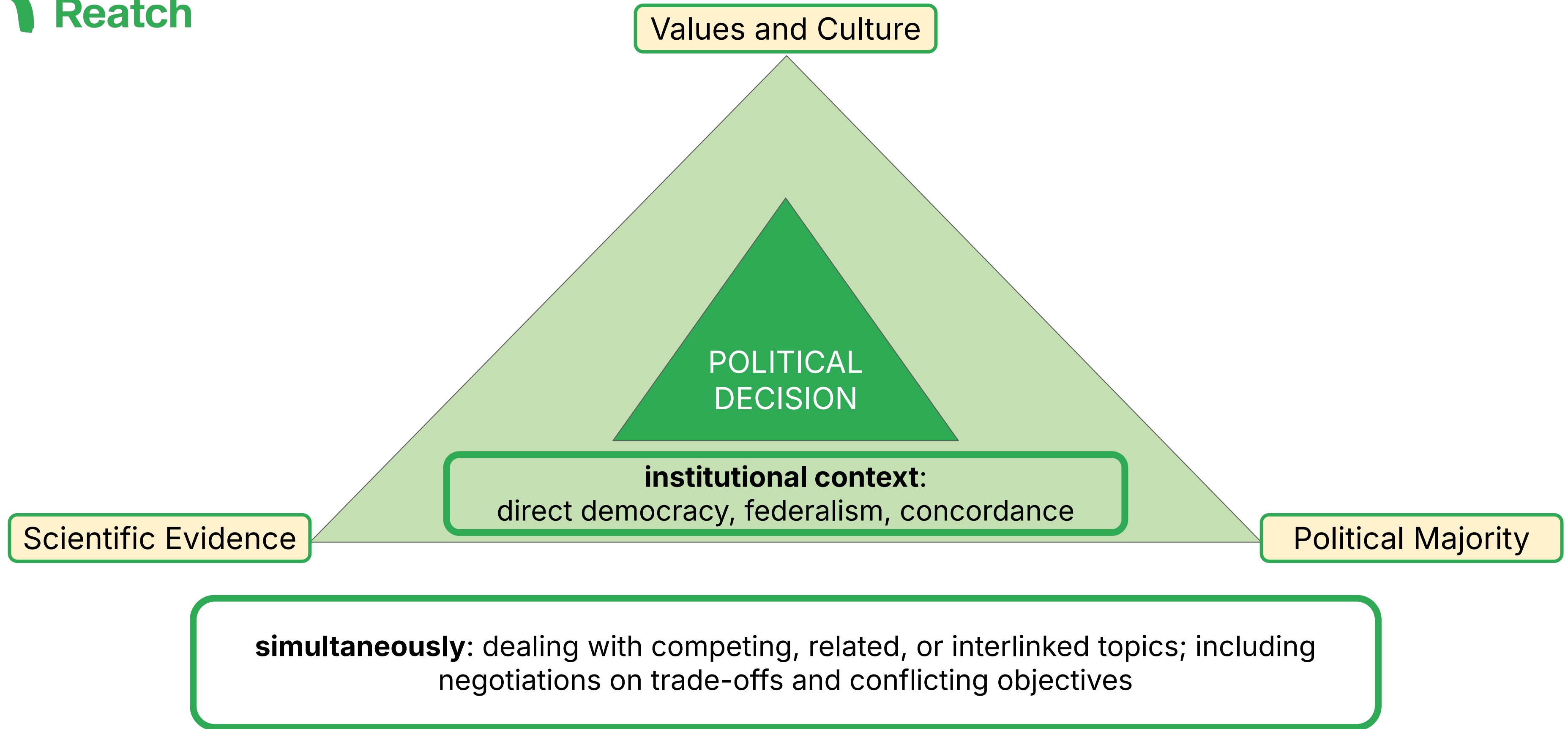




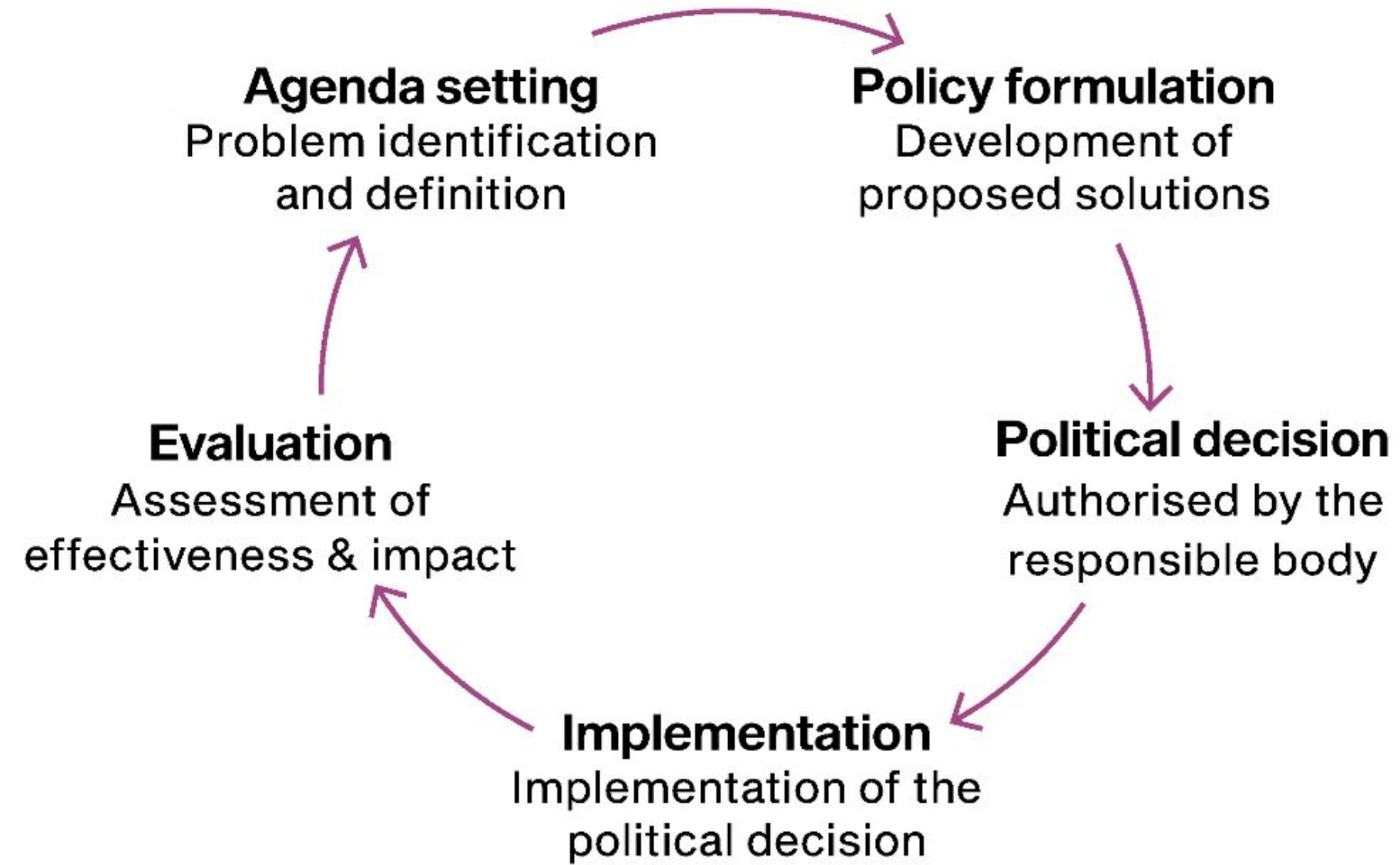
Reatch

The Swiss Political System and Interfaces with Science

Janik Mutter, Reatch



Policy-Cycle



Swiss Democracy: Distribution of Power

Distribution of Power:

- between state institutions: separation of powers
- at vertical level: federalism and principle of subsidiarity
- between positions: concordance

- **Subsidiarity principle:** decisions are always made at the lowest possible level (3+ levels of government)
 - cooperation between various political levels and their actors necessary
 - lengthy decision-making processes
- **Concordance:** balance and compromise in terms of linguistic, social and political positions; recognising minority positions
e.g. Federal Council with the division between the main parties



Swiss Democracy: Peculiarities

WIR HABEN DAS LETZTE WORT

DIREKTE DEMOKRATIE



Die Schweiz ist eine **direkte Demokratie**.
Das Volk ist der **Souverän** des Landes,
also die oberste politische Instanz.

N°1

Die Schweiz belegt weltweit den ersten Platz bei der **aktiven politischen Beteiligung der Bürger**.

45,4%

beträgt die durchschnittliche **Stimm-beteiligung** bei eidgenössischen Abstimmungen.

Das Schweizer Volk stimmt bis zu **4 Mal jährlich** über insgesamt rund 15 eidgenössische Volksabstimmungen ab.

MITBESTIMMEN

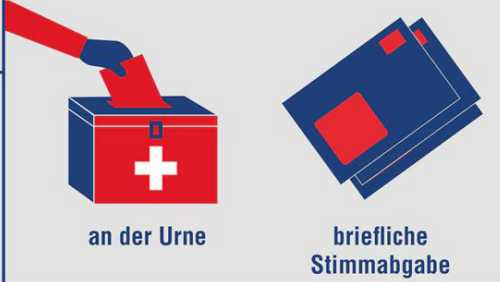
Schweizerinnen und Schweizer haben **umfassende politische Mitbestimmungsrechte**.

Initiative für eine Verfassungsänderung:
→ 100'000 Unterschriften.

Fakultatives Referendum gegen ein vom Parlament neu verabschiedetes Gesetz:
→ 50'000 Unterschriften.



Es gibt **2 Möglichkeiten**, seine Stimme abzugeben.



an der Urne briefliche Stimmabgabe

© EDA, Präsenz Schweiz 2022 / Quelle: Bundeskanzlei, Bundesamt für Statistik, Swissvotes, V-Dem Institute

- Federal state with 26 cantons: **strong federalism**
- **Multi-party system**: no alternation of power between government and opposition → political stability, but high polarisation and long decision-making processes
- Distinct **direct democracy**: comprehensive civil rights at all federal levels
 - **electoral right** (active and passive)
 - **right to vote** (referendums 3-4 per year)
 - right to initiate a **referendum** and **popular initiatives** (constitution)
 - right to public consultations
- **Militia system**: politicians are usually part-time politicians

Democracy in Switzerland: Legislative



National Council and Council of States (Federal Assembly)

- Bicameral parliament: both chambers have equal rights
→ all laws must be passed by both chambers
- Legislation: laws, constitutional amendments (only with referendum)
- Election of the Federal Council
- Budget control and supervision

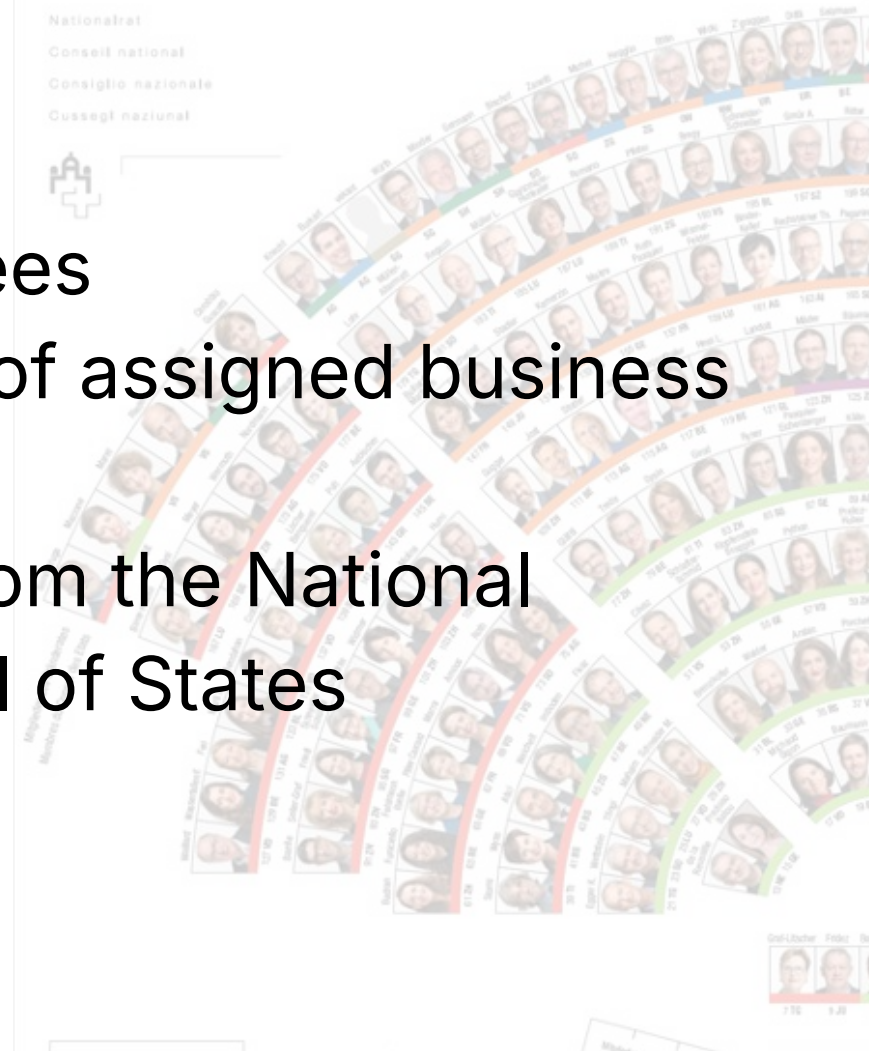
→ Official working languages: German and French

National level: Parliamentary Committees

9 Specialist Committees

- Parliamentary committees
- Preliminary discussion of assigned business
- prepare proposals
- One committee each from the National Council and the Council of States (xxx-N/xxx-S)

→ **Expert hearings**



- Foreign Affairs Committees (FAC)
- Transport and Telecommunications Committees (TTC)
- Legal Affairs Committees (LAC)
- Social Security and Health Committees (SSHC)
- Security Policy Committees (SPC)
- Political Institutions Committees (PIC)
- Environment, Spatial Planning and Energy Committees (ESPC)
- Economic Affairs and Taxation Committees (EATC)
- Science, Education and Culture Committees (SECC)

Democracy in Switzerland: Executive



Federal Council and Administration

- Drafting/preparation of laws for parliament to vote on
- Administrative and substantive work
 - complement laws with ordinances
 - implementation of laws
 - etc.

→ Official working languages: German and French



National Level: Executive and Administration

7 Federal Councillors

Departments → Federal offices etc.

- The Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA)
- The Federal Department of Home Affairs (FDHA)
- The Federal Department of Justice and Police (FDJP)
- The Federal Department of Defence, Civil Protection and Sport (DDPS)
- The Federal Department of Finance (FDF)
- The Federal Department of Economic Affairs, Education and Research (EAER)
- The Federal Department of the Environment, Transport, Energy and Communications (DETEC)

Federal Chancellery: Interface between government, administration, Federal Assembly and the public

FCh

Federal Chancellery

Viktor Rossi

Federal Chancellor

Autonomous organisationOffice of the Federal Data
Protection and Information
Commissioner**FDFA**Federal Department
of Foreign Affairs**Ignazio Cassis**

Head of Department

General Secretariat

State Secretariat

Directorate of International
Law

Consular Directorate

Swiss Agency for
Development and
Cooperation

Directorate for Resources

FDHAFederal Department
of Home Affairs**Elisabeth Baume-Schneider**

Head of Department

General Secretariat

Federal Office of Culture

Federal Office of Meteorology
and Climatology MeteoSwissFederal Office of Public
HealthFederal Food Safety and
Veterinary Office

Federal Statistical Office

Federal Social Insurance
OfficeFederal Office for Gender
Equality

Swiss Federal Archives

Autonomous organisationsSwiss Agency for Therapeutic
Products Swissmedic

Swiss National Museum

Swiss Arts Council
Pro Helvetia**FDJP**Federal Department
of Justice and Police**Beat Jans**

Head of Department

General Secretariat

State Secretariat for Migration

Federal Office of Justice

Federal Office of Police fedpol

Post and Telecommunications
Surveillance Service**Autonomous organisations**Federal Institute of
Intellectual Property

Federal Institute of Metrology

Swiss Institute of
Comparative LawFederal Audit Oversight
Authority

Federal Gaming Board

Federal Commission on
MigrationFederal Arbitration Commis-
sion for the Exploitation of
Copyrights and Related
RightsNational Commission for the
Prevention of Torture**DDPS**Federal Department of
Defence, Civil Protection and
Sport**Martin Pfister**

Head of Department

General Secretariat

State Secretariat for Security
PolicyNational Cyber Security
CentreFederal Office for Civil
ProtectionFederal Office for Defence
Procurement armasuisse

Federal Office of Topography

Federal Office of Sport

Defence sector

Federal Intelligence Service

Office of the Armed Forces
Attorney General**FDF**Federal Department
of Finance**Karin Keller-Sutter**

Head of Department

General Secretariat

State Secretariat for
International FinanceFederal Office for Customs
and Border SecurityFederal Office of Information
Technology, Systems and
TelecommunicationsFederal Office for Buildings
and LogisticsFederal Finance
AdministrationFederal Office of
Personnel

Federal Tax Administration

Autonomous organisationsSwiss Financial Market
Supervisory Authority

Swiss Federal Audit Office

Federal Pension Fund
PUBLICA**EAER**Federal Department of
Economic Affairs, Education
and Research**Guy Parmelin**

Head of Department

General Secretariat

State Secretariat for
Economic Affairs SECOState Secretariat for Educa-
tion, Research and Innovation

Federal Office for Agriculture

Federal Office for National
Economic Supply

Federal Office for Housing

Federal Office for Civilian
Service**Autonomous organisations**

Office of the Price Supervisor

Competition Commission

Board of the Federal Institutes
of Technology ETHSwiss Federal Institute for
Vocational Education and
TrainingSwiss Innovation Agency
Innosuisse**DETEC**Federal Department of the
Environment, Transport,
Energy and Communications**Albert Rösti**

Head of Department

General Secretariat

Federal Office of Transport

Federal Office of Civil Aviation

Swiss Federal Office
of Energy

Federal Roads Office

Federal Office
of CommunicationsFederal Office for the
EnvironmentFederal Office for Spatial
Development**Autonomous organisations**Swiss Federal Nuclear Safety
InspectorateFederal Inspectorate for
Heavy Current InstallationsSwiss Transportation Safety
Investigation BoardFederal Electricity
CommissionFederal Communications
CommissionIndependent Complaints
Authority for Radio and
TelevisionFederal Postal Services
Commission

Rail Transport Commission

Nationale level: Executive und Administration

National Level: Executive und Administration

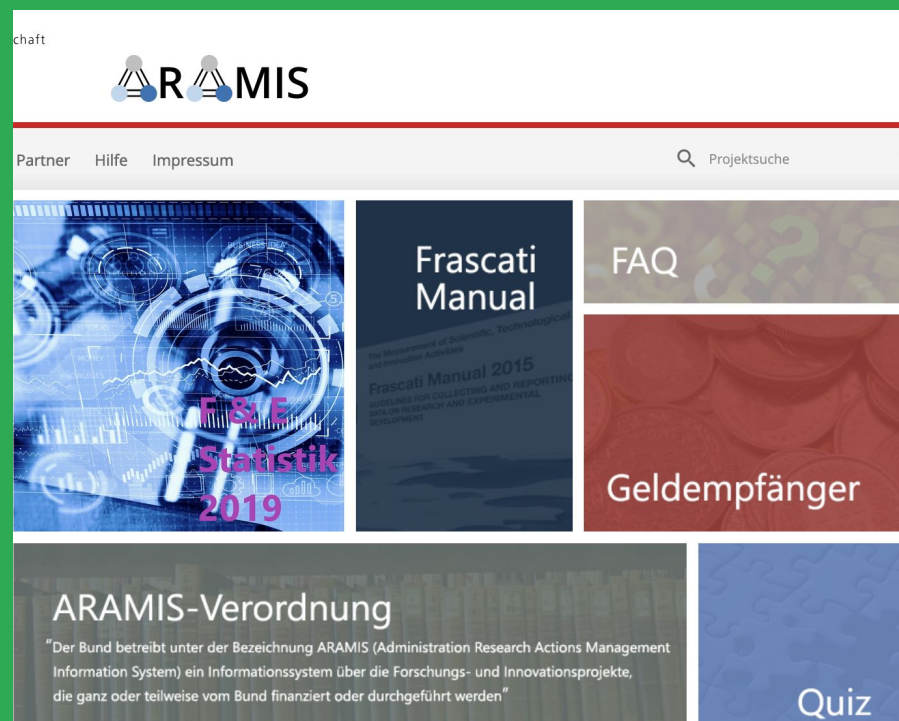
110 Extra-parliamentary Commissions

- 25 Commissions of authorities (with decision-making powers)
 - Swiss Federal Electricity Commission (ElCom)
 - Federal Energy Research Commission (CORE)
 - Competition Commission (WEKO)
 - ...
- 85 Administrative commissions (advisory organs)
 - Federal Commission for Children and Youth Issues (EKKJ)
 - Federal Commission on Migration (FCM)
 - Federal Commission for Space Issues (EKWF)
 - ...

Specialities

- Ad-hoc expert commissions
 - Covid-19 Task-Force
 - ...
- other federal enterprises and institutions
 - Swissmedic
 - Skyguide, SBB
 - ETH Domain
 - ...

Departmental Research



ARAMIS database:
www.aramis.admin.ch/

Biofilter - Test bench for filters
 intended for the biological
 treatment of bathing water

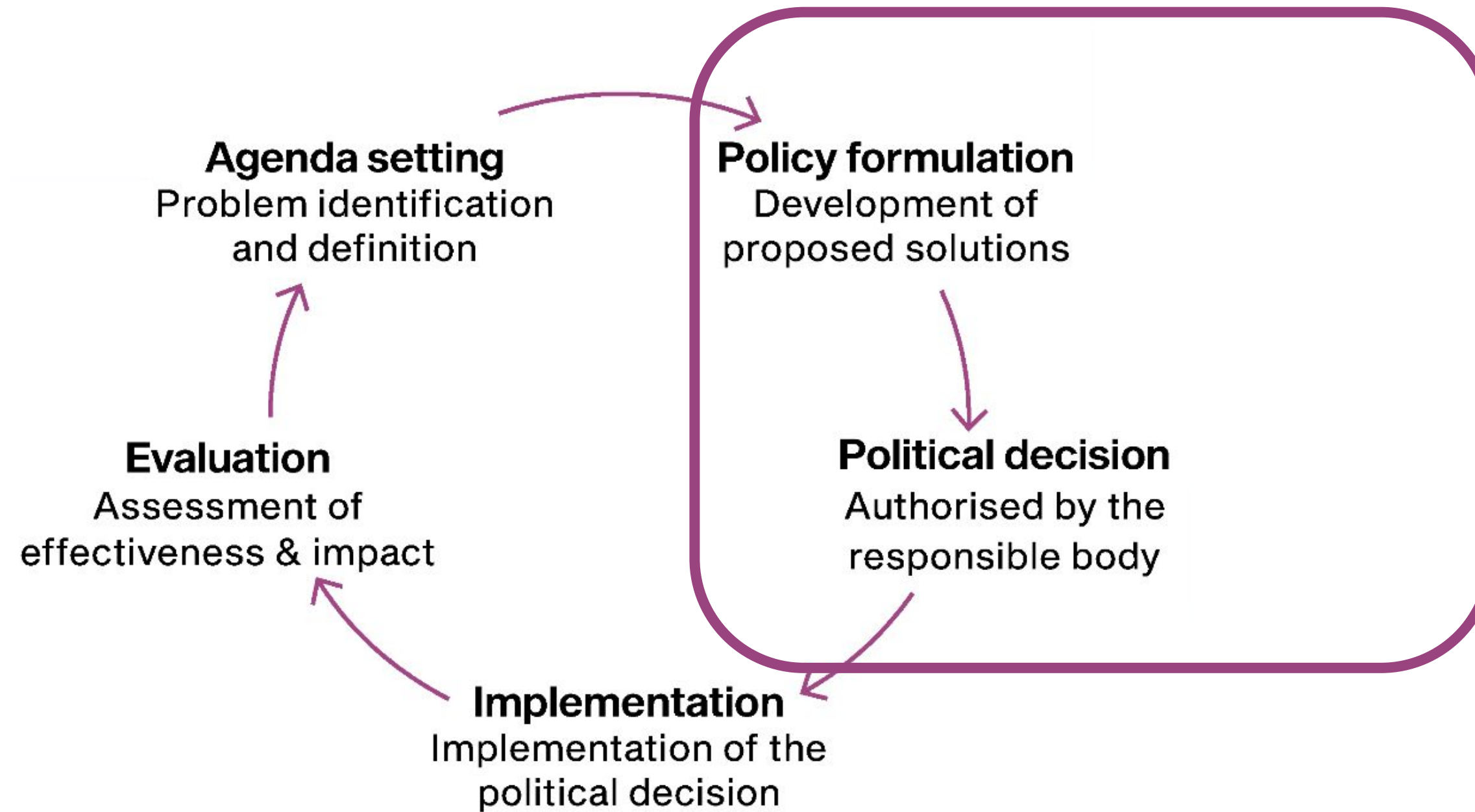


Federal Government Research: Research commissioned by the Federal Administration → specific research needed for its work

- Commissioned research
- Operation of federal research institutions (e.g. Empa, eawag ...)
- Research programmes by federal offices
 - SWEET (SFOE) or SWEETER (SFOE and FOEN)
- Research programmes (via SNSF or Innosuisse)
 - NRPs, NCCRs, Flagships, etc.
- Contributions to University research

Interdepartmental coordination committee (SERI) to avoid duplication and foster regular exchange.

Policy-Engagement for Experts



Direct-democratic Phase



Swiss voters



Parliamentary Phase



Parliament

Preparliamentary Phase



The Federal Council and the Federal Administration

1

Impetus

It is the Federal Council or Parliament that gives the impetus (in the form of a parliamentary initiative, a motion or a postulate → p. 39) for a new law. The cantons may also request a new law (cantonal initiative).

2

Preliminary draft

The Federal Council instructs Department X to draw up a preliminary draft for a law. All departments and federal offices are consulted on this preliminary draft (office consultation procedure).

4

Draft legislation

Department X prepares the preliminary draft law and adapts it on the basis of the results of the consultation procedure. It then submits the bill to the Federal Council.

3

Consultation procedure

Department X submits the preliminary draft to the Federal Council, which initiates the consultation procedure. The consultation procedure allows all citizens, cantons, communes, political parties, federations, trade unions, associations, churches and interest groups to comment on the preliminary draft.

5

Federal Council Dispatch

The Federal Council examines the bill and sends it to Parliament.

7

Consultation in the first chamber (e.g. the National Council)

The first chamber has three options: it may consider the law to be superfluous and request that it not be considered; it can reject the text and instruct the Federal Council or the committee concerned to revise it; or it can discuss the law in detail and make a decision.

6

Preliminary examination by the committee of the first chamber

The presidents of the National Council and the Council of States decide whether the bill is dealt with first in the National Council or in the Council of States. A committee of the first chamber discusses the text and submits a proposal to its Council (first chamber). (Committees → p. 38).

8

Preliminary examination by the committee of the second chamber

The committee of the second chamber discusses the text approved by the first chamber and submits a proposal to its Council (second chamber).

9

Consultation in the second chamber (e.g. Council of States)

The second chamber has the same options as the first chamber: a decision not to consider the law, rejection of the text; or point by point deliberation before making a decision.

10

Resolution of differences in the first chamber

If the decisions of the National Council and the Council of States differ, a procedure for the resolution of differences is initiated. The committee of the first chamber makes a proposal to the first chamber.

13

Final vote in the first and second chambers

The jointly reached agreement is put to a final vote in the National Council and the Council of States. Parliament votes in favour of the new law.

12

Conference of conciliation

In the event of unresolved differences between the National Council and the Council of States after three rounds, a conference of conciliation is held. The conference is composed of members of the preliminary consultation committees who work together to find an agreement. The agreement is then submitted to the first chamber, and then to the second chamber.

11

Resolution of differences in the second chamber

After discussing and voting on this proposal, the preliminary consultation committee of the second chamber addresses the remaining differences and makes a proposal to the second chamber.

14

Optional referendum

The law adopted by Parliament is brought back to the People for a vote. The People have the last word (Referendum → p. 22). If a referendum is not sought within 100 days, the Federal Council may bring the law into force.

15

Popular vote

If a referendum is launched against the law, the law will be put to the vote of the People.

16

Entry into force

If the majority of voters approve the new law, the Federal Council can bring it into force.

Duration of the legislative process on average almost 5 years (median just under 50 months)

Preparliamentary Phase

(1) Impetus by

- Federal Council (FC)
- Parliament - parl. initiative, motion, postulate
- Cantons - cantonal initiative

(2) Preliminary draft

FC commissions
respective **Department**

(3) Consultation

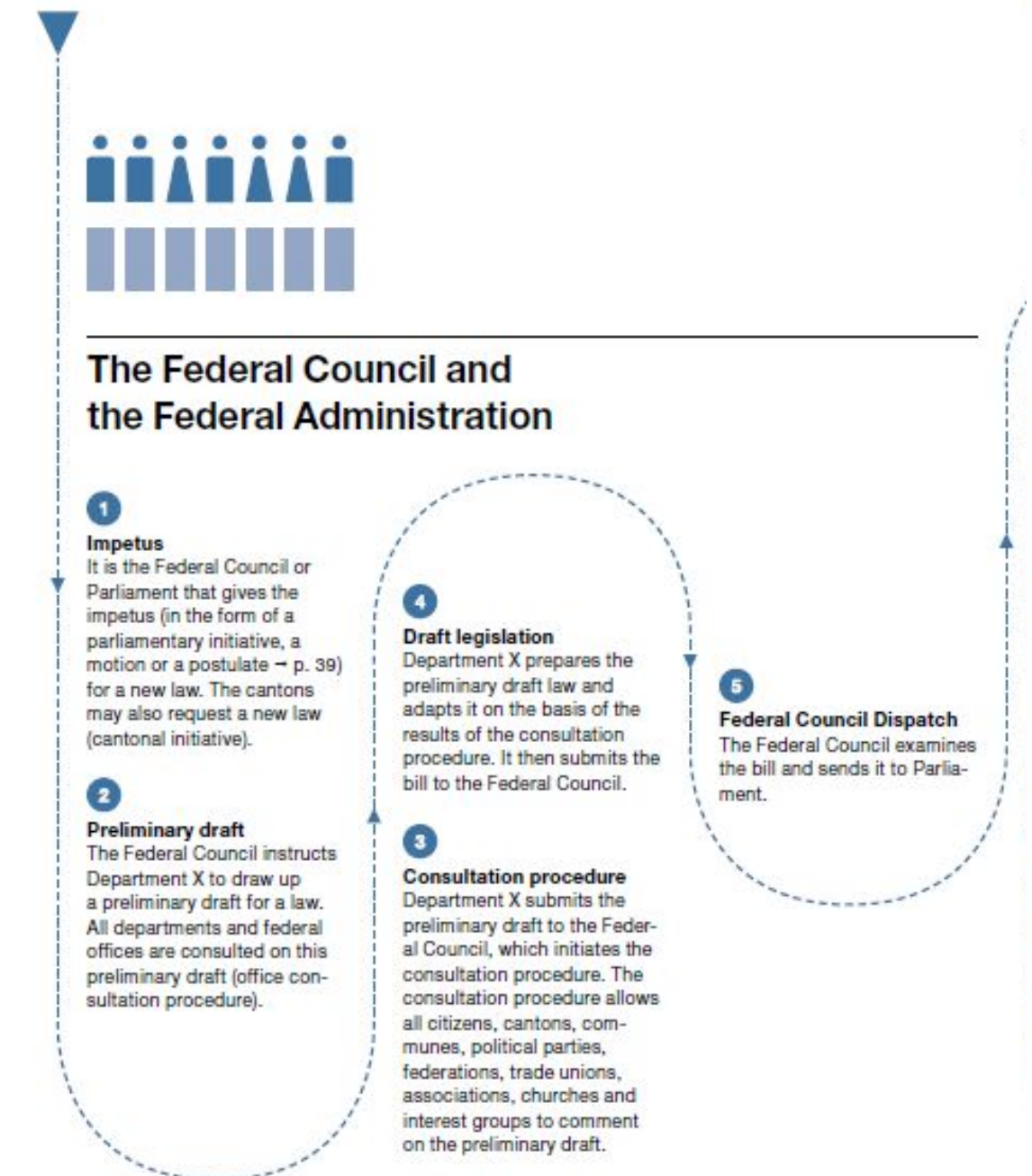
Procedure
public

(5) Federal Council Dispatch

FC examines draft law and
sends it to Parliament

(4) Draft legislation

Department revises the
preliminary draft and submits
it to the FC



Parliamentary Phase

(6) Preparation Committee First Chamber

- Presidents of NC and CS decide, who is first chamber
- Committee of the first chamber discusses the draft and submits proposal to its Council

(7) Consultation in First Chamber

- Can request non-adoption
- Reject (to committee or FC) for revision
- Discuss and vote point by point

(8) Preparation Committee Second Chamber

- discusses the text adopted by the Council of First Instance and proposes that the Council

(10) Resolution of differences in First Chamber

- if decisions differ → committee makes proposal, vote in first chamber

(9) Consultation in Second Chamber

- Can request non-adoption
- Reject (to committee or FC) for revision
- Discuss and vote point by point



Parliament

7

Consultation in the first chamber (e.g. the National Council)

The first chamber has three options: it may consider the law to be superfluous and request that it not be considered; it can reject the text and instruct the Federal Council or the committee concerned to revise it; or it can discuss the law in detail and make a decision.

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The second chamber has the same options as the first chamber: a decision not to consider the law, rejection of the text; or point by point deliberation before making a decision.

10

Resolution of differences in the first chamber

If the decisions of the National Council and the Council of States differ, a procedure for the resolution of differences is initiated. The committee of the first chamber makes a proposal to the first chamber.

Direct-democratic Phase

(11) Resolution of differences in Second Chamber

- if decisions still differ → committee makes proposal, vote in second chamber

(12) Conference of Conciliation

- if no agreement after 3 rounds
- Members of the preparatory committees seek agreement

(13) Final Vote in First and Second Chamber

- Agreement comes in NC and CS
- Decision in favour of the law → it continues
- Decision against law → dead

(16) Entry into Force

(15) Popular Vote

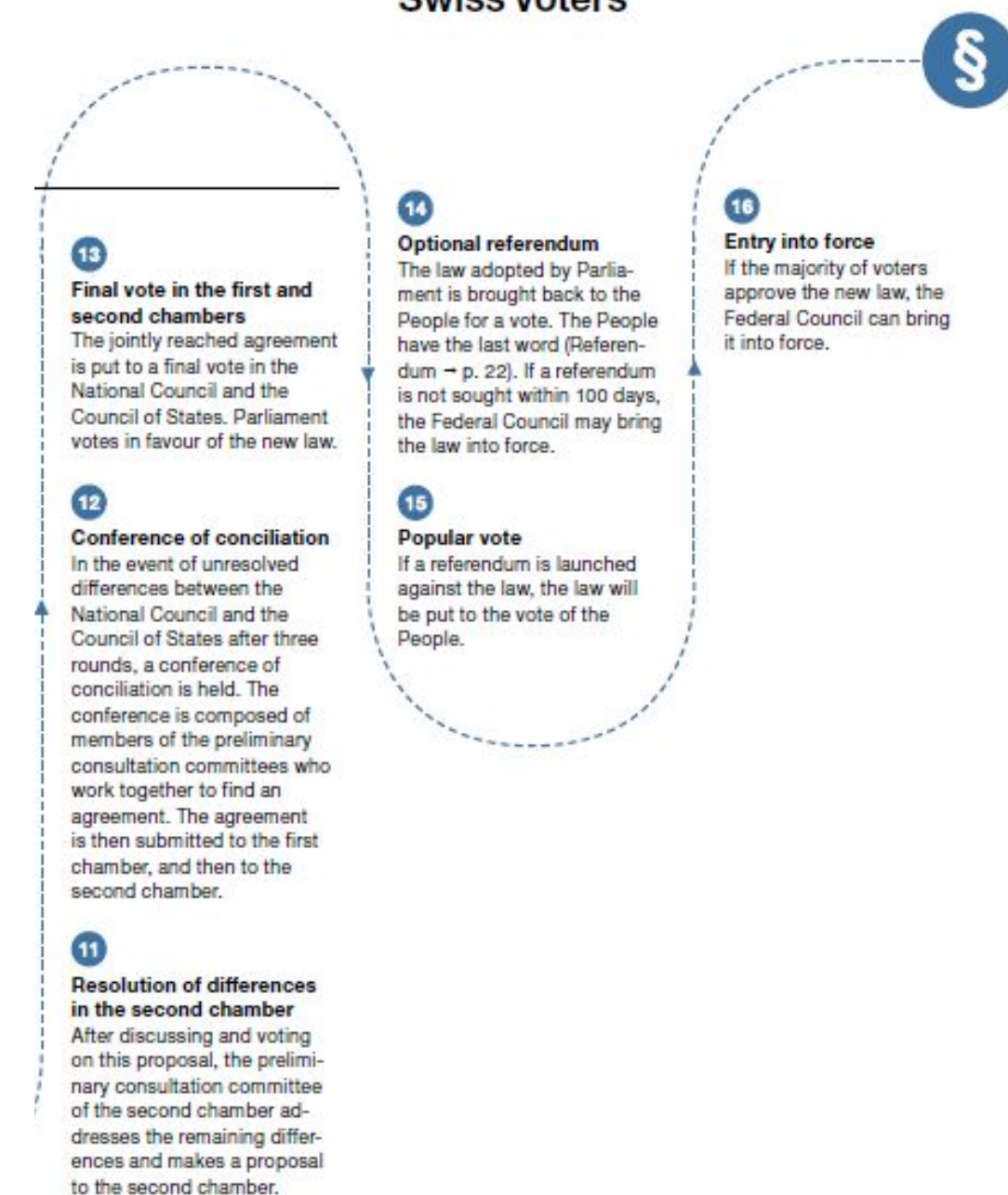
- if a referendum is held

(14) Optional Referendum

- people have the 'last word'; can hold a referendum against the law within 100 days



Swiss voters



Direct-democratic Phase

Parliamentary Phase

Preparliamentary Phase



The Federal Council and the Federal Administration

Dialogue with administration

Impetus (in the form of a parliamentary initiative, a motion or a postulate → p. 39) for a new law. The cantons may also request a new law (cantonal initiative).

2 Preliminary draft
The Federal Council instructs Department X to draw up a preliminary draft for a law. All departments and federal offices are consulted on this preliminary draft (office consultation procedure).

Draft legislation
Department X prepares the preliminary draft law and adapts it on the basis of the results of the consultation procedure. It then submits the bill to the Federal Council.

3 Consultation procedure
Department X submits the preliminary draft to the Federal Council, which initiates consultation procedure. The consultation procedure involves all citizens, cantons, communes, political parties, federations, trade unions, associations, churches and interest groups to comment on the preliminary draft.

Consultation

5 Federal Council Dispatch
The Federal Council examines the bill and sends it to Parliament.



Parliament

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10 Resolution of differences in the first chamber
If the decisions of the National Council and the Council of States differ, a procedure for the resolution of differences is initiated. The committee of the first chamber makes a proposal to the first chamber.

Committee Hearing

13 Final vote in the first and second chambers
The jointly reached agreement is put to a final vote in the National Council and the Council of States. Parliament votes in favour of the new law.

12 Conference of conciliation
In the event of unresolved differences between the National Council and the Council of States after three rounds, a conference of

is then submitted to the first chamber, and then to the second chamber.

11 Resolution of differences in the second chamber
After discussing and voting on this proposal, the preliminary consultation committee of the second chamber addresses the remaining differences and makes a proposal to the second chamber.



Swiss voters

Referendum

14 Option
The law is put to a referendum. If the law is not sought within 100 days, the Federal Council may bring the law into force.

15 Popular vote
If a referendum is launched against the law, the law will be put to the vote of the People.

Implementation

The administration's formulation and implementation of the law (e.g., ordinances)

Dialogue with administration



Similar, at the other levels



- **Subsidiarity principle:** decisions are always made at the lowest possible level (3+ levels of government)
 - cooperation between various political levels and their actors necessary
 - lengthy decision-making processes

Cantonal Level: e.g. Zurich

Committees of the Cantonal Council (Legislative):

- Committee for Education and Culture (KBIK)
- Committee for Energy, Transport and the Environment (KEVU)
- Committee for Justice and Public Safety (KJS)
- Committee for Planning and Construction (KPB)
- Committee for Social Security and Health (KSSG)
- Committee for Economic Affairs and Taxes (WAK)
- Supervisory Committee for Education and Health (ABG)
- Supervisory Committee for Economic Enterprises (AWU)
- Finance Committee (FIKO)
- Justice Committee (JUKO)
- ...

Commissions of the Directorates (Executive):

- Animal Experiments Commission
- Equal Opportunities Commission
- Ethics Committee
- Child Protection Commission
- ...

Intercantonal Level

Conference of Cantonal Governments

- Members are the governments of the 26 cantons
- Political platform for opinion-forming among the cantons
- targeted input into federal policy and foreign policy dossiers
- own commissions and working groups
- sends delegations to national and international committees and working groups

Directors' Conference

- is made up of the cantonal 'specialised ministers'
- 12 Directors' Conferences
 - EDK (Swiss Conference of Cantonal Ministers of Education)
 - FDK (Conference of Finance Directors)
 - GDK (Conference of Cantonal Directors of Public Health)
 - KOKES (Conference for Child and Adult Protection)
 - Conference of Cantonal Justice and Police Directors (GDK)
 -

How do the various levels of government work together?

Bundesverfassung

Art 117 Medizinische Grundversorgung und Pflege
Art 118 Schutz der Gesundheit
Art 3 Souveränität der Kantone

Übereinkommen
über die Rechte des Kindes
Artikel 3: Wohl des Kindes

Bund

Krankenversicherungsgesetz (KVG)
Abschnitt 4: Tarife und Preise

Preisüberwachungsgesetz

Verordnung über die
Krankenversicherung (KVV)
Kapitel 3: Tarife und Preise
(Bundesverwaltung)

Interkantonal

Interkantonale
Vereinbarung über
hochspezialisierte Medizin
(IVHSM)

Kostenteilungs-Empfehlungen
bei ausserkantonalen
Behandlungen

Kanton Bern

Gesetz betreffend die Einführung der
Bundesgesetze über die Kranken-, die
Unfall- und die Militärversicherung (EG
KUMV)
Abschnitt 1.3: Tarife

Kantonale
Krankenversicherungsverordnung
(KKVV)
Abschnitt 1.3: Tarife

Kanton Bern
Regierungsrat und Verwaltung
(Amt für Sozialversicherungen/Gesundheitsdirektion)

Bund
Bundesrat und Verwaltung
(Bundesamt für Gesundheit)



einheitliche
Tarifstrukturen und
Organisationen:
TARMED, SwissDRG,
TARDOC

Leistungserbringer

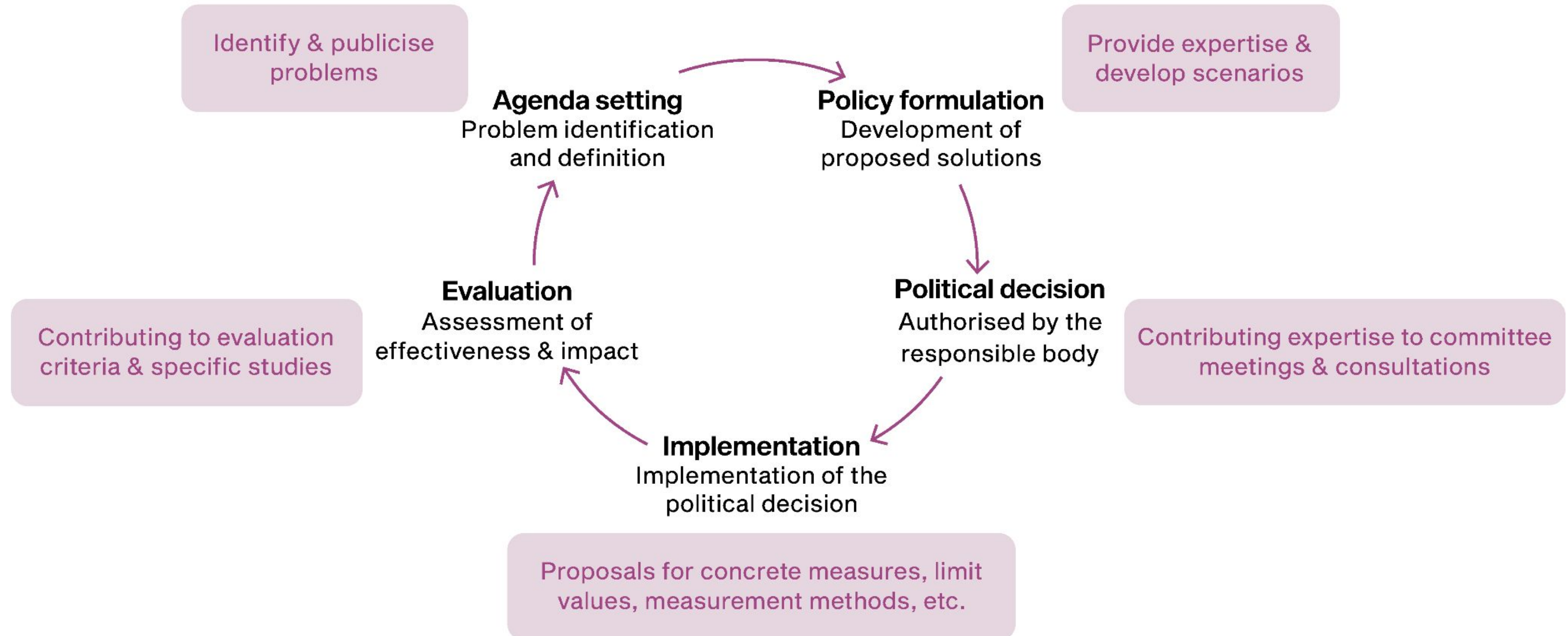
Verhandeln Tarife

Versicherer

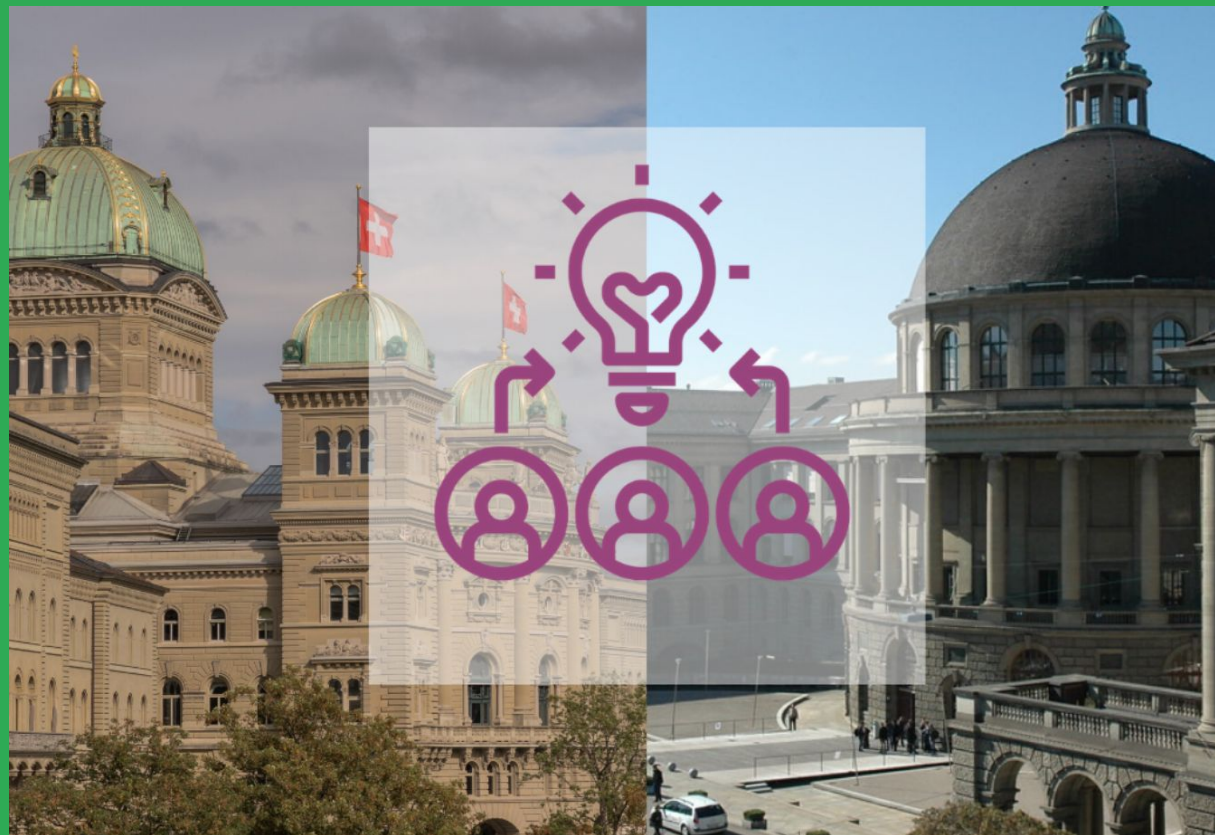
ggfs.
mit
BAG

Genehmigung Tarife

Policy-Engagement for Experts

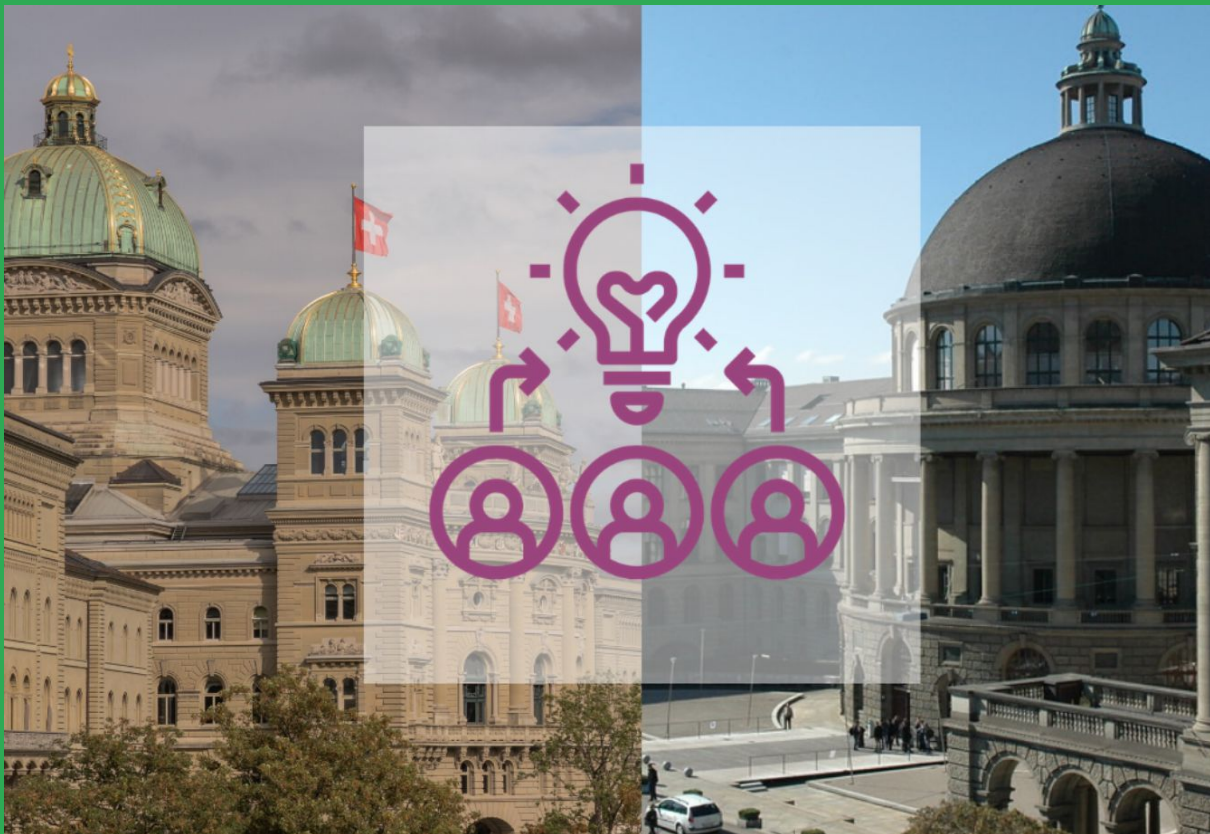


Core Points



- There is **no universal guide (no 'one size fits all')**: each topic has a slightly different starting point (legal basis, stakeholders, etc.)
→ know the **specific legal context, ordinances, initiatives**, etc.
- **Where is my expertise correctly positioned?** Where are the decisions made? / Where were the decisions made on my particular topic? Where in the policy cycle are we?
 - Communal/cantonal/intra-cantonal/national?
 - Legislative or executive?
- **Who are the stakeholders?** Who can I work with? Who do I need to convince? Build networks and maintain contacts.

Useful Resources



Swiss Parliament: www.parlament.ch

Committees: <https://www.parlament.ch/en/organe/committees>

Consultations: www.fedlex.admin.ch/de/consultationprocedures

List of parliamentary procedural requests:

<https://www.parlament.ch/en/ratsbetrieb/suche-curia-vista>

State calendar: www.staatskalender.admin.ch/home

Conference of Cantonal Governments: www.kdk.ch

House of the Cantons (Directors' Conference): www.haus-der-kantone.ch

Swiss Academies of Arts and Sciences: <https://akademien-schweiz.ch/en>

Swiss Science Council: <https://wissenschaftsrat.ch/en>

→ **Franxini Boot Camp Reader**

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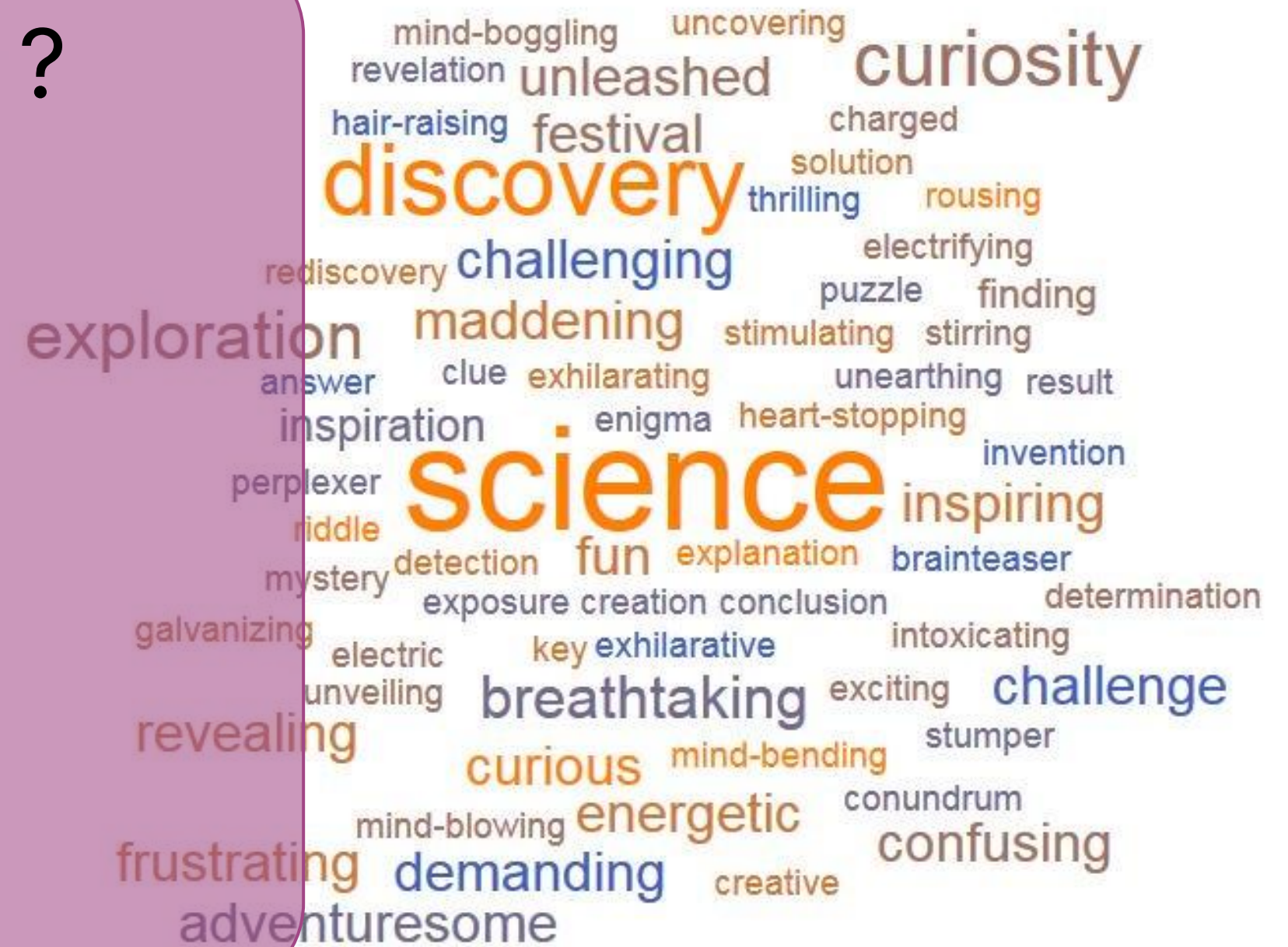
Break



Reatch

Roles for Researchers in the Science-Policy Dialogue

Hannah Schoch, Reatch



Democratic politics vs. science

Common Ground:

- **Rule-based processes:** Results are accepted if they have been achieved using established procedures.
- **Pluralistic cultures:** The diversity of interests, practices and positions is valued as a strength of the system; uniformity is the exception, not the rule.
- Trust in/belief in **open debate, collective intelligence** and **shared power**

Democratic politics:

- Exercising power by creating majorities: **«what-should-be-questions»**
- Main forms of conflict: **diverging interests** and **conflicting values**
- Predominant forms of conflict resolution: **compromise, vote, election**

Sciences:

- Progress in knowledge through cooperation and competition: **«what-is/could be-questions»**
- Main forms of conflict: **conflicting knowledge claims** and **priority disputes**
- Predominant forms of conflict resolution: **validation, falsification, consensus**

Experts in democracies (Lisa Herzog)

Fundamental tension between democratic equality and unequal expertise
equal moral worth of all citizens ↔ experts have specialised knowledge

Challenge 1

Research expertise **can provide the best evidence for certain issues**, thereby improving the basis for political decision-making, but:

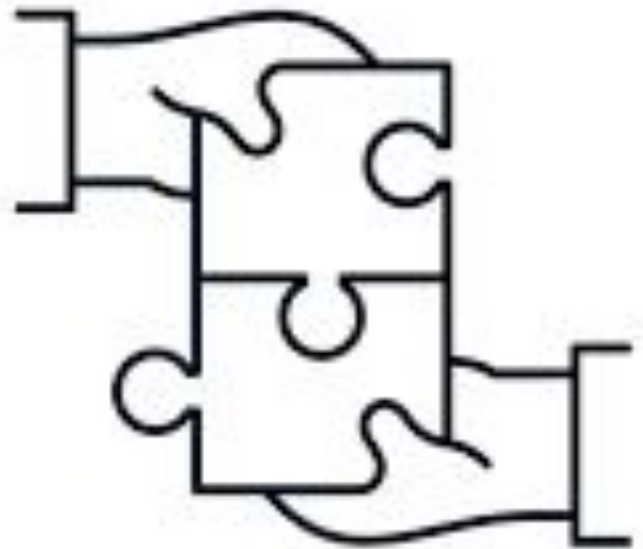
How do we ensure that it **does not turn into undemocratic technocracy** or «epistocracy»?

Challenge 2

- Experts can also be **non-researchers** → valorisation of different forms of knowledge
- Experts are **not experts in values** → but facts and values are often linked in complex ways
- Historically, expert groups formed **based on problematic criteria** (gender, status, 'race') → necessary work for epistemic justice, acknowledgement of different disciplines

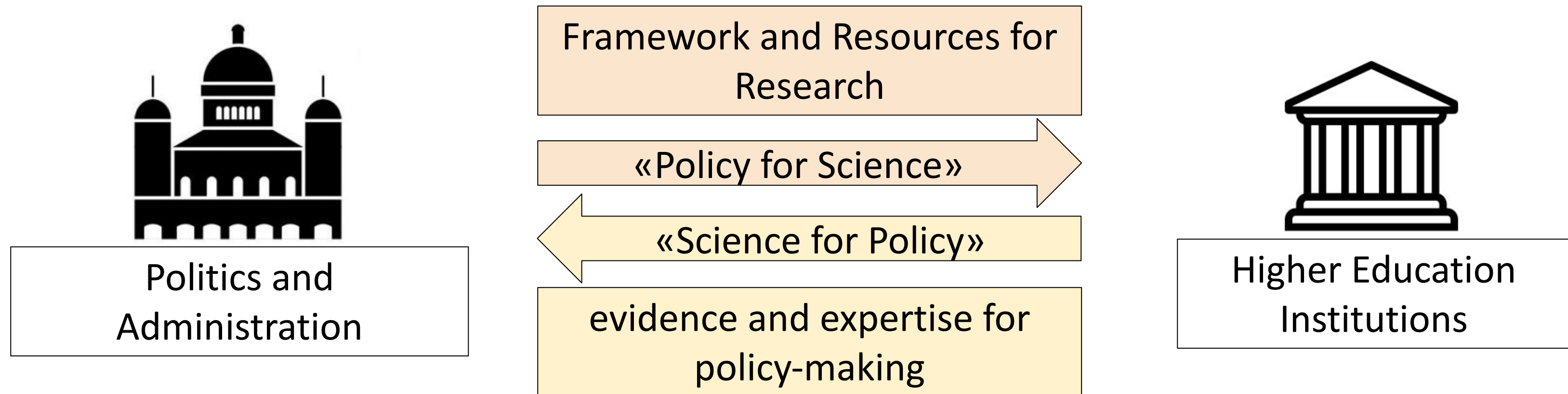
Experts in democracies (Lisa Herzog)

How can expertise be brought into democratic politics without undermining democratic values?



- **Partnership Model** (in functioning democracies): **Trust** is fundamental. The **interaction** between expert groups and democratic politics must be approached **consciously, with respect and care**.

Research and politics



Research and politics



Politics and
Administration

**SERI (ERI dispatch)
[EU / EHEA etc.]**

Framework and Resources for
Research

«Policy for Science»



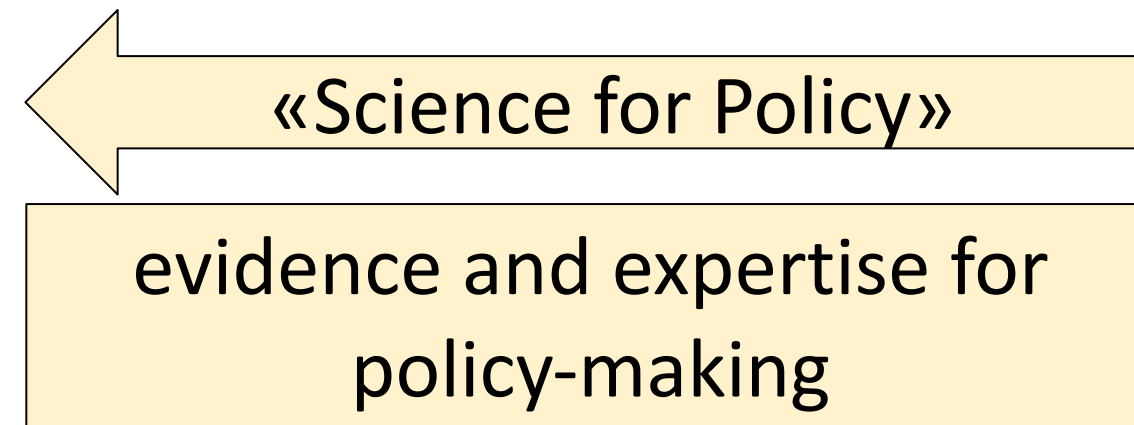
Higher Education
Institutions

primarily done by institutionalized actors:
swissuniversities, SNSF, Higher Education
Institutions, Research Institution

Research and politics



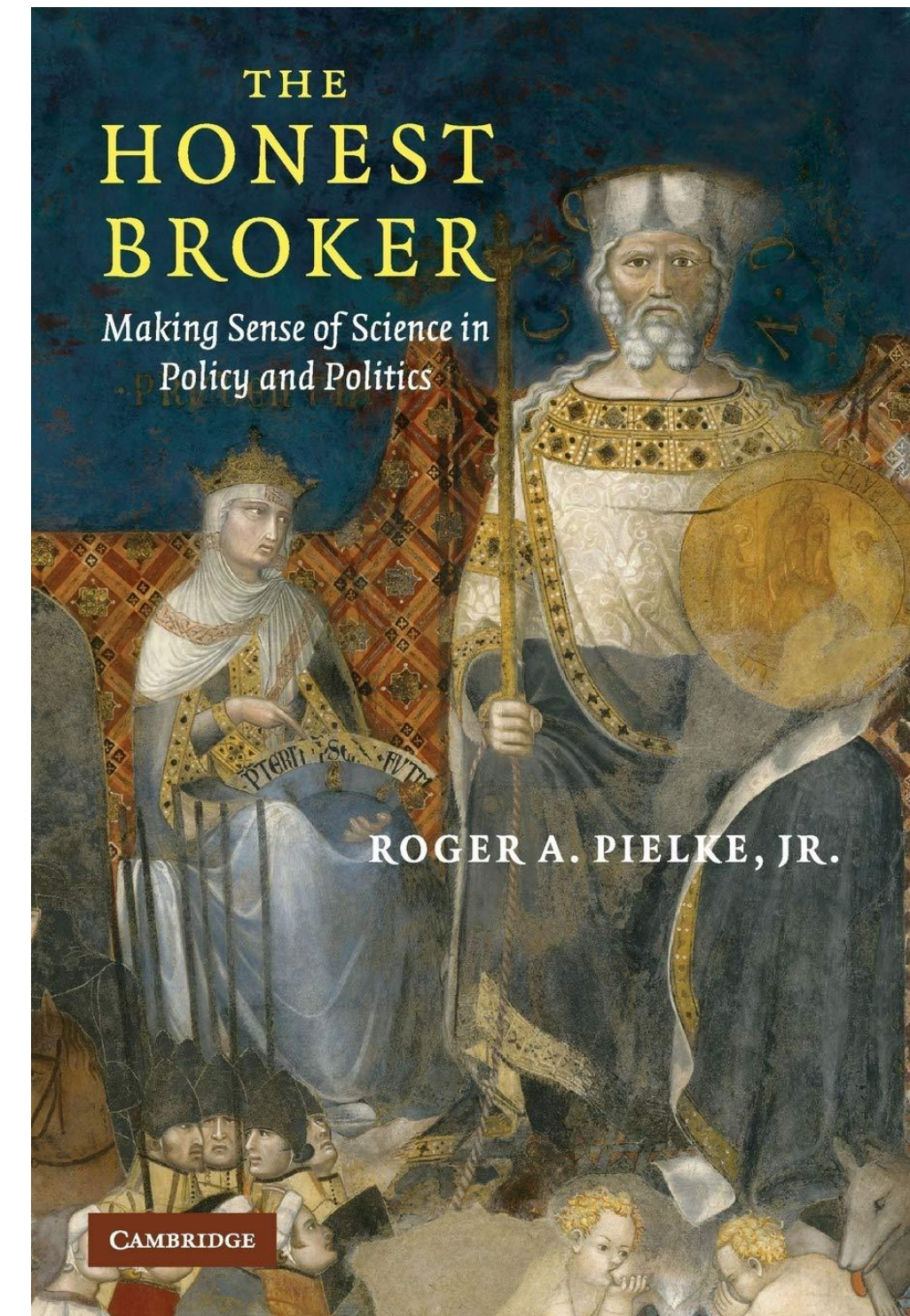
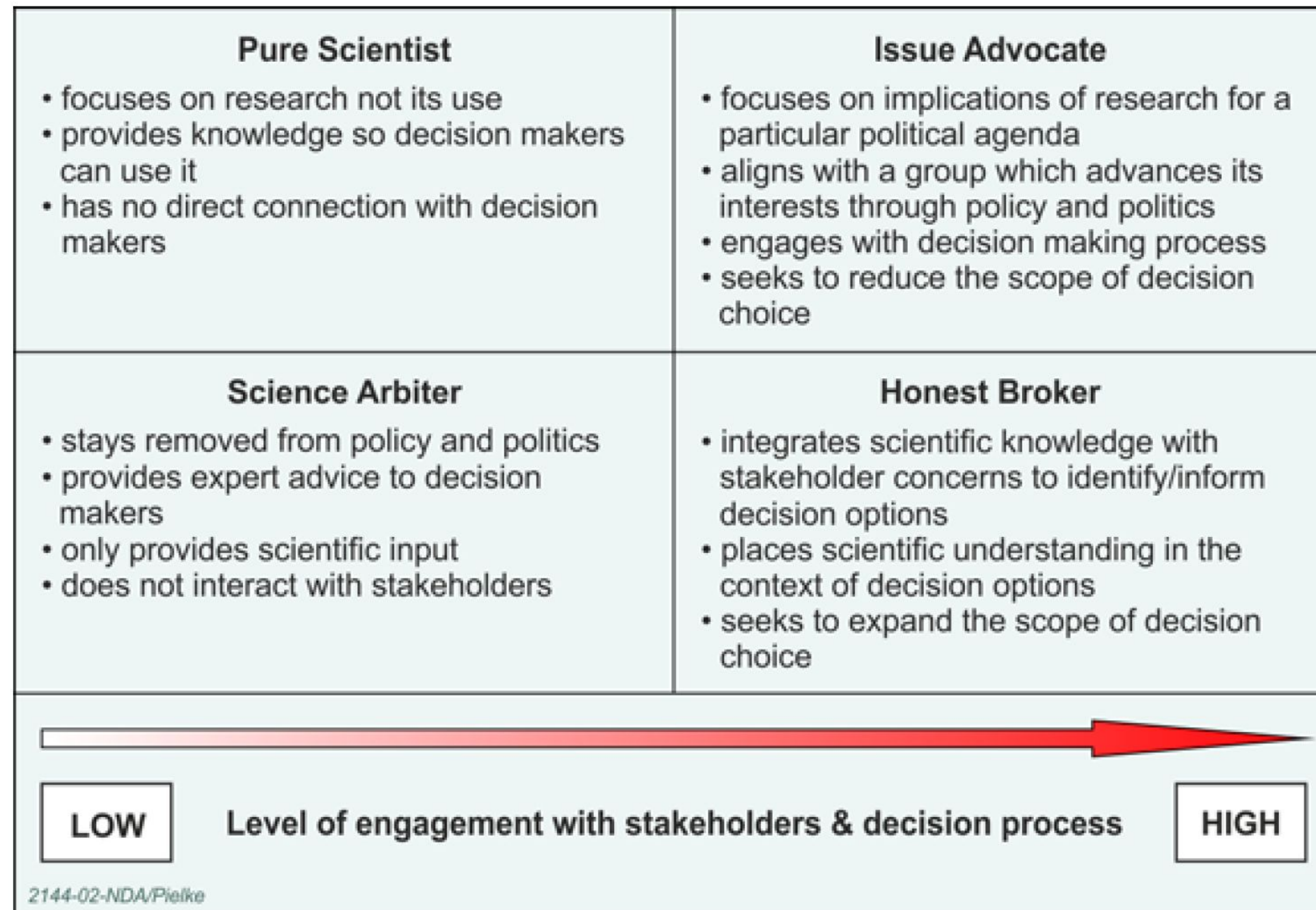
Politics and
Administration



Higher Education
Institutions

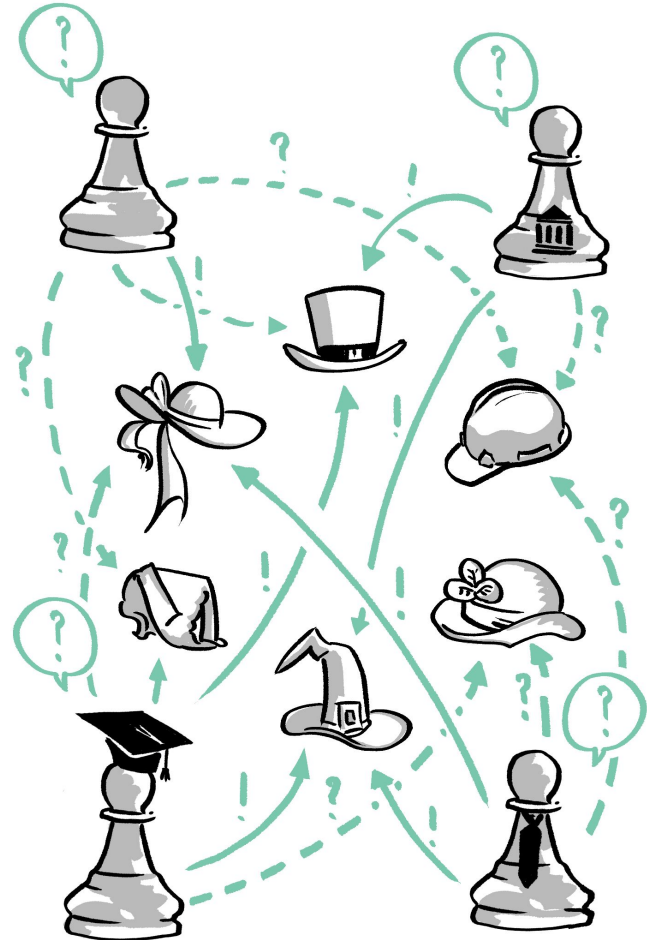
Expertise: person-specific, specialised knowledge
Evidence: Information and research results from studies and publications

Figure 1: Modes of scientist engagement with stakeholders and decision-making process



Source: Adapted from Pielke (2007).

Model for social roles



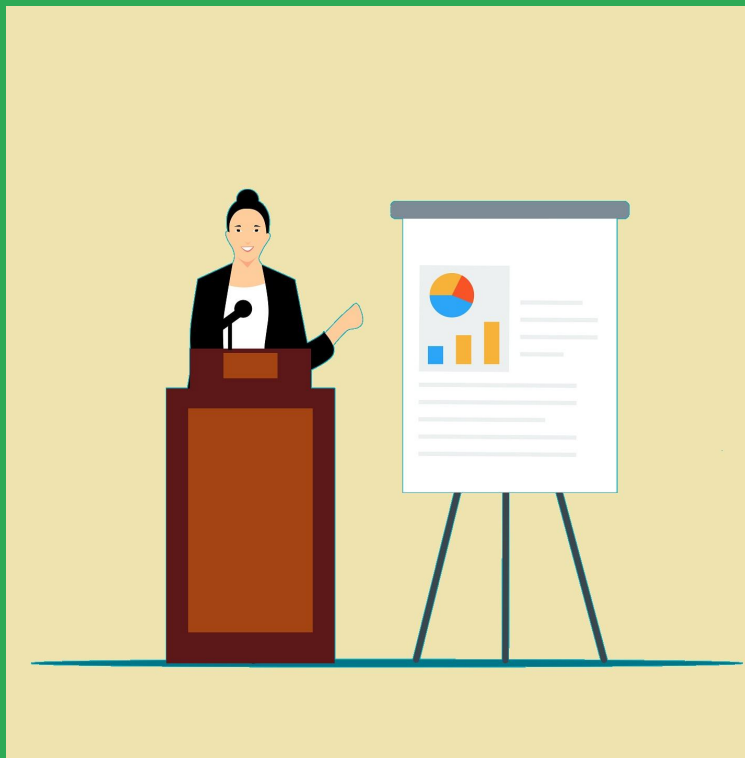
(Social) role: Set of mutual expectations regarding the actions of individuals.

Role model: Structured description of tasks, responsibilities, and competencies (often in the context of organizations or projects).

Important: A role is not an identity and can therefore vary according to different situations:

→ What role do I have in a specific context? Is my behavior consistent with this role? Is this the right role in the given context?

The role of "honest broker"

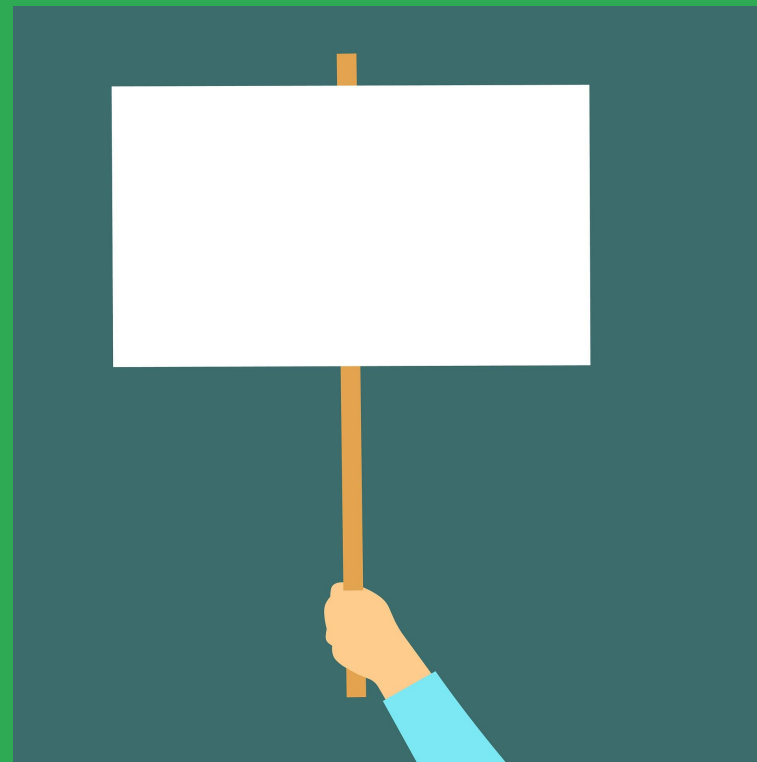


**policy-relevant but not
policy-prescriptive
with recourse to field of
scientific expertise**

- **Outline different policy options/scenarios**, provide current state of certainty/uncertainty, highlight value implications of findings
- **Decision-making options in complex situations** are made transparent on a scientific basis
- **Neutral position regarding political decisions** creates credibility and enables long-term cooperation with all political actors
- **Better protection against political instrumentalisation:**
democratically elected representatives are less able to shift responsibility for decisions to scientific experts.

BUT: hardly any active influence on the political agenda or concrete political decisions

The role of "issue advocate"



advocating for a
specific policy solution
with recourse to field of
scientific expertise

- Issues can be **actively placed on the political agenda** with potentially greater influence on policy decisions
- Well suited to **draw attention to issues** that are neglected
- Often aligned with certain segments of society/of the political spectrum: high level of trust among **like-minded political actors**
- Often **active on several stages at the same time** (media, advisory committees, political rallies etc.)
- Attractive for **media coverage**

BUT: commitment to a specific policy solution means greater exposure and risks association with a specific political agenda

(politically) engaged citizen/private person

Pure Scientist • focuses on research not its use • provides knowledge so decision makers can use it • has no direct connection with decision makers	Issue Advocate • focuses on implications of research for a particular political agenda • aligns with a group which advances its interests through policy and politics • engages with decision making process • seeks to reduce the scope of decision choice
Science Arbiter • stays removed from policy and politics • provides expert advice to decision makers • only provides scientific input • does not interact with stakeholders	Honest Broker • integrates scientific knowledge with stakeholder concerns to identify/inform decision options • places scientific understanding in the context of decision options • seeks to expand the scope of decision choice



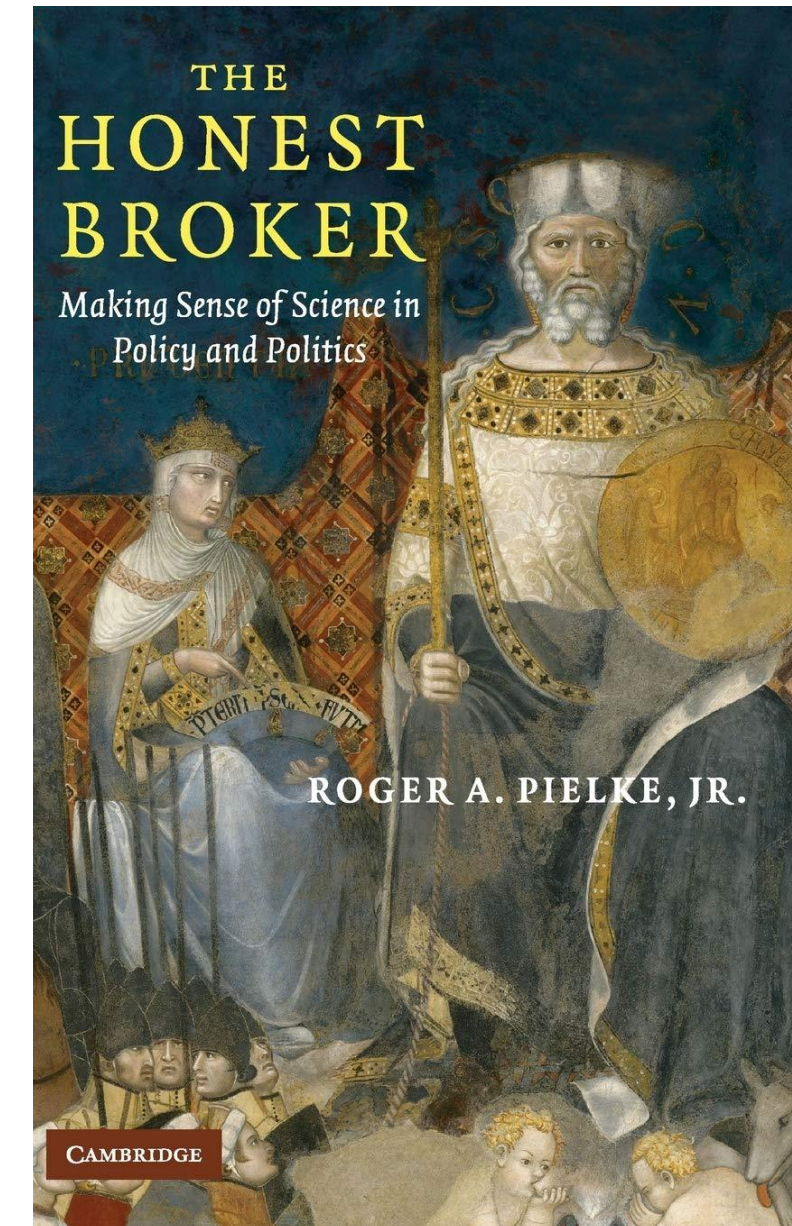
LOW

Level of engagement with stakeholders & decision process

HIGH

2144-02-NDA/Pielke

Source: Adapted from Pielke (2007).



(Basic) research can be relevant without direct (political) application

Options for sharing scientific evidence with policymakers



Workshops and Meetings: direct and personal contact and exchange with policy makers, builds network and trust

Project Reporting: report on project results/activities, often the case for departmental research, allows direct dialogue

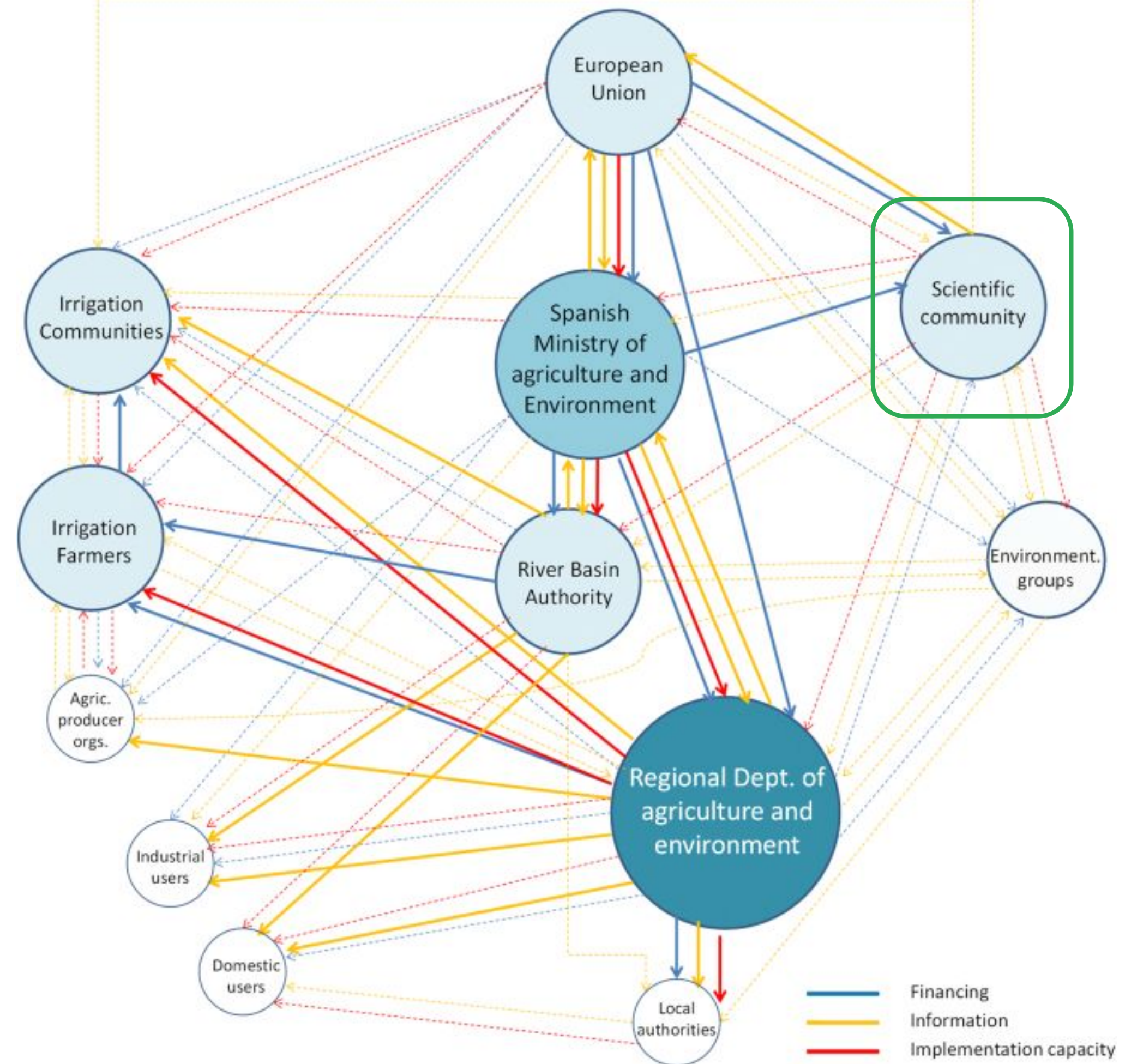
Working Groups, Commissions, etc: network with other experts, often mandated with concrete tasks by politics

White Paper: comprehensive report, includes analysis, background information and detailed presentation of solutions

Policy Brief: tool to suggest policy recommendations on the basis of research findings, its value lies in its conciseness and brevity

Public Consultation: evidence sharing using the most institutionalised way

Researchers are just one of many stakeholders



Esteve, P., Varela-Ortega, C. & Downing, T.E. **A stakeholder-based assessment of barriers to climate change adaptation in a water-scarce basin in Spain.** *Reg Environ Change* **18**, 2505–2517 (2018).
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10113-018-1366-y>

Science-policy ecosystem in Switzerland

Important actors in the field of Education, Research, Innovation (ERI)

- State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI)
- Swiss Conference of Cantonal Ministers of Education (EDK)
- Swissuniversities
- ETH-Domain
- Higher Education and Research Institutions
- Swiss National Science Foundation
- Innosuisse
- Swiss Academies of Arts and Sciences
- Swiss Science Council

Bundesgesetz über die Förderung der Forschung und der Innovation (FIFG); Bundesgesetz über die Förderung der Hochschulen und die Koordination im schweizerischen Hochschulbereich (HFKG)



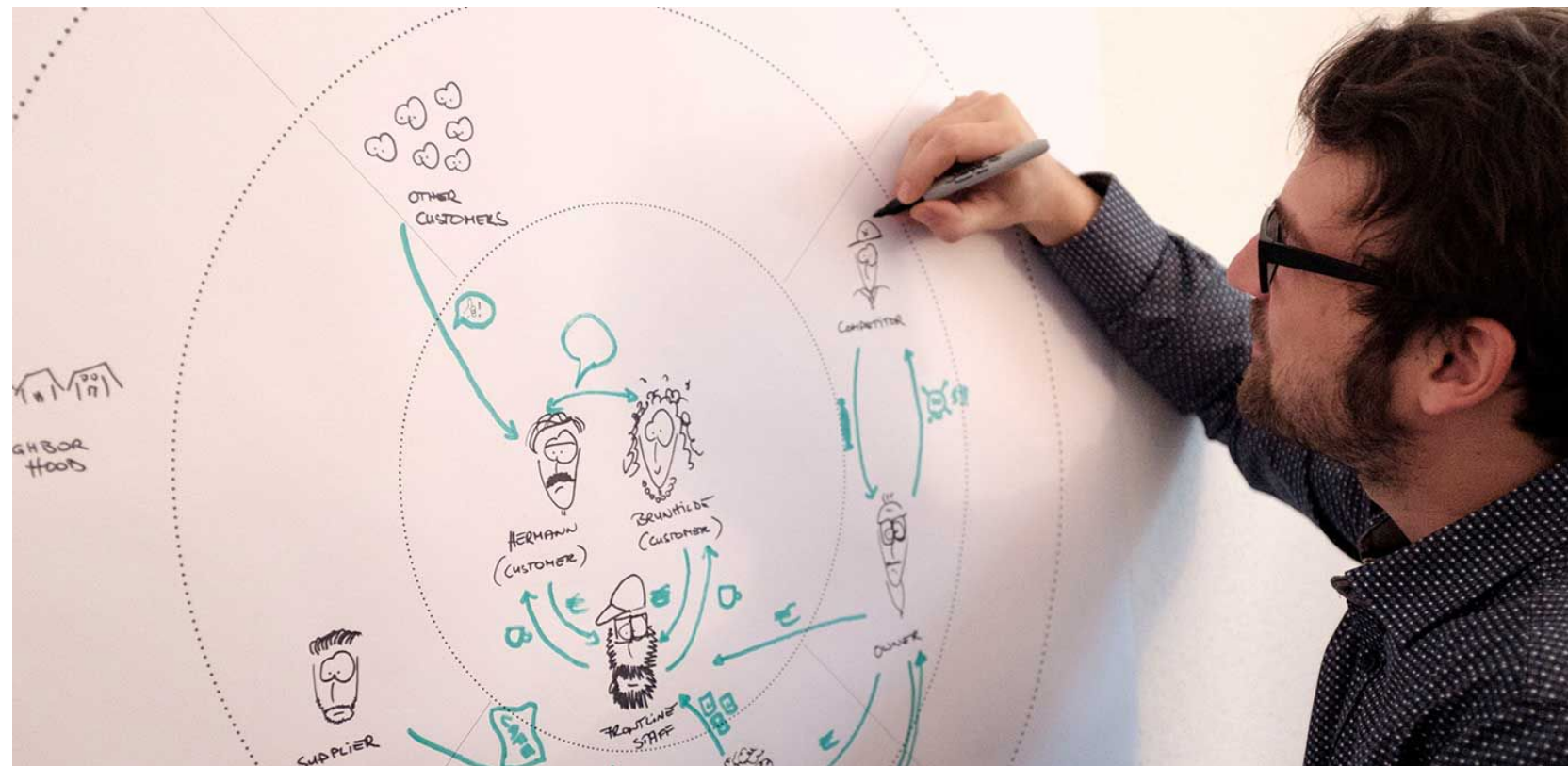
Adjacent civil society actors

Civil society actors can be key stakeholders and allies.

For example in Switzerland:

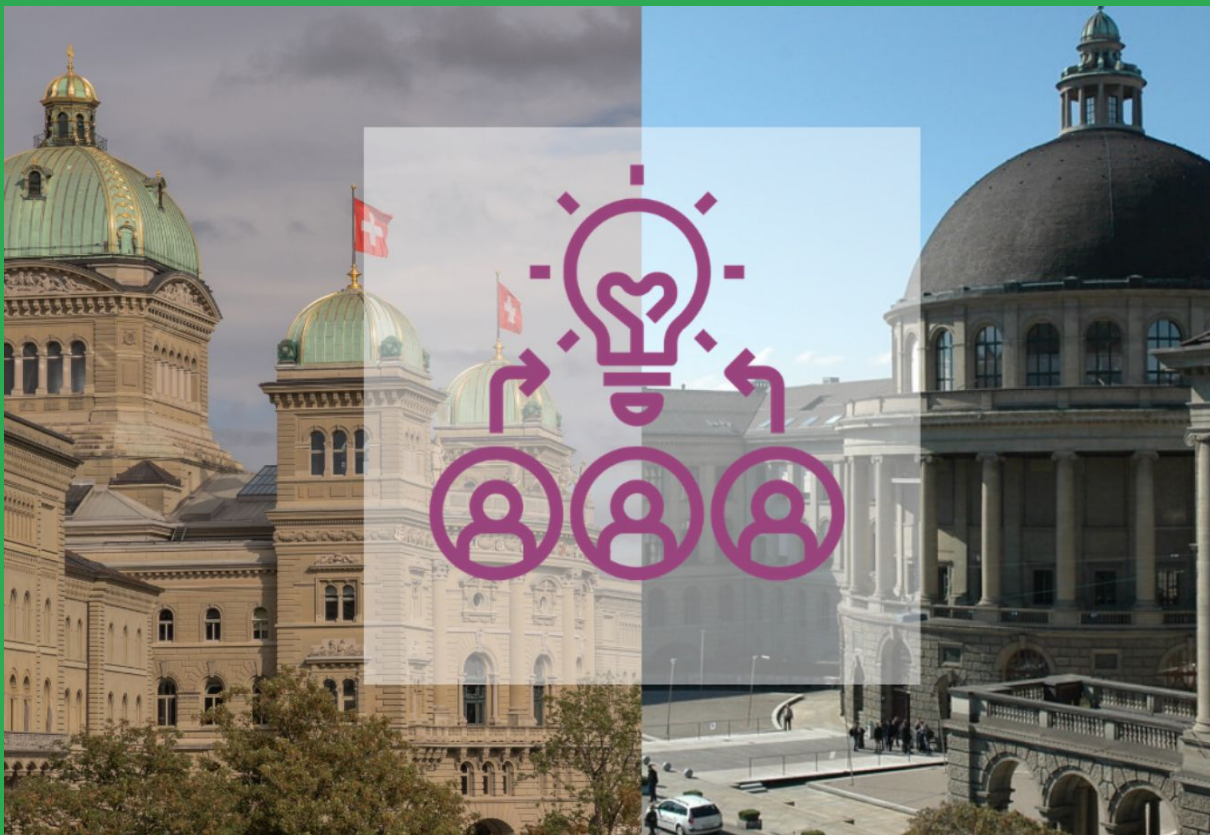
- Reatch, Staatslabor, CH++, Expedition Zukunft
- thematic: Stiftung Risiko-Dialog, AlgorithmWatch,

But: Choose with care – pay attention to political positioning



Picture: <https://www.smaply.com/blog/stakeholdermaps>

Core points



- **Tension** between scientific experts and democratic politics that must be **approached consciously, with respect and care.**
- **Clarity of one's role(s):** fosters awareness, coherence, transparency, integrity
- **Trust as the most central foundation.**

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Break



Reatch

Experiences and Tips from Public Administration

Anne-Kathrin Faust (BFE)

Boris Stolz (BAZL)



Reatch

Policy brief – What is it?

Hannah Schoch, Reatch

Two points on Knowledge and Technology Transfer in general

supply-side model of science communication works only sometimes

- idea that getting the knowledge out in the world is enough, however:
- most major publicly known scientific breakthroughs **reach the public through social discourses** (and thus in political, religious, societal, economic etc. contexts) and **with respective framings**

(Naomi Oreskes)

You want to be heard? Be relevant – for the recipient

- **People hear what is relevant to them:**
 - We perceive information always in the context of **what we know & what we expect**
 - Know and take into account **current socio-political context**, the **recipient's values and beliefs**
- **Whether communication is successful or not is determined by the recipient — not the sender.**

(Silvia Maier)

Options for sharing scientific evidence with policymakers



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Working Groups, Commissions, etc: network with other experts, often mandated with concrete tasks by politics

White Paper: comprehensive report, includes analysis, background information and detailed presentation of solutions

Policy Brief: tool to suggest policy recommendations on the basis of research findings, its value lies in its conciseness and brevity

Public Consultation: evidence sharing using the most institutionalised way

Policy brief: What is it, actually?

- for a **targeted group of informed non-specialists to support their decision-making** (> 50)
- **stand-alone document**: 2-4 pages, 1'500-2'000 words
- **focused on a single, policy relevant topic**: distilling research findings and making policy recommendations, outlining implications and considering alternative options
- **easily digestible**: short, concise, plain language
- **visually appealing**: key information can be easily located and understood
- **national language**: German and/or French

→ Ask yourself in what moment(s) & for what purpose(s) a policy-maker will look at a policy brief.



Policy brief: What is it, actually?

Work from the assumption that the reader will look at the policy brief only during a meeting:

- Is it directly relevant to the problem they need to solve?
- Can they immediately see what information is where and what information is most important?



Policy brief: What to consider

1. Purpose:

Informing on a particular issue and suggest possible policy options

Be clear on:

- What is the **specific problem** you want to support policy makers in solving?
- What are the **policy considerations/discussions** that this is relevant for?
- What do the policy-makers **need to know** for a better informed decision?

Consider: Is the policy brief really the right tool for your research findings? Policy briefs should not be overused so they remain an effective tool.

Policy brief: What to consider

2. Audience:

Addressing a *specific* group of people, usually informed non-specialists

Be clear on:

- Who is your very **specific target audience** for *this* policy brief?
- What are the **channels** through which you can reach them with your policy brief?
- What is the right **moment** to provide this information?

Consider: 'Policy makers' is not specific enough: Understand where in the policy cycle the process is and who has to take what kind of decision(s) to then decide who you are writing for.

Policy brief: What to consider

3. Content:

'Factsheet' distilling research findings and policy recommendations in jargon-free language

Be clear on:

- What is your target audience's **interest** in and **level of knowledge** on the subject?
- What is the **information** your target audience **needs** to make a better informed decision? What is the relevant research context and what are the most relevant research findings?
- What are the **policy recommendations/implications of the research findings** that you will end on?

Ensure: Every sentence in your policy-brief must be related to the particular issue & the recommendations you have defined. Draft a further, new policy brief if necessary.

Policy brief: What to consider

4. Structure:

Guiding your reader from problem to solution.

Common elements:

- A. **Executive summary** including recommendations in brief
- B. Introduction and context (What's at stake?)
- C. Overview of the research and/or problem
- D. Research findings in detail
- E. **Policy recommendations** and explanation of the implications of the research (conclusion)
- F. Further resources/reading (if it makes sense)

Consider: Executive summary & recommendations might be all the reader has time for. It's also what will convince them to look at the rest (or not).

Policy brief: What to consider

5. Layout: Ensuring easy orientation for your reader.

Tips:

- **Executive summary** on the first page
- **Titles give orientation** to the reader
- **Lists and sidebars** can structure even clearer
- **Graphics, charts, graphs** etc. can be a strong tool, if their format is effectively chosen, and they are understandable for lay people. Visuals have to support your message and make the layout attractive. Include captions.

Consider: Work from the assumption that the reader will look at the policy brief only during a meeting: Can they immediately see what information is where and what information is most important?

Policy brief: What to consider

6. Revision:

Writing is an iterative process, plan enough time for revision and testing.

Consider:

- Double check your **key message** (it might have shifted during the writing process): Do all the **individual elements connect** to the key messages?
- Do all the individual **elements coherently build on each other?**
- **Kill your darlings:** Make it as **concise and user-friendly** as possible, delete what is not strictly necessary.
- **Test your policy-brief with lay people:** Do they understand what you want them to understand?

Important:

- Like all policy relevant and media publications, the policy brief needs **approval by SFOE** to ensure proper contextualisation, timing, framing and coordination.

Policy brief: What to consider

7. Dissemination

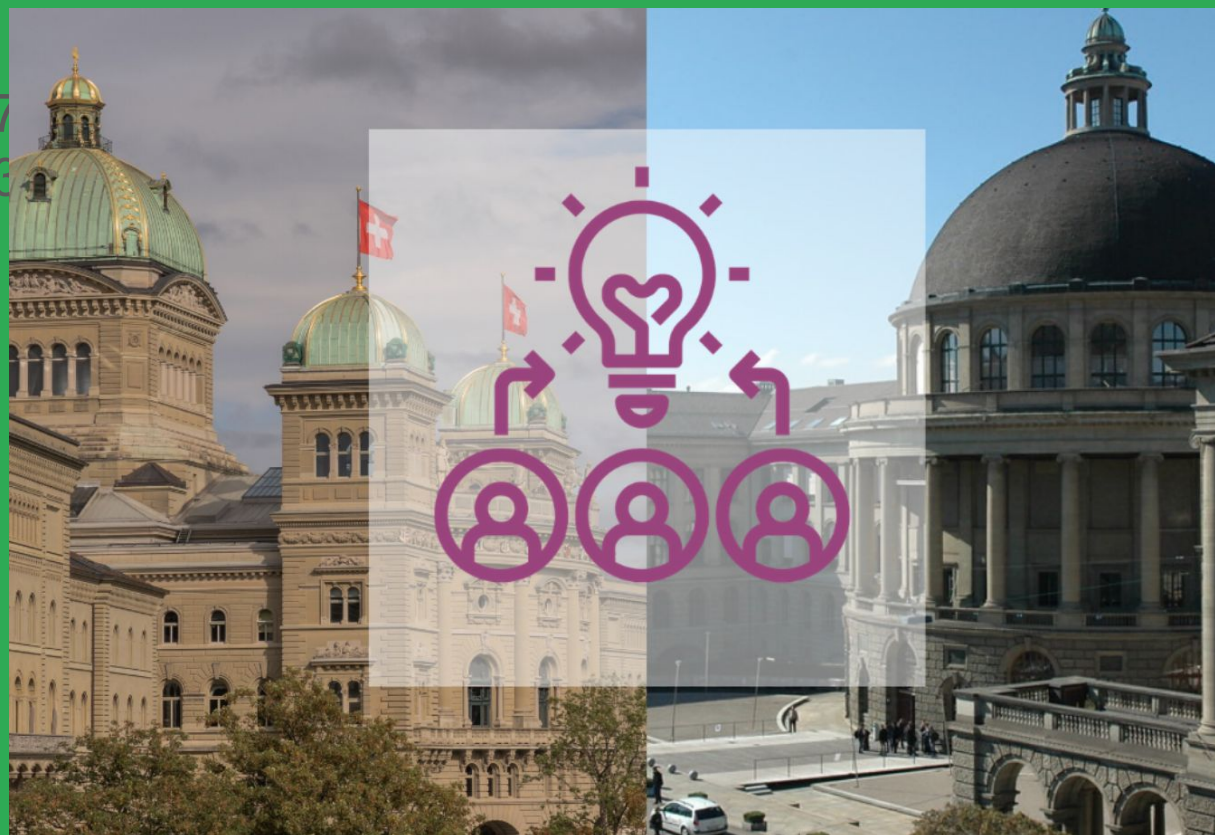
Ensuring that the policy brief reaches the right people at the right time.

Important:

- **General channels** (social media, website, newsletter) with **low guarantees** that you will reach the intended audience
- **Targeted channels** for better impact, needs proper planning and resources:
 - **personalised e-mails;**
 - **intermediaries & collaborators** (thematic civil society actors, networks, fora, knowledge hubs);
 - Does someone **in your own network** have **direct contact** to a member of your audience?
 - **hand out** to accompany **presentations** or in conversations

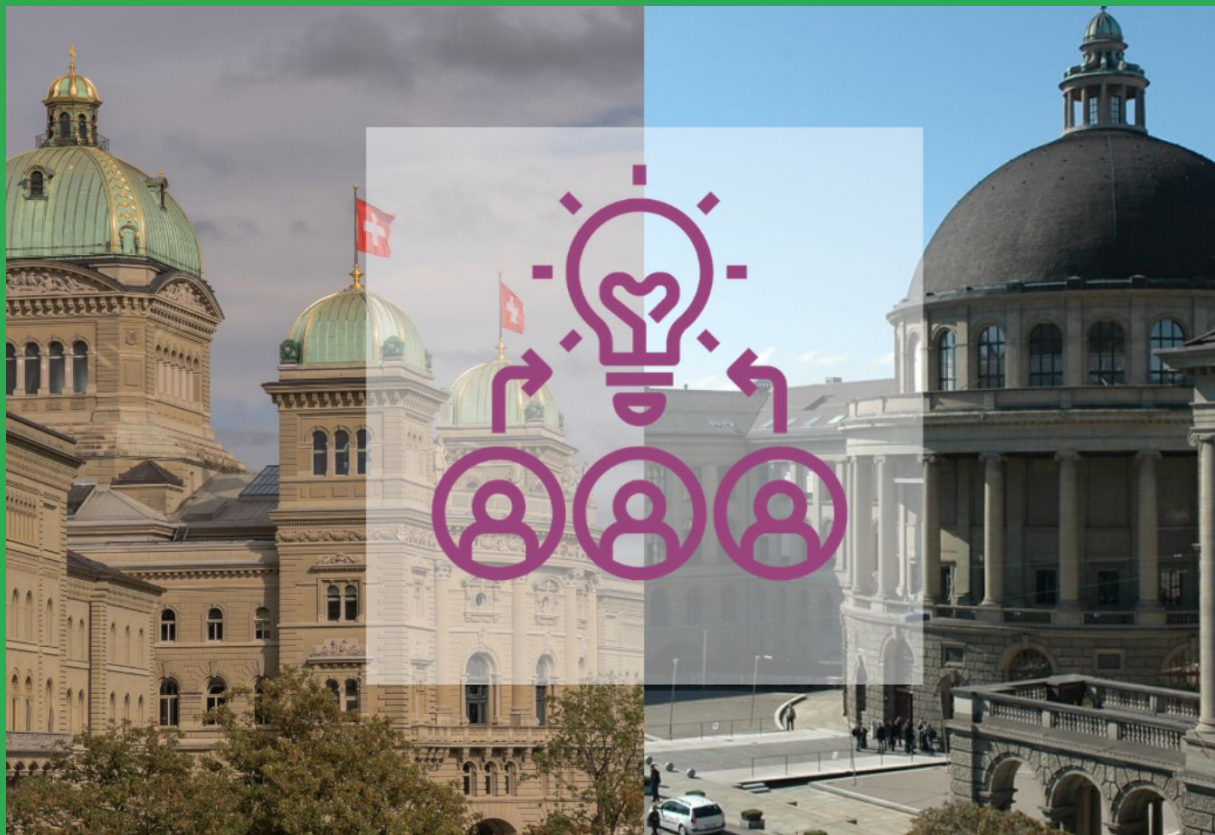
Consider: People are more likely to engage if they consider the source as trustworthy/as likely to provide relevant information.

Core Points



- Start with a **policy need** – not a research interest.
 - **Translate and contextualise evidence** for your audience.
 - Focus on **options** and **actionable insights**.
 - Keep it **short, clear** and **simple** – **guide your audience in understanding**.
 - **Plan** and **proactively steer dissemination**.
- The policy brief can be a good **exercise to gain clarity** on how your research findings relate to policy-making. **What are your most salient points?**

Useful Resources



EU Starter Kit

https://rea.ec.europa.eu/publications/sharing-scientific-evidence-policy-makers_en

IDRC: How to write a Policy Brief

<https://idrc-crdi.ca/en/funding/resources-idrc-grantees/how-write-policy-brief>

World Bank – Global Program on Sustainability: Developing Policy Briefs

<https://thedocs.worldbank.org/en/doc/e325f4a236440853757892321dc84413-0320012024/original/D2S4-DevelopingPolicyBriefs.pdf>

IPCC Handbook on Communication

<https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/2017/08/Climate-Outreach-IPCC-communications-handbook.pdf>

example policy briefs:

https://publications.jrc.ec.europa.eu/repository/bitstream/JRC145097/JRC145097_01.pdf

https://publications.jrc.ec.europa.eu/repository/bitstream/JRC146185/JRC146185_01.pdf

https://publications.jrc.ec.europa.eu/repository/bitstream/JRC145737/JRC145737_01.pdf