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	*Coffee Break*
14:15	**PART II – Roles for researchers in science-policy dialogue** **incl. Q&A and reflection on preparatory exercise**
14:55	*Coffee Break*
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**

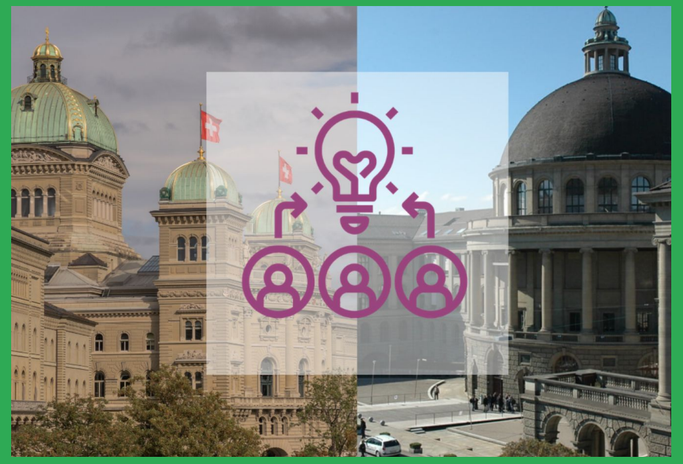
Reatch

Policy Brief Workshop SWEET

02 June 2026 | Reatch

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.

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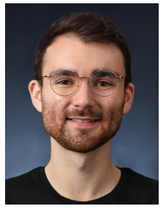
Programme Today

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

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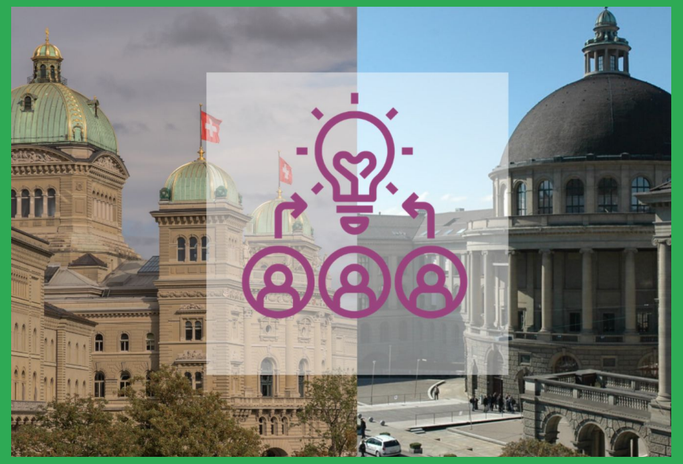
Introduction Round



- 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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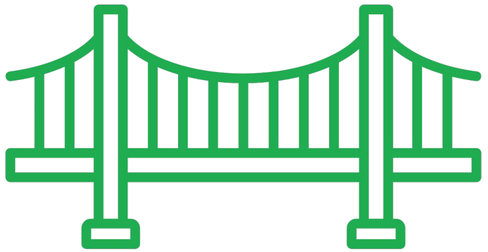
Reatch

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.

Reatch

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.

Reatch

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

Stiftung Mercator Schweiz

ERNST GÖHNER STIFTUNG

HASLERSTIFTUNG

Schweizerischer Nationalfonds

Universität Zürich[UZH]

junge akademie schweiz

zh aw

CUSO CONFÉRENCE UNIVERSITAIRE DE SUISSE OCCIDENTALE

UNIVERSITÄT BERN

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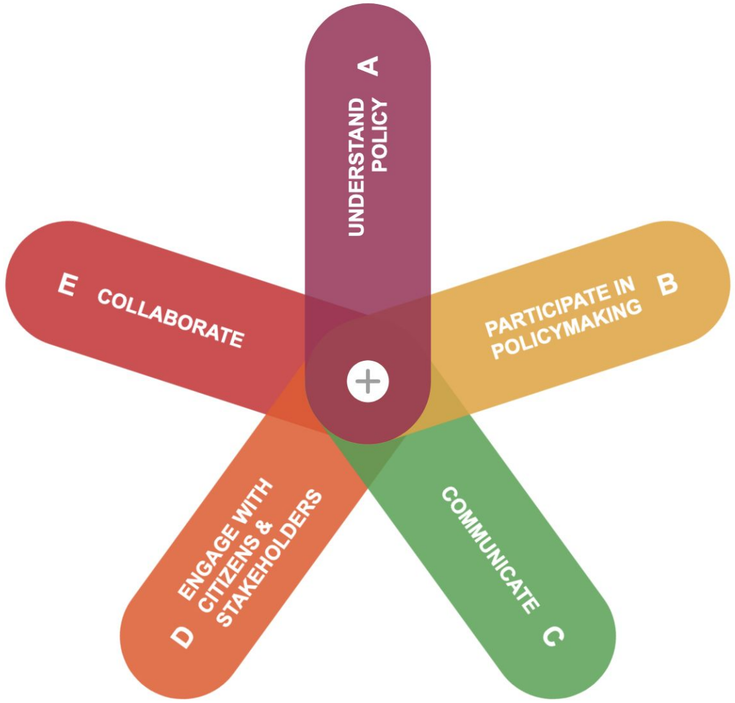
Why a policy course for researchers?



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

https://knowledge4policy.ec.europa.eu/visualisation/competence-framework-%E2%80%98science-policy%E2%80%99-researchers_en

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The Swiss Political System and Interfaces with Science

Janik Mutter, Reatch

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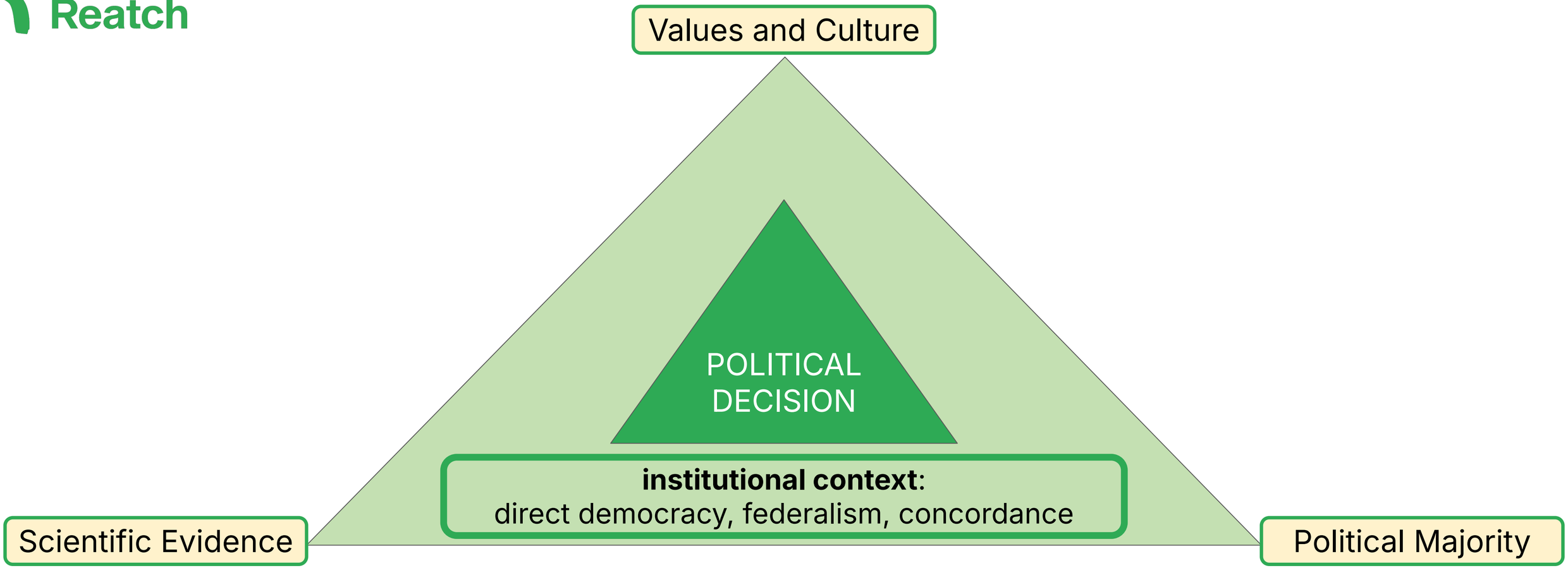

simultaneously: dealing with competing, related, or interlinked topics; including negotiations on trade-offs and conflicting objectives

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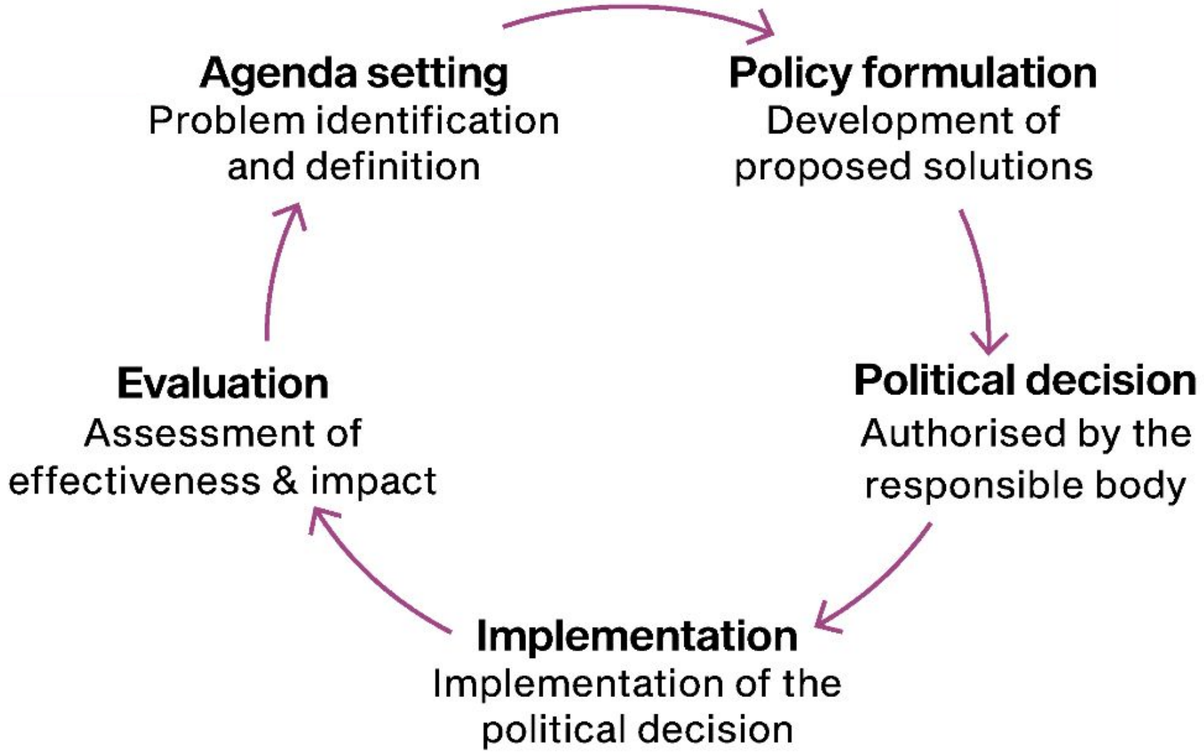
Policy-Cycle



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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

- 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

https://www.eda.admin.ch/aboutswitzerland/de/home/politik-geschichte/politisches-system/direkte-demokratie.html

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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

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	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)

https://www.parlament.ch/de/organe/kommissionen/sachbereichskommissionen

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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

Image credit: Schweizerische Bundeskanzlei

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

https://www.admin.ch/gov/en/start/departments.html

Nationale level: Executive und Administration

Staff office

FCh
Federal Chancellery

Viktor Rossi
Federal Chancellor

Autonomous organisation

Office 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

FDHA
Federal Department of Home Affairs

Elisabeth Baume-Schneider
Head of Department

General Secretariat

Federal Office of Culture

Federal Office of Meteorology and Climatology MeteoSwiss

Federal Office of Public Health

Federal Food Safety and Veterinary Office

Federal Statistical Office

Federal Social Insurance Office

Federal Office for Gender Equality

Swiss Federal Archives

Autonomous organisations

Swiss 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 Law

Federal Audit Oversight Authority

Federal Gaming Board

Federal Commission on Migration

Federal Arbitration Commission for the Exploitation of Copyrights and Related Rights

National 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 Policy

National Cyber Security Centre

Federal Office for Civil Protection

Federal 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 Finance

Federal Office for Customs and Border Security

Federal Office of Information Technology, Systems and Telecommunications

Federal Office for Buildings and Logistics

Federal Finance Administration

Federal Office of Personnel

Federal Tax Administration

Autonomous organisations

Swiss 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 SECO

State Secretariat for Education, 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 ETH

Swiss Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training

Swiss 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 Communications

Federal Office for the Environment

Federal Office for Spatial Development

Autonomous organisations

Swiss Federal Nuclear Safety Inspectorate

Federal Inspectorate for Heavy Current Installations

Swiss Transportation Safety Investigation Board

Federal Electricity Commission

Federal Communications Commission

Independent Complaints Authority for Radio and Television

Federal Postal Services Commission

Rail Transport Commission

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National Level: Executive und Administration

110 Extra-parliamentary Commissions

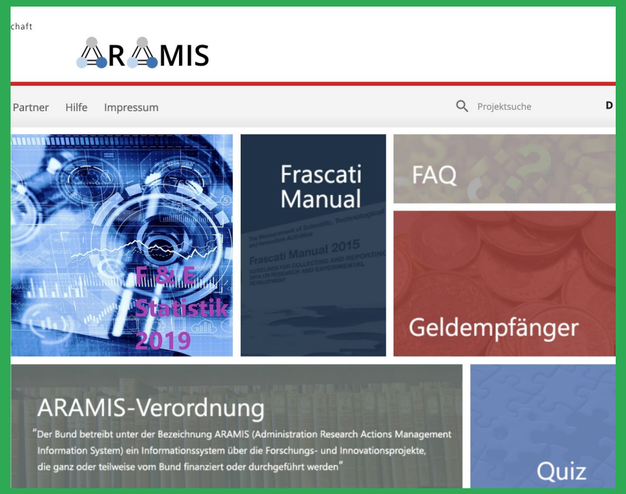
- 25 Commissions of authorities (with decision-making powers)
  - Swiss Federal Electricity Commission (ElCom)
  - Federal Energy Research Commission (CORE)
  - Competition Commission (WEKO)
  - ...
- 85 Administrative commissions (advisory organs)
  - Federal Commission for Children and Youth Issues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

https://www.admin.ch/gov/de/start/dokumentation/ausserparlamentarische-kommissionen.html

Departmental Research



ARAMIS database:
www.aramis.admin.ch/

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

sweet swiss energy research for the energy transition

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.

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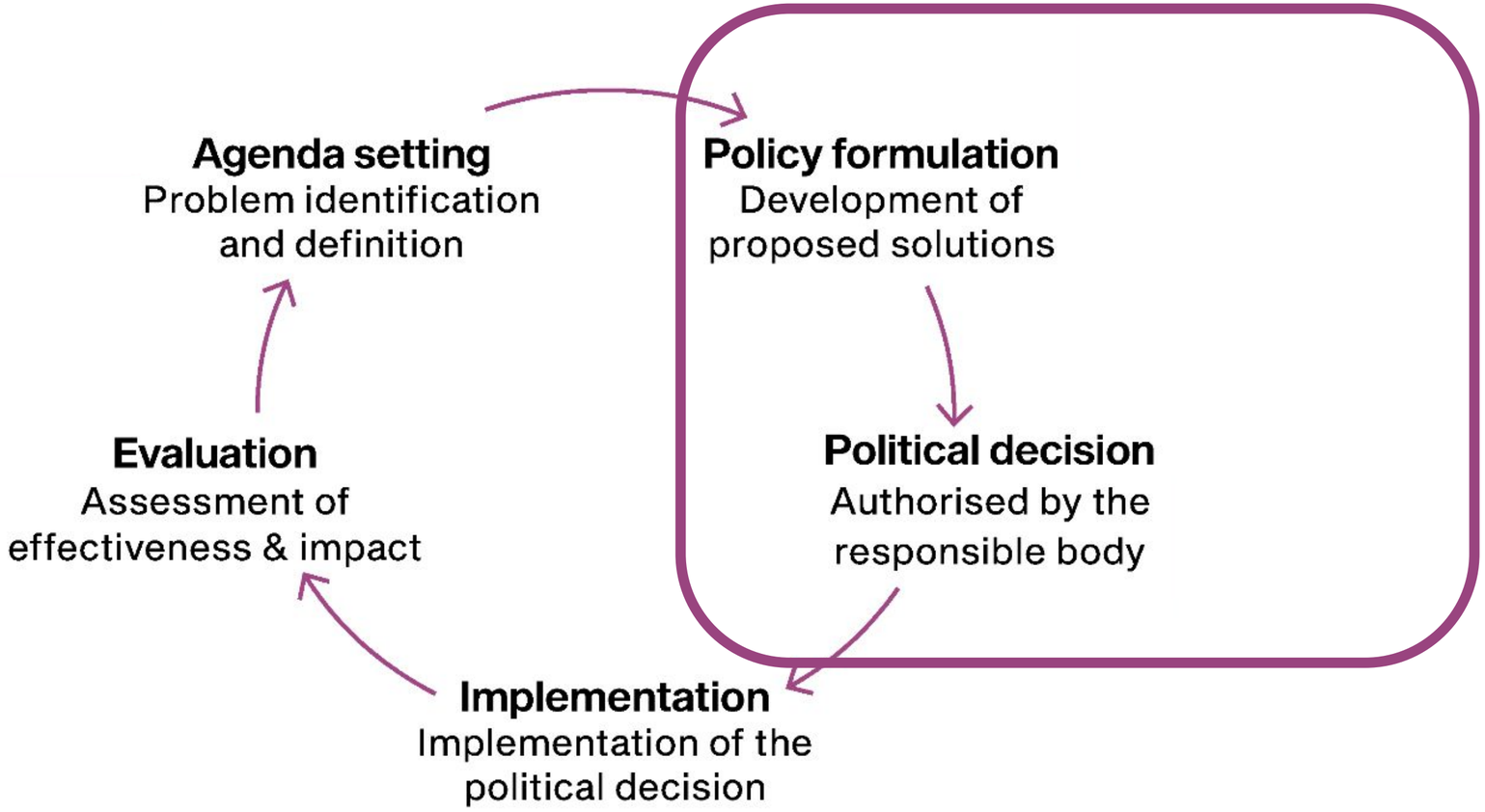
Policy-Engagement for Experts



Preparliamentary Phase

Parliamentary Phase

Direct-democratic 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).

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.

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.

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

Parliament

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).

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

Swiss voters

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

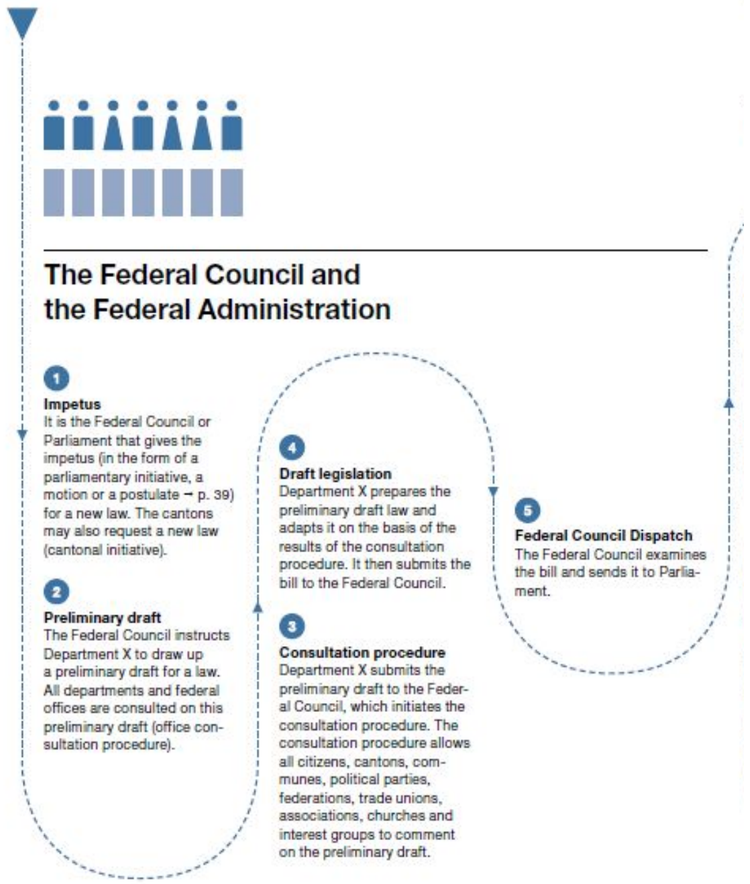
(1) Impetus by
- Federal Council (FC)
- Parliament - parl. initiative, motion, postulate
- Cantons - cantonal initiative

(2) Preliminary draft
FC commissions respective **Department**

(3) Consultation Procedure
public

(4) Draft legislation
Department revises the preliminary draft and submits it to the FC

(5) Federal Council Dispatch
FC examines draft law and sends it to Parliament



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

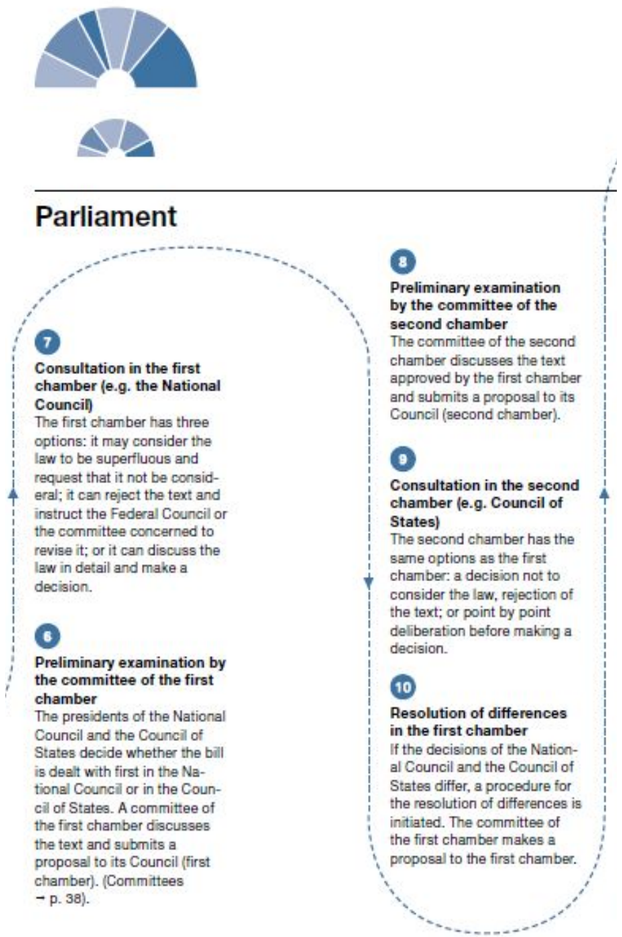
- discusses the text adopted by the Council of First Instance and proposes that the Council

(9) Consultation in Second Chamber

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

(10) Resolution of differences in First Chamber

- if decisions differ → committee makes proposal, vote in 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

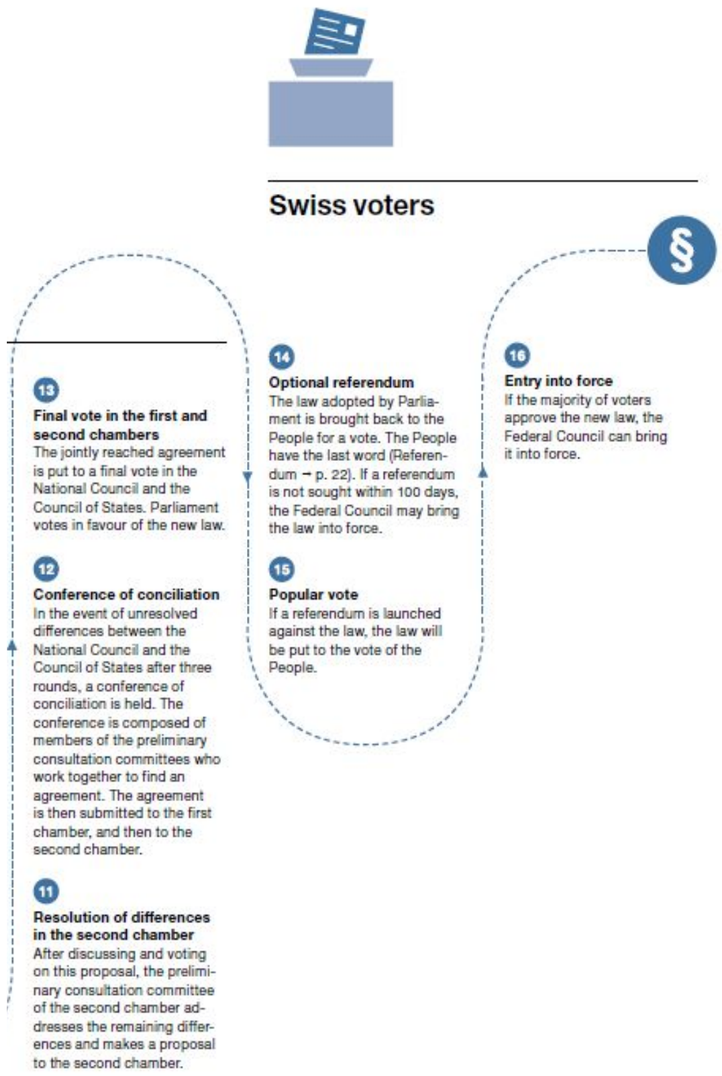
(14) Optional Referendum

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

(15) Popular Vote

- if a referendum is held

(16) Entry into Force



Preparliamentary Phase

Parliamentary Phase

Direct-democratic Phase

The Federal Council and the Federal Administration

Parliament

Swiss voters

Dialogue with administration

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

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Consultation

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Referendum

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

16
rs the bring

Implementation

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

Dialogue with administration

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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

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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
-
- ...

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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)
  - .....

https://kdk.ch/

https://haus-der-kantone.ch/organisationen

How do the various levels of government work together?

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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
Bundesrat und Verwaltung
(Bundesamt für Gesundheit)

Bund

Krankenversicherungsgesetz (KVG)
Abschnitt 4: Tarife und Preise

Preisüberwachungsgesetz

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

Interkantonal

Interkantonale Vereinbarung über hochspezialiserte 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)

einheitliche Tarifstrukturen und Organisationen:
TARMED, SwissDRG, TARDOC

Leistungserbringer

Verhandeln Tarife

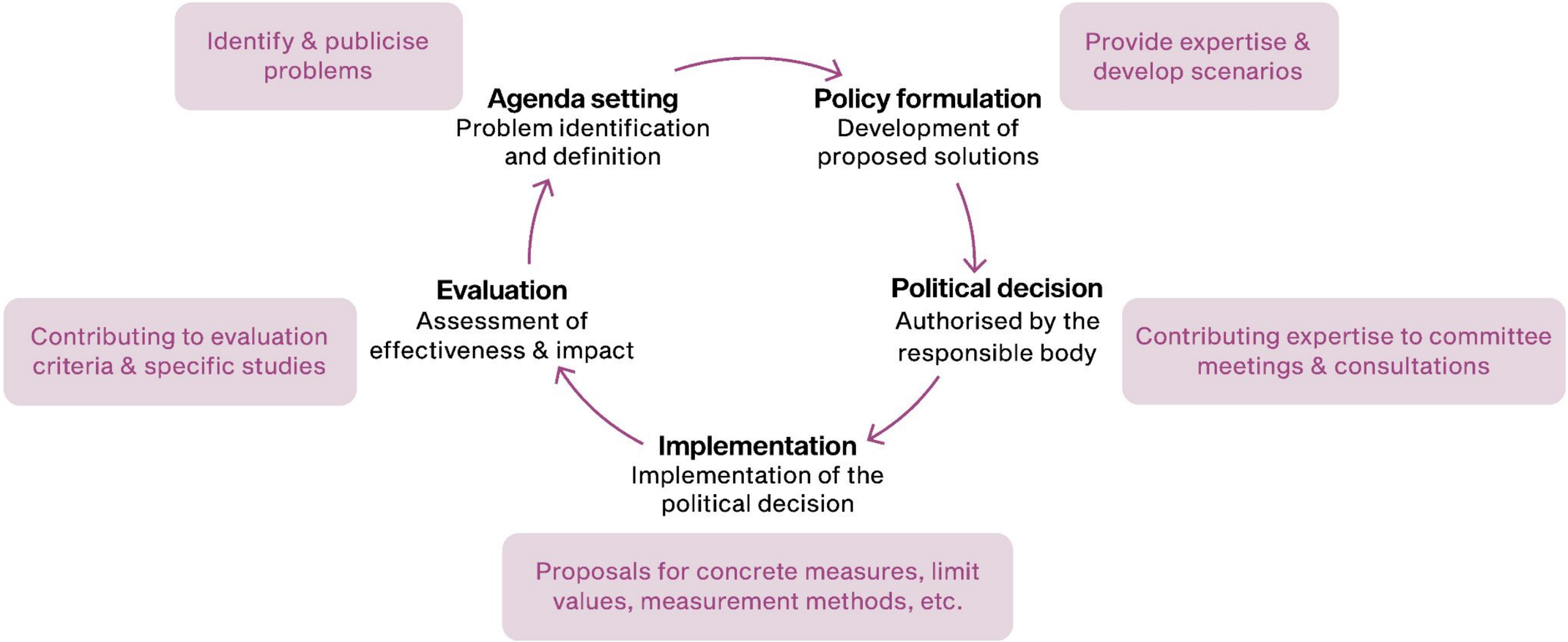
Versicherer

ggfs. mit BAG

Genehmigung Tarife

Reatch

Policy-Engagement for Experts



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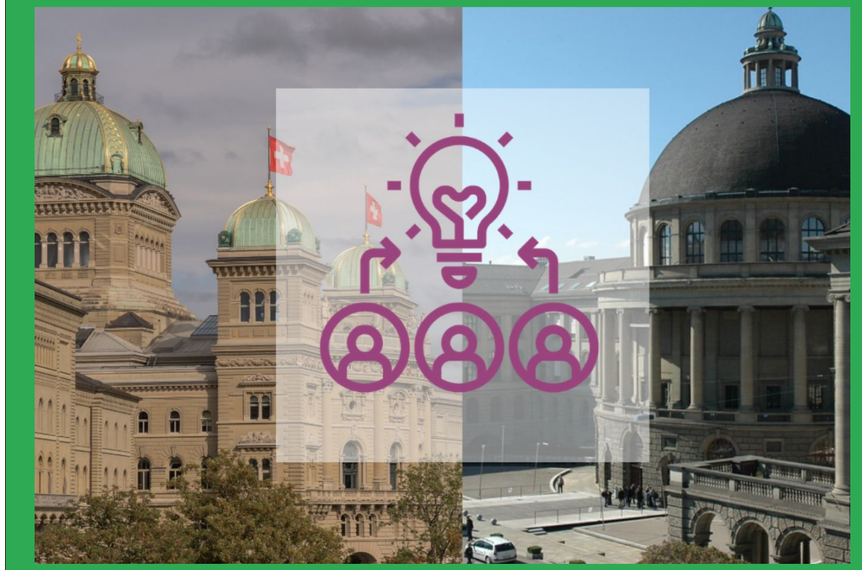
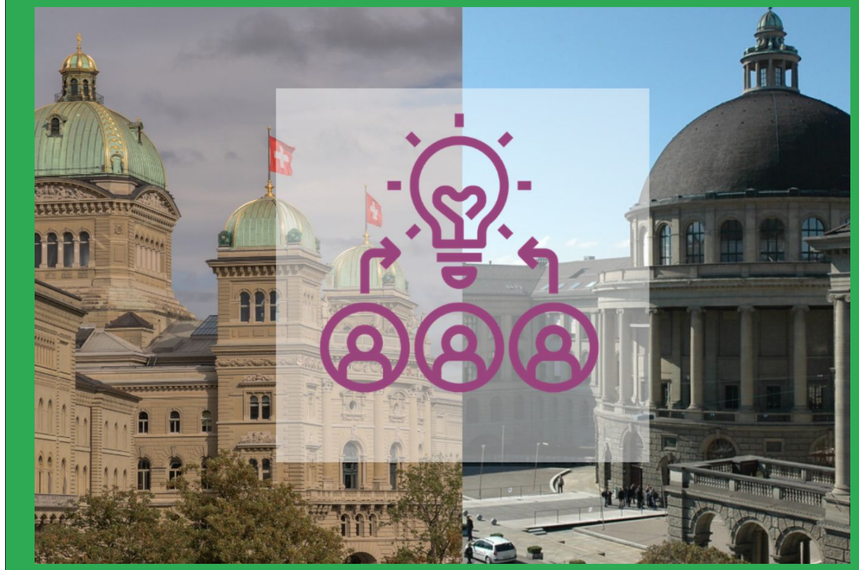
Core Points



- 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**

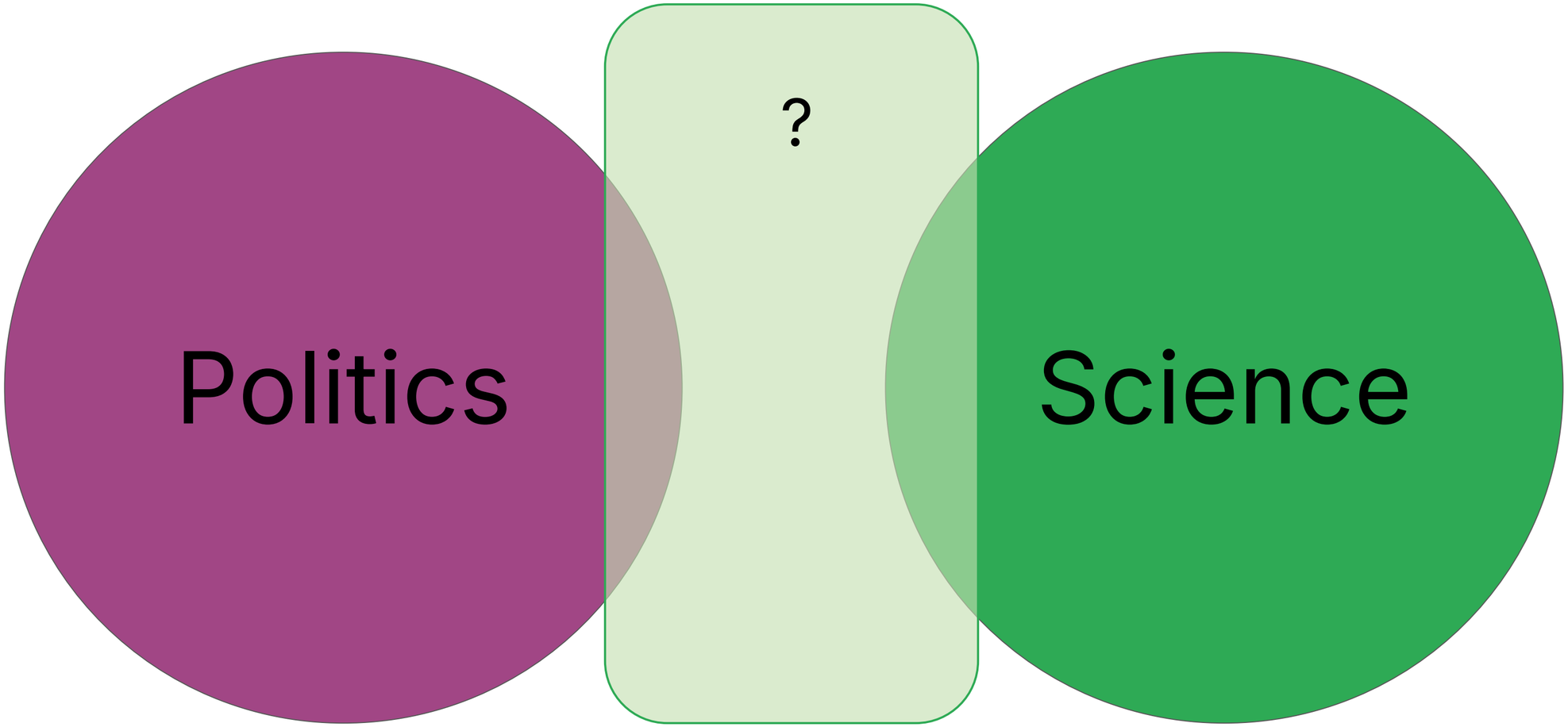
Break

Reatch

Roles for Researchers in the Science-Policy Dialogue

Hannah Schoch, Reatch

Reatch



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 ef 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**

adapted from Caspar Hirschi (Talk, 2022)

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:

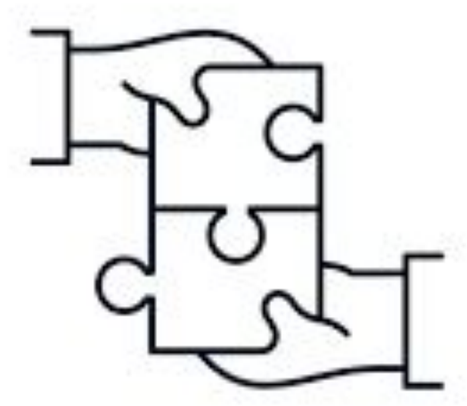
How do we ensure that it **does not turn into undemocratic technocracy** or «epistocracy»?

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

Lisa Herzog, 2023, Citizen Knowledge: Markets, Experts, and the Infrastructure of Democracy

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.**

Lisa Herzog, 2023, Citizen Knowledge: Markets, Experts, and the Infrastructure of Democracy

Reatch

Research and politics

Politics and Administration

Framework and Resources for Research

«Policy for Science»

«Science for Policy»

evidence and expertise for policy-making

Higher Education Institutions

adapted from Benedikt Knüsel, Sophie Girardin (Talks, 2024)

Reatch

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

adapted from Benedikt Knüsel, Sophie Girardin (Talks, 2024)

Reatch

Research and politics

Politics and Administration

«Science for Policy»

evidence and expertise for policy-making

Higher Education Institutions

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

adapted from Benedikt Knüsel, Sophie Girardin (Talks, 2024)

Reatch

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 particualr 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

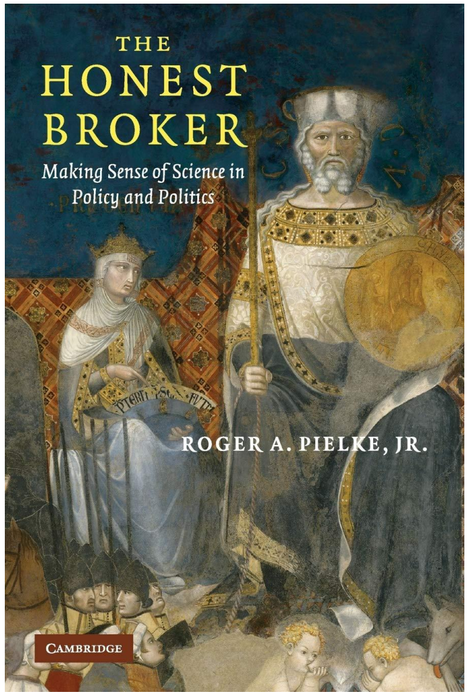
Science Arbiter

- 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 and decision process **HIGH**



Roger Pielke, 2007, The Honest Broker

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?

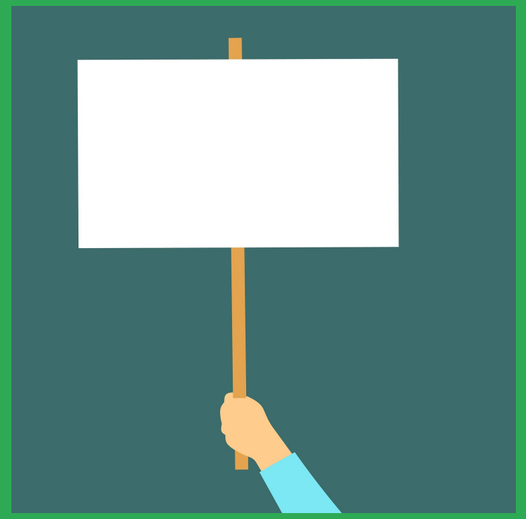
The role of “honest broker”

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

Reatch

(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

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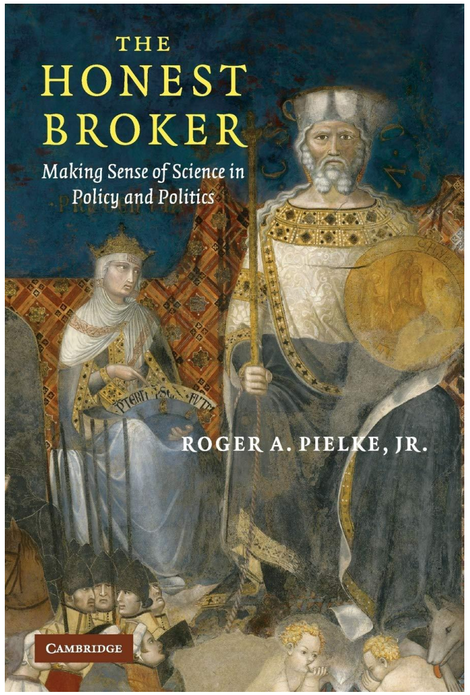

(Basic) research can be relevant without direct (political) application

Roger Pielke, 2007, The Honest Broker

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/activites, 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

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

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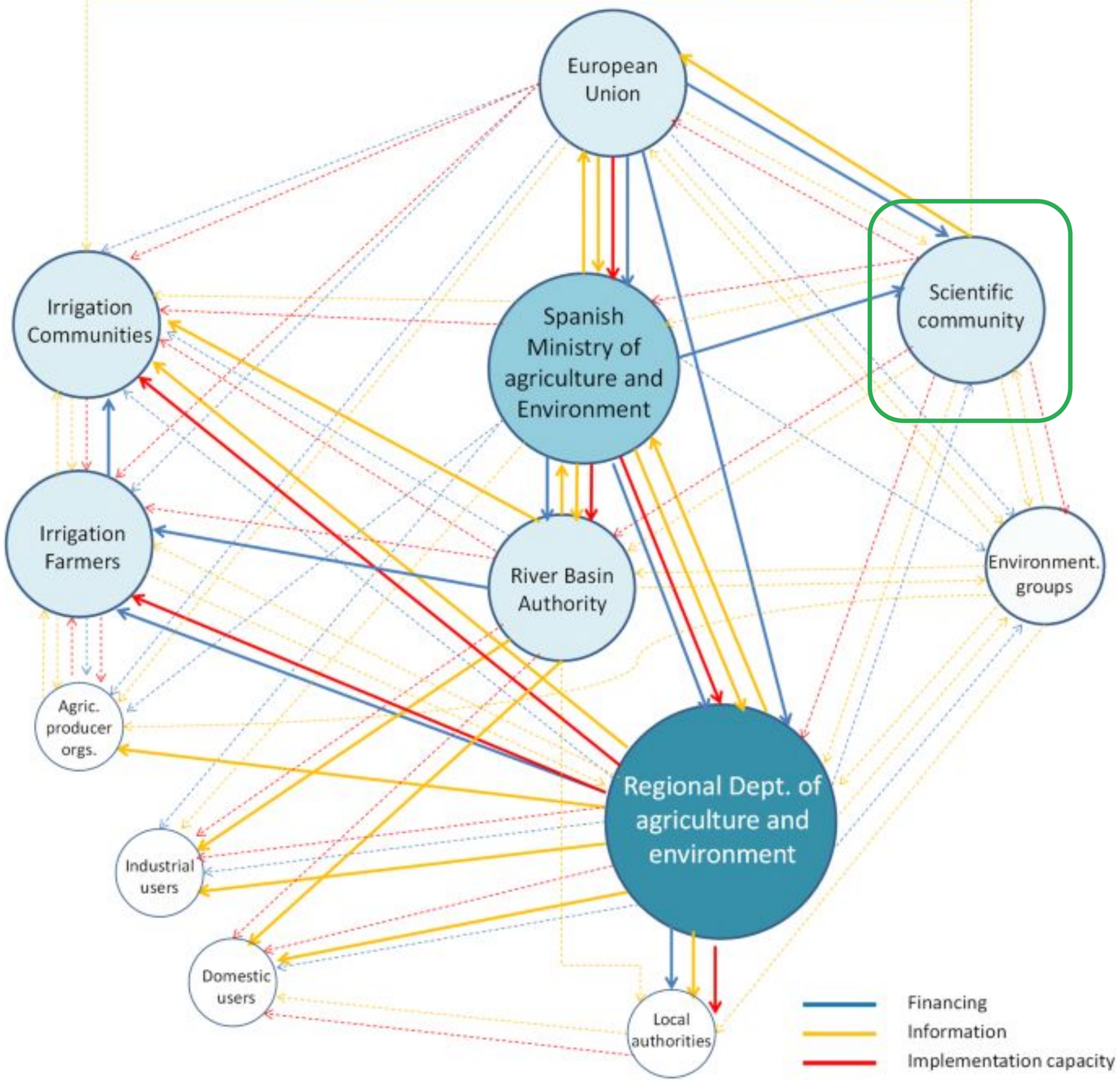
Researchers are just one of many stakeholders



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.

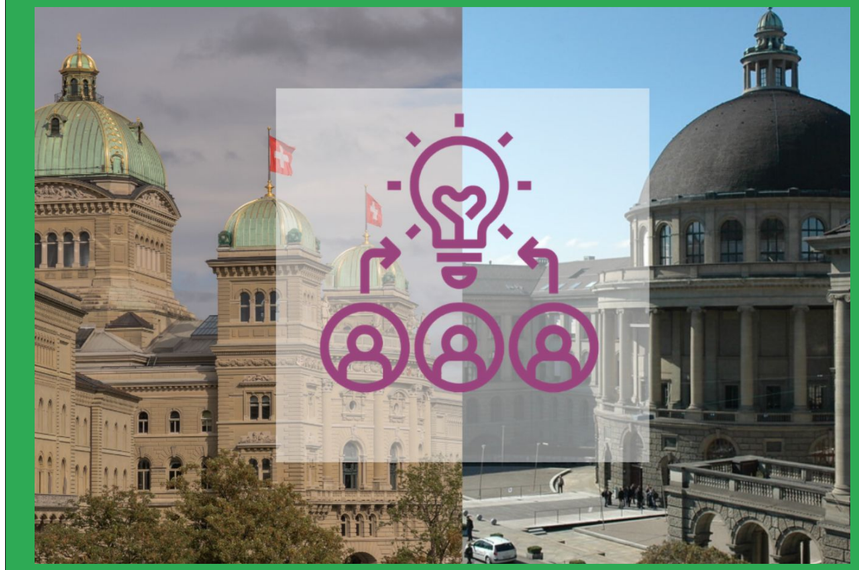
For example in Switzerland:

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

But: Choose with care – pay attention to political positioning

Reatch

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.**

Break

Reatch

Experiences and Tips from Public Administration

Anne-Kathrin Faust (BFE)

Boris Stolz (BAZL)

Reatch

Policy brief – What is it?

Hannah Schoch, Reatch

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**

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.**

Naomi Oreskes, 2017, The Scientist as Sentinel, AAAS Annual Meeting, Boston

adapted from Silvia Maier (Talk, 2024)

Reatch

Options for sharing scientific evidence with policymakers

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Policy brief: What is it, actually?

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

- 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.

Reatch

Policy brief: What is it, actually?

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

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?

Reatch

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 you 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.

Reatch

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.

Tipps:

- **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?

Reatch

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.

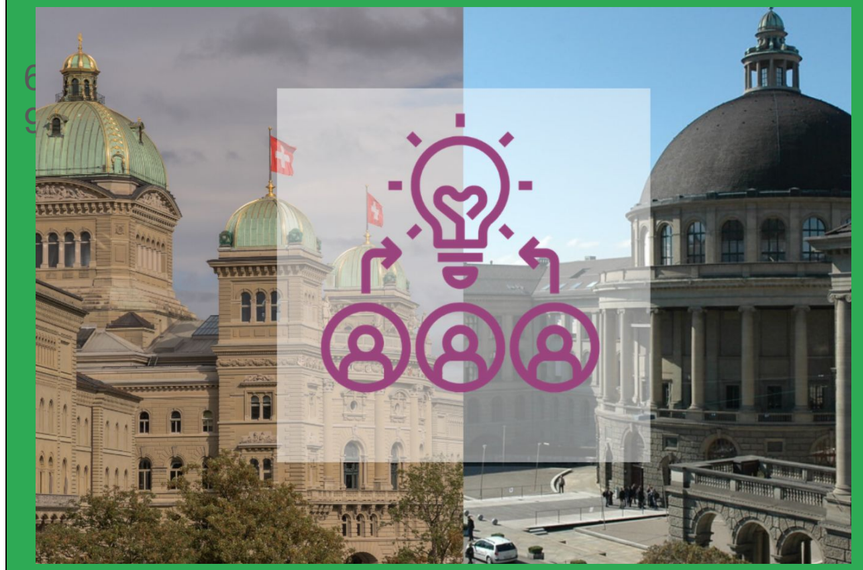
Important:

- **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.

Reatch

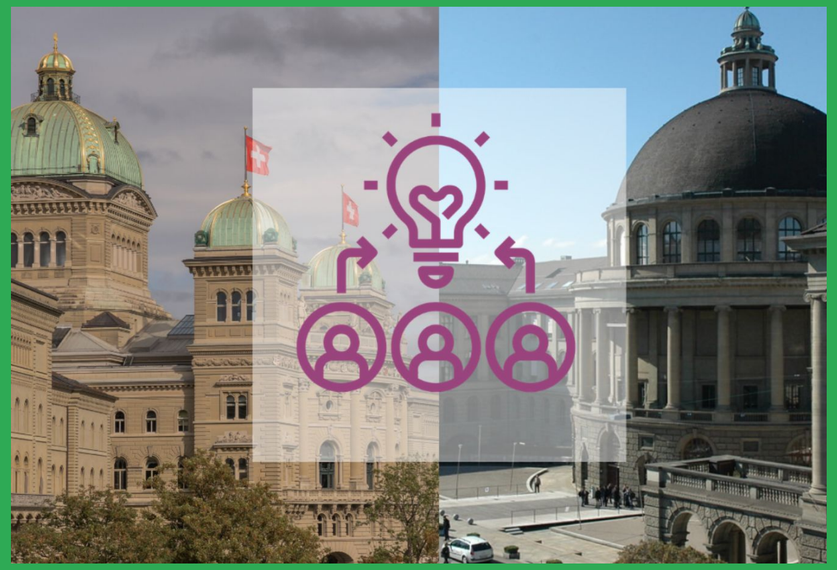
Core Points



- 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-policymakers_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

What Else?

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https://reatch.ch/franxini

Dialogue

Coaching

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Science and politics in dialogue for a democracy fit for the future.