



Strategic Capacity Report

Strategic Planning, Expert Advice

Sustainable Governance Indicators 2022

Indicator

Strategic Planning

Question

How much influence do strategic planning units and bodies have on government decision-making?

41 OECD and EU countries are sorted according to their performance on a scale from 10 (best) to 1 (lowest). This scale is tied to four qualitative evaluation levels.

- 10-9 = Strategic planning units and bodies take a long-term view of policy challenges and viable solutions, and they exercise strong influence on government decision-making.
- 8-6 = Strategic planning units and bodies take a long-term view of policy challenges and viable solutions. Their influence on government decision-making is systematic but limited in issue scope or depth of impact.
- 5-3 = Strategic planning units and bodies take a long-term view of policy challenges and viable solutions. Occasionally, they exert some influence on government decision-making.
- 2-1 = In practice, there are no units and bodies taking a long-term view of policy challenges and viable solutions.

Denmark

Score 9

Government policies have traditionally been consensus driven. This applies both to parliament, as most governments have been minority governments, and in relation to negotiations involving organizations and the political system, most notably in relation to labor market issues.

Major reforms in Denmark are usually prepared through committees or commissions established to produce reports outlining issues and options. In recent years, commissions have played an essential role in the policy formation process, including Strukturkommissionen (infrastructure commission), Velfærdskommissionen (welfare commission), Arbejdsmarkedskommissionen (labor market commission), Skattekommissionen (tax commission), Produktivitetskommissionen (productivity commission) and Dagpengekommissionen (unemployment insurance commission).

The Ministry of Finance plays a central role in initiating and coordinating strategic planning. This role is most clearly seen in the formulation of overarching strategic policy plans (usually with a horizon of about 10 years), such as the government's 2010, 2015, 2020 and, most recently, 2025 plans (Wanna et al 2017). A new plan is expected to be formulated in the near future. A primary focus of these plans has been to develop public expenditures and revenues so as to ensure that policy decisions are consistent in a medium- to long-run perspective.

In addition, it is quite common to appoint expert groups to prepare inputs for important policy discussions and reforms. The members can be experts, representatives of organizations or civil servants. The culture of professionalism in ministries has also improved.

Some reforms in the public sector – including healthcare, active labor market and social policies, and tax administration – have been criticized for being inadequately prepared. For example, tax authority reforms have been criticized for being excessively focused on cost savings, which results in less effective tax administration and a reduced ability to enforce tax compliance. The current government has allocated funds to tackle these problems. The government has also made claims to pursue decentralization despite the underlying tension between such decentralization and the overarching welfare state objective of ensuring that the population receive equal treatment.

Citation:

Wanna, John, Lotte Jensen, and Jouke de Vries, eds. *The reality of budgetary reform in OECD nations: Trajectories and consequences*. Edward Elgar Publishing, 2017.

Niels Ejersbo og Carsten Greve, *Modernisering af den offentlige sektor*. Copenhagen: Børsen, 2005.

Finance Ministry, *Finanslovsforslaget 2020*. <https://www.fm.dk/publikationer/2019/finanslovspjece-2020> (accessed 15 October 2019).

Nørgaard, Asbjørn Sonne, Poul Erik Mouritzen, and Jørgen Grønnegaard Christensen. *De store kommissioner: Vise mænd, smagsdommere eller nyttige idioter*. Syddansk Universitetsforlag, 2009.

Finland

Score 9

Strategic planning has considerable influence on government decision-making in Finland. The strategic goals of the government program are recorded in specific government-strategy documents. These strategy documents cover a one-year period and include a plan for pursuing priority goals, a notice of intent for upcoming key decisions and indicators for evaluating government performance. The implementation of the government program is assessed by a report halfway through the cabinet's tenure, which defines how strategic goals should be attained through the rest of the cabinet's time in office. The Prime Minister's Office (PMO) assists the prime minister and the government in their work and is responsible for the planning of social policy legislation that does not fall within the competence of any other ministry. The government often launches policy programs to ensure its key objectives are met. Meanwhile, the preparation and monitoring of programs is delegated to ministerial groups. In addition, the Committee for the Future deals with future-related matters. As a former entrepreneur, former Prime Minister Juha Sipilä gave the government program an even more strategic turn. For some of its policy objectives, the government utilized trial projects to assess reform impacts. The basic-income trial project, which was run with 2,000 participants nationwide in 2017 and 2018, was an example of this kind of new strategic evidence-based planning.

Finland did have a pre-existing crisis management system in place before the pandemic, but its ability to detect and monitor an incipient crisis through use of an effective early warning system, appropriate risk assessment mechanisms and relevant

expertise was limited. In an address to the parliament in April 2020, Prime Minister Marin stated: “At the beginning of the year, we had no idea that the crisis would be so profound and serious. Although Finland has a high level of preparedness for different situations when compared to many other countries, we were also surprised by the epidemic and its social and economic effects” (Prime Minister’s Announcement 2020).

Citation:

Kangas, Olli, Signe Jauhiainen, Miska Simanainen, Minna Ylikännö (eds.). The Basic Income Experiment in Finland 2017-2018. Preliminary Results. Reports and Memorandums of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health 2019:9.

Prime Minister’s Announcement 2020. Corona Crisis Management. Accessed, 28.12. 2020.
<https://valtioneuvosto.fi/en/-/10616/paaministerin-ilmoitus-koronakriisin-hoidosta>

Canada

Score 8

Neither the Prime Minister’s Office (PMO) nor the Privy Council Office (PCO) has an official strategic planning unit that is specifically dedicated to medium and longer-term scenarios. In 1997, Policy Horizons Canada was established under the PCO with a mandate to provide analysis and help the federal public service anticipate emerging policy challenges and opportunities. Its budget is small, however, and this unit has not reported through the PCO since 2007.

In practice, however, central agencies and particularly PCO and the Department of Finance have expert capacity dedicated to planning and priorities, both in policy agenda-setting and rollout. Budgets typically consider five-year horizons and various medium-term scenarios in setting the fiscal framework; planning initiatives are undertaken in lead-up to Speeches from the Throne; and larger initiatives such as innovation and skills are examples of efforts at more medium-term visioning. Given the authority and influence vested in these central agencies, the planning capacity of the government of Canada is as strong as that of other Western countries.

The current Trudeau government has also made ample use of special advisory groups to provide information and consultations on a number of policy areas (e.g., economic growth, cultural policy and issues relating to young people).

Latvia

Score 8

In December 2011, Latvia established a central government planning unit, the Cross-Sectoral Coordination Centre (Pārresoru koordinācijas centrs, PKC). The PKC’s mandate was to develop a long-term strategic approach to public policymaking, while also monitoring decision-making to ensure that public policies are effective. The PKC also monitors ministries’ progress toward meeting the government’s stated goals, as outlined in the government declaration.

As the institution responsible for the policy-planning process, the PKC ensures standardized procedures for submission of policy documents to the cabinet, including adherence to long-term and medium-term outcome indicators and the inclusion of budgetary information for additional funding within the fiscal space determined by the Ministry of Finance. It also evaluates the strategic robustness of ministry submissions to the annual three-year budget process. To strengthen the mandate of the government in key structural reforms, it established and serves as the secretariat of the National Development Council that advises the prime minister on issues such as key framework policies for the next seven-year planning period. The PKC also coordinates meetings with ministry-level policy planners in order to ensure a feedback loop for any new initiatives involving strategic planning. This group, for example, collectively approved Latvia's approach to mainstreaming the 2015 UN Sustainable Development Goals within the country's policymaking process, thus ensuring that the policy system remains systematic and coherent.

To date, the PKC has produced two National Development Plans, and has screened subsequent sectoral planning documents to ensure adherence to the plans and the Latvia 2030 framework. It contributes to policy debates on a range of cross-sectoral issues specified by the prime minister or the cabinet, including demographics and income disparities. The PKC reviews all proposals discussed by the cabinet and provides weekly briefings for the prime minister on substantive issues scheduled for discussion by the cabinet.

Despite the PKC's core role and the recent reduction in ministries' departmental units and staff numbers, the planning system remains deconcentrated. The NDP identifies the achievable outcomes and main measures mandated by the inclusive and participatory multi-stakeholder process. However, it is up to the ministries to make sector-level plans within the framework and beyond, including at the EU level.

Citation:

1. The Cross-Sectoral Coordination Centre, Information Available at (in Latvian): <https://www.pkc.gov.lv/lv/par-pkc/kas-ir-pkc>, Last accessed: 10.01.2022.
2. The Cross-Sectoral Coordination Centre (2018) Annual Report:2018, Available at: https://www.pkc.gov.lv/sites/default/files/PKCgada%20parskats%202018_FINAL_pdf.pdf, Last accessed: 10.01.2022.
3. Official Publisher of the Republic of Latvia (Latvijas Vēstnesis) (2019) Changes in the governance of State Owned Enterprises: Changes in 2020 <https://lvportals.lv/skaidrojumi/306321-grozijumi-valsts-un-pasvaldibu-kapitalsabiedribu-parvaldiba-kas-mainisies-2020-gada-2019>, Last accessed: 10.01.2022.
4. Development Planning System Law (2014) Available at: <https://likumi.lv/ta/en/en/id/175748>, Last accessed: 04.01.2022.
5. Rules for Development and Impact Assessment of Development Planning Documents (2014) Available (in Latvian): <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/270934-attistibas-planosanas-dokumentu-izstrades-un-ietekmes-izvertesanas-noteikumi>, Last accessed: 10.01.2022.

Lithuania

Score 8

Lithuania's strategic-planning system was introduced in 2000 and has been updated several times since. At the central level of government, the planning system involves all stages (planning, monitoring and evaluation) of managing strategic and operational performance. The main strategic documents include the long-term Lithuania 2030 strategy and the medium-term National Progress Program, which is in turn linked to short-term strategic-performance plans and budget programs. The planning system in general is well-institutionalized; its functioning is supported by a network of strategic-planning units within each ministry and a governmental Strategic Committee that was reintroduced in 2013. However, the strategic-planning system suffers from unnecessary complexity. About 250 strategic documents exist, while strategic action plans include 1,800 monitoring indicators. The 2016 – 2020 government developed guidelines and an action plan for restructuring the strategic-planning and budget-formulation system to focus more on results and ensure fiscal sustainability. A new draft law on strategic management is intended to regulate the results-oriented strategic-management system. Implementation of this legislation would reduce the number of strategic-planning documents from 290 to 100; however, many types of strategic-planning documents would remain. In 2020 the Act of Strategic Planning was adopted with the aim of reducing the overall number of strategic documents and goals, and creating a more efficient planning and monitoring system. Furthermore, in 2021 a new strategic-management methodology was approved by the government.

A State Progress Council composed of politicians, public and civil servants, academics, business leaders, and other representatives of Lithuanian society was established to help design the Lithuania 2030 strategy and monitor its implementation. The Council's composition was updated after the 2012 to 2016 government came to office and meetings were held on a regular basis until 2016. Although the 2016 to 2020 government was initially reluctant to employ this governance arrangement, after almost two years of putting Council activities on hold it decided to update its composition. The Šimonytė government that came to power in 2020 has promised to prepare a long-term strategy called "Lithuania 2050" by the end of 2023. In early 2022, the government approved new members for the State Progress Council, and it started its work on preparing this strategy.

More generally, although these strategic and advisory bodies take a long-term perspective and offer viable policy solutions, their influence on governmental decision-making varies by policy issue. There is a certain gap between the long-term policy aims contained in various strategic documents and both the outcomes of concrete legislative decisions and the actual practices of individual public sector organizations, especially during the times of crisis. The persistent problems in properly applying impact assessments in the legislative process to a large extent explain this gap. In addition, politically important decisions are sometimes made

without due consideration of strategic priorities and performance-monitoring, with strategic-planning documents and performance reports often playing little role in daily decision-making processes or the activities of street-level bureaucrats.

New Zealand

Score 8

New Zealand has unique constitutional arrangements resulting in a significant concentration of power in the cabinet and a highly cohesive system of cabinet government. The core executive in New Zealand is organized according to new public-management approaches and methods. Most importantly, contracts are negotiated between ministers and chief executives. With the large number of government departments and ministers (26, with a further three undersecretaries), most of whom are responsible for several portfolios, taking a whole-of-government approach to policy development can be complex and time-consuming. In addition to this, since 1996, coalition governments and support party arrangements have meant that cabinet government, while still an essential aspect of the system, includes a multiparty dimension that can disrupt collective ministerial responsibility.

Recent governments have reacted to concerns about fragmentation by recentralizing the steering capacity of the core executive. The most important government departments involved in strategic planning and policy formation are the central agencies of the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC), the State Services Commission (SSC) and the Treasury. The DPMC consists of six units: the Cabinet Office, Government House, the Policy Advisory Group, the National Assessments Bureau, the Domestic and External Security Group, and the Corporate Services Unit.

All contracts (performance agreements and departmental statements of intent) support a cooperative and whole-of-government policy approach, though evaluation of the performance assessment of chief executives has a strong focus on departmental achievements. The prime minister can draw on only moderate strategic-planning capacity (in the form of the Policy Advisory Group) vis-à-vis ministers. Ad hoc groups, often including some outside expertise, are increasingly used to complement government agencies' policy-advisory function. Moreover, the prime minister has access to the Office of the Prime Minister's Chief Science Adviser (PMCSA), whose role is to provide advice regarding how science can inform good decision-making in New Zealand. There is also a network of chief science advisers attached to a range of government departments, and a Chief Science Adviser Forum. These sources of science-based advice for the government have been important in highlighting evidence from the scientific and research community relating to key policy challenges, but the government is not required to follow such advice.

Department of the Prime Minister and the Cabinet (DPMC). Annual Report 2018. <https://dpmc.govt.nz/publications/annual-report-2018>

Office of the Prime Minister's Chief Science Adviser (PMCSA) <https://www.pmcsa.ac.nz/>

Spain

Score 8

The idea of reinforcing long-term thinking and smarter policymaking has drawn increasing political attention in Spain in recent years. Several key areas including economic policy (structural reforms), climate change, security and external action, are addressed through strategic documents that receive annual evaluations. Strategic planning units and bodies take a long-term view of policy challenges and viable solutions.

The lack of experience in forming coalition governments has had an impact on the effectiveness and coherence of policy formulation, and has led to coordination problems among ministries since 2020. However, the coalition agreement included several strategic plans. Moreover, the RRP addresses the specific challenges the country is facing and the interests of future generations. For long-term planning, the Ministry of the Presidency created a National Foresight and Strategy Office in 2020, following other similar precedents in previous governments. In 2021, the office presented its proposals for a long-term national strategy that would look toward 2050. However, this office is not fully integrated in the general process of executive policymaking, and its policy recommendations do not effectively condition the departments' initiatives. Policy advice is very fragmented among ministries.

Royal Decree 286/2017 of 24 March regulates the government's Annual Regulatory Plan and the Annual Regulatory Assessment Report. The measure also created the Regulatory Planning and Assessment Council. Since 2018, the Council of Ministers has approved a regulatory plan at the beginning of each calendar year. The plan for 2022 was approved on 11 January 2022.

Citation:

Royal Decree 286/2017 of 24 March

Oficina Nacional de Prospectiva y Estrategia del Gobierno de España (2021), España 2050, https://www.lamoncloa.gob.es/presidente/actividades/Documents/2021/200521-Estrategia_Espana_2050.pdf

Sweden

Score 8

The strategic capacity of the government has been enhanced over the past few years. Much of that capacity is found in the finance ministry where most of the long-term planning takes place. The main role of the Prime Minister's Office is not so much long-term planning but more coordination within government.

In addition to these planning efforts in the government departments, the agencies are also engaged in planning. They do not operate in close proximity to the departments, however. The exception to this pattern is when a department asks one of its agencies to look into a particular issue and to prepare advice on possible policy initiatives.

The center-right government (2006 – 2014) invested considerable energy in increasing coordination among government departments and improving executive agency steering. The Social Democratic-Green minority governments (2014 until summer 2021) have not made any sustained efforts in this respect.

Strategic policy planning in Sweden is performed using commissions of inquiry. Most of these commissions are ad hoc, appointed by the parliament, and their membership tends to reflect the parties with seats in the parliament. Recently, public servants have come to take on a larger role on these commissions. Some commissions are conducted by a single person, a high-ranking nonelected official. The authors of commission reports hold regular meetings and engage in ongoing negotiations with the politicians who ordered the investigation. In practice, any conflicts regarding the contents of the report are teased out during that time. Petersson (2016) notes that commissions of inquiry have increasingly become less independent, especially with the assignment of one special investigator with support staff as opposed to a team of investigators (see also Dahlström, Lundberg and Pronin, 2019; Petridou and Sparf, 2017).

Citation:

Dahlström, Carl, Erik Lundberg and Kira Pronin. 2019. "Det Statliga Kommittéväsendets Förändring 1990-2016." SNS Analys Rapport nr 59. (Stockholm: SNS).

Petersson, Olof. 2016. "Rational Politics: Commissions of Inquiry and the Referral System in Sweden." In Jon Pierre (ed.), "The Oxford Handbook of Swedish Politics." 650-662. Oxford University Press.

Petridou, Evangelia and Jörgen Sparf. 2017. "For Safety's Sake: the Strategies of Institutional Entrepreneurs and Bureaucratic Reforms in Swedish Crisis Management, 2001–2009." *Policy and Society*, 36(4), 556-574.

United States

Score 8

The U.S. government has a number of units that analyze policy issues and make long-term projections as part of the assessment of current options. The Executive Office of the President has multiple staffs and agencies tasked with analyzing various policy issues. On the legislative side, the Congressional Budget Office analyzes the 10-year fiscal impact of all bills with budget implications. Expertise about long-term considerations is available in abundance, in the agencies, Congress and the White House.

In most areas of government and policy, President Trump had virtually no interest in long-range planning, professional expertise or even organized, careful deliberation. The advent of the Biden administration led to a return to more traditional policymaking within the White House. Professional expertise has once again taken front stage and economists are playing a central role in decision-making. The Biden Administration is looking to capitalize on the strategic planning process required for agencies to advance their goals. Strategic plans with goals and performance measures for fiscal years 2022 through 2026 are due from agencies in February

2022. Agencies are also required by the Office of Management and Budget to align their goals with the Biden Administration's top priorities like equity, pandemic response, recovery and climate.

Australia

Score 7

Probably the most important government body for encouraging long-term strategic policy development is the Productivity Commission, which notionally provides advice to government on microeconomic policy, but which increasingly is asked to provide advice in other policy areas. The Productivity Commission conducts reviews and inquiries as directed by government, and also independently produces research reports. All advice and reports are released publicly in a timely fashion.

Within the federal public service, extensive use is made of committees to undertake strategic planning, and the activities of these committees generally peak immediately before and after the transition to a new government, and in the pre-budget period. The public service also maintains a single department, the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, with the aim of coordinating and directing strategic planning across the government as a whole.

The geopolitical challenge Australia is confronted with has resulted in the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet taking a more active role.

<http://www.blackincbooks.com/books/dog-days>

<http://www.smh.com.au/federal-politics/political-news/paul-keating-australia-lacks-a-foreign-policy-to-negotiate-the-rise-of-china-20160830-gr4y70.html>

Productivity Commission: <https://www.pc.gov.au/>

<https://www.pc.gov.au/research/ongoing/trade-assistance>

<https://www.pc.gov.au/research/completed/rising-protectionism>

Austria

Score 7

As in many other European democracies, Austrian governments tend to be coalitions, as usually no single party manages to secure an absolute majority in parliamentary elections. In terms of strategic capacity, this has both advantages and disadvantages. On the one hand, executive responsibility is blurred, as the presence of too many veto players prevents the development of consistent strategic capacity. On the other, governing coalitions are conducive to more inclusive government. Political decision-making in Austria is still characterized by a tendency to prefer a maximum of consensus, even at the price of postponing necessary decisions and shying away from taboos identified with the interests of special groups (e.g., public service unions or organized agrarian interests). Inter- and intra-party veto players have significant influence and tend to undermine strategic capacity.

Strategic-planning units and bodies consisting of public officials exist within the individual ministries. The Federal Chancellery can be considered the principal strategic-planning unit, as it is responsible for coordinating the government's various activities. However, it lacks the specialized personnel that would enable it to work as a comprehensive strategy unit and has no power to give instructions to other ministries.

The ÖVP-FPÖ coalition government (2017–2019) established secretary-generals above the traditional structures within departments and across all departments in an attempt to improve the government's strategic capacity. This regime has been continued under the ÖVP-Green government (since 2020), despite some initial concerns voiced by Green ministers. A secretary-general is only answerable to the minister. The intention is to give the respective minister (through the secretary-general) direct control over the department. A recent report by the Austrian Federal Audit Office found that the suggested “streamlining effects” on internal decision-making (as well as the suggested cost reduction for other departmental personnel) remained notably moderate, and in some cases even added to contradictory orders and counter-productive processes within departments.

As in most other countries with complex governmental structures (including coalition governments and federalism), such as Germany and Switzerland, Austria's overall performance in the coronavirus pandemic was taken by observers as a sign of structural weakness at the level of the government's strategic steering capacity. It has to be noted, however, that much of this “observed” structural weakness arises out of the federal division of powers within Austria and cannot be considered a direct effect of weak government decision-making at the national level.

Citation:

https://www.rechnungshof.gv.at/rh/home/news/Generalsekretaere_Zusaetzliches_Personal_Risiko_von_Doppe.html#

<https://www.wienerzeitung.at/nachrichten/chronik/oesterreich/2083897-Covid-19-und-die-evolutionaere-Sackgasse-des-Oeffentlichen.html>

Belgium

Score 7

Each minister (or secretary of state) works closely with a team of collaborators in each ministerial cabinet. Each cabinet is usually large, with as many as 30 to 40 senior staff and experts. Meetings take place often, and the team designs policies in line both with the minister's objectives and the government agreement. The minister and the advisory team are then responsible for drafting bill projects which are then submitted to the government in weekly meetings.

In terms of long-term planning, the knowledge accumulated by a minister's collaborators can be lost at the end of a legislative period, as the ministerial team changes with the minister. Moreover, the frequency of staff rotation is generally

high. In contrast, public administration is run by civil servants with longer tenures of office, but these groups do not generally take part in strategic ministerial decisions. Long-term planning (beyond a legislative term) is therefore made difficult. The main rationale for relying on the minister's team instead of civil servants is that the former are the minister's (and the party's) close aides and tend to be more flexible in terms of working hours and availability for emergency situations.

The federal Planning Bureau (Bureau du Plan/Planbureau) does play a role in providing longer strategic planning options, but in general it is the ministerial cabinets that are the main movers of legislative efforts.

Chile

Score 7

The president has the ability to ask for and ensure strategic planning, whether through formal or informal channels. Line ministries, most notably the Ministry of Finance, and the president's advisory ministry (Secretaría General de la Presidencia, Segpres), have considerable influence in strategic planning processes. Meetings between strategic planning staff and the head of government are held frequently. However, no long-term view of policy challenges and viable solutions is necessarily presented – these are either limited in scope or depth of impact depending on the topic. Strategic planning, policy-planning and regulatory reforms, budget planning, and ex ante evaluation of government policies and public-investment programs are carried out by specialist units and departments inside the various ministries. While there is no explicit multi-year budget planning process in place in Chile, this takes place implicitly due to the fiscal rule that (by law) links overall government expenditure to forward-looking estimates of long-term government revenue, based on growth trends and copper-price projections. These forecasts are provided in a transparent way by specialist budgetary commissions comprised of academic and private sector experts (mostly professional economists).

Ireland

Score 7

There is some evidence that Irish policymakers improved their strategic-planning capacity since the period in the immediate aftermath of the crisis. The annual reports on successive government programs detail a more coherent strategic approach to policymaking and increased use of advisory bodies. The government has relied heavily on experts over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic to inform policymaking and to justify decisions, especially the chief medical officer and members of the National Public Health Emergency Team (Colfer, 2021).

However, independent advice is not always followed. Popular pressures for increased spending and tax reductions continue to influence government decisions regarding the annual national budget and often reflect the proximity of a general

election. Prior to the pandemic, the Irish Fiscal Advisory Council, and the Economic and Social Research Institute urged the government to devote more of the revenue gains arising from economic improvements to reducing the budget deficit quicker, at the expense of lower taxes and increased spending. However, the imposition of limits on mortgage lending, intended to moderate the rise in home prices following the experiences of the housing crash, is a welcome example of unpopular but prudent strategic thinking.

While coalition agreements have been increasingly monitored, especially since the innovations of the 1992 – 1997 coalition government, concerning the much greater use of special advisers and program managers, more recently governments have published annual monitoring reports on the coalition programs. These tend to be very detailed annual reports, some much longer than the original coalition agreement. The 2020 Programme for Government: Our Shared Future document runs to 128 pages with no review published yet within the life of this government (Gov, 2020)

Citation:

Colfer, B. (2020) Herd-immunity across intangible borders: Public policy responses to COVID-19 in Ireland and the UK, *European Policy Analysis*, 06(02) pp 203-225, <https://doi.org/10.1002/epa2.1096>;

Gov (2020) Programme for Government: Our Shared Future, Department of the Taoiseach, 27 October, available at: <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/7e05d-programme-for-government-our-shared-future/>

Italy

Score 7

The concept of strategic planning is not particularly developed in Italian governmental and administrative culture. This is in part due to the fact that governments have been predominantly preoccupied with coalition problems and that the administration is still very much guided by a legalistic culture. Nevertheless, some progress has been made under recent governments. Recent government programs have been more detailed, and have become significant instruments for organizing and planning government activity. Within the government office (called the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, or *Presidenza del Consiglio*), a special department guided by a minister without portfolio has been created to oversee the implementation of this program. This department produces regular reports on the program's implementation status.

The financial aspect of strategic planning has historically been somewhat more developed, as the Treasury has to implement rigorous budgetary stability goals and works within a triennial perspective.

The configuration of the first two cabinets of the 2018–2023 legislature was based on rather incoherent majorities (the Five Star Movement and the Northern League for the first one, and the Five Star Movement and Democratic Party for the second) and with a prime minister who wielded little political clout compared to the coalition party leaders. This left little space for policy-focused strategic planning. Since the

beginning of 2020, the COVID-19 emergency has increasingly distracted the second Conte government from strategic planning.

The Draghi government – thanks to the strong personality and authority of the prime minister, and under the pressure of the implementation of the Recovery and Resilience Plan (PNRR) – has significantly improved the mechanisms of strategic planning. A strategic and coordinating unit (Cabina di Regia) under the Presidency of the Council of Ministers has gained a crucial role in the monitoring and driving of government actions linked to the PNRR. At the same time, however, it is still not sufficiently clear whether the strong centralization of PNRR guidance will be successful not only in the design (as it has been), but also in the implementation of the PNRR.

Malta

Score 7

Each government ministry has a director and unit responsible for strategy and planning. In 2015, a new unit focused on information and the implementation of standards was introduced in the office of the prime minister to facilitate coordination between various stakeholders when implementing projects. These are strongest in the Ministry of Finance, the Malta Planning Authority, the Malta Transport Authority, the Ministry of Justice and Home Affairs, and the Education Ministry. The influence of strategic planning units over fiscal and education policy has increased. A Budget Implementation unit also monitors the implementation of policies with relevance to the budget. In 2020, the Malta Financial Services Authority (MFSA) and the Malta Police Force have been overhauled. A special cabinet committee was set up to review constitutional reform. However, the number of strategic planning commissions has mushroomed in recent years. The coronavirus pandemic has played an important part in this development. Overall Malta, was among the countries that handled the pandemic best, maintaining the economy, employment and health security. This success was due to many of the reforms previously carried in the public service.

Within ministries, the permanent secretary is responsible for developing strategy, including identifying key performance indicators, and determining timeline and budgets. Strategic plans normally run over three-, four- or five-year cycles and are often developed in the course of consultation with internal and external stakeholders. Internationally recognized benchmarking methodologies are used to track progress. Ministries increasingly employ consultants to produce reports on current policy issues, a practice that may be regarded as forward planning. The Management Efficiency Unit coordinates separate ministry plans and the Malta Information Technology Agency (MITA), which reviews government IT requirements, also assists. Usually when a policy is to be reformed or updated a strategic plan is released for consultation. It has been proposed that the annual government budget be instead shifted to a multi-year timeframe to ensure a greater degree of continuity and

long-term planning. However, the performance audit by the Audit Office regarding the Vitals global healthcare deal clearly indicates the absence of strategic planning units in government decision-making. The audit states, “The NAO was unable to audit the process of negotiations held between government and the VGH as information made available was severely limited. As a result, it was not possible for this Office to understand how key changes to the concession came about, the precise role played by those involved in negotiations and whether critical changes were appropriately endorsed.” The audit further states, “Records of meetings held by the Steering Committee were provided to the NAO, facilitating this Office’s visibility over the strategic management of the project. However, of note to this Office were the concerns expressed by the PS Ministry for Health (MFH) (referred to as the PS MEH-Health in the preceding paragraph) regarding his involvement with the Steering Committee. Although minutes retained indicated his attendance at a few meetings, the PS MFH asserted otherwise, claiming that he was only invited once, expressed reservations regarding the project that were not captured in the minutes and was subsequently not invited to any other Steering Committee meeting.”

Citation:

<http://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20150823/local/malta-keeps-a-rating-deficit-is-down-economy-stronger.581555>

<http://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20151002/local/dbrs-confirms-maltas-long-term-rating-at-a-stable.586719>

<http://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20151004/business-news/ey-predicts-malta-gdp-growth-of-39-in-2015-29-in-2016.586905>

<http://www.politico.eu/article/maltas-eu-presidency-how-did-it-go/>

<https://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20170701/local/eu-presidency-a-fantastic-experience-has-come-to-an-end-pm.652048>

Caleja Ragonesi L., Maltese Presidency aims to make the ordinary extraordinary. Europe’s Word January 2017

Strategic Plan 2017-2020 Academy for disciplined forces Malta

Mobile Government Strategy 2017-2018ffddddd

Ufficju tal – prim Ministru, Rapport Annwali 2020

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Dec 2021 – An audit of matters relating to the concession awarded to Vitals Global Healthcare by Government Part 2 | A review of the contractual framework – download abridged – download

Netherlands

Score 7

The Dutch national government is run at the cabinet level as an exercise in political risk management by a smart “fixer” (e.g., Prime Minister Rutte), who is well known for his aversion to strategic vision. The political inevitability of multiparty coalition governments with narrow parliamentary majorities almost dictates a monistic relationship between parliament and executive. Therefore, important decisions are taken during Monday morning meetings between the prime minister and his core cabinet and the leaders of (four) coalition parties. Sectoral ministers outside the core lend support in preparing decisions, but play a larger role in departmental implementation planning. In cases where political support is difficult and the problematic is societally and technically complex, the Rutte government used another typical Dutch coalition tactic: “poldering” through extensive societal

consultation with numerous business and civil society associations (also see “Societal Consultation”) This “double compromise” nature of Dutch politics is hardly conducive to policymaking through well-thought-out long-term strategy.

As a kind of countervailing factor, the Dutch government has four strategic-planning units: the Scientific Council for Government Policy (Wetenschappelijke Raad voor het Regereingsbeleid, WRR), the Netherlands Bureau for Economic Policy (Centraal Plan Bureau, CPB), the Netherlands Institute for Social Research (Sociaal Cultureel Planbureau, SCP) and the Netherlands Environmental Assessment Bureau (Planbureau voor de Leefbaarheid, PBL). All of these are formally part of a ministry, but their statutes guarantee them independent advisory functions. Yet, their close ties to government departments means they are frequently used to model the short- and mid-term effects of proposed policy proposals. The CPB and PBL in particular are “obligatory passage points” in the financial-economic feasibility testing that has dominated neoliberal austerity strategies for over a decade. Even parliament imposed upon itself the rule that every new policy proposal had to fit within given financial constraints. This resulted, on one hand, in the huge financial reserves that allowed the government to provide generous support to firms during the coronavirus pandemic; on the other hand, for a long time, it slowed down the shift away from neoliberalism and effectively choked serious policy initiatives and investment in areas such as education and the greening of the economy.

It was this political climate that in 2019-2021 led to political demonstrations by farmers, construction workers, teachers, students and healthcare workers on a scale not seen for decades. Another long-term negative impact of the neoliberal political mood has been knowledge “leakage,” if not destruction, in the departmental structure and in the civil service. In the departmental structure, the political will to reduce the cabinet to as few members as possible resulted in the abolition of the Department for Housing, Spatial Planning and Environment – policy domains where huge problems popped up during Rutte III. The recruitment and training of civil servants focused much more on procedural matters, political communication skills and damage control rather than innovative thinking in terms of the environment, climate change, the sustainability transition strategy, or the skills needed for a rapidly changing economy and society. Also hampering matters was the fact that the system for recruiting top-level civil servants is not linked to strategic government goals, but rather to implementing a carousel of interorganizational mobility with fixed term limits (the average departmental top-level civil servant occupies his/her position for only about four years before moving on to another position, mostly in another department.)

Long-term steering capacity has traditionally been strong in the areas of water management and the management of care – that is, in ensuring the maximum opportunity for good care for every eligible citizen, for an acceptable cost. Planning units jointly advocated a coordinated long-term exit strategy for the coronavirus crisis and the development of pandemic preparedness for a next public health crisis;

and they have released a flurry of new policy proposals, although their data and policy recommendations, in the age of science skepticism, have been attacked by the political parties that normally rely on them for political debate and deliberation. These proposals have addressed the areas of pensions, population growth, most aspects of climate change (the Urgenda verdict, the new nitrogen-emissions rule, biodiversity in the Dutch natural environment), the future of Dutch agriculture, traffic infrastructure and mobility, (social) housing, the future of care as a social issue, the role of money and financial regulation, and labor market regulatory reforms, digitalization and the use of algorithms by government, and for the first time in many years, long-term planning on defense issues.

Many of the issues mentioned in these long-term strategic explorations and scenarios appear to have found their way into the new coalition agreement of December 2021. Yet the agreement reads more like a wish-list expressing the need to start making serious policies on long overdue problems than a coherent strategy for the future. Moreover, responding to the political mood and desire to conduct government in a more dualist way, and to have more steering flexibility and space for political debate and negotiations with opposition parties, the agreement for the first time in recent history drops the routine practice of thorough financial feasibility testing of coalition agreement proposals.

Citation:

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WRR rapport no. 105. 11 November 2021. Opgave AI. De nieuwe systeemtechnologie.

Clingendaal, Netherlands Institute of International Relations, DECEMBER 2020. Hoe moet de Nederlandse defensie er in de toekomst uitzien? Het perpetuum mobile van uitstel.

Norway

Score 7

Significant strategic planning takes place in the course of governmental decision-making. The Ministry of Finance is responsible for long-term planning, and also presents views during the annual budget cycle on how best to cope with long-term economic challenges and public sector financing.

The standard procedure for major decisions and reforms entails the following steps: First, the government appoints an ad hoc committee tasked with delivering a detailed report, a green paper, on a particular issue. Some of these committees are composed exclusively of experts, while others may have a broader membership that includes politicians and representatives of unions, business confederations and other non-governmental organizations. Since the 1970s, the number of academics in these committees has increased significantly, while the total number of committees appointed per year has decreased. The next step is to circulate the report to interested parties with an invitation to comment on analysis and policy proposals. Normally, a period of three months for comments is recommended, and six weeks is the minimum period. Third, after comments have been received will the government prepare a proposal for parliament, sometimes in the form of a parliamentary bill, but occasionally only as an initial white paper. Governments deviate from this procedure only in cases of emergency, and any attempt to circumvent it would lead to public criticism.

There is an established procedure for the approval of the annual budget. Activity starts a year in advance, when the government holds three conferences on the budget proposal. The finance minister presents an initial proposal to parliament in the first week of October. A parliamentary committee plays an active role in the budget process, making concrete proposals for the distribution of resources. This proposal becomes the basis of parliamentary discussion. After the parliament approves a proposal for the allocation of resources, it becomes binding for subsequent, more detailed discussions that take place in various parliamentary committees. By December 15, this work is concluded and the final budget is approved by (majority in) the parliament.

South Korea

Score 7

Strategic planning remains an important priority in South Korean governance. Strategic priorities are set by the powerful presidential office, although the fact that the president only serves a single five-year term makes it difficult to plan beyond a single electoral cycle. President Moon launched his five-year vision and plan (“100 Policy Tasks: A Nation of the People, A Just Republic of Korea”) in September 2017. This was supplemented and reinforced in December 2019 by the longer-term “2045 Vision for an Innovative, Inclusive Nation.” To help him develop implement these plans, President Moon relied on the Presidential Commission on Policy

Planning, including a policy unit comprised of the Future Policy Research Center (responsible for research and support on national mid- to long-term policies) and the State Affairs Tasks Support Group (provides respective research and support). In total around 100 committee members, mostly professors or other experts, work in one of the six subdivisions addressing the issues of people's sovereignty, national growth, inclusive society, sustainability, decentralization, and peace and prosperity. In addition, the two special committees on income-led growth and the New Southern Policy help to identify key policies that the government will pursue, and help develop medium- and long-term plans to carry out the policies.

While managing the COVID-19 pandemic overshadowed other policy objectives for most of 2020, the Moon administration took the opportunity of developing a COVID-19 response and recovery plan to review and reinvigorate his administration's strategic plan. The administration launched the Korean New Deal in 2020 and updated it in 2021. The New Deal – with its three pillars Digital, Green, Human – is consistent with the five-year strategy. The New Deal incorporates and reinvigorates key policy priorities such as fostering a more inclusive, innovative and green economy; improving social protections; and implementing balanced regional development. Moreover, the New Deal seems to strike an appropriate balance between short-to-medium-term response and recovery and long-term transformation.

Citation:

국정기획자문위 6개 분과 34인 '정책통 라인업' ('Policy Management Lineup' of 34 members in six subdivisions of the State Affairs Planning Advisory Committee). Maeil Business Newspaper. May 19, 2017. <https://www.mk.co.kr/news/politics/view/2017/05/336552/>

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Korea Ministry of Economy and Finance. "Government Announces Korean New Deal 2.0," July 14, 2021. <https://english.moef.go.kr/pc/selectTbPressCenterDtl.do?boardCd=N0001&seq=5173>.

대통령직속 정책기획위원회 (Presidential Commission on Policy Planning) <http://www.pcpp.go.kr/>

Estonia

Score 6

The supporting structures of government in Estonia are mainly located in the line ministries. The Government Office (GO) includes the Strategy Unit, which supports and coordinates the drafting of strategic development plans and government action plans, and monitors the implementation of these policy documents. It has increased in staff size in recent years (from nine in 2015 to 16 in 2021) and has a central role in coordinating the national strategy, Estonia 2035.

The national strategy is closely related to the process of the state budget strategy. Meetings of the prime minister and ministers take place every year, where the achievement of the strategic goals of Estonia 2035 and any necessary changes are

discussed. Prior to the state budget strategy meetings, the strategy director of the GO provides an overview of the state of implementation of Estonia 2035 at a meeting of the cabinet of ministers, highlighting possible bottlenecks in the implementation of the strategy. Although the administrative process of strategic planning is well established, members of parliament from various parties remain skeptical about the real effect of the Estonia 2035 plan (Riigikogu Toimetised 2020). In addition to the Strategy Unit, there is also the Prime Minister's Bureau, which is comprised of experts in various policy areas who advise the prime minister. Different from the Strategy Unit, this body is mostly linked to the prime minister's political party and its members change with each new prime minister.

In 2017, the Foresight Center (FC) was established by the parliament to carry out long-term social and economic analyses, and draft development scenarios. The center consults parliamentary committees, but has only an implicit connection to the executive. The FC has implemented several policy analyses (e.g., examining the future of the tax system, healthcare and long-term care, the sustainability of the pension system, and mobility and transport scenarios), but no policy reforms have so far been initiated on the basis of these analyses. In 2021–2022, the FC staff size and budget was reduced.

Citation:

Riigikogu Toimetised 2020, vol 4. <https://rito.riigikogu.ee/eelmised-numbrid/nr-42/>

Germany

Score 6

Since the 2013 coalition agreement, German governments have strengthened strategic planning as a cross-sectoral topic for ministries (Bundesakademie für Sicherheitspolitik 2021). In the last legislative term 2017–2021, the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) acted as coordinator in the context of its Foresight (Vorausschau) instrument. A mid-term conference of this initiative collected contributions from various ministries that have increasingly devoted resources to strategic foresight processes over the past ten years. As a result, efforts to consider long-term trends have increased. The Chancellery also now features a strategic foresight group tasked with long-term planning issues. According to experts, this increase in foresight analyses is having an impact on government policies (Bovenschulte et al. 2021).

In the new government's coalition agreement, strategic foresight is not explicitly mentioned. However, there is an emphasis on forward-looking behavior in various policies (Koalitionsvertrag 2021), though it remains unclear whether this will result in strengthened foresight analysis on the part of government with greater impact on actual policy formulation.

Citation:

Bovenschulte, Marc, Simone Ehrenberg-Silies, Kerstin Goluchowicz, Christoph Bogenstahl (2021): Regierungs-Foresight - Stand und Perspektiven, Working Paper des Instituts für Innovation und Technik in der VDI/VDE-IT, Nr. 59.

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Koalitionsvertrag (2021): Mehr Fortschritt wagen, Bündnis für Freiheit, Gerechtigkeit und Nachhaltigkeit, Koalitionsvertrag zwischen SPD, Bündnis 90/Die Grünen und FDP.

Greece

Score 6

Strategic planning has long proved difficult for the central government in Athens thanks in large part to the archipelago-like character of governance involving conflicting political interests, clientelism and a highly formalistic administrative culture that fosters segmentation. Weak horizontal coordination within and among ministries, government agencies and state-owned companies used to make matters worse.

Strategic planning took precedence after the change of government in 2019. The new government passed a new law aiming to reorganize the government and the upper echelons of the central public administration. The law strengthened the core of the government by reorganizing the Prime Minister's Office, which became the Presidency of Government. The reorganized prime minister's office included strategic planning and programming units. It also assumed new tasks such as coordination of government policy across ministries and annual legislative planning. That office works side by side with two government ministers without portfolio, which assist the prime minister with supervising the daily functioning of government and long-term policy cycles. Compared to the past, in 2020–2021, strategic planning has vastly improved.

Citation:

The new law on strategic planning was 4622/2019.

The website of the Greek prime minister is <https://primeminister.gr/en/home>

Israel

Score 6

Strategic planning units are located under the Prime Minister's Office (PMO), and include the National Economic Council, the National Security Council (NSC) and the Policy Planning Department. Strategic planning and implementation for major issues in Israel are very centralized under the PMO. A recent example is the national handling of the COVID-19 crisis by the NSC instead of the National Emergency Management Authority (NEMA), the designated crisis preparedness and response coordination authority.

In general, the most prominent step taken by the PMO in terms of efforts to foster strategic planning has been the annual publication of the Governmental Plan Book.

The book offers a review of the Israeli government's strategic planning units. Since 2019, the PMO has described its updated version of the book as the continuation of the government's efforts to translate government policy into measurable and comparable goals across all policy fields and government offices.

Citation:

"A guide for government planning," The department for policy planning, September 2010 (Hebrew)

Arlozorov, Merav, "Serious, Ambitious, and Improving: Some Good Words on Netanyahu's Government," The Marker, 5.3.2017, <https://www.themarker.com/news/1.3903271>

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The Government ICT Authority 2019-2021 Strategic Plan, 2019, (Hebrew):

https://www.gov.il/BlobFolder/generalpage/strategic_plan_19/en/STRATIGY-%20ICT%20AUTHORITY%20-%20ENGLISH.pdf

"Policy departments – auxiliary tool for navigation," the Reut institute 11.6.2008.

Policy Planning round tables, PMO office, June 2016 (Hebrew), <http://www.pmo.gov.il/policyplanning/shituf/Pages/roundtable.aspx> (Hebrew)

Round Tables: why did we stop them?, Tuvanot (Insight), 2019, https://www.insights.us/blog_he/renewal-at-insights-us

Round Tables in the PMO, Sheatufim, 2019 <https://sheatufim.org.il/subject/cross-sector/pmo/>

Japan

Score 6

The central-government reform of the Koizumi government in 2001 strengthened the role of lead institutions considerably. The unit officially in charge of "policy-planning and comprehensive policy coordination on crucial and specific issues in the cabinet" is the Cabinet Office (Naikaku-fu), which assists the prime minister and his cabinet. It is supported by a well-staffed Cabinet Secretariat (Naikaku-kanbō). The Cabinet Office also coordinates a number of policy councils including the Council on Economic and Fiscal Policy. While there is a certain amount of overlap between councils concerning strategic issues, the councils have at least contributed to informing executive and public discourses. Whereas individual line ministries have strategic-planning units staffed with mid-ranking officials, their actual influence on long-term planning seems to be limited compared to the clout of bureau chiefs and more senior officials such as administrative vice-ministers. Policy-planning units tend to have very few staff members.

Prime Minister Abe's (2012-2020) reliance on the same chief cabinet secretary since 2012 greatly contributed to strengthening the role of the Cabinet Office as a strategic-planning unit, as it came to dominate fields such as foreign policy. However, the power rests with the leading politicians rather than the bureaucrats involved.

Citation:

Harutaka Takenaka, Institutional Foundation for the Abe Government's Political Power, Japan Foreign Policy Forum, No. 49, October 2018, <https://www.japanpolicyforum.jp/politics/pt20181011174513.html>

Dmitry Filippov, How Shinzo Abe Is Changing Japan's Foreign Policy Apparatus, The Diplomat, 13 December 2018, <https://thediplomat.com/2018/12/how-shinzo-abe-is-changing-japans-foreign-policy-apparatus/>

Mexico

Score 6

The Mexican president is required by law to produce a strategic plan in his first year in office. At a lower level, there are quite a few planning units within the Mexican government, though they do not all have decisive input in the policymaking process. Longer-term, Mexico has committed itself to the SDGs and created a specialized technical committee involving 25 federal agencies, which will collect the statistical information required to monitor progress.

President López Obrador has an extraordinarily high level of legitimacy. Elected with the support of more than 53% of the Mexican voting population, with a majority in Congress and high approval rates (65% in November 2021), he has initiated a wide-ranging transformation of Mexico, the so-called fourth transformation. First, he repealed several reforms of the former government, such as the education reform. Second, he stopped infrastructure projects, like the new Mexico City Texcoco Airport. In addition, President López Obrador has created new social programs and plans to revive the Mexican oil industry. He has also pledged to demilitarize the war on drugs, a strategy which has so far failed. Another element of the so-called fourth transformation are state and electoral reforms. Mexico has numerous autonomous bodies and agencies; however, the government plans to limit their autonomy and centralize power, indicating that one goal is to cut government spending, among other arguments. Overall, strategic planning involved in these transformations has been concentrated in the presidency, less in strategic planning units and bodies.

United Kingdom

Score 6

Although the United Kingdom has one of the most centralized political systems and is one of the long-established liberal democracies in the world, the resources directly available to the prime minister are relatively limited compared with those available to other heads of government. Formally, there is no prime ministerial department to provide strategic planning or advice, although the Cabinet Office provides an important coordinating role across government and its head, the cabinet secretary, attends cabinet meetings. The cabinet secretary is also the head of the civil service, after the two roles were separated under the 2010 – 2015 coalition government. In 2014, the post of chief executive of the civil service was created with the incumbent becoming a permanent secretary of the Cabinet Office in 2015. The departure of the incumbent CEO in April 2020 saw the role modified to chief operation officer, with a remit to lead efficiency drives across government. The Cabinet Office also houses

the National Security Adviser and a centralized COVID-19 taskforce, with both offices led by top-ranked civil servants (permanent secretaries).

The governance of the Cabinet Office includes a board charged with the strategic and operational leadership of the department, on which eight of the 17 members are external, non-executive directors from diverse backgrounds. For strategic coordination across government, the key body is the Economic and Domestic Affairs Secretariat (EDS), established in summer 2015. Generally, the Civil Service has undergone substantial modernization and professionalization over the past decade. As the 2021 Cabinet Office annual report notes, its remit has “expanded from our traditional secretariat work to a much wider role at the center, coordinating delivery and driving change across government.”

At a political level, a special advisory unit has supported all recent prime ministers. Special advisers and civil servants staff these advisory units. The remit of the Number 10 Policy Unit is defined by the prime minister but tends to focus on strategic political and policy decisions. In 2021, the prime minister set up a new delivery unit, headed by Michael Barber (who had previously fulfilled a similar role during the Blair administration), to ramp-up policy implementation, replacing the Implementation Unit set up by David Cameron.

However, these structures in some cases diminished the executive’s ability for strategic planning, especially in the case of policy disunity in cabinet. Prime Minister Boris Johnson and his (then) chief special adviser, Dominic Cummings, quickly adopted a strategy that combined opacity with confrontation, alleging that Parliament worked against “the people.” Without a majority in the House of Commons and without a public strategy for the government, this resulted in what many observers considered to be close to a constitutional crisis.

After Johnson won a substantial majority in the 2019 general election, the conflicts diminished initially. When Cummings was forced to leave, there was a substantial drop in headline grabbing initiatives and a return to normal civil service consultations. Latterly, a series of revelations about the conduct of staff in number 10 Downing Street have cast doubt on the effectiveness of the machinery for government strategy, highlighting the important role of the prime minister in setting the tone.

Citation:

https://civilservicelearning.civilservice.gov.uk/sites/default/files/twelve_actions_report_web_accessible.pdf
https://www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/sites/default/files/publications/whitehall-monitor-2021_1.pdf

Czechia

Score 5

While the institutional infrastructure for strategic planning in Czechia remains relatively weak, a number of strategic frameworks exist, partly resulting from EU pressure. In April 2017, following two years of widespread consultations, the

government approved Czechia's 2030 strategic framework, which sets out a long-term vision for the development of the country (Government of the Czech Republic 2017). It also set up the Government Council for Sustainable Development, which is in charge of monitoring the implementation of the strategy as well as updating the strategy. The stated objectives correspond to the United Nations' SDGs. The document is full of worthy, but extremely general commitments, such as promising support for low-carbon technologies without offering any specifications. There have been two changes of government since its approval and little sign that it has influenced policymaking. Thus, government policy manifestos continue to be the most important form of medium-term planning. They are presented to the Chamber of Deputies, after a new government assumes office, for a vote of confidence.

Citation:

Government of the Czech Republic (2017): Strategic Framework Czech Republic 2030. Prague (https://www.vlada.cz/assets/ppov/udrzitelny-rozvoj/projekt-OPZ/Strategic_Framework_CZ2030.pdf)

France

Score 5

French governments commonly refer to ad hoc committees tasked with providing information on crucial issues. In rare cases, a report is requested from a single person. Committee members are mainly high-level civil servants, former or active politicians and academics, and often are chosen on the basis of their sympathy to the government in office at the time. Most reports are made public but a few remain unpublished, in particular when the report's proposals appear too provocative to be accepted by social partners. This situation raises the concern that opportunism may prevail over real strategic planning. The risk is that reports that are too innovative or provocative will be immediately buried by the government for fear that powerful lobbies will protest (in particular the public sector unions).

Each minister is entitled to recruit 10 so-called cabinet members, usually young political appointees who are tasked with providing policy advice. However, short-term considerations are usually more important than strategic planning in this regard. In addition, some portfolios have high levels of turnover of ministers, making long-term planning impossible outside of senior civil servants' ability to carry through their own bureaucratic agendas.

The only bodies that take a long-term view in terms of strategic planning are bureaucratic departments, such as those in the finance, transport, environment and foreign affairs ministries. The committee of economic advisers attached to the prime minister's office produces reports on its own initiative or at the office's request. Its impact on actual policymaking is limited, however. The Court of Accounts, whose reports often serve as the starting point of reforms, is taking on a growing importance with regard to long-term policymaking. Its annual and special reports are attracting increasing attention from public authorities and the media. Some are prepared at the request of governmental authorities, but many are prepared on the court's own initiative.

France Stratégie, an interesting think tank attached to the prime minister, has recently developed into a body of strategic planning and policy evaluation, although its impact on governmental policy is uncertain for the time being. OECD reports are not part of the national strategic planning framework, but they are rather influential, as they compare countries' performances and capacities to adjust to future challenges. Moreover, both the media and public opinion are very sensitive to international rankings.

Luxembourg

Score 5

The country's small size and the consequently small size of its administration do not allow for sufficient strategic planning. Only a few public bodies offer simulations, such as the National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies Luxembourg (STATEC) and the General Inspectorate of Social Security (Inspection Générale de la Sécurité Sociale, IGSS). The Economic and Social Council (Conseil économique et social), the University of Luxembourg and the public research institute, Luxembourg Institute of Socioeconomic Research (LISER) offer also analyses. The research department of the central bank (Banque Centrale du Luxembourg), the Conseil national des Finances publiques, the general inspectorate of the financial sector (Commission de surveillance du secteur financier, CSSF) focus on economics and finance planning.

The Ministry of State (led by the prime minister, who is also state minister) is tasked with overseeing institutional relations with the Grand Ducal Court, the Chamber of Deputies and the Council of State.

In January 2020, the government created the Luxembourg Sustainable Finance Initiative in conjunction with several partners including Luxembourg for Finance (the agency for the development of the financial center) and the High Council for Sustainable Development (Conseil Supérieur du Développement Durable), an independent civil society body that advises the Luxembourg government about sustainable development matters. The goal is to raise awareness about, promote and help develop sustainable finance initiatives in the Grand Duchy.

In February 2021, the government adopted the Electronic Governance 2021-2025 strategy, jointly developed by the Ministry of Digitalization and the Government IT Centre. This reflection aims to strengthen e-government and enable the transition to digital government within the framework of state modernization strategies.

The COVID-19 crisis created particular challenges for the Scientific Council for Health (Conseil scientifique dans la domaine de la Santé) (founded in 2005).

Citation:

“Luxembourg Adopts Electronic Governance 2021-25 Strategy.” Chronicle.lu (23 February 2021). <https://chronicle.lu/category/politics/35684-luxembourg-adopts-electronic-governance-2021-25-strategy>. Accessed 14 January 2022.

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Luxembourg Sustainable Finance Initiative. <https://lsfi.lu/who-we-are/>. Accessed 14 January 2022.

Poland

Score 5

Motivated by EU demands and by the objective of improving the country’s absorption and use of EU funds, the planning capacities of the Chancellery of the Prime Minister (Kancelaria Prezesa Rady Ministrów, KPRM) were expanded following EU accession. When Mateusz Morawiecki became prime minister in December 2017, the Center for Strategic Analysis was created in the Chancellery. Beginning with the 2016 Strategy for Responsible Development, the PiS government has presented various medium- and long-term reform programs. While planning capacities have existed, however, policymaking under the PiS government has ultimately been guided by the visions and inspirations of PiS party leader Jarosław Kaczyński.

Portugal

Score 5

There have been virtually no changes with regard to strategic capacity. While there are strategic planning bodies in most ministries, their impact remains limited. The prime minister’s advisory cabinet is more influential, but it has to deal with a number of day-to-day demands in addition to offering a long-term view on policy challenges and viable solutions. Immediate issues tend to gain precedence over long-term

policy-planning. Moreover, the pressures of the pandemic compounded these immediate demands during the period under review. The relative absence of institutionalized forms of strategic planning is evidenced by the government's decision to outsource the preparation for the Strategic Vision for the Economic Recovery Plan of Portugal.

Switzerland

Score 5

Strategic planning is not given significant weight in Switzerland. It is further rendered difficult by the fact that the country has a quasi-presidential political system (meaning the government cannot be voted out of office by the parliament) with a collegial government, a strong non-professional element, a consociational decision-making structure, a strong corporatist relationship between a weak federal state and outside interest organizations, and considerable uncertainty deriving from the system of direct democracy. Compared with other advanced democracies, strategic planning in Switzerland is underdeveloped and, constrained by the governmental and federal structure and the logics of direct democracy, it is rather inefficient.

The Swiss government is not strictly speaking a parliamentary government and does not have a policy agenda comparable to a “normal” parliamentary government. Furthermore, all seven members of the government have equal rights and powers; there is no prime minister. The president of the government is *primus inter pares*. He or she is not leader of the government in the sense of a prime minister.

Strategic planning is the task of the Federal Chancellery, the central coordinating body of the federal administration. Strategic planning in this context involves: identifying the current legislative period's major challenges; describing the legislative period's major goals and instruments; specifying the goals for the current year; and exercising accountability by providing parliament with annual reports.

A recent review of the state of research finds that “in the context of a strongly federal and non-parliamentary system with extended direct democracy, the Federal Council usually fails to present – and implement – a forward-looking strategic management and coherent policy-planning with clear priorities” (Vatter 2020: 251).

Citation:

Schedler, Kuno 2019: Strategische Staatsführung und Steuerungsinstrumente –wie können Regierung und Exekutive strategisch führen?, in: Ritz, Adrian, Theo Haldemann and Fritz Sager (eds.): *Blackbox Exekutive. Regierungslehre in der Schweiz*, Zürich: NZZ Libro, 285-305

Vatter, Adrian. 2018. *Das Politische System Der Schweiz. Grundlagen, Institutionen Und Vergleich*, 3rd edition, Baden-Baden: Nomos (UTB).

Vatter, Adrian (2020): *Der Bundesrat. Die Schweizer Regierung*. Zürich: NZZ

Turkey

Score 5

With Presidential Decree No. 13, the central harmonization function regarding strategic management components such as strategic planning, development of a performance program and production of the annual report is carried out by the Strategy and Budget Department. Previously these tasks had been the responsibility of different ministries. Strategic plans are prepared in public administrations within the scope of the central government, social security institutions, SOEs, special provincial administrations, and municipalities with populations of 50,000 or more. They are implemented through performance programs and monitored through annual reports. As of October 2021, a total of 49 strategic plans had been evaluated by the Strategy and Budget Department, 13 of which were developed by the central public administration, 35 by state universities and one by an SOE.

Under the new presidential system of government, the head of Strategy and Budget is affiliated with the Presidential Office. The 2021 Annual Plan of the Presidency emphasized that efforts are underway to strengthen and align the budget with the policies contained in the government's main policy documents and the objectives and targets of the strategic plans in a holistic approach. The results of these attempts remain to be seen. There are no cumulative statistics on the frequency of meetings between strategic planning staff members and government heads. In general, these meetings are held once a year and during budget negotiations.

Citation:

Cumhurbaşkanlığı Strateji ve Bütçe Başkanlığı. 2022 Yılı Cumhurbaşkanlığı Yıllık Programı. <http://www.sp.gov.tr/upload/xSPTemelBelge/files/AXe9Q+2022-Yili-Cumhurbaskanligi-Yillik-Programi-26102021.pdf>

Bulgaria

Score 4

In Bulgaria, systematic strategic planning is considered most important with regard to meeting EU membership requirements and preparing strategies and programs within the EU framework. These include the convergence program, the reform program as a part of the European Union's 2020 strategy, and concrete strategical considerations in setting priorities for EU funds absorption. Under the macroeconomic imbalances procedure of the European Union, which categorizes Bulgaria as a country with imbalances, Bulgaria is obliged to integrate specific European Commission recommendations into the development of its policy strategies.

There are national strategies for security, energy, governance and the development of water resources, development of scientific research, Roma integration, physical education and sport. These strategies have been prepared in coordination with various ministries and on the basis of extensive discussions with the relevant expert

communities. They are overseen by the line ministries and parliamentary committees responsible for these policy areas. Presently, the Council of Ministers' portal for public consultations lists 160 "active" strategic documents relating to the national level. More than 20 of them were updated or created in 2019, and six have a time horizon that extends beyond 2025.

The deadlines for hearing and adopting strategies expired at the end of 2020 and within the first three months of 2021. The new seven-year strategies are weak, as they do not provide robust assessments of the previous period's outcomes; the strategies are also overburdened by details that make it difficult to follow the trajectory of implementation; and, most importantly, they fail to evaluate which objectives have been met thus far and why.

To make matters worse, work on the strategies effectively came to a halt during the elections. The only strategic work performed by the caretaker governments has been on the Recovery and Resilience Plan, which was commented on by the European Commission in December. At the time of this writing (January 2022), the government is making amendments to the plan while other strategies have been put aside for the time being.

Citation:

Strategic documents at the national level (a list of documents in Bulgarian), available at: <http://strategy.bg/StrategicDocumentsHandler.ashx?lang=1&type=1>

Croatia

Score 4

Since joining the European Union in 2013, strategic-planning capacity in Croatia has increased substantially, in part due to the learning process that took place during the accession period, but also thanks to Croatia's inclusion in the EU strategic-planning exercise organized within the framework of the European Semester. Moreover, many local and regional self-government units have realized that success in drawing EU funds largely depends on the quality of strategic planning.

Despite the introduction of new institutional and procedural arrangements, policymaking in Croatia continues to be dominated by short-term political interests. Strategic decisions are still very often made pro forma, lack political support and end up being shelved. Also, in numerous cases, strategies are inconsistent and lack some of the elements that strategic documents should contain. A good case in point has been the fate of the National Development Strategy 2030, announced by the second Plenković government as an umbrella strategy. Back in 2017/18, interest associations and ordinary citizens were invited to provide their input with much acclaim. On 5 February 2021, the Croatian parliament finally adopted the National Development Strategy of the Republic of Croatia, which covers the period through 2030. Presenting the strategy in the parliament, Plenković emphasized that it focuses on four developmental pillars: sustainable economy and society, strengthening resilience to crises, the green and digital transition, and balanced regional

development. The problem, however, is that there are no deadlines or benchmarks in the document as adopted by parliament that would enable the fulfillment of these goals to be monitored.

Ivo Bičanić, a leading Croatian economist, has criticized the strategy, emphasizing that it is “irreparably bad” because it is a “sterile and toothless document” that does not create obligations for this or future governments, and does not limit the implementation of their programs, whatever they may be. Plenković and Minister of Regional Development and EU Funds Nataša Tramišak promised that as many as 67 sectoral strategic documents would be harmonized with Strategy 2030 by 2022. The question remains, however, whether any further strategies and policies will emerge from this “umbrella strategy.” For example, other democratic countries often adopt such general development documents, but their adoption is followed by the kind of clearly articulated sectoral policies that Croatia has generally not developed. Thus, it seems that in Croatia, daily politics have again trumped long-term strategic planning.

Citation:

Bičanić, I. (2020) Bičanić: Nismo baš svi bedaci. Za taj novac strategiju su mogli napisati Rodrik i Acemoglu, recenziju

Krugman i Stiglitz i još bi ostalo za Ekonomski institut, (We are not all fools. For that money, Rodrik and Acemoglu could write a strategy, peer-review Krugman and Stiglitz, and more would remain for the Institute of Economics), Web-portal Ideje, November 15, 2020 (<https://ideje.hr/bicanic-nismo-bas-svi-bedaci-za-te-novce-strategiju-su-mogli-napisati-rodrik-i-acemoglu-recenziju-krugman-i-stiglitz-i-jos-bi-ostalo-za-ekonomski-institut/>).

Petak, Z. (2018) Policy-Making Context and Challenges of Governance in Croatia, in: Z. Petak, K. Kotarski (eds.), Policy-Making at the European Periphery: The Case of Croatia. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 29-45.

Cyprus

Score 4

The foundations of integrating strategic planning into administrative practices were mainly laid out in 2014 reforms. The Directorate General for European Programs, Coordination and Development (DGEPCD) was assigned competences for planning, coordination, monitoring and the evaluation of implementation. The DGEPCD was renamed the Directorate General of Coordination (DGC) and placed under the Ministry of Finance (December 2021). This seems to clarify and strengthen the DGC’s role as the general coordinator for the above tasks.

In line with the 2014 law on fiscal responsibility, planning and coordination of development by the DGC, headed by the secretary of the Council of Ministers and under the finance minister, may be more coherent.

Implementation of strategic planning has been slow, because of the lack of services needed to acquire capacity and planning skills. A three-year strategic plan is now found on the websites of all ministries, an indication of the progress made. The Recovery and Resilience Plan supplements the overall goals of planning.

However, implementation seems problematic. Since 2016, only 67% of development projects have been completed. Meanwhile, the extent to which ad hoc policies compromise the coherence of planning is an open issue.

Citation:

1. Ministry of Finance, 2020, Strategic Framework for Fiscal Policy (in Greek), <http://mof.gov.cy/en/publications/strategic-framework-for-fiscal-policy>
2. Many in the budget, little executed (in Greek), Philenews, 9 January 2022, <https://www.philenews.com/oikonomia/kypros/article/1371523/proypologzoyn-polla-ekteloyn-lig>

Slovakia

Score 4

The institutional capacity for strategic planning in Slovakia is weak. Capacities for planning in the ministries are limited, and there is no central policy-planning unit in the Government Office. The fragmented nature and the rigid departmentalism of public administration in the country have complicated strategic planning. So has the high degree of staff turnover which, driven as it is by a politicized public administration, limits the continuity of institutional expertise. The Matovič government created the new position of a Deputy Prime Minister for Legislation and Strategic Planning. However, the first person to hold this office, Štefan Holý, has done little to improve the government's strategic capacity.

Slovenia

Score 4

The institutional capacity for strategic planning in Slovenia is rather weak. Capacities for planning in the ministries are limited, and there is no central policy-planning unit in the Government Office. After assuming office, the Cerar government announced that it would expand planning capacities. However, save for the adoption in December 2017 of the strategic framework for policymaking, the Slovenian Development Strategy 2030, the Cerar government achieved little in the way of progress. The Šarec government did nothing to improve strategic planning. Meanwhile, the Janša government has been rather pre-occupied with the COVID-19 pandemic, but still managed to prepare a comprehensive report on the implementation of the Slovenian Development Strategy 2030.

Citation:

Government of the Republic of Slovenia (2017): Slovenian Development Strategy 2030. Ljubljana (http://www.vlada.si/fileadmin/dokumenti/si/projekti/2017/srs2030/en/Slovenia_2030.pdf).

Government of the Republic of Slovenia (2020): Report on the Development 2020. Ljubljana (https://www.umar.gov.si/fileadmin/user_upload/razvoj_slovenije/2020/slovenski/POR2020.pdf).

Hungary

Score 3

The Orbán governments have subordinated all political actions to the goal of consolidating their power and have reacted to problems and challenges on a day-to-day basis, without reference to an over-reaching plan. The economic and fiscal

priorities have frequently shifted. While ministries in general, and the Prime Minister's Office and the Cabinet Office in particular have grown substantially, not much effort has been invested in building institutional capacities for strategic planning.

Iceland

Score 3

Long-term strategic planning in Iceland is often vague, with comparatively weak execution, supervision, and revision of plans. When specific objectives are established in the policy-planning phase, a lack of sufficient incentives or institutional mechanisms typically limits their realization. As a result, the government can delay or change strategic plans. For example, parliament approves a strategic regional policy every four years (Stefnumótandi byggðaaáætlun), but – as this plan has the status of a parliamentary resolution and not legal status – the government has no binding obligation to implement the plan. Consequently, only certain aspects of these four-year plans have ever been implemented.

Policymaking is monitored by cabinet ministers, who rely on their respective ministerial staff for advice and assistance.

Citation:

Special Investigation Committee (SIC) (2010), Report of the Special Investigation Commission (SIC), report delivered to parliament 12 April, <https://www.rna.is/eldri-nefndir/addragandi-og-orsakir-falls-islensku-bankanna-2008/skyrsla-nefndarinnar/english/>. Accessed 3 February 2022.

Parliamentary resolution on a strategic regional plan for the period 2018 – 2024.

<https://www.stjornarradid.is/lisalib/getfile.aspx?itemid=3b970dc2-f19a-11e8-942f-005056bc4d74>
Accessed 17th October 2019. Accessed 3 February 2022.

Romania

Score 3

While EU membership has forced the Romanian government to produce regular strategic documents, and despite Romania's 2018 National Reform Program having declared strategic planning a key priority for the government, policymaking in Romania still lacks strategic planning. In March 2019, parliament adopted "Romania 2040," which outlines a long-term national social and economic development strategy that is coordinated by a multi-stakeholder commission (Commisia Romania 2040) and elaborated by a council (Consiliul de Programare Economica si Comisia Nationala de Strategie si Prognoza) that would advise government policy for years to come. In June 2019, however, the Constitutional Court rejected "Romania 2040" criticizing the substitution of the parliament by the commission. Critics also noted that the strategy had been pushed by PSD head Dragnea so that a smaller PSD-controlled commission would adopt the national budget for the years to come instead of parliament.

The European Commission continues to support Romania to improve its strategic planning capacities through the implementation of the Annual Working Plan of the Government and supporting frameworks. Of note, the Romanian government extended its strategic planning systems so that all 13 Institutional Strategic Plans were updated for 2019–2022.

Citation:

Romanian Government (2018): National Reform Program 2018. Bucharest
(<https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/2018-european-semester-country-report-romania-en.pdf>)

Romanian Government (2020): National Reform Program 2020. Bucharest
(https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/default/files/2020-european-semester-national-reform-programme-romania_en_0.pdf)

Indicator

Expert Advice

Question

Does the government regularly take into account advice from non-governmental experts during decision-making?

41 OECD and EU countries are sorted according to their performance on a scale from 10 (best) to 1 (lowest). This scale is tied to four qualitative evaluation levels.

- 10-9 = In almost all cases, the government transparently consults with non-governmental experts in the early stages of government decision-making.
- 8-6 = For major political projects, the government transparently consults with non-governmental experts in the early stages of government decision-making.
- 5-3 = In some cases, the government transparently consults with non-governmental experts in the early stages of government decision-making.
- 2-1 = The government does not consult with non-governmental experts, or existing consultations lack transparency entirely and/or are exclusively pro forma.

Canada

Score 9

Canadian government departments and agencies effectively tap into expertise of academics and other experts outside the government in multiple ways. Many government departments and agencies have advisory committees, which can have considerable influence but rarely a dominant role in policymaking.

Most recently, in response to COVID-19, such expert counsel has become more prominent. The federal government has struck an Industry Strategy Council tasked with advising on economic growth and competitiveness. Also established has been the COVID-19 Vaccine Task Force to advise on vaccine candidates and development, especially since the country lacks domestic supply. Moreover, the existing National Advisory Committee on Immunization has played a critical role throughout the pandemic. Mona Nemer, named Canada's new Chief Science Adviser in September 2017, continues to provide advice on issues related to science and government policies that support it, including evidence-based decision-making and open government science fully available to the public.

Citation:

Innovation, Science and Economic Development 2020. "Minister Bains announces new Industry Strategy Council," 8 May 2020, <https://www.canada.ca/en/innovation-science-economic-development/news/2020/05/minister-bains-announces-new-industry-strategy-council.html>.

National Research Council Canada. "COVID-19 Vaccine Task Force," 22 September 2020, <https://nrc.canada.ca/en/corporate/covid-19-vaccine-task-force>.

Office of the Chief Science Adviser of Canada, Annual Report of the Chief Science Adviser of Canada, 2020, https://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/063.nsf/eng/h_98146.html

Chile

Score 8

Technocratic institutions and practices play an important role in government decision-making. Experts from academia, NGOs, partisan think tanks and the private sector are very influential in the preparation of government (presidential) programs and the development of policy-reform proposals by presidential or ministerial technical commissions. These technical commissions, which are charged with proposing policy reforms in specific areas (education, pension, social and wage policies, minimum wage policy, fiscal rule, etc.) or for singular policy challenges (e.g., corruption), tend to have significant impact on government legislation. Commissions are largely comprised of experts, and to a minor extent of representatives of interested parties, and cover a wide political spectrum. This kind of technical input into the policymaking process belongs to the technocratic tradition in Chilean politics. As a political practice, this can be described as institutionalized, as both the former and the current party coalition followed this tradition. The main policies of government programs tend to be elaborated and accompanied by expert commissions. Some reform initiatives in the education and environmental sectors, for example, have been accelerated or even blocked due to ideological differences within the commissions dealing with the issue. Experts (economists and lawyers in particular) are a key factor in drafting the reform proposals submitted to the president or to ministers.

Denmark

Score 8

Denmark's political administration draws to some extent on in-house expertise. For most policy areas, however, policymakers rely on advising councils or expert committees. On a more permanent basis, the Danish Economic Council plays an important role as an independent institution, as politicians heed its recommendations. Since 2007, the number of chairmen of the Economic Council have increased from three to four and the responsibilities of the chairmen (independent experts) have been expanded. They now also head the Environmental Economic Council and the productivity council (meeting EU requirements), and act as the fiscal watchdog (related to the Budget Law). The chairmen prepare reports that are then discussed by members representing unions, employers, independent experts, the central bank and the government. The reports typically garner media attention. The chairs are non-partisan and usually serve for several years before returning to academia.

Citation:

Jørgen Grønnegård Christensen, Peter Munck Christiansen og Marius Ibsen, *Politik og forvaltning*. 3. udgave. Copenhagen: Hans Reitzels Forlag, 2011.

Website of the Danish Economic Councils: www.dors.dk/ (accessed 20 April 2013).

Det Økonomiske Råd 1962-2012 – Et jubilæumsskrift, De Økonomiske Råd, København.

New Zealand

Score 8

In terms of frequency and intensity of policy advice, the relevance of external academic experts for governmental policymaking depends on the subject area. Non-governmental academics with technical expertise can have a significant role in policy areas such as health, energy, social affairs and tertiary education. The Labour government has since 2017 considerably increased the number of policy design working groups. Notable examples include the Tax Working Group, the Welfare Expert Advisory Group, the 2018 Mental Health and Addiction Inquiry, the Royal Commission into Abuse in Care, the Curriculum Advisory Group, and the Health and Disability System Review. The Zero Carbon Act established the Climate Change Commission, which – among its other functions – advises the government on how to reduce New Zealand’s carbon emissions to the net zero level by 2050. The Pandemic Influenza Technical Advisory Group has played an important role in informing the government’s COVID-19 response.

However, while the number of expert groups has increased, the Labour-led coalition government has also been criticized for ignoring advice provided by some of these groups. For example, Prime Minister Ardern has ruled out implementing a capital gains tax – one of the key recommendations made by the Tax Working Group (Wells 2019). Similarly, the government has been accused of failing to follow the policy roadmap set out by the Welfare Expert Advisory Group (Carroll 2021), and has been criticized for not listening to Māori experts or including systematic gender analyses in its budget policies (Greaves, 2021; Curtin et al, 2021). That said, significant changes are underway as a result of the health system review, and the Mental Health and Wellbeing Commission was launched in February 2021 as a direct outcome of the Mental Health and Addiction Inquiry.

Citation:

Carroll (2021) “Government accused of failing to follow roadmap from welfare expert group.” Stuff. <https://www.stuff.co.nz/business/industries/127213266/government-accused-of-failing-to-follow-roadmap-from-welfare-expert-group>

Curtin et al (2021). The Conversation, 21 May 2021 <https://theconversation.com/nz-budget-2021-women-left-behind-despite-the-focus-on-well-being-161187>

Greaves (2021) “Māori experts have been all but invisible in the government Covid-19 response. Why?” The Spinoff. <https://thespinoff.co.nz/politics/07-10-2021/maori-experts-have-been-all-but-invisible-in-the-government-covid-19-response-why>

Wells (2019) “PM Jacinda Ardern has ruled out implementing a Capital Gains Tax while she is at the helm of Labour.” New Zealand Herald. <https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/pm-jacinda-ardern-has-ruled-out-implementing-a-capital-gains-tax-while-she-is-at-the-helm-of-labour/IQ4FD7CLYKKLU6YAH2H2S4MDSE/>

Norway

Score 8

There is a significant degree of academic influence on policymaking in Norway. Economic and social research are mobilized to develop so-called knowledge-based policies. Academics are regularly involved in government-appointed committees for the preparation of legislation. On a more informal level, various departments regularly consult academic experts from a range of academic disciplines. Academics are active in public debate and their views often prompt replies and comments from senior politicians. Increasingly, the parliament also arranges hearings, and invites experts to provide advice and recommendations.

Sweden

Score 8

Overall, the government department staff solicits advice or other contacts with external actors less frequently than in the past. Communication is today managed in detail and there are disincentives to open up to external actors at sensitive stages of the policy process. Having said that, the recent pandemic crisis has highlighted Sweden's high policy capacity and reliance on expert knowledge for its policy response (Petridou, 2020; Zahariadis et al, 2021). Notably, the Coronavirus Commission consisted overwhelmingly of academics (Coronakommissionen, 2021).

Coronakommissionen. 2021. "Delbetänkande 2: Sverige under pandemi." SOU 2021:89. <https://coronakommissionen.com>

Petridou, Evangelia. 2020. "Politics and Administration in Times of Crisis: Explaining the Swedish Response to the COVID-19 Crisis." *European Policy Analysis*, 6(2), 147-158.

Zahariadis, Nikolaos, Evangelia Petridou, Theofanis Exadaktylos, and Jörgen Sparf. 2021. "Policy Styles and Political Trust in Europe's National Responses to the Covid-19 Crisis." *Policy Studies*: 1-22.

Switzerland

Score 8

In the Swiss political system, the drafting of bills takes place primarily within extra-parliamentary and parliamentary committees. As of November 2019, 116 of these extra-parliamentary committees existed, with government-selected members that included academics, representatives of interest groups and parties, individuals with particular expertise and other such experts. While there are multiple criteria for selecting members, the government seeks a balanced representation of language groups, political parties and ideologies and other societal interests. Academics are selected on the basis of academic profile, but their allegiance to political parties or other societal interests may also be taken into account.

In December 2018, the Federal Council decided to reduce the number of committees by 13, but also to create two new committees. Thus, while expert commissions and their members do have a dominant influence on governmental decision-making, the influence of academics per se is much more limited than is the influence of the

politically constituted groups as a whole. In addition, the share of academics on these committees is rather limited, amounting to about 11% of all seats. However, the combined total of academics and high-level federal and canton civil servants (who usually have academic training) accounts for about half of all commission seats.

In Switzerland, public policies are regularly assessed by evaluators who have had academic training. According to a 2016 study by Pleger et al., about 50% of these evaluators felt influenced or pressured by stakeholders; about the same level as in the United States, but considerably less than in Germany and the United Kingdom (about 80%).

This finding underscores the importance of evaluations for policymaking. A 2017 large-scale cooperative research project by Sager et al. concluded that policy evaluations not only play an important role for policymaking in the executive-administrative nexus but also contribute to decision-making in parliament and to a lesser degree in direct-democratic decision-making.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the reliance on evaluation rather than organized expertise in external committees proved to be problematic. While the government established the Science Covid Task Force, it did not know how to handle the advice it received from the Science Task Force. It was evident that Swiss politics lacked a routine for integrating scientific advice into policymaking while pressure. This lack of routine culminated in the SVP's proposal to prohibit the Science Task Force from issuing public statements about the pandemic. Nevertheless, while the parliament rejected the proposal, it is evidence of the bumps in the science-policy interface that Switzerland will need to address in the aftermath of the coronavirus crisis (Hadorn et al. 2022; Sager et al. 2022). While Switzerland was arguable successful in dealing with the crisis, this was not due to a smooth exchange between science and politics.

Hadorn, Susanne, Fritz Sager, Céline Mavrot, Anna Malandrino, Jörn Ege (2022). Evidence-based Policymaking in Times of Acute Crisis: Comparing the Use of Scientific Knowledge in Germany, Switzerland and Italy. *Politische Vierteljahresschrift*: forthcoming.

Lyn Pleger, Fritz Sager, Michael Morris, Wolfgang Meyer, and Reinhard Stockmann 2016: Are Some Countries More Prone to Pressure Evaluators Than Others? Comparing Findings from the United States, United Kingdom, Germany and Switzerland, *American Journal of Evaluation*, DOI: 10.1177/1098214016662907

Sager, Fritz (2017). "Evaluation and democracy: do they fit?" *Evaluation and Program Planning*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.evalprogplan.2017.08.005>

Sager, Fritz, Thomas Widmer und Andreas Balthasar (Hg.) (2017). *Evaluation im politischen System der Schweiz – Entwicklung, Bedeutung und Wechselwirkungen*. Zürich: NZZ Verlag, Reihe „Politik und Gesellschaft in der Schweiz“.

Sager, Fritz, Céline Mavrot, Johanna Hornung (2022). *Wissenschaftliche Politikberatungssysteme in der Covid-19-Krise: Die Schweiz im Vergleich mit Deutschland, Italien, Frankreich und Grossbritannien*. Bern: Untersuchung im Auftrag der Schweizerischen Bundeskanzlei.

https://www.admin.ch/ch/d/cf/ko/Statistik_AnzahlGremienAK.html

Estonia

Score 7

The extent and impact of academic consultation is framed by the overall pattern of government decision-making. Limited strategic capacity in the center and a tendency to pass policy-formulation initiatives to the line ministries makes the overall picture fragmented. The final reports of the research projects are made publicly available on the websites of the governmental institutions that requested the study. However, the majority of the studies are commissioned simply to obtain overviews of problems or provide evidence for the government's standpoints.

Other forms of non-governmental expert consultations (e.g., roundtable discussions and workshops) are rather widespread. In preparing the long-term "Estonia 2035" strategy, experts and opinion leaders have been regularly engaged, while the relevant website enables interested citizens to participate in and interact with developing the strategy. However, these events are often held pro forma and do not lead to effective policy change.

Finland

Score 7

The government predominately organizes the collection of scholarly advice informally, for example, by consulting scientific experts on committee report drafts. Some formal bodies, such as temporary working groups, ad hoc committees and permanent councils, also exist. In general, various permanent and non-permanent committees play an important role in structuring scholarly advice in government decision-making. An example of a permanent group that advises the government and ministries in research and technology matters is the Research and Innovation Council. A government resolution on a comprehensive reform of state research institutes and research funding, which aims to make the use of sectoral research in governmental decision-making more efficient and focused, was adopted in 2013, and implemented between 2014 and 2017. The Prime Minister's Office makes a yearly plan for realizing strategic research objectives and calls for the systemic use of research projects and data for decision-making, steering and operating procedures. Projects under the government's strategic research goals are managed by the Strategic Research Council at the Academy of Finland. The PMO appointed a scientific expert panel to study the effect of the pandemic in the spring of 2020.

Germany

Score 7

In almost all policy fields, expert commissions advise policymakers on a regular basis. Most of their members are appointed by the government or by individual ministries. The Bundestag also consults regularly with non-governmental experts,

which can involve regular expert hearings on specific topics as well as commissions of enquiry (Enquetekommission) on broader issues that continue for several years.

In addition, ad hoc commissions are often created to provide scientific input on major reforms involving complex issues and thus help build consensus. In sum, there are plenty of established and ad hoc expert advisory bodies providing the government expertise and advice. These include, for example, the German Council of Economic Experts (Sachverständigenrat zur Begutachtung der Gesamtwirtschaftlichen Entwicklung), the German Advisory Council on the Environment (Sachverständigenrat für Umweltfragen) and the Commission of Experts for Research and Innovation (Expertenkommission Forschung und Innovation), all of which produce regular reports on current policy issues (Siefken 2019).

In addition, most ministries maintain external, academic or legal advisory bodies. However, the impact of experts often has little visibility, and policymaking is also heavily influenced by party positions. Nevertheless, while advisory reports do not always have an immediate impact, they do have some influence on political debates within the government, the parliament and among the general public, because they are made publicly accessible.

Experts have played a much more influential role in decision-making during the pandemic. The federal and state governments' decision-making processes have been based on input from scientists and in particular the expertise of the Robert Koch Institut (RKI). The government has also closely monitored objective data on the dynamics of the pandemic when making its decisions. The German Ethics Council attracted considerable attention for its statements regarding the ethical tradeoffs associated with pandemic policies, who was to be prioritized during the vaccine rollout and, more recently, the issue of obligatory vaccinations. Another important body for the sciences and healthcare, particularly in the context of the pandemic, is the German National Academy of Sciences Leopoldina. However, some have criticized the Leopoldina, stating that it had delivered its recommendations "on the government's order" by justifying lockdown measures (Hirschi 2021).

Summing up, scholarly advice is widely available, but political considerations often dominate legislative and executive decision-making. In addition, the engagement of expert commissions or other sources of advice is sometimes used as a means of postponing decisions rather than as a true decision-making aid. However, during the pandemic, the role of experts and their impact on policymaking has increased significantly.

Citation:

Hirschi, Caspar (2021): Weder wissenschaftlich noch demokratisch legitimiert, in: Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 19.03.2021, p. 11

Siefken, Sven T. (2019): Expertenkommissionen der Bundesregierung, in: Falk, Svenja et al. (eds), Handbuch Politikberatung, Berlin, p. 145-161

Greece

Score 7

Following the change in government in 2019 and particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic, non-governmental expertise was upgraded in the early stages of decision-making. For instance, in 2020, a committee of economists under the Greek-Cypriot Nobel prize winner in economics C. Pissarides devised the Plan for the Development of the Greek Economy, which included economic policy recommendations. Following the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, the government convened two expert committees, the Committee of Epidemiologists and the National Committee on Vaccinations, and continuously consulted with them in the period under review. This development was a vast improvement over past practices.

In the past, most of the ad hoc committees, staffed by academic experts, were formed by ministers for their own sake, not by the prime minister. Qualified academics often served as experts within ministries, where they also acted as administrative elites in Greece's highly politicized civil service.

Moreover, in the period under review, the New Democracy government attracted a comparatively large number of qualified experts in a variety of policymaking sectors. Some of these individuals had acquired their expertise and job experience in the private sector, while others had worked in Greek and foreign universities. Previous connections to New Democracy proved largely irrelevant to the hiring decisions. This was an improvement over the past, when experts had often been recruited primarily on the grounds of their loyalty to the governing party.

Citation:

The "Pissarides Plan" is available in Greek at: <https://government.gov.gr/schedio-anaptixis-gia-tin-elliniki-ikonomia/>

Israel

Score 7

The government has several means of interacting with experts and academics, which are generally guided by the Instructions for Public Participation Guide (PMO 2017). Overall, experts can sit on independent public committees to examine the causes and consequences of a specific event or incident. They can also serve in permanent committees that consult with the government on a regular basis, such as the National Economic Council in the PMO, or be summoned by parliamentary committees to present opinions or to offer a different perspective on a certain issue. In addition, think tanks and research institutes act as brokers between the academic world and politics, advocating and offering information on current events and policy issues. A recent example is the national plan for climate change adaptation. As part of planning for the implementation of this plan in 2019 – 2020, the government sought advice from various experts and NGOs.

On security and other issues such as foreign policy, the government tends to consult experts from the military rather than academics. Ministers often appoint an external

advisory committee to assist with specific issues, and also often consult informally with academic experts, primarily to receive guidance that is not influenced by political interests. In addition, the government consults with professionals via policy-planning roundtables, digital forums and Q&A platforms.

Citation:

Blockchain Technology Takes Hold in Israel: Expert Take, Cointelegraph, 2018 (Hebrew): <https://cointelegraph.com/news/blockchain-technology-takes-hold-in-israel-expert-take>

“Conclusions of the committee for the examination of the fiscal policy with respect to oil and gas resources in Israel,” State of Israel official publication, 2011 (Hebrew): http://www.financeisrael.mof.gov.il/FinanceIsrael/Docs/En/publications/02_Full_Report_Nonincluding_Appendixes.pdf

Hever, Shir, “The Privatization of Security,” 2012, Van Leer Institute

OECD (2015), “Scientific Advice for Policy Making: The Role and Responsibility of Expert Bodies and Individual Scientists,” OECD Science, Technology and Industry Policy Papers, No. 21, OECD Publishing, Paris. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/5js3311jcpwb-en>

Government decision number 2025 on rural development, 2015 (Hebrew): http://www.gov.il/he/Departments/policies/2014_des2025

Government Decision number 4079, “Israel’s preparations for adaptation to climate change: implementation of the recommendations to the government for a strategy and a national action plan,” 2018 (Hebrew): http://www.gov.il/he/Departments/policies/dec4079_2018

PMO Office 2017, Instructions for Public Participation, 2017 (Hebrew): <http://www.pmo.gov.il/policyplanning/shituf/Documents/all%20web.pdf>

The Ministry of Environment, Climate Change Adaptation plan, 2019, <http://www.sviva.gov.il/subjectsEnv/ClimateChange/AdaptationKnowledgeCenter/Pages/default.aspx#GovXParagraphTitle2>

Luxembourg

Score 7

Publicly funded research in Luxembourg has developed considerably in recent years. Nowadays, the public research environment is concentrated in Belval, where the University of Luxembourg (founded in 2003), with its three interdisciplinary centers – the Interdisciplinary Centre for Security, Reliability and Trust (SnT), the Luxembourg Center for Systems Biomedicine (LCSB), and the Luxembourg Center for Contemporary and Digital History (C²DH), is based. Several other specialized research centers also exist, including the Luxembourg Institute of Science and Technology (LIST), the Luxembourg Institute of Health (LIH), the Luxembourg Institute of Socioeconomic Research (LISER), the Integrated Biobank of Luxembourg (IBBL) and the Max Planck Institute Luxembourg for International, European and Regulatory Procedural Law. The Luxinnovation and the National Research Fund (FNR) are located on the site.

For major policy reform projects, the government mostly consults highly reputable institutions abroad. This has the advantage that scholarly advice from institutions abroad allows for independent analysis.

Considering the country's small size, links between government and national research facilities are strong. The University of Luxembourg took part in designing and operating the Luxembourg's brand-new supercomputer, MeluXina (inaugurated in June 2021). To contribute to the fight against COVID-19, Research Luxembourg (a consortium consisting of the University of Luxembourg, LIH, LISER, LIST, FNR and the Ministry of Higher Education and Research) launched a national COVID-19 platform to coordinate research projects and collaborations.

Citation:

"COVID-19 taskforce: New national platform, FNR Call in the making." University of Luxembourg. (2020). https://www.uni.lu/university/news/slideshow/covid_19_taskforce_new_national_platform_fnr_call_in_the_making. Accessed 14 January 2022.

"Third Industrial Revolution Strategy Study for the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg." https://www.troisiemerevolutionindustrielle.lu/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/TIR-Strategy-Study_Short.pdf. Accessed 14 January 2022.

Spain

Score 7

There is no formalized connection between the government and external thinking, although university scholars, think tank analysts and practitioners are often consulted by ministries on legal, economic, welfare and international issues – particularly at the beginning of any legislative process to prepare the draft bill and to assess its impact. In 2020 and 2021, the government asked for external advice when engaged in policy design and institutional redesign. For example, several panels of external experts have been established to advise the government on the development of the Strategic Energy and Climate Change Framework, and Law 7/2021 on Climate Change and Energy Transition established an Expert Committee on Climate Change and Energy Transition as an advisory body. In addition, several consultative councils have been established to ensure the participation of civil society groups as well as that of the private sector in the design and implementation of the RRP.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Spanish government relied on the opinions of professionals from different areas as well as on information from the autonomous communities, town councils and government organizations. Four working groups were created in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. A multidisciplinary working group was set up by the minister of science. The plan to transition to a new normality was prepared by a committee of experts, made up of 15 professionals from different areas. Moreover, the Scientific and Technical Committee was established to advise the government; and a technical group was set up to monitor and evaluate the epidemiological situation in the autonomous communities. There were also expert groups established at the level of autonomous communities. More generally, experts from business interest groups play an important role in the policy process across policy areas, particularly in economic policies and agriculture affairs.

Citation:

Gobierno de España (2021), Plan de Recuperación, Transformación y Resiliencia https://www.lamondcloa.gob.es/temas/fondos-recuperacion/Documents/160621-Plan_Recuperacion_Transformacion_Resiliencia.pdf

Feás, Enrique; Steinberg, Federico (2021), The climate and energy transition component of the Spanish National Recovery and Resilience Plan, ARI 64/2021 – 6/7/2021

Laura Chaqués & Iván Medina (2021): The representation of business interests during the COVID-19 pandemic in Spain, *Revisat Española de Ciencia Política*, No. 57, available at <https://recyt.fecyt.es/index.php/recp/article/view/89916>

United Kingdom

Score 7

Non-governmental academic experts played an important role in conducting independent reviews of central government policy or strategy during the post-1997 Labour governments. They have worked on the economics of climate change (Sir Nicholas Stern), the future of the pension system (Lord Turner), a review of health trends (Sir Derek Wanless) and fuel poverty (Sir John Hills). Established academics have also served in decision-making bodies such, as the Monetary Policy Committee of the Bank of England since 1997 when the Bank of England was made independent of government. These academics have thus been given substantial influence over core decisions. Most government departments solicit external studies on policy-relevant issues and are supported in doing so by a new Cabinet Office team called Launchpad. The reports are subject to normal procurement rules, typically with a restricted call for tenders.

The coalition government (2010 – 2015) altered the political orientation of the experts consulted by government. A further shift in practice was due to the commitment to what is known as open policymaking (OPM), under which policymakers are called on to actively seek broader inputs into the policymaking process. The traditionally strong influence of think tanks has continued, but those of the left-leaning variety (e.g., the Institute for Public Policy Research and Policy Network) have been replaced by more conservative-minded ones (e.g., the Resolution Foundation and the Center for Policy Studies). The interactions are transparent but occur at various stages of the policymaking process and are often initiated by the think tanks themselves. The emphasis on OPM can be regarded as a change in approach, emphasizing not only evidence-based policymaking, but also helping to identify more appropriate policy solutions. A “what works” team in the Cabinet Office facilitates this process and government departments publish details about their areas of research interest. The Government Office for Science is a unit dedicated to bringing scientific evidence to bear on decision-making. In November 2018, five new business councils, covering major export-sector clusters, were established to advise on how to create the best business conditions in the United Kingdom after Brexit.

There are also many informal channels through which government consults or is briefed by individual academics who have expertise in specific areas. These channels

are often more influential than more formal consultation processes. Civil servants are routinely involved in academic events, and benefit from professional policy training and the Trial Advice Panel. The Trial Advice Panel, which consists of experts from within government and academics, supports civil servants to design experimental and quasi-experimental assessments for programs and interventions.

In the negotiation of the EU withdrawal agreement, informal links proliferated, including with think tanks, business interests and academia, but the fundamental political choices were not obviously influenced by expert advice. Attempts by former adviser to the prime minister Dominic Cummings to recruit “weirdos and misfits” to Number 10 jobs in order to increase the diversity of approaches beyond normal civil service areas did not succeed and ended after his dismissal. During the pandemic, the government relied extensively on expert scientific knowledge channeled through the Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies (SAGE), a body with many subdivisions that brings together a range of relevant skills, and works closely with the government’s chief scientific officer and chief medical officer. Nevertheless, criticisms have been voiced about some of the SAGE advice.

Citation:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/government-office-for-science/about>

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2020/jan/02/dominic-cummings-calls-for-weirdos-and-misfits-for-no-10-jobs>

Australia

Score 6

The federal government has always made extensive use of scientific and specialist scholarly advice, particularly in areas such as health and medicine, and science and technology.

Since the late 1990s, and particularly since 2007, the federal government has funded a range of specialist centers and institutes aimed at undertaking fundamental research and planning, the findings from which feed into government policy. Examples include government support for regulation and compliance centers at the Australian National University, with the Regulatory Institutions Network (RegNet), and the establishment of the Australia and New Zealand School of Government, which is a postgraduate faculty set up by the Australian and New Zealand governments, and by the state governments in New South Wales, Queensland and Victoria.

Despite these formal mechanisms, academic influence on government decision-making is relatively limited, particularly in the economic- and social-policy domains. Australian governments accept advice on technical issues, but much less so on political and economic issues. The notable exception is the Productivity Commission, which draws on expert advice when conducting inquiries and reviews.

Austria

Score 6

Due to the fragmented structure of the cabinet, there is no coherent pattern of using scholarly advice. The extent to which each ministry seeks systematic academic advice, and whose advice is being invited, is up to the individual minister.

Economic and financial policy is the only area in which general scholarly advice is easily available and commonly sought. Two institutions established respectively by the social partners (the Austrian Institute of Economic Research, Österreichisches Institut für Wirtschaftsforschung) and through a mix of public and independent funding (the Institute for Advanced Studies, Institut für Höhere Studien) regularly articulate specific opinions such as economic forecasts. Governments typically take these two institutions' work into account when making policy. Both institutes have an excellent reputation for academic quality and independence, but are nevertheless structurally (financially) dependent on government actors. Except with respect to immigration and pension policy, there is no regular academic advisory board, as exists in Germany or the United States.

While the period of the ÖVP-FPÖ government was responsible for a relative decline in public and expert consultation regarding new laws and regulations, and with some expert opinions allegedly suppressed by the government to avoid public dissent, the coronavirus pandemic opened up a new chapter in government-expert relations. Not only have scientists become more prominent contributors to the public debate, there have also been important institutional innovations to foster closer exchange between political decision-makers and scientists, such as the COVID-19 Future Operations Platform (<https://futureoperations.at/>). Further, the pandemic prompted a new style of dealing with expert advice, with some ministers revealing to the public who exactly their advisers on contested key decisions were. Overall, the coronavirus pandemic became a historic catalyst for a new era of expert-based governance in Austria. The gesamtstaatliche Covid-Krisenkoordination (Gecko), formed in late 2021, included about 25 senior experts from different disciplines and was designed to play a crucial role in all coronavirus-related policies.

Citation:

<https://science.apa.at/power-search/7052218416774764840>

<https://irihs.ihs.ac.at/id/eprint/5746/7/koenig-2020-politikberatung-oesterreich-future-operations-clearing-board.pdf>

<https://www.diepresse.com/5805409/der-minister-holt-seine-berater-vor-den-vorhang>

<https://corona-ampel.gv.at/corona-kommission/mitglieder-der-corona-kommission/>

<https://www.derstandard.at/story/2000132010220/das-sind-die-neuen-covid-krisenmanager-und-ihr-expertenteam>

Belgium

Score 6

Consultation with non-governmental academic experts depends on the subject matter; their actual influence on eventual decisions is most of the time quite limited, and certainly marginal when compared to the influence of experts who work full-time for the ministers' or state secretaries' "cabinet" (or office, see below). The government and/or the parliament do consult full-time academic experts with independent views, but rarely in a systematic way (this is left to the initiative of parliamentary committees), and not necessarily to enable genuine scientific debate. However, in Belgium's neo-corporatist system, representatives of the social partners (employers' organizations and trade unions) are systematically summoned for participation when a strategic decision is to be made on socioeconomic issues. In other politically sensitive areas (e.g., tax reform) academic and international expertise has had very limited influence.

The management of the health crisis required a different approach, with new, improvised procedures. The government summoned an advisory group of non-governmental academic experts in virology, epidemiology and economic crisis management, among other fields. They initiated systematic meetings and reports, initially in a chaotic manner. The head of the team has subsequently described how unclear their mission was, and discovered only after the fact that she could potentially be held personally liable for some of the damage created by the COVID-19 crisis. Only in subsequent updates of the group were the procedures and responsibilities clarified.

The multiple iterations of this newfound approach to working with experts led to an alphabet soup of expert groups. These groups were given guidance in their missions and everyday functioning by their respective ministers. At the onset of the crisis, the government activated the National Security Council (NSC), a structure designed to closely monitor and provide advice in the event of major crises and national emergencies. Most relevant were its Risk Assessment Group (RAG) and Risk Management Group (RMG) components, which were combined in an emergency "medical cluster." To assess the potential economic impact of the epidemic, another NSC expert group, the Economic Risk Management Group (ERMG), was also created. Later on, a fourth expert group was installed, the Group of Experts for the Exit Strategy (GEES), focusing on concrete strategies for exiting the first lockdown. As the idea that the crisis was not temporary became more prevalent, the GEES was replaced by the GEMS: the Group of Experts in Management Strategy, which continues to advise the government with regular reports on the evolution of the public health situation and suggests possible measures that could be taken.

Citation:

<https://vsse.be/fr/notre-fonctionnement/cadre-legal-et-administratif/le-conseil-national-de-securite>

<https://www.vocabulairepolitique.be/conseil-national-de-securite/>

<https://plus.lesoir.be/342853/article/2020-12-10/coronavirus-voici-le-casting-du-nouveau-groupe-dexperts-qui-conseillera-le>

<https://plus.lesoir.be/343730/article/2020-12-15/coronavirus-le-gems-succede-au-gees>

Iceland

Score 6

Governments occasionally consult academic experts. Typically, these experts are trained lawyers who provide advice on the preparation of specific laws or public administration practices, but economic and engineering experts have also been consulted. These experts are quite often affiliated with the political party of the minister seeking their advice. Meanwhile, some independent experts without party affiliation have noticed that their views are ignored. Thus, impartial, non-governmental experts do not have a strong influence on decision-making.

However, the 2008 economic collapse changed this pattern. The need for scholarly advice on judicial, financial, and economic issues, as well as on questions of public administration, increased markedly. This was particularly the case with the April 2010 parliamentary Special Investigation Committee (SIC, Rannsóknarnefnd Alþingis), which investigated the causes of the economic collapse. A number of experts in various fields – including law, economics, banking, finance, media, psychology, philosophy, political science, and sociology – contributed to the SIC report. While no data exist on the broader use of expert advice in governmental decision-making, the SIC experience may have expanded the role of experts overall.

Foreign experts are occasionally called upon. In 2017, four teams of foreign economists were asked to evaluate Iceland's monetary policies and prospects.

Academic experts called upon to advise the government are commonly viewed as being politically partisan. This has reduced public confidence in academic expertise in Iceland. According to Gallup, public confidence in the University of Iceland dropped from 90% in early 2008 to below 80% after the 2008 economic collapse and has since remained around 75% in the Gallup polls (74% in 2018 and 2019, and 77% in 2021).

Citation:

Gallup, <https://www.gallup.is/nidurstodur/thjodarpuls/traust-til-stofnana/>. Accessed 3 February 2022.

Ireland

Score 6

In 2009, Professor Patrick Honohan of Trinity College Dublin was appointed governor of the central bank of Ireland. This marked a break with the tradition that the retiring permanent secretary of the Department of Finance would succeed to the governorship. Following his retirement toward the end of 2015, the government

announced the appointment of another academic, Professor Philip Lane of Trinity College Dublin, as his replacement. Following Professor Lane's appointment as chief economist to the European Central Bank, Professor Lane was replaced as governor of the central bank of Ireland, for a seven-year term starting on 1 September 2019, by Gabriel Makhoul, a former secretary to the New Zealand Treasury.

The Irish Fiscal Advisory Council (FAC) is an independent statutory body, comprising five experts, mainly drawn from academia. It was established in 2011 as part of a wider reform of Ireland's budgetary procedures. The FAC is required to "independently assess, and comment publicly on, whether the government is meeting its own stated budgetary targets and objectives." The claim made by then chairman of the council, Professor John McHale of National University of Ireland, Galway, that the 2016 budget violated the rules of the European Union's Stability and Growth Pact received much publicity. This assertion, however, was quickly withdrawn following a rebuttal by the minister for finance. Nonetheless, the FAC stuck to its criticism of the 2016 budget as being excessively expansionary. Following his retirement, Professor McHale was replaced as chairman of the by Professor Seamus Coffey of University College Cork. The FAC's criticism of the government's excessive reliance on financing brought about by buoyant corporate tax revenues in recent budgets at least provoked a commitment by the minister of finance in the 2020 budget to produce a Fiscal Vulnerabilities Scoping Paper, which would examine corporation tax over-performance and policy options aimed at ensuring the sustainability of the public finances.

Academics have regularly held advisory posts in government ministries, including in the Taoiseach's Office and at the Department of Finance. Advisers meet regularly with ministers but there is no information on the impact on policymaking of the advice proffered. There is no established pattern of open consultations with panels of non-governmental experts and academics, although some ad hoc arrangements have been made from time to time. As above, the government has relied heavily on experts over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic, including the chief medical officer and the National Public Health Emergency Team (Colfer, 2021).

Citation:

Colfer, B. (2020) Herd-immunity across intangible borders: Public policy responses to COVID-19 in Ireland and the UK, *European Policy Analysis*, 06(02) pp 203-225, <https://doi.org/10.1002/epa2.1096>;

Academics are active in several recently-formed independent blogs that may have some influence on policy maker. These include: <http://www.irisheconomy.ie> <http://www.publicpolicy.ie> <http://www.politicalreform.ie> <http://www.nerinstitute.net>

Japan

Score 6

The Japanese government is assisted by a large number of advisory councils. These are traditionally associated with particular ministries and agencies, with some cross-cutting councils chaired by the prime minister. Such councils are usually composed of private sector representatives, academics, journalists, former civil servants and

trade unionists. The question is whether advisory boards truly impact policymaking or whether the executive simply uses them to legitimize extant policy plans. The answer may well vary from case to case. In some instances, LDP-led governments have used outside expertise to overcome opposition to policy changes and reform. Think tanks, most of which operate on a for-profit basis, play only a limited role in terms of influencing national policymaking.

In 2019, powerful Financial Services Minister Taro Aso publicly rejected findings of a Financial Services Agency panel report on the pension system, raising concerns that expert recommendations would in the future be less able to guide policymaking. Similarly, throughout 2020, the government was criticized for its failure to consult with experts on COVID-19 policies and its response to the pandemic.

Citation:

Sebastian Maslow, Knowledge Regimes in Post-Developmental States: Assessing the Role of Think Tanks in Japan's Policymaking Process, *Pacific Affairs* 91 (2018), 1: 95-117.

Advisory panel in works to speed up review of Japan defense guidelines, *The Japan Times*, 26 August 2018, <https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2018/08/26/national/politics-diplomacy/advisory-panel-established-step-defense-guideline-review/>

Naoko Furuyashiki, Finance minister Aso blasted for rejecting report on inadequate pension system, *The Mainichi*, 21 June 2019, <https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20190621/p2a/00m/0fp/015000c>

Latvia

Score 6

The decision-making system in Latvia is transparent and open to public participation from the point at which policy documents are circulated between ministries in preparation for review by the cabinet. At this stage, experts and NGOs have the opportunity to provide input on their own initiative.

Most ministries have developed good practices in the area of public consultation. For example, ministries often seek expert advice by inviting academics to join working groups. Some government planning documents, such as the National Action Plan for Open Government by the State Chancellery, have been drafted in cooperation with NGO experts, following public discussions.

However, the government lacks the finances to regularly commission academic input. Consequently, expert engagement is given voluntarily, without remuneration.

The tax reform in 2017 saw a wide array of international and domestic experts propose and debate reforms across a broad spectrum of government committees, public forums, TV and radio debates, and op-ed columns. A similar deliberation process preceded the healthcare reforms and, in 2019, the territorial administrative reform. This has increased the status of non-governmental academic experts and government transparency.

However, expert advice is not always sought out and/or embraced. Recently, for example, an academic expert group was established to assess the future scenarios for COVID-19 crisis management, coordinated by the PKC. Soon afterward, the group of experts terminated its activities indefinitely, because the model for cooperation with the Cabinet of Ministers was seen as having failed, and the experts did not feel that the results were justifying their efforts. The group explained that the cooperation should be rooted in government requests for academic expertise, which had not occurred during this time.

Citation:

1. Official Gazette 'Latvijas Vestnesis' (2021) Statement by the Academic Environment Expert Group on the suspension of its activities, Available (in Latvian): <https://lvportals.lv/dienaskartiba/333432-akademiskas-vides-ekspertu-grupas-pazinojums-par-savas-darbibas-apturesanu-2021>, Last accessed: 13.01.2022

Lithuania

Score 6

Lithuanian decision-makers are usually quite attentive to the recommendations of the European Commission and other international expert institutions. They are also receptive to involving non-governmental academic experts in the early stages of government policymaking. The governments led by Andrius Kubilius and Algirdas Butkevičius set up expert advisory groups (including the so-called Sunset Commission, which involved several independent experts). The Skvernelis government, however, did not renew the mandate of the Sunset Commission. Instead, the Skvernelis government decided to develop a Government Strategic Analysis Center (STRATA) tasked with generating new evidence for policymaking, using the government's reformed Research and Higher Education Monitoring and Analysis Center (MOSTA) as a basis.

However, major policy initiatives are usually driven by intra- or interparty agreements rather than empirical evidence provided by non-governmental academic experts. In many cases, expert recommendations are not followed when the main political parties are unable to come to a political consensus. In addition, the rarity of ex ante impact assessments involving experts and stakeholder consultation contributes to the lack of timely evidence-based analysis. For example, debates on the amendments to the Alcohol Control Law, which was adopted by the parliament in 2017, were affected by the lack of timely evidence-based analysis. Some initiatives publicly discussed by the government in 2018 – 2019 (e.g., the introduction of vouchers for buying food from small retailers, or the relocation of the Ministry of Agriculture from Vilnius to Kaunas) were not accompanied by impact assessments.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, governments started relying much more on expert advice in selecting measures to tackle the spread of the virus and address challenges in the healthcare system. However, this for the most part concerned experts in medicine and epidemiology, and to a lesser extent data scientists. Experts in the

social sciences were much less involved. Medical experts were not initially involved systematically, but a more comprehensive approach emerged with the creation of the Medical Experts Council as an initiative of the president.

The conservative-liberal coalition government formed in late 2020 stated in its program that it intends to devote more attention to the conduct of impact assessments and consultations with stakeholders, including experts. The government also received a set of recommendations from the OECD, which prepared a policy study on how to better utilize evidence for policymaking purposes. In November 2021, STRATA and the European Commission jointly organized a workshop on the use of science to inform policymaking, in which other ways of improving the use of science for policymaking purposes were also discussed. After the 2020 elections, the parliament established a Committee for the Future, which regularly invites experts to its discussions. However, consultations with experts on concrete legislative initiatives proposed by members of the parliament are rare, and depend on the personal initiative of specific committee chairpeople.

Citation:

Bortkevičiūtė et al., Nuo greitų pergalių prie skaudžių pralaimėjimų: Lietuvos viešosios politikos atsakas į COVID-19 pandemiją ir šios krizės valdymas 2020 m, 2021, Vilnius: Vilnius University.

OECD, Mobilising Evidence at the Centre of Government in Lithuania. Strengthening decision-making and policy evaluation for long-term development, Paris: OECD, 2021.

European Commission, Science for policymaking in Lithuania workshop, November 23, 2021, https://knowledge4policy.ec.europa.eu/event/science-policymaking-lithuania_en

Mexico

Score 6

In the Mexican political system, barriers between the government and scholars are comparatively low. It is quite common for a cabinet to include recruits from academia, and there are also substantial informal contacts between academics and high-level public officials. By the same token, former government officials often teach at universities.

After assuming office, President López Obrador announced he would strengthen relationships with experts and activists from civil society, rather than with economists and international professionals. In contrast to former governments, consultations with civil society actors and citizens enjoy high priority. However, these announcements have proven to be merely rhetorical. In reality, governmental decision-making is concentrated in the presidency, mainly in the figure of President López Obrador himself in a populist manner. Experts and members of the public are included in pro forma consultations.

Netherlands

Score 6

The government frequently employs ad hoc commissions of scientific experts on technical topics like water management, harbor and airport expansion, gas drilling on Wadden Sea islands and pollution studies. The function of scientific advisory services in departments has been changed through the establishment of “knowledge chambers” and, following U.S. and UK practice, the appointment of chief scientific officers or chief scientists as advisory experts. Depending on the nature of the policy issues, these experts may flexibly mobilize the required scientific bodies and scientists instead of relying on fixed advisory councils with fixed memberships. This also allows room for political flexibility – that is, by hiring or contracting commercial, private consultancies to provide politically needed and desirable research and advice.

Although the use of scientific expertise is quite high, its actual influence on policymaking cannot be precisely ascertained, as scholarly advice is intended to be instrumental and therefore is less welcome in the early phases of policymaking. During the pandemic, the government has relied heavily on expert advice from the Outbreak Management Team. It is certainly not transparent to the wider public, although the public has become more aware of – and alarmed – about the importance of expert advice during the management of the coronavirus pandemic. Since 2011, the focus of advice has been redirected from relatively “strategic and long-term” issues to “technical, instrumental and mid-/short-term” matters.

As might be expected in times of political polarization and science skepticism, even members of parliament have expressed doubts about the integrity of the knowledge institutes and the validity of their information. The research unit of the Ministry of Justice and Safety (Wetenschappelijk Onderzoeks – en Documentatie Centrum, WODC) has been subject to political meddling, and during the debates and deliberations on the climate agreement, on flight routes to and from the newly built but not yet used Lelystad Airport, and especially on estimating the agriculture sector’s nitrogen emissions, the Environmental Planning Agency’s measurement and modeling practices came under scrutiny. Generally, politicians and the wider public have become more aware that expert advice frequently relies on plausible assumptions-based modeling rather than on evidence-based information.

Nevertheless, the cabinet still appears to rely heavily on its knowledge institutes and departmental knowledge centers for its long-term strategies and decision-making. The scrutiny by political parties, members of parliament, civil society associations and journalists has generally been beneficial with regard to the transparency of information collection and the policy support provided by the government’s knowledge institutes.

Citation:

R. Hoppe, 2014. Patterns of science/policy interaction in The Netherlands, in P. Scholten & F. van Nispen, Policy

Analysis in the Netherlands, Policy Press, Bristol (ISBN 9781447313335)

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Volkskrant, Yvonne Hofs. 19 juli 2020. Boeren gaan protesteren bij ‘selectief’ rekenend RIVM: soepel voor de snelweg en streng voor het vee

P. Omtzigt, 2021. Een nieuw social contract, Deel III. Hoe modellen Nederland bepalen, Amsterdam: Prometheus

Boin, A. et al., 2020. Een analyse van de nationale crisiresponse. Leiden: The Crisis University Press

R. Hoppe, 2014. Patterns of science/policy interaction in The Netherlands, in P. Scholten & F. van Nispen, Policy Analysis in the Netherlands, Policy Press, Bristol (ISBN 9781447313335)

South Korea

Score 6

Non-governmental academic experts have considerable influence on government decision-making. Expertise is sourced from external experts at research institutes and universities. A large portion of the Presidential Commission on Policy Planning is staffed with professors and other experts, and most of the other members have an academic background. In addition to the Presidential Commission on Policy Planning, scholars are often nominated for top government positions. Academic experts participate in diverse statutory advisory bodies established under the offices of the president and prime minister. Advisory commissions are usually dedicated to specific issues deriving from the president’s policy preferences. However, the selection of academic experts is often seen as too narrow and exclusive. The process of appointing experts remains highly politicized, and in the past experts have often been chosen because of their political leanings rather than their academic expertise. Some fault the Moon administration for ignoring criticisms of policies provided by experts with different political perspectives than its own, which makes the process of policy consultation less effective.

Citation:

Korea.net. President Moon appoints senior secretaries. May 11, 2017
<http://www.korea.net/NewsFocus/policies/view?articleId=145963>

United States

Score 6

U.S. policymaking incorporates scholarly and expert advice in an informal and highly decentralized manner. Along with university-based experts and analytic agency staffs, there are a few hundred think tanks – non-governmental organizations that specialize in policy research and commentary.

During the first year of the pandemic, President Trump spread misinformation about COVID-19 and his administration “undermined, suppressed and censored government scientists working to study the virus and reduce its harm” (Tollefson,

2020). During the 2020 presidential campaign, Joe Biden pledged to restore the integrity of expert advice within the federal government, something he started to put into practice during his first year in the White House, which witnessed a major shift in presidential discourse and behavior surrounding the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

Citation:

Tollefson, Jeff. 2020. "How Trump damaged science – and why it could take decades to recover," *Nature*, October 7. <https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-020-02800-9>

Bulgaria

Score 5

In Bulgaria, there are various ways to consult stakeholders and experts, including a special online portal at the Council of Ministers and more than 70 advisory councils. The government has also begun seeking out expertise by forming public councils linked to specific ministries. Representatives of academia and research institutes are traditionally included in the process on an ad hoc basis.

Apart from opinions for strategies in the fields of social inclusion, poverty, jobs and social policy, no other strategies received any attention in 2021. The three versions of the Recovery and Resilience Plan were widely discussed too, but very few promising proposals were taken by the government drafters.

Amendments to the state budget of 2021 and the provisional framework for the 2022 budget were also extensively discussed by the Fiscal Council and independent experts. There is currently little indication which suggestions will be included.

Citation:

Council of Ministers, public consultations portal: www.strategy.bg

Council of Ministers, advisory councils portal: saveti.government.bg

Czechia

Score 5

In Czechia, there are several permanent or temporary advisory bodies and several public research institutions that are closely linked to individual ministries or the Government Office and which partly depend on state funding. Within the cabinet, there is a unit consisting of consultants and advisers to the prime minister, whose task is to evaluate the substantive content of legislative materials and prepare a strategic agenda for the government. Under Prime Minister Babiš, the consultation of non-governmental experts has lost importance. The number of his official external advisers fell to only 11. While Babiš reactivated the National Economic Council of the Government (NERV) – a government advisory body on economic issues, which had originally been formed in 2010, but then left to go dormant – at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, the body was soon sidelined and had little impact on

government decision-making. Petr Fiala, the new Czech prime minister since the end of November 2021, has expanded the number of his official external advisers from 11 to 14. The prime minister's Council of Advisers is dominated by economists and medical experts.

France

Score 5

In contrast to some other European countries, the French government does not rely heavily on academic advice, even though the President's Office and the Prime Minister's Office frequently consult economists, and outstanding non-governmental academics may be chosen to sit on national reflection councils covering various policy fields (e.g., integration and education). But the influence of academics is not comparable to what can be found in many other political settings. High-level civil servants tend to consider themselves self-sufficient. Once the government has chosen a policy strategy, it tends to stick to it without significant discussion over the appropriateness or effectiveness of choices made. One recent illuminating case has been the announcement that more nuclear energy would be necessary in the future as part of the country's energy mix. There is nothing comparable in France to the economic institutes in Germany, for example, the opinions of which serve to guide the government and offer a platform for public debates. One telling example of this indifference to experts was the decision (in reaction to the modest ranking of French universities in international rankings) to merge the universities within individual cities and regions, under the assumption that larger universities would produce better results. This decision was taken in spite of the opposition of the academic community, and against the evidence provided by, for instance, the American and British university systems. Predictably, the results have been rather disappointing, while some new bureaucratic monsters have been born.

By contrast, the reform of the pension system currently has been heavily influenced by experts and economists. However, its radical U-turn in relation to the past has created political turmoil and fierce opposition. Due to the explosion of the pandemic the reform had to be delayed to a more opportune time.

Italy

Score 5

Italy lacks a strong tradition of regular government consultation with non-governmental academics. A small group of partisan experts selected by the prime minister and other ministers frequently offer strategic and technical advice. However, independent experts are rarely consulted in a transparent way. Important legislative proposals do not benefit from an institutionalized, open and transparent consultation process. In the finance, culture and labor ministries the role of external experts is more established. Independent academic experts have in the past been involved in the spending review, but only on a short-term basis.

The current Draghi government has given a prominent role to non-partisan experts by assigning them four important ministries (environmental transition; infrastructure; technological innovation and digital transition; and university and research). Generally speaking, the policy advisory system in Italy is not very inclusive and it is based only on bureaucratic expertise combined with partisan advisers.

Malta

Score 5

Consultation processes involving academic experts has always been rather intermittent, but since 2013, such experts have been involved in a greater number of areas including family issues, gay rights, care of the elderly, health issues such as diabetes, IT in schools and others. With the exception of standing parliamentary committees, which regularly consult with academic experts, the government tends to consult with outside experts in an issue-based and ad hoc manner. Academic input is at the line ministry level. Policy issues have at times been the focus of studies directly commissioned from faculties, institutes and other bodies. Information required by the government may also be contracted out on an individual basis. In recent years, EU funds have been sourced to conduct research and consultation processes on a greater scale.

In addition, the process of developing important strategic plans and policies is being opened to consultation by stakeholders, including NGOs and the general public. Web-based consultation processes have become more refined, and calls for consultation more frequent. Nonetheless, gaps in the consultation process remain. In some policy areas, consultation remains sketchy or minimal, while in others, policy areas stakeholders are brought in only at a late stage. Occasionally, experts selected for the consultation process are accused of having conflicts of interest. One such example is the attempt in 2021 to update legislation with regard to prostitution. Different expert views and government input on whether and how the sector should be decriminalized resulted in the policy area becoming so contentious that reform was put on the back burner.

Citation:

<http://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20160908/local/gozo-ministry-ordered-to-publish-consultancy-deals.624367>

<http://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20160818/local/chamber-of-pharmacists-not-consulted-on-move-to-electronic.622392>

<http://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20161007/local/delimara-power-station-ippc-application-to-get-public-consultation.627239>

<http://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20160816/local/era-chairman-denies-conflict-of-interest-in-townsquare-application.622170>

PA Chief insists Paceville consultants had no conflict of interest Malta Today 02/11/16

Paceville Master plan: Mott MacDonald should refund payment after alleged conflict of interest Independent 23/11/16

<https://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20181002/local/white-paper-on-valletta-monti-stalls-to-be-published-shortly.690602>

https://www.maltatoday.com.mt/news/national/90252/watch_local_government_white_paper_proposes_more_responsibilities_for_regional_committees#.W9MPkXsZaM9

https://www.maltatoday.com.mt/news/national/90157/rent_reform_will_not_fix_prices_targets_stability_through_longer_leases#.W9MQJ3szaM8
https://www.maltatoday.com.mt/news/national/95731/proposed_amendments_to_building_regulations_published_for_public_consultation#.XZxwO2AzbIU
<https://www.pa.org.mt/consultation>
 Malta Today 18/09/2020 Sex workers with agency must be part of prostitution reform
 Malta Today 16/03/2021 Malta prostitution reform gains support of European sex workers union

Portugal

Score 5

The government utilizes academic experts for research on a wide variety of topics and to implement strategic development. A good example of this is the government's decision to commission Professor António Costa e Silva to write the Strategic Vision for the Economic Recovery Plan of Portugal.

In the context of the pandemic, this form of consultation was extended. The government established regular meetings between health experts and political decision-makers, including members of the government, the president, representatives of all parties with parliamentary representation, representatives of trade unions and the business community, and other stakeholders. The first of these meetings took place on 24 March 2020, with subsequent sessions held very frequently (initially weekly, then fortnightly), totaling 10 sessions over the first pandemic wave (the last of which was held on July 24). While no regular meeting schedule was afterward established, this group has met subsequently as deemed necessary.

The government also engaged in consultations with experts from other fields. For example, the prime minister has regularly met with a number of leading economists to discuss economic recovery policies, beginning as early as mid-April 2020 (XXII Governo Constitucional) and continuing in October of that year (Público 2020). Overall, the experts selected represented a diverse body of opinion, and the group was by all accounts open to the addition of new members over time.

However, these mechanisms are mainly used on an ad hoc basis, and without a systematic academic-consultation mechanism in place.

Citation:

Público (2020). "Primeiro-ministro ouve economistas e empresários sobre Plano de Recuperação e Resiliência," Público, 5 October 2020, available online at: <https://www.publico.pt/2020/10/05/politica/noticia/primeiro-ministro-ouve-economistas-empresarios-plano-recuperacao-resiliencia-1934061>

XXII Governo Constitucional (2020). "Primeiro-Ministro reúne-se com académicos e economistas sobre as medidas de relançamento económico," 13 April 2020, available online at: <https://www.portugal.gov.pt/pt/gc22/comunicacao/comunicado?i=primeiro-ministro-reune-se-com-academicos-e-economistas-sobre-as-medidas-de-relançamento-económico>

XXII Governo Constitucional (2020). "Governo nomeia António Costa e Silva coordenador da preparação do Programa de Recuperação Económica e Social," 3 June 2020, available online at: <https://www.portugal.gov.pt/pt/gc22/comunicacao/noticia?i=governo-nomeia-antonio-costa-e-silva-coordenador-da-preparacao-do-programa-de-recuperacao-economica-e-social>

Slovakia

Score 5

Slovak governments rely on various permanent or temporary advisory committees. Prime ministers have their own advisory body. There are also several public research institutions with close linkages to ministries that are largely dependent on state funding and provide their analysis to the government. Within the ministries, expert advice is provided by so-called “analytical centers,” which are separated units composed of experts with different backgrounds, but a common sense of mission. At the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Matovič government set up a temporary advisory body, the Economic Crisis Council. Like its predecessors, however, however, both the Matovič and Heger governments have been inconsistent in deciding upon whether to draw upon external expertise and, if so, whom they choose to work with. During the first wave of the pandemic, Matovič drew in some cases upon the knowledge of health experts to silence criticism and to bypass institutionalized procedures, and backtracked on expert advice when pressed by public opinion in other cases (Bušítková/ Baboš 2020).

Citation:

Bušítková, L., P. Baboš (2020): Best in Covid: Populists in the Time of Pandemic, in: *Politics and Governance* 8(4): 496-508 (DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17645/pag.v8i4.3424>).

Slovenia

Score 5

In Slovenia, the Government Office and the ministries have various advisory bodies that include academic experts. Prime Minister Cerar, an academic himself, strongly relied on academic and practitioners’ advice when establishing his party platform, coalition and government program. While the Cerar government regularly sought external advice, it often failed to implement it. The Šarec government behaved in a similar fashion. The Janša government has established several expert groups for digitalization, de-bureaucratization, healthcare reform and the coronavirus crisis, which have been tasked with preparing policy solutions and proposing new or adopted legislation. Several solutions (e.g., concerning de-bureaucratization and digitalization) have already been adopted inside amended normative frameworks. For instance, the de-bureaucratization law was adopted in December 2021 following intense public debate and included dozens of de-bureaucratization measures, which aim to simplify administrative procedures in both the public and private sectors.

Croatia

Score 4

The 2009 Societal Consultation Codex, which serves as a set of guidelines for the policymaking process, mentions the consultation of academic experts. In practice, however, the involvement of academic experts in the policymaking process remains

rare. Moreover, it is largely limited to the early phases of policy formulation and does not extend to the final drafting of legislation, let alone the monitoring of implementation.

Poland

Score 4

Under the PiS government, policymaking has been ideologically driven rather than evidence based. While the government does consult with experts, these consultations are selective and not very transparent. The government listens to *Ordo Iuris*, an anti-choice group of conservative lawyers, but refuses to consult experts on climate change. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the government set up a COVID-19 advisory council, but has increasingly ignored its recommendations. This marginalization led 13 out of 17 council members to resign in January 2022. The government's ideological approach has led many experts who once showed some sympathy for PiS to break with the party.

Romania

Score 4

Cooperation between the government and non-governmental experts is weakly institutionalized. Consultations are irregular and lack transparency as well as mechanisms that would ensure feedback received is actually accounted for in policy. The dismantling in 2018 of the Ministry for Public Consultation and Civic Dialogue, to ensure systematic public consultation, marked a step backward in the formalization of public and expert consultation processes within the country. No real changes occurred under Dăncilă and Orban in 2019. As part of its National Action Plan, Open Government Partnership (2018–2020), the Romanian government sought to standardize the public consultation process. However, the outcome of this exercise is not clear and public consultation on legislative or institutional activities remains sporadic.

Citation:

Open Government Partnership, National Action Plan (2018-2020). Bucharest.

(https://www.opengovpartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Romania_Action-Plan_2018-2020_EN.pdf)

Turkey

Score 4

The spectrum of communication with outside experts is narrowing, as the government has begun to recruit experts that will provide alternative but not critical opinions on relevant issues of public policy.

Public institutions' annual activity reports do not indicate how often expert opinions have been requested. Selected groups of scholars participate in the preparation of

special expert reports related to the national development plans. The councils established under the Presidential Office are entitled to prepare reports on certain public issues and incorporate the opinions of the ministries, relevant public entities as well as other experts.

Citation:

Üstüner, Y., & Yavuz, N. (2018). Turkey's Public Administration Today: An Overview and Appraisal. *International Journal of Public Administration*, 41(10), 820-831.

Cyprus

Score 3

Appointments to the managing councils of public law entities include scholars. With regard to expert participation in consultative bodies created in the past, little is known about their work or fate.

Advisory bodies have long existed, although with limited tasks and scope of work, and limited to providing non-binding advice. Their voluntary work was supplementary to that of the administration.

Institutions in which experts participate, such as the Fiscal Council, the Economic Council and the Scientific Council for Research have seen their work and advice largely ignored. The new Deputy Ministry for Research and Digital Development (2020), a chief scientist and the Scientific Council for Research, appointed in 2018, are working together on research.

While the state rarely seeks experts' advice, it has been working closely with experts on COVID-19 issues since early 2020.

Hungary

Score 2

The Orbán governments have shown no interest in seeking independent and knowledge-based advice and have alienated many leading experts who initially sympathized with them politically. The culture war waged by Fidesz and the growing restrictions placed on academic freedom have further intensified this alienation. The government has invested considerably in creating a network of partisan experts in fake independent institutions that can influence public opinion and has used such institutions to give a voice to government views in the international debates. The reduction of decision-making to an inner circle and abstaining from broad advice evidently leads to groupthink and low quality of decisions, often detached from societal reality.

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