



Macromedia
University of Applied Sciences

MASTER THESIS

Final paper for the obtainment of the
Master of Arts Degree

Policy Design:
Redesigning the Traditional Policy Cycle
Towards Human-Centredness

in the course of study Design Management

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Cologne, July 25th 2022

Abstract

Citizens' dissatisfaction with current policymaking is growing, including in Germany. Due to the steady focus on problem-solving, politics is moving further away from citizens' needs. Therefore, traditional methods can no longer address the increasing complexity of political and societal problems. To counteract, Policy Design is introduced to enable policymakers to better deal with complex issues using designerly mindsets. This seeks to achieve more effective and human-centred policy outcomes.

The thesis aims to integrate design approaches into policymaking, more specifically into the traditional Policy Cycle, in order to develop policies based on people's needs. Therefore, the following research question is addressed within the scope of the study:

Which design-specific measures must be integrated into the traditional Policy Cycle to ensure effectiveness in policymaking to develop thoughtful and human-centred policies?

To address the research question, the core aspects of policymaking are clarified through scientific research, such as the traditional Policy Cycle and Policy Design. This formed the basis for further research using the Delphi method. In the next step, qualitative interviews are presented to identify criticism of the current policymaking process and optimisation proposals. For this purpose, eleven international experts from diverse domains were interviewed, reaching from the political to the design field. Finally, three points of criticism regarding the traditional Policy Cycle are revealed through an evaluation of the scientific research and expert interviews:

1. Policymaking as an isolated, linear, and top-down approach.
2. The gap between policy formulation and policy implementation.
3. The lack of active participation in policymaking.

To counteract these points of criticism, the thesis proposes a redesign of the traditional Policy Cycle, moving toward more human-centredness. The developed *new* process, therefore, is guided by the Double Diamond, which exploits vital advantages of Design Thinking. In addition to the redesigned process, a map is established, showing the current and preferred state of participation in policymaking. Both attempts clarify the potential that design can unfold in policymaking.

Keywords

Polycymaking, Policy Cycle, Policy Design, Human-centred-Design, Design Thinking

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List of Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Explanation
DJI	<i>Deutsches Jugendinstitut</i>
e.g.	exempli gratia (for example)
GTM	Grounded Theory Methodology
HCD	Human-centred Design
HDL	Helsinki Design Lab
IAP2	International Association for Public Participation
i.e.	id est (that is)
JUBU	<i>Jugendbeteiligung bei Bürgerbudgets</i>
PD	Participatory Design
UCD	User-centred Design

1 Introduction

This thesis critically questions the traditional Policy Cycle and its impact on policy outcomes and social life. Moreover, the study examines the use of design in policymaking by proposing a new approach to developing policies that better meet society's needs.

1.1 Problem Definition

Several studies demonstrate the current dissatisfaction of citizens with the political system. According to the German Federal Statistical Office (Statistisches Bundesamt, Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin für Sozialforschung, and Bundesinstitut für Bevölkerungsforschung, 2021), 32 per cent of Western Europeans are not satisfied with the functioning of democracies in 2019; in Eastern Europe the figure is as high as 47 per cent. Furthermore, in Germany, 59 per cent state that they are little to not at all pleased with the federal government (Statista Research Department, 2022). Referring to Friedrich-Ebert-Foundation (2019, April 4, transl. title), the following points of criticism can be derived:

- too little interest by citizens in receiving information (88 per cent agreement);
- lack of transparency by politicians about existing societal problems (80 per cent agreement);
- the increasing complexity of political problems (64 per cent agreement);
- not enough opportunities to participate as a citizen (59 per cent agreement).

Referring to the stated points of criticism, there is a high necessity to address these issues by focusing on the needs of citizens and developing improved policy outcomes. The demand for greater proximity to citizens in policymaking can be confirmed by the fact that governments have the primary authority over many aspects of social life (Howlett, 2014). 'We take for granted that governments on a daily basis take decisions that influence our lives and the societies in which we live' (Bason, 2016, p. 1). Therefore, policy failure and thus citizen dissatisfaction is contributed. Another significant issue is the increasing complexity of problems and the rapid and continuous societal change. 'Social reality is constantly changing, creating a continuous movement of overwhelming complexity and multiple simultaneous rationalities to deal with' (Christiansen & Bunt, 2016, p. 42).

According to scientific research, design emerges as a valuable way to address the above challenges. It helps in developing desired policy outcomes that improve societal life.

Governments worldwide have recognised the value of design and are moving towards more effective, open, and citizen-centred governance (Bason, 2016; Howlett, 2014).

1.2 Objectives and Research Question

The issues described in the previous chapter raises the following research question, which aims to be answered in this thesis:

Which design-specific measures must be integrated into the traditional Policy Cycle to ensure effectiveness in policymaking to develop thoughtful and human-centred policies?

Furthermore, the thesis outlines the criticism of traditional policymaking as well as the status quo of policy design. The findings from the scientific research are then challenged and compared with the results of the research conducted. The study's outcome is finally presented in a concept focusing on redesigning the traditional Policy Cycle.

1.3 Methodology and Structure

The thesis is divided into seven chapters: introduction, scientific research, evaluation of the scientific research, research question and methodology, a proposal for implementation, the evaluation of the proposed concept, and a conclusion.

The second chapter provides scientific research. First, the basics of political science are presented. This section deals with the dimensions of the political system, policy science, policymaking, the traditional policymaking process, and the case study of voter turnout in Germany. The next chapter describes the nexus between design and politics in more detail. It covers the evolution of design, a definition and status quo of Policy Design, design activities and design mindsets in policymaking, and finally, the difference between policy design and Design for Policy. The third part investigates the nature of design processes in policymaking, focusing on Human-centred Design and Design Thinking. The two sub-chapters are divided into a general definition and an analysis of the impact of the concerned design process in policymaking. The last section of the scientific research covers participatory processes in policymaking. Therefore, Participatory Design and Co-Design, as well as their influences on policymaking, are further described.

The third chapter presents the findings that emerged from scientific research. This section is divided into points of criticism and optimisation proposals.

After evaluating the scientific research, a research question and hypothesis are established in chapter four. These build the basis for the subsequent empirical study. The research methodology is based on the Delphi method, an approach that relies on close exchange with experts on the given topic. Furthermore, the study undergoes a process of alternation between research, interpretation, and evaluation. As part of the conducted research, problem-centred expert interviews are carried out, followed by coding and an evaluation. Finally, the section concludes with a comparison of the results of the scientific research and the expert interviews. In this step, the points of criticism are readdressed.

The fifth chapter presents the proposal for implementation resulting from the before acquired findings. This chapter is subdivided into benchmarks and a design proposal, which covers a *Redesign of the Traditional Policy Cycle* and *An Evolving Map of Participation in Policymaking*. The concept provides a counteraction to the previously raised criticism. Both design proposals are evaluated in chapter six by the same experts previously interviewed.

The last chapter contains a conclusion of the thesis and an outlook on the presented topic.

2 Scientific Research

The following chapter examines the three primary topics of this thesis. First, existing political science knowledge and theories are described and illustrated through a case study. The second part then addresses the role of design in policymaking, focusing on the relationship between design and policy. Finally, the typical design and participation processes are explained, which are crucial for this work's further course.

2.1 Basics of Political Science

The definition of the word *politics* is as wide-ranging as the subject area within politics itself. 'Politics aims to improve human coexistence' (Naßmacher, 2004, transl. p.1). This quote is a simplistic explanation of a multitude of attempts to explain politics. The scientific discussion of what is understood today by the German term *Politik*¹ can be traced back to antiquity (Naßmacher, 2004; Engi, 2006). As a result of this continuous development, today's political science has only been taught at German universities since the end of the Second World War and is recognised as a sub-discipline of social sciences. Furthermore, political science deals with interdisciplinary topics, including history, philosophy, sociology, and economics (von Alemann, 1995; Naßmacher, 2004).

From philosophical perspectives, which Plato and Aristotle significantly shaped, other theories on the meaning and purpose of politics were developed over the centuries (von Alemann, 1995). Despite the multitude of theories and definitions, German political scientists' most important political terms were identified in a survey conducted by Carl Böhret² (von Alemann, 1995). Conflict, interest, power, and consensus were the most frequently mentioned words in this order and, according to Naßmacher (2004) and von Alemann (1995), are counted among the 'key terms of political science' (von Alemann, 1995, transl. p.143). Therefore, a brief explanation of the terms from a political perspective follows:

Interest

Interest results from the needs of individuals that affect their intentions and demands (Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, 2021c). Interests can relate to the individual,

¹ Since the word politics offers a diverse landscape of conceptual explanations, Lorenz Engi (2006) examined the various definitions of the term. Starting with the word's origin, he summarised the most important scientific approaches in an article. The author concluded that all aspects of politics can never be covered by only one definition and that a delimitation is always necessary (Engi, 2006).

² In the survey by Carl Böhret (1985), a total of 256 university lecturers and students of political science were asked about the indispensable terms of politics. In the process, 639 different terms were named, 414 of which were mentioned once each (Böhret, 1985; von Alemann, 1995).

material, and societal level, forming the 'link between the individual and society' (von Alemann, 1995, transl. p. 146).

Conflict

Conflicts arise when different interests clash. Therefore, they are inevitable in a society consisting of diverse interest groups (Naßmacher, 2004). Furthermore, they can arise when social agreements are not respected (von Alemann, 1995).

Consensus

In order to resolve conflicts, a *consensus* is needed within the interest groups. Through discourse, compromise, and a collective agreement of rules, a political order can be created in which the various interests are respected (von Alemann, 1995; Naßmacher, 2004; Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, 2021a).

Power

Political science defines the term *power* variously (von Alemann, 1995). Power can be seen as superiority, asserting one's own interests without regard to other interest groups (Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, 2021b; Weißeno et al., 2009). However, power is also used to protect the political order determined by social consensus (von Alemann, 2013; Weißeno et al., 2009). In this case, it is understood as legitimate power or legitimate rule (Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, 2021b).

Hiltrud Naßmacher (2004) places the conceptual explanation of the four key terms in the order shown above and thus illustrates a causality that highlights the necessity of political order. Ulrich von Alemann (1995) also describes these four key terms and derives its own definition of the word politics from them. However, he criticises the fact that the terms *public* and *common good* regarding Böhret's survey do not appear among the first 25 words. He defines politics as follows: 'Politics is a public conflict of interests under conditions of public use of power and need for consensus' (von Alemann 1995, p. 148).

Since this thesis strives to increase public participation in the political system and shape the focus of political content along with society by design methods, both Naßmacher's and von Alemann's definitions of politics serve to guide this work.

2.1.1 Dimension of the Political System

In German-speaking countries, the word *politics* is used independently of the political topic being communicated. In international and English-speaking countries, on the other hand, the term *politics* is conceptually viewed three-dimensionally (Heidenheimer, 1986;

Alemann et al., 1994; von Alemann, 1995). *Polity*, *politics*, and *policy* all signify *politics*³ but are used to analytically capture and structure the complexity of politics (Massing & Weißeno, 1995; von Alemann, 1995).

Polity

The term *polity* refers to the structural dimension of politics (Massing & Weißeno, 1995; von Alemann, 1995). Therefore, this dimension shows the framework for political action and is derived, among other things, from the constitution, the fundamental laws, and the values of society (Massing & Weißeno, 1995; Naßmacher, 2004). Moreover, polity is also described as an institutional dimension resulting from policies and manifesting itself as a political order (Alemann et al., 1994; Naßmacher, 2004). According to these institutions such as 'governments, parliaments ... courts, offices, schools, and corporations' are covered by the polity level (von Alemann, 1995, p. 142).

Politics

Politics refers to the processual dimension in which political actors (such as politicians, parties, or trade unions) with different interests and objectives meet, resolve conflicts, or reach a consensus (Naßmacher, 2004; von Alemann, 1995). The political level includes votes, elections, or coalition negotiations, in which a higher degree of influence is sought through strategic action (Massing & Weißeno, 1995; Alemann et al., 1994).

Policy

Policy describes the substantive dimension of politics and results from the interests of a society and its political actors (Alemann et al., 1994). It encompasses society's problems, the goals to be achieved, and the various solutions (Alemann et al., 1994; von Alemann, 1995). These contents are reflected, e.g., in individual party programs and can often be categorised into different policy fields⁴ (Massing & Weißeno, 1995; Schneider & Janning, 2006). Accordingly, an essential component of the policy level is the conception, design, and evaluation of policy content (Massing & Weißeno, 1995; von Alemann, 1995).

In sum, 'politics... is the realisation of policy content... with the help of politics processes... within a framework of action of polity structures' (Naßmacher, 2004, transl. p. 2).

³ Arnold J. Heidenheimer (1986) analysed the English-language categorisation of the terms *polity*, *politics*, and *policy* and compared them with European political science. The author contrasted the German and French languages and pointed out the problems that complicate the analytical discussion of politics without a distinction of terms (Heidenheimer, 1986).

⁴ Policy fields such as education policy, environmental policy, social policy, or foreign policy.

THREE DIMENSIONS OF POLITICS

	DIMENSION	MANIFESTATION	CHARACTERISTICS
POLITY	Structure	Constitution Norms Institutions	Organisation Rules of procedure Order
POLITICS	Process	Interests Conflicts Struggle	Power Consensus Enforcement
POLICY	Content	Tasks Objectives Programmes	Problem-solving Design Outcome

Figure 1: The three dimensions of politics (adapted from Schubert & Bandelow 2014 p. 4).

2.1.2 Policy Science

In the present, it can be observed that news and reporting primarily focus on the processual dimension of politics and focus their attention to differences and conflicts of political actors. As a result, 'substantive, concrete factual information, factual questions, and demands' of politics become unmanageable for observers (Blum & Schubert, 2018, p. 2). In the past, political science was predominantly concerned with 'normative political ideals'⁵ (Schneider & Janning, 2006, p. 17). According to this, the academic focus turned to the the processual and structural dimensions of politics (Blum & Schubert, 2018; Schneider & Janning, 2006). However, the ourse changed in the 1950s: With the publication of *The Policy Sciences* by Harold Lasswell and Daniel Lerner (1951), the scientific examination of policy content gained relevance (Blum & Schubert, 2018; Schneider & Janning, 2006). Based on the fundamental motif of 'shaping the social and political order through creative and cooperative action' (Janning, 2006, transl. p. 11), political projects, concrete political actions, and outcomes moved towards the field of policy research (Blum & Schubert, 2018).

Policy research developed from the scientific field and the increasing demand for political consultancy (Schneider & Janning, 2006). Furthermore, the interdisciplinary approach introduced by policy consulting initially led to critical voices in German political science, as policy research was seen as a social science trend (Schneider & Janning, 2006). However, over the years, policy research expanded into exploratory and problem-solving science (Blum & Schubert, 2018; Schneider & Janning, 2006). While the former focuses

⁵ Blum and Schubert (2018) use normative political ideals to describe political science that deals with 'the right, equitable or good political order' based on 'political guiding ideas' (Blum & Schubert, 2018, p. 17).

on gaining a general understanding of current public policymaking, the problem-solving approach is additionally concerned with gathering evidence for sound policymaking (Schneider & Janning, 2006; Enserink et al., 2012).

Since public policymaking (i.e., the intent, actions, and outcomes of policy) depends on the processual and structural dimensions, policy research needs to look at many more factors to understand the policy dimension (Schneider & Janning, transl. 2006, p. 17).

2.1.3 Policymaking

Policymaking is constantly changing. Underlying it are the interests of the public and the social values and norms that are sought for a safe and just coexistence. To reconcile both aspects, the political decision-making power in a democracy is handed over to policymakers. In this sense, policymakers represent the respective values and norms in form of a constituted government (Gerston, 2022). Therefore, public policymaking is designed to achieve set goals and to improve people's life (Gerston, 2022). The socially diverse views on a quality life and the resulting conflicts of interest make policymaking a complex and ongoing process involving discussion, negotiation, legislative decision-making, and policy implementation (Müntefering, 2013; ETF & Serban, 2015; Gerston, 2022).

Successful policymaking, therefore, requires skills to identify and solve problems (Gerston, 2022; Gerhardt, 2013). To accomplish this, it is crucial to be willing to learn, take risks, be creative, and unbiased (Gerhardt, 2013). Furthermore, in order to drive desired changes, policymaking is strongly dependent on its actors, their responsibilities, and competencies. 'It is an important factor when considering a policy that it is not only made for people, it is also made by people' (Gerhardt, 2013, transl. p. 60). Public participation in policymaking is defined through two approaches: passive and active. In the passive approach, the government is administrative once it is constituted. According to this, the role of individual citizens is to maintain the system and government functions. The citizens themselves play a subordinate role, are subject to the government, and are passive observers (Gerston, 2022). This approach stems from traditional policymaking with hierarchical structures, which used to be considered ideal. The demand for greater citizen participation led to a development that increasingly follows an active approach (ETF & Serban, 2015). In this context, citizens are directly involved in the policymaking process, having the choice to get involved when needed and bring up political problems (Gerston, 2022).

2.1.4 Policymaking Process

To study complex dynamics and processes in policymaking, Harold Lasswell built a foundation for analysing policy processes (Howlett et al., 2020; Fischer et al., 2007). To illustrate how public policy 'is and should be conducted', the author divided the policymaking process into seven successive phases (cf. table 1) (Blum & Schubert, 2018, transl. p. 157; Howlett et al., 2020, p. 9).

Name of the individual phase	Definition
1. Intelligence	On the basis of a specific problem, policymakers gather and evaluate information.
2. Promotion	Solution measures are proposed to government actors, and alternatives are discussed.
3. Prescription	In this phase, a decision is made. An obligatory measure is selected from the previously discussed options.
4. Invocation	Rules are drawn to enforce the measure and ensure compliance.
5. Application	The judiciary and the administration apply the established rules and ensure compliance.
6. Termination	The rules and measures are followed until they are changed or terminated.
7. Appraisal	The process ends with the evaluation regarding the original objective.

Table 1: Seven phases of the policymaking process according to Lasswell (adapted from Blum & Schubert 2018 p. 157; Howlett et. al. 2020 p. 9).

Regarding political science, Lasswell's phase model is considered guiding but not definitive. Therefore, some critiques emphasise that phasing the process helps to better understand the complexity and interdependencies within policymaking. Furthermore, it needs to be stated that Lasswell's model does not include external actors and thus only covers the government's perspective (Howlett et al., 2020).

This is due to Lasswell's orientation toward the system model by David Easton⁶, a political scientist (cf. figure 2). Easton's theory assumes that the political system is a non-transparent black box influenced by external factors but remains opaque within the box (Blum & Schubert, 2018; Howlett et al., 2020). Conversely, Lasswell's phase model focuses specifically on 'illuminating' the black box (Blum & Schubert, 2018, transl. p. 158) and, instead, shedding light on the internal process while completely ignoring non-state actors, such as trade unions, institutions, or companies (Howlett et al., 2020; Howlett et al., 2013).

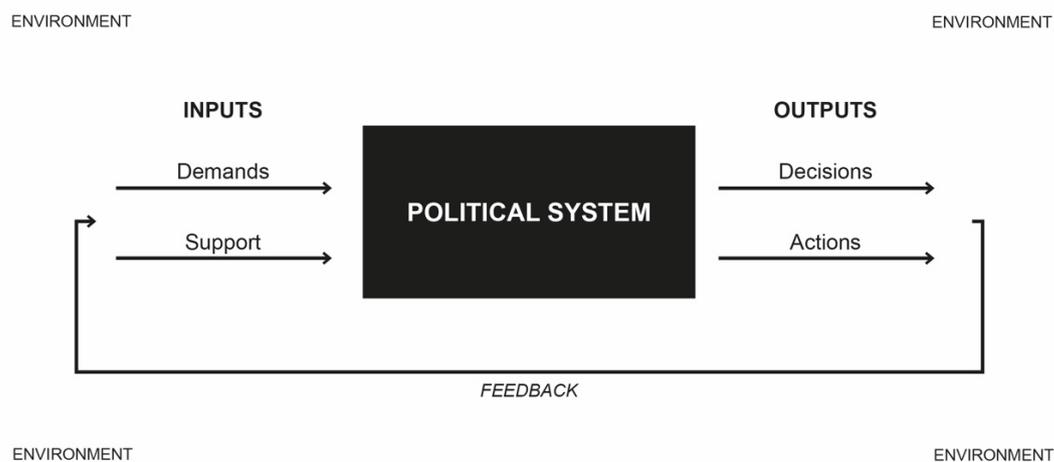


Figure 2: David Easton (1965) *Political System Theory* (adapted from Blum & Schubert 2018 p. 24).

Another criticism of Lasswell's model relates to the linearity of the phase progression (Blum & Schubert, 2018; Howlett et al., 2020). This is consistent with the fact that public policymaking is mostly impulsive. Firstly, vested interests and ideologies accompany problem identification as well as problem-solving. Therefore, the systematic approach of policymakers is not always accurate in practice (Howlett et al., 2020; Howlett et al., 2013). Secondly, policymaking's starting and end points are, in many cases, not clearly recognisable. In addition, the individual phases sometimes overlap, proceed in different orders, or are even skipped (Blum & Schubert, 2018; Howlett et al., 2020), leading to the most significant shortcoming of the phase model: the completion of the policymaking process after the appraisal phase. This implies that policymaking reaches a

⁶ David Easton briefly describes the political system as follows: The political system constantly interacts with external environmental factors. On the one hand, demands are placed on the system, such as specific problem solutions. At the same time, the system also receives support, e.g., by paying taxes. Easton describes this process as inputs. The processing of the inputs takes place in a black box – the political system, which is quite intransparent and dependent on the government. The reaction of the system, i.e., the decisions or measures, are then fed back to the outside world as outputs and again affect the system as inputs via feedback loops (Massing, 2021; Howlett et al., 2020).

comprehensive conclusion after working through all phases (Howlett et al., 2020). Whereas, in terms of Easton's phase model, policies are brought back to the policy system in the form of new inputs. Ending the model with policy evaluation excluding iterations 'contradicts Lasswell's own claim to design and deliberation' (Blum & Schubert, 2018, p. 156).

Given the criticism, Lasswell's phase model led to several refined versions (Fischer et al., 2007), one of which was pioneered by Garry D. Brewer. The policy researcher developed a significant renewal of the policymaking process by reducing Lasswell's model from seven to six phases. Brewer's version of the individual phases is defined as follows:

1. **Invention/Initiation:** problem perception, problem definition, proposed solutions.
2. **Estimation:** risk analysis, cost-benefit analysis of the proposed solutions.
3. **Selection:** rejecting solutions and making a choice.
4. **Implementation:** implementation of the selected solution.
5. **Evaluation:** assessment of the solution.
6. **Termination:** termination in view of the evaluation (Howlett et al., 2020).

Brewer's refinement addressed some of the previously mentioned points of criticism. In this model, policy evaluation takes place before the termination phase. In addition, Brewer describes the course within the process in detail and involves other non-state actors. Therefore, all involved stakeholders are shown beside the individual steps and tasks of policymaking (Howlett et al., 2020). The most significant change is that Brewer depicts the policymaking process in cyclical terms. In this sense, he points out that most policies, albeit in different guises, will return to the political agenda (Howlett et al., 2020). Consequently, further changes to Brewer's model led to the well-known Policy Cycle consisting of a spectrum of phases: problem identification, agenda setting, policy formulation, decision-making, policy implementation, policy evaluation, and policy termination. All variations cover three core phases:

- **Problem identification / Agenda Setting**
- **Program formulation**
- **Implementation**

(Blum & Schubert, 2018; Schneider & Janning, 2006, transl. p. 50)

The thesis primarily focuses on Howlett's version of the traditional Policy Cycle as described below. Respecting Brewer's model, Howlett reduced the Policy Cycle to five

phases (cf. figure 3) and combined the problem identification with agenda setting, as these phases cannot be determined (Howlett et al., 2020; Blum & Schubert, 2018). Furthermore, Howlett (2020) summarised different theoretical approaches within the process to illustrate the general logic of the Policy Cycle.

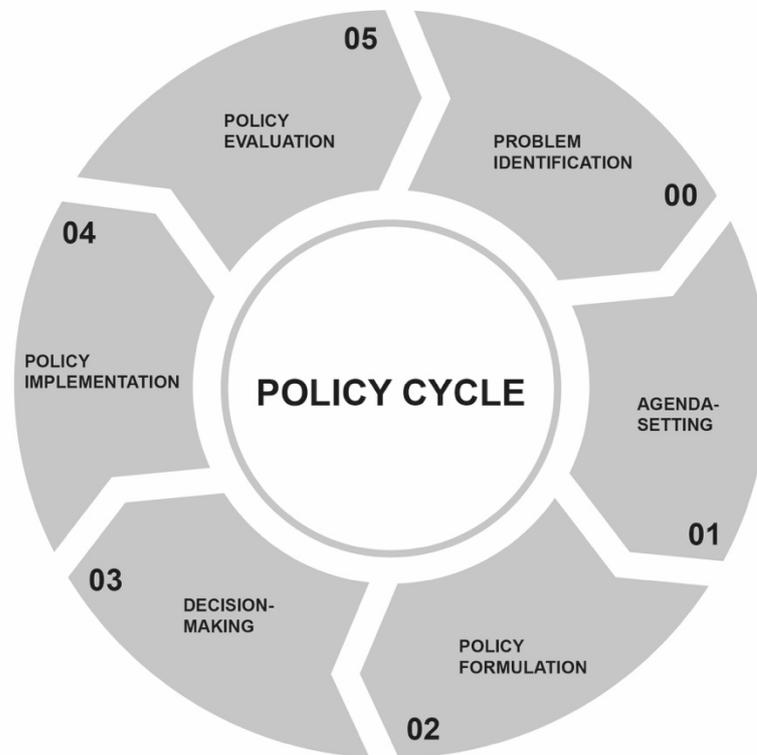


Figure 3: The Policy Cycle (adapted from Howlett et al. 2013; Vaz & Prendeville 2019 p. 145).

Problem Identification / Agenda Setting

The first phase of the Policy Cycle, *problem identification*, requires the perception of a socio-economic problem that needs to be solved (Blum & Schubert, 2018). This phase is thus considered the most important. It is crucial for the further course of the process, the actors involved, and the solution outcome (Howlett et al., 2020; Howlett et al., 2013). 'Problems can initially be economic, ecological, or technical nature. They become social problems only by affecting people's life chances' (Schneider & Janning, transl. 2006, p. 51). First, it must be clarified whether a social field of tension exists in which a difference between the current and the preferred state can be detected (Blum & Schubert, 2018; Howlett et al., 2020). Such indicators of *problem identification* may include studies, statistics, and media (Blum & Schubert, 2018; Schneider & Janning, 2006). Furthermore, societal issues can be differentiated in terms of their complexity. For example, apparent measures can solve taming problems, at least on the surface. Wicked problems, on the other hand, are highly complex where the cause has not yet been identified or significant opinion differences appear regarding the solution (Howlett et al., 2020).

Post-war political science assumed that government action was purely objective and dependent on understanding the problem and the government's competence. Nowadays, it is clarified that *problem identification* is instead a consistent sociological process that depends on societal change and development (Howlett et al., 2020). Therefore, whether an issue moves onto the *political agenda* depends strongly on the definition of the problem. For example, societal issues can be deliberately intensified by the respective initiators to increase supporters' reach or divert attention from failures. Accordingly, issue framing⁷ is a popular method to specifically initiate and define problems (Howlett et al., 2020; Howlett et al., 2013). Initiating an issue can be done in two ways: internal and external. The former describes a grievance triggered by state actors that is placed on the *government's agenda* without publicity dynamics. This can happen, e.g., in measures relating to national security policy. However, external initiation occurs frequently. In this process, the public identifies problems and brings them to the government's attention. Therefore, the government is asked to put the problem on the agenda through collective pressure or lobbying (Howlett et al., 2020).

Which issues finally make it onto the *government's agenda* and how they are prioritised depends on temporal factors. For example, in addition to internal and external initiation, deliberate initiation describes the preference for prioritising an issue through the occurrence of random events (Schneider & Janning, 2006; Howlett et al., 2020). In case of the COVID-19 crisis, which led to hospital overcrowding in Germany, the lack of skilled workers in hospitals was brought back into the public spotlight. The causes are thus attributed to the disproportionate income of nursing professionals (ARD, 2021). Consequently, the urgency of this subject, as well as the public attention, led to the issue being put on the *government's agenda* (Müller, 2022). Political actors such as trade unions or nurses, who had previously demanded wage increases in the health sector, were able to place their issues regarding the crisis (Rosigkeit, 2021; Ver.di, 2020). Political scientist John W. Kingdom refers to this as suitable 'opportunities' policy windows'⁸ (Schneider & Janning, 2006; Howlett et al., 2020; p. 104). In addition to coincidental events, there are other policy windows, some of which are predictable:

⁷ Issue framing is the thoughtful formulation of a problem to achieve the desired effect. It can also be helpful to break down issues in a structured way and identify actors and possible solutions. In the political field, issue framing is often used to gain more extensive support from certain groups (The University of Kansas, n.d.).

⁸ In the multiple stream approach, John W. Kingdom describes how specific issues get onto the political agenda and why others do not. He assumes three independent streams, which include the characteristics of the problem, various possible solutions, and the public's general mood. If all aspects come together, a so-called *policy window* opens, which increases the chance of finding a particular issue on the government agenda (Michaels, 2006).

- **'routinised windows:** regularly scheduled procedural events, such as budget cycles, determine agenda openings;
- **discretionary windows:** individual political preferences on the part of decision-makers dictate window openings;
- **spillover windows:** related issues are drawn into already opened windows in other sectors or issue areas'

(Howlett et al., 2020; p. 104, as cited in Howlett, 1998).

Political actors need to find the right time window to prepare and position their concerns. For the prediction of policy windows, strategic and analytical competencies are required (Howlett et al., 2020); otherwise, there is a risk that supposedly more relevant issues will be prioritised by the government (Schneider & Janning, 2006).

Policy Formulation

Regarding the previously identified and defined problems, the *policy formulation* phase involves policymakers developing and evaluating proposed solutions and measures (Howlett et al., 2020). This includes the precise definition of goals, possible instruments for achieving the goals, and the assessment of all available alternative actions (Blum & Schubert, 2018; Schneider & Janning, 2006). Howlett (2020) identifies four characteristics: The first refers to the assessment of all available information with the help of 'research reports, expert testimonies [*sic*], stakeholder inputs [*sic*]', or topic-specific consultants (Howlett et al., 2020, p. 134). This is followed by the dialogue phase, in which policymakers discuss their problem statement and the preferred solution among themselves or publicly. The third characteristic, all findings from the two previous steps flow into the *formulation phase*, from which one or more fact-based proposals for action result. Finally, the suggested policy formulations are discussed again in consolidation to address possible internal objections and, at best, reach a preliminary internal decision (Howlett et al., 2020).

However, if proposals get rejected, this is not necessarily based on the findings of the previous steps (Howlett et al., 2020). Often, the preliminary decision of policymakers is tied to the interests of the political dimension (Howlett et al., 2013). Therefore, networks (Blum & Schubert, 2018) or cognitive biases (Howlett et al., 2013) can further influence *policy formulation*. For example, according to Blum and Schubert (2018), the closed nature of a group of political actors can prevent the acceptance of alternative proposals. Moreover, cognitive biases on the part of policymakers or advisors can affect the actual perception of facts (Howlett et al., 2013). Furthermore, *policy formulation* is subject to some political constraints, such as existing laws that may block possible measures or

governmental, financial, and human resources. The latter three aspects are needed to implement measures but may not be available to the required extent (Howlett et al., 2020).

As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, the Policy Cycle's phases are not necessarily sequential. Accordingly, *agenda setting* is not always followed by *policy formulation*. The development and discussion of solutions to policy problems can be the subject of public debate before official government debates (Howlett et al., 2020). Furthermore, measures and programs that were previously developed for other problems or policy areas, can be considered again as possible options for action. (Blum & Schubert, 2018). In addition, principles and methods according to the development of problem-solving measures cannot be explained descriptively from a political science perspective:

'... because much of the actual work in policy formulation takes place behind the scenes in the confines of the bureaucracy and executive offices, often with strict measures in place to ensure secrecy and confidentiality. While this is beginning to change, and new studies and handbooks have emerged that grapple with these issues (Howlett & Mukherjee, 2017), there is still work to do before this area of the policy process is as well-known [sic] and modelled as effectively as the other stages of the policy process' (Howlett et al., 2020, p. 174)

Individual interests in solutions, as well as trade-off solutions, often lead to 'no direct connection between "problem" and "solution"' (Blum & Schubert, 2018, p. transl. 179, as cited in Simon, 1993). Therefore, 'satisfactory solutions' (Schneider & Janning, 2006, p. 57) are considered options for action.

Decision-Making

After several options for action have been selected in the previous phase, only a few options are available in the *decision-making* phase. A final and official decision then needs to be made from these proposed options. Therefore, the *decision-making phase* occurs only once in the entire process (Howlett et al., 2020). Furthermore, the number of policy actors decreases significantly to that point (cf. figure 4)⁹. While the whole policy

⁹ In the *Actor Hourglass model*, Howlett (2020) illustrates the course of the actors involved in the Policy Cycle. First, he defines the policy universe as every citizen, without exception, and their opportunity to participate by identifying the problem and calling for action. Then, the number of participants is reduced to the policy subsystem, which has sufficient knowledge in the respective problem field to participate in discussions and problem proposals. In the next step, only a few elected government members can make a final decision, which is why all other actors are excluded at this point of the cycle. Finally, with the policy implementation and evaluation, the actors mentioned earlier are gradually included again (cf. figure 4) (Howlett et al., 2020).

universe may be involved at the beginning of the process, the final decision is only made by selected decision-makers. The extent to which other actors, such as consultants or lobbyists, continue to be part of the process depends on the respective policymakers (Blum & Schubert, 2018; Howlett et al., 2020). As in the formulation phase, recommendations for action can still be made by internal experts or agencies, and the expertise of external universities and think tanks¹⁰ (Fischer et al., 2007; Howlett et al., 2020).

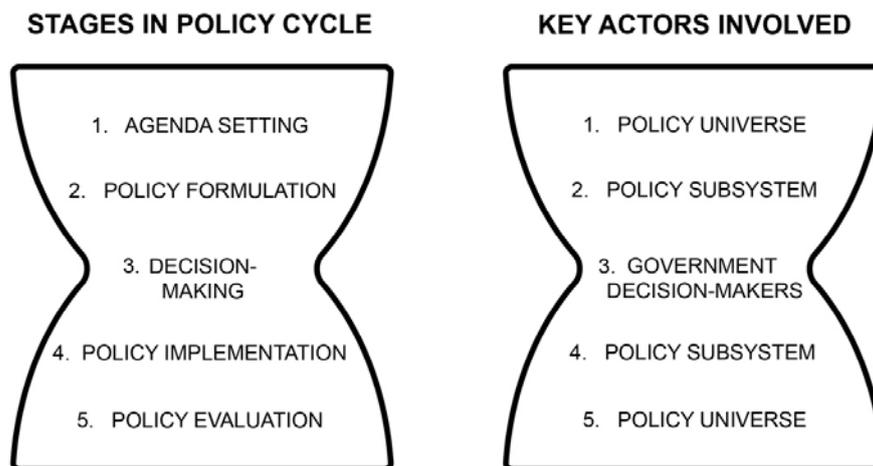


Figure 4: Actor Hourglass model (adapted from Howlett et al. 2020 p. 12).

Another point worth mentioning is the different types of decisions. Therefore, a distinction is made between *positive* and *negative decisions*. While the positive decision should lead to a change in the status quo and solve the problem through (new) measures, the negative decision is used to maintain the existing state consciously and at least temporarily. At this point, the Policy Cycle stops, and further implementation does not happen. Furthermore, part of the negative decision is non-decision that upholds the status quo (Howlett et al., 2020). However, contrary to the public perception of the problem, non-decision occurs much earlier in the process and ensures that a problem is deliberately ignored and does not end up on the political agenda (Blum & Schubert, 2018; Howlett et al., 2020).

If a positive decision is made in this process phase, additional factors for implementing the measure must be clarified. For the purposes mentioned above, financial and human resources are determined and planned (Blum & Schubert, 2018). However, even if the

¹⁰ Think tanks are international institutions that support the political decision-making process with ideas and proposals for solutions and promote policy transfer between governments. Since the 1960s and 1970s, these think tanks have increasingly been commissioned by governments, e.g., by awarding expert opinions (Fischer et al., 2007; Hüttmann, 2021).

policy proposals are checked in advance for effectiveness and efficiency, a wrongly assessed problem can lead to a disproportionate reaction¹¹. This would waste resources in the long run, thus not solving the given issue. Therefore, *decision-making* always remains risky for government officials (Howlett et al., 2020).

Policy Implementation

If a final policy has been adopted in the decision-making phase, it officially enters into force. Therefore, practical *implementation* of the selected measure is initiated (Blum & Schubert, 2018; Howlett et al., 2020). Until the 1970s, it was assumed that the decision-making process was completed at this point, and implementation was no longer within their remit (Blum & Schubert, 2018). In fact, at this stage of the process, the number of actors is increasing, although *implementation* continues to receive less attention from the public and government perspectives (Gerston, 2022; Howlett et al., 2020). 'For most of us, the topic is not very exciting because it is sort of the aftermath of the big event- the decision-making by those in power' (Gerston, 2022, p. 117). Therefore, while the debates and discussions of the political dimension attract attention, interest in this phase declines with the perception that *implementation* is only a by-product of politics, namely the administration (Gerston, 2022).

With the decision being made in the previous phase, decision-makers establish an expanded area of responsibility in which bureaucrats, according to their agencies and offices, are responsible for implementing and managing policies (Gerston, 2022; Dye, 2016; Howlett et al., 2020). In order to implement the defined goals and carry out their assigned tasks, bureaucratic agencies are provided with resources, which are managed and deployed by the decision-making authority (Gerston, 2022; Dye, 2016). Furthermore, *implementation* is an ongoing task 'because the process of carrying out policies tends to be a never-ending effort that requires constant participation from people with the expertise to do it' (Gerston, 2022, p. 119). In addition to the adequate provision of resources, several other factors apply to a successful bureaucracy (Gerston, 2022; Howlett et al., 2020). According to Gerston (2022), bureaucracies are most successful when they are kept lean in their administrative domain. The more stakeholders involved in the administrative process, the more likely disruptive influences can be found (Gerston, 2022). In Gerston's view, two additional core elements are needed to accurately implement measures. The first aspect refers to the translatability of tasks.

¹¹ Government decisions can be both 'proportionate' and 'disproportionate'. A proportionate reaction is where the problem has been correctly assessed, and the decision is appropriately efficient and effective in resolving the identified problem. If a decision is 'disproportionate or disproportionate to the severity of the problem', the reaction is said to be unreasonable (Howlett et al., 2020, p. 178).

Bureaucrats, i.e., employees at the administrative level, must have a clear and explicit understanding of the tasks and set goals. As a rule, they receive that information in written format from the decision-makers, although these mostly allow leeway for implementation (Gerston, 2022). Another point Gerston (2022) mentions is accountability's responsibility. While elected government representatives are accountable to the public, bureaucrats are the responsibility of the associated bodies (e.g., ministries). Therefore, they must provide these bodies with information on the current situation via regular reports (Gerston, 2022).

Nonetheless, difficulties and challenges repeatedly arise during *implementation* (Gerston, 2022; Howlett et al., 2020). As political actors and their power differ between the formulation and implementation phases (Howlett et al., 2020), it is not uncommon for policy intentions and their actual implementation to show considerable differences. This gap between the phases often leads not only to the failure of policies but also to unclear blame games between politicians and bureaucrats (Blum & Schubert, 2018; Howlett et al., 2020). This conflict can be traced back to the principal-agent dilemma¹², which describes the information asymmetries and self-interests between the political levels (Blum & Schubert, 2018).

Further potential for conflict arises from different views of policymaking. Above all, two views on the goal-oriented implementation of policies led to a fundamental discussion in political science at previous times. Some camps advocate a top-down, others a bottom-up approach. The former places decision-makers in a central role in policymaking (Blum & Schubert, 2018; Fischer et al., 2007). This is due to their decisions, which determine the further procedure and ensure that the implementation is carried out precisely according to specifications, leading to a linear and hierarchical process. Contrary to this view, the bottom-up approach advocates the belief that the implementation process starts with the so-called street-level bureaucrats¹³, who are closer to real-life problems (Fischer et al., 2007).

¹² The principal-agent theory originated in economics and is used in political science to examine problems (such as the principal-agent dilemma) within political hierarchies. In the political context, the legislator is regarded as the principal who assigns a mandate to the administration (agent). Thereby misunderstandings emerge during execution due to information asymmetries, and different perceptions arise regarding the policy to be designed (Blum & Schubert, 2018).

¹³ Political scientist Michael Lipsky uses the term *street-level bureaucracy* to describe those professional groups that serve the public and have direct contact with citizens (for example, police officers, teachers, and social workers). Those groups act as intermediaries between the government and the public and carry out the decisions made by superior decision-makers (Blum & Schubert, 2018; Howlett et al., 2020).

'Bottom-uppers have successfully convinced the wider community of implementation scholars that implementation is more than the technical execution of political orders from above. It is itself a political process in the course of which policies are frequently reshaped, redefined or even completely overturned' (Fischer et al., 2007, p. 100).

Beyond the political science discussion, a new view of hybrid theory exists, emphasising both approaches' relevance. On the one hand, the top-down perspective in which decision-makers take over the 'central guidance', plan instruments and resources, and initiate policies; on the other hand, the bottom-up approach in which street-level bureaucrats have attributed a 'local autonomy' that allows sufficient room for manoeuvre in the implementation of policies (Fischer et al., 2007, p. 95).

Policy Evaluation

With the *evaluation* of the previous phases, the Policy Cycle provisionally ends. The criteria of the evaluation, as well as the implementation, vary according to the respective focus. Therefore, reviewing the implemented policies refers to different dimensions and perspectives (Blum & Schubert, 2018; Howlett et al., 2020). In an internal evaluation, implementing actors carry out a self-evaluation. This includes the internal administrative evaluation, which focuses on financial and human resources compliance. However, the political evaluation also assesses citizen satisfaction based on votes received (Blum & Schubert, 2018). On the other hand, in an external evaluation, outside actors rate the impact and outcome of the implemented policy (Blum & Schubert, 2018; Howlett et al., 2020). This includes public evaluation, in which citizens, through their participation in elections, review the policies implemented so far and the future intentions of political actors. Another more comprehensive perspective is academic evaluations (Blum & Schubert, 2018), which focus on policy learning. Therefore, policy measures are optimised through systematic evaluation with cross-cutting insights (Blum & Schubert, 2018; Howlett et al., 2020).

The six primary evaluation models are as follows:

1. goal-attainment model;
2. side-effects model;
3. relevance model;
4. client-oriented model;
5. stakeholder model;
6. collegial models: peer review, self-evaluation

(Howlett et al., 2013, pp. 387-388; Blum & Schubert, 2018).

For the purpose of this thesis, the four main models are outlined regarding the relevance of citizen-centricity.

The goal-attainment model has already been used since the 1950s. As the name suggests, this type of evaluation measures the outcome of the policy according to the previously set goals. Therefore, the formerly defined aims must first be identified, structured, and transformed into measurable terms. This is because evaluation results cannot be clearly summarised if the goals are contradictory or unclearly set (Howlett et al., 2013). Another deficit results from the focus on objectives. This means that 'incidental outcomes or side-effects' are not included in the evaluation field, which in turn can lead to a distorted representation (Howlett et al., 2013, p. 388).

The side-effects model optimises the goal-attainment model by enlarging the field of investigation and specifically including unintended side-effects in the results. This allows additional evaluation criteria to be added afterwards (Howlett et al., 2013).

In the client-oriented model, the evaluation criteria are defined concerning the clients' desires, wishes, requests, demands, goals, concerns, and [sic] expectations' (Howlett et al., 2013, p. 393). 'The philosophy is that the citizen is a customer whose needs should be considered so that public services become more accustomed to client wishes' (Howlett et al., 2013, p. 399). Furthermore, the implementation of the client-oriented model can range from questionnaires to the intensive involvement of service users, which needs and satisfaction are decisive for a positive or negative evaluation result. However, this model, and the following stakeholder model, can only be used in a representative democracy in a complementary and limited way (Howlett et al., 2013).

Since the 1970s, the stakeholder model has gained focus. The model was justified by the already unattainable objectivity of evaluation, which is why the stakeholder model concentrates on multi-faceted perspectives.

In sum, according to Howlett et al. (2013), the goal-attainment and side-effects models are solely based on quantitative data collection and are therefore not sufficiently meaningful. Whereas he supports the stakeholder model:

'Since stakeholder-orientation will bring up more aspects of the subject-matter for discussion, the quality of the evaluation findings will increase. All in all, it is easy to agree with the recommendation that almost every evaluation ought to begin with the determination of relevant actors and rounds of interactive data assembly.'

... It brings to light information that meets the real requirements of the different stakeholders, thereby enhancing the probability that the findings actually will be put to use' (Howlett et al., 2013, p. 196).

Since the approaches described only show a partial perspective and each has advantages and disadvantages, a combination of the models is suggested for a comprehensive evaluation (Howlett et al., 2013).

Finally, the *evaluation phase* determines the success or failure of the policy outcome and the process's termination. If a problem has been solved satisfactorily, the measure runs for the time being, and the process ends. However, if deficits are identified, the process begins with the *problem identification* measure, and the cycle repeats itself (Blum & Schubert, 2018).

2.1.5 Case Study: Declining Voter Turnout in Germany

Chapter 2.1.4 already described the Policy Cycle in a theoretical framework. However, to gain practical insights, this chapter presents the Policy Cycle using a case study. For this purpose, the problem of declining voter turnout in Germany is examined along with the individual phases of the policymaking process. It needs to be noted that the following description cannot be compared with a complete policy analysis due to time constraints.

Since the 1970s, Germany has had a downward trend in voter turnout (cf. figure 5). For example, while in 1976, voter turnout in the German federal election counted at 90.7 per cent, only 76.6 per cent of eligible citizens voted in the past federal election in 2021 (Der Bundeswahlleiter, 2022; Statista, 2022). Furthermore, it can be observed that quotas are also declining at the various electoral levels, e.g., in state or local elections (Deutscher Bundestag, 2015). This circumstance poses some dangers for representative democracy.

As mentioned in chapter 2.1.4, the policymaking process begins with *identifying a problem*. Therefore, regarding the case study of declining voter turnout, the first question is: Has the problem been socially recognised and, if so, by which actors? The published statistics of the Federal Election Commissioner and reports of various institutes and organisations indicate that the problem has not only been socially recognised but is also of public relevance (Bundeswahlleiter, 2022; Vehrkamp et al., 2016). In 2006, the Bertelsmann Foundation published a report with a 8-point plan to increase voter turnout. In doing so, they reported current statistics, the accompanying problems, and possible consequences (Vehrkamp et al., 2016). Furthermore, media attention regularly

addresses the issue of voter turnout by focusing on reporting upcoming election campaigns and results (Grimberg, 2022). Public opinion on the causes is divided:

- 'disenchantment with parties and politics;
- dissatisfaction with the political system;
- social and economic dissatisfaction;
- growing inequality' (BPB, 2022, transl. para. 2).

COURSE OF THE BUNDESTAG TURNOUT FROM 1976 TO 2021

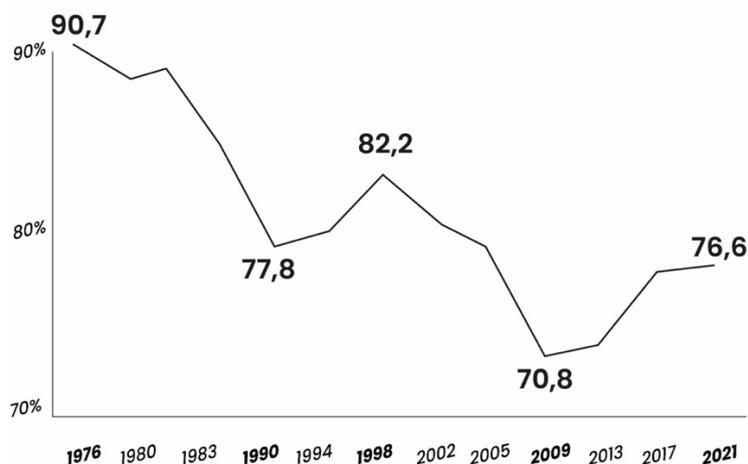


Figure 5: Course of the Bundestag turnout from 1976 to 2021 (adapted from der Bundeswahlleiter 2022).

The German Federal Parliament (Bundestag) is already aware of the issue of declining voter turnout. Therefore, several solutions are currently on the *political agenda* for debate (Deutscher Bundestag, 2015). Especially since 2021, there has been increased discussion of proposals to lower the voting age to 16. So far, the submitted bills have been rejected (Deutscher Bundestag, 2021). However, the *Commission for the Reform of the Federal Electoral Law and for the Modernisation of Parliamentary Work*, appointed by the German Bundestag, was commissioned to deal with the advantages and disadvantages of lowering the voting age until 2023. For this purpose, the commission meets regularly with 18 parliamentarians and 18 experts (Deutscher Bundestag, 2021; Deutscher Bundestag, 2022).

Given the problem identification and the problem-solving suggestions from the public, the German parliamentary parties have formulated some proposals. Therefore, they established the thematic *Democracy Promotion*, which is intended to counteract the issue of declining voter turnout in Germany.

Party programmes for the 20th Bundestag elections show that most parliamentary parties mainly focused on promoting political education and lowering the voting age. These measures are intended to stimulate the formation of political will and should lead to increased voter turnout in future scenarios (Ipd, 2021). Table 2 shows an excerpt of the respective positioning of the parliamentary parties on *Democracy Promotion*.

Party	Party programme extract	Position
SPD (2021, transl. p. 47)	<i>'We will continue to expand the federal programme "Demokratie leben!" and promote prevention projects at the federal, state, and municipal levels. Political education is also indispensable. To this end, we advocate increased and easier access to political education opportunities and the promotion of democracy both within and outside of school education'.</i>	Political education
CDU (2021, transl. p. 78)	<i>'We are committed to strengthening political education and the teaching of values: Only those who know how democracy works can also act democratically later on'.</i>	Political education
BÜNDNIS90 / DIE GRÜNEN (2021, transl. p. 178)	<i>'To be able to forge the broadest possible alliances for a constitutional voting age, we want to lower the voting age for federal and European elections to 16 in the coming legislative period. Based on an evaluation of the voting age of 16, we want to lower the voting age further if necessary'.</i>	Lowering the voting age to 16
FDP (2021, transl. p. 40)	<i>'We, Free Democrats, demand a lowering of the voting age to 16 years for the German Bundestag and the European Parliament elections. As a prerequisite for this, political education must be strengthened in all types of schools. The right to vote is the key to political participation. It is the most noble right in a democracy'.</i>	Lowering the voting age to 16; Political education
AfD (2021, transl. p. 14)	<i>'The people shall be given the opportunity to introduce legislative initiatives and to decide on them by popular vote. There shall be no</i>	Referendums

	<i>thematic restrictions beyond Article 79 (3) of the Basic Law’.</i>	
Die Linke (2021, transl. p. 124)	<i>‘DIE LINKE advocates lowering the voting age in all democratic decision-making processes at European, federal, state, and local level to 14 years’.</i>	Lowering the voting age to 16

Table 2: Positioning on the topic of Democracy Promotion of the current parliamentary parties in the Bundestag.

As mentioned, the previous bills to vote with the age of 16 were rejected in parliament, which can be classified as a negative decision (cf. chapter 2.1.4). However, as the Commission is still dealing with this issue, there is no further action at this point in the Policy Cycle.

To fully illuminate the case study along the subsequent process phases, *policy implementation* is described from a parliamentary decision dated back in time. For further explanation, it should be noted that the federal government has been implementing measures to promote democratic values since 1992 (BMFSFJ, n.d.). A current programme, e.g., was established in 2015 and is called *Demokratie leben!* by the *Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth*. The program funds nationwide projects to promote democracy, shape diversity, and prevent extremism (BMFSFJ, 2021). 165.5 million euros are expected for the programme in 2022. Regarding our case study, aspects of the programme concerning *Democracy Promotion* are explained below.

“‘Demokratie leben!’ strengthens the understanding of democracy, democratic education, and social cohesion. The funded projects focus on fundamental principles such as equality, the rule of law, the protection of human rights, and social participation in political processes. Children, adolescents, and young adults, in particular, are supported in exercising their participation rights and co-determination’ (Demokratie leben!, n.d., transl. para. 6).

During the entire programme period, *Demokratie leben!* is constantly and scientifically accompanied and evaluated by Deutsches Jugendinstitut (hereafter referred to as DJI). Both the supported projects and the overall concept of the federal programme are examined and evaluated. The evaluation methodology includes document analyses, online surveys, and quantitative interviews with project leaders, cooperation partners, and participants (DJI, n.d.). Every year, the DJI publishes a report with new findings and

recommendations for the further development of the programme (Demokratie leben! n.d.-a).

Finally, referring to the Policy Cycle's *outcome*, a positive project example is highlighted, funded by the programme *Demokratie leben!* The project is called *Jugendbeteiligung bei Bürgerbudgets* (hereafter referred to as JUBU), started in 2020, and is led by the association *mitMachen* (mitMachen e. V., 2020). The project aims to bring young people and adults between the ages of 16 and 26 closer to local democracy and promote active participation in democratic processes. For this purpose, participants have the opportunity to present their individual local project ideas for the community. Furthermore, they can develop their projects with the assistance of JUBU. Moreover, financial support is provided for residents to realise their ideas (mitMachen e. V., 2020).

The mentioned *outcome* of the case study is one example of many trying to increase voter turnout indirectly and in the long term. As the decision regarding lowering the voting age has not yet been made, no conclusion can be drawn. Nevertheless, the allocation of political actions to the Policy Cycle's phases helps to obtain an overview of the overall policymaking process.

2.2 Design and Policy

Society is surrounded by uncertain and ill-defined 'wicked problems'¹⁴ and a complex political system, which is the owner of these problems (Christiansen & Bunt, 2016; Bason, 2016). According to Rittel and Weber (1973, p. 160), 'nearly all wicked problems include public policy issues'. Therefore, the government's task is to respond to such complexity and develop effective and efficient policies and services that fit citizens' needs (Howlett, 2014; Bason, 2016; Hermus et al., 2020). However, only the government itself determines how satisfactory and society-oriented it governs (Howlett, 2014). In Geoff Mulgan's words (2009: 1, as cited in Bason, 2016, p. 1): 'Governments can be brutal and stupid. But the best have helped their citizens to live stronger, safer, richer, freer lives'.

Here is where design comes into play. 'Where there is design, there is the potential for change' (Junginger, 2016, p. 57). Using design approaches in policymaking allows problems to be addressed and solved more productively (Christiansen & Bunt, 2016),

¹⁴ Wicked problems are defined by complexity and high uncertainty and are therefore difficult to deal with (Bason, 2010, p. 10; Camillus, 2016). Such societal challenges can be found in environmental problems, social and economic inequality, and terrorism (Erlhoff & Marshall, 2008). Further reading: Rittel, H. W. J., & Webber, M. M. (1973). Dilemmas in a general theory of planning. *Policy Sciences*, 4(2), 155–169. <https://doi.org/10.1007/bf01405730>

more thoughtfully (Bason, 2016), and more efficiently. The aim is to improve the lives of citizens (Christiansen & Bunt, 2016) by transforming current into preferred situations (Bason, 2016) by applying problem-solving activities such as design approaches (Junginger, 2016).

2.2.1 The Evolution of Design in Policy

The origins of design entering the political system to help shape better policies go way back to policy sciences' beginnings. Harold Lasswell was one of the first to examine policy formulation and implementation, pointing out the importance of understanding how policymakers go into action. Following this approach, policy researchers began to focus more explicitly on the implementation process to demonstrate policymakers' impact on the policy outcome. This led to the separation of policy formulation and implementation (Howlett, 2014, pp. 190-191).

Another essential research in this field is the study of Graham Allison in 1971, which analysed 'the governmental decision-making¹⁵ during one of the most challenging crises of the cold war, the Cuban missile crisis' (Vanhoonacker & Wangen, 2016, p. 1). Through this critical view, the author influenced further political scientists and decision researchers to develop advanced models to better understand decision-making processes on a governmental basis (Bason, 2016, p. 2; Vanhoonacker & Wangen, 2016). By this time, interest in Policy Design had increased across academia (Bason, 2010, p. 6; Howlett, 2014).

Around the 1980s, political studies within the design context focused on policy theory-building rather than policy practice (Howlett, 2014, p. 191; Mortati, 2019). Theory building, in this case, specialised in a 'more careful examination of implementation instruments and instrument choices' (Howlett, 2014, p. 191). This, it was argued, contributed to a deeper understanding of policymaking and better policy outcomes (Howlett, 2014). '... the suggestion here is that we should concentrate on the generic tools of government action, on the "techniques" of social intervention' (Salamon, 1981, p. 256, as cited in Howlett, 2014, p. 191). Before turning to studies of policy instruments, Linder and Peters (1988, as cited in Howlett, 2014, p. 188) pointed out that policymaking consists of two different perspectives: the analytical view, which draws knowledge from

¹⁵ Allison examined the governmental decision-making during the crisis 'through three conceptual lenses: rational actor, organisational behaviour [*sic*], and governmental politics'. The primary outcome of the author's study is 'the complexity of policymaking processes' and 'the relevance of the *Essence of Decision* for scholars in foreign policy and public administration' (Vanhoonacker & Wangen, 2016, pp. 1-2). Further reading about Graham Allison's discovery: Allison, G. T. (1971). *Essence of Decision. Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis*. Little, Brown.

experiences and reasons and the abstract view, which relies on assumptions of possible courses for action. This understanding led to acknowledging the design orientation within political science (Howlett, 2014, p. 188). According to Bason (2010, p. 6), the first out of four stages¹⁶, ‘awareness’¹⁷, would have been achieved by then.

In the 1990s, researchers focused mainly on analysing policy tools and ‘the shifts in patterns of instrument choice over time’ (Howlett, 2014, p. 192). These advanced studies and the high value placed on design in the political context resulted in creating policy instrument mixes. However, further studies did not pursue this aspect (Howlett, 2014, p. 192).

Since the complexity of multiple aspects of globalisation is increasing (Bason, 2016; Vaz & Prendeville, 2019) – which leads to challenging and extensive policymaking – ‘a (re)emergence of “new” design thinking has occurred’ in the twenty-first-century¹⁸ (Howlett, 2014, p. 192). This reorientation of policymaking focuses on society’s current wicked problems and contributes to tackling barriers that emanate from governments. Moreover, this new design momentum fosters public sector innovation, targeting public policies and services (Vaz & Prendeville, 2019; Bason, 2016).

2.2.2 Policy Design: A Definition

Policy Design relates to a set of activities carried out by a group of actors, which improve the formulation and implementation of policies by adding creativity to the policymaking process (Cairney, 2021; Mortati, 2019; Considine, 2018, p. 154). Creativity, in this sense, refers to a ‘designerly’¹⁹ way of ‘solving’²⁰ wicked problems (Considine, 2018; Johnson & Cook, 2013). Design, and therefore Policy Design, offer a unique approach to dealing with complex issues through applying an open-ended and iterative process. This allows different thinking, knowing, exploring, and planning in a governmental context, which overall defines ‘a new way of policymaking’ (Bason, 2016, p. 3; Christiansen & Bunt, 2016, p. 43). Furthermore, working with design practices allows focusing more on humans and their needs as well as adapting to continuously changing conditions (Mortati, 2019; Christiansen & Bunt, 2016).

¹⁶ Policy Design evolved in four overlapping stages: Awareness, Cases and Practice, Barriers, and Practice (Bason, 2010, pp 6-7).

¹⁷ Governmental parties acknowledged that handling wicked problems and complex challenges through design approaches – in this case, Policy Design – is a process that implies the reinvention of government itself.

¹⁸ ‘As twenty-first-century design also reflects the discovery of complexity’ (Bason, 2016, p. 4).

¹⁹ The term ‘designerly’ was shaped by Nigel Cross (1982), referring to design as a discipline based on design research and design education.

²⁰ ‘Social problems are never solved. At best they are only re-solved – over and over again’ (Rittel & Webber, 1973, p. 160).

Policy Design is divided into two dimensions: as something to do, practical, and to explain, academic (Cairney, 2021; Peters, 2018; Mortati, 2019). Both Policy Design dimensions improve policy formulation and implementation (Peters, 2018, p. 4). The practical dimension, also known as policy analysis, refers to designing the policy outcome. More specifically, it describes the process that develops solutions to public issues (Cairney, 2021; Peters, 2018). The academic dimension, the policy process research, deals with the 'study of all policymaking activity' and the extent to which design may be involved (Cairney, 2021, p. 2). Furthermore, it concentrates on the constraints that evolve from the governmental context, which correlate with the requirements that policy analysts face (Cairney, 2021; Peters, 2018). Cairney (2021, p. 2) identifies three significant limitations in the policymaking process: First, it is more a matter of remaking policies rather than designing and developing new ones. The change needed is primarily minor. Therefore, most cases require a redesign of consisting policies (Peters, 2018). Second, policymakers and policy analysts provide only a subset of all relevant evidence needed. Instead, they gather data via 'cognitive and organisational shortcuts' to make decisions (Cairney, 2021, p. 2). Third, policymakers depend on the governmental environment.

Applying Policy Design in governments indicates a set of competencies and a variety of design tools. According to Cairney (2021, p. 1), Policy Design is subject to various 'approaches, methods, perspectives, and actors' to develop human-centred policies. Most importantly, it is necessary for a policy designer to bring along specific characteristics, such as:

- systematic, creative, and iterative thinking while being knowledgeable;
- being solution-focused and adaptive to unpredictable situations;
- 'using the logic of abduction'²¹ (Hermus et al., 2020, p. 3);
- being open to experimentation, imagination, and participation;
- looking at alternative ways and 'respond creatively to complex problems' (Considine, 2018, p. 147);
- employ enthusiastic, sensitive, and pragmatic skills;
- develop a great understanding of the problem and recognise opportunities for solutions (Peters, 2018; Mortati, 2019; Bason, 2016).

²¹ The logic of abduction refers to a different way of addressing an issue (Bason, 2017). It describes 'the logic of what could be' by hypothesising and speculating about achieving valuable design outcomes (Hermus et al., 2020, p. 3).

The skills presented need to be supplemented and regularly adjusted by the authors, e.g., to adapt to constantly changing conditions and circumstances.

Furthermore, specific key elements need to be followed in remaking policies. First, it is necessary to understand constraints, challenges, and possibilities to define the issue to be addressed (Mortati, 2019). Therefore, 'design research can help policymakers better understand the root causes of problems' (Bason, 2016, p. 4). Further, Policy Design requires diverse actors, units, and institutions that bring along different ways of thinking (Peters, 2018). It also involves the *superpower* of citizens (Mortati, 2019; Hermus et al., 2020). As Herbert Simon stated: 'everyone designs who devises courses of action aimed at changing existing situations into preferred ones' (1996, 111, as cited in Peters, 2018, p. 1). Based on this, Participatory Design (hereafter referred to as PD) and Co-Design have an important impact (cf. chapter 2.4.1 & 2.4.2).

In general, Policy Design offers multiple methods²² and tools that help capture citizens' insights (Christiansen & Bunt, 2016). However, according to Peters (2018, p. 9), it is necessary to apply soft instruments that define 'the environment of behaviour rather than the behaviour itself'. Soft instruments, in this context, are characterised by collaboration and discretion, which citizens very much value. Concerning Germany, it can be assumed that due to the GDPR rules (General Data Protection Regulation), discretion is mandatory as well as a legal requirement (intersoft consulting, 2021, May 5).

The aim and challenges of Policy Design

Using design approaches to address complex societal problems offers numerous benefits to society and government. The most promising aspect is the achievement of the three basic principles of democratic policymaking: 'efficiency, efficacy, and effectiveness' (Mortati, 2019, p. 11). This allows the government to enable policies rather than manage them. (Mortati, 2019). Another beneficial effect of applying Policy Design is developing reliable and credible policies while incorporating various values and visions (Peters, 2018; Hermus et al., 2020). As for the policymaking process itself, linear and siloed thinking becomes an iterative and open-ended approach (Mortati, 2019).

Despite all this, challenges arise, such as the risk of designing policy outcomes that do not correspond to policymaking reality (Cairney, 2021). Moreover, even though well-

²² Policy Design approaches are mostly labelled as 'service design, strategic design, macro design, public design, design thinking, human-centred design, social innovation, social entrepreneurship' (Bason & Schneider, 2016, p. 23).

designed policies primarily address or resolve societal problems, failures occur occasionally (Howlett & Mukherjee, 2018, p. 4).

2.2.3 Status Quo of Policy Design

Design has a significant impact on policymaking (Howlett, 2014). Governments²³ and public organisations worldwide apply design approaches to provide better policy outcomes and public services. 'It is argued that design offers some potential to overcome the limitations of conventional policy methods to fostering public and social innovation by developing creative solutions' (Mulgan, 2014, as cited in Vaz & Prendeville, 2019, p. 1).

However, the 'new' Policy Design must deal with great challenges and unexplored territories that have emerged throughout the last two decades (Howlett, 2014). According to Bason (2016, p. 3), there is a lack of linkage between design, society, and public policy. Further, policymakers need to gain a deeper understanding of design (Johnson & Cook, 2013). Moreover, designers need to get 'familiar with the nature of the governance and policy contexts in which they are working' (Howlett, 2014, as cited in Howlett, Mukherjee & Woo, 2015, p. 301). Another major challenge is to reach a more advanced level of policy formulation, to maintain better policy outcomes for society (Johnson & Cook, 2013; Mortati, 2019). Finally, policy feedback and evidence-based policy will take on a significant part in designing policies (Howlett et al., 2015). The former refers to testing policy results, which in the long run, reduces policy failures (Wutzler & Stühlinger, 2021, March 23; Tosun & Treib, 2018). The latter is based on the systematic use of academic and scientific research (Cairney, 2021). Furthermore, evidence-based policy encourages effective and efficient policymaking (Wutzler & Stühlinger, 2021, March 23).

Currently, Policy Design is addressing the above challenges to some extent. In the course of this thesis, the most important approaches are presented below.

The lack of linkage between design, society, and public policy refers to three central attempts. First, Peters (2019, p. 15) stated that 'the challenge for a valid and meaningful concept of Policy Design is more on the side of design than policy'. Therefore, the author proposed a conceptualisation of design, which would result in naturalising design to social and political systems (Peters, 2019). Second, participatory processes, such as PD and Co-Design, are becoming increasingly essential and cannot be dismissed. This

²³ Leading governments that integrate design into public policies: Australia, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Italy, Netherlands, United Kingdom, and United States (Bason, 2016; Bason, 2010).

means that Policy Design needs to collaborate with multiple stakeholders, state and non-state actors, e.g., people from society (Cairney, 2021). As Veselý (2020, p. 226) argued: 'Design must fully incorporate the world of those that the policy targets'. Therefore, the 'new' Policy Design actively engages citizens to use real-life experiences (Veselý, 2020). Third, addressing human factors is necessary for effective citizen-driven policy outcomes (Peters, 2018, p. 5). A key aspect for governments to focus on better policy outcomes is to conduct more detailed user research and deepen their knowledge in anthropology (Bason, 2010, p. 11).

A deep understanding and superior knowledge of the design and political context contribute strongly to a successful policy design. In this case, as already mentioned, design has a more significant influence. The new design orientation thus deals with the competencies that policy designers need, such as a design attitude rather than a decision attitude; soft skills rather than hard skills (Peters, 2019; Cairney, 2021). The first describes the process of finding solutions instead of deciding from alternatives (Peters, 2019). The second points out the characteristics (cf. chapter 2.2.2) that a designer needs to possess, which, for instance, would imply using 'logic, knowledge and experience' throughout the policymaking process (Cairney, 2021, p. 4).

A great issue in Policy Design is the paucity of literature on formulating policies. Furthermore, guides for policy formulation are mainly built on assumptions (Veselý, 2020). 'We provide policy designers with assumptions that are not in accordance with what they face in practice. ... the probability of successful designing might be improved if we abandon traditional assumptions' (Veselý, 2020, p. 226). Therefore, the role of design is to improve and enhance the policy formulation process by integrating further design research (Howlett & Mukherjee, 2018). Another relevant aspect is the need to work with design mixes. A package of tools helps to better deal with wicked problems and, therefore, achieve specific objectives (Cairney, 2021; Howlett & Mukherjee, 2018). As Veselý (2020, p. 221) would say: 'Complex problems require a design mix instead of one alternative'. The author also proposed that policy designers must establish a broader knowledge of the interaction between multiple policy mixes.

An even more critical challenge is the increasing need to gather policy feedback to support evidence-based policy change (Cairney, 2021, p. 4). As Mettler and SoRelle (2017, as cited in Howlett & Mukherjee, 2018, p. 316) stated: 'Past policies' feedbacks are shaping future policies'. Therefore, learning from practice and experiences and accessing knowledge is significant for policy designers to apply evidence-based policy (Veselý, 2020), which helps to govern more effectively and transparently. Furthermore,

there is a need for imaginative and experimental skills for refining policymaking processes (Mortati, 2019). Mortati (2019, p. 14) argues, 'it is clear how the discipline is not yet well accustomed ... and will therefore need in the future to enlarge both debate and experimentation to robustly prove effectiveness'. Corresponding to this, policy feedback, experimentation, and fine-tuning are the key activities to improve the policy design process and its various approaches.

2.2.4 Design Activities and Design Mindsets in Policymaking

This chapter is mainly dedicated to the literature *Design for policy* edited by Bason (2016) and the paper *Design as an Agent for Public Policy Innovation* written by Vaz & Prendeville (2019).

Design activities assigned in stages (regarding Bason, 2016)

Bason (2016) distinguishes four primary areas where design methods are used: policy intent, design insight, ideation, and implementation. According to Body & Terrey (2016, pp. 179-190), the primary task of policy intent is to generate a shared understanding of the proposed policy. This already happens at the very beginning of policymaking. The aim of the intent is ...

- a) to establish a coherent knowledge among all stakeholders throughout the whole process;
- b) to ensure successful policy implementation and therefore prevent policy failure;
- c) and to secure confidence within the community and the government. 'This is achieved by having a clear and well-understood argument for the change that is successfully communicated to all people involved in the design, build and delivery of the change' (Body & Terrey, 2016, p. 183).

Designing insights describes gathering experiences, needs, motives, and pain points from various actors. This helps to focus on the main issue and opportunities 'to shape, develop and deliver new solutions' (Siodmok, 2016, p. 192). Therefore, design research methods are used to observe people's behaviour. The value of designing insights is to develop sound policy outcomes based on the real-life experiences of citizens. 'Early collaboration between local people and experts, working with designers can help create the conditions for communities to participate in policy development. This reduces the risk of policy failure' (Siodmok, 2016, p. 192). Design insights are characterised by extensive, open-ended investigations, qualitative approaches, and contextual-based observation.

According to Siodmok (2016), designing insights²⁴ is divided into analytical insights, which focus on defining the problem, and creative insights, which concentrate on possible solutions.

The original task of the ideation process is to propose utopian concepts through images and physical models – either to convince or to explore. In policymaking, it is more about trying out the proposed solution. It, however, is a challenge²⁵ to integrate the attitude given by the ideation process. ‘We need to make room for more playful, iterative and inclusive processes of creation in public policy’ (Halse, 2016, p. 210). Therefore, evocative sketches and design games are experimental design approaches that may make proposed ideas more tangible for public policy. The benefits of evocative sketches are the inclusion of a diverse range of people and the open-ended procedure. Furthermore, this ideation approach is applied to early design proposals. In this sense, design games prove to be ideal by showing the current situation and the proposed future through a playful setting. Design games are based on simplicity, collaboration, and easy understanding. The aim is to collect possible new design ideas brought forward by the players (Halse, 2016).

Applying design activities in policy implementation shifted from achieving efficiency and transactions to creating robust relationships with citizens. Maschi & Winhall (2016) have identified ways in which design can become more valuable to public systems and society. For example, behaviour change²⁶ motivates people to contribute to the changes that affect their lives actively. Therefore, design needs to influence citizens’ behaviour and broaden their engagement. Another major task is to involve the community in a participatory way (cf. chapter 2.4). Design, in this case, needs to create valued experiences and be open to all stakeholders. Furthermore, storytelling through design can be meaningful for the relationship between people and the state and the associated outcomes. Therefore, public services must design narratives ‘to engage citizens in new activities, actions, behaviours and relationships’ (Maschi & Winhall, 2016, p. 216). Another way to strengthen the relationship between the system and society is by balancing power. This means encouraging people to take charge of their own lives. After

²⁴ Insights can be designed through various methods, such as Co-Design, cultural probes, design ethnography, discovery workshops, user diaries, interviews, journey mapping, and many more – no rulebook states which methods should be used (Siodmok, 2016).

²⁵ Reasons why ideation seems to be a challenge in policymaking: ‘the scale of the problem is too large; the level of complexity is too high; the cultures of public governance do not embrace the participatory aspects of co-creation and playful experimentation’ (Halse, 2016, p. 203).

²⁶ A newly discovered method for behavioural change is nudging. Nudging describes changing people’s behaviour by encouraging them to act reasonably. Furthermore, it is considered a stimulus, not coercion or prohibition (Thaler & Sunstein, 2008; John, 2018).

all, governments must enable trust and transparency in designing and implementing policies and services.

Designerly mindsets (*regarding Vaz & Prendeville, 2019*)

Vaz & Prendeville (2019) devoted their research to design methods and tools throughout the Policy Cycle. The findings are based on a study with 16 policy labs from Europe. They all claim to work with design approaches, although some cannot specify at which stages the design methods and tools were applied. However, the use of the following was mentioned: 'Ethnographic research; Co-creation; (Rapid) Proto-typing; Experimentation; Personas; User Journeys; Design Thinking; Gamification; Human-centred Design' (Vaz & Prendeville, 2019, p. 10). Furthermore, the research revealed uncertainty about which methods and tools should be applied and at which stage of the process the design approaches are most helpful.

According to Vaz & Prendeville, it is more about designerly mindsets rather than 'the use of design methods and tools'. In this case, the authors distinguish three mindsets: 'user-centredness', 'co-creation', and 'exploration' (Vaz & Prendeville, 2019, pp. 11-12).

- User-centredness focuses on the audience directly targeted by the policy in question. Therefore, constant reflection with those users is necessary.
- Co-creation describes the active collaboration with various stakeholders throughout the policymaking process. In particular, those affected by the policy and public servants.
- Exploration refers to the 'willingness to experiment with solutions' (Vaz & Prendeville, 2019, p. 12) as well as to fail fast.

2.2.5 The Difference between Policy Design and Design for Policy

The traditional Policy Cycle (cf. chapter 2.1.4) is divided into various phases, each with its characteristics and tasks (Villa Alvarez, Auricchio & Mortati, 2022; Cairney, 2021). Policy formulation and policy implementation, or Policy Design and design for policy, as Mortati (2021) refers to, are two major stages. 'A superior process of policy formulation will lead to a superior set of policy instruments and components, which will, in turn, result in a superior outcome' (Howlett & Mukherjee, 2018, p. 5). Therefore, the traditional policymaking process builds on these two phases to develop policies for society.

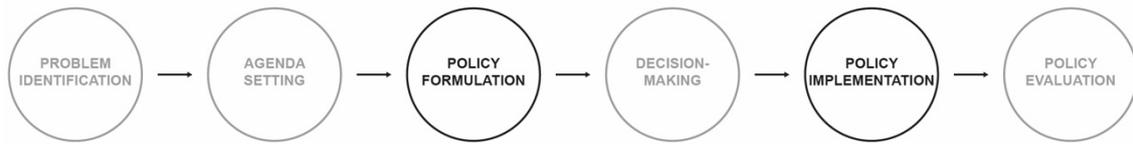


Figure 6: An adapted model of the Policy Cycle by Howlett and Ramesh (2003 as cited in Junginger 2016 p. 58). It shows the six stages of the traditional Policy Cycle. The visualisation highlights the main phases of the policymaking process: policy formulation and policy implementation.

Policy formulation – referred to as Policy Design

Policy formulation is based on a knowledge-focused mindset that ‘identifies, refines, and formalises’ opportunities to actively confront problems ‘on the formal agenda’ (Villa Alvarez et al., 2022). This stage aims to formulate better policies by applying design mixes aligned to political means. According to Mortati (2021, p. 3), policy formulation is the process ‘that inquires how design approaches and methods could help formulate better policies through optimal design spaces’. Design spaces, in this sense, refer to the extent to which design is deployed throughout the process. Literature on the different types of design spaces varies slightly. However, they all claim high and low design spaces and non-design (Howlett & Mukherjee, 2018; Howlett & Mukherjee, 2018a; Mortati, 2021; Howlett et al., 2015; Peters, 2018). The following remarks are based on the recent debate of Marzia Mortati (2021), who dedicated their studies to policy formulation – as the author refers to Policy Design. According to Mortati, there are three primary design spaces: strong, weak, and non-design.

Strong design spaces refer to problem-oriented policy processes, also known as full design (Peters, 2021) or design via packaging (Howlett et al., 2015). The task is to ‘find the most effective way to address a policy problem’ (Mortati, 2021, p. 7). According to Mortati (2021, pp. 12-13), ‘design ... supports policymakers to engage with real situations providing insights and using robust evidence’. This implies actively engaging with citizens, applying policy mixes and pointing out future scenarios (Mortati, 2021). As described in Howlett & Mukherjee (2018a, p. 310), packaging is characterised by experimenting with paradigmatic new policy goals.

Weak design spaces refer to ‘politically oriented policy processes’. Policy formulation, in this case, is ‘more partial and less intentional’ (Howlett & Mukherjee, 2018a, p. 310) and design is a secondary matter. Furthermore, it does not value collaboration with stakeholders and citizens. Mortati (2021) distinguishes two main aspects of weak design, starting with smart patching, as Howlett & Mukherjee (2018a) refer to. This design space describes ‘the lack of institutional recognition’ (Mortati, 2021, p. 13). ‘Design ... tries to

gain credibility by providing data analysis ... for new service development' (Mortati, 2021, pp. 12-13). In addition, smart patching refers to the 'experimentation with new policy settings, instruments or objectives' (Howlett & Mukherjee, 2018a, p. 310). The second aspect of weak design describes design as absent in policymakers' work environments. 'Design is peripheral and works at the micro level of communities, though lacking to upscale proposals to the policy/politics levels' (Mortati, 2021, p. 13). According to Howlett & Mukherjee (2018a), this design space works with disputed interpretations, also known as layering.

The last design space is defined by non-design. In this case, design is not perceived at both the 'institutional and community level' (Mortati, 2021, p. 14). This has the effect that policymakers cannot correctly deal with societal problems and make decisions based on bargaining, corruption, or inconsistent studies (Mortati, 2021; Howlett & Mukherjee, 2018a). Another characteristic of non-design is the rejection of policy change (Peters, 2021).

According to Howlett & Mukherjee (2018a), policymakers mostly fail due to the lack of design integration. To avoid this, Mortati (2021, p. 14) states: 'Design can be more effective if introduced in policy formulation ... to have impact it needs institutional recognition and will to engage multiple points of view for the development of better policy outputs and outcomes'.

Policy implementation – *referred to as Design for Policy*

Policy implementation has the task of bringing policies into action by focusing on better policy outcomes (Mortati, 2021; Villa Alvarez et al., 2022). More specifically, the process concentrates on the output's effect on the target's behaviour (Tosun & Treib, 2018). According to Villa Alvarez et al., (2022), design makes its most significant contribution to policy implementation. Marzia Mortati (2021) refers to this stage of the Policy Cycle as Design for Policy. Design here works with experimental methods and design competencies (Mortati, 2021, pp. 2-4) and is based on an action-driven process identified by iterative loops (Mortati, 2021). Stakeholders, in this process, are mainly implementation actors, administrators, and citizens (Tosun & Treib, 2018).

According to Tosun & Treib (2018, p. 316), there are two types of policy implementation: centralised and decentralised. The difference between the two approaches is that the latter gives the implementation actors more leeway to adjust policies to local reality. On the other hand, centralised implementation is based on strict political guidance.

Therefore, the two implementation types can also be described as top-down (centralised) and bottom-up (decentralised) processes (Tosun & Treib, 2018).

Design for Policy aims to achieve 'more inclusive, participative, and efficient outputs in terms of public services' (Mortati, 2021, p. 4). Referring to Mortati (2021), PD, Co-Design, and Service-Design are commonly used to reach this objective (cf. chapter 2.4).

2.3 The Nature of Design Processes in Policymaking

Design processes are characterised by creativity, systematic iteration, evaluation, and adaptation (Christiansen & Bunt, 2016). Most importantly, they transform current into preferred situations (Bason, 2016, p. 3; Peters, 2018) by applying 'solution-focused' and 'abductive thinking' (Hermus et al., 2020, p. 3). 'Processes of design are iterative in formation and implementation. This means that design is accustomed to being open-ended [*sic*], uncertain or in "beta", using a set of bounded, disciplined techniques to test, learn and revise throughout the creative process' (Bason, 2016, p. 43). Furthermore, a deeper understanding of the initiated problem helps better work through the design process, leading to sound outcomes (Hermus et al., 2020). Johnson & Cook (2013) concur that adopting design in policy systems improves formulation.

The concept behind Policy Design did not initially involve the application of design approaches, methods, or tools (Villa Alvarez et al., 2022). Nevertheless, the necessity to introduce design in policymaking has become very clear. Vaz & Prendeville (2019, p. 11) highlight three primary needs for design in policy: 'addressing the complexities of current social policy issues, ... innovating and bringing new approaches to public policymaking'. The study on design methods and tools by Vaz & Prendeville (2019) implies redesigning the current policymaking process and introducing innovation to achieve novel policy outcomes. The author argues that there is a 'need for innovation to address the complexity of current social policy issues, suggesting the traditional processes fail in doing so' (Vaz & Prendeville, 2019, p. 12). This proposal is also supported by Villa Alvarez et al.. They added: 'the sequence indicates that design activities produce design process [sub]cycles which develop within each of the stages of agenda setting, policy formulation and policy implementation' (2022, p. 108).

The following chapter compares common design processes and mindsets with the traditional Policy Cycle model (cf. chapter 2.1.4). This helps to better understand the current relationship between design approaches and the Policy Cycle.

2.3.1 Human-Centred Design

Human-centred Design (hereafter referred to as HCD) describes an approach that generates solutions by focusing on *full human beings*²⁷ throughout the design process (Ferri & de Waal, 2017; IDEO, 2015; Burns, 2018; Munger & Van Dael, 2020). Society act as experts on their own lives and personal experiences (Steen, 2008, p. 27). ‘People who face ... problems every day are the ones who hold the key to their answer’ (Bødker, 2015, as cited in Ferri & de Waal, 2017, p. 10).

Table 3 shows the different definitions of HCD. Again, it is indicated that humans and their experiences must be the core focus.

Author	Definition
Munger & Van Dael (2020, pp. 1 & 7)	‘HCD is a field that puts end-users at the centre of the design process. it is an empathic approach to innovation’.
ISO 9241-220:2019(en)	‘HCD ... also addresses impacts on a number of stakeholders, not just those typically considered as users’.
ISO 9241-210:2019(en)	‘HCD ... aims to make systems usable and useful by focusing on the users, their needs and requirements, and by applying human factors/ergonomics, and usability knowledge and techniques’.
Burns (2018, p. 209)	‘HCD aims to develop solutions to problems by involving the human perspectives in all steps of the process. it focuses on finding a solution for a real-life problem experienced by real people’.
Ferri & de Waal (2017, p. 10)	‘HCD is intrinsically participatory and collective. start by including them in the very definition of the problem space’.
IDEO (2015, pp. 9, 13 & 14)	‘HCD is a unique approach to problem solving’. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Putting people at the heart of the process. • Designing solutions that are desirable, feasible, and viable. • Believing that all problems are solvable.

Table 3: Definitions of Human-centred Design.

²⁷ *Full human beings* describes people as more than just *users*. It considers further aspects of human beings, such as their ‘personal histories, desires, emotions, and ... needs’ (Ferri & de Waal, 2017, p. 69). This can include ‘citizens, consumers, family members, political constituents, lovers, entrepreneurs, etc.’ (Ferri & de Waal, 2017, p. 10). Involving *full human beings* reveals the main distinction between HCD and User-centred Design (hereafter referred to as UCD). Therefore, UCD concentrates solely on users’ needs (Gondomar & Mor, 2020) and ‘suggests a narrower focus on people’s roles as users’ (Steen, 2011, p. 45).

According to Munger & Van Dael (2020) and IDEO (2015), HCD is divided into a mindset and a process. A human-centred mindset is based on various values. Munger & Van Dael (2020) consider empathy, curiosity, and optimism the most critical factors. IDEO (2015) adds further values, such as creative confidence, learning from failure, and continuous iteration.

- Empathy: focuses on human needs, constraints, and beneficiaries by taking people's perspectives (Munger & Van Dael, 2020; IDEO, 2015).
- Curiosity: enables to see a given situation from a new perspective (Munger & Van Dael, 2020).
- Optimism: helps to believe that 'every problem is solvable' (IDEO, 2015, p. 24). In addition, optimism always refers to the future (Munger & Van Dael, 2020). 'It is the embrace of possibility, the idea it is [*sic*] out there' (IDEO, 2015, p. 24).
- Creative confidence: refers to belief and trust in creativity and HCD to address wicked problems (IDEO, 2015).
- Learn from failure: allows to get things wrong throughout the process. Failure in developing solutions is part of the process, as is allowing and accepting it. 'Fail early to succeed sooner' (IDEO, 2015, p. 21).
- Continuous iteration: helps to improve and refine solutions. This process step relies on the feedback from 'people you are [*sic*] designing for' (IDEO, 2015, p. 119).

In the following, special attention is paid to the HCD process developed by IDEO. As shown in figure 7, the process consists of three main phases: Inspiration, Ideation, and Implementation. The first stage deeply understands people affected by the emerging problem (IDEO, 2015, p. 11). Burns (2018, p. 209) describes this phase as the act of 'understanding the lives and desires of the people'. Therefore, it is essential to identify people's needs, hopes and fears (IDEO, 2015). The ideation phase describes generating ideas, recognising possibilities, prototyping, gathering feedback, and refining through iteration. It is about making sense of all the collected data. The third phase of the HCD process is about bringing the solution to market, primarily via piloting (IDEO, 2015). Throughout the entire process, it is crucial to consider 'what is most desirable, feasible and viable²⁸ for the people you are designing for' (IDEO, 2015, p. 13). Therefore, it is essential to balance these three forces when looking for solutions (Munger & Van Dael, 2020, p. 12).

²⁸ Desirable: people's needs, hopes, and fears.

Feasible: technical capacities for the implementation.

Viable: Financial dependencies regarding the realisation of the solution (IDEO, 2015; Munger & Van Dael, 2020).

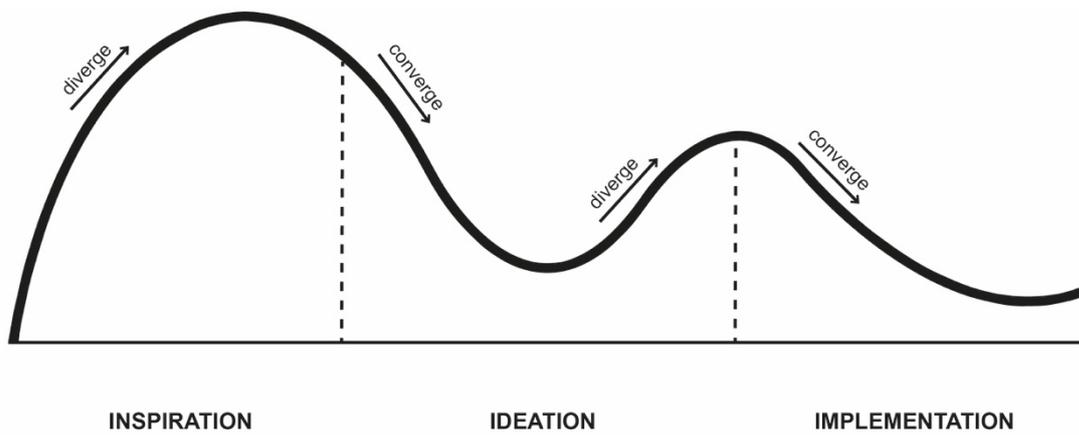


Figure 7: HCD process adapted from IDEO (2015 p. 13).

Furthermore, the HCD process is based on iteration. According to Burns (2018, p. 209), 'iterative means that, at each stage, the design is reconsidered and given feedback before progressing to the next state'. This requires close and constant interactions and early feedback from users and other stakeholders. Moreover, divergent and convergent thinking²⁹ is applied alternately throughout the HCD process to ensure the development of market-ready solutions (IDEO, 2015, p. 13).

Human-centred Design in policymaking

Several governments are starting to acknowledge the potential of design in policymaking, allowing HCD to be seen as a valuable approach. Putting people at the centre of the process helps to design policy outcomes that truly match citizens' needs and desires. Wutzler & Stühlinger (2021, March 23) cite three significant advantages of HCD in policymaking: acceptance by citizens, efficiency created by iteration loops, and increased adaptability.

Two recent studies on HCD in policymaking are presented below.

Sabine Junginger (2016) focused her research on the separation between policymaking³⁰ and policy implementation (cf. figure 6, chapter 2.2.5). The author argues that both approaches are carried out in isolation without considering citizens' perspectives and experiences. Furthermore, Junginger cites that design in policymaking is more seen as an activity rather than an integral part of the process. 'This understanding frames and limits Policy Design [*sic*] because it enables almost exclusively responsive and reactive designing' (Junginger, 2016, p. 57). Moreover,

²⁹ While divergent thinking describes working with a broader view and expanding perspectives, convergent thinking focuses on prioritisation and refinement (Munger & Van Dael, 2020, p. 21).

³⁰ Policymaking refers to the following phases of the Policy Cycle: problem identification, agenda setting, policy formulation, and decision-making.

design is primarily applied as an approach in policy implementation. On the other hand, policymaking concentrates on solving problems and making decisions. 'Policy ... driven by problem-solving does not lend itself to envisioning and inventing futures. It does not encourage or enable us to develop innovative policies towards achieving more desirable futures' (Junginger, 2016, p. 60). Junginger's suggestion is to 're-frame policymaking as designing' (Junginger, 2016, p. 57). To achieve this, policymakers need to shift towards human-centredness, focusing on peoples' experiences and actively engaging with citizens throughout the process. Therefore, it is essential to bridge policymaking and implementation as well as using participatory, collaborative, and Co-Design approaches. Furthermore, reflecting on problems, defining situations, and framing solutions are essential. Through human-centredness and constant iteration, policies can become more 'meaningful, useful and usable' (Junginger, 2016, p. 62). Moreover, applying HCD in policymaking requires establishing cross-ministerial teams by connecting policymakers, public managers, and designers. 'If the public sector is serious about its efforts to ... become more citizen-centred and transform governance, design will have to become part of the curriculum of future policymakers, civil servants, and other public managers' (Junginger, 2016, p. 58).

The study by Bason and Austin (2021) specialised in human-centred governance. According to this subject, they examined the link between governing, managing, and designing. According to Bason (2017), a change in governance towards citizen-centricity is needed:

- a) refocusing the role of public governance towards support rather than control;
- b) redesigning the policymaking process to be more bottom-up;
- c) strengthening the relationship with citizens through the application of co-production;
- d) shifting characteristics towards relational, networked, interactive, and reflexive aspects³¹.

In addition, Bason and Austin (2021) pointed out the importance of cross-cutting teams in government, management, and design. Therefore, improving the relationship between public management and design is crucial for a shift towards open and human-centred governance. In Bason's (2017, p. 220) words: 'human-centred governance ... is reached,

³¹ Relational: reframing the relationship between public policy organisations and society towards valuable outcomes. Networked: deliberate collaboration with various societal and civic actors throughout the policymaking process. Interactive: Using artefacts to mediate and facilitate interactive processes between governmental organisations, citizens, and other stakeholders. Reflective: an empathetic, qualitative, and subjective way of understanding and re-solving complex issues (Bason and Austin, 2021, p. 18).

or discovered, through engagement, by public managers, with the design approach. To put it simply, design powers the journey to human-centred governance’.

Through the evaluation of the study, six management engagements within three design dimensions emerged, which reveal a process for human-centred governance (Bason & Austin, 2021). Figure 8 shows how public management interacts with design.

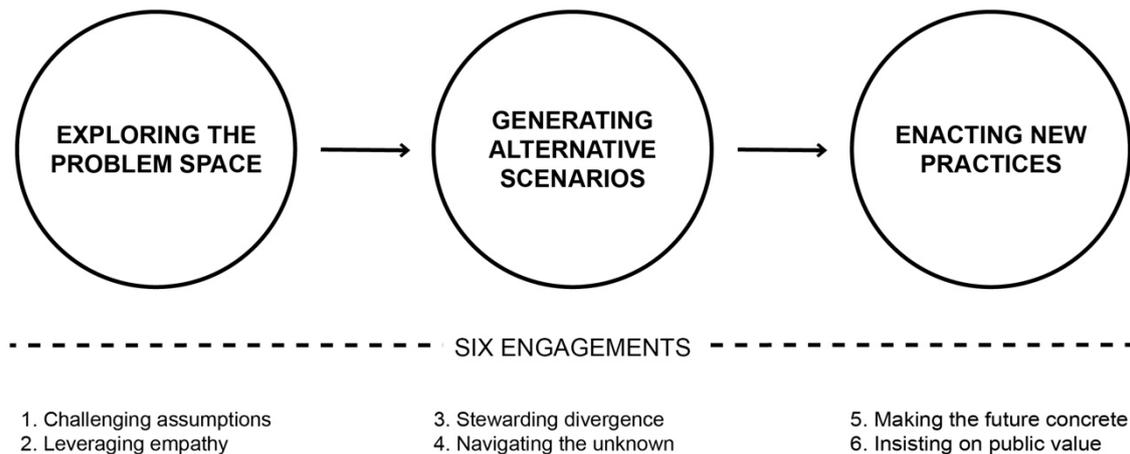


Figure 8: The human-centred governance process – six management engagements within three design dimensions (adapted from Bason & Austin 2021 p. 11).

Compared to the findings of Junginger’s paper, the following similarities emerge: Both pointed out that design approaches in the traditional Policy Cycle are mainly used in the policy implementation phase, limiting the development of citizen-centred outcomes. This implies the need to apply design methods and activities throughout the process. To achieve this, both point out the necessity of bringing design to a ‘collective level’ (Bason & Austin, 2021, p. 3) by making it ‘part of the curriculum’ (Junginger, 2016, p. 58). In addition, both studies refer to the importance of human-centred governance to manifest the creation of valuable policies. Furthermore, they suggest reinventing new design approaches, focusing more on participation, collaboration, and Co-Design.

2.3.2 Design Thinking

Tim Brown, Executive Chair of IDEO, defines Design Thinking as follows: ‘Design Thinking is a human-centred approach to innovation that draws from the designer’s toolkit to integrate the needs of people, the possibilities of technology, and the requirements for business success’ (IDEO, n.d., para. 1). Hasso Plattner Institute describes Design Thinking as ‘a systematic approach to complex problems from all areas of life’ (Hasso Plattner Institut, 2022, transl. para. 1). Furthermore, IDEO declared on their website that ‘Design Thinking has a human-centred core. It encourages organisations to focus on the people they’re creating for, which leads to better products,

services, and internal processes. ... the first question should always be what's the human need behind it?' (IDEO, 2020, para. 1).

Therefore, Design Thinking is considered a discipline, mindset, or process that generates innovative ideas, products, services, or processes through analytical and creative synthesis. Furthermore, the design approach is nowadays used in business to develop innovations under the following key factors: technical feasibility, economic viability, and human needs (also essential in HCD as mentioned in chapter 2.3.1). The latter always focuses on placing people at the centre of action (cf. figure 9) (IDEO, n.d.; Bason, 2010; Brown, 2019).

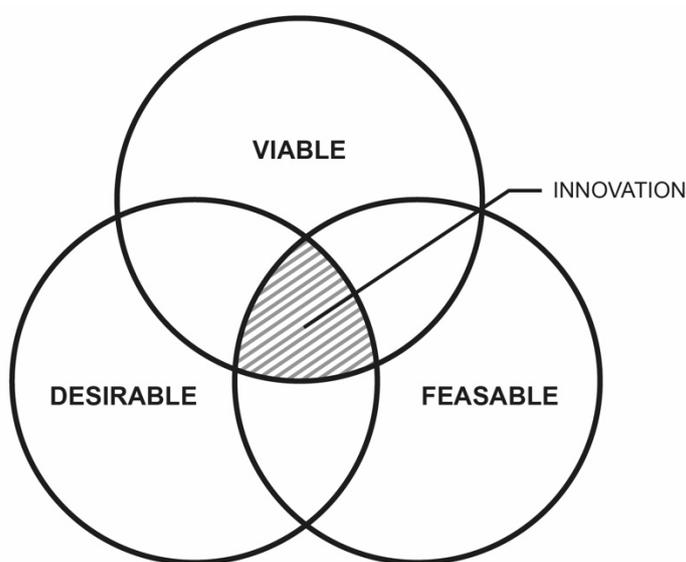


Figure 9: The three key factors of innovation (Hasso Plattner Institut 2022).

Furthermore, Design Thinking can solve problems and create new perspectives on the path to innovation. The process begins with an initial goal, realistic deadlines, and the creation of clarity. In the next step, design thinkers use available resources to prototype and test their developed solution proposals. Finally, feedback helps in refining ideas and improving products or services. Design Thinking is not only used by designers; it can be applied by anyone who wants to solve problems creatively and efficiently (IDEO, n.d.; Brown, 2019).

The Design Thinking process is not followed by specific instructions (Brown, 2019). However, different models have been developed that bring forth their respective advantages for different focal points. The most well-known companies and organisations that have further developed the Design Thinking approach are as follows:

- Hasso Plattner Institute of Design;
- Google Design Sprints;
- Design Council UK;
- IDEO (Helios Design, 2022).

In the following, the Design Thinking process by the Hasso Plattner Institute is illuminated (cf. figure 11).

To successfully complete a Design Thinking process, the assembled team needs to be multidisciplinary. This means that the constellation of team members from diverse areas and thematic focuses is ideally suited to run through the project working with different perspectives and competencies. In addition, it is recommended to set up several small teams of about five to six members who constantly exchange with each other. This promotes the cohesion of working groups and ensures that all perspectives can be respected (Hasso Plattner Institut, 2022). Another crucial point to consider is the space in which the project will be developed. The premises need to be generous enough for all team members to be able to unfold freely. Furthermore, the equipment requires flexibility. This facilitates the easy and practical adaptation of furniture and materials to the given project.

The Design Thinking process runs in iterative loops, allowing for an ‘open error culture’ (Hasso Plattner Institute, n.d., transl. para. 6). Moreover, the process covers the following six phases, which focus on human needs:

- Understand
- Observe
- Point of View
- Ideation
- Prototyping
- Test

The first phase is the briefing. This step aims to get a common *understanding* of the framework and scope of the problem. If all team members are aware of the problem, they must internalise the human-centricity component (Hasso Plattner Institut, 2022; Brown, 2019). Then, in the *observation phase*, the actual needs of users or stakeholders are identified. This helps to strengthen the empathy of the team members for the further course of the process. In the third step, the team compiles and breaks down the knowledge gained from the observation (Hasso Plattner Institut, 2022; Brown, 2019). For

this purpose, some tools³², such as the empathy map (cf. figure 10), can be used to summarise and present a compact overview of people's thoughts, impressions, and feelings (Adobe, 2021). With the knowledge gained from the previous phases and the depiction of *points of view*, the *ideation phase* follows, in which various possible solutions are developed. These proposals need to be highly diverse and broad as possible. The solutions developed and selected in the previous steps are then validated and evaluated. For this purpose, *prototypes* are created in the fifth phase and *tested* by users in the sixth phase (Hasso Plattner Institut, 2022). It needs to be noted that the Design Thinking process is non-linear. Therefore, iterations between different steps are necessary to incorporate insights and feedback into the process phases. Furthermore, divergent and convergent thinking is applied throughout the entire process (cf. chapter 2.3.3 Double Diamond) (Hasso Plattner Institut, 2022; Brown, 2019).

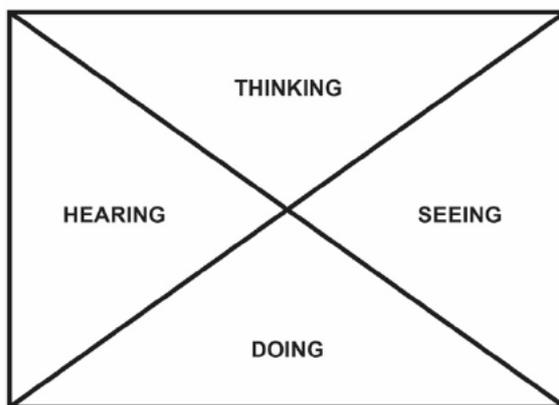


Figure 10: Empathy Map (adapted from Lewrick et al. 2018 p. 42).

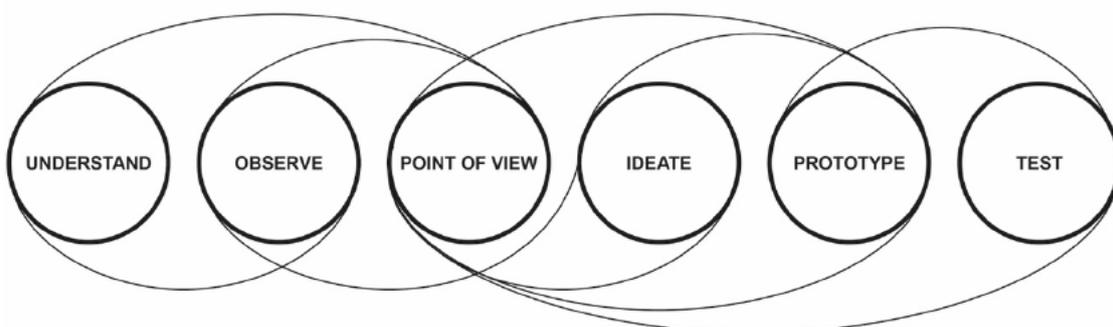


Figure 11: Design Thinking process (adapted from Hasso Plattner Institute n.d.)

³² Due to time constraints, this chapter will not discuss tools and methods in depth. However, selecting the right tools according to the individual phases and project goal is essential in Design Thinking. In addition to interviews, co-creation, brainstorming, and the empathy map, many other tools can be used (Lewrick et al., 2018; Lewrick et al., 2020).

Design Thinking in policymaking

'Increasingly, designers find themselves creating fewer products and more social solutions' (Bason, 2010, p. 137). This statement points out that Design Thinking's benefits have been embraced throughout businesses. Furthermore, this design process is constantly increasing in the public sector. Therefore, it is slowly but steadily leading to reshaping governmental institutions. As a result, Design Thinking plays a growing role in policymaking, designing interpersonal relationships and services, and generating innovative ideas in the public sector (Bason, 2010).

The following shows an example that successfully applies Design Thinking throughout governmental business. The *Sitra* organisation is a *think tank* that works on projects that benefit the common good through funding and supervision of the Finnish Parliament. 'Our vision is that Finland will prosper by building a fair, sustainable and inspiring future that ensures people's well-being within the limits of the earth's carrying capacity' (The Finnish Innovation Fund Sitra, 2022, para. 2). With this vision, Sitra has set itself the task of shaping social life and the economy according to responsible and sustainable guidelines. In addition, they rely on the commitment and participation of the population to promote democracy (The Finnish Innovation Fund Sitra, 2022). In 2009 Sitra founded the Helsinki Design Lab (hereafter referred to as HDL), which, until 2013, focused on implementing Strategic Design³³ in governmental tasks.

'Helsinki Design Lab accelerates the integration of design and government by establishing strategic design as a core discipline in supporting governmental decision making and service delivery. By developing strategic design, we hope to advance society's ability to cope with complex issues, such as climate change and demographic shifts, by developing tools to assist institutions to better conceptualise and respond to "wicked" challenges' (Helsinki Design Lab, n.d.-b, para. 2).

Through the *Design Exchange Programme*, HDL placed strategic designers working full-time in collaboration with Finnish ministries and municipalities to help restructure the public sector through design tools. The aim was to implement design and innovation capacities in the Finnish government, create a new generation of strategic designers, and develop more effective services through design methods (Helsinki Design Lab,

³³ In this example, the term *Strategic Design* is used instead of Design Thinking. Since this project is a matter of the past, it can be assumed that the term Design Thinking was not as widespread as it is today. This is because both disciplines, Strategic Design and Design Thinking, are strongly intertwined (Brown, 2019; Stickdorn et al., 2017). Therefore, it is important to emphasise that the example does not refer directly to Design Thinking but to human-centricity in problem-solving.

n.d.-b). In monthly meetings, all public sector stakeholders, including designers, met and discussed the strategies for the innovative transformation of the public sector. The outcome of the program has shown success. Among other things, a co-creation model for urban planning was developed and introduced. As a result, citizens, including children, were able to actively participate in urban planning. Furthermore, the *Helsinki Social Welfare Office* introduced a web-service for families that is designed to meet the needs of families. Moreover, the website is constantly optimised by feedback loops (cf. figure 12) (Helsinki Design Lab, n.d.-b).

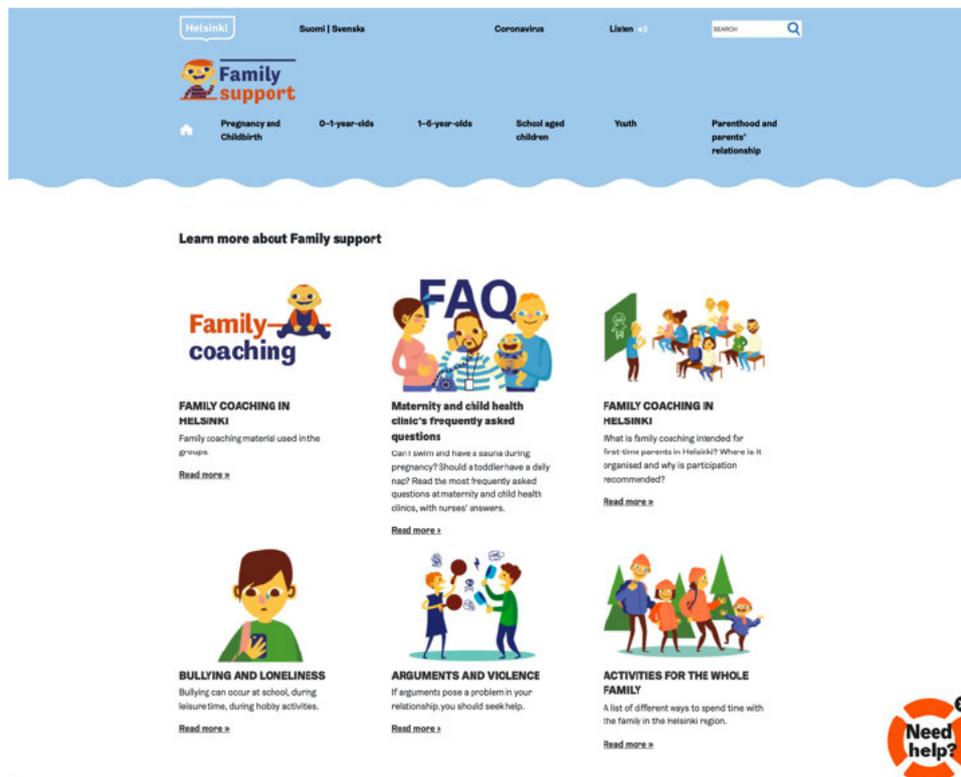


Figure 12: Website of the Helsinki Social Welfare Office (2022).

Despite previous practices, the implementation of Design Thinking in politics remains challenging. Although politics is a sensitive charged field, the decision-making process and policymaking are conducted exclusively rational and analytical and, therefore, rejecting the emotional perspective. However, the fact that Design Thinking combines emotional and intuitive with logical and analytical skills makes the process suitable to shape public life (Bason, 2010). Nevertheless, Bason (2010) emphasises that public policymaking should internalise the following four principles of Design Thinking:

A willingness to experiment

Regardless the appraisal of policy measures, there is no guarantee that approved laws and policies will have the desired effect. Therefore, Design Thinking can assist in

breaking down broad policy measures into smaller project objectives and launching an iterative learning process. Bason (2010) proposes implementing a form of a beta version of government programs and regularly optimising and testing them based on user feedback, in this case, society.

Questioning the status quo

'Using the word "why" is not something government officials are particularly trained at' (Bason, 2010, p. 143). Therefore, policymaking should internalise the questioning of existing situations. As with Design Thinking, conventional thinking patterns should be challenged to find results-oriented solutions (Bason, 2010).

Integrate citizens

Human-centred policymaking should be designed *for* citizens and, above all, *with* citizens. This helps to understand their real needs and circumstances and develop better solutions according to their wishes (Bason, 2010).

Using the tools of visualisation

'The power of visualising sizes, relationships and impacts in a different form than Excel spreadsheets should not be underestimated' (Bason, 2010, p. 145). Occasionally, governments predominantly use graphic designers to communicate final results to society. However, visual representation (prototypes, videos, graphics, and so forth) is functional within government work and in communicating with citizens to convey ideas or complex relationships (Bason, 2010).

2.3.3 Double Diamond

The Double Diamond is a framework developed in 2004 by the Design Council, the UK's national strategic advisor on design. It presents the supposedly chaotic design process in a structured way and thus helps to solve complex problems through clear guidance. Furthermore, the Double Diamond can be applied in various environments and is used by multiple actors, including designers. The four phases of the Double Diamond process are: discover, define, develop, and deliver (Design Council, 2019; Hambeukers, 2021).

In *discover*, the first phase, the problem area is extensively researched to gather as many insights as possible. Subsequently, all the information is summarised in the second phase, and the focus is narrowed down to define specific challenges. These first two steps thus form the first diamond, also referred to as the *problem space* (cf. figure 13). In *develop*, the third phase, a set of potential solutions to the problem is developed and refined. Finally, in *deliver*, a solution is selected, implemented, and evaluated. The latter

two phases, deliver and develop, form the second diamond, also known as the *solution space*. By dividing the design process into these four different phases, the Double Diamond provides a structured approach that can be adapted to the needs of each project (Design Council, 2019).

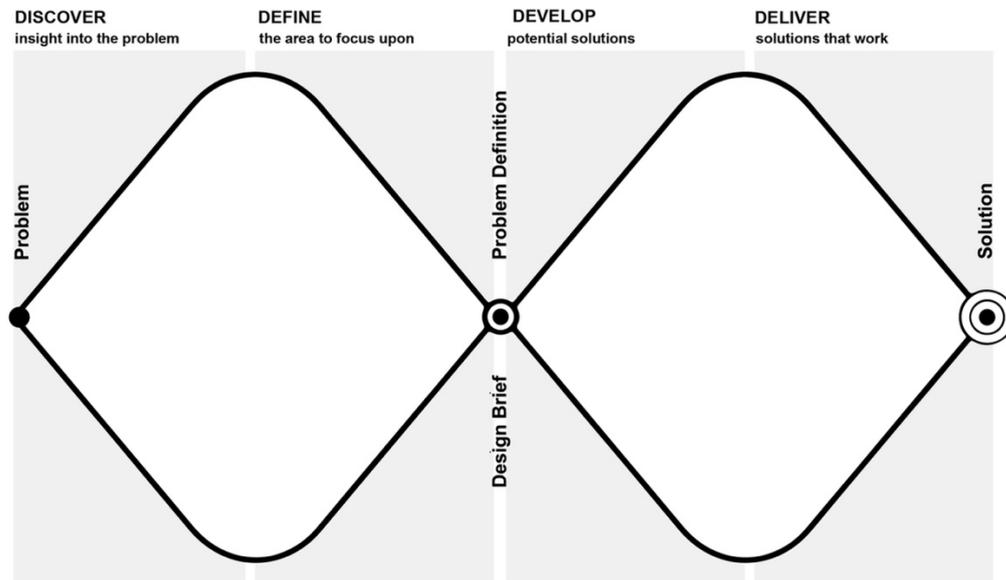


Figure 13: Original Double Diamond model from the Design Council (2019).

The Double Diamond's basic features can be traced back to Bela H. Banathy. In his book *Designing Social Systems in a Changing World*³⁴, Banathy (1996) describes, among other things, the dynamics of a divergent and convergent approach within processes (cf. figure 14). According to this, the representation of the Double Diamond process is not randomly chosen. Instead, it illustrates the divergent approach in the discover and develop phases, which are conceived to look broadly by generating and experimenting with ideas. During this procedure, there are no constraints and potential obstacles. In addition, this helps to unleash creativity and consider all possibilities as options (Sullivan, 2020). On the other hand, the convergent phases, define and deliver, concentrate on refocusing to avoid losing sight of the goal (Sullivan, 2020; Hambeukers, 2021).

³⁴ In his book *Designing Social Systems in a Changing World*, systems scientist *Bela H. Banathy* explores the question: 'Is there a way for us to participate in giving direction to the evolution of our systems, our communities, and our society?' (Banathy, 1996, p. 1). In addition to the basics of Systems Design, Banathy examines various design approaches and methods and integrates them into the fundamentals of Systemic Design. Furthermore, he develops new concepts and shows the positive effect Design and Design Thinking can have on social systems (Banathy, 1996, p. 1).

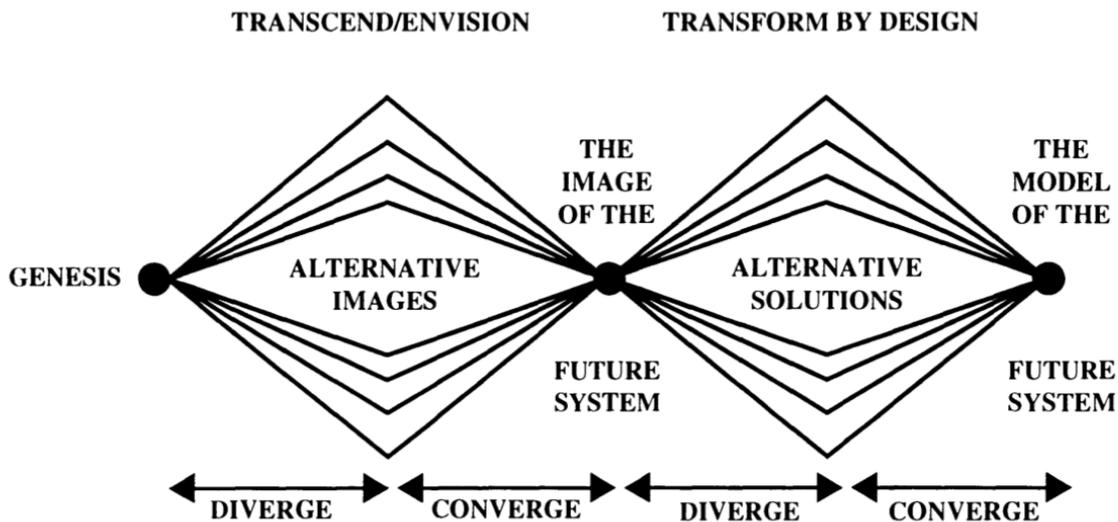


Figure 14: The dynamics of divergence and convergence (Banathy 1996 p. 75).

Besides divergent and convergent thinking, the Design Thinking process and the Double Diamond have further essential features in common:

- They emphasise the importance of user needs.
- They involve an iterative process of ideation, prototyping, and testing.
- Both approaches place a high value on multidisciplinary teams and co-creation.

The Double Diamond is thus a framework that supports the application of Design Thinking.

Double Diamond in policymaking

In the following the UK Policy Lab serves as an example using the Double Diamond in policymaking.

To reform the public service in the United Kingdom (UK), in 2014 the *Policy Lab* was founded (Policy Lab, n.d.). The mission of the Lab is to bring 'human-centred design approaches to policymaking' to generate valuable solutions and policy innovations (Policy Lab, n.d., para. 1). Through a team of 16 designers, researchers, and policymakers, the Policy Lab supports the UK government in developing and pre-testing solutions to various policy problems through design, data, and digital tools. The three core tasks are as follows:

- delivering new policy solutions through inspiring practical projects;
- building the skills and knowledge of the policy profession and wider civil service;
- inspiring new thinking through writing and experiments (Policy Lab, n.d., para. 5).

At the request of the respective government representatives, the Policy Lab works on multiple political projects in various policy fields. After establishing contact, the Policy Lab usually offers a workshop with the stakeholders involved. This serves to get to know each other and to be briefed on the respective political challenges (Policy Lab, n.d.). In the next step, the Policy Lab uses so-called policy sprints to start working together on larger projects. In the workshop (one to three days long), diverse people work together to develop a joint commitment and initial ideas. The project's total duration depends on the problem to be addressed, but in essence, they constantly follow the Double Diamond process. In the following, a paragraph by the Policy Lab is presented:

'Larger projects, like homelessness, can run from three months to a year and involve working intensively with service designers, ethnographers, data scientists and subject specialists. We broadly follow the double diamond process: define, discover, develop, deliver. The discovery stage typically involves some form of ethnographic insight, captured in film or on paper; often combined with data science. In the development stage we work with people affected to prototype and test new solutions. We then offer support to departments in taking these ideas to scale (the delivery bit)' (Policy Lab, n.d., para. 10).

For this purpose, the Policy Lab developed a design framework based on the Design Council's Double Diamond for explicit use in policymaking (cf. figure 20, chapter 5.1.2) (Siodmok, 2019). In the first phase, it is not only about understanding the problem but also about recognising the issues of the previous policy, including the political context. The problem is then redefined in the second phase considering new insights. Finally, in the third and fourth phases, the team develops solutions that will then be tested.

2.4 Participatory Processes in Policymaking

Governments seek to achieve optimal and needs-oriented outcomes for their citizens. However, most apply traditional and rational approaches (Saguin & Cashore, 2022; Fischer, 2016) that have proven ineffective, according to Gouache (2022, p. 71). Furthermore, the author points out that various governments are built on 'generalised myopia (looking only at what stands right before their eyes)' and a lack of farsighted thinking (Gouache, 2022, p. 71). Above all, there is an apparent absence of active citizen participation in policymaking, particularly in 'decision-making [*sic*] processes and future-oriented [*sic*] choices' (Gouache, 2022, p. 68), resulting in a society that has hitherto been shaped by politicians and experts. The mentioned issues lead to a turn towards more transparent and participatory processes (Saguin & Cashore, 2022).

'Citizens are demanding a more direct form of democracy ... to being involved in actual decision-making procedures, or simply taking the autonomy to self-organise [sic]. there is a loud and clear call for participation, voiced by both citizens and policymakers' (Devisch, Huybrechts & Ridder, 2019, p. 1).

Despite the increasing acknowledgement of engaging society in policymaking, participatory processes do not function as a panacea (Saguin & Cashore, 2022). However, collaborating with citizens and other non-state actors is a necessary precondition (Manzini, 2016, p. 104). According to Latour (2005a, 31, as cited in Devisch et al., 2019, p. 2), citizen participation in policymaking is based on 'bringing together those who are concerned – and even more important those who are not concerned'. Furthermore, it is crucial to understand the needs and desires of all those affected by the system (Devisch et al., 2019; Pilemalm, 2018; Fischer, 2016).

Participatory processes are about understanding, sharing, investigating, discussing, and reflecting collectively as a team (Simonsen & Robertson, 2013). Furthermore, they aim to shape a more prosperous future and design the world with the people who inhabit it (Simonsen & Robertson, 2013, p. 5). Therefore, this political shift can be called we-government (Pilemalm, 2018). In this context, inclusive approaches are highly responsible for designing a worthwhile world, aiming to be ethical and democratic (Simonsen & Robertson, 2013). The ethical stance refers to people's right to interact with others to shape the world they live in (Simonsen & Robertson, 2013, p. 65).

The concept of participatory processes offers many advantages. The most promising are listed below:

- citizen power for a better democracy (Arnstein, 2019; Gouache, 2022);
- value enhancement for society (Manzini, 2016);
- transformation to a more favourable and satisfactory political system (Manzini, 2016; Fischer, 2016);
- change to a more autocratic, tolerant, open-minded government (Manzini, 2016; Swyngedouw, 2005);
- perception of the whole society, including marginalised citizens (Fischer, 2016);
- quality improvement of decisions and solutions that lead to better results in governance and policies (Gouache, 2022, p. 70; Manzini, 2016);
- combination of efficiency and equity³⁵ (Fischer, 2016, p. 351).

³⁵ Equity, in this sense, refers to the social aspect. This implies balancing different civic groups, e.g., by giving marginalised groups equal opportunities to influence policymaking.

Achieving these benefits is subject to a long-term process characterised by constant optimisation proposals. On the significance of this thesis, three primary suggestions evolved: The first refers to actively involving citizens ‘at an early stage of the policy process’ (Gouache, 2022, p. 70). More specifically, in problem identification, agenda setting, and decision-making stages. According to Saguin & Cashore (2022), iterative prototyping provides a powerful tool for achieving participation in problem identification. Moreover, it helps to gain an extensive understanding of public issues. Furthermore, participation in agenda setting offers a variety of perspectives of the people for whom the policy is being designed (Gouache, 2022; Taylor, 2006). Finally, to achieve effective and legitimate policies, the need ‘to open up decision-making to greater participation’ emerged (Taylor, 2006, p. 300). In this case, citizens are empowered to self-organise and take responsibility for their own lives (Devisch et al., 2019).

The second proposal focuses on farsightedness and its importance in developing desirable policies. According to Gouache (2022, p. 69), future thinking ‘stimulates strategic dialogue, widens our understanding of the possible, strengthens leadership, and informs decision-making’. Furthermore, it is suggested to apply farsightedness already in the early stages of the process – problem identification and agenda setting (Gouache, 2022).

Lastly, it is crucial in participatory policymaking to involve heterogeneous citizens, including marginalised or excluded groups (Pilemalm, 2018; Fischer, 2016). According to Saguin & Cashore (2022, p. 7), Devisch et al. (2019), and Fischer (2016), an example of doing so is to provide ‘enjoyable experiences’ for all participants, e.g., through Design Games. Design Games offer the opportunity to unite diverse people to create a setting for experimentation, making participatory approaches enjoyable for all.

The continuing subchapters discuss two approaches to participatory processes: PD and Co-Design. The section highlights relevant definitions, the current debates on the individual approaches to policymaking, and the distinction between the different concepts.

2.4.1 Participatory Design

Simonsen & Robertson (2013, p. 1) define PD as:

‘a process of investigating, understanding, reflecting upon, establishing, developing, and supporting mutual learning between multiple participants in collective “reflection-in-action”. The participants typically undertake the two

principal roles of users and designers where the designers strive to learn the realities of the users' situation while the users strive to articulate their desired aims and learn appropriate technological means to obtain them'.

PD in the political context primarily focuses on including the society's perspective throughout the policymaking process (Devisch et al., 2019; Simonsen & Robertson, 2013). The voice of citizens is of valuable interest to governments, particularly policymakers (Steen, 2008). According to Simonsen & Robertson (2013), PD is defined by design-by-doing and 'reflection-in-action' (Schön, 1984). The former describes using critical, conceptual, experimental, and practical methods, such as prototyping (Hagen et al., 2012, September). The latter is built on collaborative and continuous reflection throughout the PD process. Furthermore, PD covers various activities, including methods, tools, and techniques. According to Hagen et al. (2012, September) and Erlhoff & Marshall (2008), Design Games and Co-Design are among them.

Saguin & Cashore (2022) distinguish two different logics of PD in policymaking:

- *Participation for design* works primarily through the involvement of citizens as informants and advisors rather than decision-makers (Saguin & Cashore, 2022, p. 4). In this sense, participants engage in argumentation, discussion, and exchanging ideas on a given public problem. This logic of citizen participation focuses on gaining new and diverse knowledge about society by applying it only in some parts of the process. However, in this sense, the designer alone remains the expert (Mainsah & Morrison, 2014).
- *Design for participation* actively empowers citizens to interact within the policymaking process. The aim is to provide 'means for people to be able to be involved, the need for respect for different voices' (Bannon and Ehn 2012, p. 41, as cited in Saguin & Cashore, 2022, p. 5). Therefore, in this context, citizens are considered experts and part of the design team. Furthermore, this participatory logic needs to involve citizens at an early stage of the process in order to foster creativity and innovation. Design Thinking is an ideal approach in this context (cf. chapter 2.3.2).

Participatory processes and a *Spectrum of Public Participation*

Participatory processes are characterised 'as living things, continuously moving up and down a ladder' (Devisch et al., 2019, p. 5). Therefore, they appear to be flexible and situation dependent. Devisch et al. (2019, p. 10) conclude that 'these processes move

not only up and down the ladder, but also move on a temporary scale from what is permanent to something temporary’.

Sherry R. Arnstein (2019) established 1969 the *Ladder of Citizen Participation*, which will be presented in the following. The ladder outlines eight levels of participation, some of which are interconnected:

- ‘Manipulation’ and ‘Therapy’ refer to as non-participation. The former describes educating and advising citizens, whereas therapy focuses on curing their ‘pathology’. Neither level has a function of power.
- ‘Informing’, ‘Consulting’, and ‘Placation’ are among the aspects of tokenism which apply some degree of participation. However, citizens do not play an active role in decision-making. In placation, citizens start to influence policymaking. Therefore, this stage differs slightly from informing and consulting.
- ‘Partnership’, ‘Delegated Power’, and ‘Citizen Control’ are those levels at which citizens gain power in decision-making. Partnerships refer to collaborative processes with powerholders and citizens, such as Co-Design (Arnstein, 2019; Gouache, 2022). In the latter two levels, ‘citizens obtain the majority of decision-making seats, or full managerial power’ (Arnstein, 2019, p. 25).

More recently, the International Association for Public Participation (hereafter referred to as IAP2) published a *Spectrum of Levels of Public Participation*. According to IAP2 International Federation (2018, November 12), it ‘was designed to assist with the selection of the level of participation that defines the public’s role in any public participation process’. This model is based on five different stages (cf. figure 15). Evans & Terrey (2016, p. 6) claim that this spectrum better reflects participatory approaches and their justifications for application.

	INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GOAL	‘To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions’	‘To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions’	‘To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered’	‘To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution’	‘To place final decision making in the hands of the public’
PROMISE TO THE PUBLIC	‘We will keep you informed’	‘We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision’	‘We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision’	‘We will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible’	‘We will implement what you decide’

Figure 15: *The Spectrum of Public Participation* (adapted from IAP2 International Federation 2018 November 12).

Gouache (2022) adapted both the *Ladder and Spectrum of Public Participation* in his recent paper about a case study on participatory foresight and democratic Policy Design. The author (Gouache, 2022, p. 71) states that ‘the ambition is to progressively experiment and reach higher levels of Arnstein’s participation ladder, meaning, going from information or even consultation levels to partnership levels or even delegated powers’. One might say that this is where Co-Design comes into play.

2.4.2 Co-Design

Co-Design describes the active contribution of people throughout a design process. Furthermore, this approach focuses on including all the voices of society, as well as understanding their lives (CO-CREATE, 2019; Evans & Terrey, 2016). According to Sanders & Stappers (2008, p. 6), Co-Design ‘refers to the creativity of designers and people not trained in design working together in the design development process’. This implies the involvement of all people, including marginalised or excluded groups. Compared to PD, Co-Design is based on shaping decisions as a collective (CO-CREATE, 2019). As illustrated in figure 15, PD can be broken down into various levels. Considering the overlaps in both definitions, one could conclude that Co-Design takes place in the upper level of *The Spectrum of Public Participation* – collaboration (cf. figure 16). According to Manzini (2016), Co-Design covers three primary stages: co-discover, co-develop, and co-deliver. The first refers to collectively gaining a deeper understanding of the issue. In most cases, a re-framing of the problem is demanded. The second stage describes the ideation process within a team of people from society, designers, and further experts. Furthermore, new ideas and innovations are tested and refined through prototyping. The latter describes ‘innovative ways that people can engage with the design solution in the medium or longer term’ (Manzini, 2016, p. 197).

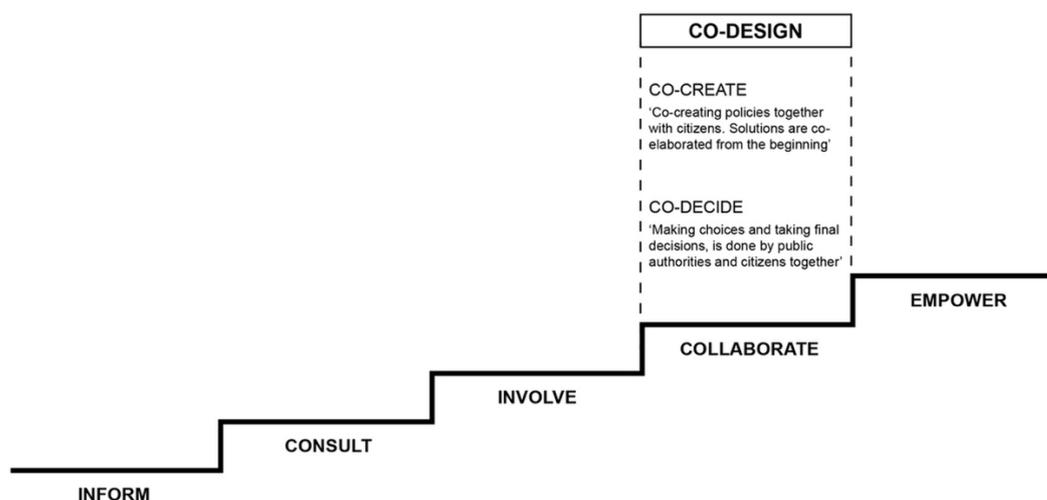


Figure 16: *The Spectrum of Public Participation with a focus on Co-Design* (adapted from Gouache 2022 p. 71; IAP2 International Federation 2018 November 12; Arnstein 2019 p. 26).

Co-Design is further based on interpersonal factors, such as 'engagement, dignity, respect, trust', as well as on 'social aesthetic and moral values' (Bason, 2017, p. 191).

Co-Design for policymaking

Co-Design can significantly benefit the government, given policymakers' complex issues (Blomkamp, 2018; Evans & Terrey, 2016).

'Co-Design can radically improve the quality of policymaking [sic] and operational delivery. It can contribute to creating more active citizens, help manage complex problems in public service design and delivery, build new relationships and knowledge required for 21st-century [sic] governance, and develop individual skills, confidence, and ambition' (Evans & Terrey, 2016, p. 260).

However, it is up to the government whether Co-Design is of great value. Evans & Terrey (2016, p. 243) state that 'the success of Co-Design is all in the doing. Done badly it can destroy trust systems; done well it can help solve policy and delivery problems, stabilise turbulent lives, and improve life chances'.

Co-Design in policymaking establishes itself as a relatively new concept (Bason, 2017). It focuses on creating value for citizens by actively including them in the policymaking process and seeing them as local experts.

According to Blomkamp (2018, p. 729), Co-Design is 'a way to generate more innovative ideas, ensure policies and services match the needs of citizens, achieve economic efficiencies by improving responsiveness, foster cooperation and trust between different groups, meaningfully engage the "hard to reach", and achieve support for change'.

Co-Design is based on Design Thinking and results in an iterative process, applying divergent and convergent thinking. Most crucial is to stick to specific key principles, such as empowering people directly affected by the issue being addressed to participate in policy change actively (Blomkamp, 2018; Evans & Terrey, 2016, p. 250). Further major principles are as follows:

- placing citizens and stakeholders at the centre of the process;
- having a clear policy intent, as well as being intentional and action-oriented;
- applying skills of observation, negotiation, and empathy;

- working multi-disciplinary and building a shared understanding throughout the process;
- prototyping with citizens early on;
- creating and gathering knowledge of each stage;
- balancing the desirable, the possible, and the viable (Evans & Terrey, 2016, pp. 257-258).

Another essential principle emerges from Sylvan's (2008, p. 138) literature on collaborative democracy, which states that good collaboration is built on four ingredients: an honest and open-minded relationship between all stakeholders; the emergence of trust within the relationship (supported by Evans & Terrey, 2016, p. 243); power-sharing of political authorities with the community; and a contextual evidence-based approach.

The promise of Co-Design in policymaking covers multiple aspects as follows:

- improving efficacy and efficiency by including local knowledge and ideas (Blomkamp, 2018, pp. 735-736);
- strengthening engagement and trust in government (Blomkamp, 2018, p. 736);
- achieving greater legitimacy by including citizens throughout the process (Evans & Terrey, 2016, p. 258);
- changing the behaviour of political authorities regarding policymaking (Evans & Terrey, 2016, p. 258);
- generating multiple possible solutions by working with real-time data (Evans & Terrey, 2016, p. 258);

Nevertheless, Co-Design is marked by challenges that need to be addressed:

Challenge	Detailed clarification of the challenge
The government culture and its functions are not conducive to Co-Design (Blomkamp, 2018, p. 737).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • collaborative competencies and mind-sets are missing; • not designed for experimental or responsive approaches; • risk of co-opting and holding citizens accountable.
The embedment of Co-Design into policymaking proves to be difficult (Blomkamp, 2018, p. 737).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • complexity rises due to the diverse approach; • time-consuming nature of Co-Design; • the doubt that Co-Design is not transferable to system-wide problems.

The evidence of the value of Co-Design is lacking (Blomkamp, 2018, p. 736).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • limitations through the lack of documentation, analysis, and evaluation of Co-Design in public policymaking.
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Table 4: Challenges of Co-Design in the political context.

In sum, Co-Design in policy faces multiple challenges. Most notably, the traditional, isolated, and silo-thinking governance setting and its severe limitation in time. Therefore, the implementation of collaborative approaches is given more complexity. However, there is potential: ruling *with* people rather than *for* people is the way ahead (Blomkamp, 2018, p. 737). Furthermore, there is a need to overcome trust issues and transfer some of the governments' power and responsibilities to the public (Blomkamp, 2018; Sylvan, 2008).

It is crucial 'to invest time in the inception of Co-Design [sic] projects, engage meaningfully with end users, address power imbalances in decision-making [sic] and suspend dominant problem-solving [sic] paradigms that are linear, logic-driven [sic], and past data-driven [sic], to be more exploratory, and open to discovery' (Evans & Terrey, 2016, p. 258).

Another proposal refers to a more differentiated analysis and evaluation of participation processes and the need for further development of a Co-Design framework (Blomkamp, 2018, pp. 738-339).

3 Evaluation of the Scientific Research

The following chapter demonstrates the evaluation of the scientific research. A more specific differentiation is made between criticism of the Policy Cycle and proposed optimisations.

3.1 Criticism that Emerged from Scientific Research

The evaluation of the scientific research reveals five critiques, which are further discussed as follows (cf. figure 17):

1. Policymaking as an isolated, linear, and top-down approach.
2. Policymaking as a knowledge-focused, non-design space.
3. The distinct separation of policy formulation and policy implementation.
4. The transversal knowledge gap between government and design.
5. The lack of focus on policy evaluation.

Policymaking as an isolated, linear, and top-down approach

Policymaking is identified as bureaucratic, traditional, rational, and analytical. Furthermore, governance is built on multiple constraints, such as time limitations and silo-thinking, that counteract addressing complex problems effectively and human-centred. Moreover, policymaking is done in isolation and is not open to society. Towards this issue, another significant aspect demonstrates the lack of active citizen participation, referred to as Co-Design. According to Gouache (2022, p. 68), Co-Design is notably missing in 'decision-making [*sic*] processes and future-oriented [*sic*] choices,' as well as policy formulation. Applying collaborative approaches counteracts the criticism of working on assumptions in the policy formulation stage. The most critical factor regarding this criticism is that the political culture is, in most cases, not built for design's embeddedness.

Policymaking as a knowledge-focused, non-design space

Policymaking, and therefore policy formulation, is carried out in weak or even non-design spaces. Weak design spaces are politically oriented and are seen as a secondary matter. Non-design spaces can be clarified as rejecting policy change; bargaining, corruption, or inconsistent studies are common aspects. Furthermore, policymaking is based on data and knowledge and focuses on problem-solving and decision-making.

If design is applied in the policymaking process, it is mainly and consciously done in policy implementation. However, it is more seen as an activity and creative act, contributing to responsive and reactive design.

The distinct separation of policy formulation and policy implementation

According to Junginger (2016), policy implementation occurs separately from policy formulation. More specifically, the encounter happens between the decision-making and the policy implementation phase. At this point, the task is handed over to policy designers and managers, at best. Moreover, both approaches find themselves done in isolation.

The transversal knowledge gap between government and design

Bason and Austin (2021) and Junginger (2016) argue that there is a knowledge barrier between the government and the design domain. More specifically, as Johnson & Cook (2013) and Howlett (2014) state, a deeper transversal understanding of both sides is missing. Therefore, it is increasingly difficult to deal with complex societal problems.

The lack of focus on policy evaluation

Working with policy feedback is crucial for future-oriented effective policymaking. Contrary to this is the fact that the poorly applied evaluation phase prevents evidence-based policy change. Furthermore, due to this, errors are identified later in the process, often too late to make any adjustments.

According to Junginger (2016, p. 60) 'the biggest and costliest mistakes tend to happen in the first and earliest stages of a design process, although the consequences and implications of these errors are often experienced and visible only in later design stages, often, when it is too late for changes'.

POINTS OF CRITICISIM

- Policymaking as an isolated, linear, and top-down approach
- Policymaking as a knowledge-focused, non-design space
- The distinct separation of policy formulation and implementation
- The transversal knowledge gap between government and design
- The lack of focus on policy evaluation

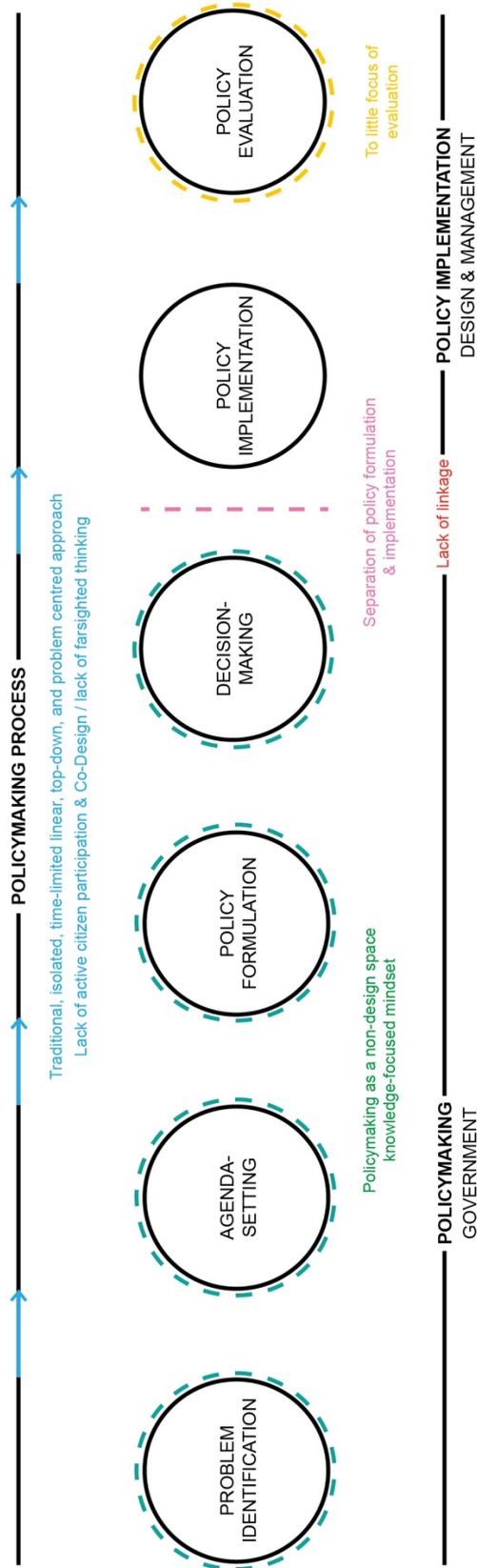


Figure 17: Criticism that emerged from the scientific research (own illustration).

3.2 Optimisation Proposals

Regarding the five critiques mentioned above, optimisation proposals resulting from scientific research are presented below:

1. Redesigning the policymaking process.
2. Policymaking toward a full design space.
3. Cross-functionality in policy formulation and policy implementation.
4. The conceptualisation of design and design education.
5. Integrating evaluation loops early in the process.

Redesigning the policymaking process

To address the first point of criticism – *policymaking as an isolated, linear, and top-down approach* – it is suggested to redesign the current policymaking process. More specifically, to shift from a top-down to a hybrid or bottom-up approach. Therefore, governance needs action-driven, design-by-doing, and ‘reflection-in-action’ (Schön, 1984) courses. Furthermore, constant iteration is necessary to ensure efficiency, efficacy, and effectiveness.

Another crucial aspect is the pursuit of cultural and structural change in governments. This is based on ruling *with* citizens, referred to as a supporting position. Therefore, political authorities need to bring along specific characteristics, as follows:

- being open-minded, honest, and transparent;
- being empathetic, respectful, and trustworthy;
- using abductive and farsighted thinking;
- being critical, conceptual, practical, experimental, and imaginative;
- working collaborative and human-centred.

Moreover, the importance of human-centred governance, we-government, emerged. Therefore, it is proposed to actively include citizens early in the process and aim for collaboration and empowerment, so-called Co-Design. This level is based on a close relationship with society, trust, and power-sharing.

A further suggestion is to focus more on consciously applying design approaches and methods in policy formulation to develop better and more effective outcomes.

Policymaking toward a full design space

To address the second point of criticism – *Policymaking as a knowledge-focused, non-design space* – it is suggested to work towards a full design space. This can be achieved by actively involving citizens, applying new design approaches and mixes, and building on future scenarios. In addition, integrating design methods and activities throughout the policymaking process allows for tackling societal issues more thoughtfully and efficiently.

As already mentioned, participatory processes, especially Co-Design, are increasingly demanded by policymakers and society. Such collaborative approaches focus on the citizens' perspectives, needs, and desires. Therefore, complex problems can be addressed by working with real-time data. However, given the lack of evidence of Co-Designs' benefits, a framework needs to be developed.

Another proposal for collaborative approaches is to involve society already in problem identification, agenda setting, and decision-making. Moreover, Gouache (2022) suggests deliberately partnering with citizens or even placing decisions in their hands. Furthermore, participative governance must empower heterogeneous citizens, including marginalised or excluded groups.

Besides Co-Design, there is a call for further design approaches and methods in policymaking, such as Service-Design, Design Thinking, Nudging, and Prototyping. Moreover, governance needs to focus on establishing enjoyable experiences for citizens, e.g., by working with experiments and games.

Cross-functionality in policy formulation and policy implementation

To address the third point of criticism – *The distinct separation of policy formulation and policy implementation* – it is suggested to bridge this disconnection by setting up cross-cutting, multidisciplinary teams which connect government, management, and design. Furthermore, there is a need to strengthen the relationship between policymakers, public managers, and designers. This allows moving toward a collaborative, transparent, and open-minded government.

The conceptualisation of design and design education

To address the fourth point of criticism – *The transversal knowledge gap between government and design* – it is suggested to naturalise and conceptualise design to the political system and generate a deep understanding of the political context for designers. Therefore, it is necessary to achieve a transversal knowledge of both domains.

A further crucial aspect is adopting a design attitude and integrating designerly mindsets into policymaking, such as *user-centredness*, *co-creation*, and *exploration*.

According to Junginger (2016, p. 58), design needs 'to become part of the curriculum'. This refers to a broader education, especially for policymakers, civil servants, and other stakeholders of the political system. The engagement and acknowledgement of design in policymaking lead to a more efficient process and promising policy outcomes.

Integrating evaluation loops early in the process

To address the fifth point of criticism – *The lack of focus on policy evaluation* – it is suggested to focus more on policy feedback, including citizens' participation. To prevent policy failures from being identified too late, it can be implied to insert evaluation loops into the process early on. Furthermore, evaluation processes are needed to promote evidence-based policy change.

3.3 Conclusion

To draw a conclusion to the suggestions mentioned above, it can be stated that a change is strongly needed. However, this transformation requires time, patience, and constant optimisation. Nevertheless, every step towards a change is a step towards a more prosperous future.

4 Research Question & Methodology

The following chapter addresses the raised research question and the formulation of hypotheses resulting from scientific research. Furthermore, the research methodology and its approach are described closely. Finally, the evaluation of the research method is compared with the results of scientific research.

As already mentioned in the introduction, the research question is as follows:

Which design-specific measures must be integrated into the traditional Policy Cycle to ensure effectiveness in policymaking to develop thoughtful and human-centred policies?

Regarding the scientific research, the following hypotheses have emerged:

H1: *Human-centred approaches in policymaking need to reach a higher level of participation – a level of collaboration and empowerment.*

H2: *Effective policymaking must abandon traditional, linear approaches and, therefore, manifest design as a mindset and an educated standard for policymakers and other political stakeholders.*

To answer the research question and confirm or refute the hypothesis, qualitative research was carried out and evaluated.

4.1 Research Methodology

As part of this thesis, qualitative research was conducted.

‘Qualitative research is an approach for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem Those who engage in this form of inquiry support a way of looking at research that honours [sic] an inductive style, a focus on individual meaning, and the importance of reporting the complexity of a situation’ (Creswell & Creswell, 2017, p. 41).

Furthermore, this type of research focuses on everyday and real-life issues and their expression from the concerned actors’ perspectives. Therefore, the interaction between researchers and the given target group is crucial throughout the study (Breuer, 2010, pp. 37-38). Moreover, qualitative research tends to be holistic, open-ended, reflexive

(Creswell & Creswell, 2017), and geared toward discovery (Breuer, 2010). All those characteristics contribute to our study.

Regarding the thesis, first, problem-centred expert interviews were held to deepen knowledge on the topic and gain insights from professionals in the field. Further on, a concept was developed based on evaluating both the scientific research and the expert interviews. The final draft was then reviewed again by the previously interviewed experts. This systemic research approach refers to the Delphi method, which focuses on two main aspects:

- structuring and organising uncertain knowledge;
- exchanging with experts and gathering their feedback (Häder, 2014).

Further, the Delphi method is subject to the Grounded Theory Methodology (hereafter referred to as GTM), which refers to a constantly changing data collection and analysis process. Moreover, GTM describes an interplay between theory-based and practice-based research. It aims to push the research process along by analysing early on and steadily returning to data. Furthermore, GTM requires conceptual work, constant comparison, ongoing theory development, and *memo writing*³⁶. This systematic methodology contributes to discovering new practices (Mey & Mruck, 2010, pp. 616, 617 & 624; Breuer, Muckel & Dieris, 2019). Regarding the thesis, GTM could only be carried out in parts due to time limitations. Nevertheless, it can be said that if the study extends beyond the thesis, GTM will be reintroduced as a method.

4.2 Problem-Centred Expert Interview

The first step of the qualitative research was to conduct expert interviews, which can be divided into three main aspects:

- confirm or broaden the perspective on the criticism of the Policy Cycle;
- deepen the knowledge about Policy Design and its impact on policymaking;
- specify the current and future role of specific design methodologies in policymaking.

Qualitative expert interviews generally offer the opportunity to gather specialised knowledge on a particular field of interest (Mey & Mruck, 2010b). Furthermore, this

³⁶ Memo writing is the process of taking protocols of all relevant events, results, and outcomes, which need to be continuously refined (Mey & Mruck, 2010, p. 617).

method uses the experts' recommendations and evaluations to structure the needed measure (Bogner, Littig & Menz, 2014, p. 13). Therefore, problem-centred expert interviews were conducted as part of the thesis.

A problem-centred expert interview describes the fusion of two approaches: theory-generating expert interview and problem-centred interview. The former focuses on the social relevance of expert knowledge 'as it practically shapes and determines a field of action'; the latter focuses on individual perspectives of experiences and opinions (Döringer, 2021, pp. 266-267).

According to Döringer (2021, p. 276), the combination of those two interview approaches '*address [sic] a constructivist perspective, understanding expert knowledge not only as exclusive knowledge limited to the insights of science or disciplines, but also as practical, local knowledge emerging from professional as well as private experiences*'. Furthermore, the author states that a problem-centred expert interview '*represents a promising approach for investigating and analysing the increased complexity and informality of decision-making processes*' (Döringer, 2021, p. 276).

Further characteristics of problem-centred expert interviews are as follows:

- qualitative approach;
- 'move [sic] beyond explicit expert knowledge' (Döringer, 2021, p. 269);
- are based on openness and flexibility;
- expose interpretative knowledge;
- use interview guidance as a supporting mechanism;
- are part of the GTM (Döringer, 2021; Mey & Mruck, 2010b).

4.2.1 Selection of Experts

Eleven international experts of different domains were interviewed who are all familiar with both the design and political context. This helped to build a broad knowledge base and identify key statements. In addition, the multinational selection of participants made it further possible to gain cross-national insights.

The following domains were covered:

Interviewee	Professional specification
██████████, based in Germany	Service-Design and Customer Experience
██████████, based in Austria	Service-Design Expert (Consultancy, Lectureship, Author)
██████████, based in Switzerland	Industrial Design, Design Management, Business Consultancy, Professorship in Design Management
██████████, based in Germany	Political Consultancy
██████████, based in The United Kingdom	Lectureship and Research in the Politics Department (public policy, nudge-theory, and civic participation)
██████████, based in The United Kingdom	Critical Design, Speculative Design, Creative Strategy Design
██████████, based in Germany	Integrated Design, Service-Design
██████████, based in Belgium	Strategic Design in Public Sector, Research, Professorship in Policy Design
██████████, based in The United Kingdom	Head of Policy Design Community in the UK Government
██████████, based in India	Architecture, Urban and Regional Planning, Qualitative Research in simulations and game design
██████████, based in Australia	Political Science, Public Policy Analysis, Political Psychology

Table 5: Interviewees and their professional specification (ordered by the chronological sequence of the interviews).

4.2.2 Interview Implementation

The guided expert interviews were conducted by the authors of this thesis; one moderated, and the other took notes. Furthermore, they were carried out virtually via video call and were recorded in consent. Each interview took approximately one hour and was divided into the following sections:

- get-to-know-you round;
- general question: expert opinion on the approach to a complex societal problem;
- overview of the case study³⁷ (cf. chapter 2.1.5) and the criticism that emerged from scientific research (cf. chapter 3.1);
- key questions:
 - the role of the particular design domain in policymaking;
 - citizen-centricity in policymaking;
 - expert opinion on established criticism;
 - personal statement on a visual representation of an iterative process.

Since the interviews were kept open, the questions varied depending on the participant. The exact questions and individual interviews can be found in appendix 2.

4.2.3 Interview Evaluation

To be able to evaluate the interviews, they were first transcribed. The transcription contains only valuable statements needed for the thesis. Non-relevant information was not written down, such as the get-to-know-you round, the introduction to the topic, and a detailed presentation of the case study and points of criticism.

These non-relevant passages are marked in the transcript (cf. appendix 2).

The interviews were then analysed through coding. Coding describes the systematic and focused evaluation of the pre-conducted study. Therefore, the data is examined, interpreted, and analysed from different perspectives. In this process, data is summarised and structured, and at the same time, complexity is circumvented. The aim is to identify connections between the expert interviews and to consolidate findings to develop a concept. Moreover, coding is invariably linked to the research question and the hypotheses derived from scientific research. In addition, this evaluation method is seen as the core of GTM (Breuer et al., 2019; Kuckartz & Rädiker, 2020).

To carry out systematic coding, key categories and, if relevant, subcategories must be formulated (Breuer et al., 2019; Kuckartz & Rädiker, 2020). These can be set in advance (deductive) or during the process (inductive) (Breuer et al., 2019). The formulations need to be extensive, precise, understandable, and plausible (Kuckartz & Rädiker, 2020, p. 34). Subsequently, the text passages of the previously conducted and transcribed

³⁷ The case study was mainly used to illustrate the given problem of policymaking better. Therefore, it was only presented to the interviewees and will not be further considered for the concept proposal.

interviews are assigned to those categories. Therefore, the interviews are edited and coded one after the other. This process helps to group, summarise, differentiate, and identify the qualitative material (Breuer et al., 2019; Kuckartz & Rädiker, 2020). Concerning the thesis, data-based and thematic categories were applied. The first refers to interpreting the given data material; the second reflects on arguments and thought patterns (Breuer et al., 2019; Kuckartz & Rädiker, 2020, p. 26).

The following categories were established:

1. Criticism affirmation
2. Proposals for optimisation
3. Statements on individual process phases

The first category confirms or refutes the points of criticism resulting from scientific research. Furthermore, additional critiques were gathered from the expert interviews. Therefore, the subcategories were set up as shown in table 6.

Category 1: Criticism affirmation	
Subcategories	Citation to convey meaning of subcategory
C1: separation of policymaking and policy implementation	<i>This idea that your policy is designed and made by policymakers, and then policy implementers try [sic] to implement it, but there is a gap, there is a policy failure. And often, that is explained by the fact that policy designers do not take the implementation context sufficiently into account, that they do not have enough knowledge about ... the reality of policy implementation. So, there is that sort of classic implementation gap [redacted], cf. appendix 2.5, line 66).</i>
C2: the lack of linkage between government, design, society	<i>I think it takes training policymakers. I suppose there is a number of different leverage points for introducing design ... there are all these leverage points in the public state system where you could tackle or inject design into the system. And we are looking at that ourselves. We are trying to work out [sic] where those leverage points are, and then trying to take advantage of them [redacted], cf. appendix 2.9, line 163).</i>
C3: no / weak design in policy formulation	<i>I think that obviously, the policy formulation, you have put that as a non-design space; I think that is quite an important area where you could integrate more public participation [redacted], cf. appendix 2.5, line 169).</i>

C4: policymaking as a linear, top-down approach	<i>In this view, it almost looks as if it is a linear process. That should not be the case at all. I think politics is about people and cannot be solved in a linear way as a complex problem [REDACTED], transl., cf. appendix 2.1, line 262).</i>
C5: too little focus on policy feedback and policy evaluation	<i>The fact that public authorities spend a lot of time and energy in implementing policies that have never been either tested, prototyped, or experimented. This is also another reason for [sic] failures of most of the policies that come out ... we end up having, most of the time, no evaluation [REDACTED], cf. appendix 2.8, line 91).</i>
Other points of criticism	<p><i>Policymakers are often dull or better they are taught credit, and partly is just habit. But they make policy backwards [REDACTED], cf. appendix 2.9, line 68).</i></p> <p><i>And one of the key issues [sic] in this process ... is that most of the policies that come out of this process end up failing to respond to the problem because the problem was the wrong one in the first place [REDACTED], cf. appendix 2.8, line 110).</i></p> <p><i>In practice, they are still a kind of split universe. There is a sense of pretending that you are still going through the steps of the Policy Cycle [REDACTED], cf. appendix 2.11, line 180).</i></p> <p><i>In an [sic] ideal world, every five years, there have [sic] to be revisions, but it does not happen [REDACTED], cf. appendix 2.10, line 161).</i></p>

Table 6: Subcategories of key category 1 – Criticism affirmation.

The second category covers the proposals for optimisation regarding the traditional policymaking process. Based on the scientific research findings, six subcategories were established (cf. table 7). Assigning the text passages of the interviews to the corresponding categories has shown which proposals have been addressed the most and therefore offer great potential.

Category 2: Proposals for optimisation	
Subcategories	Citation to convey meaning of subcategory
Process characteristics	<i>A very important point: move away from this linear process towards an iterative process. This means building in loops from the</i>

	<i>beginning to make it clear that various iterations, at least a minimum of iterations, must be carried out within the individual areas but also between the areas ([REDACTED], transl., cf. appendix 2.2, line 95).</i>
Process flow	<i>In my opinion, the first step would be agenda setting. From this perspective, one would look at the problem space Then, you would have to go into a double diamond process ([REDACTED], transl., cf. appendix 2.3, line 295).</i>
Manifestation of design	<i>I do think design is the next kind of frontier for governments everywhere. And it is not well established, and there is not any kind of global leader that is talking about it. I think that makes it quite an exciting space because it is about to happen ([REDACTED], cf. appendix 2.9, line 319).</i>
Citizen-centricity	<i>We also need to respond to a growing demand, which is citizens wanting to have a greater say in politics and in governance. Which means we need to invent not only a design-based policymaking process but a participatory design-based policy process ([REDACTED], cf. appendix 2.8, line 211).</i>
Cross-functionality	<i>Cooperation and partnership are essential. It is on eye level and achieves much more in the long term ([REDACTED], transl., cf. appendix 2.4, line 166).</i>
Individual proposals	<p><i>You are putting in these sorts of processes that force them to stop and think and reflect on failure on what could go wrong. I think that is where sort of, not nudging but kind of behavioural insights, more broadly, can help us create better policy ([REDACTED], cf. appendix 2.5, line 265).</i></p> <p><i>I think prototyping becomes extremely relevant at the back end of the process ([REDACTED], transl., cf. appendix 2.1, line 271).</i></p> <p><i>Probably the primary approach would be just to challenge the fact that there is a solution to that ([REDACTED], cf. appendix 2.6, line 46).</i></p> <p><i>The choice to do nothing is, in a sense, also a policy. You can frame that as the policy of doing nothing or the decision to just let things happen ([REDACTED], cf. appendix 2.11, line 559).</i></p>

Table 7: Subcategories of key category 2 – Proposals for optimisation.

The third category includes all statements concerning the individual phases of the traditional policymaking cycle. This helped to gain a more focused and detailed perspective on the process (cf. table 8).

Category 3: Statements on individual process phases	
Subcategories	Citation to convey meaning of subcategory
Problem Identification	<i>... that we will have a clear view and understanding of the original problem, including, of course, and this is crucial, to collect very diverse and multi-angle perspectives on the problem. This is also something often lacking in what we could call policy diagnosis [redacted], cf. appendix 2.8, line 60).</i>
Agenda Setting	<i>You have to focus very early on and determine in the agenda setting phase in which area you want to make a change [redacted], transl., cf. appendix 2.1, line 164).</i>
Policy Formulation	<i>What is missing or what should perhaps be included in the area of policy formulation is the entire area of prototyping. That is to really try things out [redacted], transl., cf. appendix 2.2, line 90).</i>
Decision-Making	<i>You need a political decision for all major decisions concerning an administration. You are not allowed to simply decide as a city administration. Within the normal activity or also within a decision, you are free. Otherwise, you would be completely blocked in your actions [redacted], transl., cf. appendix 2.7, line 180).</i>
Policy Implementation	<i>That also becomes a gap when you talk about bottom-up. We are only talking about the issues on top-down approaches, but there are significant issues from the bottom-up approach too, for it to be implemented in that way [redacted], cf. appendix 2.10, line 123).</i>
Policy Evaluation	<i>I think the evaluation and feedback loops are often the most useful thing if you look at them [sic] in a technocratic way. 'Has it worked? What have we learned? What did work?' [redacted], cf. appendix 2.11, line 247).</i>

Table 8: Subcategories of key category 3 – Statements on individual process phases.

4.2.4 Interview Evaluation Results

The evaluation of the expert interviews is broken down into two sections: Criticism affirmation and proposals for optimisation.

Criticism affirmation

In general, it can be stated that all five points of criticism resulting from the scientific research were more or less confirmed. However, criticism number 2 – *Policymaking as a knowledge-focused, non-design space* – was less discussed. This concludes that the others are given more priority. Furthermore, it emerged from the interviews that the points of criticism 3 – *The distinct separation of policy formulation and policy implementation* – and 4 – *The transversal knowledge gap between government and design* – are very much intertwined and perceived as one.

Proposals for optimisation

The following recommendations for optimisations can be derived from the expert interviews:

- Applying the Double Diamond in policymaking.
- Manifesting design by educating design fundamentals.
- Investing in an open-ended, time-consuming process.
- Focusing on a higher level of participation throughout the process.
- Working cross-functional towards sets of solutions.

Furthermore, findings emerged regarding the visualisation of the process. According to most interviewees, the illustration should resemble the Double Diamond process or be represented linearly via iteration loops.

'It is also very important to adopt a kind of Double Diamond approach, a kind of iterative, but also a quite open approach, and to be open in terms of results, and to make the necessary resources and, above all, time available' (██████████, transl., cf. appendix 2.3, line 51).

'It is hard to move away from the models that you have seen all your life and think of something different. But it would definitely involve lots of arrows' (██████████, cf. appendix 2.5, line 340).

'People need a process that they can follow ... a very classic linear process, where you hint at iterations by making little loops and arrows. But the linear process by definition already includes iterations' (██████████, transl., cf. appendix 2.2, line 233).

4.3 Comparison of the Results from Scientific Research and Expert Interviews

For the development of the concept, we highlighted three points of criticism that emerged from scientific research and were subsequently confirmed by the expert interviews. These critiques form the basis for the redesign of the traditional policymaking process. The concept is founded on the following criticisms (cf. figure 18):

1. Policymaking as a linear approach.
2. The gap between policy formulation and policy implementation.
3. The lack of active participation in policymaking.

Furthermore, the above criticism speak for the confirmation of the hypotheses previously established by the scientific research:

H1: *Human-centred approaches in policymaking need to reach a higher level of participation – a level of collaboration and empowerment.*

H2: *Effective policymaking must abandon traditional, linear approaches and, therefore, manifest design as a mindset and an educated standard for policymakers and other political stakeholders.*

The endorsement of the hypotheses is presented more explicitly in the description of the design proposal (cf. chapter 5.2). Furthermore, chapter five discusses the concrete findings regarding the optimisation proposals from both research approaches, which further provides the answer to the research question (cf. chapter 4).

POINTS OF CRITICISM

1. Policymaking as an isolated, linear, and top-down approach
2. The gap between policy formulation and policy implementation
3. The lack of active participation in policymaking

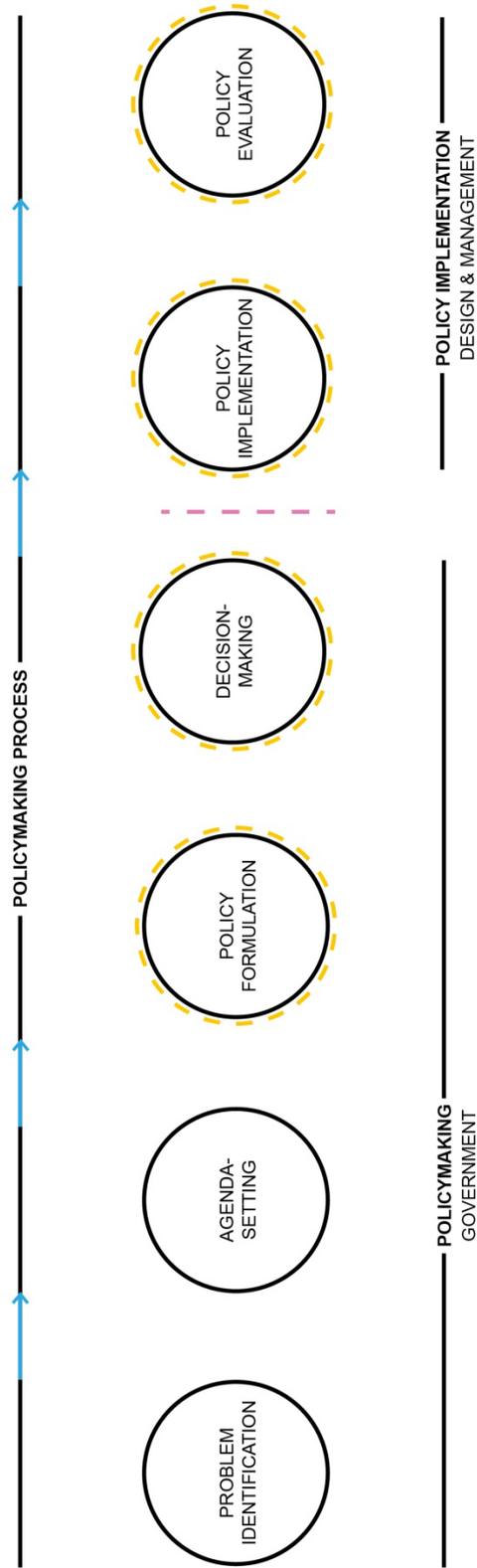


Figure 18: The three points of criticism on which the concept is based (own illustration).

5 Proposal for Implementation

The following chapter represents inspiring benchmarks and a concrete design proposal. By developing the concept, we applied the Double Diamond framework as an approach (cf. chapter 2.3.3). The first two phases – *discover* and *define* – refer to a) the scientific research and the conducting of expert interviews and b) the evaluation of those research methods. Regarding the research results, a concept was then *developed*. This ideation process included the *Top Five* approach, brainstorming, and visualisation. The former helps to prioritise ideas (IDEO, 2015, p. 79) or, in our case, to focus on core statements on which the concept is later based. The latter refers to a visual representation of ideas, which makes ideating ‘more tangible and helps to clarify thoughts’ (IDEO, 2015, p. 101). Finally, the concept was *defined* via prototyping and an evaluation with some experts interviewed (more on this later in chapter 6).

5.1 Benchmarks

The following five benchmarks inspired the developed concept (chapters 5.2 & 5.3). More specifically, the practices impacted the visualisation and content of the design proposal.

5.1.1 Systemic Design Framework

The *Systemic Design Framework* (cf. figure 19) was recently launched by the Design Council. Overall, the framework represents a cross-cutting approach that helps designers to address major complex problems. ‘These challenges are systemic, require more than one organisation, and can probably never be entirely solved’ (Drew, 2021, April 27). Moreover, the framework focuses on humans and the planet.

The *Systemic Design Framework* represents four aspects:

- the use of the Double Diamond to communicate divergent and convergent thinking;
- the inclusion of ‘invisible activities’ that revolve around the design process;
- four key characteristics³⁸;
- ‘six principles that encompass nature and non-human beings’³⁹ (Drew, 2021, April 27; Design Council, 2021).

³⁸ The four characteristics of the *Systemic Design Framework*: ‘System thinker, designer/maker, connector/convenor and leader/storyteller’ (Drew, 2021, April 27).

³⁹ The six principles of the *Systemic Design Framework*: ‘people- and planet-centred, zooming in and out, testing and growing ideas, inclusive and welcoming difference, collaborating and connecting, circular and regenerative’ (Drew, 2021, April 27).

Furthermore, the framework helps to gain a shared understanding between all stakeholders and fosters ethics, values, and inclusion (Design Council, 2021).

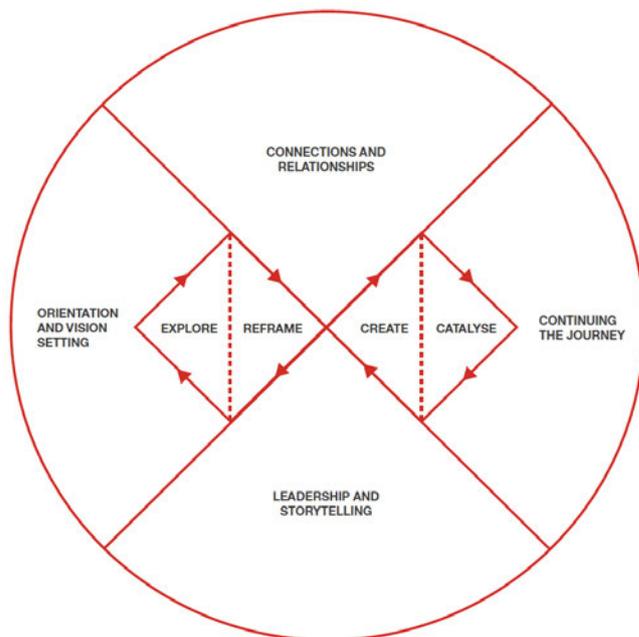


Figure 19: The Systemic Design Framework by the Design Council (2021b).

5.1.2 The Double Diamond for Policy

The depicted illustration (cf. figure 20) shows an adaption of the Design Council’s Double Diamond that visualises the relationship between design and policy. It represents the process of a policy designer whose task is to examine the current problem situation in order to develop preferred policy outcomes. Therefore, it is crucial ‘to apply design in the earliest stages of policy development ... and to adapt design practice to better suit the policy context’ (Siodmok, 2019, December 20). *The Double Diamond for Policy* works as a framework for policy designers to improve policymaking.

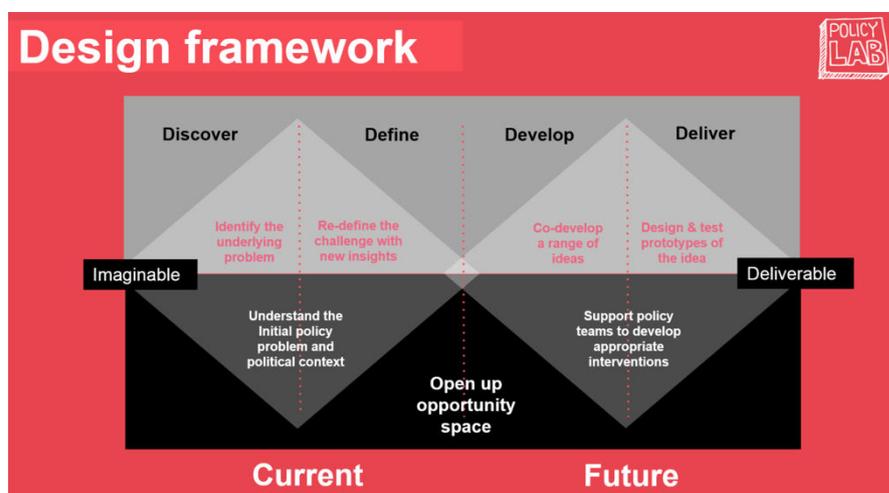


Figure 20: The Double Diamond for Policy by the Design Council (2019).

5.1.3 The a-b/c Methodology

The *a-b/c Methodology* by Ted Hunt (cf. figure 21) represents the issue of chasing the need for a solution (b) to a given problem (a). ‘We live in this binary condition that we think there are [sic] problems and solutions’ (Ted Hunt, cf. appendix 2.6, line 48). Therefore, the author suggests abandoning this idea of a solution and instead applying critical thinking by problematising the solution (c).

‘Something like that in policymaking could be advantageous to people that traditionally deal with as A to B logic, and then maybe just frame it as making compromises. But they are always chasing this B, this ideal solution to the problem of A and using their traditional systems or linear systems to get to B. If we are considering C on a [sic] far more sophisticated level than just kind of like tradeoffs and conflicting interests. That could help to enhance the process maybe, or even just make it more appealing to the general public that has become quite disillusioned with politics, because they are increasingly left out than the people that the C, in this case, is affecting’ (Ted Hunt, cf. appendix 2.6, line 120).

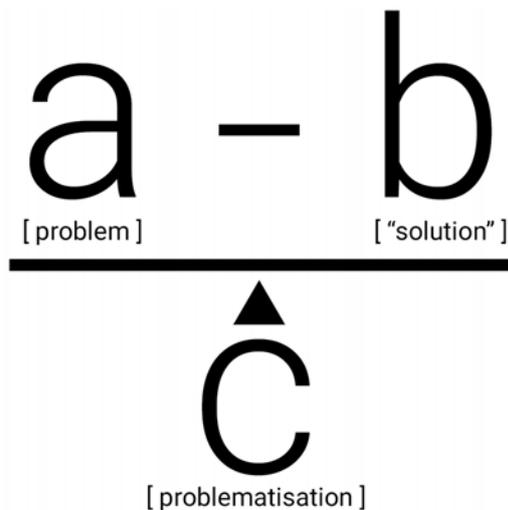


Figure 21: The a-b/c Methodology by Ted Hunt (Hunt n.d.).

5.1.4 An Evolving Map of Design Practice and Design Research

An Evolving Map of Design Practice and Design Research by Liz Sanders (2008) represents the state of design research (cf. figure 22). Furthermore, it demonstrates the ‘relationships between the various approaches, methods, and tools’ (Sanders, 2008, p. 13). The author distinguishes the map into two crossing dimensions: approaches and mindsets. The former is divided into the research-led and design-led perspective. The latter is split into the expert mindset (designing *for* people) and the participatory mindset (designing *with* people). Furthermore, Sanders (2008, p. 13) states that ‘maps can be

useful for showing complexity and change', which argues for the representation of participation in policymaking through a map (more on this later in chapter 5.2.2).

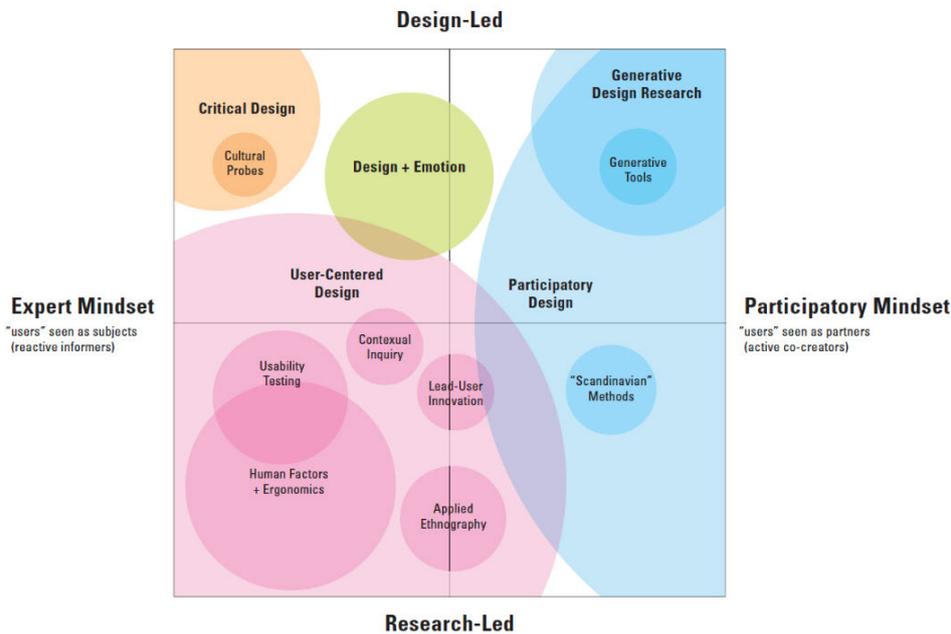


Figure 22: An Evolving Map of Design Practice and Design Research by Liz Sanders (2008 p. 14).

5.1.5 Participatory Design Approach in Policymaking

The *Participatory Design Approach in Policymaking* was recently established by Christophe Gouache, an expert in Policy Design. According to the author, the crucial thing in a participatory process is the starting point, the identification of citizens' needs. Based on this analysis, a further approach to addressing the problem is defined. The investigation phase is followed by two stages of joint action: Co-defining and Co-generating ideas. Co-defining can also include not to act: 'That is also policy, to design not to act on [sic] problems' ([redacted], cf. appendix 2.8, line 219). Once the ideas are generated, it is significant to be open to re-examining the problem.

'Once you formulate your ideas, it turns those ideas into concepts. And those concepts in the design process, we give a form. This means ... we visualise them – in order for this concept to become a bit more tangible, a bit more concrete. Because they are becoming more concrete, we are seeing the ones that are the most robust and at least promising. It is only due that you take forward to prototypes and then to an iteration cycle of testing with users, citizens, civil servants, etc. – in order to refine your solution. This can be one, two, three, four or five loops' ([redacted], cf. appendix 2.8, line 229).

As soon as a promising and tested idea is reached, the developed solution can be implemented and further evaluated. Overall, participation is the most crucial aspect of the process presented below (cf. figure 23). Furthermore, several iterations are required to find the optimal solution to a given problem, jumping back and forth between different phases. In fact, it is crucial to invest time in order to achieve sound policy outcomes.

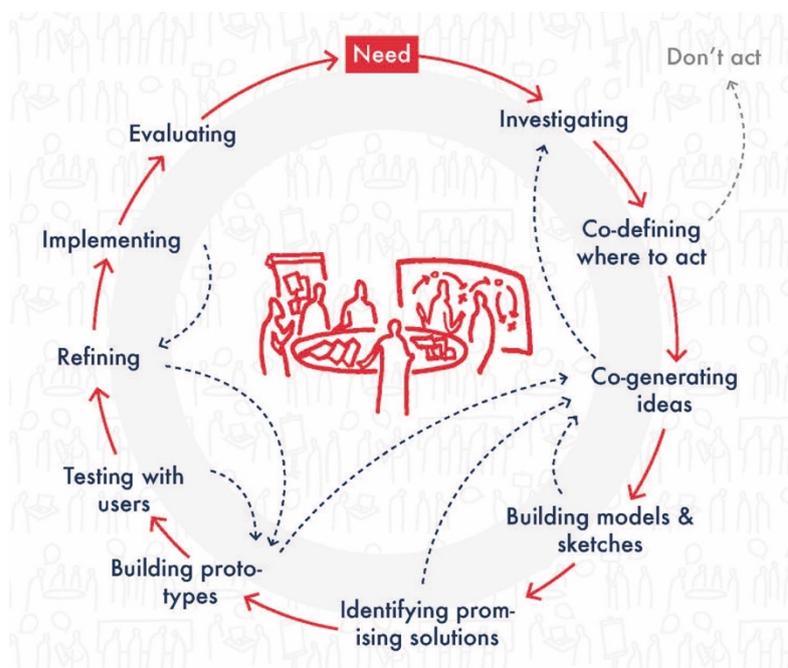


Figure 23: The Participatory Design Approach in Policymaking by Christophe Gouache.

5.2 Design Proposal

Based on the scientific research findings and the expert interviews, we have developed a concept divided into two parts. The former illustrates a *Redesign of the Traditional Policy Cycle*; the latter shows an *Evolving Map of Participation in Policymaking*. Both attempts require a designerly mindset (cf. chapter 2.2.4) and a set of characteristics that speak to openness, honesty, transparency, and respect (cf. chapter 2.2.2). Furthermore, governments must be committed to time to undergo the process successfully.

‘When you apply the design process into the policymaking process, it takes more time to develop your policy. But you invest so much in designing the right solution that you end up saving time at the end on the long term’ ([REDACTED], cf. appendix 2.8, line 273).

Gouache’s statement also refers to being open to iterations and allowing to go back and forth within the process: design-by-doing, ‘reflection-in-action’ (Schön, 1984). Another

important aspect is the education of policymakers on design principles to ensure that design values are incorporated into policymaking.

‘There is a kind of design fundamental that everyone should know about’ ([REDACTED] [REDACTED], cf. appendix 2.9, line 170).

Furthermore, integrating design into the traditional Policy Cycle requires a hybrid approach balancing top-down and bottom-up. In addition, there is a need to focus more on cross-functionality and participation within the policymaking process (more on this later).

Moreover, addressing complex problems requires letting go of clinging to a solution and a finish line. This corresponds with the statement of Rittel & Webber (1973, p. 160), stating that ‘social problems are never solved. At best they are only re-solved’. Therefore, it is more about working towards a set of adaptations.

‘We live in this binary condition that we think there are [sic] problems and solutions. And for every problem, there has to be a solution, and that solution can be found by the right people and the right teams or the right methodologies start abandoning the idea that there is a solution’ ([REDACTED], cf. appendix 2.6, lines 48 & 68).

‘My colleague, Brian Head, who writes a lot about wicked policy problems, objects to the idea of policy solutions The first thing that you probably need to do is to lower expectations if you do that with a more holistic picture in mind, I think there are a bit more chances that you do something that is meaningful, useful, and would not be about fixing the problem. Brian Head will always say, “let’s not talk about fixing problems because that is actually over promising”’ ([REDACTED], cf. appendix 2.11, line 152).

5.2.1 Redesign of the Traditional Policy Cycle

The following presents a redesign of the traditional policymaking process. To better convey the process, the concept is divided into four parts:

1. Characteristics of the *new* policymaking process.
2. Sphere of influence of design.
3. Merging policy formulation and policy implementation.
4. Tasks within the individual phases.

Before going into more detail on the individual aspects of the developed process, a comparison to the traditional Policy Cycle is made – with particular attention to the process flow and visualisation. The proposal of the *new* policymaking process shows minor changes regarding the original order. However, two modifications have been made:

The first one refers to the renaming of the *problem identification* phase, which is instead called *problem input*. In the proposed process, the problem analysis is carried out several times – explicitly in *problem input*, *policy formulation*, and *policy implementation*. First, the problem is identified; afterwards, it is investigated and finally reformulated. This helps to gain a deep and shared understanding of the given societal issue. Moreover, this iterative approach of repeatedly analysing the problem is crucial for adapting to unpredictable, ever-changing circumstances. The significance of re-examining the problem also emerges from the expert interviews:

‘Start to explore the problematics of the problem and how it affects different people in different ways’ (██████████, cf. appendix 2.6, line 56).

‘Start by suspecting the problem itself and always consider by default that the problem you have been given is not the right one – that it has been wrongly framed, wrongly identified, or not enough clarified. Therefore, you need to investigate it more. This is a key element in the design process because most of the time you end up developing sets of solutions that answer indirectly to the initial problem you were given’ (████████████████████, cf. appendix 2.8, line 31).

‘Problems often have to do with a chain of problems that are somehow interrelated’ (██████████, cf. appendix 2.11, line 132).

The second change refers to the process flow. Compared to the traditional Policy Cycle, the *policy outcome* becomes a more focused aspect in policymaking. Instead of putting the outcome at the end, the *new* approach consciously places it within the policymaking process. This supports the finding of applying an open-ended process and burying the idea of working towards a finish line. It needs to be noted that the *policy outcome* simply represents an essential part of the process; however, it is not a distinct phase of its own. The visualisation of the *new* policymaking process is inspired by the Double Diamond (more on this later), consciously excluding the visual depiction of iterations. This is due to the fact that iterations vary depending on the specific case and, therefore, cannot be represented universally.

Characteristics of the *new* policymaking process

Concerning the expert interviews⁴⁰, the proposed policymaking process is based on the Double Diamond framework. Furthermore, the Double Diamond is being re-applied within the process (cf. figure 24). Addressing complex societal problems with this specific design process allows for iterative, open-minded, and open-ended practice (cf. chapter 2.3.3). Therefore, divergent and convergent thinking is used continually. The proposal of integrating the Double Diamond into the policymaking process is also reflected in the experts' statements:

'I follow the classic Double Diamond process in Service Design I believe the Double Diamond will duplicate itself infinitely if you keep bumping into problems with many iterations. I think this is even more extreme in the politics of public administration, in the public sphere than in a business context' (██████████, transl., cf. appendix 2.1, lines 55 & 63).

'When you approach a project, you see a problem, have an idea, and should not try to go through a linear design process' (██████████, transl., cf. appendix 2.2, lines 214).

'The classic Service Design approach is, of course, the Double Diamond – especially for a complex problem' (██████████, transl., cf. appendix 2.7, lines 24).

Further crucial characteristics are as follows:

- The process is solution-mitigating rather than solution-oriented: focus on adaptations instead of solutions.
- Policymaking as redesigning: the outcome is constantly fed back into the system as an input.
- The process is context- and situation-dependent: need for an iterative approach.

⁴⁰ When asked, 'Imagine you have to tackle a complex societal problem – how would you approach this problem?' most experts relied on the Double Diamond. Furthermore, in 4 out of 11 interviews, the Double Diamond was deliberately mentioned as a proposal for optimising the traditional Policy Cycle.

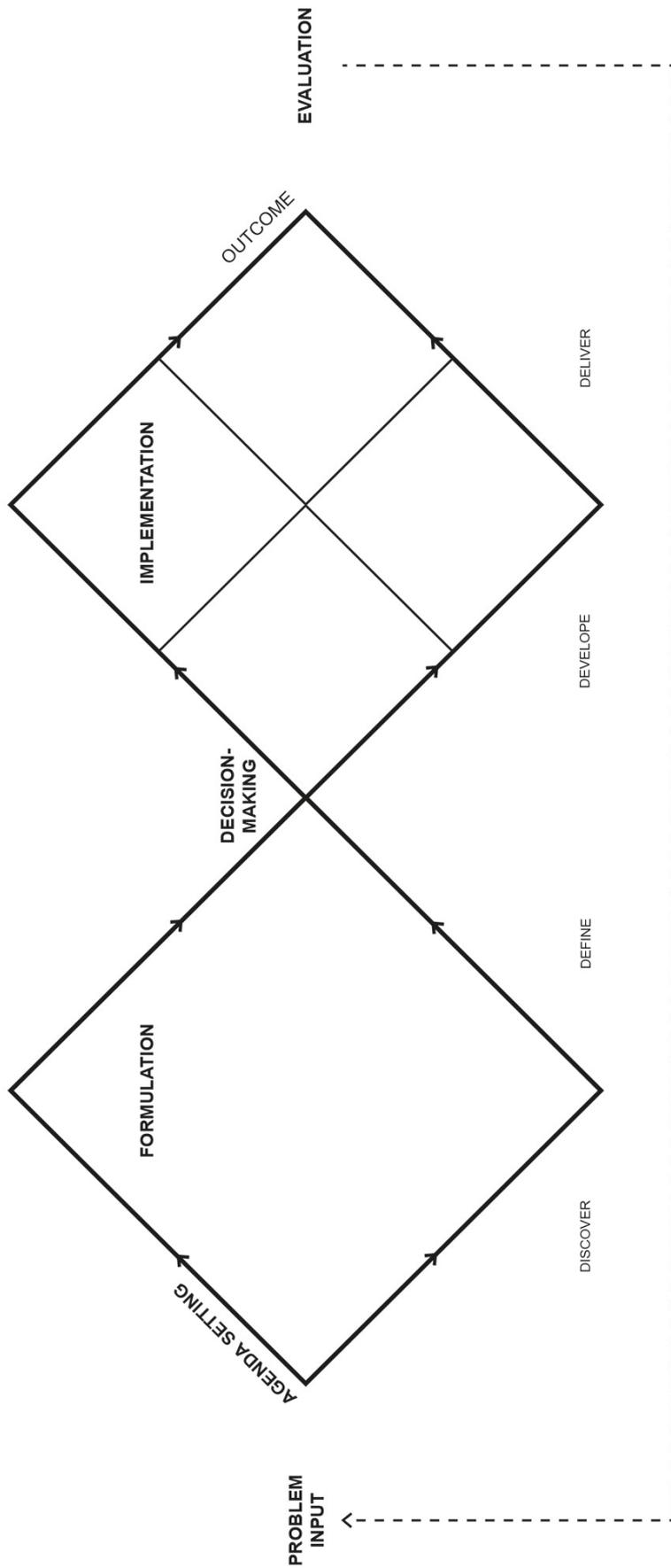


Figure 24: Representation of the new policymaking process – focus on its characteristics (own illustration).

Sphere of influence of design

As described in chapter 2.1.1, policymaking refers to three dimensions⁴¹ of the political system: polity, politics, and policy. Polity stretches across all the phases of policymaking and overlooks the entire process to maintain an overarching order. Moreover, polity represents the constitution and the rules of political procedures. In fact, it sets the framework and thus the scope for action of the other two dimensions, politics and policy. 'The framework is not unchangeable, but it is not arbitrary and can be changed at any time' (Weißeno et al., 2009, transl. p. 33). Therefore, the optimised process flow remains unaffected.

Within polity, politics and policy take place (cf. figure 25), which are primarily concerned with asserting political interests and shaping policy. This is where design comes into play. However, the first two stages of the *new* policymaking process – *problem input* and *agenda setting* – are solely the responsibility of the polity domain. Therefore, design has no greater influence within this area.

Design as an approach first enters policymaking in the formulation phase – *policy formulation* and *decision-making* – also referred to as politics. However, the greatest focus of design's sphere of influence is on the policy domain. This includes *policy implementation*, *policy outcome*, and *policy evaluation*. At this point in the process, design places more attention on human-centred approaches to achieve satisfactory policy outcomes.

⁴¹ Polity: Structural dimension – includes the entire political order.
Politics: Processual dimension – covers political debate and consensus building.
Policy: Substantive dimension – comprises the tasks and objectives of politics.
(Massing & Weißeno, 1995; Naßmacher, 2004; von Alemann, 1995)

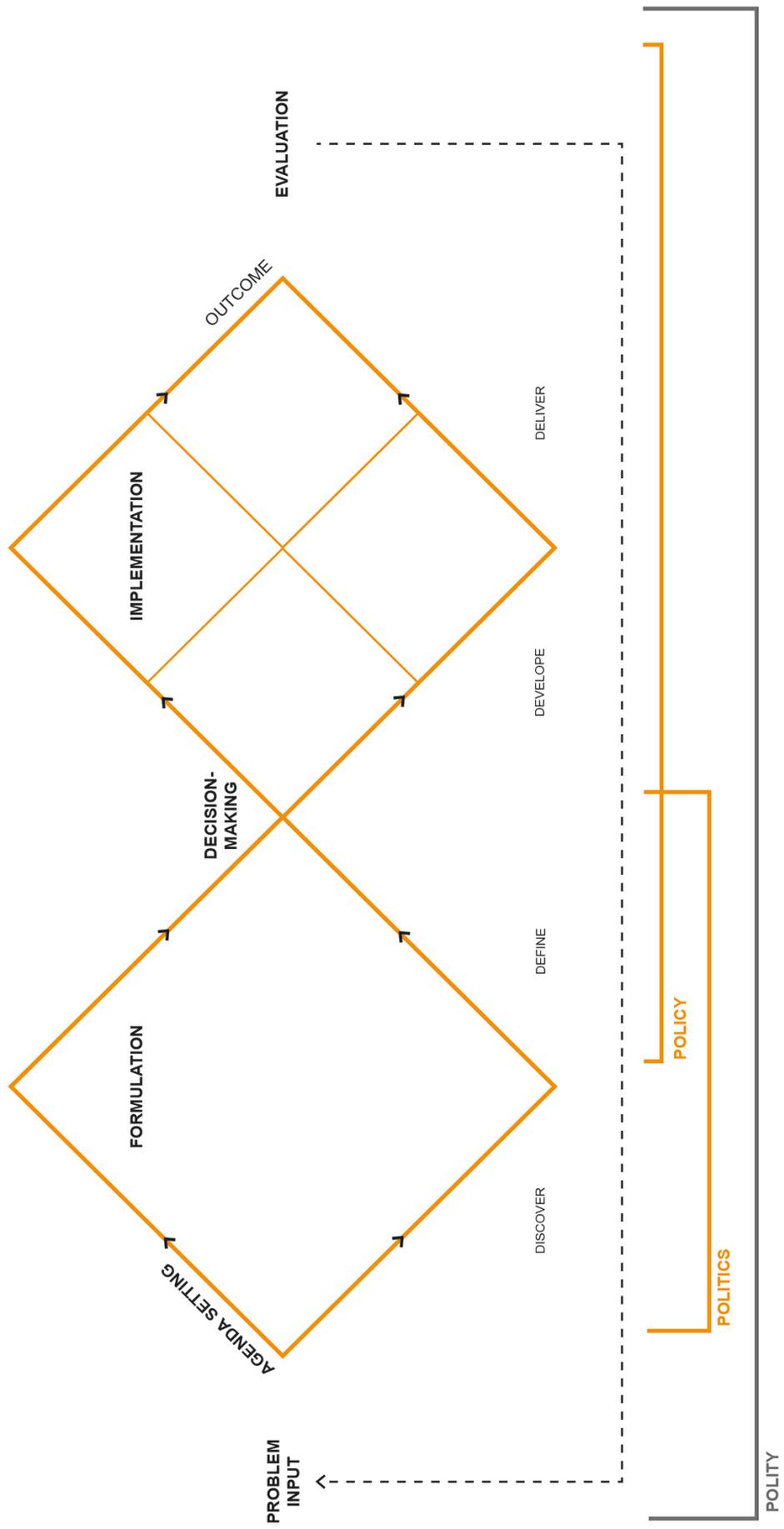


Figure 25: Representation of the new policymaking process – focus on the sphere of influence of design (own illustration).

Merging policy formulation and policy implementation

As stated in chapter 4.3, one central point of criticism is *the gap between policy formulation and policy implementation*. According to the results from the expert interviews, there are four leading causes for this critique:

- The dissonance between formulating and implementing: ‘every handover is a breaking point’ (██████████, transl., cf. appendix 2.2, line 173)
- An ‘asymmetry of information between policy designers and policy implementers’ (██████████, cf. appendix 2.5, line 71).
- Poor communication between politicians (decision-makers), civil servants (policymakers), bureaucrats (policy implementers), and citizens.
- The lack of sharing from the bottom to the top: civic participation.

To overcome this gap, three main proposals emerged: Cross-functionality, agility, and participation (illustrated by an overarching square, cf. figure 26).

Cross-functionality refers to setting up a transversal and multidisciplinary team built on sharing and learning. Knowledge sharing aims to achieve an equal level of understanding and thus overcomes communication barriers in the long run. Furthermore, cross-functionality should be integrated into policymaking early on.

‘What we need here is as many ideas as possible. The more we put people around the table, the greater we will have new ideas and fresh ones. This needs to be a collective process because we do not care who gives the best idea; what we need is the best ideas’ (██████████, cf. appendix 2.8, line 223).

‘Collaboration across boundaries is an essential component of the policy process’ (██████████, cf. appendix 2.5, line 118).

Agile working (Stellman & Greene, 2015) interplays with cross-functionality. However, it is most essential in the decision-making phase, as this is where leadership positions interact. Moreover, this part of the process is mainly about decisions: First, it is crucial to set up a cross-cutting core team consisting of representatives of governance, design, and management. This multidisciplinary team will guide, manage, and supervise the process of the given policy. Second, agreements regarding resources, capacities, and external cooperation are further made at this stage. Another important aspect is making action-based decisions to provide reasonable measures for developing better policy outcomes.

‘The team must be set up in a cross-functional way so that good decision can be made together’ ([REDACTED], transl., cf. appendix 2.1, line 190).

‘A core team is involved from start to finish, and the same people who saw the problem with their own eyes in research remain during prototyping, implementation, and evaluation. That they can say, “yes, what we are measuring here actually describes the problem that we defined at the beginning”. This means having a core team that accompanies the whole process and tries to avoid hard handovers is essential. By that, I do not mean the general team composition cannot change – it has to change because you need different skills depending on the activity. However, the core team itself should remain the same’ ([REDACTED] [REDACTED], transl., cf. appendix 2.2, line 175).

Participation refers to the conscious inclusion of civil servants, citizens, and further stakeholders within the policymaking process. In this sense, it is mainly applied in *policy formulation, implementation, and evaluation*. However, a distinction is made according to the degree of participation in each phase: In *policy formulation*, participation is applied as consultation and involvement. In *policy implementation* and *policy evaluation*, on the other hand, it varies from consultation, involvement, collaboration, and empowerment (cf. *the Spectrum of Public Participation*, chapter 2.4.1). Furthermore, the level of participation always depends on the individual policymaking case.

‘Co-design would be a more equal form of participation It is probably much less common than public participation. It is understandable; it is harder to do than if you are designing national policy. But if you are creating a service at local level, and if that service is going to be dependent on the cooperation of citizens for it to work – it is a service that needs lots of volunteers to participate, or it is a service where citizen participation is intrinsic to it working – then, those are the perfect cases where you need more Co-design. Also, the grassroots level often has information that policymakers do not. So, it goes back to information asymmetries’ ([REDACTED], cf. appendix 2.5, lines 218 & 221).

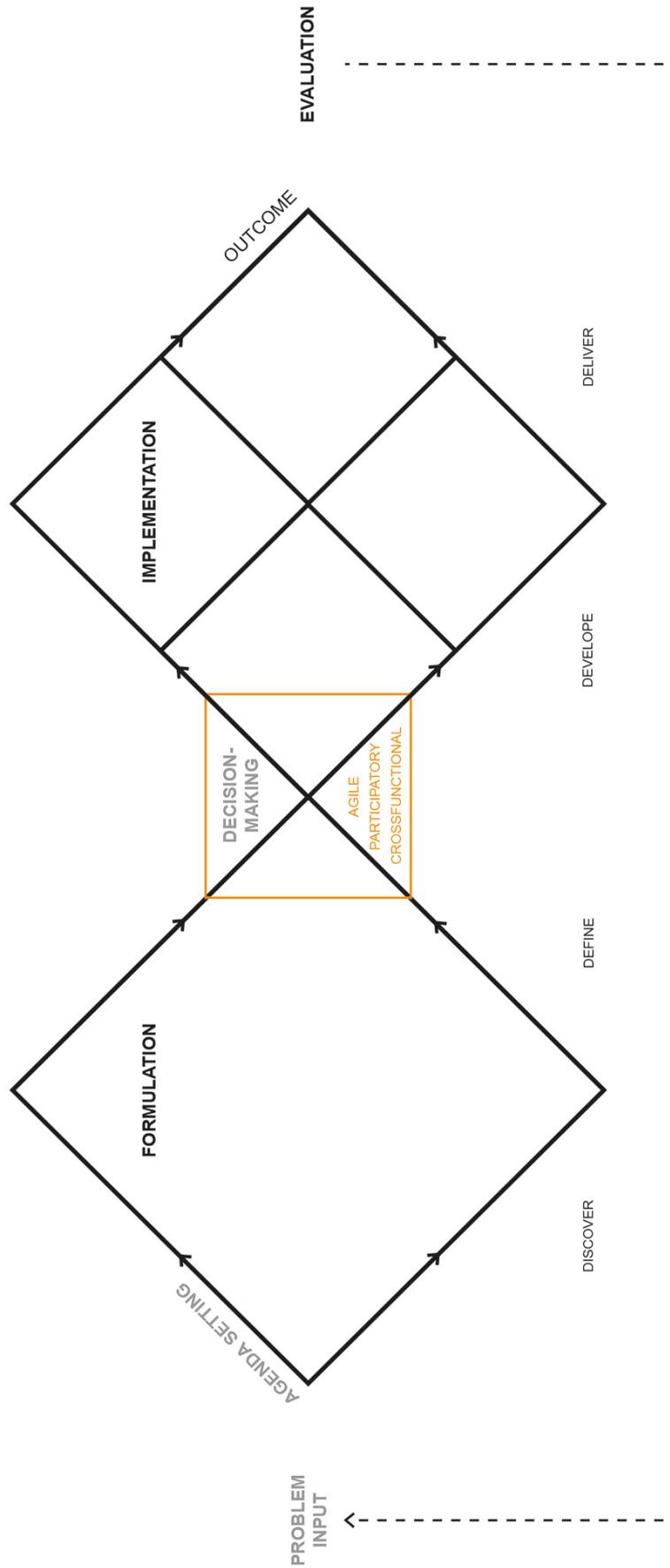


Figure 26: Representation of the new policymaking process – focus on merging policy formulation and policy implementation (own illustration).

Tasks within the individual phases

To better understand the concrete tasks, the description is divided into individual phases. Overall, two aspects need to be noted upfront: As mentioned before, problem analysis is applied repeatedly within the process; in *problem input*, *policy formulation*, and *policy implementation*. The same applies to evaluation. Regarding the expert interviews, evaluation is applied in *policy formulation*, *policy implementation*, and *policy evaluation*. This is done by using qualitative and quantitative methods. Furthermore, it is suggested that the problem analysis and evaluation are carried out in a participatory manner.

'Policy evaluation has to occur several times, probably three times in the well-thought-out process, and you can be sure that it is a finished solution you can share with the general public' (██████████, transl., cf. appendix 2.1, line 236).

'What is missing is accurate testing, becoming aware of your assumptions, carrying out experiments, and building actual prototypes where you also have measurable results afterwards. Accompany them qualitatively and quantitatively to get feedback accordingly' (██████████, transl., cf. appendix 2.2, line 92).

'Policy is constantly changing, and I think evaluating policy and getting sort of citizen feedback, and participation needs to happen all the time. But it must be done in a kind of robust and realistic way – the resources to properly evaluate policy' (██████████, cf. appendix 2.5, lines 218 & 305).

'I would like the evaluation to close a circle to policy implementation or maybe even go all the way back to the formulation' (██████████, transl., cf. appendix 2.7, lines 83).

Coming back to the individual phases and the concrete tasks that need to be accomplished (cf. figure 27):

Problem input and *agenda setting* are regulated by the polity domain (as mentioned in *the sphere of influence of design*). Therefore, these phases will not be discussed.

In *policy formulation*, the focus is placed on participation, cross-functionality, knowledge transfer, and design education. Furthermore, the problem is addressed again by investigating it precisely under the given context (second analysis of the problem). In this sense, it is crucial to consult different perspectives by engaging people directly involved in the issue. The focus is on qualitative research; however, quantitative studies are also

considered. This helps to gain a deep understanding that is subsequently shared with the multidisciplinary team.

'In my opinion, the real problem can only be understood in the qualitative insides search' (██████████, transl., cf. appendix 2.1, line 157).

'Especially for a complex problem, I would first do a lot of research and think about which stakeholders are relevant for such a process: Who would I perhaps have to invite to such a process so that they can best understand the problem and work on solutions with me? Then, in the best case, we would explore the problem together' (██████████, transl., cf. appendix 2.7, lines 25).

A further step is to define the aim of the policy by focusing on the following guiding questions:

- Who is the intended (primary) audience?
- Who is affected by the outcome?
- What needs must be addressed?
- What is the desired outcome of the policy?

Defining the policy goal is followed by the conception of the *policy formulation*. Crucial in this step is cross-functional, cross-competence, and cross-divisional working. Moreover, there is a need to introduce, train, and manifest design fundamentals. These design principles refer to the designerly mindset (cf. chapter 2.2.4) and typical design processes, such as Human-centred Design, Design Thinking, and the Double Diamond (cf. chapter 2.3). In addition, the design fundamentals must be accessible to all team members.

Before moving on to the next phase of the *new* policymaking process, gathering feedback is essential to facilitate decision-making. Then, based on the evaluation, either the next phase is entered or iterations must be applied (first evaluation stage).

In *decision-making*, design has a rather subordinate function. In this process stage, elected decision-makers (referred to as experts) form a core team, establish measurements for cooperation, and develop capacity and resource plans. The core team includes governance, design, and management advocates overseeing the overall process. To sum up, *decision-making* is ruled by political experts. This is due to the fact that the decision-making phase is part of the polity dimension (cf. chapter 2.1.1), which

presupposes the political structure. Therefore, citizens and bureaucrats have no further influence.

'I think the decisions have to be made by experts in the end; citizens would not count, and they would not make a good decision in the sense of the general public. This objectification has to be done by experts' (██████████, transl., cf. appendix 2.1, line 221).

Furthermore, according to political scientist Professor Klaus H (Sarrazin & Bayerischer Rundfunk, 2020), involving citizens' referendums in complex political issues is not effective. A negative example, according to Sarrazin & Bayerischer Rundfunk (2020), is the plebiscite in the UK, where society voted on whether the country should leave the EU – Brexit. Furthermore, introducing decision-making by citizens would be difficult to implement, as it would result in situative yes-no decisions (Allianz Vielfältige Demokratie, 2018).

The most attention is paid to design in *policy implementation*. In this stage of policymaking, the Double Diamond is additionally integrated. This means that the implementation solely goes through *discover, define, develop, and deliver* again – *research, focus, prototype, and evaluate* are what they are named in the *new* policymaking process. In *research* (discover), the problem is addressed once again by reframing it through qualitative research (third analysis of the problem). The phases of *focus, prototype, and evaluate* (define, develop, deliver) include the usual approaches of the Double Diamond (cf. chapter 2.3.3). In all four stages, it is indispensable to practice participation: especially collaborative approaches such as Co-design (referring to the level of collaboration in *The Spectrum of Public Participation*, cf. chapter 2.4.1 & 2.4.2).

'In Germany, there have been some pilot studies on citizen participation that are very promising. So absolutely Co-design. And it is important that a whole range of citizens participate, not just those who volunteer' (██████████, transl., cf. appendix 2.2, line 124).

'If you have leeway, then I am a big fan of Co-creation or Co-design. But for that, you also need room for manoeuvre' (██████████, transl., cf. appendix 2.7, lines 96).

'I suppose the mature state is this idea about Co-design, where really you are developing – the citizen becomes part of the design team, and helps to design

the intent, and the analysis as well as understanding the world and the design responses. It is two-way traffic. This is a conversation; it is not just collecting information. That feels to me like the future' (██████████, cf. appendix 2.9, line 210).

'To be able to effectively do citizen Co-design, you need to share power. That power needs to be shared between the elected official, the minister, and their advisors, the civil servants, the administrators, and the citizen' (██████████, cf. appendix 2.9, line 247).

Regarding those statements of the expert interviews and the findings from scientific research, Co-Design can enormously impact policymaking. However, it can also be used as tokenism. On the one hand, governments are applying Co-design in some cases imprudently and rather demonstrate doing things the right way, which leads to inefficiency. On the other hand, mostly 'citizens with the strongest voices tend to participate, those who have particular interests in the topic' (██████████, cf. appendix 2.5, line 142). Therefore, it is crucial in policymaking to choose the right level of participation as well as to engage with diverse stakeholders.

'Are we really co-designing? And if so, great, no one will be against it. Is Co-design sometimes also exploited as an antidote against something quite pernicious?' (██████████, cf. appendix 2.11, line 361).

'There are criticisms that sometimes that can be tokenistic. It could be that the policymakers have a strong idea of what they want to do, based on political priorities. In some cases, they actually have a legal duty to consult the public, depending on the country' (██████████, cf. appendix 2.5, line 137).

Before implementing the developed policy, it is necessary to test and evaluate (second evaluation stage). Again, it is essential to collaborate with civil servants, citizens, and other people involved to gather valuable feedback. Then, the policy is either implemented or improved based on the evaluation results. The latter requires jumping back to previous process steps.

'Even if it is five iterations. I think you can keep doing that until the feedback gives give the green light to their problem understanding' (██████████, transl., cf. appendix 2.1, line 197).

If the policy has been implemented, it is referred to as the *policy outcome*. As already mentioned, we consciously moved the output prior to the evaluation stage. Therefore, it is recognised as a part of the policymaking process rather than the ultimate finish line.

After *policy outcome*, monitoring its adoption and satisfaction is particularly crucial. Therefore, *policy evaluation* helps measure success or failure using qualitative and quantitative approaches (third evaluation stage). This phase of gathering feedback focuses on the larger perspective.

'I would understand the evaluation that comes afterwards as an evaluation in the sense of the public. That is after you have tested a tool on such a small scale, you make it accessible to a ... larger number of people. In our world, you could say that it is a step-by-step process ... I think that is also part of design. Verifying and evaluating the assumptions until you are quite sure that the problem will be solved' (██████████, transl., cf. appendix 2.1, line 199).

To conclude the description of the process, it is necessary to discuss the various design approaches briefly. We have interviewed design experts from different domains, such as Service-Design, Critical- and Speculative Design, Design Management, Strategic Design, and Game Design. Besides Service-Design, where the Double Diamond takes up a considerable part of the working environment, Critical Design and Game Design can significantly impact policymaking. The former refers to constantly challenging the issue, approaching problems using critical thinking and working with provocations.

'In this specific problem that you have got, it might just be to challenge the presuppositions the whole notion is built upon. ... I would go all the way back to: What is democracy? What do we think about democracy? Why are we assuming that democracy is the best form of organisation?' (██████████, cf. appendix 2.6, line 135).

The latter, Design Games, includes working with games and simulations to ...

- a) get different perspectives on board;
- b) facilitate a dialogue between political authorities and society;
- c) share opinions in a risk-free environment;
- d) collectively develop ideas for future scenarios;
- e) collect real data by engaging with real-life scenarios.

'We design games and simulations for both, so we actually identify ourselves as a bridge organisation. As I said, you have the government, and you have the people. In a very ideal world, there have to be a lot of conversations about Policy Design, but that necessarily does not happen. Most of the time, it is information from government to people, and this data part rarely happens. So, we act in between two sorts of gains to facilitate this dialogue' (██████████, cf. appendix 2.10, line 147).

Furthermore, the scientific research and the findings of the expert interviews revealed another fundamental domain that can be applied in policymaking: Behavioural Design, specifically Nudging. According to Thaler & Sunstein (2008, p. 4), 'one who nudges ... alerts, reminds, or mildly warns another'. In the sense of policymaking, it is stated that the choices of society can be softly influenced by policymakers 'through redesigning procedures and institutions in ways that privilege socially beneficial outcomes' (John, 2018, p. 58). In addition, it is crucial to guide people rather than coerce them: 'enabling people to keep their liberty intact' (John, 2018, p. 59).

'We do all these things unthinkingly, and if only governments can tuck into that, then governments can maybe make us behave differently, or in a way that helps us as individuals as well as society. Well, that is the sort of nudging, the nudging line of thought' (██████████, cf. appendix 2.11, line 453).

According to the expert interviews, there is a shift happening: not only can politics nudge society, but also vice versa.

'Sometimes, citizens can even nudge the policymakers. And they do. So, nudging can work both ways as well we can think much more broadly about how these psychological kinds of insights can help understand policymaking itself and some of the reasons behind policy failure' (██████████, cf. appendix 2.5, lines 277 & 283).

'There is an old literature that already tells us that policymakers are themselves somewhat cognitively challenged at times It is a combination of cognition flaws and sort of group dynamics that led to the notion of groupthink I think that speaks a little bit to the idea of can we nudge the policymakers back. Can we actually tweak their behaviour or set up the choice architecture in such a way that is less scope for full groupthink?' (██████████, cf. appendix 2.11, lines 464 & 480).

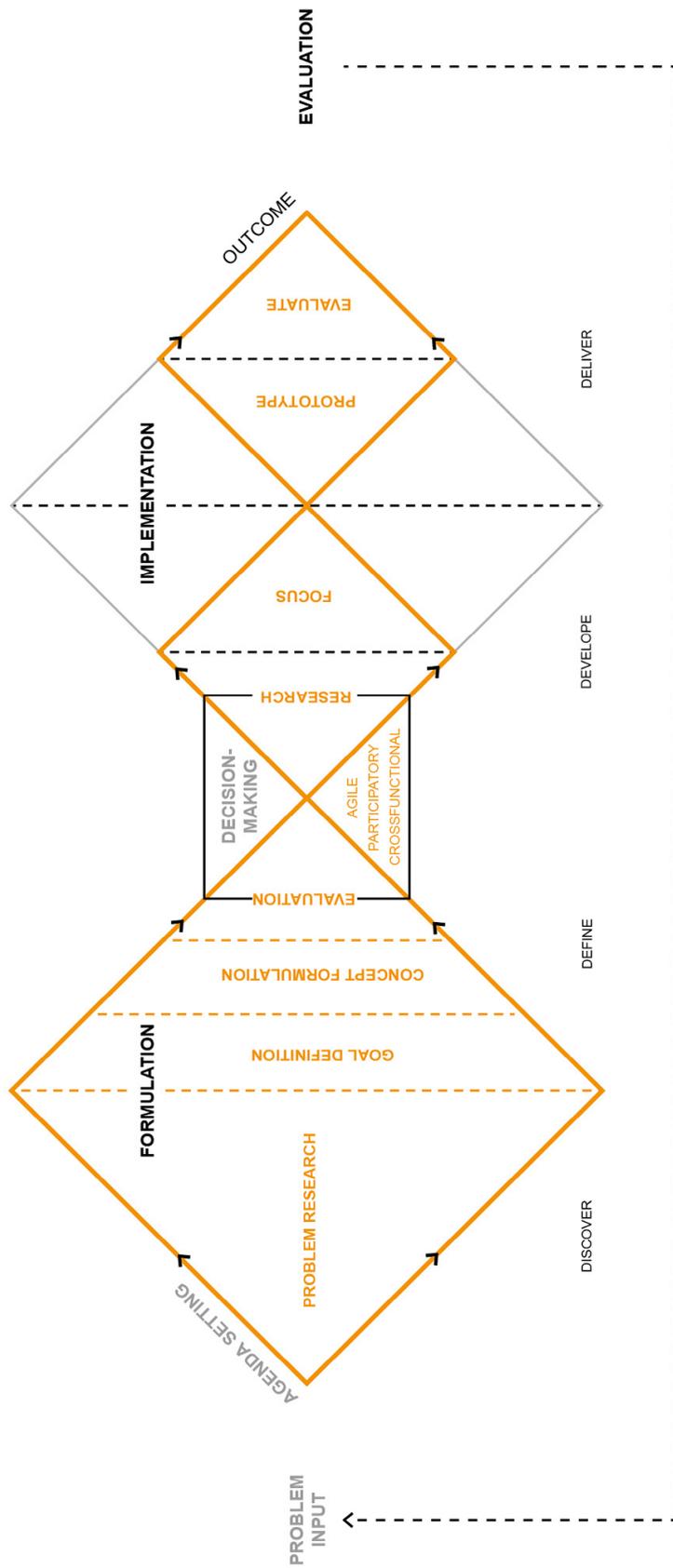


Figure 27: Representation of the new policymaking process – focus on the tasks within the process (own illustration).

5.2.2 An Evolving Map of Participation in Policymaking

Referring to the third criticism that emerged from the scientific research and the expert interviews – *the lack of active participation in policymaking* – we developed an *Evolving Map of Participation*. The visualisation is inspired by the *Evolving Map of Design Practice and Design Research* by Liz Sanders (2008; cf. chapter 5.1.4), whereas the contextual sense is based on the *hourglass model* by Howlett (cf. chapter 2.1.4). Following Liz Sanders' model, a map was used to represent complexity and change (Sanders, 2008). However, unlike Sanders *Evolving Map*, our approach includes a timeline in the form of process steps and different levels of participation.

The individual phases of the *new* policymaking process are presented on the horizontal axis, while the various levels of participation are shown vertically, reaching from *weak* to *strong participation*. Furthermore, the individual stages of participation are adapted from the *Spectrum of Levels of Public Participation* by IAP2 (cf. chapter 2.4.1). Moreover, the *Map of Participation in Policymaking* includes three stakeholders: political authorities (depicted in blue), civil servants (depicted in pink), and citizens (depicted in yellow). Finally, the overlap of citizens and civil servants is demonstrated in orange.

The developed *Evolving Map of Participation in Policymaking* is distinguished into the current and preferred state. In the current representation (cf. figure 28), it is apparent that politics determines by far the power for itself. Furthermore, it is shown that citizens and civil servants are excluded from policymaking and are merely considered in policy implementation, and just to a weak extent (reaching from the levels of inform to involve). The same applies to the evaluation phase. Whereby the range only extends from consult to involve.

The preferred visualisation of the map (cf. figure 29) shifts to a higher level of participation of civil servants and citizens. Moreover, it can be seen that the more advanced the process, the higher their participation level. Moreover, policymaking seeks greater collaboration with civil servants and citizens, referring to Co-Design and empowerment. On the contrary, political power is decreasing. However, decision-making remains in the political sector.

'There is always an interesting thing, that ... policy Co-design and design can never be detached completely from politics' (██████████, cf. appendix 2.11, lines 399).

Current state of participation in policymaking

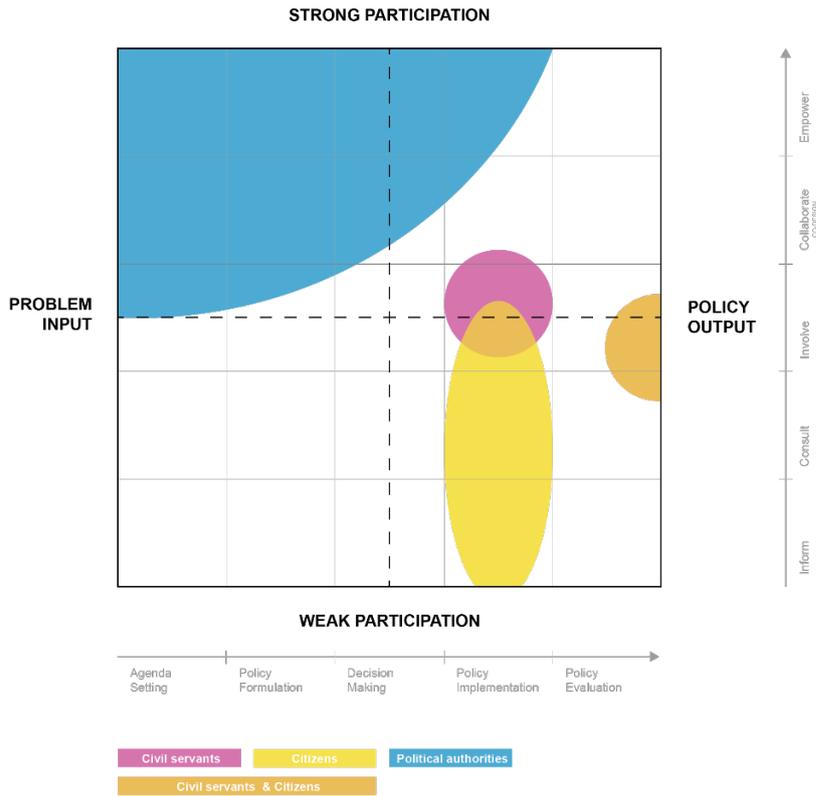


Figure 28: An Evolving Map of Participation in Policymaking – current state (own illustration).

Preferred state of participation in policymaking

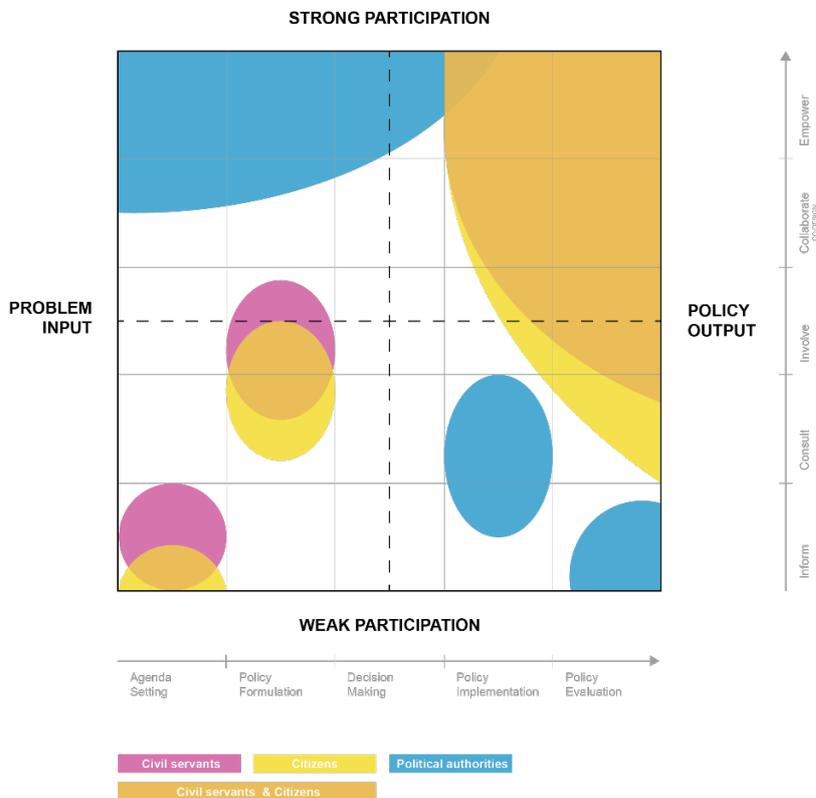


Figure 29: An Evolving Map of Participation in Policymaking – preferred state (own illustration).

6 Evaluation of Concept

In the following, the evaluation of the concept is described. The evaluation aimed to have the concept (which was developed from the findings of the scientific research and the interviews) cross-checked by the previously interviewed experts in order to:

- identify possible flaws in the concept;
- include unaddressed options for further development;
- initiate a dialogue between the experts to gain further insights.

6.1 Evaluation Methodology

To carry out the evaluation, a Miro board⁴² was created, which on the one hand, contains an introduction of the evaluation procedure and, on the other hand, presents the results of the developed concept. In addition, all eleven experts received a request to evaluate the concept. This request contained a link with access to the Miro board and an assigned colour and number used to anonymise the individual expert. The experts' identity was only visible to us regarding the evaluation.

The Miro board was divided into seven sections (cf. figure 30). The first two served to welcome the experts and introduce them to the evaluation process. In these sections, instructions on how to use the board were communicated textually and visually. Therefore, the following guide was provided:

1. *have a look at the current traditional Policy Cycle;*
2. *check out the points of criticism we focus on;*
3. *take a look at our concept proposal;*
4. *analyse the concept;*
5. *give feedback via post-its;*
6. *Do you have further comments? Write them in the text field provided.*

According to the guide, the experts were asked to give feedback on the assigned post-its. First, the presentation of the traditional Policy Cycle was shown (cf. chapter 2.1.4, figure 3), followed by the criticism of the policymaking process (cf. chapter 3.1, figure 17). These two sections served as comparative data for the subsequent parts presenting

⁴² Miro is an international company that offers software for creating digital whiteboards. Miro boards are suitable for communication and remote work in teams, regardless of time zones and locations. Furthermore, they provide a variety of application possibilities, including integrating external links, graphics, and videos. Additional tools, such as diagrams or virtual post-its, are also provided, reminding remote work of physical collaboration (Miro, 2022).

the developed concept through visualisations and explanatory texts (cf. figure 30). Finally, an additional discussion frame was created for further criticism, suggestions, and feedback.

Experts unfamiliar with Miro's use were given the concept in the form of a PDF for evaluation. The PDF file did not differ from the Miro board in terms of content and was therefore similar in structure. Instead of the post-it function, the experts had the opportunity to leave comments within the PDF and send further criticism, suggestions, and feedback via e-mail.

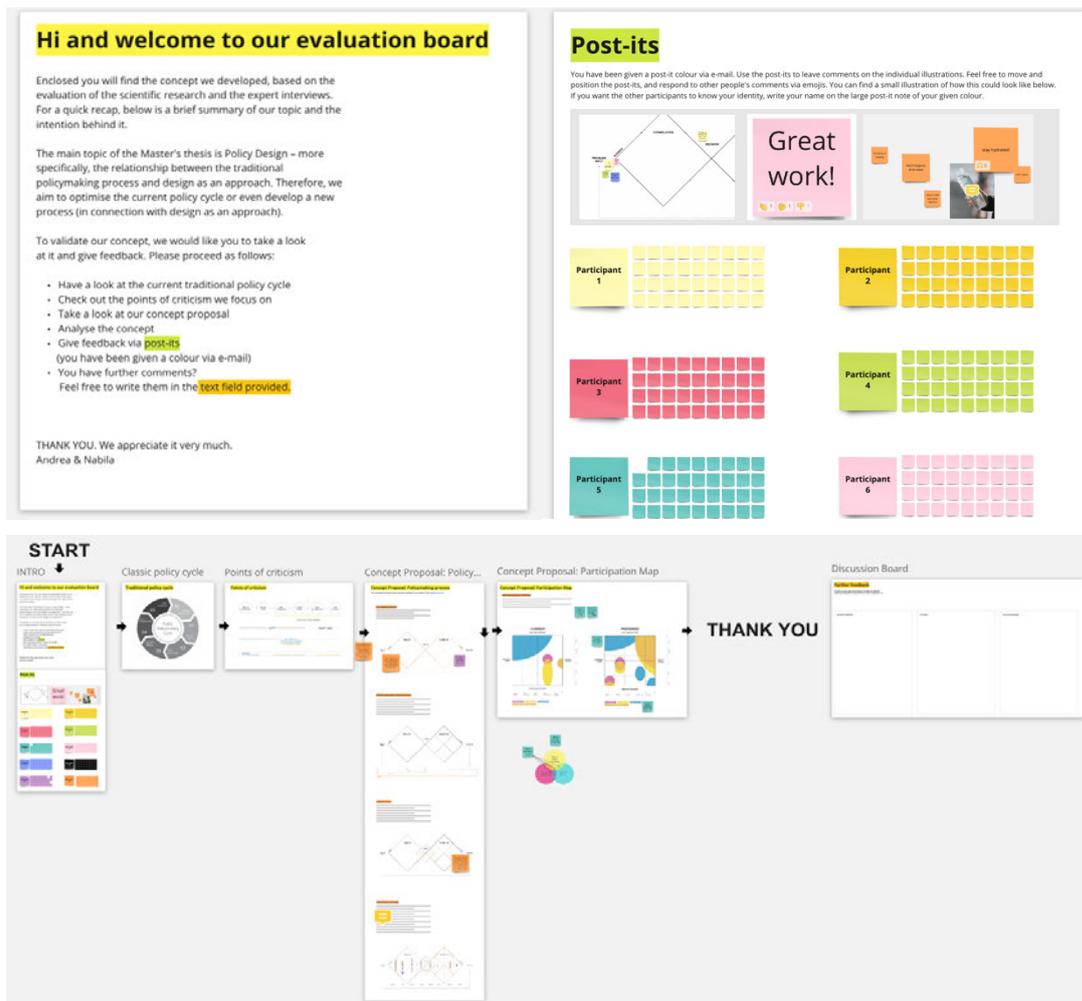


Figure 30: Evaluation board in Miro.

Two of the eleven experts participated in the evaluation and gave feedback on the concept. The points raised are explained below. However, due to time constraints, the points of criticism could not further be integrated into the concept.

6.2 Remarks on the Redesign of the Traditional Policy Cycle

Prescriptive model

Participant one noted that Co-design should be addressed more intensively in the *new* policymaking process. For this, the expert mentioned the keyword of the prescriptive model, which could be used as a guide to apply Co-Design in practice.

Feedback loop

Furthermore, participant one added that the path from the *evaluation phase* back to *problem input* should be described as a feedback loop to make the illustration of the policymaking process more understandable (cf. figure 31).

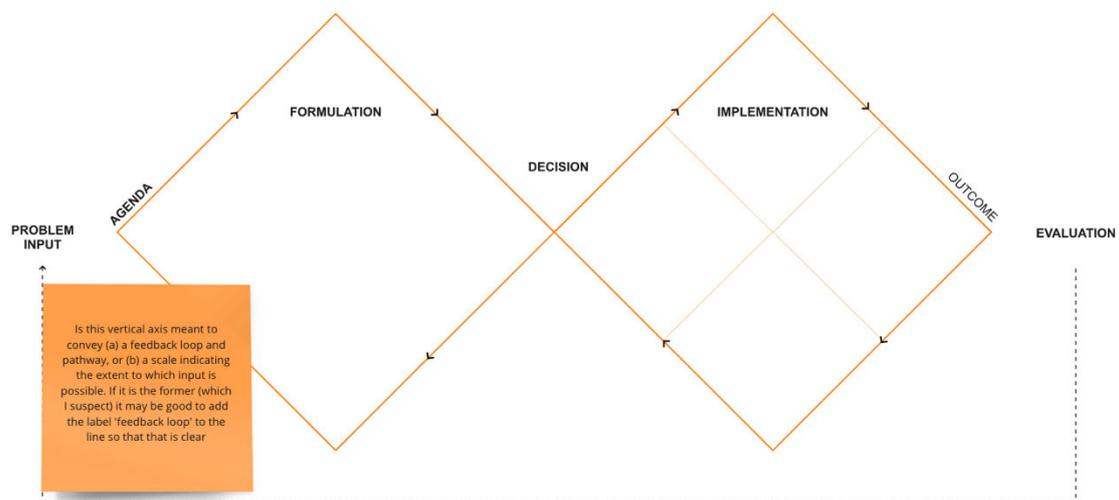


Figure 31: Evaluation board; feedback note 1.

Visualisation of the process model

Participant one added that the traditional Policy Cycle is easy to understand because of its simplicity. However, the representation of the additional diamond within the process can lead to problems comprehending the model and the interrelationships.

6.3 Remarks on the Evolving Map of Participation in Policymaking

Stronger differentiation between politics and the authorities

According to participant two, the process still depends too heavily on political actors. The expert stated: 'For me, this concept is still too much from the inside out. From the ruler

to the citizen'. The expert thus raised the question of whether policies are more of an authority-driven or a political-driven matter.

Relationships of the involved actors in policymaking

Participant two gave a further thought-provoking impulse to the concept, including a self-created illustration (cf. figure 32). For this purpose, the expert divided the involved actors into separate fields and pointed out that the overlaps and thus their relationship should be examined more intensively.

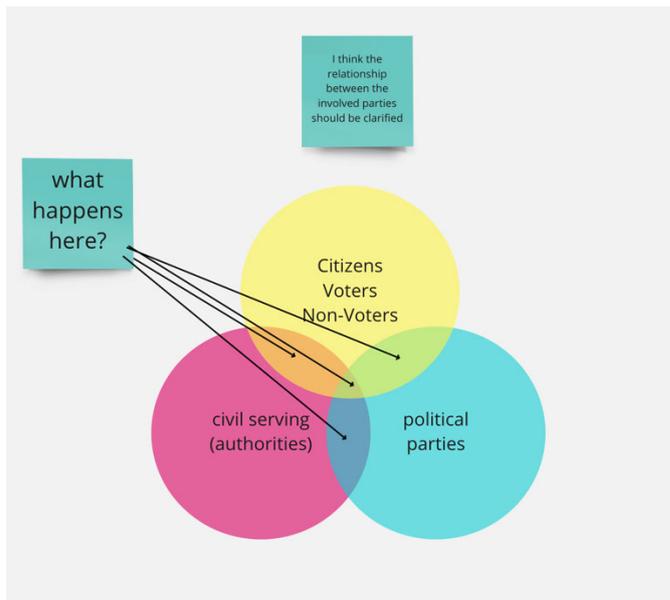


Figure 32: Evaluation board; feedback note 2.

6.4 Conclusion of the Evaluation

Due to time constraints on the part of the experts, the evaluation could not be carried out to the extent expected. Therefore, the Miro board did not enable a dialogue between the participants. Nevertheless, the insights mentioned above can be considered for further research and development of the concept. In addition, using Miro for evaluation had both advantages and disadvantages. The method showed weaknesses regarding individual questions about the concept. Furthermore, since the participants viewed the Miro board at different times, it was impossible to enter dialogue among them. On the other hand, the board's interactive function proved beneficial: Participants could express their thoughts and suggestions freely and without bias. Furthermore, the possibility to use tools helped the experts to present their feedback visually and thus understandably.

7 Conclusion

Politics is and always has been complex in nature. Different interests, objectives, and circumstances shape politics into an ongoing task, affecting everyone across issues. A further aspect of complex policymaking is society's constant and uncertain change. Therefore, the traditional Policy Cycle helps to gain an overall perspective on tackling societal problems.

7.1 Conclusion of the Research Results

Regarding scientific research and the qualitative methodology, several points of criticism emerged that contradict the traditional Policy Cycle: On the one hand, an analytical focus on problem-solving is ascribed, leading to an isolated and linear process. On the other hand, transfer knowledge between politics and design is enormously missing. Furthermore, the study showed that in real terms, the process only serves as a guide and is not followed through in practice. Finally, the most fatally critical factor is the lack of citizen participation. Since policy outcomes directly affect society, a shift toward human-centricity is necessary. Therefore, it is essential to rethink the traditional Policy Cycle and develop a process attributed to people.

However, Design, and Policy Design in particular, can counteract these points of criticism, known as the 'designerly' way of 'solving' wicked problems.

7.2 Conclusion of the Proposed Implementation

To answer the research question, a *Redesign of the Traditional Policy Cycle* and an *Evolving Map of Participation in Policymaking* was developed.

The study confirmed that design processes, especially the Double Diamond, offer an approach contradicting the traditional Policy Cycle. Therefore, the proposed *new* policymaking process is inspired by an interplay of the Double Diamond. Furthermore, it focuses on resolving the points of criticism mentioned above. Therefore, e.g., problem analysis and evaluation are repeatedly applied throughout the process, based on iterations. Moreover, the gap between politics and design is bridged by increasing agility, cross-functionality, and civic participation. To shift towards an iterative, open-minded, and open-ended practice, characteristics such as focusing on adaptations rather than one solution are needed. In addition, divergent and convergent thinking are crucial in policymaking, agreeing with the concept of the Double Diamond.

The proposed *Evolving Map of Participation in Policymaking* refers to the critique of the lacking participation. Therefore, two visualisations are demonstrated to show the current and preferred state. The maps show the different degrees of involvement of three actors – political authorities, civil servants, and citizens. Furthermore, the concept demonstrates the necessity of applying higher levels of participation on the part of civil servants and citizens, so-called Co-Design and empowerment.

7.3 Limitations of the Thesis

The thesis is subject to three primary limitations: The first refers to time constraints regarding the given time of completion. Therefore, the complex and wide-ranging topic of the study could not be fully elaborated. Thus, we had to severely narrow the scope and could not include all previously considered aspects (referring to more profound research on design approaches, such as Nudging, Design Game, Strategic Design, etc.). Furthermore, the time limitation affected the collaboration with experts, especially concerning the evaluation of our concept.

Regarding the proposed *new* policymaking process, it must be noted that the approach was not developed in a realistic environment. Meaning that the process has not been carried out based on an actual, complex political problem. Therefore, at this point, the *new* policymaking process needs to be seen as a heuristic model.

Finally, the *Evolving Map of Participation in Policymaking* does not represent a scientifically or statistically valid finding. This is due to the level of interpretation entailed by the map. Nevertheless, the visualisation provides a basis and stimulus for a more valid further development.

7.4 Final Conclusion

In sum, the proposed concept relies heavily on the study's findings and the need to redesign the given Policy Cycle. Although the thesis only covers a small contribution to promoting Policy Design, it can be of value to policymakers, policy designers, researchers, and further stakeholders related to the topic. Furthermore, the thesis is one of a few that developed a *new* policymaking process by integrating design processes into the traditional Policy Cycle. Therefore, we aim to continue this study further on.

To conclude, Policy Design is becoming increasingly relevant regarding a more prosperous future. Even though it is very challenging to implement a design understanding in politics, it is even more important to push research forward. Therefore, educating political authorities, civil servants, and designers is required. Perhaps another

step might be to anchor Policy Design as part of the curriculum in design and political science subjects. In this way, a transdisciplinary understanding of design and politics would already be transmitted in education.

Finally, it can be stated that the right direction has already been taken.

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