



DYNAMIX

Decoupling growth from resource use  
and environmental impacts

# Public acceptability of DYNAMIX policy mixes

DYNAMIX Deliverable D5.4.2



This project has received funding from the European Union's Seventh Framework Programme for research, technological development and demonstration under grant agreement no 308674



## AUTHOR(S)

Robin Vanner, PSI

Martha Bicket, PSI

Bridget Elliott, PSI

Chris Harvey, PSI

With contributions by:

Martin Hirschnitz-Garbers, Ecologic Institute

Gerald Berger, WIMAS

Martin Nesbit, IEEP

Tomas Ekvall, IVL

Completed in February 2016

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT & DISCLAIMER

The research leading to these results has received funding from the European Union FP7 ENV.2010.4.2.3-1 grant agreement n° 308674.

Neither the European Commission nor any person acting on behalf of the Commission is responsible for the use which might be made of the following information. The views expressed in this publication are the sole responsibility of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Commission.

Reproduction and translation for non-commercial purposes are authorized, provided the source is acknowledged and the publisher is given prior notice and sent a copy.

## DYNAMIX PROJECT PARTNERS



Svenska  
Miljöinstitutet





## List of Acronyms

<b>Acronym</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
EU	European Union
EC	European Commission
VAT	Value added tax
LETS	Local Exchange Trading Systems
NIMBY	'Not in my back yard'
VBN	Value-Belief-Norm
WTP	Willingness to Pay
ETS	Emissions Trading Scheme
CAP	Common Agricultural Policy
NECD	National Emissions Ceilings Directive
MS	Member State
PES	Payment for Ecosystem Services
LULUCF	Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry
WTD	Working Time Directive
GHG	Greenhouse Gas



# Table of Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>BACKGROUND .....</b>	<b>10</b>
3.1	The role of public acceptance and paradigms in policy making .....	10
3.2	The processes that citizens use to accept or reject policy proposals .....	12
3.2.1	Perspectives in the formation of public acceptability .....	13
3.2.2	Factors important in public acceptability .....	14
3.3	Towards a DYNAMIX methodology for analysing public acceptability .....	18
3.3.1	Existing approaches to the analysis of public acceptability .....	19
3.3.2	The role of collective discourse in public acceptability .....	20
<b>4</b>	<b>METHODOLOGY .....</b>	<b>22</b>
4.1	Rapid early assessment .....	23
4.2	Identification of key discourse terms .....	23
4.3	Search frequency analysis .....	24
4.4	In-depth review and assessment of discourse(s) .....	26
4.5	Development of proposed mitigations, enhancements and policy sequencings .....	27
<b>5</b>	<b>SUMMARY ASSESSMENT REPORTS.....</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>RESULTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....</b>	<b>36</b>
6.1	Summary of assessments .....	36
6.2	Identified thresholds in public acceptability .....	45
6.2.1	More significant proposed mitigations .....	45
6.3	Inter-policy sequencing (i.e. 2 <sup>nd</sup> round assessment policies) .....	47
6.4	Recommendations to policy makers .....	48
	<b>REFERENCES .....</b>	<b>49</b>



# 1 Executive Summary

## Introduction and background

This report presents the outcomes from the assessment of public acceptability of the policy packages as proposed within the DYNAMIX project. It forms part of the DYNAMIX project's larger ex-ante policy assessment of the environmental, social, economic, legal and public acceptability implications of implementing a number of policy packages which seek to achieve absolute decoupling by 2050. This analysis of public acceptability relies heavily upon the concept of paradigms and applies an earlier stream of work within DYNAMIX exploring paradigms and their potential role, if shifted, in achieving sustainable resource use by 2050. This work is reported in Vanner and Bicket (2013).

The dominant paradigm in society sets a strong context for the public acceptability of a policy, and will often set the starting parameters of public discourse of what might be deemed acceptable by the public when considering policy options. While they may be deeply embedded and difficult to change, paradigms are not immovable, and are influenced and reshaped over time through reactions to both new evidence and experience. This is of central importance behind the concept of the **'theoretical pathway for paradigm change'** developed for DYNAMIX:

*The 'theoretical pathway for paradigm change' maps out the envisaged pathway of interactions between society and policy actions which would lead to the required paradigm change over time.*

The processes that citizens use to accept or reject policy proposals are complicated. Different groups and individuals have different perspectives and as a result, citizens will often go about forming their views on acceptance or otherwise in very different ways. Additionally, different citizens have different priorities and levels of trust in governments. Finally, as these different individuals and groups interact in the real world, their differing levels of power and influence will lead to the interests of some stakeholders having more weight in the public's mind. Vanner and Bicket (2013) propose that public acceptability is informed by public discourse, which in turn represents the interrelation between scientific and socio-cultural paradigms via institutions (including governments) and the tools and policies they develop in order to influence behaviour.

## Methodology

The approach used to assess public acceptability of the proposed policies has been to use relevant public discourses as a means of understanding how the public would likely respond if the policy were to be proposed in the real world. A staged methodological tool-kit was developed to maximise the value of the analysis to the DYNAMIX project as it progressed and broadly comprised the following key stages:

1. **Rapid early assessment** of policy proposals to refine methodology and shortlisted policies.
2. **Development of key terms** to define the relevant discourse(s) and ensure cultural and geographical coverage.



3. **Search frequency analysis** to identify at a high-level where and by whom these terms have been used.
4. **In-depth review and assessment** of discourse to explore the most salient and relevant discourses, identify thresholds of public acceptability and propose policy mitigations, enhancements and sequencings.

The policy packages as proposed under DYNAMIX face a challenging implementation context. Many of the measures require EU-wide implementation and therefore agreement among all Member States (whether absolute or qualified). This will require convergence of EU opinion around these issues within a common timeframe. It has therefore been the intention of this assessment to ensure that any policy which is assessed to be **highly contentious** is subject to mitigations and/or sequencing. The rationale for this being that, within the assessment criteria, a highly contentious policy requires not only political capital, but additionally the right '**window of opportunity**' for public acceptance. It is the intention of DYNAMIX to sequence policies in a way that permits these thresholds to move over time (i.e. paradigm change), in part, by ordering of when policies are implemented to lay the ground for more ambitious policies. In some cases these will be extensions to a proposed policy, such as prepending a voluntary scheme to a mandatory proposal. Other examples include policies which have been initially assessed as highly contentious but which become implementable once other related policies have laid the ground.

## Results

The **results** of this assessment are provided in Annex 1, and summarised in sections 5 and 6 of this report. The assessment outcomes are further summarised in Table 1. Table 1 (and Table 4 in the main part of the report) show that, of the 14 policies that underwent full assessment, 7 were assessed to be potentially highly contentious (there was considerable uncertainty for 2 of these assessments). Once mitigated however, all of these were assessed to be no more than potentially contentious, and therefore can be implemented with the investment of political capital, but without the need for an enabling political window of opportunity as such. This is considered an important distinction as these DYNAMIX policies are proposed at an EU level, with some of them relying on simultaneous implementation (i.e. many of the tax policies which need to avoid cross border leakage).



**Table 1 - Public acceptability assessment outcomes**

See Table 3 for the detailed identified thresholds of public acceptability and proposed policy mitigations, enhancements and sequencings.

Policy instrument fiche	Public acceptance - unmitigated	Public acceptance - mitigated
Green fiscal reform: internalization of external environmental costs	---	--
Green fiscal reform: materials tax	---	--
Stimulation of sharing systems	(-)	0
Product standards	---	(--)
Targeted information campaign on changing diets and on food waste	0	0
Development of food redistribution programmes/food donation to reduce food waste	--	-
Value added tax (VAT) on meat products	---	--
A 'circular economy tax trio' - taxes on the extraction of selected virgin materials and on landfilled and incinerated waste	---	--
EU-wide introduction of feebate schemes for selected products categories	++	++
Reduced VAT for the most environmentally advantageous products and services	-	0
Boosting extended producer responsibility	(--)	-
Enabling shift from consumption to leisure	(---)	-
Step-by-step restriction of advertising and marketing	(---)	--
Local currencies for labour-based services	-	0

Key:

+++	Likely very positive
++	Likely positive
+	Likely relatively positive
0	Unnoticed
-	Uncontentious
--	Contentious
---	Highly contentious
(++)	Assessment uncertain
((--))	Assessment very uncertain

The **thresholds in public acceptability** as identified in the analyses include, for:

- Green fiscal reform: The public's concerns are particularly around the fairness of environmental taxes. The threshold of the measure centres not only on affordability but also a sense that they are being imposed fairly and evenly, and not just where it is possible.



- Stimulation of sharing systems: The threshold of acceptability has been associated with those citizens who either don't want to or can't participate, and then focused on the level of public funding provided.
- Product standards: Consumers in some more Eurosceptic Member States are presently liable to reject collective action for environmental purposes in domestic product policy.
- Food waste policies: Acceptability thresholds have been identified around policies that threaten to increase living costs or significantly reduce the consumer's right to shop freely and throw unwanted food away.
- Value added tax (VAT) on meat products: Acceptability thresholds have been identified associated with fairness concerns, border issues and competitiveness issues. 5-year transitional exemptions for certain non-luxury meat products have been proposed.
- Step-by-step restriction of advertising and marketing: The threshold of acceptability is associated with restrictions on advertisement on luxury goods linked to conspicuous consumption.
- Local currencies for labour-based services: It is likely that there would be objections to Local Exchange Trading Systems (LETS) where either:
  - They are perceived in public discourse as being primarily motivated as a way of avoiding taxation;
  - Or where LETS become compulsory for buyers or sellers to participate in.

## Recommendations

The **more significant mitigations** include, for:

Green fiscal reform policies:

- Ensure as far as possible that the taxes do not threaten the international competitiveness of industry, with the corresponding threats of economic leakage and jobs losses. To account for additional production costs to EU producers, border adjustments will need to be applied on imported and exported products, as far up product supply chains as reasonably possible. The border adjustment measures as proposed in the materials tax policy fiche will go a long way to maintain public support, but there may be particular product sectors which will need dedicated attention.
- The fiscal benefits need to be announced and delivered in a way that householders both understand and notice the benefits, and do not suffer notable cash flow issues as a result.

Product standards:

- A timed exemption for some Member States, particularly the UK, might ensure that the benefits (or at least the lack of feared disbenefits) are demonstrated in other EU Member States ahead of implementation.

Value added tax (VAT) on meat products:

- It is proposed that 5-year transitional exemptions for certain meat products be explored; whereby temporary exemptions are agreed based on certain mitigation criteria. This will more likely exempt certain lower value chicken and pork meat products.

The analysis has identified a number of far-reaching policies which may be implementable once the proposed policies have been successfully implemented. These include, for:



- **Reduced meat consumption:** Policies to regulate further meat consumption, including the introduction of ‘meat free days’ in public food outlets, as well as the defining of size of meat portions when selling meat products. The latter would include the labelling of retail products and the regulation of portion sizes in restaurants.
- **Food redistribution:** Policies to require the publishing of data on, and the offering for redistribution of, all food wastes from the production and retail sectors. Additionally, full-product-chain food waste targets to be introduced on large retailers.
- **Sharing schemes and extended producer responsibility:** It has been assessed that the various material tax policies (i.e. green fiscal reform and the circular economy trio) have the potential for facilitating paradigm change in other areas such as greater sharing schemes and extended producer responsibility.
- **The sequencing of social and overarching policies:** These policies will lend themselves naturally to sequencing. It is assessed that the introduction of step-by-step restrictions on advertising and marketing has the potential to lay the ground for enabling a shift from consumption to leisure and LETS policies.

Based on insights which emerged from this analysis, the ex-post case study evaluations and stakeholder interactions that took part as a series of DYNAMIX policy platforms with our stakeholders, we make the following **recommendations to those formulating policy**:

- Be aware of the worldviews and paradigms of all those inputting into the policy formulation, including your own and those supporting you. In doing so, it is more likely that mechanisms and pathways for paradigm change will become explicit.
- Give prominence to public acceptability issues and be prepared to make adjustments to the policy to maintain it.
- Involve and engage with target groups through consultation and participation in the policy design process to explore mutually agreeable solutions.
- Consider making concessions to target groups, to ease the introduction of the suggested policies, and make a policy more acceptable overall. In particular, be prepared to support transitions in sectors most affected.
- Where necessary, be prepared to invest considerable political capital<sup>1</sup>. Often the most challenging and needed paradigm changes will provide a return on the investment with ‘interest’.
- Seek to frame the change in the context of a wider transition over the longer term. To demonstrate that such changes are possible, highlight where equivalent paradigm shifts have occurred in the past. Choose words, concepts, discourses and rhetoric carefully as their meaning may differ subtly between different groups and stakeholders in society.
- Recycle any revenues generated from implementing policies where possible.
- Be aware of false paradigm shifts and unintended consequences which counteract the desired objective (e.g. substitution, leakage and rebound effects).

---

<sup>1</sup> Political capital refers to the trust, goodwill, and influence a politician has with the public and other political figures.



## 2 Introduction

This report provides the outcome of the public acceptability assessment. It forms part of a larger ex-ante policy assessment of the environmental, social, economic, legal and public acceptability implications of implementing a number of policy packages which seek to achieve absolute decoupling by 2050. The policies as developed within the DYNAMIX project include:

1. Green fiscal reform intending the internalization of external environmental costs.
2. Green fiscal reform involving a materials tax.
3. Stimulation of sharing systems.
4. Product standards.
5. Targeted information campaign on changing diets and on food waste.
6. Development of food redistribution programmes/food donation to reduce food waste.
7. Value added tax (VAT) on meat products.
8. A 'circular economy tax trio' – taxes on the extraction of selected virgin materials and on landfilled and incinerated waste.
9. EU-wide introduction of feebate schemes for selected products categories.
10. Reduced VAT for the most environmentally advantageous products and services.
11. Boosting extended producer responsibility.
12. Enabling shift from consumption to leisure.
13. Step-by-step restriction of advertising and marketing.
14. Local currencies for labour-based services.

Findings from the public acceptability analysis documented in this report have been used to:

1. Inform improved policy mix design for more effective and publicly acceptable implementation.
2. Explore the extent to which the proposed policy mixes can effectively support absolute decoupling once public acceptability is taken into account.



## 3 Background

### 3.1 The role of public acceptance and paradigms in policy making

The success of a policy instrument depends on a large range of factors including; the strength and quality of its design; how it is implemented; the resources invested (financial and technical); the enforcement and compliance measures put in place; as well as the level of political capital available to overcome any public acceptability issues.<sup>2</sup> Policy mixes aiming to lead towards absolute decoupling will particularly require degrees of behavioural change, and will therefore depend to a large degree on the consent and cooperation of the public. The assessment of public acceptability cannot be viewed as a static equation independent of context. Windows of opportunity will often emerge where the public is more receptive to the objective of the policy (see for example Baumgartner and Jones (1993)). An important part of this is public discourse and the public's familiarity with adopting similar behaviours, as well as prominence of the environmental imperative for action. The sequencing, presentation and timing of policies is therefore of vital political importance.

The consequences of strong opposition to a given policy may range from high implementation and enforcement costs, eroded political capital, to ultimately policy withdrawal or failure. Therefore, an important part of DYNAMIX is the ex-ante analysis of the proposed policy instruments to assess potential issues with regard to public acceptability. This analysis of public acceptability relies heavily upon the concept of paradigm and applies an earlier stream of work within DYNAMIX exploring paradigms and their potential role, if shifted, in achieving sustainable resource use by 2050. This work is reported in Vanner and Bicket (2013).

The term 'paradigm' has come to be applied loosely with a range of different meanings; it is synonymous and used interchangeably with belief, concept, theory, and even tradition, practice, or attitude. In broad terms (and as used in the context of DYNAMIX), an individual or group of people's 'paradigm' is the worldview – the set of values, beliefs and ideologies – in which they are immersed and which they use to navigate any new evidence, challenges or choices with which they find themselves confronted. Paradigms manifest themselves externally via 'discourses'. According to Dryzek (2007), discourses establish meanings, identify agents, confirm relations between actors and other entities, set the boundaries for what is legitimate knowledge, and generate what is accepted as common sense. In essence, an individual's discourse is the interface between his or her own paradigm and the outside world.

---

<sup>2</sup> See also Demmke and Deakin (2001), who use an alternative categorization of these: motivation, knowledge of the law, information, deterrence and threats, resources, skills, and efficient management and coordination structures.



The dominant paradigm in society therefore sets a strong context for the public acceptability of a policy, and will often set the starting parameters of public discourse of what might be deemed acceptable by the public when considering proposed policies. While they may be deeply embedded and difficult to change, paradigms are not immovable, and are influenced and reshaped over time through reactions to both new evidence and experience. Sometimes, compelling new evidence of environmental harm alone can lead to a collective acceptance for the need for policy intervention. Other times, resistance to change will mean that policy and practice may need to move ahead of consensus. Either way, positive change in practices may well, over time, help to bring about a positive shift in the dominant paradigm, leading to a redefining of the limits of public acceptability and of the policies at the disposal of policymakers.

An illustrative example of this would be the public acceptability in the UK of the requirement to segregate household waste for the purposes of recycling. Challenging waste management targets stemming from the Waste Framework Directive led to the introduction of a range of measures<sup>3</sup> at a local authority level which were counter to existing practices and were met with some reluctance among a proportion of the population accustomed to the collection of all wastes together. However, by actually requiring households to sort their waste (i.e. a change in practice) the policy led to a shift in behaviour and ultimately perceptions of what was publicly acceptable in this area of policy. There is also some qualitative evidence to suggest that ensuring greater recycling can catalyse a sense of greater environmental responsibility in areas other than waste management (UK Cabinet Office, 2002) i.e. practice-led paradigm change or 'I do green things therefore I am green'. An alternative route of paradigm would be the more conscious and often voluntary integration of environmental data with behaviour. Underlying the former change in attitude is likely a latent desire for integrity which is possible by someone who has experienced that the change in practice is possible. Both of these routes of behaviour and paradigm change are potentially relevant, depending on the context and population segment. Paradigm change is more likely however if the policy is conceived, designed and communicated from the destination paradigm. It is therefore important for those formulating policy to be aware of the pathway of change they envisage when they design policy.

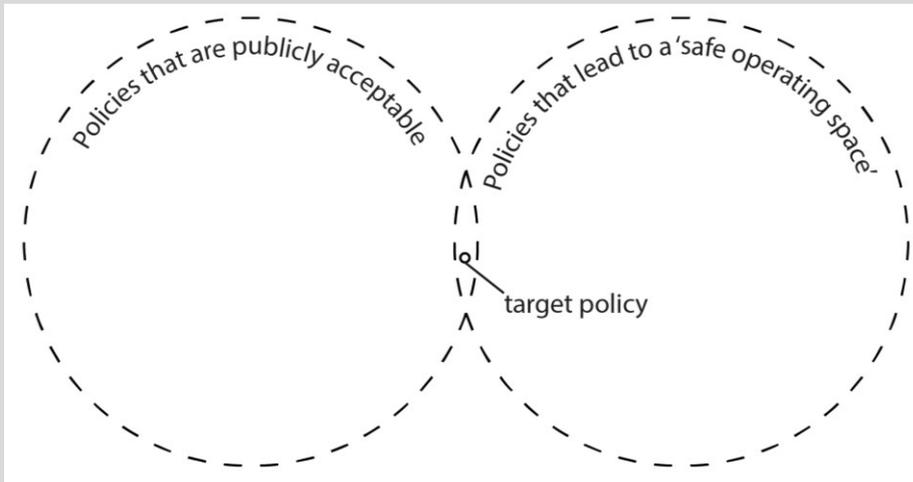
This is of central importance behind the concept of the 'theoretical pathway for paradigm change' developed for DYNAMIX in Vanner and Bicket (2013) and recapped in Box 1.

---

<sup>3</sup> The measures varied by local collection authority but included: offering of weekly collections for recycled and food waste materials, moves from weekly to fortnightly collection of residual waste streams, limits on the capacity of residual waste stream containers, distribution of composting equipment.

### Box 1: Theoretical pathway for paradigm change

In the idealised scenario illustrated in the figure below, there is already at least one policy or policy mix that both fits within the acceptability limits defined by the current paradigm and leads to a safe operating space.



However, it is conceivable that no overlap exists between what the public finds acceptable and policies that lead to a safe operating space. In this case, the existing paradigm limits need to be acknowledged and a 'theoretical pathway for paradigm change' developed in such a way that the proposed policy may become acceptable and feasible to implement at a later date through stepwise/sequential implementation of policy measures paving the way for greater acceptability of previously unacceptable measures.

*The 'theoretical pathway for paradigm change' maps out the envisaged pathway of interactions between society and policy actions which would lead to the required paradigm change over time.*

This assumes that positive outcomes from early sequenced policies lay the foundations for previously 'out-of-paradigm' policies to be implemented in subsequent steps. In this case, the key is to design a policy pathway which is publicly acceptable to present citizens but that moves the paradigm towards one compatible with a safe operating space in the longer term, through a series of 'stepping-stone' sequencing policies.

Source: Adapted from Vanner and Bicket (2013)

## 3.2 The processes that citizens use to accept or reject policy proposals

The processes that citizens use to accept or reject policy proposals are complicated. Groups and individuals have different perspectives and will often go about forming a view of the acceptability of a given policy or issue in very different ways. Furthermore, different citizens have different priorities and levels of trust in governments. Finally, as these different individuals and groups interact in the real world, their differing levels of power and influence



will lead to the interests of some stakeholders having more weight in the public's mind. These three issues are explored in turn here.

### 3.2.1 Perspectives in the formation of public acceptability

The different perspectives that citizens use to frame and understand proposed policies is of great relevance to how the proposal is discussed and whether the public ultimately accepts or rejects the policy proposal. The main relevant perspectives are summarised as follows:

- 1) **The wider perspective** including environmental issues and political perspectives. In the absence of experience or direct interest to refer to, Devine-Wright (2008) suggests that people will likely seek to construct an opinion based on wider perspectives and interests. This is often an idealised, theoretical and often collective perspective some will adopt when they first hear of the issue of concern or eventual policy perspective. Although some segments may be willing to maintain this perspective throughout the policy making process, others will use less idealised and collective perspectives as they seek to understand how the policy proposal will actually affect them.
- 2) **A comparison to existing practices relevant to the policy proposal.** An important step in contemplating acceptance of a policy proposal is a comparison of what would be actually required with existing practices. Where this differs greatly in a way that seems significant, proxy reasons for rejecting the policy should be given even though the objectives of the policy are broadly accepted.
- 3) **Self-interest and NIMBYism** (Not In My Back Yard). This perspective is seen via the common understandings of NIMBYism as typically viewed by those outside in relation to the siting of renewables. Parallel to this is a group of methodological approaches to ex-ante analysis which seeks to understand a policy proposal from the perspective of individual interests. The point of reference when viewing this is therefore important, as is how the perspective and the approach to analysis interact. Devine-Wright (2008) challenges the use of the NIMBY concept as an 'off the shelf', easy-to-use way of thinking about local opposition to renewable energy technologies, often used as a pejorative label used to undermine the legitimacy of opponents' views.

The important issue for the eventual acceptance or rejection of policy proposals is that citizens can be primed to adopt different perspectives when understanding policy proposals, depending on how the policy is framed (by the policy maker) and how others frame and discuss the issues once it enters public discourse. Where the public are using a different perspective to those proposing the policy, there is a risk of misunderstandings. Devine-Wright (2008) explored the role of information deficit and reported that there is limited evidence (only 1 out of 3 studies) that more informed individuals are more accepting of renewable energy technologies. Behind this is an often flawed assumption that public resistance can be tackled by the provision of more public information (i.e. the so called 'deficit model').



### 3.2.2 Factors important in public acceptability

The role of citizens' priorities is of importance as to whether a policy proposal will be acceptable to the public. When asked, citizens might agree that certain issues are important but fail to say if they would support action in this area. If asked to rank their priorities however, it may be possible to see if the policy will retain support in the face of real-world proposals which involve trade-offs between different priorities. Where support is not immediately forthcoming, trust in governments and the resulting political capital are also important. Based on this, it is proposed that the following three factors are important in public acceptability:

1. **Priorities:** Are the objectives of the policy measures in alignment with the issues that are a priority and of most concern to the European public? Or failing that:
2. **Trust:** Is there sufficient trust in the relevant institutions to accept the objectives of the policy as important? And also:
3. **Responsiveness:** Is it perceived that the institutions proposing the policy will listen to the voices of citizens' concerns?

A source with the most comprehensive coverage of information on these factors is the Standard Eurobarometer 82 survey (EB82)<sup>4,5</sup>. This across-Europe report provides a selection of data for 35 countries on various topics such as the European political situation and the economy, as well as issues of public trust, issues of concern and sense of European citizenship.

#### Priorities for EU citizens

One of the questions within the Eurobarometer survey is

*'What do you think are the two most important issues facing the EU at the moment?'*

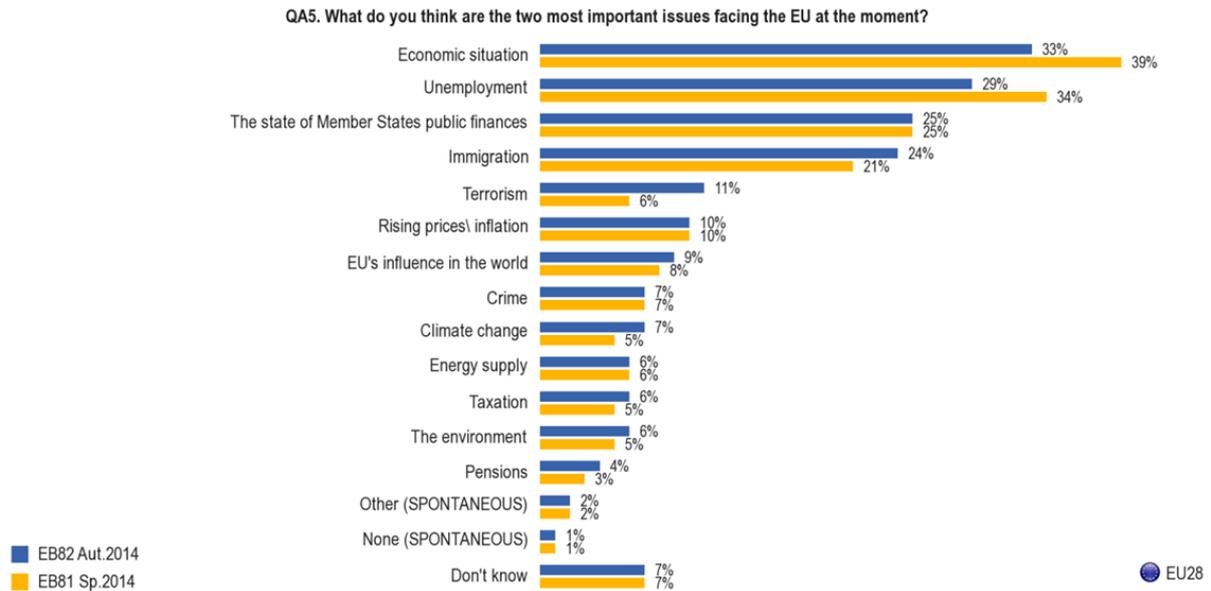
The results are shown in Figure 1.

---

<sup>4</sup> Which was carried out between 8 and 17 November 2014 in 35 countries or territories: the 28 European Union (EU) Member States, the six candidate countries (the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Iceland, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania), and the Turkish Cypriot Community in the part of the country that is not controlled by the government of the Republic of Cyprus.

<sup>5</sup> It is considered justified to include all candidate countries as it seems more likely than not that these countries will join the EU within the timeframe relevant to DYNAMIX's policy implementation.

**Figure 1 EU citizen’s perceptions of the most important issues facing the EU**

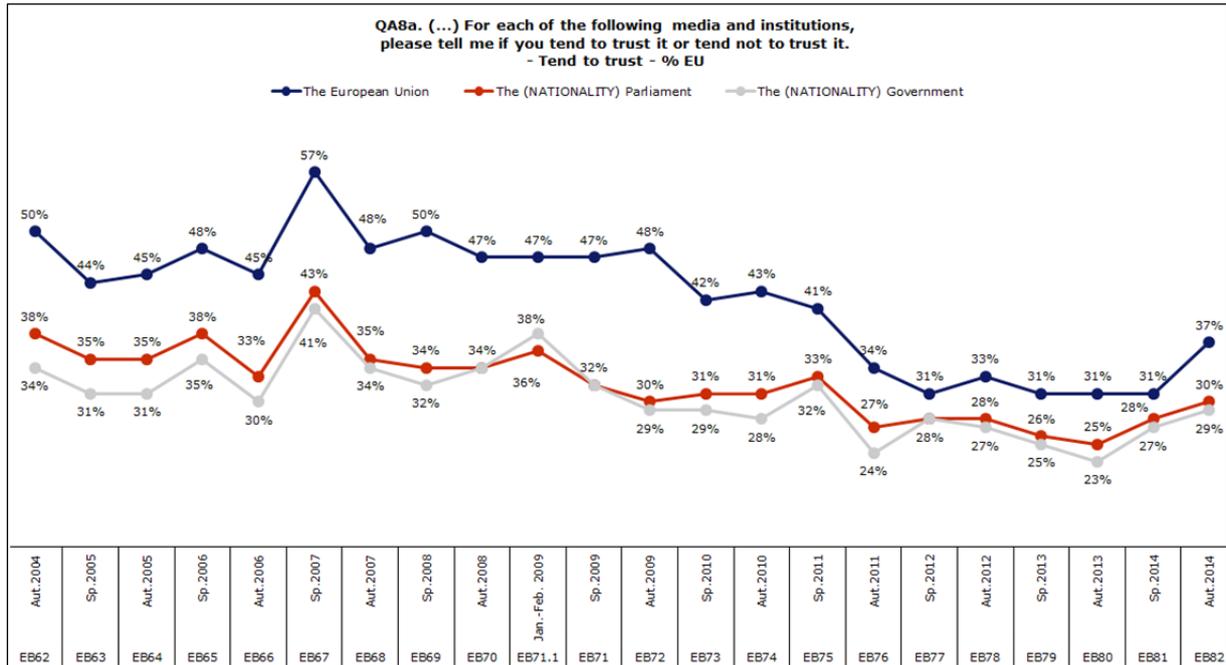


Source: The Standard Eurobarometer 82 survey (EB82)

Figure 1 shows that the economic situation is the most important concern of EU citizens in August 2014, followed by employment (mentioned by 33% and 29% of respondents respectively). Climate change was identified as the most important issue by only 7% of respondents, followed by energy supply (6%) and the environment (also 6%), which therefore places these issues as the ninth, tenth and twelfth most important concerns respectively. However, if the results for these three issues are combined, it would suggest that 19% of EU citizens did identify at least one of the issues relevant to DYNAMIX as their priority, making it the fifth-highest ranking after the priorities related to the economic crises (the economic situation, unemployment, the state of the public finances) and immigration. It therefore seems problematic if a policy proposal requires a trade-off between one of these priority issues.



Figure 2: Trust in the European Union, national government and parliaments

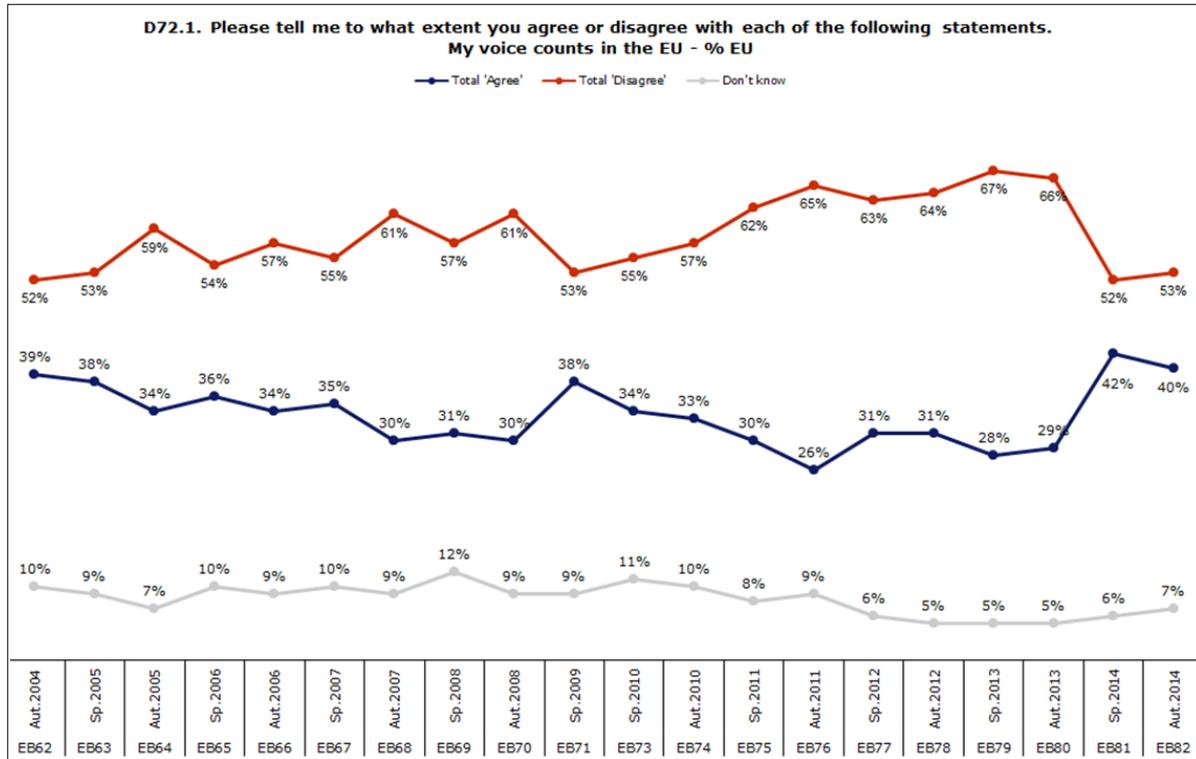


Source: The Standard Eurobarometer 82 survey (EB82)

Figure 2 shows that less than half of EU citizens reported trusting the European Union. This has been increasing in recent years (37% and up 6% since spring 2014) after consistent decline since spring 2007. This 6% increase is the largest since spring 2007. Trust in national governments and national parliaments are lower at 29% (up 2% since the spring report) and 30% (also up 2%) respectively, however these are also showing an increasing trajectory. No explanation is offered within the survey report for either these declining trends from 2007 or the increasing trend in more recent years. Whilst there is a broad coincidence with economic trends and confidence related to the sovereign debt crises, economic trends cannot fully explain the notable peak in spring 2007. In terms of public acceptability within DYNAMIX, such peaks in trust can be seen as windows of opportunity to engage the public in challenging and far-reaching reforms, such as those proposed in the policies.



Figure 3: European perception that "their voice counts in the EU"



Source: The Standard Eurobarometer 82 survey (EB82)

Figure 3 shows that 40% of Europeans agree that "their voice counts in the EU", while more than half say that their voice does not count (53%). This is considered as an important factor when implementing policy as where it is not the case that the public believes that their voice 'counts'; the public will be less likely to engage constructively with public consultations and debate in a way that permits the identification of the most genuine issues of concern.

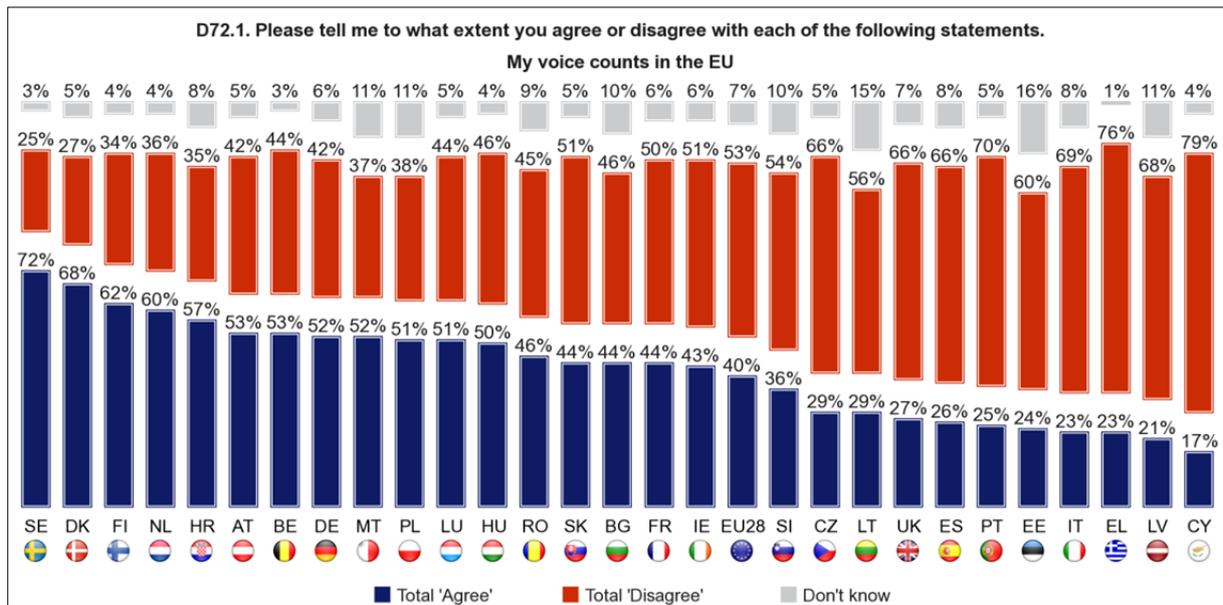
There is a broad improving trend for this factor, after a deteriorating trend from spring 2009 to autumn 2011, with the number of Europeans reporting that they totally disagree that their voice counts, declining in recent years and the number totally agreeing that they feel that their voice counts increasing from spring 2013 to spring 2014.

This varies greatly by Member State as shown in Figure 4. In 13 Member States, a majority of respondents say that their voice counts in the EU. More than two-thirds of citizens feel this way in Sweden (72%) and Denmark (68%), between two-thirds and one half do so in 10 countries<sup>6</sup> and a relative majority of the population in Romania also think that their voice counts in the EU (46%, compared with 45% who disagree). Conversely, in the remaining 15 countries, the majority of respondents who expressed an opinion indicated that they feel their

<sup>6</sup> Finland (62%), the Netherlands (60%), Croatia (57%), Austria (53%), Belgium (53%), Germany (52%), Malta (52%), Poland (51%), Luxembourg (51%) and Hungary (50%).

voice does not count in the EU, in proportions that ranged from 46%<sup>7</sup> in Bulgaria to 79% in Cyprus. There is a broad geographical trend identifiable for this issue, with Scandinavian and mostly northern countries, such as Sweden, Denmark, Austria and Germany, more likely to report that their voice counts in the EU. This difference is important and could be an important factor in the political capital required to implement many of the kind of policies being proposed within DYNAMIX.

Figure 4: European agreement that "their voice counts in the EU" by Member State



Source: The Standard Eurobarometer 82 survey (EB82)

### 3.3 Towards a DYNAMIX methodology for analysing public acceptability

Paradigms make the way that people understand and formulate their response to policy proposals complex. Not least because the way that the policy is conceived, constructed and implemented can often be influenced by paradigm thinking. Therefore, when developing an ex-ante assessment methodology for public acceptability, the concept of paradigm remains an important issue.

<sup>7</sup> I.e. 46% of 90% of the respondents who gave a response other than 'Don't know'.



### 3.3.1 Existing approaches to the analysis of public acceptability

A review of empirical studies that have examined public acceptability or acceptance of climate change policies was carried out by Zvěřinová et al. (2013) as part of the EU-funded CECILIA2050 project<sup>8</sup> and found that studies can be sorted into five different categories:

- 1) **Studies applying social psychological theories of behaviour or Cultural theory.** Studies using a theory of behaviour, such as the Value-Belief-Norm (VBN) theory (or those using Cultural theory), are included in this category. These studies are focused on attitudes, norms and values related to the acceptability of policies. Zvěřinová et al. (2013) found that most studies used internet or mail survey methods to determine these. Other studies employed only some constructs or modification of the VBN model, whilst some, such as Leiserowitz (2006) and Poortinga et al. (2002) used cultural theory. Zvěřinová et al. (2013) highlight how since the 1970s, social-psychological theories of behaviour have been quite commonly employed to explain pro-environmental behaviour. However, only a few researchers apply these theories in the field of acceptability of environmental policies. Approaches applying social psychological theories of behaviour have been challenged by a number of social scientists such as Shove (2010) who proposes a much wider range of methods to understand behaviour. The notable criticism of this approach is examples where values are determined by changes in practices (rather than values determining practices/behaviour) as explored in section 3.1
- 2) **Studies using microeconomic and utility theories.** Studies based on microeconomic theory or utility theory are included in this category and tend to use stated preference methods to estimate WTP (“Willingness to Pay”), often combined with a worldview of behaviours based on an assumption of maximising individual utility (Zvěřinová et al., 2013). Stated preference methods introduce a hypothetical contingent scenario and then directly question individuals via surveys about their preferences. For example, Bristow et al. (2010) explored WTP for different ETS (Emissions Trading Scheme) attributes, including allocation of emissions permits. The evidence review highlights that although stated preference methods have become a widely used tool, there remain questions about whether valid and reliable inferences about real market behaviour can be drawn (Louviere et al., 2004). A significant drawback is the hypothetical nature of the approaches whereby respondents are not outlaying their actual money, as well as the often lack of quality response (i.e. WTP for the 1st unit of utility will likely differ from the additional units of utility) (Zvěřinová et al., 2013). This later issue is referred to in the literature as part-whole bias.
- 3) **Public opinion research.** This category includes studies which rely on public opinion to gauge the acceptability of policies, typically gathered through post, telephone, or online questionnaires (Zvěřinová et al., 2013). Whilst this type of approach introduces a broad range of ad-hoc models often without a theoretical background, most typically these approaches rely on some type of regression

---

<sup>8</sup> [www.cecilia2050.eu](http://www.cecilia2050.eu)



analysis. Response methods such as these often fail to identify the underlying motives, and in some cases how people would actually respond if the situation was presented in a real world situation. A key for this relates to reporting or good responder bias which centres on a desire to present the socially most acceptable response.

- 4) **Referenda.** Studies in this category are similar to the public opinion research outlined above but specifically use referenda or post-referenda data (Zvěřinová et al., 2013). Studies of this kind highlighted in the evidence review were mostly limited geographically to Switzerland, since this is a country with a long-standing tradition of referenda on public policy issues. Studies which used data from Swiss referenda mostly exploited data from post-referenda telephonic interviews conducted after each national ballot. The apparent relative strength of this category of approaches is the reduced hypothetical nature of opinion research as the more direct question can be posed: 'How did you vote in the x referendum?'
- 5) **Qualitative studies.** This category of a less defined set of approaches relies solely on qualitative methods. No examples were explicitly given by Zvěřinová et al. (2013) but it is thought that this category might include qualitative case study or observational analysis. Furthermore, it seems possible that this approach may offer the possible potential of gaining a deeper understanding of why public opinion is what it is, as well as offering some insights into how the public might respond to similar proposals.

There are strengths and weaknesses in all of the categories of approach. In terms of the approach taken in DYNAMIX, the key characteristics are:

1. The collective nature of social systems with regard to how the policies being assessed within DYNAMIX are discussed and implemented.
2. The far-reaching timeframe and nature of the DYNAMIX objectives and policies.

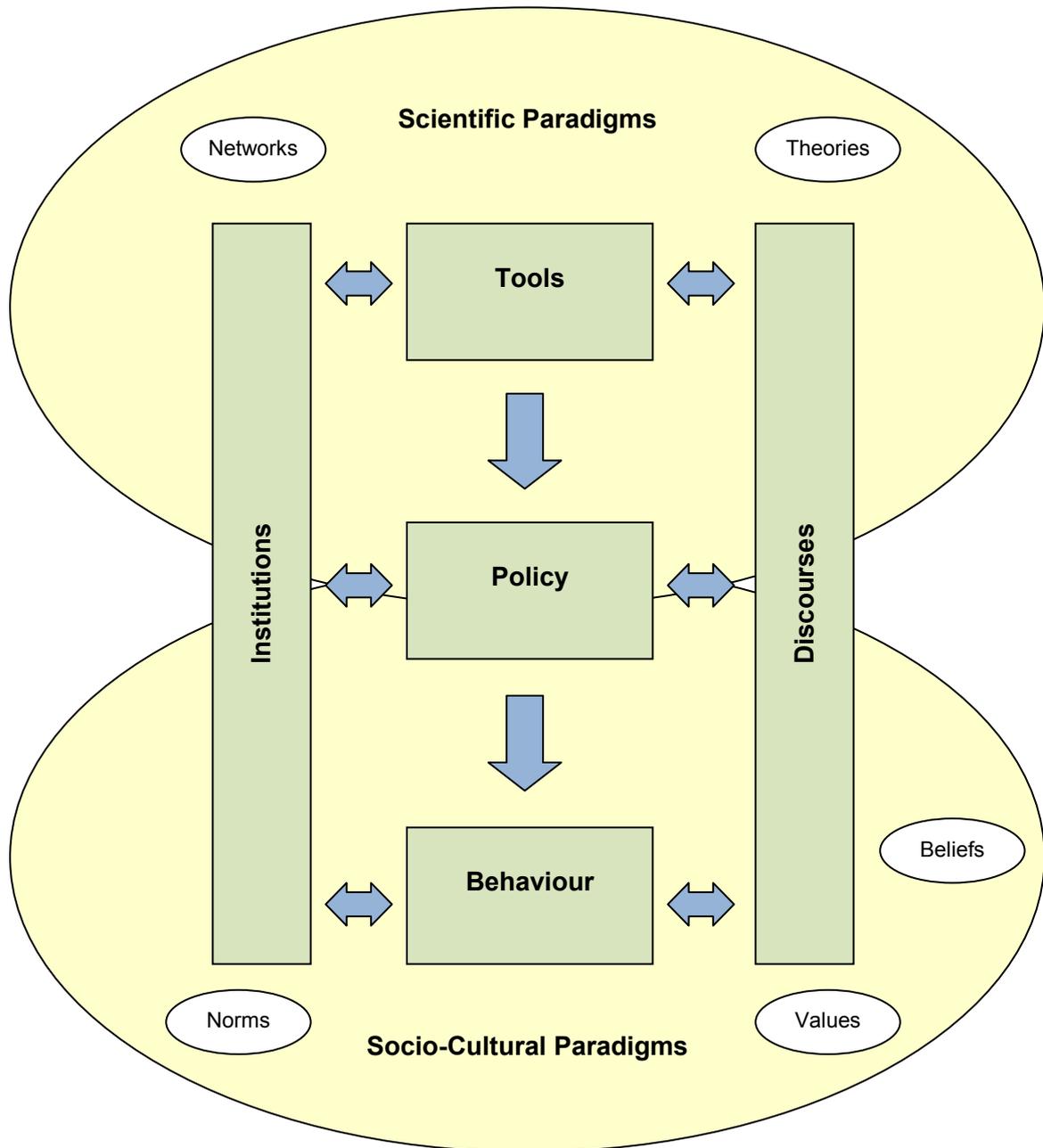
This requires an understanding of why public opinion is how it is and how it might extrapolate beyond the bounds of existing experience.

Heras-Saizarbitoriaa (2011) adopted a media coverage approach to its analysis which reports what occurred in the real-world. This approach however lacks a theoretical background to extrapolate beyond existing experience. With a more integrated model it may be possible to explain why the outcome of a given discourse was as it was, the conditions and likelihood that the outcome might have been different and importantly for DYNAMIX, the type of situation that the discourse is relevant and transferable to. It was therefore decided to develop a media-based approach which uses the theoretical paradigm framework as developed in Figure 5 to understand the discourse.

### 3.3.2 The role of collective discourse in public acceptability

Vanner and Bicket (2013) present an understanding of the paradigm system and how worldviews, paradigms and institutions interact and form public discourses. This is reproduced in Figure 5.

**Figure 5: DYNAMIX' understanding of the paradigm system**



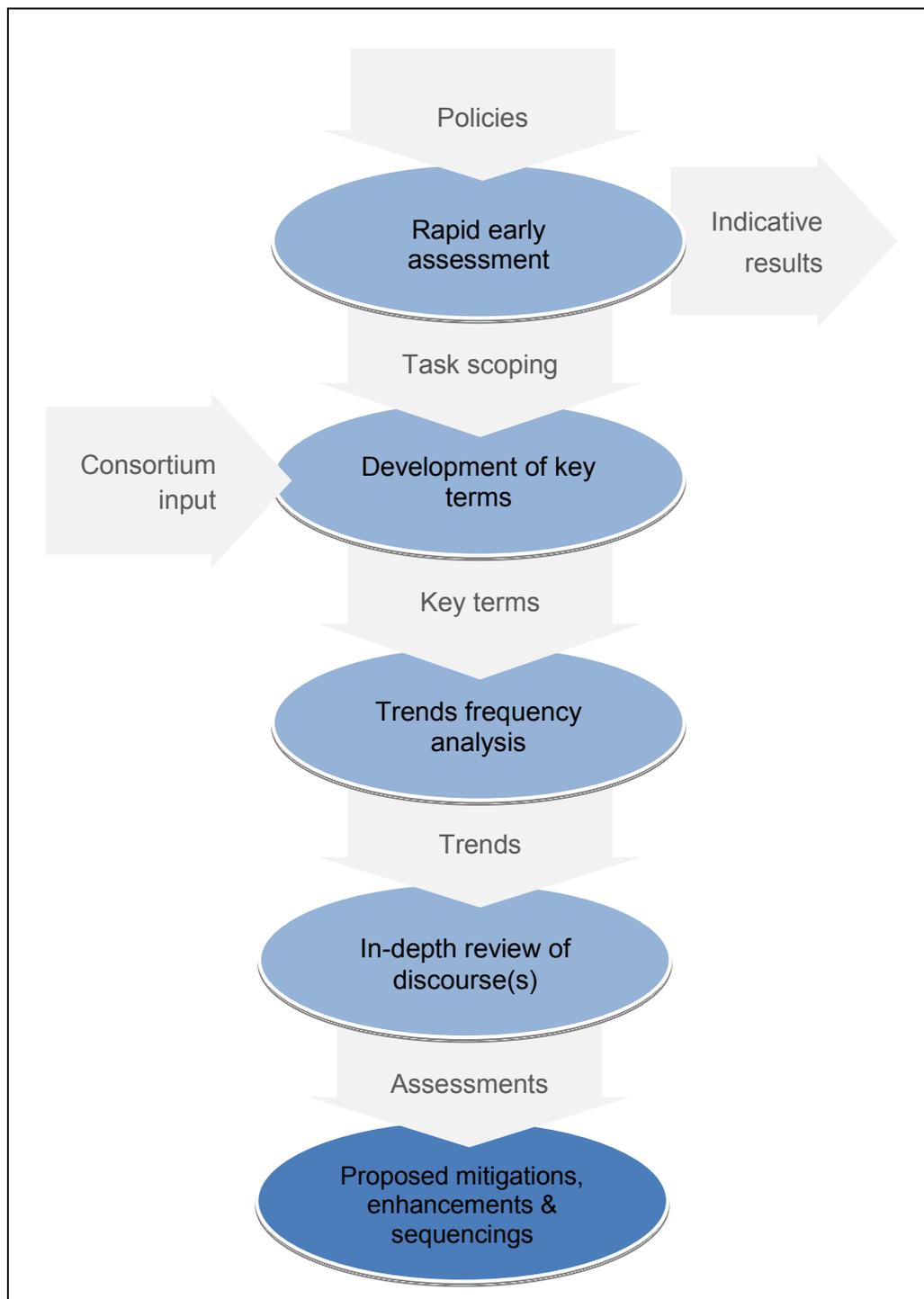
Source: Vanner and Bicket 2013

Figure 5 shows how the interrelation between scientific and socio-cultural paradigms can best be understood via discourses, institutions (including governments) and the tools and policies they develop in order to influence behaviour. In Vanner and Bicket (2013), we propose that it is this wider system which forms the means of co-creation and re-validation of the paradigm system.

## 4 Methodology

The approach used to assess public acceptability of the proposed policies has been to use relevant public discourses as a means of understanding how the public would likely respond if the policy were to be proposed in the real world. A staged methodological tool-kit was developed to maximise the value of the analysis to the DYNAMIX project as it progressed. This tool-kit is introduced in Figure 6 and described in detail throughout this section.

**Figure 6: Staged methodological tool-kit**





### 4.1 Rapid early assessment

A rapid early assessment of the policy instruments was based on the researcher shared assessment and judgment, informed by the policy fiche descriptions. This assessment sought to:

- Establish the likely availability of data for later discourse analysis.
- Identify public acceptability ‘hot-spots’ or particularly challenging topics.
- Inform the final selection of policies to be taken forward for final assessment.
- Provide DYNAMIX partners with an early assessment of the likely level of acceptability and paradigm change across the full range of instruments.
- Provide an early indication of the extent to which additional or sequencing policies may be justified.
- Test and refine the methodology.

A summary of results from the preliminary rapid review is presented below.

**Table 2 – Early assessments of policies**

Discourse data availability		Public acceptability	
<b>Good</b>	10	<b>Unnoticed</b>	11
<b>Available</b>	10	<b>Uncontentious</b>	
<b>Low</b>	6	<b>Contentious</b>	13
<b>Missing or N/A</b>	9	<b>Highly contentious</b>	8
		<b>Unimplementable</b>	-

Note: These represent a preliminary assessment based on an early larger set of policy fiches and on the researchers’ understanding of the issues involved

The outcome of this assessment showed:

- Data availability varied across the policy discourses but was present in most cases.
- Public acceptability issues centred on a minority sub-set of 8 policies.

### 4.2 Identification of key discourse terms

An important task for the in-depth investigations to follow was the development of key discourse terms. This is essential in defining the discourse which is relevant to the public acceptability of the particular proposed policy, as well as ensuring that the language, cultural

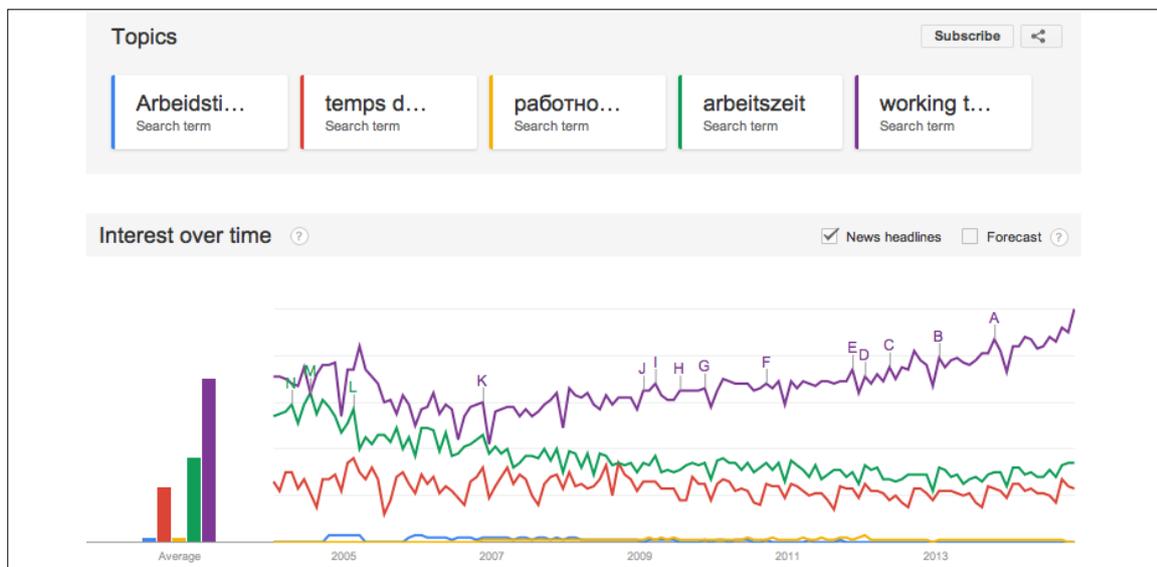
and geographical variations are captured within the analysis. This was achieved using the following processes:

1. Identification of key terms used in the policy fiche.
2. A web-based search query of these terms to identify how these have been translated into public discourse. So for example, the discourse among professionals to develop a policy may use the term '*removal of the exemption on VAT on meat products*', whereas public discourse will additionally use the term '*meat tax*'.
3. It was identified that the media discourses frequently developed more precise terms, often emerging from within public discourse, which a direct linguistic translation would not pick up. Therefore, the terms were shared within the DYNAMIX consortium with the request to provide examples where their country of origin/residence has developed its own logistic and cultural derivative of the key term.
4. Finally, the selected key discourse terms underwent a direct linguistic translation into the various official languages of the EU.

### 4.3 Search frequency analysis

In the next stage of our analysis we used *search frequency analysis* as a supporting tool for our follow-up in-depth analysis. Building on its use in recent studies including Choi and Varian (2012), Wilde and Pope (2013), and Trevisan (2014), discussed in more detail below in Box 2, we used a search frequency analysis tool, Google Trends<sup>9</sup>, to quantify the frequency of interest in key discourse terms in each of the different EU Member States. A sample snapshot result is shown in Figure 7.

**Figure 7: Google Trends snapshot<sup>10</sup>**



<sup>9</sup> [www.google.co.uk/trends/explore](http://www.google.co.uk/trends/explore)

<sup>10</sup> G - Poor handovers and working time directive 'causing hospital deaths' – The Guardian.



Search frequency analysis facilitates the comparison of the relative popularity of search terms by geographical location and date. Google Trends results are normalised to place an emphasis on *relative* popularity of search terms, which reduces sample bias that might otherwise arise due to varying population sizes. The Google Trends tool also disregards duplicate searches. It is important to understand that search frequency analysis results are only approximations.

### Box 2: Google Trends as a research tool

Trevisan (2014) explores the use of Google Trends as a research tool for the “identification of broad socio-political trends”, noting amongst its potential benefits the opportunity to study the relationship “between off-line events and online behaviour” and the growing centrality of online search engines to modern information practices. Wilde and Pope (2013) use Google Trends in their analysis of fishing interest in fifty countries. They found Google Trends to be a strong method for the identification of “issue salience”. Wilde and Pope also found correlations between normalized search volume and real effects: an increase in search volume for an issue was accompanied by actual media coverage of the issue. A study by Choi and Varian (2012) explored the short-term economic predictive ability of search query indices and found correlations between these and certain economic indicators (e.g. unemployment; consumer purchases; and travel). The study found that of the predictive (autoregressive) models tested, those which included relevant Google Trends variables tended to outperform those without by 5 to 20 per cent.

Google Trends is used in this analysis as a supplementary tool to highlight possible events and other instances of relevant discourse which may otherwise have been overlooked. Although examples exist of correlations between search frequencies and related real effects (e.g. Wilde and Pope, 2013; Choi and Varian, 2012), a *lack* of data cannot be relied upon to infer public acceptability or low public interest in an issue. For example, strong regional or national views on an issue may remain undiscussed because they are widely held as common knowledge, or the issues may not yet have entered the public discourse, but nonetheless might rally strong opinion if they were to.

Indeed, further caveats arise due to the fact that search frequency analysis and our broader approach also:

- **Relies heavily upon the identification of the correct search terms** and therefore risks being subject to the cultural bias of those who identify the terms. We attempted to mitigate this bias by consulting the input of partners abroad and by use of a snowballing approach<sup>11</sup> to the identification of key terms.
- **Assumes media representativeness of public opinion and counter-coalitions.** However, the media articles identified are not necessarily those that accurately reflect the attitudes of the public at a given time. Headlines may be intentionally provocative; the readership may know (and may be expected) not to take them at face-value; this is

---

<sup>11</sup> For a description of the snowballing approach, see Chu (2010).



context which we may not be aware of. The analysis also only picks up on the visible discourse, and misses out on the impact of closed-door lobbying of government by private business, for example.

- **Assumes commensurability of results between Member States.** Google Trends results are normalised to place an emphasis on *relative* popularity of search terms. This reduces sample bias that might otherwise arise due to varying population sizes between different regions, but consequently means that search term frequencies cannot be directly compared between different geographical areas. Instead, only an indirect comparison of the *relative popularity* of search terms (i.e. compared with other search terms in those regions) is possible across different regions, or Member States.

#### 4.4 In-depth review and assessment of discourse(s)

The search frequency analysis was used to direct more in-depth review of relevant media and government sources. This was intended to identify qualitative acceptability issues, prominent trends, framing of the issues within the discourse in relation to different specific groups participating in the discourse (e.g. industry coalitions; NGOs) and the thresholds of acceptability. These analyses drew upon:

- Published papers reflecting on the issues under investigation.
- Publicly available lobbying positions and responses to consultations.
- Public media sources as returned by online searches.

Care was taken to explore those public discourses where the values transfer across as much of the EU as possible. However, where a particularly focused and relevant discourse emerged within a particular Member State, this was pursued.

Public acceptability was assessed against the following question and criteria:

- **Can the policy measure be implemented within a democratic system?**
  1. **Unnoticed:** The policy measure could likely be proposed and implemented without any widespread public concern.
  2. **Uncontentious:** Proposal of the policy measure will likely cause some public concern on the issues, but it is unlikely that any formal coalition of disparate stakeholders will form to oppose it.
  3. **Contentious:** Proposal of the policy measure will likely cause considerable public concern on the issues raised, which will lead to the formation of coalitions of disparate stakeholders to oppose it. The policy measure in its current form can only be implemented within democratic systems by the investment of political capital from the ruling government.
  4. **Highly contentious:** Proposal of the policy measure will very likely cause considerable public concern on the issues raised, which will lead to the formation of a coalition of disparate stakeholders to oppose it. The policy measure in its current form can only be implemented within democratic processes by the



investment of considerable political capital from the ruling government during the right 'window of opportunity'.

5. **Unimplementable:** Proposal of the policy measure will very likely cause considerable and negative concern on the issues which will lead to the formation of coalitions of disparate stakeholders to oppose it. It is not conceivable that the policy measure in its current form can be implemented within democratic processes.

A necessary part of mitigating the highly contentious policies is the identification of thresholds of public acceptability. This reflects the 'paradigm edge' or 'point of paradigm change', which DYNAMIX seeks to focus on and highlight where more stringent policy is possible. These involve the issues, population segments and stakeholders that present a level of contention that threatens to undermine public acceptability within the democratic process.

#### 4.5 Development of proposed mitigations, enhancements and policy sequencings

The policy packages as proposed under DYNAMIX represent a challenging context for the policy packages to be introduced. Many of the measures require EU-wide implementation and therefore agreement among all Member States (whether absolute or qualified). This will require convergence of EU opinion around these issues within a common timeframe. It has therefore been the intention of this assessment to ensure that any policy which is assessed to be **highly contentious** is subject to mitigations and/or sequencing. The rationale for this being that, within the assessment criteria, a highly contentious policy requires not only political capital, but additionally the right '**window of opportunity**' for public acceptance.

It is not the intention of DYNAMIX to avoid acceptability thresholds altogether, but rather sequence policies in a way that permits these thresholds to move over time (i.e. paradigm change). This inter-policy sequencing (i.e. ordering of policy implementations) differs somewhat from the intra-policy sequencing (i.e. *within* policy fiches) proposals as summarised in Table 4, in that the inter-policy sequencings are more significant and reflect how early policies can lay the ground for more ambitious policies. In some cases these will be extensions to a proposed policy, such as prepending a mandatory scheme with an introductory voluntary scheme. Other examples include policies which have been initially assessed as highly contentious but which become implementable once other related policies have laid the ground.

All of the information as explored in this methodological section was applied to make the assessments, and where there were significant public acceptability concerns, we have made proposed mitigations to the policy fiches.



## 5 Summary assessment reports

Detailed assessment reports including sources are provided in Annex 1. However, summaries of these assessment reports for each of the three policy fiche groupings (*metals*, *land use*, and *overarching*) are provided here. The summaries capture the **level of acceptability (in bold)** for each policy fiche, including the threshold of acceptability (underlined) where there is an identifiable issue which limits the level of acceptability revealed within public discourse. The summaries also highlight any recommended **mitigation and sequencing measures** where there are significant acceptability issues observed, so as to encourage greater acceptability.

### **Green fiscal reform - internalisation of costs & materials tax**

Green fiscal reform (or 'environmental tax reform' as it is referred to in this analysis) is a concept found largely to be confined to professional discourses among academics and policy makers rather than public discourses in most languages. The analysis therefore indicates that the environmental tax component of environmental tax reform will likely face considerable resistance from within public discourse unless the benefits side of the tax reform is captured within the public debate. Key sectors that would likely resist the environmental tax side of the environmental tax reform are motorists' representatives and the aviation sector generally. The public's concerns are particularly around the fairness of environmental taxes. The limit (i.e. **the threshold**) of the measure centres not only on affordability but also a sense that they are being imposed fairly and evenly, and not just where it is possible.

It will be necessary to ensure as far as possible that material taxes do not threaten the competitiveness of industry globally, with the corresponding threats of economic leakage and jobs losses. To mitigate public concern in this regard, border adjustments will need to be applied on imported and exported products, as far up product supply chains as reasonably practicable. The border adjustment measures as proposed in the materials tax policy fiche will go a long way to maintain public support, but there may be particular product sectors which will need dedicated attention.

Based on the analysis, the following **recommendations and mitigations** for environmental tax reform are proposed so as to improve public acceptability:

- It should be proposed as a large-scale tax reform process to maximise the chances that the public discourse incorporates the tax benefits of the reform.
- Border adjustments be applied in relation to the materials tax, on imported and exported products, as far up product supply chains as reasonably practicable and targeted at at-risk sectors.
- The fiscal benefits need to be announced and delivered in a way that householders both understand and notice the benefits, and do not suffer notable cash flow issues as a result.
- Where possible, it is preferable to recycle revenues as close as possible to the sector or group of consumers who face the tax.
- Agreement should be reached on a cross-party consensus over the medium term.
- The proportion of revenue not recycled back into tax reform needs to be limited in order to avoid a loss of trust among citizens.



### Stimulation of sharing systems

The analysis considered the discourses around sharing systems such as bike and car sharing. The analysis found that there is **unlikely to be significant public acceptability issues** associated with voluntary sharing systems. Where there are concerns, they are likely to be related to functioning and implementation issues. The level of public funding would likely be the main area of public resistance if sharing systems are greatly expanded.

The threshold of acceptability might be found among those citizens who either don't want to or can't participate and the level of public funding, if perceived to be disproportionate.

Based on the analysis, the following **recommendations and mitigations** are proposed so as to improve public acceptability:

- It's important that public acceptability is gauged on a case-by-case basis, and public funding either seen as a start-up grant or long-term public subsidies transparently justified. It is also important that sharing systems are made relevant to all segments of society, not just urban populations.

### Product policies

Analysis for this policy fiche considered the discourses around product standards separately from those around boosting extended producer responsibility.

#### ***Boosting extended producer responsibility***

With regards to boosting extended producer responsibility, there was **little evidence relating to the acceptability of this kind of measure** at the citizen or consumer level. Various take-back schemes already exist across the EU, especially with electrical appliances and drinks bottles. The resulting implementation and discourse varies considerably between Member States, with the consumers of some Member States more engaged than others with the return of such products. In order to improve the public acceptability of these kinds of schemes, **it is recommended that** proposals appeal to consumers by offering money-back where possible and easy return of products. A good example includes the return of mobile phones to recycling schemes.

#### ***Product standards***

The outcomes of the analysis for product standards indicated that this kind of measure would likely be **relatively un-contentious throughout most of the EU, but contentious or even highly contentious in a small number of Member States** such as the UK where



there are concerns around the threat to consumer freedom of choice.

There appears to be a strong Eurosceptic sentiment behind the concerns promoted within the UK discourse. However, the negative reaction in the UK is relatively shallow and reactionary, and would likely be quite different if the association with the EU was not made. Furthermore, the vacuum cleaner discourse<sup>12</sup> in the UK highlights the possibility that a deeper and more contended discourse resulting from the policy reaching implementation would improve acceptability. A threshold of acceptability may therefore lie with consumers who are more likely to accept measures that correct market failures that affect the self-interests of consumers and are presently liable to reject collective action for environmental purposes in domestic product policy.

Based on the analysis, the following **recommendations and mitigations** are proposed to improve public acceptability of product standards:

- Sequencing of standards based on the prioritisation of products where there are clear private benefits of product standards and ensuring that this is highlighted within the implantation.
- Product areas which have a predominately or sole-environmental benefit should be sequenced after benefits have been demonstrated in the money savings areas.
- A timed exemption for some Member States, particularly the UK, might also ensure that the benefits (or at least the lack of feared disbenefits) are demonstrated in other EU Member States.
- Policy implementation timeframes which have the positive support of sceptical Member States such as the UK, are essential in avoiding negative discourses.
- Greater independent technical oversight of particular manufacturers' influence on product standard-setting. This would increase transparency in the standard setting, and might reduce the likelihood that some manufacturers would lobby against the measure.

---

<sup>12</sup> The vacuum cleaner discourse refers to the media reaction following a European Commission directive which aimed to encourage more energy efficient domestic appliances such as vacuum cleaners.



### Food waste

This policy fiche included measures such as targeted information campaigns on changing diets and on food waste, as well as development of food redistribution programmes/food donations to reduce food waste.

It is unlikely that policies focusing on information campaigns relating to food waste or efforts to strengthen food donation and reduce waste will encounter significant opposition. Indeed, there is some evidence of public sentiment acting directly in this area in support of both Good Samaritan legislation and the acceptance of less uniform produce. Examples include support for food waste 'foragers' and buying ugly or 'inglorious' produce. Underlying this are possible paradigm changes starting to occur within the public around their food waste, some of whom are no longer willing to tolerate what is perceived as unnecessary food waste generated by narrowly focused actions on the part of retailers. The public has frequently come out in support of food waste redistribution efforts and against efforts to cut funding to these programmes such as in France with the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived.

If such paradigm changes continued, it would be unlikely that any lobbying actions or reservation around measures to reduce waste, such as Good Samaritan legislation, would be able to prevent legislation. Thus there appears good scope for further governmental action. However, this might be seen as an easy public coalition, where there is no perceived impact on the vast majority of the public. Should the proposed measures threaten to increase living costs or significantly reduce the consumer's right to shop freely and throw unwanted food away, it is possible that a coalition of interest could form to lobby against the measures.

This therefore represents the threshold of acceptability for these kind of measures, where political capital is required to implement beyond the existing paradigm

Although the public seems reasonably supportive of food waste mitigation policies, the **following recommendations are made** to minimise opposition:

- Caution around the stronger initiatives concerning dietary behaviour, as well as reforms to supply chains in order to prevent loss of support.
- Avoidance of excessive cost on retailers and ensuring that any change in the consumer experience is gradual. Key to this will be to ensure that the sources of food waste from the production and retail sectors do not impact on sales to higher-value consumers. Voluntary and coordinated action will also be important, backed up by targets and the threat of stronger interventions should this fail.

### Land production policies

Land production policies considered in the analysis of this policy fiche included:

- Stronger and more effective environmental and climate dimension for EU land management in the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP).



- Revised emissions levels in the National Emissions Ceilings Directive (NECD) and additional measures for better management of the nitrogen cycle on farmland.
- Promotion of Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) programmes.
- Regulation for Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry (LULUCF).
- Strengthened pesticide reduction targets under the Pesticides Directive, and provision of guidance to farmers on integrated pest management.

It has been assessed as **unlikely that these policies would be publically contended**. It is likely that the details of the policies will be contested between the agricultural sector and the relevant public authorities, but it seems unlikely that this would be discussed widely or within public discourse. Only if the farming lobby and governments were unable to agree and there is an issue that is relevant and understandable to the public would the policy process be contested widely in public discourse.

Overall, the EU population is highly supportive of the objective of CAP and the objectives of these policies.

#### **Value added tax (VAT) on meat products**

Overall, removing VAT exemptions on meat products would likely generate considerable public discourse and resistance among many. The meat sector would likely mount concerted lobbying efforts to highlight among the public the drawbacks of the policy. The policy has provisionally been assessed to be **highly contentious in its unmitigated form**. Acceptability thresholds have been identified associated with fairness concerns, affordability among some, border issues and competitiveness issues.

The following policy **mitigation measures are proposed** to improve its public acceptability:

- a) The measure should be consulted on with the relevant stakeholders and their concerns listened to as much as possible.
- b) The measure should not be excessively regressive but focused on luxury products.  
The following mitigation criteria are proposed so that the taxed products are:
  - i. Not essential for a healthy diet for any segment of the population;
  - ii. Price inelastic without available substitutes with a lower environmental impact;
  - iii. And have a low-income elasticity.
- c) It is therefore proposed that 5-year transitional exemptions for certain meat products be explored; whereby temporary exemptions are agreed based on the mitigation criteria above. This will more likely exempt certain chicken and pork meat products.
- d) The measure to be implemented across all EU Member States simultaneously and identically – thereby mitigating border import issues.



### **EU-wide introduction of feebate schemes for selected products categories**

Discourses around key terms such as ‘feebate’, ‘smart-taxes’, and ‘bonus-malus’<sup>13</sup> were considered as part of the analysis for this policy fiche, however no negative discourses were found to be associated with any of the terms within Europe. In particular, implementation of feebate and bonus-malus taxes were **not found to be contentious** in any of the Member States reviewed and would unlikely be in the form envisaged within the DYNAMIX policy packages. It appears that this form of environmental tax reform is understood by the public and is acceptable.

Whilst implementation of these kinds of schemes appears to be fairly uncontentious, care will be needed to ensure that implementation issues do not lead to negative discourses. In particular, the classing of the scheme is essential to ensure that future schemes are not perceived to be discriminating against consumers who need to own a larger or more energy-consuming product, such as families who need a large car but are willing to buy the most energy efficient car possible. It is also important to note that the bonus-malus has mostly been implemented on at the point of sale and not on the running of already purchased products. It is therefore recommended that any move towards use of taxes on existing products (i.e. annual vehicle taxes) would need to be carefully phased-in in order to provide a warning to consumers and not be seen as discriminatory.

### **Reduced VAT for the most environmentally advantageous products and services**

Analysis of this policy fiche found that reduced VAT measures for the most environmentally advantageous products and services is **broadly acceptable to most actors within the discourse**, with concerns largely focused around detailed issues. The main existing block to its implementation is the EU Commission itself in relation to the relevant Directive. Collective action in this area coordinated by the Commission would likely see such concerns resolved.

The existing discourses have not thus far focused on issues regarding loss of public revenues and corresponding increase in taxation elsewhere. The discourse related to a more wide-ranging policy proposal in this area would likely pick up on this issue and explore the merits of the policy more closely.

There is no clear threshold to this level of acceptance, although any extension to energy efficient products that are already cost-effective to invest in (such as a highly efficient washing machine), would likely be met with more resistance based on unfair subsidies to those who have better access to capital.

<sup>13</sup> The term bonus-malus is used widely with reference to the adjustment of private car insurance premiums as a result of making a claim or not.



Clear, simple, fair and transparent objectives around future reduced VAT measures are **recommended to help ensure that public acceptability is maintained**. Consensus across the EU in the level and categorisation of this policy is also important.

### **Enabling shift from consumption to leisure**

This policy fiche considered measures to reduce working hours such as encouragement of part-time work or sabbaticals; longer statutory vacation times; dismantling of discrimination of part-time workers; the introduction of flexible wage records and reductions of the fixed cost of labour that currently disfavour part-time posts (e.g. in employee taxation and administration).

Regardless of the specific approach(es) used, measures to reduce working hours generally are likely to be met with **significant opposition and resistance in the public discourse**. This is inferred from analysis of the publicly-available discourse surrounding the introduction, implementation and impact of the EU's Working Time Directive (WTD), proposed in 1990, adopted in 1993 and subsequently updated and replaced by other directives. Historically, out of the EU-28 Member States, the WTD has met greatest resistance from the UK. In the UK Associations of employers and their supporters claimed negative impacts of inflexibility and increased labour costs and the importance of maintaining employer and job market flexibility for economic competitiveness.

Discussions over proposals around changes to the WTD took place between 2004-2009 but failed. Since 2010 the EC has been engaging in a review of the WTD and a range of consultations. This extended period of deliberation indicates continuing resistance and lack of consensus around certain aspects of the WTD and working time restrictions, and which would likely feature in response to other measures or initiatives to reduce working time in general.

Analysis of this policy fiche revealed a **number of key recommendations** that could be used to help mitigate/minimise opposition towards such policy measures and improve public acceptability:

- First, with regard to the WTD, the EU can focus on the revision of the WTD, continuing to work with key actors such as ETUC, CEEP, Business Europe and UEAPME. For example, the CEEP attributes the steep increase in the number of Member States using the opt-out over the years to be a consequence of the problems concerning on-call time. If issues such as on-call time for key workers could be addressed and an end to the opt-out negotiated, a revised WTD could form a useful tool within this policy for enabling the shift from consumption to leisure.
- Second, a promising approach might be to refocus the policy around a specific cause for extra time. In other words, instead of a general reduction of working hours, to allow for and encourage additional permitted leave for a specific cause such as parental leave or carer's leave. This may better avoid rebound effects and avoid negative lobbying in the public space by linking the policy with issues that have a



good and growing level of public acceptability and momentum. In a first step, the EU could contribute by comparing effectiveness and economic impacts of these policies and setting out options in a communication.

### **Local currencies for labour-based services (LETS)**

This policy fiche explored the discourses around 'Local Exchange Trading System' (LETS) schemes and found that there is **unlikely to be significant public acceptability issues** associated with them. The concerns are likely to be related rather to functioning and implementation issues. In terms of **thresholds of acceptability**, it is likely that there would be objections by governments on behalf of other citizens, if the LETS was primarily motivated as a way of avoiding taxation or where the LETS becomes compulsory for buyers or sellers to participate in.

Based on the analysis for this policy fiche, it is **recommended** that tax authorities take a measured and appropriate response to LETS in order to maintain the level of public acceptability.

### **Step-by-step restriction of advertising and marketing**

A five-step approach to the restriction of advertising and marketing was considered as part of this policy fiche, including the following measures:

1. Regulation of advertising to ensure that it is fair
2. Ensuring compliance with and further development of voluntary codes of conduct
3. Adapting and developing existing EU law on misrepresentative environmental claims
4. Building on and extending existing regulation with respect to advertising and health
5. Restriction of advertisements on luxury goods linked to conspicuous consumption.

A review of the relevant discourses found that there appears to be **strong public support for the early measures**, which are in-line with the existing regulatory regime. The threshold of acceptability is associated with the more far reaching measures, and particularly the restrictions on advertisement of luxury goods linked to conspicuous consumption. This represents a significantly different world view in the role of the regulation in advertising.

**In order to mitigate/minimise opposition and improve public acceptability** to the measures in the five-step approach, a sequenced implementation approach is recommended to win public support on the earlier and less contentious measures. Further, dialogue could be structured in such a way as to demonstrate that it is not advertising that is under attack but rather the protection of social space. Lastly, there is strong public support across many Member States, particularly Spain, Germany, UK, France, Netherlands, and Portugal, for restrictions targeted at misleading or unfair advertising. The elimination of this form of blatant, dishonest marketing would appear to be a clear win and not very contentious.



## 6 Results and recommendations

The public acceptability analysis has focused on three main areas of analysis:

1. The **level of acceptability**, based on an understanding of existing public discourses.
2. Where there is a level of acceptability revealed within public discourse, the **threshold of acceptability**. This often reflects the ‘paradigm edge’ or ‘point of paradigm change’, which DYNAMIX seeks to focus on and highlights where more stringent policy is possible.
3. Where there are some significant acceptability issues, the **mitigation and sequencing** within the measure to permit acceptability to be maintained.

These are summarised in Table 4. Throughout this section, the assessment categories as shown in Table 3 have been used to provide consistency with other DYNAMIX qualitative ex-ante assessments.

**Table 3: Assessment categories as used within the assessments**

	<b>Public acceptability assessment outcomes</b>
+++	Likely very positive
++	Likely positive
+	Likely relatively positive
0	Unnoticed
-	Uncontentious
--	Contentious
---	Highly contentious
(++)	Assessment uncertain
((--))	Assessment very uncertain

See section 4.4 for detailed criteria

### 6.1 Summary of assessments

Table 4 shows that, of the 14 policies that underwent full assessment, 7 were assessed to be potentially highly contentious (there was considerable uncertainty for 2 of these assessments). Once mitigated however, all of these were assessed to be no more than potentially contentious, and therefore can be implemented with the investment of political capital, but without the need for the right political window of opportunity. This is considered an important distinction as these DYNAMIX policies are proposed at an EU level, with some of them relying on simultaneous implementation (i.e. many of the tax policies which need to avoid cross border leakage).

**Table 4: Summary outcomes from the public acceptability assessments, proposed recommendations, sequencings and mitigations**

Policy instrument fiche	Summary: Acceptability, <u>threshold</u> and mitigations	Proposed recommendations and mitigations	Public acceptance - unmitigated	Public acceptance - mitigated
Green fiscal reform: internalization of external environmental costs	The environmental tax component of (further) environmental tax reform will likely face considerable resistance from within public discourse unless the benefits side of the tax reform is captured within the public discourse. Key sectors that would likely resist the environmental tax side of the environmental tax reform are motorists' representatives and the aviation sector generally. The public's concerns are particularly around the fairness of environmental taxes. The limit (i.e. the threshold) of the measure centres not only on affordability but also a sense that they are being <u>imposed fairly and evenly, and not just where it is possible. A further threshold relates to public concerns</u> about any reduced industrial competitiveness leading to economic leakage and jobs losses.	It is recommended that environmental tax reform be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Proposed as a large-scale tax reform process to maximise the chances that the public discourse incorporates the tax benefits of the reform.</li> <li>Border adjustments be applied on imported and exported products, as far up product supply chains as reasonably practicable and on at-risk sectors.</li> <li>The fiscal benefits be announced and delivered in a way that householders both understand and notice the benefits, and do not suffer notable cash flow issues as a result.</li> <li>Where possible, it is preferable to recycle revenues as close as possible to the sector or group of consumers who face the tax.</li> <li>Agreed on a cross-party consensus over the medium term.</li> <li>The proportion of revenue not recycled back into tax reform needs to be limited in order to avoid a loss of trust among a key</li> </ul>	---	--
Green fiscal reform: materials tax			---	--

		sub-group of citizens.		
Stimulation of sharing systems	<p>Analysis of the existing public discourses suggests that there are unlikely to be significant public acceptability issues associated with voluntary sharing systems. Concerns have related to the functioning and implementation issues. The threshold of acceptability might be found among those citizens who either don't want to or can't participate, and then focused on the <u>level of public funding provided</u>. There is also a case for a gradual roll-out of sharing systems, so as to introduce both paradigm change and systems adaption.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It's important that public funding, either seen as a start-up grant or long-term public subsidies, is transparently justified.</li> <li>• It is also important that sharing systems are made relevant to all segments of society, not just urban populations.</li> </ul>	(-)	0
Product standards	<p>The acceptability issues around existing and planned product standards are limited in most Member States, but are notable in the UK with dominant concern being the threat to consumer freedom of choice. There appears to be a strong Eurosceptic sentiment behind the concerns promoted within the UK discourse. However, the negative reaction in the UK is relatively shallow and reactionary, and would likely be quite different if the association with the EU was not made. Furthermore, the vacuum cleaner discourse in the UK highlights the possibility that a deeper and more</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a case for sequencing of standards based on the prioritisation of products where there are clear private benefits of product standards and ensuring that this is highlighted within the implantation.</li> <li>• Therefore, product areas which have a predominately or sole-environmental benefit should be sequenced after benefits have been demonstrated in the money savings areas.</li> <li>• A timed exemption for some Member States, particularly the UK, might also ensure that the benefits (or at least the lack</li> </ul>	---	(--)

	<p>contended discourse resulting from the policy reaching implementation would improve acceptability. Within this context, consumers are more likely to accept measures that correct market failures that affect the self-interests of consumers and <u>are presently liable to reject collective action for environmental purposes.</u></p>	<p>of feared disbenefits) are demonstrated in other EU Member States.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy implementation timeframes which have the positive support of sceptical Member States such as the UK are essential in avoiding negative discourses.</li> <li>• Greater independent technical oversight of particular manufacturers' influence on product standard-setting would increase transparency in the standard setting, and might reduce the likelihood that some manufacturers would lobby against the measure.</li> </ul>		
<p>Targeted information campaign on changing diets and on food waste</p>	<p>It is unlikely that policies focusing on information campaigns relating to food waste or efforts to strengthen food donation and reduce waste will encounter significant opposition. Indeed, there is some evidence of public sentiment acting directly in this area in support of both Good Samaritan legislation and the acceptance of less uniform produce. Examples include support for food waste 'foragers' and buying ugly or 'inglorious' produce. Underlying this are possible paradigm changes starting to occur within the public around their food waste, some of whom are no longer willing to tolerate what is perceived as unnecessary food waste generated by narrowly focused actions on the part of retailers. However,</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Caution is required for the stronger initiatives concerning dietary behaviour, as well as reforms to supply chains in order to prevent loss of support.</li> <li>• The proposed measures need to both avoid excessive cost on retailers and be gradual in how they change the consumer experience.</li> </ul>	<p>0</p>	<p>0</p>
<p>Development of food redistribution programmes/food donation to reduce food waste</p>	<p>Underlying this are possible paradigm changes starting to occur within the public around their food waste, some of whom are no longer willing to tolerate what is perceived as unnecessary food waste generated by narrowly focused actions on the part of retailers. However,</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key to this will be to ensure that the sources of food waste from the production and retails sectors do not impact on sales to higher-value consumers.</li> </ul>	<p>--</p>	<p>-</p>

	<p>should the proposed measures <u>threaten to increase living costs or significantly reduce the consumer's right to shop freely and throw unwanted food away</u>, it is possible that a coalition of interest could form to lobby against the measures.</p>			
Value added tax (VAT) on meat products	<p>Overall, removing VAT exemptions on meat products would likely generate considerable public discourse and resistance among many, often rooted in cultural relationships with meat. The meat sector would likely mount concerted lobbying efforts to highlight among the public the drawbacks of the policy, which would include fairness concerns, border issues and competitiveness issues.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The measure should be consulted on with the relevant stakeholders and their concerns listened to as much as possible.</li> <li>• The measure should not be excessively regressive but focused on luxury products. The following mitigation criteria are proposed so that the following products are NOT:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Essential for a healthy diet for any segment of the population;</li> <li>• Price inelastic without available substitutes with a lower environmental impact;</li> <li>• Have a low-income elasticity.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• It is proposed that 5-year transitional exemptions for certain meat products be explored; whereby temporary exemptions are agreed based on the mitigation criteria above. This will more likely exempt certain chicken and pork meat products.</li> <li>• The measure to be implemented across all EU Member States simultaneously and identically – thereby mitigating border import issues.</li> </ul>	---	--

<p>A 'circular economy tax trio' - taxes on the extraction of selected virgin materials and on landfilled and incinerated waste</p>	<p>As these are production based taxes, it is unlikely that public attention will be on such tax measures, unless <u>concerns about the industrial competitiveness</u> can be established and these linked to economic leakage and losses of jobs. It seems likely that, in the absence of border adjustment arrangements, the affected sectors will seek to make this case. <u>The threshold of acceptability relates to the degree these taxes can be introduced without these sectors being able to raise sufficient public concern.</u> Whilst it is hard to establish the outcome of such a process, it seems likely that the levels of taxation proposed in the fiche will eventually be publicly acceptable, only after some level of contention.</p>	<p>It is recommended that the taxes are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Announced as a large-scale tax reform process.</li> <li>• Agreed on a cross-party consensus over the medium term.</li> <li>• Consulted on extensively with the affected sectors to recycle revenues in the way that mitigates their losses as much as possible without undermining the environmental objectives of the policy package.</li> </ul>	<p>---</p>	<p>--</p>
<p>EU-wide introduction of feebate schemes for selected products categories</p>	<p>Feebate and bonus-malus tax environmental tax reform appear to be understood and are seen as acceptable by the public within the EU where they have been introduced, and would remain so in the form envisaged within the DYNAMIX policy packages.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The classing of the scheme is essential to ensure the scheme is not perceived to be discriminating against consumers who need to own a larger or more energy-consuming product, such as large families needing larger cars.</li> <li>• Taxes on existing products (i.e. annual vehicle taxes) would need to be carefully phased-in in order to provide warning to consumers and not be seen as discriminatory.</li> </ul>	<p>++</p>	<p>++</p>

Reduced VAT for the most environmentally advantageous products and services	The measure is broadly acceptable to most actors within the discourse, with concerns focused largely on detailed issues. There is no clear threshold to this level of acceptance, although the extension to appliances that are already <u>cost-effective to invest in without the measure</u> , would likely meet with more resistance based on unfair subsidies to those who can afford the additional cost of energy efficient products.	Consensus across the EU in the level and categorisation of this policy is important.	-	0
Boosting extended producer responsibility	Little evidence has been found for the acceptance of EPR policies at the citizen or consumer level. However, the consumers of some Member States are more engaged than others in the return of product schemes. It is possible that if EPR schemes were perceived to be <u>counter to consumer, producers and retailers interests</u> , they might form alliances against the proposals and lobby against the measure via the media. There is however limited evidence for this within the existing public discourse. It was also proposed within DYNAMIX's policy platform that ERP schemes would benefit from a deposit scheme, particularly for high-value technology products in a way that leads to product design innovation that ensures end-of-life residual value.	It is important that the proposals appeal to consumers by offering money-back where possible and easy return of products.	(--)	-

<p>Enabling shift from consumption to leisure</p>	<p>A policy to reduce working hours generally is likely to be met with significant opposition and resistance in the public discourse. Historically, out of the EU 28 Member States, the Working Time Directive has met greatest resistance in the UK. In the UK Associations of employers and their supporters claim negative impacts of <u>inflexibility and increased labour costs</u> (e.g. CBI, CEEP, Business Europe, and UEAPME) and the importance of maintaining employer and job market flexibility for economic competitiveness.</p>	<p>A recommended first step would be a revised stronger WTD with a reconsideration of the opt-out, which is less cumbersome for sectors to implement, and with clarity over its intended interpretation. This could be complemented separately by a review of basic and gender-equal parental leave and career leave allowances with a view to increasing these in the longer term.</p> <p>It is important that working time regulatory policies tackle issues such as on-call time for key workers.</p>	<p>(---)</p>	<p>-</p>
<p>Step-by-step restriction of advertising and marketing</p>	<p>There appears to be strong public support for the early measures, which are in line with the existing regulatory regime (i.e. relating to misleading marketing, public health and 'green washing'). The threshold of acceptability is associated with the <u>restrictions of advertisement on luxury goods linked to conspicuous consumption</u>. This represents a significantly different worldview in the role of the regulation of advertising, and it is quite possible that alliances would form to lobby against this kind of restriction.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Priority should be given in sequencing to restrictions targeted at misleading or unfair advertising.</li> <li>• Policy presentations should seek to demonstrate that it is not advertising that is under attack but rather the protection of social space.</li> </ul>	<p>(---)</p>	<p>--</p>

<p>Local currencies for labour-based services</p>	<p>There is unlikely to be significant public acceptability issues associated with voluntary Local Exchange Trading Systems (LETS). The concerns are likely to be related to the functioning and implementation issues. The thresholds of acceptability include: it is likely that there would be objections by governments on behalf of other citizens, <u>if the LETS is primarily motivated as a way of avoiding taxation; where the LETS becomes compulsory for buyers or sellers to participate in.</u></p>	<p>It is important that tax authorities take a measured and appropriate response to LETS.</p>	<p>-</p>	<p>0</p>
---	--	---	----------	----------



## 6.2 Identified thresholds in public acceptability

The identification of thresholds of public acceptability is important. They inform where sequencing and mitigation is required. The thresholds in public acceptability as identified in the analyses and presented in Table 4 include, for:

- **Green fiscal reform:** The public's concerns are particularly around the fairness of environmental taxes. The threshold of the measure centres not only on affordability but also a sense that they are being imposed fairly and evenly, and in a way that avoids a loss in industrial competitiveness and jobs.
- **Stimulation of sharing systems:** The threshold of acceptability has been associated with those citizens who either don't want to or can't participate, and then focused on the level of public funding provided.
- **Product standards:** Consumers in some more Eurosceptic Member States are presently liable to reject collective action for environmental purposes in domestic product policy.
- **Food waste policies:** Acceptability thresholds have been identified around policies that pose a notable cost on industry, combined with notably threatening consumer freedom of choice.
- **Value added tax (VAT) on meat products:** Acceptability thresholds have been identified associated with fairness concerns, border issues and competitiveness issues. 5-year transitional exemptions for certain non-luxury meat products has been proposed.
- **A 'circular economy tax trio':** The threshold of acceptability relates to the level of these taxes possible without the affected sectors being able to raise sufficient public concern of job losses.
- **Step-by-step restriction of advertising and marketing:** The threshold of acceptability is associated with restrictions on advertisement of luxury goods linked to conspicuous consumption.
- **Local currencies for labour-based services:** It is likely that there would be objections to Local Exchange Trading Systems (LETS) where either:
  - They are perceived in public discourse as being primarily motivated as a way of avoiding taxation; or
  - Where LETS become compulsory for buyers or sellers to participate in.

### 6.2.1 More significant proposed mitigations

The more significant mitigations shown in Table 4 which have a bearing on how the policy is structured, and are therefore of particular relevance to the other DYNAMIX partners include, for:

Green fiscal reform:

- Ensure as far as possible that the taxes do not threaten the global competitiveness of industry, with the corresponding threats of economic leakage and jobs losses. To account for additional production costs to EU producers, border adjustments will need to be applied on imported and exported products, as far up product supply chains as reasonably possible. The border adjustment measures as proposed in the materials



tax policy fiche will go a long way to maintain public support, but there may particular product sectors which will need dedicated attention.

- The fiscal benefits need to be announced and delivered in a way that householder's both understand and notice the benefits, and do not suffer notable cash flow issues as a result.

Product standards:

- A timed exemption for some Member States, particularly the UK, might ensure that the benefits (or at least the lack of feared disbenefits) are demonstrated in other EU Member States ahead of implementation.

Value added tax (VAT) on meat products:

- It is proposed that 5-year transitional exemptions for certain meat products be explored; whereby temporary exemptions are agreed based on the mitigation criteria above. This will more likely exempt certain chicken and pork meat products.



## 6.3 Inter-policy sequencing (i.e. 2<sup>nd</sup> round assessment policies)

This section proposes a number of more far-reaching policies which can be sequenced after the successful implementation of the first wave policies with anticipated paradigm change.

These proposals include, for:

- **Reduced meat consumption:**
  - Policies to regulate further meat consumption, including the introduction of 'meat free days' in public food outlets, as well as the defining of size of meat portions when selling meat products. The latter should include the labelling of retail products and the regulation of portion sizes in restaurants. The reason for this is that it is believed that the introduction of VAT on meat, although potentially controversial, has the potential to be relatively transformative in the public's acceptability of further policy. The reason for this is part informational (i.e. many citizens are not aware of the degree that animal rearing contributes to GHG emissions), as well as the role of citizens actually eating less meat.
- **Food redistribution:**
  - Policies to require the publishing of data on, and the offering for redistribution of, all food wastes from the production and retail sectors. Additionally, full-product-chain food waste targets to be introduced on large retailers. Analysis of the public discourses in this area as presented in Annex 1 (section 4) suggests that food waste is an issue that has the potential for significant paradigm change, once the wider public becomes more aware of the issues. Bicket et al. (2014) identified considerable scope for paradigm change and great savings within the food production and retail sector via better product chain management and integration. It is believed that the greater transparency and public relations risk provided by this policy would facilitate this change.
- **Sharing schemes and extended producer responsibility:**
  - It has been assessed that the various material tax policies (i.e. green fiscal reform and the circular economy trio) have the potential for facilitating paradigm change in other areas such as greater sharing schemes and extended producer responsibility.
- **The sequencing of social and overarching policies:**
  - These policies will lend themselves naturally to sequencing. It is assessed that the introduction of step-by-step restrictions on advertising and marketing has the potential to lay the ground for enabling a shift from consumption to leisure and Local Exchange Trading System (LETS) policies.



## 6.4 Recommendations to policy makers

Based on insights which emerged from this analysis, the ex-post case study evaluations and stakeholder interactions that took part as a series of DYNAMIX policy platforms with our stakeholders, we make the following recommendations to those formulating policy:

- Be aware of the worldviews and paradigms of all those inputting into the policy formulation, including your own and those supporting you. In doing so, it is likely that the mechanisms and pathways for paradigm change which would otherwise be implicit in the policy will become explicit.
- Give prominence to public acceptability issues and be prepared to make adjustments to the policy to maintain it.
- Involve and engage with target groups through consultation and participation in the policy design process to explore mutually agreeable solutions.
- Consider making concessions to target groups, to ease the introduction of the suggested policies, and make a policy more acceptable overall. In particular, be prepared to support transitions in sectors most affected.
- Where necessary, be prepared to invest considerable political capital<sup>14</sup>. Often the most challenging and needed paradigm changes will provide a return on the investment with 'interest'.
- Seek to frame the change in the context of a wider transition over the longer term. To demonstrate that such changes are possible, highlight where equivalent paradigm shifts have occurred in the past. Choose words, concepts, discourses and rhetoric carefully as their meaning may differ subtly between different groups and stakeholders in society.
- Recycle any revenues generated from implementing policies where possible.
- Be aware of false paradigm shifts and intended consequences (e.g. substitution, leakage and rebound effects which counteract the desired objective).

---

<sup>14</sup> Political capital refers to the trust, goodwill, and influence a politician has with the public and other political figures.



## References

- Adamowski, J. (2014) Romania plans to cut VAT on meat to 9%. *Global Meat News*, 7th April 2014. Available from: <http://www.globalmeatnews.com/Industry-Markets/Romania-plans-to-cut-VAT-on-meat-to-9>
- Baumgartner, F. and Jones, B. (1993) *Agendas and Instability in American Politics*. The University of Chicago Press, London.
- Bedington, E. (2012) 'Government tax plans "roasted"'. *Meatinfo*, 11th September 2012. Available from: [http://www.meatinfo.co.uk/news/archivestory.php/aid/14483/Government\\_tax\\_plans\\_\\_93roasted\\_94.html](http://www.meatinfo.co.uk/news/archivestory.php/aid/14483/Government_tax_plans__93roasted_94.html)
- Bicket, M., Guilcher, S., Hestin, M., Hudson, C., Razzini, P., Tan, A., ten Brink, P., van Dijk, E., Vanner, R., Watkins, E., Withana, S. (2014) *Scoping study to identify potential circular economy actions, priority sectors, material flows & value chains*, report for DG Environment
- Chu, H. (2010). *Information representation and retrieval in the digital age*. Medford, N.J: Published for the American Society for Information Science and Technology by Information Today.
- Choi, H. and Varian, H. (2012), Predicting the Present with Google Trends. *Economic Record*. [Online]. 88, 2–9. Available from: <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1475-4932.2012.00809.x/full>. [Accessed 18 February 2015].
- Demmke, C., and Deakin, S. F. (2001). *Towards effective environmental regulation: innovative approaches in implementing and enforcing European environmental law and policy*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Law School.
- Devine-Wright, P. (2008). Reconsidering public acceptance of renewable energy technologies: a critical review. In: Jamasb, T., Grubb, M. (eds), *Delivering a Low Carbon Electricity System: Technologies, Economics and Policy*, Cambridge University Press.
- Dryzek, J. S. (2007) Paradigms and Discourses. In *Oxford Handbook of International Environmental Law*, edited by Daniel; Brunnee Bodansky, Jutta; Hey, Ellen. United States: Oxford University Press: 44-62
- Dunmore, C. and Dunai, M. (2012) Exclusive: Hungary losing 1 billion euros a year from food VAT fraud. Reuters, 7th June 2012. Available from: <http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/06/07/us-hungary-vat-fraud-idUSBRE85614B20120607>
- Hårsman, B. and Quigley, J. (2011) Political and Public Acceptability of Congestion Pricing: Ideology and Self-Interest in Sweden. *Access*, 38, Spring 2011 [Online ] Available from: <http://www.accessmagazine.org/articles/spring-2011/political-public-acceptability-congestion-pricing-ideology-self-interest-sweden/>
- Hawkes, S. (2013) Rising beef prices turn meat-eaters on to Quorn, *The Telegraph*, 23rd June 2013. Available from: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/newsbysector/retailandconsumer/10137738/Rising-beef-prices-turn-meat-eaters-on-to-Quorn.html>



- Heras-Saizarbitoria, I., Cilleruelo, E., Zamanillo, I (2011) Public acceptance of renewables and the media: an analysis of the Spanish PV solar experience. *Renewable and Sustainable Energy Reviews*, Vol 15, Issue 9, pp4685-4696 [Online] Available at: <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1364032111003285>
- McMury, A. (2014). Spanish government ignores recommendations to double taxes on meat products. *GlobalMeatNews*, 1st April 2014. Available from: <http://www.globalmeatnews.com/Industry-Markets/Spanish-government-ignores-recommendations-to-double-taxes-on-meat-products>
- Poulter, S. (2013) Food prices to rise faster than salaries until 2018: Fresh produce could become a rare treat for poorer families. *The Daily Mail*, 9th December 2013. Available from: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2521041/Food-prices-rise-faster-salaries-2018-Fresh-produce-rare-treat-poorer-families.html>
- Swanevik, L. E., (2014), 'Eblex responds to meat tax proposals'. *Meatinfo*, 3 January 2014. Available from: [http://www.meatinfo.co.uk/news/fullstory.php/aid/16501/Eblex\\_responds\\_to\\_meat\\_tax\\_proposals.html](http://www.meatinfo.co.uk/news/fullstory.php/aid/16501/Eblex_responds_to_meat_tax_proposals.html)
- The Lithuania Tribune, 1st July 2013, 'Prime Minister says Lithuania could cut VAT on meat in 2015 or 2016', <http://www.lithuaniatribune.com/43085/prime-minister-says-lithuania-could-cut-vat-on-meat-in-2015-or-2016-201343085/>
- Thewlis (2014), 'Meat tax! The latest sin tax proposal...' *Bitter Wallet*, 24th March 2014. Available from: <http://www.bitterwallet.com/meat-tax-the-latest-sin-tax-proposal/73426>
- Tiffin, R, Balcombe, K, Salois, M, Kehlbacher, A. (2011) *Estimating Food and Drink Elasticities*, University of Reading, 23rd November 2011 [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/137726/defra-stats-foodfarm-food-price-elasticities-120208.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/137726/defra-stats-foodfarm-food-price-elasticities-120208.pdf)
- Trevisan, F. (2014). Search engines: From social science objects to academic inquiry tools. *First Monday*. [Online]. 19 (11). Available from: <http://firstmonday.org/ojs/index.php/fm/article/view/5237/4157>. [Accessed 18 February 2015].
- UK Cabinet Office (2002) *Public Attitudes Towards Recycling and Waste Management* [Online] Available at: [https://www.ipsos-mori.com/Assets/Docs/Archive/Polls/waste\\_recycling.pdf](https://www.ipsos-mori.com/Assets/Docs/Archive/Polls/waste_recycling.pdf)
- Vanner, R., Bicket, M. (2013): *The use of paradigms in DYNAMIX*, Deliverable 1.1.
- Wilde, G. and Pope, K. (2013). *Worldwide trends in fishing interest indicated by internet search volume. Fisheries Management and Ecology*. [Online]. 20 (2-3), 211–222. Available from: <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/fme.12009/full>. [Accessed 18 February 2015].
- Zvěřinová, Iva; Ščasný, Milan; Kyselá, Eva (2013). *What Influences Public Acceptance of the Current Policies to Reduce GHG Emissions?* CECILIA2050 WP2 Deliverable 2.5. Prague: Charles University Environment Center.