
ACE Focal Points Academy



United Nations
Climate Change

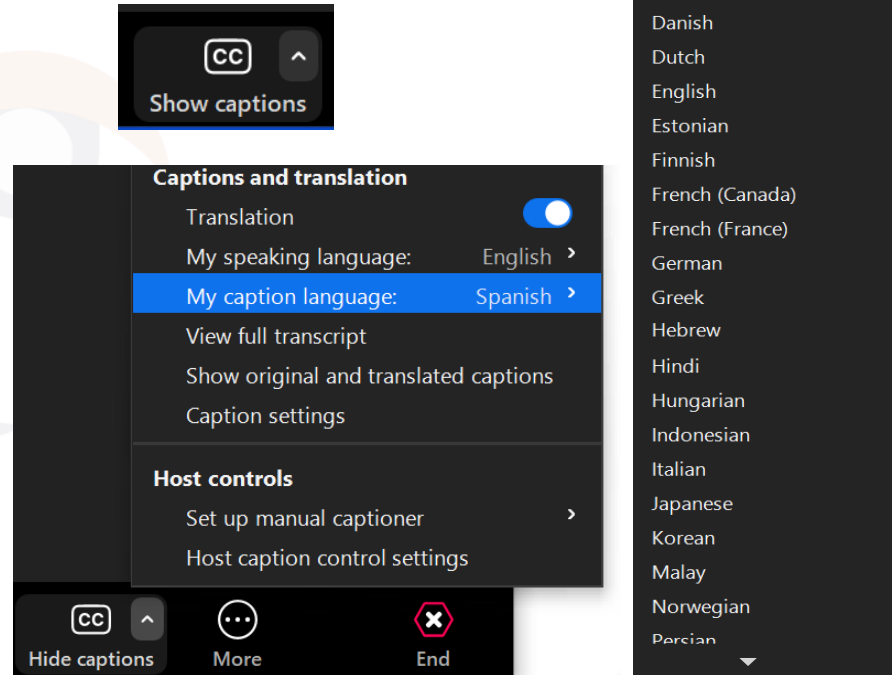


Instructions for interpretation

Login to ZOOM platform

Ensure that your computer volume is switched off and your microphone is on mute.

- Select from the tool bar: *'show captions'*
- Open the menu for the show captions button and enable *'Translation'* and click on *'My caption language'*
- From the menu, choose your preferred caption language



Module 3

Behavioral Science for Effective Climate and ACE Policy Implementation



United Nations
Climate Change



Scene setting: Academy Module 3 and linkages to ACE Dialogue

ACE Dialogue Expected Outcomes

- Participants reflect on, discuss, and share views on the effectiveness of the Glasgow work programme on ACE.
- Participants identify any emerging gaps and needs relating to the Glasgow work programme's implementation that can inform discussions on its improvement.
- Participants develop an improved understanding of what constitutes an effective, impactful, and implementable activity and deliverable.

Module 3 Session Objectives

The session aims to strengthen the capacity of ACE Focal Points to apply behavioural insights to improve the effectiveness of climate and ACE-related policies.

- Better understand behavioural barriers affecting climate policy implementation
- Identify why ACE programmes sometimes fail to achieve expected results
- Learn practical behavioural tools to improve policy effectiveness
- Explore how behavioural approaches can strengthen ACE implementation at national level
- Consider ethical aspects relevant for public sector application.



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



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Behavioural Insights for more effective ACE policies implementation

A practical training session for ACE Focal Points

Supported by:



Federal Ministry
for the Environment, Climate Action,
Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety



INTERNATIONAL
CLIMATE
INITIATIVE

ACE Academy, 13th June 2026
Bonn, Germany

based on a decision of
the German Bundestag

Every sustainability challenge has one thing in common



To solve them, someone somewhere has to start behaving differently.



Why use behavioural science?

Many climate awareness and education programmes have been running for decades,

and we now know more about climate change than ever before,

but still continue to behave in unsustainable ways...



Only since 2000 on average in the world:

- Individual **energy consumption** rose by 18%
- Individual **plastic waste** generation is up by 15%
- Individuals in developed countries continue **wasting** from 30 to 110 kg of **food** per year.

Objectives



Better understand behavioural barriers affecting climate policy and ACE implementation



Recognize why ACE programmes do not always achieve the expected results



Learn practical behavioural tools to make climate and ACE policies more effective



Explore how behavioural approaches can strengthen ACE implementation at the national level



Consider ethical aspects when applying behavioural approaches in the public sector



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“Behavior is ultimately
the product of the brain,
the most mysterious
organ of them all.” —
Ian Tattersall



Interactive Stroop Effect Experiment

In this experiment you are required to say the color of the word, not what the word says.

For example, for the word, **RED**, you should say "Blue". As soon as the words appear on your screen, read the list as fast as you can.

RED

GREEN

BLUE

YELLOW

PINK

RED

ORANGE

PINK

BLUE

WHITE



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Another experiment?



Which situation is more likely?

Bob is an opera fan who enjoys touring art museums when on holiday. Growing up, he enjoyed playing chess with family members and friends. Which situation is more likely?

A Bob plays trumpet for a major symphony orchestra



OR

B Bob is a farmer





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Next experiment





Here's a simple arithmetic question:

A bat and ball cost \$1.10. The bat costs \$1 more than the ball. How much does the ball cost?



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One more experiment?



Imagine a situation.

You are going to buy a burger for lunch. In the café next to you it costs 15\$, and in the café which is 15 mins walk away it costs 5\$.

Will you walk for 15 mins to the other café to save 10\$?



Now you are going to buy a laptop.

You are in the store A and in this store the laptop costs 2,035\$.

In the other store B, which is 15 mins walk away it costs 2,025\$.

Where will you buy a laptop?





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And the last
one...





Our two “operating systems”



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SYSTEM 1

Intuition & instinct

95%

Unconscious
Fast
Associative
Automatic pilot



SYSTEM 2

Rational thinking

5%

Takes effort
Slow
Logical
Lazy
Indecisive

How many of you promised yourselves at least once...?



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I'll give up eating junk food

I will be exercising at least 1-2 times
per week...minimum!

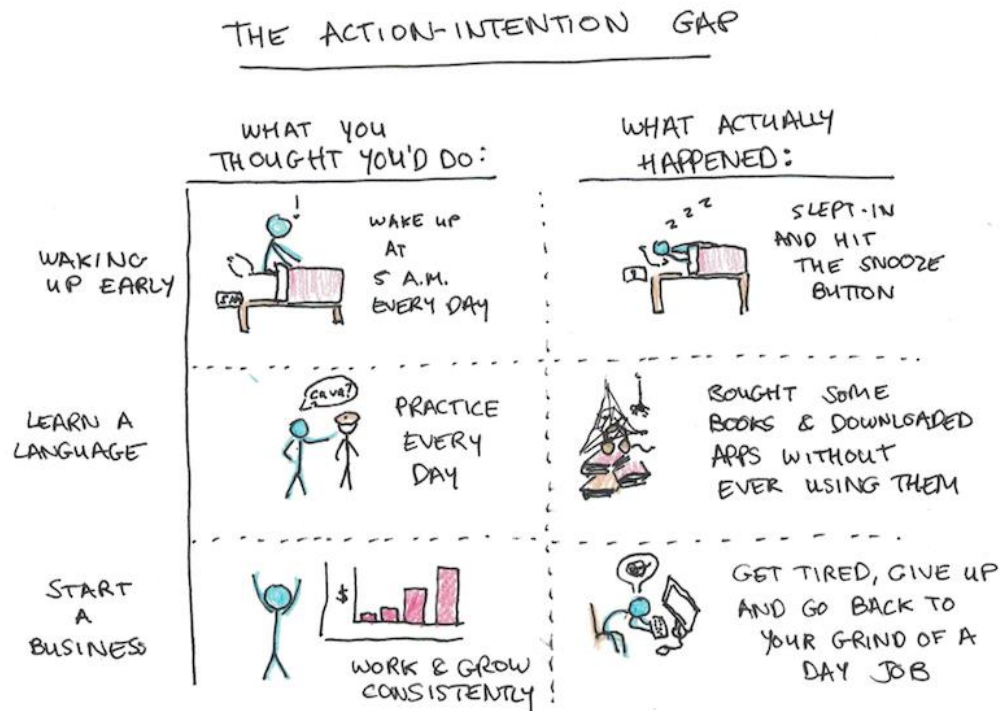
I will try to sleep more / at least 8 hours per day

How many of you have ever broken your New Year
resolutions?

Nearly 60% of people that wanted
to do more exercise or improve
their fitness broke their new year's
resolution in a few weeks.

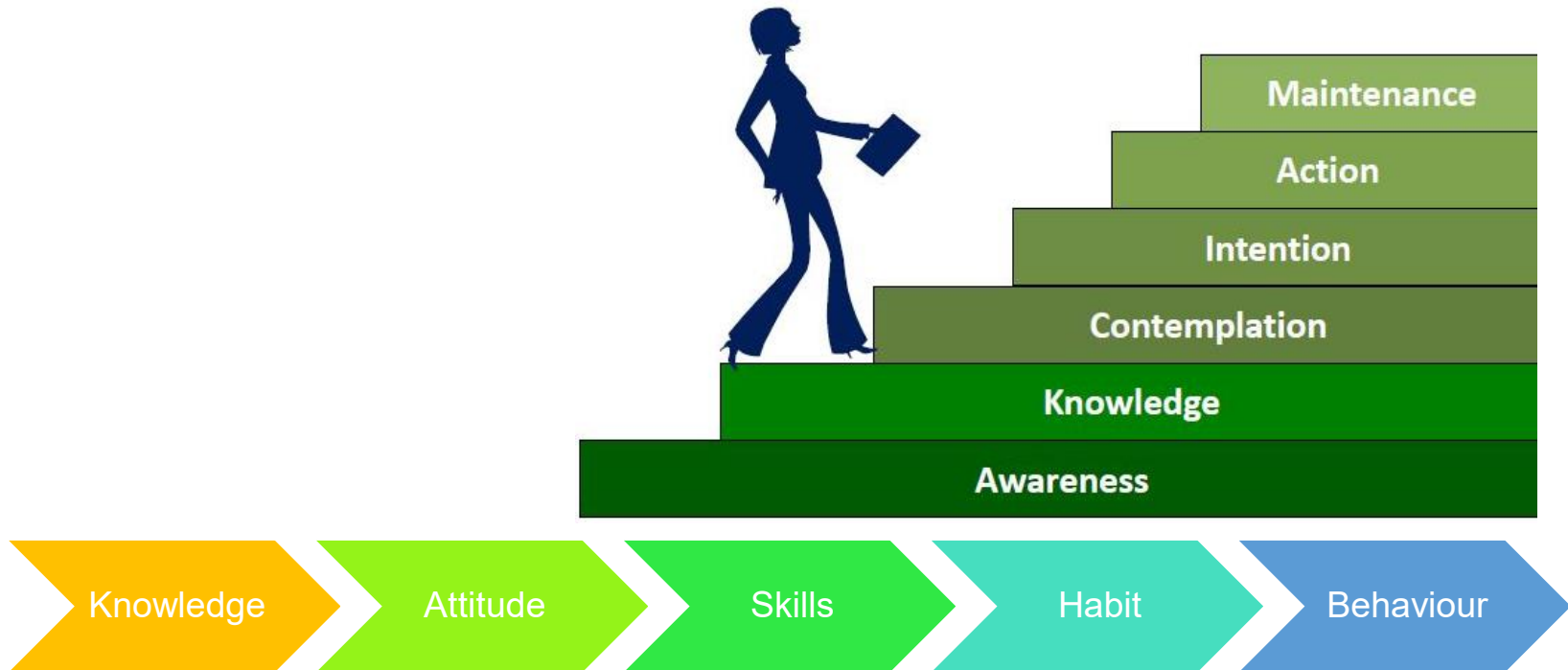
From 2022 study of 14K
respondents

Intention-action gap



Favorable attitudes and good intentions are not enough..

Changing behaviour is very difficult



Why information campaigns alone often fail



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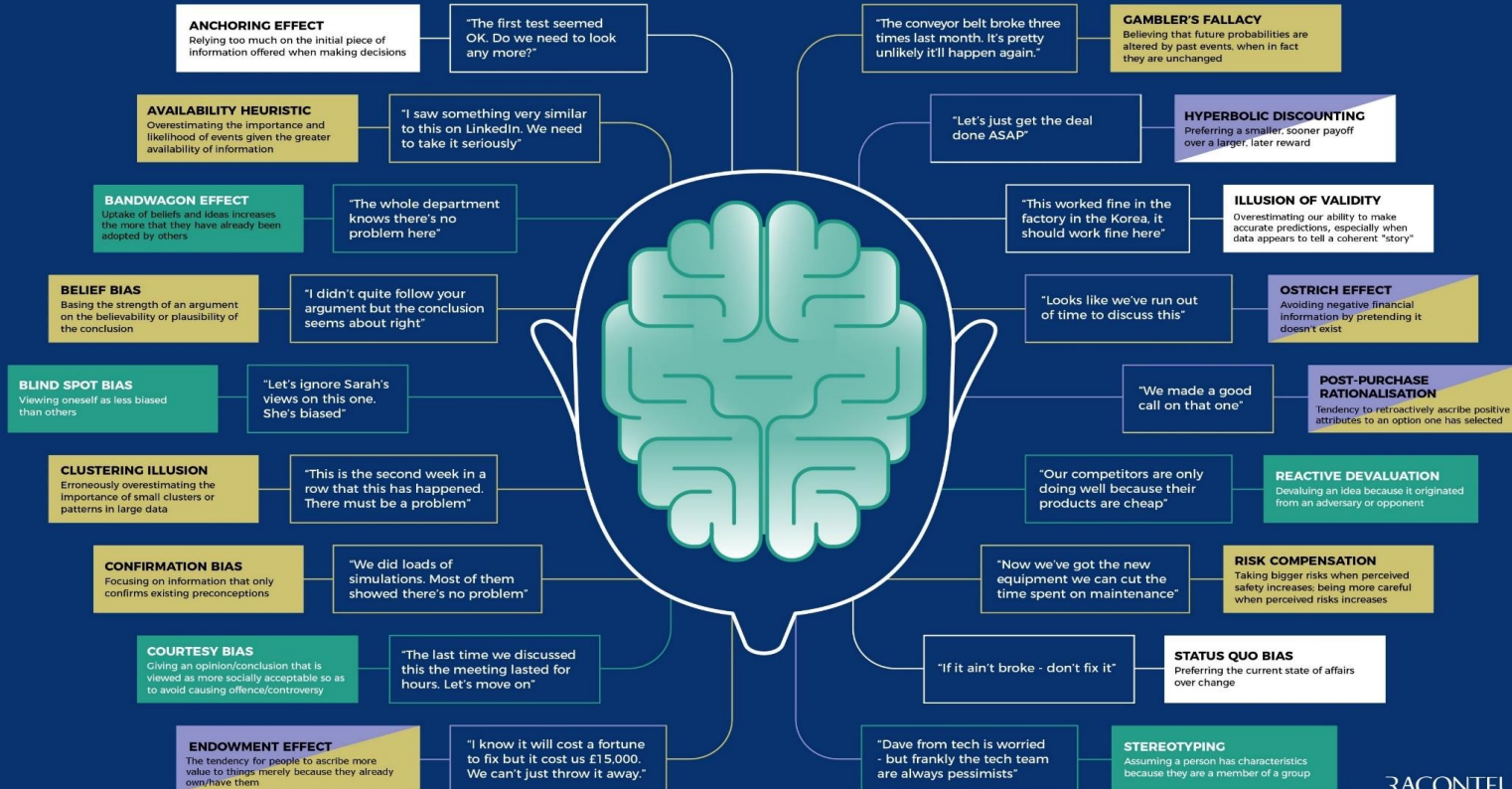
Many types of barriers



Cognitive biases



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RACONTEUR

Source:
Desjardin
(2021)

Barriers to “green transport”

(Park, 2023, p. 90)

Adoption of electric vehicles	Reduced vehicle use in favour of public and active travel	Reduced aviation demand, & choosing greener flights
• Upfront cost • Real and perceived limited public charging infrastructure • Real and perceived range anxiety and charging time • Lack of established second-hand market • Consumer knowledge, awareness and attitudes • Especially poor charging options for those without off-street parking • Delaying purchase because tech is still improving rapidly	• Ingrained habits • Frictions and hassle factors, especially the ‘first mile’ decision which dictates the whole journey mode • Limited infrastructure, accessibility, and functionality • Desirability and identity • Affordability and perceptions of value • Skills, safety and confidence	• Lack of affordable, convenient, or quick alternatives for long-distance travel • Reluctance to sacrifice overseas vacations • Lack of transparency about the carbon impacts of flights for consumers • Lack of regulation or strong incentives for more efficient flights among airlines

Barriers to “green food”

(Park, 2023, p. 106)



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Reducing beef, lamb and dairy consumption in favour of more plants

- Social norms around eating meat, and cultural identity
- Low availability and access to appealing plant-based dishes, particularly when eating out
- Most people have small repertoire of recipes; (knowledge and time/effort barriers)
- Low awareness of environmental impacts of food, relative to other impacts
- Most people prioritise cost, taste and convenience over health and environmental concerns
- Cost is often perceived as higher - this can be true for processed plant-based meat alternatives, though not for fresh veg and legumes
- Consumption is deeply habit-based

Reducing household food waste

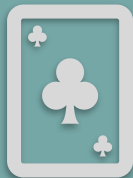
- Lack of knowledge of how to use leftovers; lack of knowledge of how to tell if something is still edible
- Sub-optimal food shop planning (planning for leftovers), home storage (freezing), and meal planning (using up)
- ‘Disgust factor’ for handling leftover food
- Tendency to buy bulk rather than lose out on savings
- Habits and frictions associated with using up leftovers



Group exercise



Divide in groups of 4-5 people



Using Barrier analysis cards, work in your group to identify barriers that prevent effective ACE implementation – as many as you can. Fill in Worksheet 1.



Competition:

Each group will report back two barriers that have not yet been mentioned by other groups.

The last group still able to identify new barriers wins.

Types of barriers

1. **Capabilities** - refer to a person's physical or psychological ability to perform the behaviour.
2. **Opportunities** - refer to anything in the physical or social environment that may encourage or discourage a behaviour.
3. **Motivations** - refer to internal reflective and automatic mechanisms that activate or inhibit a behaviour.



Types of barriers

Capability barriers

- Cognitive skills
- Interpersonal skills
- Evaluating options & making decisions
- Attention span
- Memory
- Awareness
- Physical ability

Opportunity barriers

- Opportunities in the environment
- Resources & time
- Prompts in the environment
- Role models
- Social & cultural norms

Motivation barriers

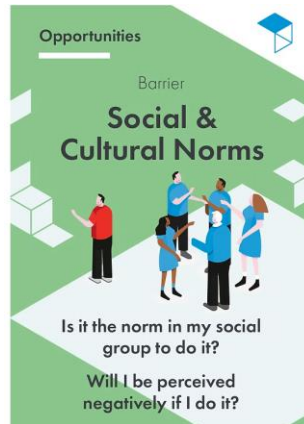
- Identity
- Beliefs about consequences
- Emotions
- Goals
- Belief in abilities
- Habits
- Accountability
- Automatic responses

A few examples



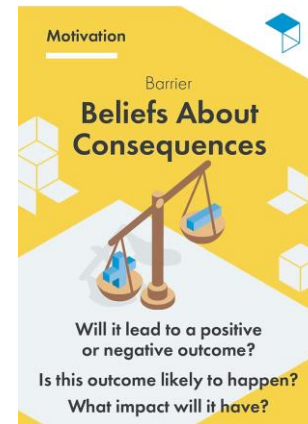
Attention span

ACE receives limited institutional attention compared to adaptation and mitigation agendas.



Social & cultural norms

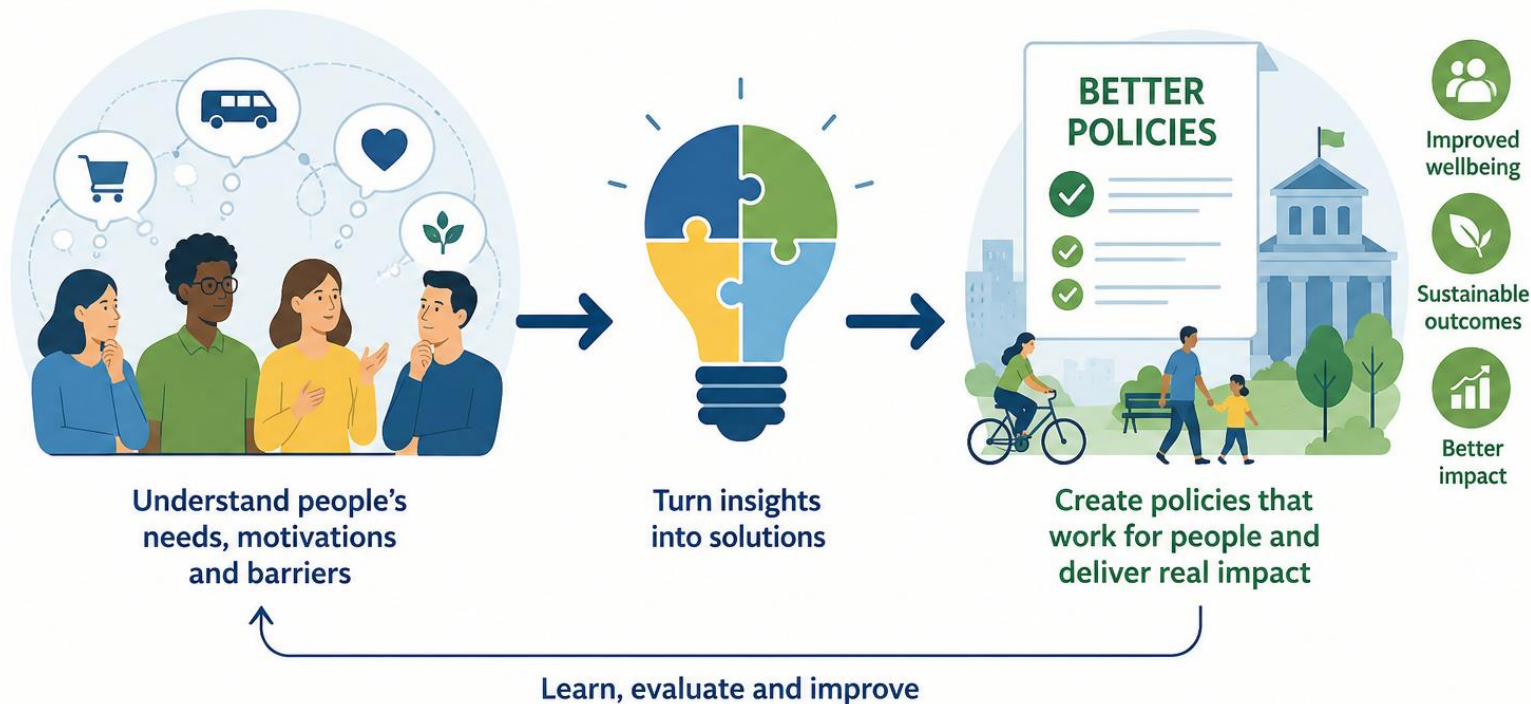
Institutional culture and resistance to collaborate across ministries for effective mainstreaming of ACE.



Beliefs about consequences

Decision-makers may doubt the impact of ACE as ACE outcomes are often long-term and difficult to quantify.

Understanding behaviour → designing better policies



Behavioural insights complement traditional policy tools



Stronger together

Using the right tools in combination
for greater impact

Examples of Organisations using Behavioural Insights



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Government
of Canada



Government of the Netherlands



Australian Government
Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

Porsche Consulting

“

The panel concludes that behavioural interventions can increase the efficacy of pricing strategies, mandates, subsidies and taxes.

”

Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)
Assessment Report 6, 2022



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A **nudge** is “any aspect of the **choice architecture** that alters people’s behaviour in a predictable way without forbidding any options or significantly changing their economic incentives.

To count as a mere nudge, the intervention must be easy and cheap to avoid.” (p. 8)

THE GLOBAL BESTSELLER

Few books can be said to have
changed the world, but *Nudge* did.
The Final Edition is marvellous:
funny, useful, and wise'

DANIEL KAHNEMAN

FULLY
REVISED

nudge

The Final Edition

RICHARD H. THALER
& CASS R. SUNSTEIN



Why nudges are popular



BI-based instruments can be very effective, sometimes more than harder instruments



Nudges do little harm, can be adapted low-cost; low-hanging fruits

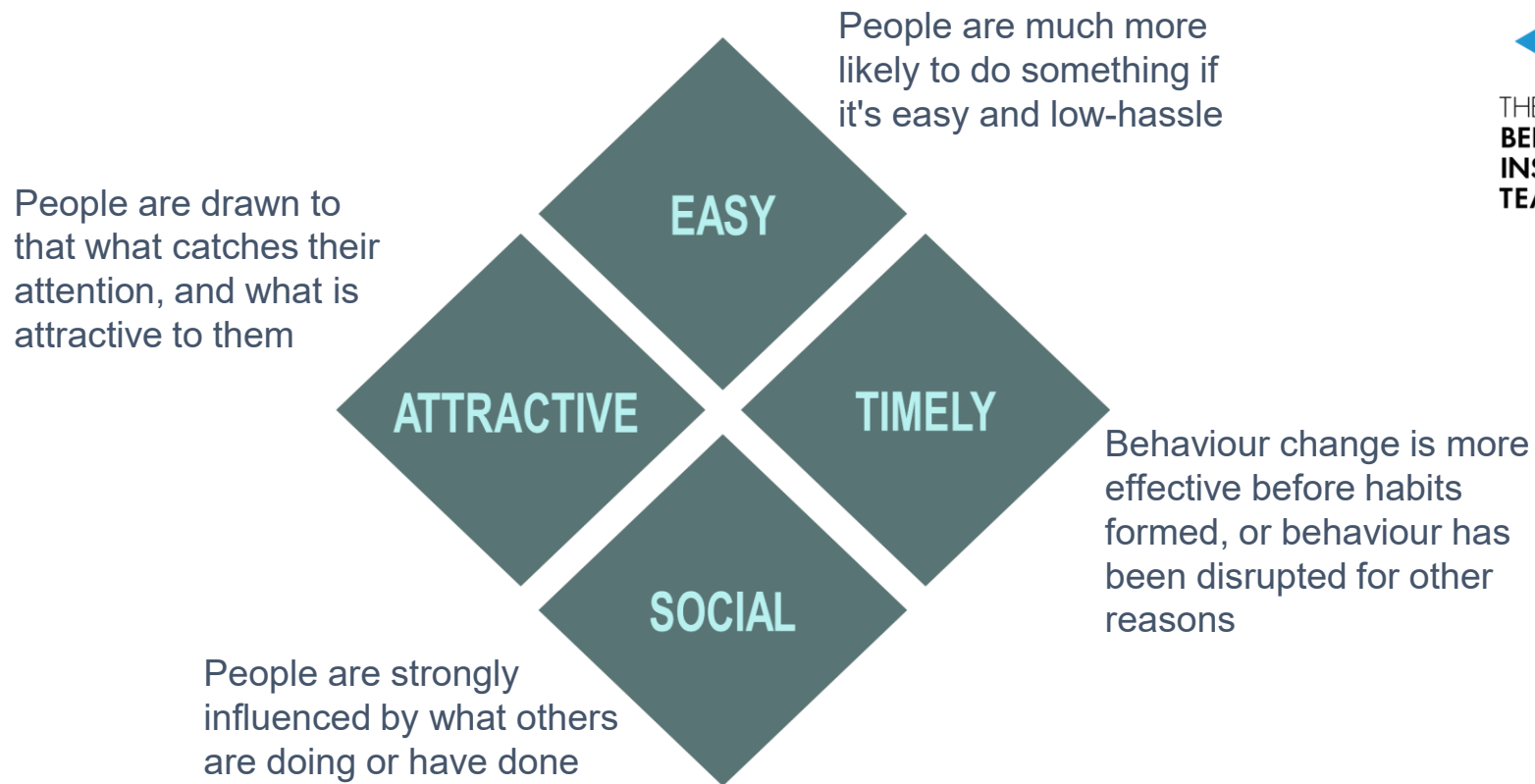


Behavioural approaches are often easy to test

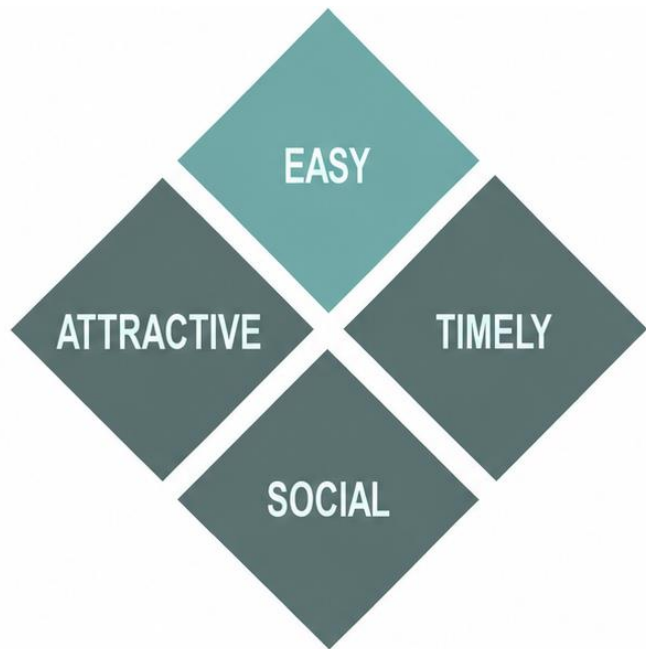


„ASAP tools“ responding to the urgency and wickedness of climate change – „all hands on deck“

The BIT mantra: “Make it EAST”



Make it EASY!



Simplification

Removing frictions and sludge

Defaults

Action planning

Small doable actions

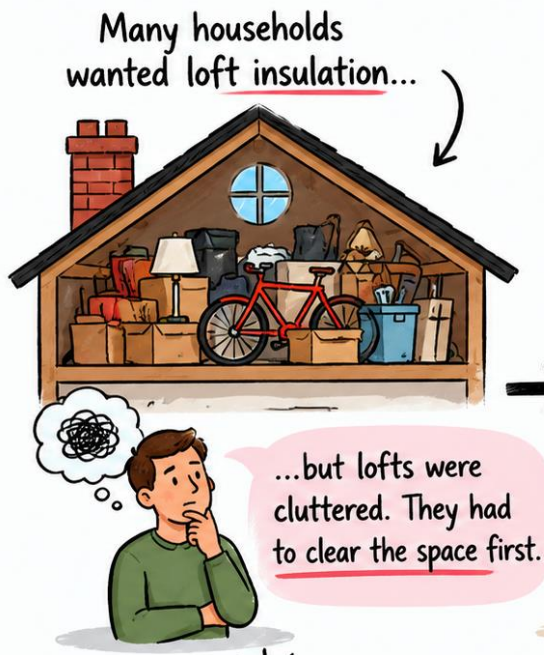
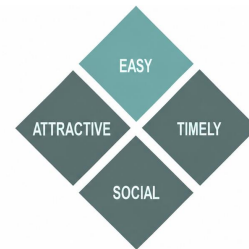
Increasing convenience

Simplification



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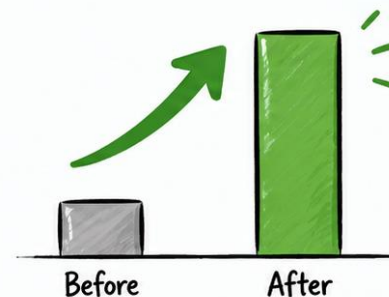
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UK Behavioural Insights Team
offered low-cost
loft-clearance services.



Result:
A 5x increase
in insulation
installation rates.



Removing sludge

SIMPLIFYING ACCESS TO SOLAR SUBSIDIES

BEFORE (COMPLEX PROCESS)

-  Many documents required
-  Multiple department approvals
-  Physical submissions & repeated visits
-  Long approval delays



AFTER (SIMPLIFIED PROCESS)

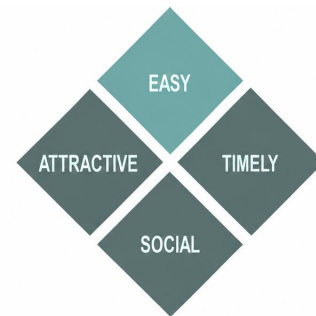
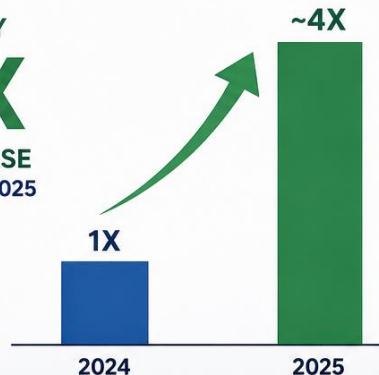
-  Fewer documents required
-  Single-window approval
-  Online application & tracking
-  Faster approvals, minimal delays



Easier access. Faster approvals.
More roofs going solar.

ROOFTOP SOLAR ADOPTION BY POPULATION

NEARLY
4X
INCREASE
2024 to 2025



CASS R. SUNSTEIN
COAUTHOR OF THE NEW YORK TIMES BEST SELLER NUDGE

Sludge

What Stops Us
from Getting Things Done
and What to Do about It

Power of defaults

We ‘go with the flow’ of pre-set options



The Power of Default: Germany’s Green Choice

Making renewable electricity the default option led millions to choose green—without lifting a finger.



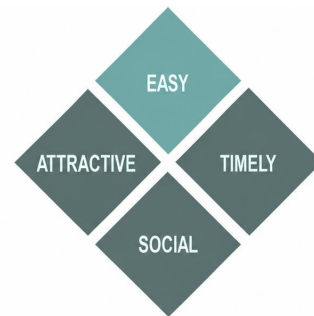
OLD SYSTEM: OPT-IN (ACTIVE SIGN-UP)

Customers had to actively choose green electricity.



NEW SYSTEM: DEFAULT (AUTOMATIC GREEN)

Renewable electricity is the default option.
Customers are automatically on green unless they opt out.



Defaults:

- require less effort
- feel recommended
- status quo bias in action

Action planning



The Power of Planning: UK Commuters Get on Board

Specific travel plans turn good intentions into real action.

SPECIFIC TRAVEL PLANNING

Commuters were asked to make detailed plans for their public transport.

“On **Monday and Wednesday**
I will take the **8:10** train.”



Exactly
when



Exactly
where



Exactly
how

VS

GENERAL ENCOURAGEMENT

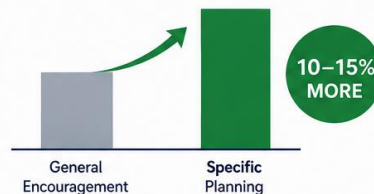
Others were simply encouraged to “travel sustainably.”

“Please try to
travel sustainably.”



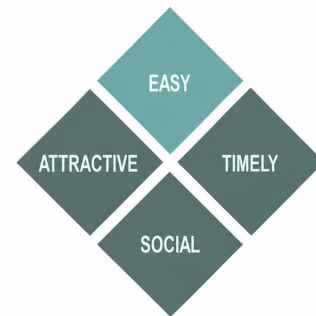
THE IMPACT

Specific planning led to
10–15% more
increase in public transport use
compared to general encouragement.



A plan in mind. A change in habit.

Specific travel plans helped commuters choose public transport—**10–15% more**.



Small doable actions

BIG CHANGE CAN FEEL OVERWHELMING



SMALL STEP FEELS DOABLE



EXAMPLE: MEAT FREE MONDAY CAMPAIGN

Instead of asking people to change their diet completely, the campaign encouraged just one small step:

Go meat free just one day a week.



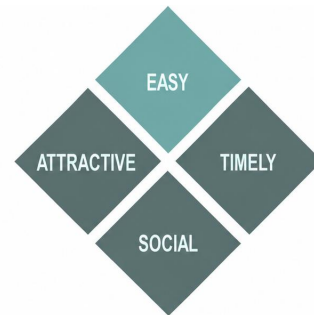
Made the change feel smaller and easier



More people were willing to try it

Small actions can lead to big change over time.

Start small. Stay consistent.
Create a better future.



Increasing convenience



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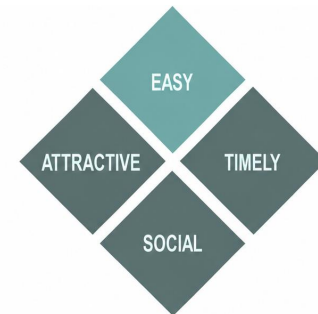
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Designing Convenience. Inspiring Change.

COPENHAGEN'S BIKE REVOLUTION

By making cycling easier, safer, and more convenient for everyone, Copenhagen turned everyday trips into a greener choice.



THE CHALLENGE

Too many people drove short distances.



THE SOLUTION

The city invested in wide, safe, and connected bike lanes all around Copenhagen.



THE RESULT

More people choose cycling instead of driving.



Less traffic
and congestion



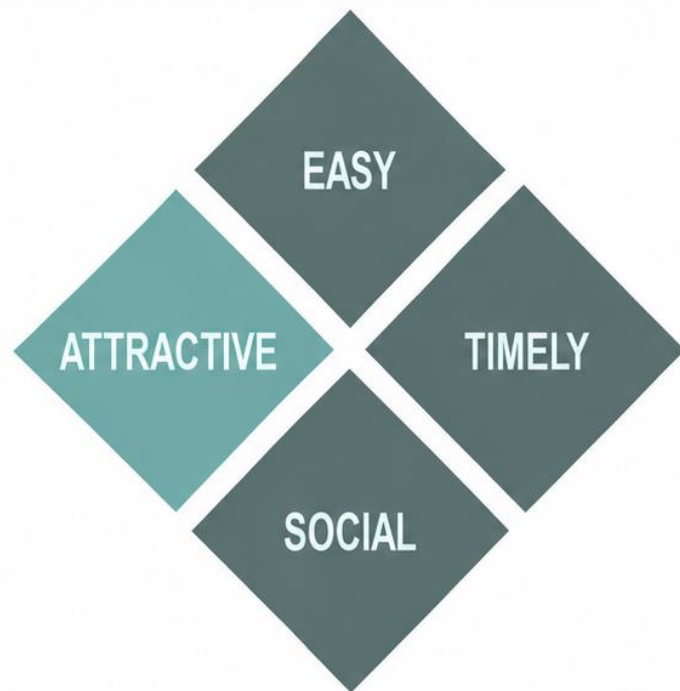
Cleaner air
and a healthier city



Better for people,
better for the planet



Make it ATTRACTIVE!



Framing & Positive Messaging

Salience & Visibility

Rewards & Incentives

Gamification

Emotional Appeals

Attractive Design & Aesthetics

Personalization

Identity & Belonging

Framing and Positive Messaging

The way information is presented changes how people respond.

FOCUS ON CLIMATE & EMISSIONS
Less effective



CO₂ EMISSIONS
CLIMATE CHANGE

- ✗ Feels distant
- ✗ Hard to relate to daily life
- ✗ Benefits feel far away



FOCUS ON HEALTH, FAMILY & SAVINGS
More effective

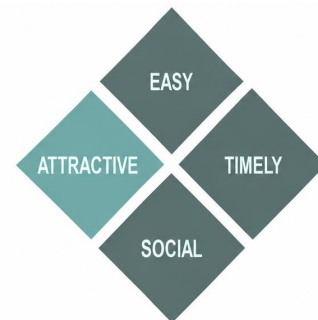
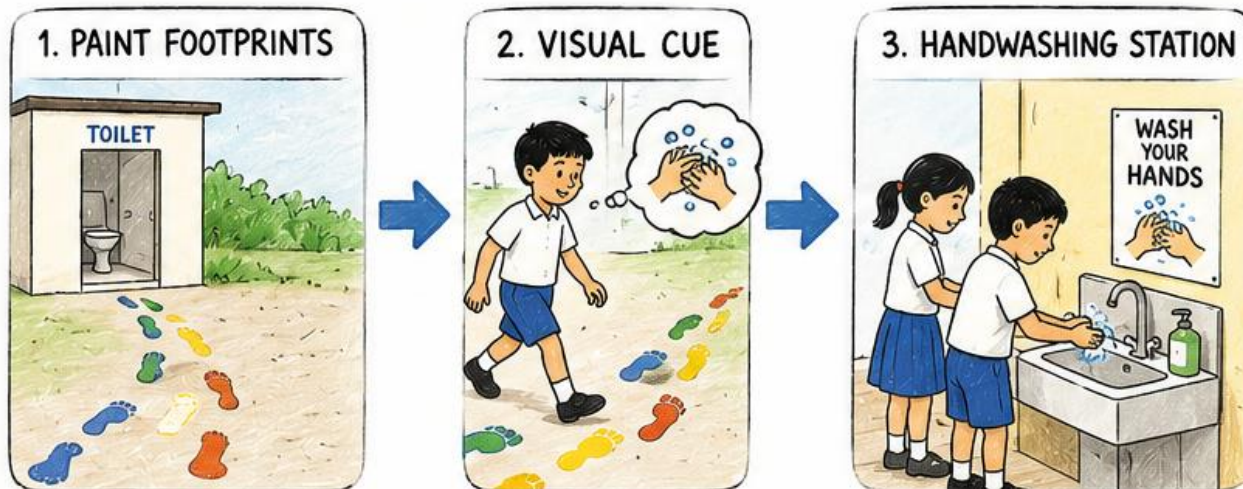


-  Protect your family from smoke
-  Better health for you and your family
-  Save money on fuel

- ✓ Feels relevant
- ✓ Easy to relate to daily life
- ✓ Benefits are immediate and personal



Salience and visibility



Handwashing rates among children
increased a lot
even without any additional education.

Emotional Appeals



EMPATHY

I care about this.



PRIDE

I feel good supporting this.



HOPE

I believe we can make a difference.



TOGETHERNESS

We're in this together.



Emotional connection
leads to care, support and action



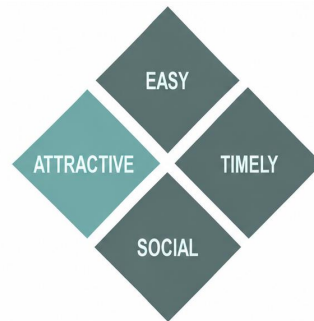
WWF has long used images of pandas, tigers and other cute animals in their campaigns.



→ People are much more likely to care when they feel an emotional connection.



In Sweden alone, they raised about **400,000 USD** with such campaign to protect endangered species.

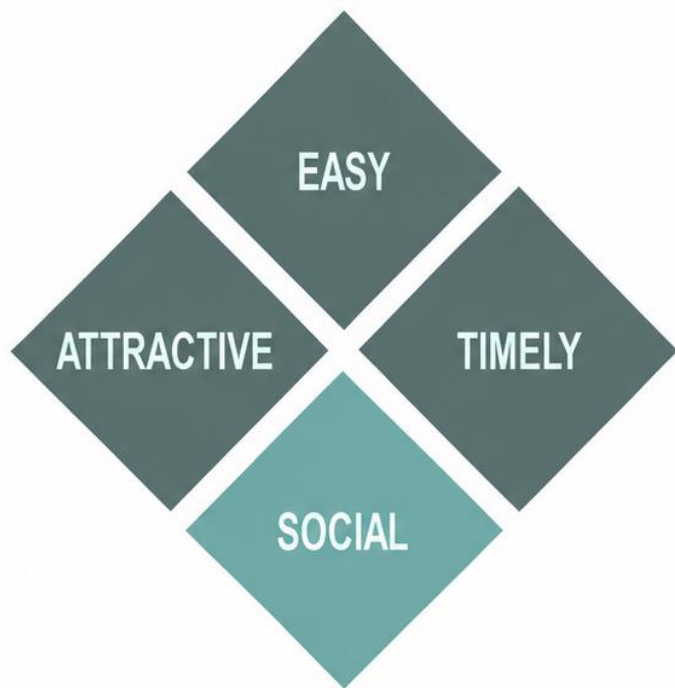


ADOPT A TIGER

Adopt a better future with WWF



Make it SOCIAL!



Using social norms: what others are doing

Using peer comparisons and competitions

Disclosure (smart, personalized)

Public commitment & pledges

Positive feedback

Role models

Power of social pressure



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Social norms and peer comparisons



Instead of just telling people to save electricity, these reports show how your energy use compares to similar homes in your area.



YOUR HOME ENERGY REPORT

For the period: May 1 – May 31

YOU USED
1,242 kWh
This month

HOW YOU COMPARE TO SIMILAR HOMES



Top 20% of efficient homes

750 kWh

Average home

1,000 kWh

Your home

1,242 kWh



One famous example comes from **energy companies** in the US and several other countries.



When people saw they were using more energy than similar homes, many reduced their consumption.

2%
LESS
ELECTRICITY
USE

=

EQUIVALENT TO TAKING
**hundreds of
thousands of
cars**
off the road.



Public commitments

EXAMPLE: PUBLIC COMMITMENT IN SPAIN

- 1** Households were invited to sign a pledge to sort and recycle organic waste.



- 2** A small action, a big impact.



- 3** Households that signed the pledge were about 5% more likely to participate in recycling.

+5%

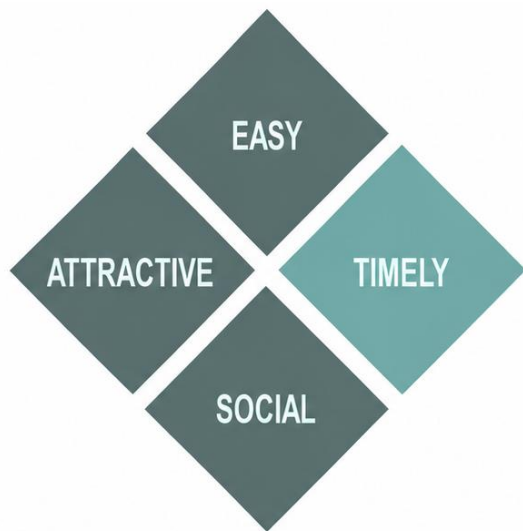
more likely to
recycle



At scale, a small increase like 5% leads to a huge increase in recycling—at almost no cost.



Make it TIMELY!



Timely reminders

Prompting at the point of decision

Habits: intervene before they become established

Triggering after relevant events

When behaviour is disrupted

Targeting at the right moment



KENYA

Timely opportunity to buy fertilizer
leads to more use

Willing but cash runs out



The solution: act at the right time



The impact

+11–14%
increase in
fertilizer adoption

=



As effective as a
50% subsidy later
in the season



Group exercise #2



Divide in the same groups as in exercise #1.



Looking at the barriers identified in exercise 1, propose 2-3 nudges that could help address these barriers. Fill in worksheet 2.



Each group should report back 1-2 nudges that they feel could work best. Explain how they will look like and which barriers they will help address.

- ✓ Strong majority approval in most countries
 - ✓ Automatic enrollment in saving plans and green energy tariffs
 - ✓ Traffic lights, calory labels for healthiness of food
 - ✓ Graphic warnings on cigarette packages

- ✗ Supports non-legitimate goals of the nudger
- ✗ Inconsistent with dominant social values or majority interests
- ✗ Takes financial contributions by default
- ✗ Manipulates (subliminal advertising)

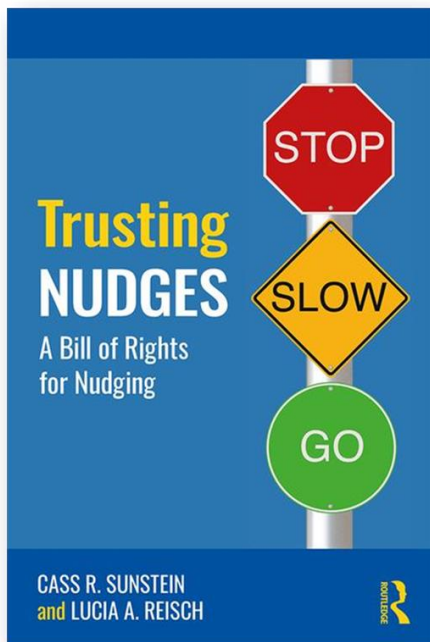


Table 2: Overview on the approval of the 15 nudges in the six surveyed countries.

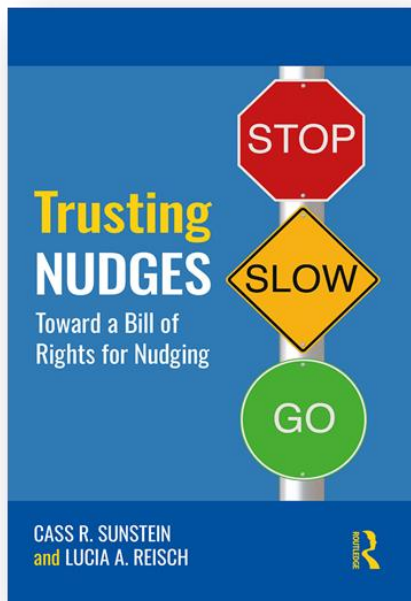
		IT	UK	FR	DE	HU	DK
1	Requiring calorie labels in chain restaurants	86	85	85	84	74	63
2	Requiring traffic light labels signaling healthiness of food	77	86	74	79	62	52
3	Encouraging defaulting customers into green energy providers	76	65	61	69	72	63
4	Law requiring active choice regarding organ donation on obtaining the driver's license	72	71	62	49	54	62
5	Law requiring supportive choice architecture for healthy food in large grocery stores	78	74	85	63	59	48
6	Public education campaign with vivid pictures against distracted driving	87	88	86	82	76	81
7	Public education campaign for parents promoting healthier food for their children to fight childhood obesity	89	88	89	90	82	82
8	Requiring subliminal advertising in movie theatres against smoking and overeating	54	49	40	42	37	25
9	Requiring airlines charging their customers a carbon emission compensation fee	40	46	34	43	18	35
10	Requiring industry to put warning labels on food with high salt content	83	88	90	73	69	69
11	Default citizens to donate 50 Euro for the Red Cross on tax return	48	25	29	23	37	14
12	Requiring movie theatres running information campaigns against smoking and overeating	77	67	66	63	40	35
13	Requiring energy providers to default customers into green energy	74	65	57	67	65	55
14	Requiring sweet-free cashier zones in supermarkets	54	82	75	69	44	57
15	Requiring one meat-free day in public canteens	72	52	62	55	46	30

Nudging “for Bad” – Dark patterns

- X Trick questions
- X „Sneak into basket“
- X In-app-purchases
- X Subscription sneaking („Roach motels“)
- X Data Zuckering
- X Making price comparisons difficult
- X Hidden costs
- X ConfirmShaming
- X Hidden advertisements
- X Forced continuity
- X Friend spamming
- X Deepfakes
- X Dark defaults



Good Governance of Nudging



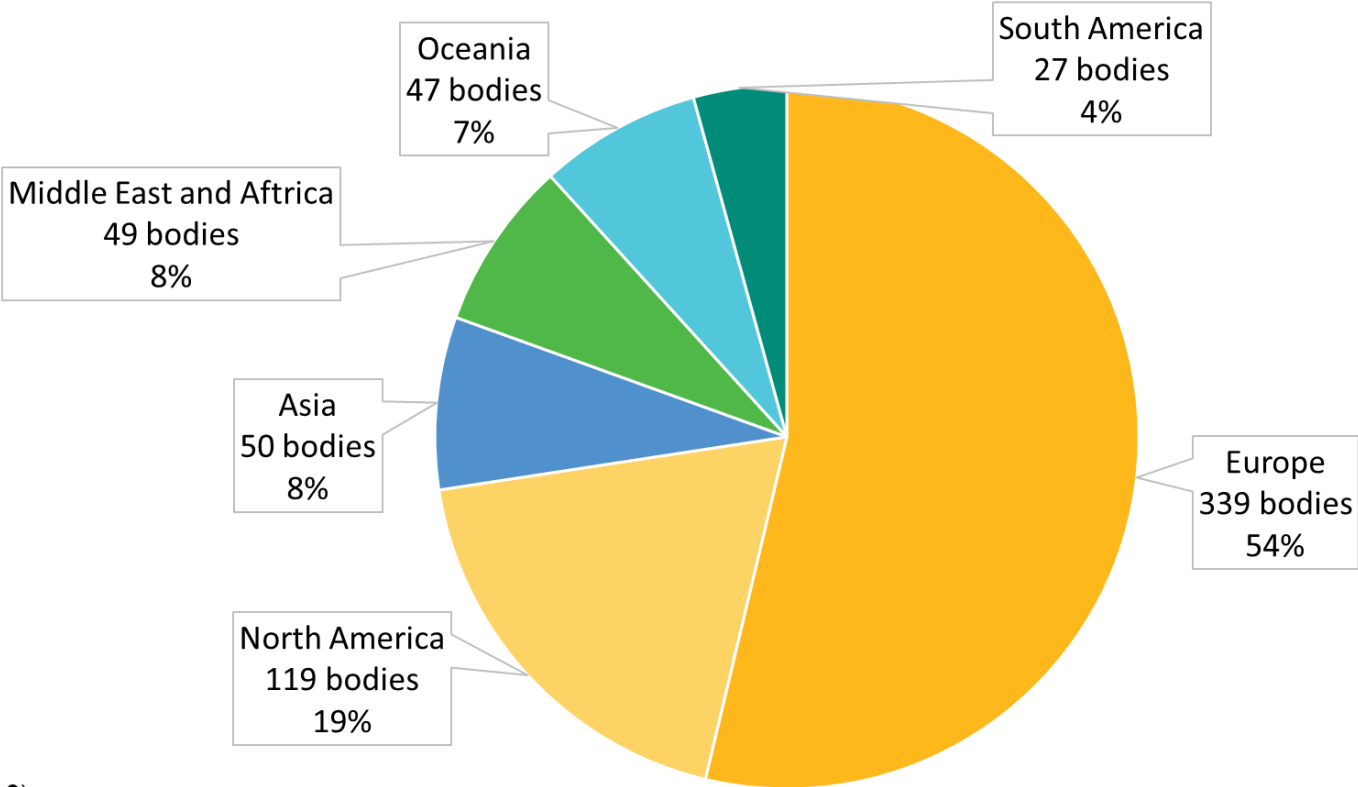
- Nudges must respect basic **individual rights**
 - Nudges must be consistent with people's **values and interests**
 - Nudges should not take things from people, and give them to others, without their **explicit consent**
- Nudges must **not manipulate** people
 - Nudges should be **transparent** rather than hidden
 - Beware of the **side effects**

Categories of behavioural public policy bodies

(Naru, 2024)

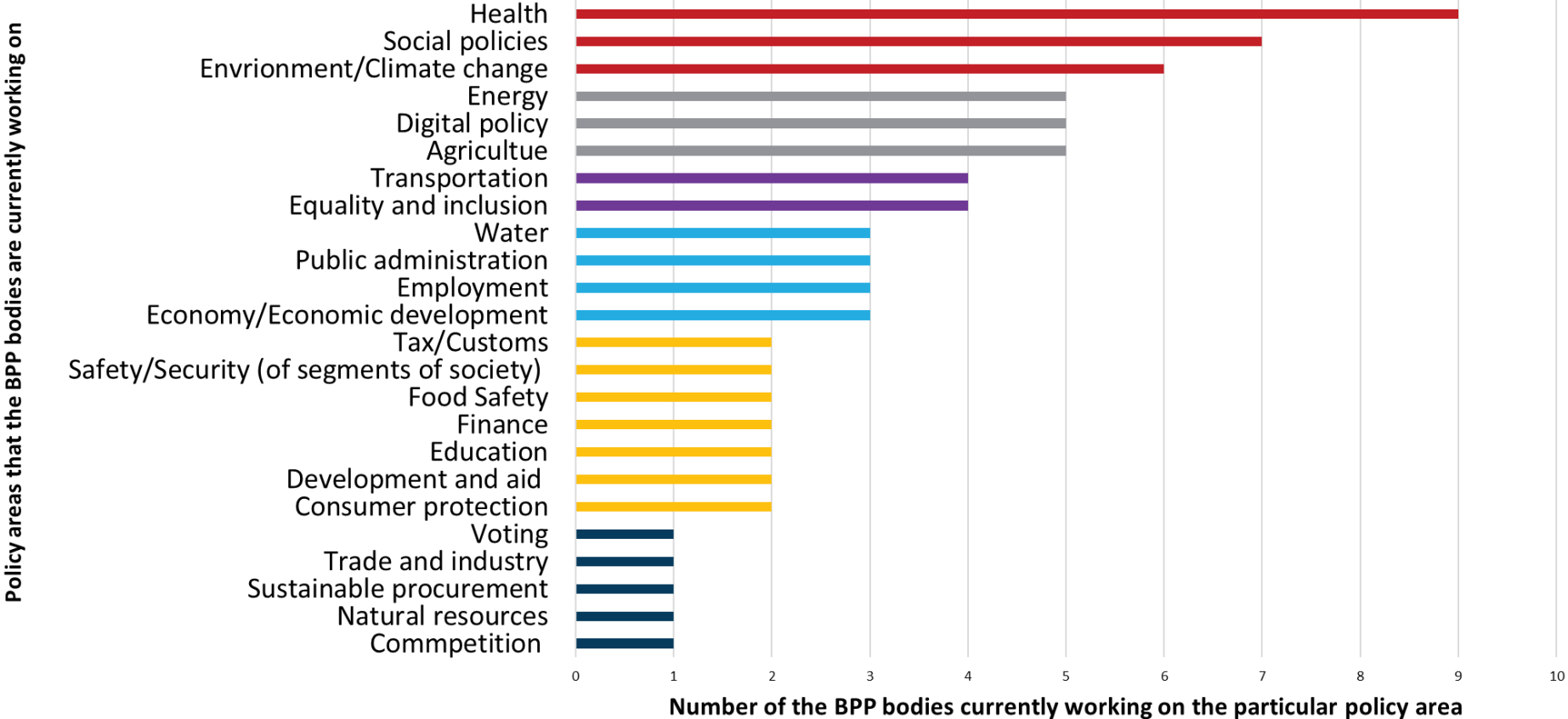
Category	Examples
Governmental	Body in or set up or primarily funded by a central, federal, provincial, state, or local government; a regulatory agency; a governmental initiative; other public sector entity
Academic / Research	Body in a university; academic initiative; research entity; various think tanks
Private	For-profit or nonprofit independent private entity (such as a consultancy)
International	Multinational organization
Others	Network, association, or membership organization, policy advocacy organization, philanthropic or foundation organization, knowledge hub

Number of behavioural public policy bodies by continent



Source: Naru (2024, p.6)

Policy areas worked in by the behavioural public policy (BPP) bodies in the in-depth survey



Export package on BeSci for policymakers



 **TRAINING**

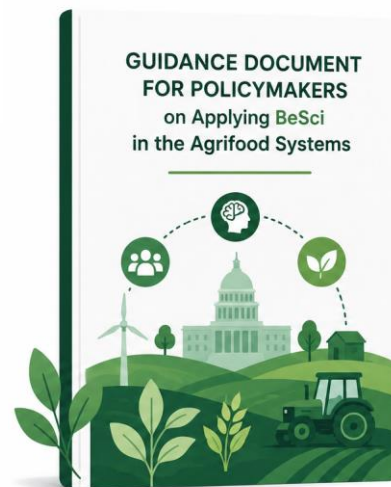
**4-DAY
IN-PERSON**

Basics of Application of Behavioural Science to Environmental and Climate-related Policies



FULL TRAINING PACKAGE OF MATERIALS

-  Facilitator Guide
-  Participant Learning Manual
-  Case Studies
-  Activity Worksheets
-  Pre- and Post-Assessments



STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4



CASE STUDIES



CHECK-LISTS



Export packages on BeSci for educators



Guide for educators on applying BeSci to improve impacts of educational programmes

- ✓ Step-by-step guide
- ✓ Case studies
- ✓ Check-lists

M&E Guide for non-formal education

- ✓ Step-by-step guide
- ✓ Examples and case studies
- ✓ Indicators
- ✓ Tools
- ✓ QR code gamification app



BeSci package for comms



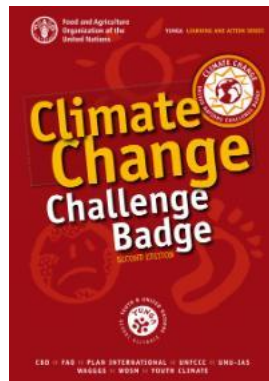
On-the-desk Guide for Communications teams – applying BeSci approaches to improve comms impacts

- ✓ Step-by-step guide
- ✓ Case studies
- ✓ Check-lists

Training package on behavioural science approach in comms

- ✓ Ppts
- ✓ Activity worksheets
- ✓ Possible training support for ACE Focal points

Education resources



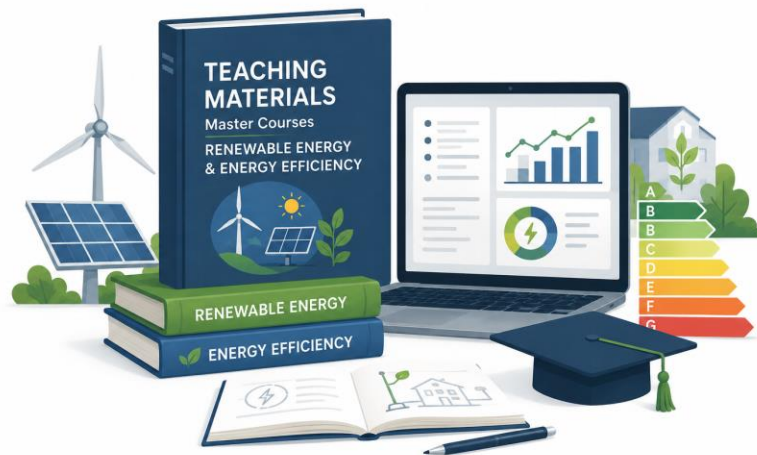
Educational packages on climate action for schools, universities and youth organizations:

- ✓ empowerment packs,
- ✓ teaching aids,
- ✓ educational videos etc.

YUNGA Challenge badges

New ones:

- Green Cities Challenge badge
- Food Losses and Waste Challenge badge
- Gender Equality Challenge badge
- Ecosystem Restoration Challenge badge
- Agriculture Challenge badge



Some other guidance docs



Guidance on how countries can effectively undertake mechanisms to support climate action, such as the use of public engagement mechanisms and educational programmes



Guidance on how ACE interventions can effectively address the needs of different stakeholders, i.e. the most vulnerable and marginalized groups



Guidance on peer-to-peer mechanisms for farmers, youth leaders, teachers and activists



M&E package



APP



GUIDANCE



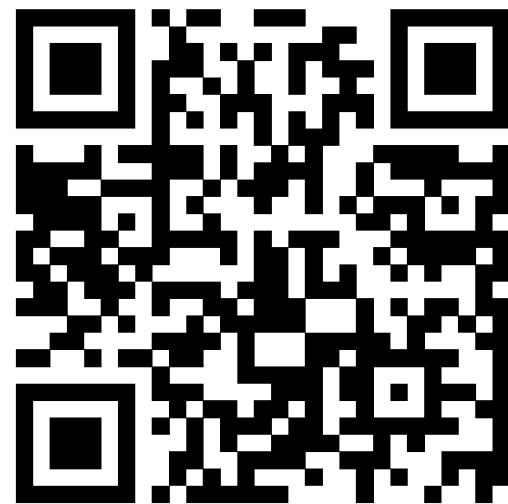
M&E TRAINING PACKAGE



LESSONS LEARNT

Quick poll

Join at
slido.com
#3773 483





FACE NDC

Facility for Action for Climate Empowerment to
achieve Nationally Determined Contributions

Thank you for your attention

Closing

- Final Remarks
- Next Steps



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Climate Change





**We would appreciate
your feedback!**



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