

Speakers and presentations

Workshop “Science for Policy – Challenges and Opportunities”

Wednesday, 8 November at 12:30–17:00

at the Permanent Representation of Estonia to the EU, Rue Guimard 11/13, 1040 Brussels



Dr. Lorenzo Melchor – Policy Analyst, Joint Research Centre, European Commission.
Presentation: „**Science for Policy in Estonia**“

Global complex issues require that democratic societies have their public policies informed on the latest knowledge and scientific evidence. This additional component in policymaking sets a challenge of where the knowledge and scientific evidence should come from and how it is absorbed into the political decision-making. Countries have to set up novel workflows and intermediary institutions to ensure that there is a constant knowledge exchange and cocreation between policymakers and scientific experts while making new regulatory acts and public policies and taking political decisions.

The presentation gives an overview of how the ecosystem of knowledge and evidence-informed policymaking is set up in Estonia, with its strengths and weaknesses. It also underlines the challenges in the ecosystem and suggests possible improvements. This analysis is part of a multi-country reform project of the public administration and science and innovation systems to build institutional capacity on evidence-informed policymaking.



Dr. Sabina Leonelli – Prof. of Philosophy and History of Science, University of Exeter
Presentation: „**Open Science for Policy**“

The rise of the importance of Science for Policy activities has raised an issue of how to maintain scientific freedom and responsibility in an environment, where certain topics and outcomes of research are preferred by the society and are thus better financed. One possible solution to this problem is consistent integration of Open Science principles into policies of science.

The presentation gives a short overview of Open Science principles and discusses the means of how to align them with Science for Policy requirements.



Dr. Tiit Lukk – Vice-Rector for Research at Tallinn University of Technology
Presentation: „**Science for Policy as a driver of research topics**“

The challenges of the university in a situation where more and more national (and also EU) funding for TA comes on clearly predetermined topics is discussed. Examples are given about how the researchers have adapted their topics towards the technological need of a country over a long period of time (oil shale valorisation) and sharply in response to dramatic changes in the society (bioinspired robotics for military use).



Getter Oper – Deputy Head of Innovation Department, Estonian Ministry of Defence
Presentation: „**Public input – secret output: challenges of managing research of sensitive nature**“

Allocation of public funding into R&D assumes that the results of the research are available to the society with minimal restrictions. However, in certain areas for instance security and defence the country needs to maintain secrecy to achieve the desired goals set in the R&D program(s).

Ministries of the Estonian Government employ science advisers to oversee and manage the research performed in their respective area of governance. Getter Oper from the Estonian Ministry of Defence discusses the challenges in managing the research efforts where the immediate results are covered with secrecy.

In addition, a problems of engaging public research bodies into this type of activities are presented.



Kalev Koidumäe – CEO at Estonian Defence and Aerospace Industry Association
Presentation: „**Science for Policy as a driving force of innovative entrepreneurship**“

Evidence- and knowledge-based policies are generally aimed at greater general prosperity of the society. As a beneficial side product of such policies, one could hope for a boost of innovation in the area the scientific knowledge is gathered for making the political decision. Throughout at least the last 100 years the best example of a link between the public policy and boost of innovation has been defence industry, where the political decisions have intensified innovation, that eventually reaches beyond the boundaries of military technologies.

The presentation describes how the war in Ukraine has had an impact in the innovative defence industry in Estonia and gives examples of emerging technologies beyond military use.