



Accelerating Policy Making 2.0: Innovation directions and research perspectives as distilled from four standout cases



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ABSTRACT

People are lately re-considering the advantages of becoming once again an active part of the society, as they everyday discover new ways of connecting with each other towards common goals. This increasing change of attitude calls for new tools and methods as traditional tools for policy making have proved unable to predict and cope with most of today's pressing and persistent challenges. In this context, it is considered as of pivotal importance to study a set of representative set of modern Policy Making 2.0 best cases, in order to scout towards evidence-based future directions, policy propositions, documented results and conclusions. The purpose of the paper at hand is to provide policy makers, practitioners, as well as other interested stakeholders, with a bouquet of (mostly ICT-related) policy implications and practical recommendations that stem through an evidence based, domain-wide study, aiming at directing them towards more efficient and effective launch, steering and sustaining of Policy Making 2.0 initiatives. Early engagement of stakeholders, openness, user friendliness and agility in the whole procedure constitutes only a high level presentation of the propositions and implications derived as a result of the analysis that follows.

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1. Introduction

Uncertainty constitutes a common reality in many aspects of everyday life of both organisations and individuals (Misuraca et al., 2010), (Charalabidis, Lampathaki, & Askounis, 2010). Modern environments can only be treated as global, interconnected, complex systems (Osimo, Lampathaki, & Charalabidis, 2010) comprising of highly improbable events (Taleb, 2008) and “wicked problems” (Rittel & Webber, 2008). In addition, rapid changes either at small or large scale (e.g. the global ongoing financial crisis) ask for drastic and dynamic approaches that take as many parameters as possible into consideration, trying to map every possible interaction (Bishop & Baudains, 2010). (See Table 1.)

Under such demanding conditions, many different stakeholders (e.g. public sector, NGOs, non-profit organisations) try to develop and offer public value (Bozeman, 2007), (Moore, 1995) through innovative public service concepts and scenarios, aiming to achieve their targets in more efficient and effective ways. Towards this direction, one of the most promising enablers is Internet and Communication Technology

(ICT); leading to the well-known Policy Making 2.0 wave. ICT is expected to facilitate modelling of complex processes, collaboration among the various involved actors and, thus, simplify the decision making process even under the most complicated and demanding conditions. Moreover, sophisticated simulation and visualisation mechanisms are expected to offer more user-friendly work environments.

In addition, ICT is expected to constitute a catalyst for the attainment of one of the most desired developments of the last decades in policy making: the (either direct or indirect) engagement of end-users (and especially citizens) in the policy making process. An attainment that could directly lead to transparent and open policy making procedures, eventually leading towards the restoration of citizens' trust to policy makers and the respective authorities. It has to be noted that the emergence and immediate establishment of social media as a disruptive worldwide phenomenon (Khan & Park, 2013) has made the need of harvesting the collective knowledge of the end-users and the available user-generated content through opinion mining and crowdsourcing mechanisms almost imperative (Chadwick, 2009), (Chang & Kannan, 2008), (Kavanaugh et al., 2012), (Millard, 2009), while at the same time these development is considered as a main vehicle for achieving openness and transparency (Bertot, Jaeger, & Grimes, 2010b).

Nevertheless, even though a large number of initiatives already exist both in research level and as prototypes (Bertot, Jaeger, & Grimes, 2010a), (Lampathaki et al., 2010), (Osimo, 2008), (Barkat, Jaeggli, & Dorsaz, 2012), (Leighninger, 2011), recent studies (Charalabidis,

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Table 1
Policy propositions addressing different audience and related to different case development phases.

Policy propositions	Audience			Case development phase		
	Policy makers	Policy modellers	Researchers	Ideation/case definition	Implementation/technology	Stakeholders' engagement
<i>Agile methods deliver faster and better</i>	X	X	X	X	X	
<i>High quality and open data improve accuracy, transparency and efficiency</i>		X	X		X	
<i>Visualisation and social computing convey policy messages smoother</i>		X	X		X	X
<i>Real-time simulation improves efficiency and effectiveness levels</i>		X	X		X	
<i>Different stakeholder groups call for different Interfaces</i>			X		X	X
<i>Multi-disciplinarity offers more accurate results</i>	X	X	X	X		
<i>Seek for early adopters to gain traction</i>	X	X	X			X
<i>Implant the case in the hosting public organisation</i>	X	X				X
<i>Look beyond experimentation and treat your cases as a product/service</i>	X			X		
<i>Investigate porting the case to other domains and contexts</i>	X	X	X	X		

Lampathaki, Misuraca, & Osimo, 2012), (Armenia et al., 2011, 07) evince that most of the existing approaches and tools for the policy making process have not yet achieved the desired outcomes.

Thus, it became imperative to perform an in-depth study in order to try to understand what the characteristics that could ensure the success of similar future initiatives are; why the plethora of innovative service concepts and scenarios fail, while there are paradigms that have faced great success? Why many ICT-oriented endeavours go unnoticed, while the need to engage citizens in policy making and receive the relevant feedback (Nam, 2012) can be achieved more easily and less costly (Mergel, Schweik, & Fountain, 2009) than ever before, in contrast with traditional approaches that cannot support this effectively (Lukensmeyer & Torres, 2008)? Critical success factors have to be recognised and put forward in order to formulate a set of suggestions to be communicated to all interested stakeholders and act as a roadmap for future initiatives.

Along the above lines, the manuscript at hand is structured as follows. The current section serves as an introduction to the rest of the document. Section 2 presents the methodological approach that guided the implemented work, as well as the list of the 10 prevailing cases that accrued. The following section (Section 3) performs a detailed cross-analysis of the four most outstanding cases, while Section 4 discusses the results and provides a list of suggestions to all interested stakeholders. Last but not least, Section 5 concludes the document.

2. Methodology

2.1. Overview

In order to guide the timely implementation of such a study's purpose, as well as ensure the high quality of the anticipated results, a clear and stepwise methodology was formulated and applied. Fig. 1 provides a quick overview of the methodology's steps and an initial identification of tools and approaches that were utilised:

As depicted in the methodology figure (See Fig. 1), Phase I dealt with the creation of a case study repository (eventually including a set of 335 Policy Making 2.0 cases) retrieved through the prioritisation of potential sources of information and an open invitation for proposal of cases through Web 2.0 channels. Knowledge extraction followed the preparation of a cases' description template that facilitated the structured information gathering regarding the cases under consideration, succeeded by the definition of the 1st group of criteria for selecting the initial subset of 25 case studies. The set of criteria applied in the aforementioned first selection round can be found below; it needs to be stressed out that the findings of the CROSSOVER research project (CROSSOVER, 2013), co-funded by the European Commission, played an important

role in the process of the analysis, as the scope of the project was close to the scope of the paper at hand:

- Stage of the Policy Making Cycle, namely "Agenda Setting", "Design", "Implementation" and "Monitoring and Evaluation" (CROSSOVER, 2012), to which the case refers
- Relation to the CROSSOVER research challenges
- Targeting directly or indirectly Policy Makers to support them in their policy making procedures
- Timeliness of the case (evidence of the case as being active in the last three years should be found)
- Quantity and quality of existing material
- Innovation (each case should display innovative characteristics at policy and technological levels)

In the second phase, the initially selected cases were forwarded for a 2nd round analysis for selecting the most 10 promising ones. A multi-criteria method has been selected for prioritising the cases, based on the Analytic Network Process (ANP) (Saaty, 2001) method, a more general form of the well-known Analytic Hierarchy Process (Saaty, 1980) (AHP) used in multi-criteria decision analysis (Belton & Stewart, 2002). The set of criteria applied in the aforementioned second round of selection included:

- Number of steps of the policy cycle addressed (no. and %)
- Number of CROSSOVER research challenges touched (1 or 2)
- Number of CROSSOVER sub-challenges touched per research challenge (no. and %)
- Evidence of the case being active (active, terminated less than 1 year ago, terminated more than 1 year ago)
- Evidence of utilisation by stakeholders (high, medium, low)
- Maturity (inception, traction, hyper-growth, mature)
- Commitment (one-off effort, embedded in short term strategy, embedded in long term strategy)
- Sophistication of tools used (high, medium, low)

The results of the aforementioned analysis formed a set of four outstanding cases that were thereafter subject to an in-depth analysis carried out through desk research and the conduction of interviews with key involved stakeholders. The interviews' process aimed to capture important aspects that were not publicly available on the information sources already exploited, to verify advertised results and to acquire more information (such as impact, usefulness, drawbacks, advantages, business opportunities, etc.).

Finally, the findings of this survey were synthesised through a cross-analysis that allowed the identification of emerging trends, drivers and

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