



**Better Legislation
for Smoother Implementation**

Multidisciplinary teams for digital-ready policymaking



**European
Commission**

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GLOSSARY

ABBREVIATIONS	TERMS
AI	Artificial Intelligence
BLSI	Better Legislation for Smoother Implementation
CoP	Communities of Practice
EIF	European Interoperability Framework
HR	Human Resources
ICT	Information Communications Technology
IT	Information Technology
LEOS	Legislation Editing Open Software
ML	Machine Learning
MPs	Members of the Parliament
NGOs	Non-governmental organisations
RaC	Rules-as-Code
SMEs	Subject matter experts



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Under the ISA² programme, our [legal interoperability team](#) set the ambition to foster better legislation for smoother implementation, by promoting [digital-ready policymaking](#), on the one hand, and by exploring how [technology can support lawmaking](#), on the other. During our journey so far, we learned that while policymakers are eager to embrace digital-ready considerations and technology in policymaking, they need support to make the first steps. We believe that **multidisciplinary teams** are key ingredients of such support, and we explain how technology and lawmaking can converge, via a multitude of skilled experts, towards multidisciplinary lawmaking.

The present study takes note of the constantly growing abundance, length, depth and complexity of legal texts, as well as the subsequently growing complexity in lawmaking, legal analysis and enforcement. It also introduces digital technologies as a means that holds significant potential to assist and support policymakers and analysts in their tasks. The study presents the multidisciplinary teams as key assets in the policy process to regulate

modern societal issues in an effective way, i.e., addressing the complexity, while benefitting from (often) innovative technologies.

Finding the right multidisciplinary team is an important enabler for digital-ready policies. The chapters that follow dive deep in the advantages and challenges of multidisciplinary policymaking. They explain the many forms of multidisciplinary involvement during the policymaking cycle and show how the multidisciplinary team complements and reinforces the effectiveness of the traditional collaboration across policy areas.

The study argues that **multidisciplinary teams can play a significant role across all stages and activities of policymaking**, including stakeholder consultations, inter-service / inter-ministerial collaboration, parliamentary processes, and beyond.

The study also describes the **various profiles** that should be involved in such multidisciplinary teams, coming from the legal, organisational, semantic and technical domains. Profiles from the legal domain cover the expertise around legal drafting and implementation, as well as the general legal landscape. Profiles from the organisational domain bring expertise towards more user-centric business processes and more efficient business architectures that decrease administrative burden. Finally, profiles from the semantic and technical domains bring expertise on data management and formatting, as well as on innovative technologies, skills and ways to implement policies.

Core benefits of working in multidisciplinary teams are presented and analysed, like the sense of community that paves the way towards a common vision. Other important benefits include a holistic approach across the whole policymaking process, efficient handling of all phases of that process, conceptual consistency, enhanced information sharing and streamlined work practices, as well as cost-effective implementation.

Significant challenges of the multidisciplinary teamwork include the ambiguity in terminology and understanding across the different domains, the need for frequent communication and collaboration to resolve this ambiguity, which might result in burdensome discussions. Also, the lack of transparency or confidentiality might hinder the smooth collaboration across the involved parties and lead to misalignment and partial information. Overall, the formation, management and operation of a multidisciplinary team can be complex thus challenging.

The paper also shares **some ways to foster multidisciplinary teams**, recommendations and best practices from real-life examples of teams, which have been applying the multidisciplinary principle from the start, in the development of policies. One of the most significant ingredients is the **shared goals and values** that all members of a multidisciplinary team should have. A **common vision** is key to steer the core of the team towards their objectives.



1. INTRODUCTION



1. INTRODUCTION

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

Today, citizens, businesses and public administrations are dealing with policies that are highly **complex**. Societies are changing very quickly and the ways to **draft rules and policies** need to also evolve at the same pace to ensure that they address the fast-changing needs.

In the digital world, societies require **effective administration** of new or revamped policies. Therefore, **policies should become digital-ready** by enabling smooth and digital-by-default policy implementation and by fostering digital transformation through best use of digital technologies and data. To formulate such digital-ready policies, policymakers should consider digital aspects across the whole policy cycle to ensure that the new policy proposals are ready for the digital age, future-proof and interoperable. They should also consider the use of **innovative methodologies** and tools (e.g., AI powered) in the policy design, analysis and implementation process.

To embrace technical considerations, as well as the use of IT systems and tools, policymakers need to involve **different professional profiles** in the policymaking process. For example, data scientists may identify existing data sets to feed the policy design or IT specialists could help creating policies that are more IT-oriented, simple to understand and easy to apply. This implies that policymakers need to work in **multidisciplinary teams**¹ to deliver policies that can be smoothly and seamlessly implemented. This is why the concept of multidisciplinary teams is considered as a **key enabler** for digital-ready policies.

The [Better Legislation for Smoother Implementation \(BLSI\)](#) community keeps refining its approach to [digital-ready policymaking](#), in sync with the 2021 revision of the European Commission's [Better Regulation Agenda](#). The illustration shown by Figure 1 – presenting the definition of digital-ready policies, as well as their components and key enabler – is in line with Tool #28 Digital-ready policymaking of the [EC better regulation toolbox](#).

¹ The [European Interoperability Framework](#) also reflects the need for multidisciplinary in its recommendation for a holistic approach by defining four different views of interoperability: **legal, organisational, semantic and technical**. To translate this into a practical example, policymaking activities involving public services should consider different groups of stakeholders.



1. INTRODUCTION

Digital-ready policies' components and enabler

*Policies (and legislative acts) are **digital-ready** if they enable smooth policy implementation through best use of digital technologies and data.*

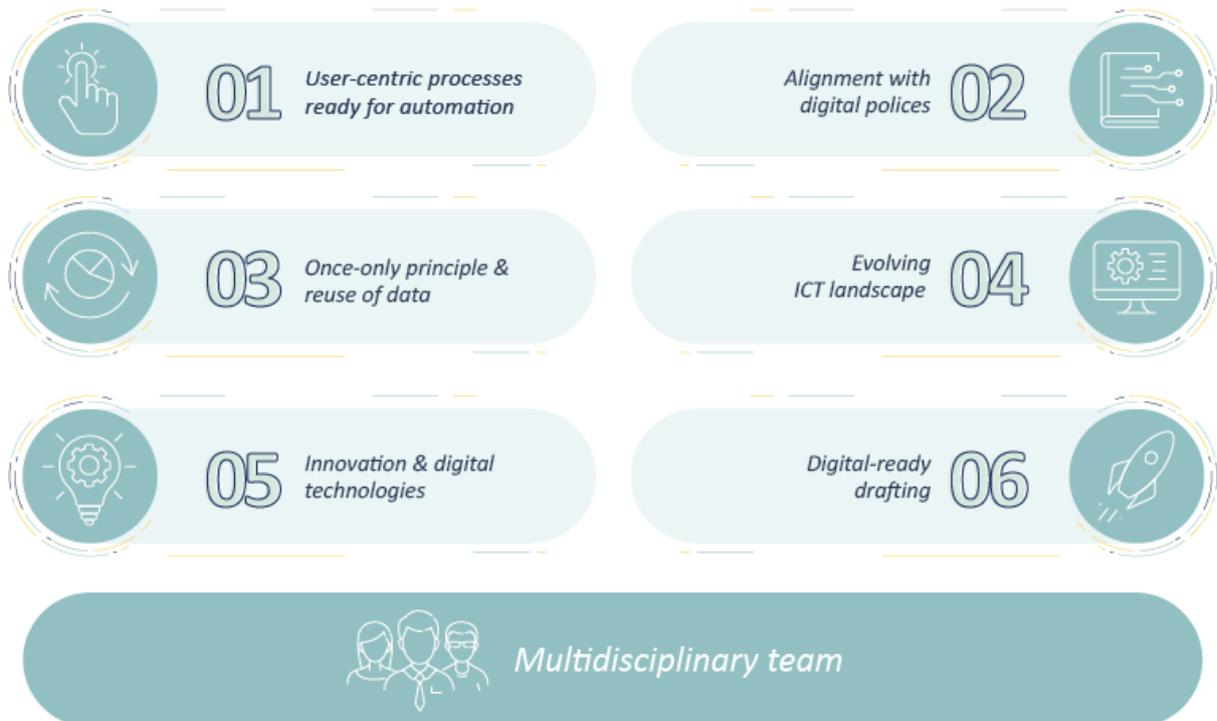


Figure 1: Digital-ready policies definition and digital-ready components

1.2 TARGET AUDIENCE

This paper is addressed mainly to **policymakers** who need to develop policies taking into account digital and interoperability aspects or who want to design seamless digital policies. As policymakers are the main actors involved in designing legislative acts, this paper foresees to provide support in identifying the right ways and the right profiles to build a multidisciplinary team.

Although this paper is inspired by the European Commission's Better Regulation, it can be of interest to policymakers at every level of governments, being EU, national or local.

1.3 APPROACH

This study builds on desk research, as well as on the input from a [webinar on multidisciplinary teams, organised by the BLSI community](#).



2. DEFINITION OF THE MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAMS



2. DEFINITION OF THE MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAMS

2 MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAMS IN DIGITAL-READY POLICYMAKING

2.1 WHAT IS A MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAM?

At a first glance, the simplest definition seems to imply that a multidisciplinary team consists of “*members of different professions working together*”. A wider definition that is used for the purpose of this issue paper, comes from Jefferies & Chan (2004), describing the multidisciplinary team as:

A multidisciplinary team is described as a group of people with complementary skills who are committed to a common purpose, performance goals and approach, for which they hold themselves mutually accountable.

The above definition illustrates an important feature of multidisciplinary work: it is not just a matter of getting different professionals together; teams need to have **shared goals and values**. Other definitions also underline that successful multidisciplinary collaboration requires **well-defined edges, roles and responsibilities**, where **diversity is highly appreciated** and team members **understand and respect** the competencies and different perspectives of each other, as well as **learn from other disciplines**.

But what is the difference between multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary teams?

While sometimes used interchangeably, these terms refer to distinct conceptual models of team working.

An **interdisciplinary team** consists of individuals with varied expertise who work on the tasks at hand **collectively**. The team members do not work separately and report back to teammates but, instead, they brainstorm together and share their thoughts and opinions in a group setting. Knowledge and methods from different disciplines are being **integrated**, using a real synthesis of approaches.

On the other hand, **multidisciplinary teams** exhibit the characteristics of **independent** teamwork, with the members of multidisciplinary teams focusing on their **individual** knowledge and expertise, working together to resolve issues and report back to a group of individuals with differing expertise.



2. DEFINITION OF THE MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAMS

In a nutshell, the interdisciplinary teams allow for the combination of team members' expertise, while in the multidisciplinary teams, each team member has its own expertise and brings this expertise to the rest of the team (see Figure 2 below).

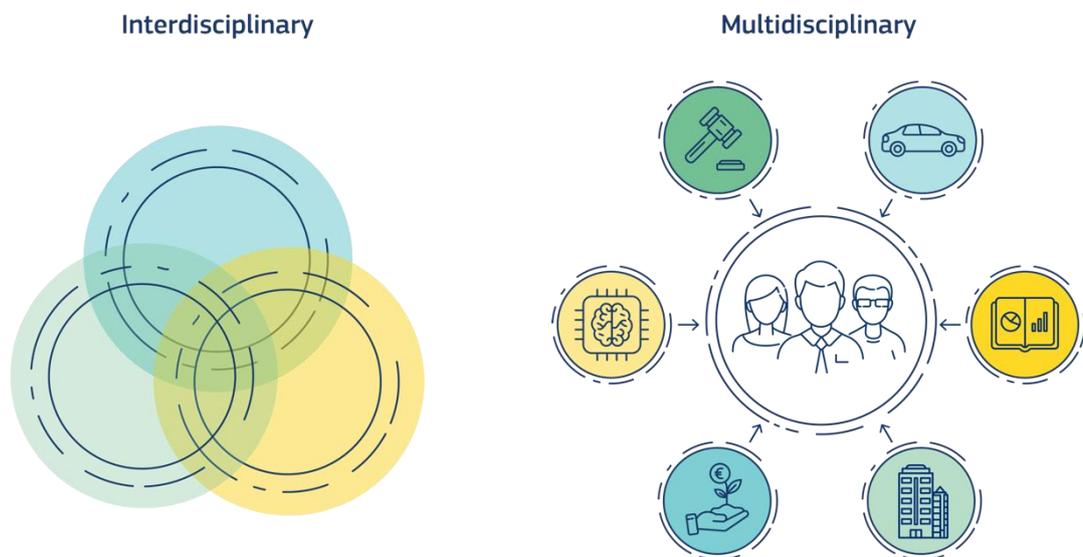


Figure 2: Interdisciplinary versus Multidisciplinary teams

With respect to the term for multidisciplinary teams, the next section examines how multidisciplinary teams can facilitate the policymaking process.



2. DEFINITION OF THE MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAMS

2.2 HOW ARE MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAMS LINKED TO POLICYMAKING?

There are many forms of **multidisciplinary involvement during the policymaking cycle**, since relying on other disciplines in the process is not something new.

Stakeholder consultations

It is key to capture and consider, as early as possible in the policy formulation, the views of different stakeholders (e.g., SMEs or policy implementers). This proactive involvement ensures that the policy is **well-informed and evidence based**. **Public and targeted stakeholder consultations** seek to harvest inputs of impacted groups thus promoting transparent policymaking.

Collaboration across policy areas

Consultations between ministries help to **reconcile different views, priorities and perspectives** during policymaking. In the European Commission, such interservice work takes the form of interservice group meetings and the interservice consultation.

Parliamentary process

Statistics from 18 parliamentary democracies from Alexiadou, D. (2014) have proven that there is large variation in the dominant professional backgrounds of cabinet ministers. Furthermore, relevant studies have been executed to set the guidelines on how to build and reform systems that set professional and ethical standards standards for Members of the Parliament (MPs) and also regulate their conduct, to ensure that these are met e.g. the one for the *Professional and Ethical standards for Parliamentarians* from ODIHR (2012)).

Multidisciplinary teams

The multidisciplinary team **complements and reinforces** the effectiveness of the traditional collaboration across policy areas, by inviting colleagues with diverse professional profiles in the core team of the lead service. The multidisciplinary team ensures **co-creation at the heart of the policy design** process.

In the current technologically evolving era, it is primordial to duly and timely consider the digital aspects of any new policy proposal. For this reason, multidisciplinary teams supporting policymaking should involve diverse 'digital profiles' (e.g.: ICT experts or colleagues with experience in policy implementation, etc.).



2. DEFINITION OF THE MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAMS

Example:

In **computational law**, the multidisciplinary team consists of both lawyers and computer scientists to conduct foundational research into how computational systems can perform legal calculations (such as compliance checking, regulatory analysis etc.).

Source: Genesereth, Michael R.: "What Is Computational Law?"
<https://law.stanford.edu/2021/03/10/what-is-computational-law/>

The next chapter presents in detail which profiles should be part of a modern multidisciplinary team that contribute to digital-ready policymaking.



2. DEFINITION OF THE MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAMS

2.3 WHICH PROFILES COMPOSE A MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAM IN DIGITAL-READY POLICYMAKING?

Inspired by the [European Interoperability Framework \(EIF\)](#), this paper groups the profiles, who can reinforce the digital-ready angle of policymaking in a multidisciplinary team, across the four different views of interoperability: **legal, organisational, semantic and technical**.

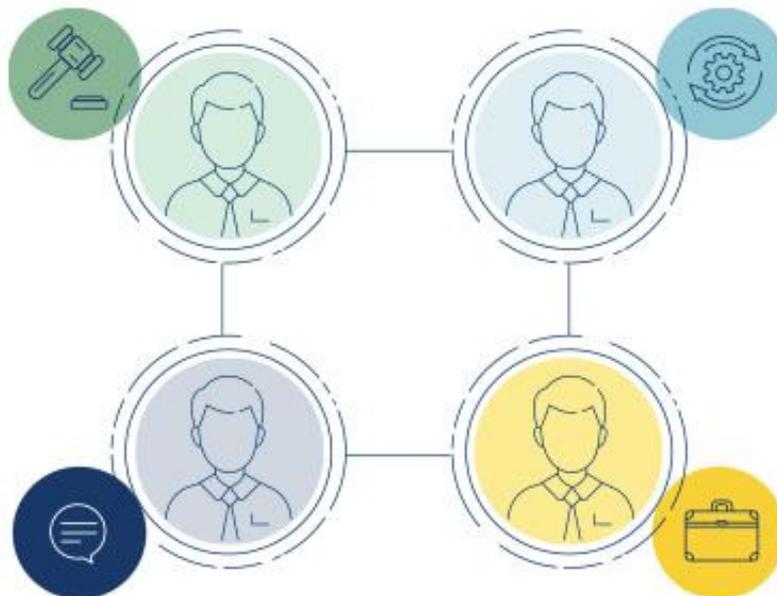


Figure 3: Profiles based on the interoperability views



2. DEFINITION OF THE MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAMS

a) Profiles from a legal perspective:



Subject-matter experts to contribute on specific policy fields based on their individual expertise.



People with a good **overview of the EU digital legislative landscape**, able to identify cross-links, dependencies, possible conditionalities or synergies with other digital initiatives, e.g. experts in digital policies;



People with policy implementation experience to channel in lessons learned from both good and bad practice examples thus thriving for pragmatic policies, e.g. experts in regulatory agencies, national administrations;



Experts in legal drafting to help with clear and simple wording, which is a must for a smooth digital implementation in the future, e.g. legal advisor;



External experts from standardisation organisations or the industry, to provide their expertise in the policy area to make it more digital-ready;



Data Protection Coordinator to help detect questions of data protection early in the policymaking process.

b) From an organisational perspective:



Business architects to help analyse and document the processes and data flows to ensure the smooth implementation of the policy;



Process analysts and transformation experts to analyse and document user-centric processes ready for automation;



Social scientists, since people with skills in social sciences can help designing user-centric digital-ready policies (e.g. sociologists, ethnologists).



2. DEFINITION OF THE MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAMS

c) From a semantic perspective:



Data experts to provide information and advice on existing and reusable data sets, as well as on the available standards and recommendations from standardisation organisations, like reference data models and recommended vocabularies. Data experts can also advise on the (re)use of data, as well as on their visualisation in the digital-ready policy.

d) From a technical perspective:



People with digital / ICT knowledge – including security aspects – to provide information about the current ICT landscape and future necessities and possibilities for the digital implementation of the policy;



People with knowledge about innovative digital technologies to give advice on their potential use during the policy cycle and/or in relation to a specific policy proposal;



Coders/Rules-as-code specialists to write the code (rules-as-code) of the policy scenarios in machine understandable format;



Test Engineers to test the policy scenarios in an automated way and validate the results;



Service Designers to provide a good understanding of the service design implications currently faced in the scope of the policy domain and possible solutions.





2. DEFINITION OF THE MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAMS

The abovementioned list of profiles is indicative and certainly not exhaustive. A multidisciplinary team for each digital-ready policy proposal can be extended with additional experts, other than the ones mentioned here, or narrowed down, as relevant. The following Table 3 shows how multidisciplinary fits in the example of Better Rules.

Service implementation example: *Better Rules*

Better Rules is an initiative of Hamish Fraser from the Service Innovation Lab in New Zealand.

It offers a fresh approach for multidisciplinary teams when developing policy. The logic behind was the service design versus policy mindset, since the service design approach looks at the whole task rather than separate tasks. Some of the profiles that were involved in experimenting with policy design projects were:

- Subject matter experts;
- Policy advisors;
- Legislative drafters/Legal Advisors;
- Rule-as-code specialists;
- Service designers;
- Business rules specialists

Source: <https://joinup.ec.europa.eu/collection/better-legislation-smoother-implementation/news/april-virtual-breakfast-multidisciplinary-teams-key-takeaways>



3. BENEFITS AND CHALLENGES OF MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAMS



3. BENEFITS AND CHALLENGES OF MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAMS

3 WHAT IS THE ADDED VALUE AND WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES OF MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAMS?

Multidisciplinarity draws on knowledge from different disciplines but stays within their boundaries [Choi, B.C.K. and Pak, A.W.P. (2006)]. The synergistic and skillful combination of different disciplines can **achieve insight beyond current borders** and thereby generate **novel solutions** to complex problems. The combination of different perspectives provided on problems can **reach better results** than the sum of the individual parts could bring separately. Some additional benefits of the multidisciplinary approach are listed below:



Holistic approach to the policymaking process;



Mutual understanding of key challenges e.g. complexity of legal texts;



Efficient handling of certain assumptions and bias in the policy process, which allows policymakers to question, monitor and address such implications in the policymaking process;



Targeted consideration of some **implementation aspects** e.g. via the support of an IT expert;



Conceptual consistency among experts – in case of the Rules-as-code (RaC) concept thanks to the use of computers;



Enhanced coordination, towards better results. There is a framework of uniformity provided among the people coordinating together and communicating that improves the quality of legal drafting;



Community-building, in terms of promoting and sustaining values and standards across relevant stakeholders;



Increased job satisfaction and team growth: team members acquire new skills, participate in decision making and take on more responsibilities that empower them to work more efficiently and effectively;



Enhanced information sharing and streamlined work practices in the context of policymaking;



Cost-effective implementation of the policymaking process;



Amplified innovation in the lawmaking process. Different people with different profiles, points of view and knowledge are the fuel that can take a multidisciplinary team above and beyond, as diversity is always enriching.



3. BENEFITS AND CHALLENGES OF MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAMS

While being rewarding, working in a multidisciplinary team can be experienced as **challenging** for a number of reasons. There are several factors identified from the literature, having also emerged throughout the present study, which can inhibit or hinder the effective functioning of teams. These issues are examined below in detail.



Different understanding of terminology among the various profiles in the policymaking team. People having different backgrounds, being specialists in their domain, may find it **difficult to cooperate due to this diversity**. Some key challenges when working in such a diversified team are the **background of the team members**, meaning the **methods**, frameworks, languages and terminologies they use, as well as the **vision** they have. Additionally, the individual team members may need to reassess exclusive claims to specialist knowledge and authority in order to form effective teams, which can provide the best possible clarity to any individual end user. A level of ambiguity can be noticed as almost every field i.e. computer science, legal, etc. will have its own interpretation of “model” and the semantics differ significantly.



Time constraints and the need for frequent collaboration. Each of the member of a multidisciplinary team should not only perform the work assigned to him/her, but also communicate and interact with the rest of the stakeholders in the context of the collaborative process. This can, however, be time consuming, especially in case the communication channels are not well established, potentially leading to a communication breakdown.



Inadequate information that might lead to incomplete decisions. For example, when the scope and aim of the team are not clear to everyone, misunderstandings may occur. Everyone should be aligned with each other, and the information should be easily accessible to enable proper decision-making.

3. BENEFITS AND CHALLENGES OF MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAMS



Lack of transparency and confidentiality, in the actions of the different stakeholders involved in the lawmaking process, which may lead to conflicts.



Inadequate management. Inclusive leadership together with the training on conflict management form a necessity for any multidisciplinary team and especially for the policymaking process. The appointed manager, who is usually also responsible for the supervision of the lawmaking process, should possess strong management skills and be able to perform an agile project management in order to achieve the expected results.



The variety of expertise across team members in the policymaking process raises the complexity of team formation and implementation. This can be more relevant especially in terms of the organisational and managerial support that is required.

Having analysed both the benefits and challenges of multidisciplinary teams in the context of the digital-ready policymaking process, the significance of the results and the value that a multidisciplinary team can achieve by working together are far more important than the challenges that one can notice. Some challenges can also be proactively addressed in the multidisciplinary approach. A team with diverse perspectives is more likely to come up with the best and most efficient proposition. This is the added value achieved for the stakeholders involved in policymaking in order to be able to formulate digital-ready policies.



4. WAYS TO FOSTER MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAMS



4. WAYS TO FOSTER MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAMS

4 HOW TO FOSTER A MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAM?

4.1 HOW TO FOSTER A MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAM WITHIN AN ORGANISATION?

As explained in the previous section, working in multidisciplinary teams can be challenging. Professionals may sometimes find themselves torn between allegiance to their profession and working to realise team goals. Think of a multidisciplinary approach towards **digital-ready** policymaking, where there is a need that various profiles reach an agreement. This means that actors like policy makers, data scientists or IT architects should agree on the requirements to be embedded in the legal act, while everyone works on their own tasks. So, how an organisation can foster multidisciplinary teams?

Some of the **ways to foster multidisciplinary teams within an organisation** are the following:



1. Organisational culture

- **Organisational culture** is the collection of shared values, expectations, and practices that guide and inform the actions of all team members. Praising the **values of openness, diversity and collaboration** in an organization builds the foundation of multidisciplinary teamwork. Recognizing the contributions of all team members within a multidisciplinary team has a far-reaching, positive effect: individuals start to see how they are part of a whole, they feel happier while performing their own activities more efficiently
- In a multidisciplinary team, each member has to perform the work assigned to him/her, and at the same time communicate and interact with the other team members. Therefore, **encouraging collaboration and engaging in team building activities** — even when working remotely — are two effective ways to bring the multidisciplinary team together and promote communication. Organisations and their managers have a key role to establish the appropriate communication paths among the key actors and steer the vision, objectives and priorities of the multidisciplinary teams.



2. Organisational structure

- **Organisational structure** aligns and relates parts of an organisation, so that it can achieve its maximum performance. The structure chosen affects an organisation's success in carrying out its strategy and objectives. In this context, the ability to collaborate within an organisation depends on the organisational structure and in general, on the governance structure.



4. WAYS TO FOSTER MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAMS

- In this context, a key element to foster multidisciplinary teams within an organisation is to create such teams and to combine different types of profiles to work in the same project. This will introduce a new structure within the organisation, allowing the teams to have different skills and disciplines when working in the same domain or in the same project. The organisation should acknowledge the needs that might occur when working in multidisciplinary teams e.g. working time in such teams commonly agreed.



3. Support

- **Human Resources (HR) professionals in organisations and in public administrations can contribute to fostering multidisciplinary teams.** HR can help establishing the atmosphere of trust and respect within the team, despite the different disciplines, competences and points of view. In essence, HR acts as a bridge in multidisciplinary teams by organising training initiatives, coaching, and providing team members with new responsibilities supporting them in their success. On one hand, this will enable team members to identify and embrace cultural and professional differences and on the other hand, organisations will be able to create resilient diverse teams and better relationships with other organisations, clients and users across the globe.
- In this context, creating and running multidisciplinary teams have similarities with **communities of practice** (CoP) and organisations can promote the creation of such communities. The **distinctive** characteristic is that communities of practice may convene members from different professions, in comparison with multidisciplinary teams where this is a core and fundamental element. Communities of practice have turned out to be an important instrument for digitally transformed, user-focused and data-driven administration, stimulating cross-organisation collaboration and knowledge sharing "groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly."



4. WAYS TO FOSTER MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAMS

4.2 HOW TO SUPPORT THE WORK OF A MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAM?

As mentioned in the previous section, there are different ways to foster multidisciplinary teams within an organisation. However, it is difficult to manage a team with disparate backgrounds. What makes it even more challenging is managing a diverse, cross-cultural team that transcends different cultures and skills. Having a team of people with various skills, experiences and backgrounds is critical when organisations want to foster a great, **inclusive culture**. From this angle, there are several **ways to support the work of a multidisciplinary team** as follows:

-  **Acknowledge cultural differences and help team members to cope with that:** Cultural diversity in teams can be both an asset and a liability; just as members' uniqueness can enhance the team, their differences can have a significant impact on the team's functioning. Hence, cross-cultural teams need effective diversity management. By the same token, multidisciplinary teams need to foster cultural understanding. Multidisciplinary teams have similarities with cross-cultural teams. Cross-cultural teams are multidisciplinary teams that include people who come from different cultures and unique experiences. A prime concern in managing a cross-cultural team, as well as a multidisciplinary team is to find a unified thread to tie across all the distinct personalities.
-  **Shared vision:** The organisation will succeed when its members share and work from the perspective of a common vision. The shared vision guides actions and decisions and provides a sense of how to proceed in times of change. A shared vision also inspires people to contribute their best work and to collaborate for the success of the organisation. [Catana, G.C., Debremaeker, I., Szkola, S.S.E. and Williquet, F., *The Communities of Practice Playbook*, 2021]. Therefore, a multidisciplinary team needs a clearly defined purpose, shared goals and a common understanding on why this team is important for the organisation. The team should envision end goals and achievements. To remain constantly aligned with the vision and objectives in a multidisciplinary team, the feedback loop is essential. Engaging also in boundary-spanning practices is crucial for a community to succeed with its projects. Stakeholder and audience mappings and consultations are important, also network expansions and professional exchanges.
-  **Engagement and communication:** Effective team functioning is dependent on communication, interpersonal relations, team composition and structure. Team respect and commitment can be facilitated in a work environment characterised by friendliness, optimism and humor. Multidisciplinary teams are valued for their open information sharing and breaking down communication barriers amongst team members. Hearing each other's stories can heighten awareness and understanding of each discipline's perspective. For example, policymakers, business architects and people with ICT knowledge should be aware of their specific communication style, illustrated as following:



4. WAYS TO FOSTER MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAMS



Policymakers discuss on the basis of legal text.



Business Architects use modelled processes to ensure the smooth implementation of the policy.



People with ICT knowledge discuss on ICT systems, innovative digital technologies and give advice on digital technologies.

- ✔ **Community knowledge management:** Concrete guidelines for collaboration, cooperation, coordination, connection and communication are critical when working in a multidisciplinary team. In particular, clear role and expectation definitions are needed.
- ✔ **Transparency:** Transparent and inclusive communication, as well as participatory decision-making procedures are paramount to build trust between team members.
- ✔ **Knowing well each team member:** It is essential for the team leader to take the time and get to know each member of the multidisciplinary team. Learning about their story and journey will help analysing individual skills and leveraging the knowledge to help the team in general. Building long lasting relationships with not only the team members, but also with the stakeholders is essential.
- ✔ **Adopting flexibility:** Different disciplines are used to work in different ways. It is important to understand the existing differences – which often affect how project schedule is set or decisions are taken – and find an agreed approach between the multidisciplinary team members.
- ✔ **Encouraging team building activities:** The leader / facilitator of a multidisciplinary could promote social activities and events to help team members to bond with each other despite their differences.
- ✔ **Visualisation tools:** Visual communication practices, visual representations, and visual thinking contribute to the effective team operation. In a multidisciplinary team, every team member brings different disciplinary methods of research, tools for making decisions, and techniques for communicating results that make team collaboration difficult. Hence, the successful use of visualisation tools and their products (visual representations) can foster multidisciplinary teams as they support knowledge exploration, integration, and collaboration by transferring information across discipline boundaries. For some existing tools, see the Annex.



4. WAYS TO FOSTER MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAMS

The box below shows two inspiring practices of fostering multidisciplinary teams.

Success stories

The first example comes from a community around the EU Green Deal. Their mission is to support Green Deal new policies with scientific evidence. With regards to their rituals and behaviors, they have set up mechanisms for peer reviewing and collective synthesis reports to deliver to policymakers. They also have a "science meets policies" regular sessions where policymakers exchange with scientists and try to understand each other's world. Sub-communities' leaders meet regularly to take stock of latest knowledge in the field and extract policy relevant insights.

Another example comes from the LEOS solution, in which the team clearly and jointly defined the vision and the concrete aim of the project and used clear and jargon-free terms. They provided short live presentations on how key elements in the scope of the project work in order to concretely present



5. RECOMMENDATIONS AND BEST PRACTICES



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5 RECOMMENDATIONS AND BEST PRACTICES

As mentioned in the previous chapters, when formulating multidisciplinary teams in digital-ready policies, policymakers need to consult with various professional profiles, including - as a minimum - business architects, IT experts and service managers from the specific field in order to create rules that are simple and easy to implement fostering digital transition of the administration.

As part of the way forward, the following recommendations shall be considered:



Organisation level



Team level



Process level



Organisation Level

- A certain **cultural change** is needed in public institutions, in general, to get everybody on-board, go along in the road of digital transformation and to move towards digital-ready legislation. Complementarily, a change in **human resources (HR) policies** is needed to build multidisciplinary teams comprising people with wide-ranging skills. For HR this means to hire people with the right skillset based on team needs. As people will be working in a multidisciplinary team on a daily basis, this requires different competences and attitude.
- Strengthening the different teams and communities involved in lawmaking could be fostered by not only involving physical persons but also **legal entities** such as companies, NGOs and universities. Organisations can facilitate such involvement of external experts through easy procuring opportunities or partnership agreements.



5. RECOMMENDATIONS AND BEST PRACTICES



Team Level

- Everything starts with a **good project manager/team leader**. This person needs to create a good atmosphere and collaboration. For example, when it comes to motivating IT experts from the team, they need to involve them in an agile process showing their achievements to the whole team. It is key to **boost the motivation** of the team by highlighting the value of their input and encourage the showcasing and sharing of their efforts and achievements (e.g. by sharing demos, sharing information, etc.).
- Working in multidisciplinary teams can lead to **reaching beyond the initial goals**. For this reason, setting as initial goal to increase the efficiency of the legal drafting process can open the door to a series of opportunities to explore new ways to draft legislations, but also to improve their content.
- **Higher diversity of skills** can bring more interesting outcomes within multidisciplinary teams. For example, beyond technical backgrounds consider involving people with social or cultural sciences. People with skills in social sciences are relevant profiles to design user-centric digital-ready policies (e.g. sociologists, ethnologists) and could be useful in the policymaking process.



Process Level

- The current “waterfall-type” lawmaking process should move more and more towards an **agile approach**, to achieve digital-ready legislation. In other words, policymakers need to explore and to understand how regulation can cope with the fast-evolving pace of new technologies and adopt a more agile approach when drafting legislation.
- Use the multidisciplinary team to represent the **text of the policies in formats for different audiences**, e.g. code, models etc. Once the legislation is drafted, the idea to apply the legal rules to software code could be further explored to ensure that it is developed in parallel to the development of the natural language model of the law.
- The processes of **trust-building and mutual recognition** of role equivalence is a very important step when building multidisciplinary team. The fact that everybody understands the goal and the scope is crucial.



6. CONCLUSIONS AND POSSIBLE QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION



6 CONCLUSIONS AND POSSIBLE QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION

In conclusion, this paper describes the multidisciplinary teams, presents their value in digital-ready policymaking and provides a number of examples for policymakers to consider when developing digital polices.

The most important conclusion is that the way of designing policies should change to keep up with the fast evolution of modern societies and technologies. To achieve this, a shift in culture and mindset is of utmost importance, towards a more agile way of working, building and maintaining a mutual understanding, as well as the necessary transparency and trust, as key requirement across all involved parties.

The purpose of this paper was to set the foundations for digital-ready policymaking by promoting multidisciplinary teamwork. The ideas presented in this paper serve as a basis for discussion among all those involved in multidisciplinary teams in digital-ready policymaking. We would love to read your views about this topic possibly along the below questions – serving as inspiration:

Question 1: Who should be on a multidisciplinary team for digital-ready policymaking?

Question 2: What is the most appropriate and effective model for multidisciplinary team management? How an effective leadership can be ensured in a multidisciplinary team?

Question 3: How to keep everyone motivated and feel valuable in an environment based on multidisciplinary skills?

Question 4: Could there be a policy framework for the definition and operation of a multidisciplinary team and how this could be drawn up?

To share your ideas, join our dedicated discussion [here](#)..

As for the **next steps** from the [BLSI community](#), stay tuned for the upcoming virtual breakfast webinars, publication of case studies, issue papers, solutions and tools, as well as legal interoperability trainings.

Finally, feel free to join the ongoing discussions on: [Digital-ready policymaking](#) and [Decision supporting tool on interoperability](#) and make sure to [subscribe to the newsletter](#) to stay tuned on what is coming and [become a member](#) of the BLSI community!



6. CONCLUSIONS AND POSSIBLE QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION

ANNEX

Regarding the actual visualisation tools that often are being utilised within a multidisciplinary team, **Figure 4** presents a summary of some useful narratives and diagrams. The visualisation tools are divided into two basic categories: those that are used to generate visual representations (making) and those used to generate discussion and feedback (telling). Even though the actual tools may be the same (sketches, drawings, mind maps, e.tc.) the communication process that they support is different, depending on who the “user” is. For example, *service designers*, as members of the multidisciplinary team when designing **digital-ready policies**, could use storyboards. *People with digital / ICT knowledge*, on the other hand could utilise the products of the previous process to generate discussion aiming to provide more effectively the information about the current ICT landscape and future necessities and possibilities for the digital implementation of the policy.

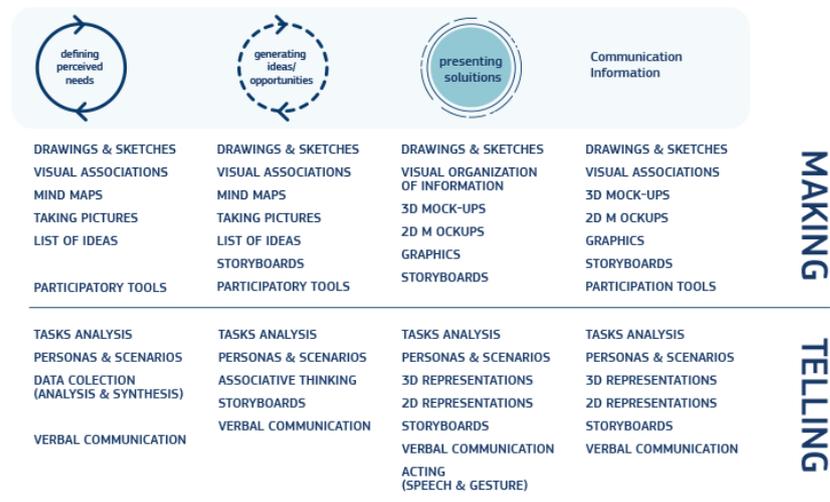


Figure 4: Visualisation tools used at the beginning stages of the design process



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