



# 10<sup>th</sup> Evaluation Conference in Prague

**What is (not) going well  
in evaluations and why?**

**Enhancing the quality and effectiveness of  
regulatory evaluations with behavioural insights**

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# What are behavioural insights (BI)?

- Core question: Why do people act as they do? (and how can policy adapt?)
- Takes lessons from social and behavioural sciences and applies them to making policy work better
- Inductive approach - uses experimentation and observation to identify patterns of behaviour and use these findings to inform policies/regulation
  - » Complements deductive, which applies theories and assumptions

# Regulatory policy making vs reality



# Regulation is fundamentally about behaviour change



“Start doing something”



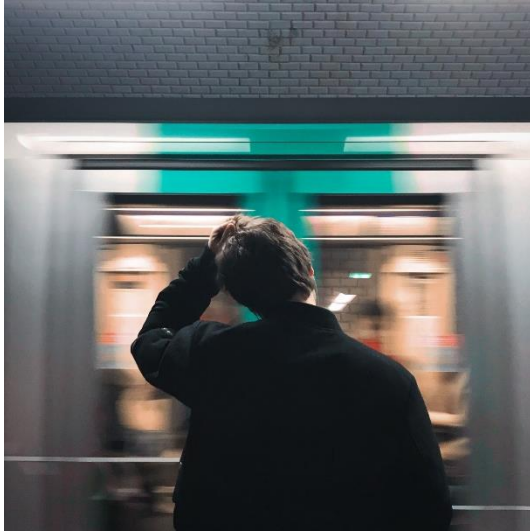
“Stop doing something”



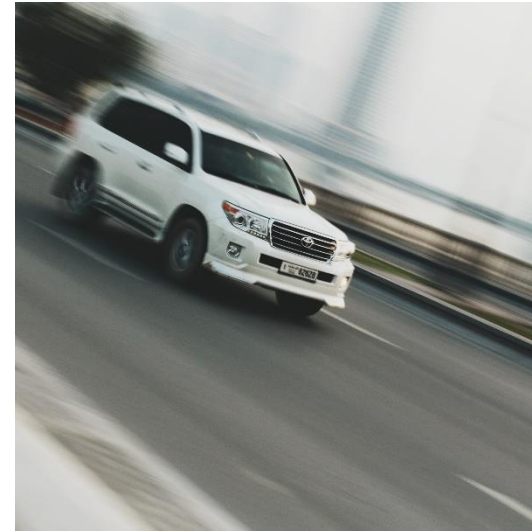


# However, behaviour change is hard...

**Attention**



**Belief formation**

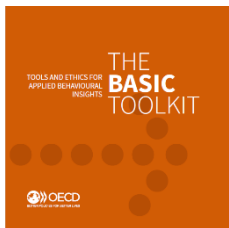


**The “ABCD” of  
behavioural  
insights**

**Choice**



**Determination**



[oe.cd/BASIC](https://oe.cd/BASIC)

# Where is BI applied?



# Why we need to think of BI in evaluation

*Government is created and run by humans, who experience the same biases and barriers as citizens*

*We should symmetrically apply lessons from improving policy outcomes to also improve policy making*



Drummond, J., D. Shephard and D. Trnka (2021), "Behavioural insight and regulatory governance: Opportunities and challenges", OECD Regulatory Policy Working Papers, No. 16, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/ee46b4af-en>

# The unfinished project: RIA as a debiasing tool

RIA can force “deliberative thinking”...

... but assumes that it is *produced* and *used* by the rational “homo economicus,” not homo sapiens

Drummond, J. and C.M. Radaelli (2024) “Behavioural analysis and regulatory impact assessments,” European Journal of Risk and Regulation, <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/european-journal-of-risk-regulation/article/behavioural-analysis-and-regulatory-impact-assessment/5D07FB93848B22B214837A2415E310A6>



# Key Question: Can the effectiveness of RIA be improved with behavioural science?

Problem: Regulatory Policy Outlook, Reviews, etc note RIAs are under utilised and not achieving expected results

Hypothesis: If behavioural barriers affect the producers and utilisers of RIA, then RIA will be less effective in driving deliberative decision making

What we need:

- » A structured process for understanding *how* behavioural issues may affecting the *knowledge producers* and *knowledge utilisers* of RIA
- » Apply this process analytically to RIA, both as a *proof of concept* but also to set up potential *solutions* to test

# Opportunities



*Attention:* Time constraints, complexity, and inability to consider all information



*Belief formation:* Pre-existing beliefs and mental shortcuts, over/under confidence, and institutional norms



*Choice:* Framing of the policy problem, limits on available policy options, and whose perspectives are included (and whose are not)

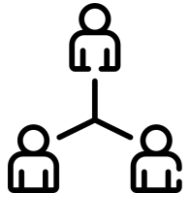


*Determination:* Inertia/path dependencies, frictions with “new” solutions, and mental exhaustion with the process

# Solutions



*Well-known solutions:* Prompts, defaults, decision trees, champions, etc.



*Organisational behaviour change:* Oversight, guidance and training



*New approaches:* many options, for example how to communicate analysis different via spider chart vs cost-benefit binaries

*Needs testing in  
real life situations*

# References



<https://doi.org/10.1787/ee46b4af-en>

*European Journal of Risk Regulation* (2024), 1–16  
doi:10.1017/err.2024.1



## ARTICLE

### Behavioural Analysis and Regulatory Impact Assessment

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## Abstract

Regulatory impact assessment (RIA) is an appraisal tool to bring evidence to bear on regulatory decisions. A key property of RIA is that it corrects errors in reasoning by pushing regulators towards deliberative thinking to override intuitive judgments. However, the steps for regulatory analysis suggested by international organisations and governmental handbooks do not handle two sources of bias and barriers that are well documented in the literature on behavioural insights. First, bias enters the process via knowledge production during the analytical process of assessment. Second, bias affects knowledge utilisation when regulators “read” or utilise the results of RIA. We explore these two pathways by focusing on drivers of behaviour rather than lists of biases. The conclusions reflect on the limitations of current practice and its possible improvement, making suggestions for an RIA architecture that is fully informed by behavioural analysis.

**Keywords:** Behaviour; knowledge utilisation; regulation; regulatory impact analysis (RIA)

<https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/european-journal-of-risk-regulation/article/behavioural-analysis-and-regulatory-impact-assessment/5D07FB93848B22B214837A2415E310A6>



# Thank you!

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