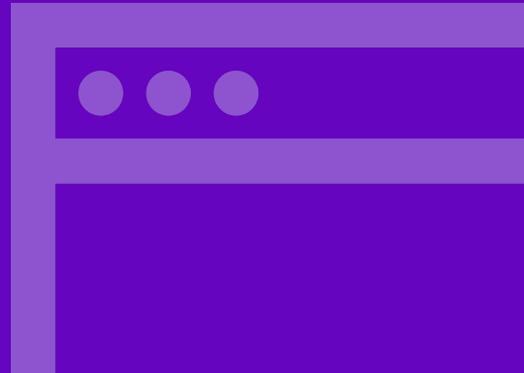


Introducing a new toolkit to apply behavioural insights to energy policy

Users TCP Academy | February 2022

Jesper Akesson | Ondrej Kacha



Motivating consumers to act sustainably is hard



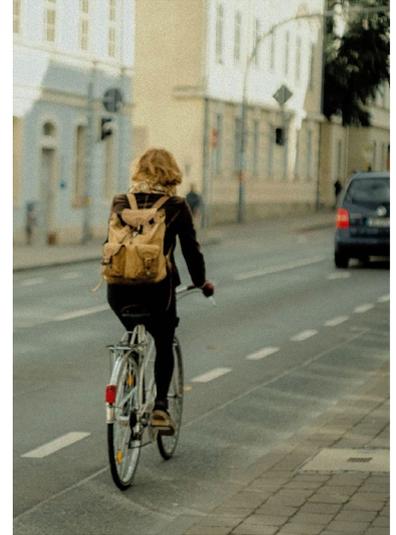
Adoption of energy efficient procedures by industry



Uptake of green technology by households



Curtailling individual energy use



Shifting from carbon-intensive modes of travel

Green policies do not always work as intended

Example:

The Green Deal in the UK
(2012 - 2015)

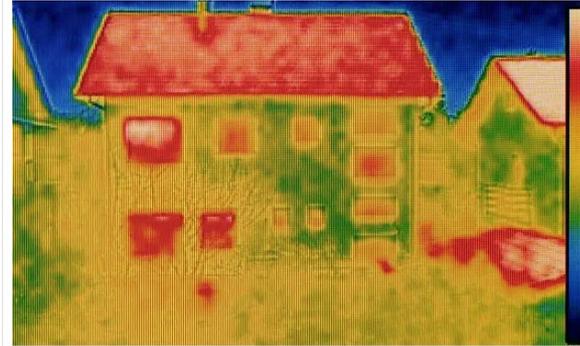


Green deal and energy companies obligation (ECO)

• This article is more than 6 years old

Government kills off flagship green deal for home insulation

Flagship scheme to insulate homes to end as government blames low take-up and stops funding of company set up to issue home improvement loans



📷 A thermal image of a home. Green deal loans helped people to insulate homes to make them more energy efficient. Photograph: Alamy

The UK government has effectively killed its flagship scheme to insulate homes because it says take-up has been too low, but has admitted it has nothing to replace the programme with.

The green deal was hailed as “transformational” and the “biggest home improvement programme since the second world war” by ministers when it was launched in 2013.

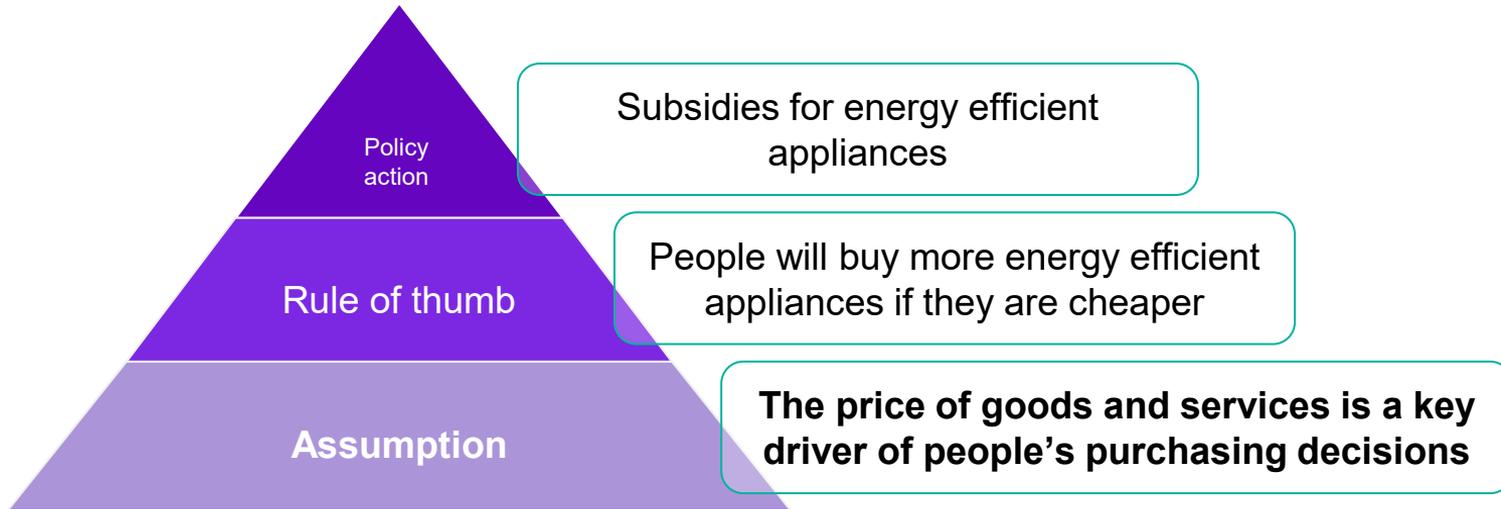
Green policies do not always work as intended

Example:
Low interest of U.S.
households in monitoring their
energy and water
consumption

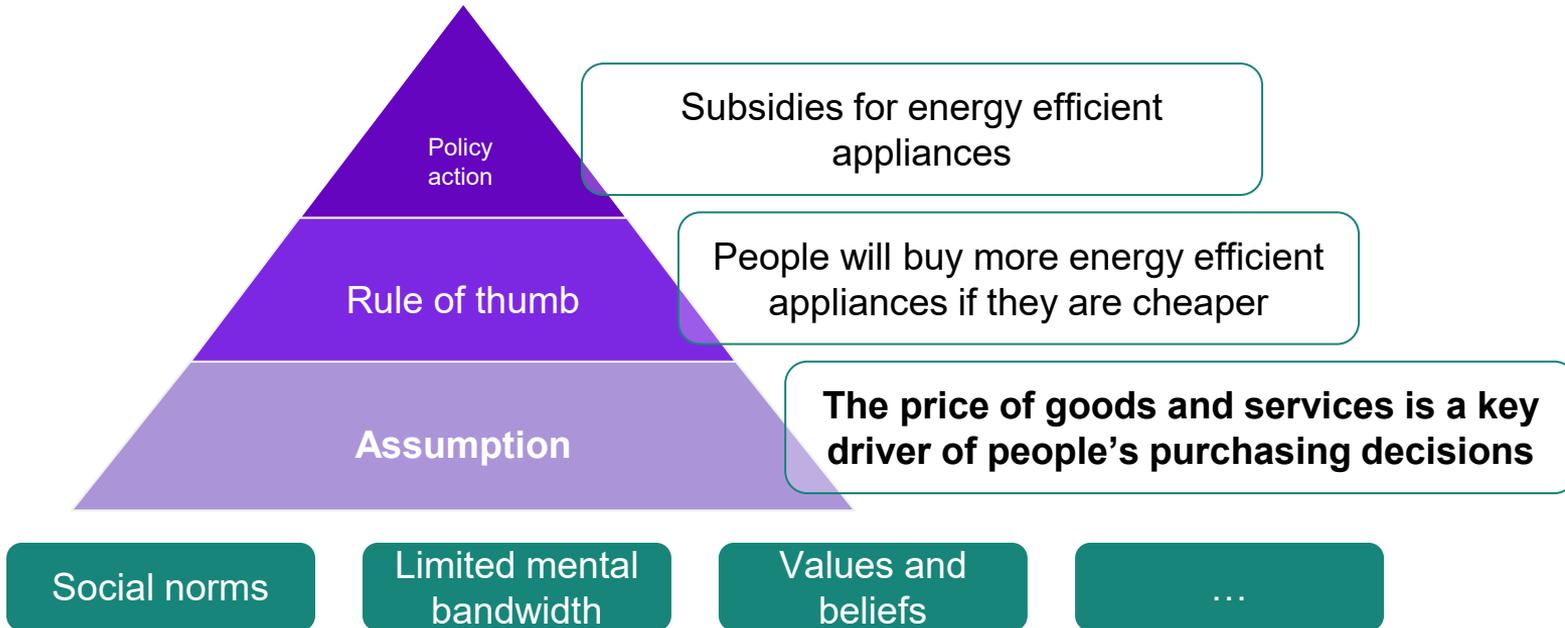


Why some energy policies fail?

Policy designers tend to make assumptions about human behaviour which do not always hold true.



The toolkit helps to uncover policymakers' assumptions about human behaviour



Applying behavioural insights to demand-side energy policies and programmes

A toolkit for practitioners

This online tool is intended for policymakers, civil servants or professionals who design or implement policies or programmes aimed at changing or reducing citizens' energy consumption.

The goal is to help you improve your policy or programme by considering the underlying psychological and behavioural factors that drive citizens' energy consumption.

You can choose from three different paths in this tool: (1) the policy or programme design path, (2) the policy or programme implementation path, or (3) the behavioural insights browser path. These paths are designed to meet the different needs that policymakers, civil servants or professionals have throughout a project's life cycle.

Please select the path that best matches your needs:

Policy or programme design

You are designing a new policy or programme and are considering different options. If you select this path, you will be guided through a series of steps that will help you choose between different available alternatives. You will also be able to review relevant behavioural considerations that might affect the success of your chosen policy or programme.

[Start](#)

Policy or programme implementation

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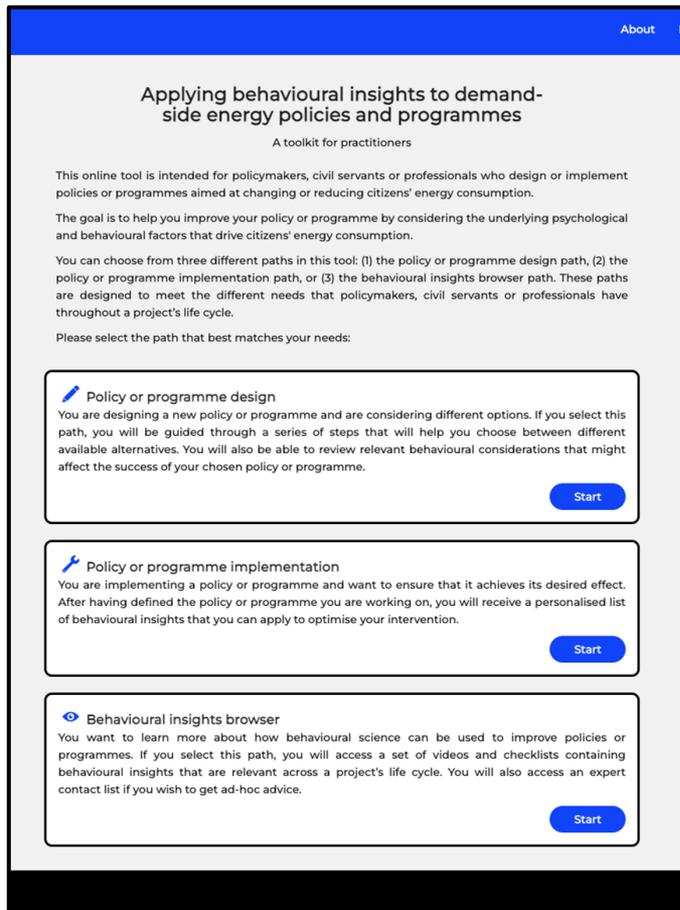
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[Start](#)

The toolkit

Introducing the public beta version



General overview

- A freely accessible website
- Developed by the Users TCP Behavioural Insights Platform
- Development involved collaboration with behavioural science experts from:



Natural Resources
Canada



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra
Swiss Federal Office of Energy SFOE



Australian
National
University

ofgem



Department for
Business, Energy
& Industrial Strategy

seai SUSTAINABLE
ENERGY AUTHORITY
OF IRELAND

TU Delft



Ministerie van Economische Zaken
en Klimaat

- The Behaviouralist serving as the task coordinator

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General overview

What does the toolkit do:

- Helps policymakers think about behavioural factors that might affect the success of their policy
- Offers guidance how these factors can be addressed

What it doesn't:

- Tells the policymaker which policy approach is the “best” considering their unique context
- Creates “behavioural experts” out of policymakers

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Start

User flow
demonstration
Policy/programme design

Area
of
focus

Policy
outcome

Policy
instrument

Policy
options

Area of focus

What policy or programme area do you want to focus on? Please select one area of focus

Buildings



You want to reduce carbon emissions produced by commercial or residential buildings. Buildings account for 17.5% of all CO₂ emissions. Examples of policy interventions in this area include retrofitting houses, installing heat pumps or smart meters and encouraging off-peak energy consumption.

Transport



You want to reduce carbon emissions in transport. Transport accounts for 16% of all CO₂ emissions. Examples of policy interventions in this area include encouraging the use of active travel, public transport or elective vehicles.

Industry



You want to reduce carbon emissions in Industry. This area encompasses policy interventions that target production processes or employee behaviours at the company level. Industry accounts for 24% of all CO₂ emissions. Examples include regulating energy-efficient manufacturing processes and motivating employees to adopt energy savings practices.

- The user journey begins with a short screening exercise
- This enables to provide tailored recommendations in a later stage
- Focus on three major areas: buildings, transport, and industry

Area
of
focus

Policy
outcome

Policy
instrument

Policy
options

Policy outcome

What policy or programme outcome do you want to achieve? Please select all that apply.

Uptake of a new technology

- Typical outcomes include encouraging citizens to install solar panels, installation of heat pumps, retrofitting homes, and uptake of energy-efficient processes in organisations.

Reduce energy consumption

- Typical outcomes include encouraging citizens to turn down their thermostats or encouraging employees to adopt energy-efficient behaviours at the workplace.

Encourage modal shift

- Typical outcomes include promoting travel to work by public transport, carpooling, and motivating travellers to switch from short-haul flights to trains.

Back

Next

- On this screen the user defines the key behavioural outcome they want to achieve
- We used the *Global Warming of 1.5 °C* report (IPCC, 2018) as the main resource to identify mitigation behaviours
- We then categorised the behaviours into three broader outcomes



Policy or programme instrument

What policy or programme instruments do you want to use? Please select all that apply

Enforce or ban behaviours

- You can enforce or ban behaviours via regulations, legislations or guidelines. Examples include banning diesel cars in city centres or enforcing minimum energy efficiency standards in industry sectors.

Incentivise or disincentivise behaviours

- You can incentivise or disincentivise behaviours using financial, in-kind, or social incentives and disincentives. Examples include providing heat pump installation grants or making electric vehicles more socially visible through distinguishable number plates.

Provide services or infrastructure

- You can provide services or infrastructure to support desired behaviours. Examples include building an online platform where citizens can contact trusted housing retrofit contractors, offering energy efficiency audits to businesses, or installing electric vehicle charging stations.

Provide information

You can provide information to encourage citizens or organisations to engage

- After defining the outcome, a user is prompted to identify policy instrument(s) they are considering to use to achieve the outcome
- Four instruments are offered to reflect legal, economic, service/environment design, and marketing approaches, respectively



Policy or programme options

1 Ban or regulate old technologies to encourage citizens to adopt new ones



2 Incentivise citizens to adopt a new technology



3 Launch an information campaign that encourages citizens to adopt a new technology



- Once the screening phase ends, users are shown a summary of their policy alternatives
- Each policy alternative has a unique set of behavioural considerations



Policy or programme options

1 Ban or regulate old technologies to encourage citizens to adopt new ones

! Behavioural considerations

Behavioural consideration 1

Have you considered that other citizens might influence your target audience not to comply with the law or regulation? [Learn more](#)

Behavioural consideration 2

Have you considered that citizens might distrust the government or relevant institutions? [Learn more](#)

Behavioural consideration 3

Have you considered that citizens might lack the knowledge, skill or physical ability to use the new technology? [Learn more](#)

Behavioural consideration 4

Have you considered that citizens might believe that they are unlikely to get punished if they break the law? [Learn more](#)

Behavioural consideration 5

Have you considered that citizens might have opposing beliefs or negative attitudes towards the new technology? [Learn more](#)

- A number of “behavioural considerations” are presented for each policy option
- The list of behavioural factors was selected in collaboration with 19 experts working in behavioural energy policy
- By clicking on “Learn more,” users can access checklists that provide guidance

Checklist: Increase public acceptance of your environmental policy or programme

Present balanced information about the impacts of your programme or policy +

Make your communications simple and brief +

Correct false beliefs and address misinformation +

Build the perception of fairness and cooperation -

Include citizens in the design of your environmental programme or policy. A solution designed without conducting prior research and consultations with citizens risks being viewed as unfair or inadequate by citizens, thus reducing public compliance. For example, businesses might be reluctant to become carbon neutral because they view the required timelines as unrealistic.

When designing an environmental programme or policy, conduct research to understand any public concerns to resolve any potential issues early on and ensure public buy-in. This is particularly important when designing solutions that are novel and disruptive. For example, providing industry representatives with opportunities to get involved and voice their concerns when designing a plan for carbon neutrality can increase chances of the policy being seen as legitimate and fair by industries. Similarly, a government introducing low traffic zones in cities might first conduct research with different groups of the public to better understand residents' driving patterns and set policy that truly help to eliminate non-essential car travel while maintaining options for essential transport.

Case Study: Taxes on carbon emissions are often perceived as unfair by members of the public, which makes voters less likely to support this and other policy measures designed to reduce carbon emissions and combat climate change. A recent survey conducted in the United States identified multiple reasons for why people view these taxes as unfair: gas prices are already perceived to be high; many people need to drive and therefore must use gas; taxes are perceived as unfairly burdensome for poorer households; lack of trust in government; and lack of understanding of the need for a carbon tax. Policymakers should be aware of these perceptions when implementing disincentives to reduce emissions.

Choose a good messenger +

- The checklists provide an informed starting point to make the policy or programme behaviourally informed
- They do not aim to provide “an ultimate recipe”
- Policymakers are prompted to consult experts and conduct additional research where necessary

Final thoughts

The screenshot shows a web page with a blue header containing the word 'About'. The main heading is 'Applying behavioural insights to demand-side energy policies and programmes', with a subtitle 'A toolkit for practitioners'. The page contains three paragraphs of introductory text and three distinct path options, each with a 'Start' button. The first path is 'Policy or programme design', the second is 'Policy or programme implementation', and the third is 'Behavioural insights browser'. Each path includes a brief description of what the user can expect.

About

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We hope that the toolkit will:

- Help policymakers think about overlooked factors
- Help realize a potential need for more research
- Help abandon one policy approach and go with another one for a good reason
- Ultimately, help policymakers to start asking behavioural questions

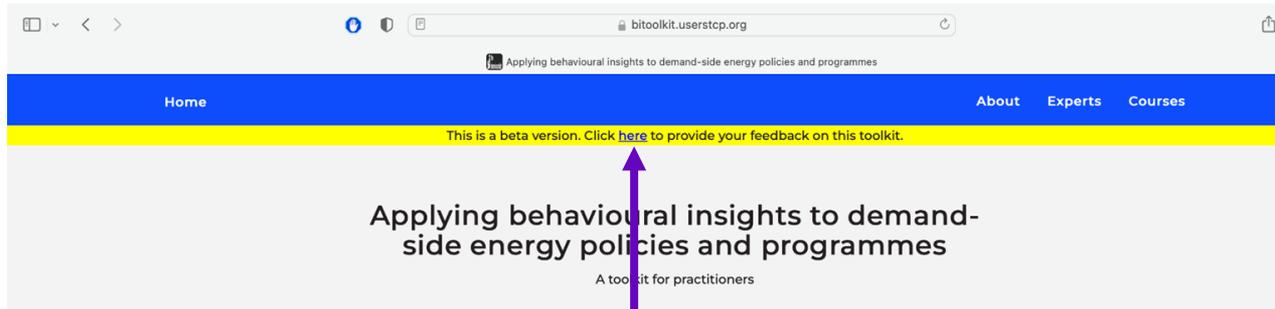
**Access
the toolkit**

public beta available now at

bitoolkit.userstcp.org



We welcome your feedback



Once on bitoolkit.userstcp.org,
click on the link in the yellow banner to
provide your feedback

Upcoming development

Several works are planned in the Users TCP BI Platform for 2022, including:



User testing and refinement of the toolkit



A massive online course (MOOC)



Adding an expert contact list to the toolkit

Q & A

Jesper Akesson
Managing Director
The Behaviouralist



Ondrej Kacha
Behavioural Scientist
The Behaviouralist

Get in touch:

ondrej@thebehaviouralist.com
www.thebehaviouralist.com

bitoolkit.userstcp.org

