Chapter 22
A Living Roadmap for Policymaking 2.0

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ABSTRACT

The chapter is based on current research conducted by the authors as part of the “CROSSOVER Project – Bridging Communities for Next Generation Policy Making,” an FP7-funded support action of the European Commission, whose main goal is to reach out to and raise the awareness of users, particularly public government practitioners and policymakers, while developing a research roadmap for establishing the scientific and political basis for long-lasting interest and commitment to next generation policymaking. In particular, the chapter identifies the opportunities and benefits resulting from applications of ICT tools for collaborative governance and policy modeling and provides an outline of what technologies are and will be available to meet the needs of policymakers. The project builds on the CROSSROAD model and roadmap with the aim to reach a stronger focus on policy modeling.

INTRODUCTION

In the last thirty years the role of the government has moved consistently away from services provision to regulation. Society and economy has become more interconnected, unstable and unpredictable than ever, and citizens are keener to engage in complex policy making. Within this context, traditional tools for policy making, based upon the perfectly rational representative agent maximizing its own utility in a general equilibrium framework, have been demonstrated to be unable to predict and cope with some of today’s most pressing challenges, such as the financial crisis and climate change. Despite the explosion of data availability, the possibility to analyze them through crowdsourcing and large scale collaboration, the advance in modeling and simulation tools for as-
sessing non-linear impact of policy options, the full potential offered by the new instruments for policy making has yet to be achieved. Therefore policy makers have not yet at their disposal a set of instruments able to cope with the needs stemming from their decision making activities. This analysis presented in this chapter has the main objective to investigate how ICT tools and methodologies can impact real life governance and policy making, and is based on the roadmapping exercise conducted as part of the CROSSOVER project (Osimo et al., 2013). This international roadmap funded and supported by the European Commission aims to establish the scientific and political basis for long-lasting interest and commitment to next generation policymaking, as well as to provide a clear outline of what technologies are available now for policymakers to improve their work, and what could become available in the future. The research is the result of a highly participative process undergone between the first draft and the final roadmap, with the involvement of hundreds of people through a number of different input methods, from live workshops to online discussion. After a brief introduction of the background, the chapter analyses the demand side: the current status of policy-making, with the key tasks (illustrated by the traditional policy cycle) and existing challenges. The first section of the chapter presents the rationale and the methodology for the roadmap on policy-making 2.0. The second section presents the demand of policy making, stressing in particular the challenges encountered in the activity of the policy maker. The third section represents the core of the chapter and briefly presents the key research challenges related to future policy making, including an additional research challenge concerning the impact of policy-making 2.0 by the mean of counterfactual impact evaluation. Finally, in the last section we summarize the findings of the chapter and we outline the future research avenues, suggesting that policy-making 2.0 cannot be considered the panacea for all issues related to bad public policies, but that at the same time it is more than just a neutral set of disparate tools. It provides an integrated and mutually reinforcing set of methods that share a similar vision of policy-making and that should be addressed in an integrated and strategic way; and it provides opportunities to improve the checks and balances systems behind decision making in government, and as such it should be further pursued.

THE RATIONALE OF THE ROADMAP: WHAT IS THE PROBLEM?

The Project CROSSOVER

The CROSSOVER project aims to consolidate and expand the existing community on ICT for Governance and Policy Modeling (built largely within FP7) by:

- Bringing together and reinforcing the links between the different global communities of researchers and experts: it will create directories of experts and solutions, and animate knowledge exchange across communities of practice both offline and online;
- Reaching out and raising the awareness of non-experts and potential users, with special regard to high-level policy-makers and policy advisors: it will produce multimedia content, a practical handbook and high-level policy conferences with competition for prizes;
- Establishing the scientific and political basis for long-lasting interest and commitment to next generation policy-making, beyond the mere availability of FP7 funding: it will focus on use cases and a demand-driven approach, involving policy-makers and advisors.

The CROSSOVER project pursues this goal through a combination of content production, ad
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