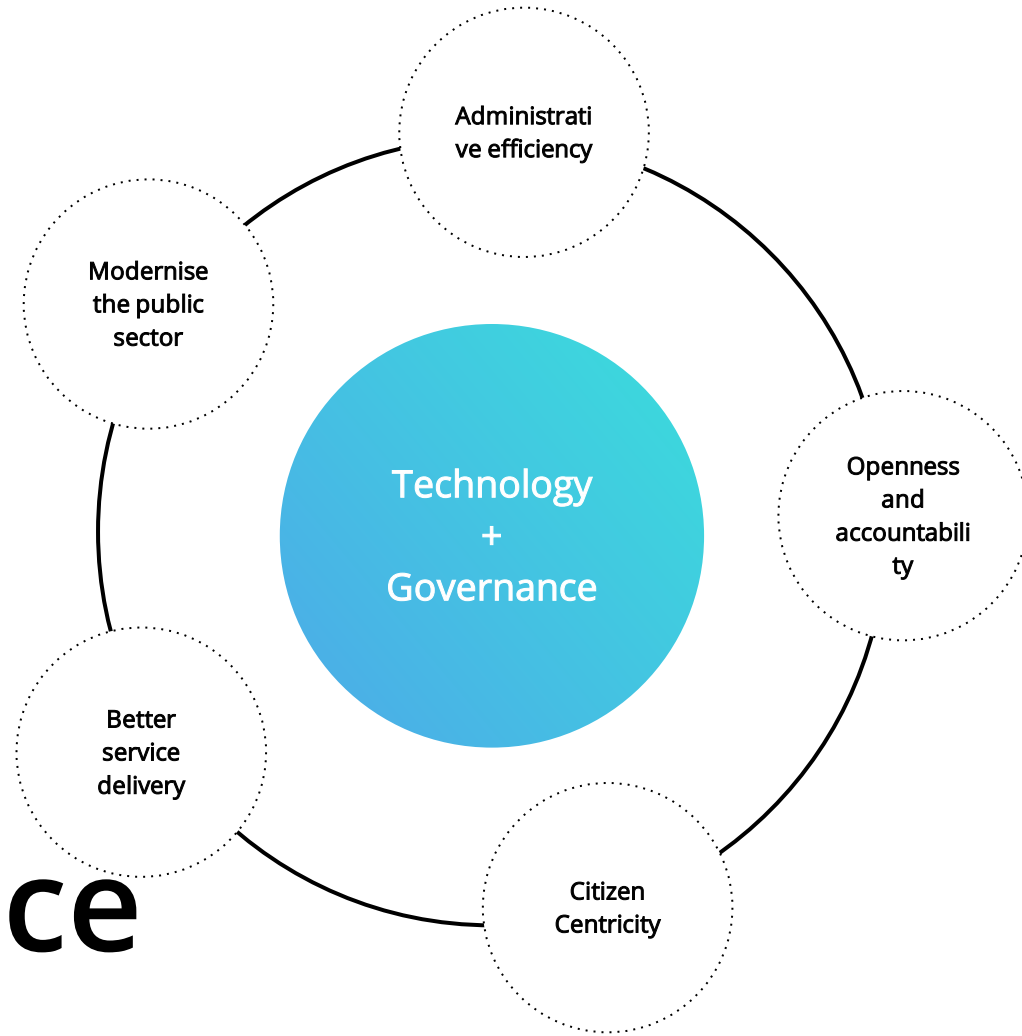


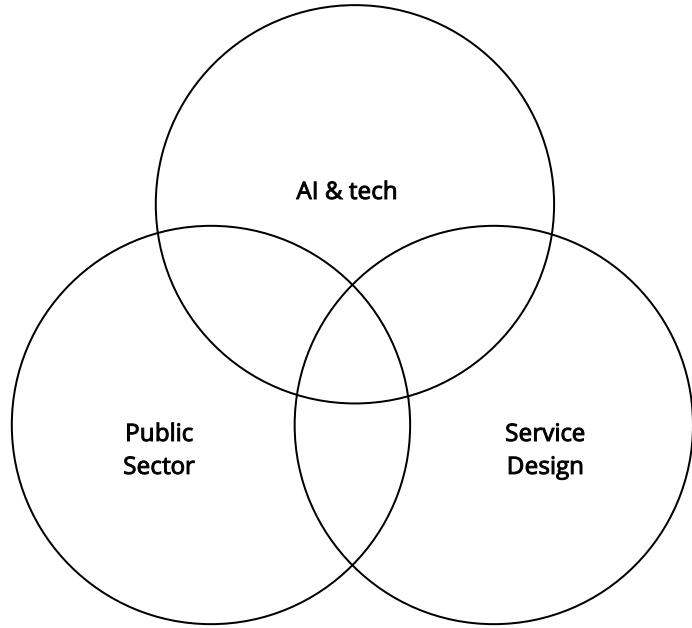
Citizen and Stakeholder Engagement for Service Design A Coin with Two Sides

Ilaria Mariani, PhD, Assistant Professor
Department of Design, Politecnico di Milano

The integration of **digital technologies** and innovative approaches in the public sector is underpinned by the goal of improving government services, optimising administrative efficiency, and streamlining overall governance, addressing evolving challenges and demands faced by governments.

Bridging Technology & Governance





Challenges in the field

ILARIA MARIANI. PhD, Department of Design, Politecnico di Milano

THEORETICAL CHALLENGES

Adapting to evolving scenarios. Governments often lack frameworks and models to adapt quickly to evolving digital scenarios and user needs.

Cultivating dynamic capabilities. Developing the necessary dynamic capabilities for continuous innovation and transformation.

Governance models. Models for effective governance structures that facilitate digital transformation are not yet fully developed.

PRACTICAL CHALLENGES

Implementing user-centered approach. Challenges in training Public Administration to understand and user-centered approaches to better answer users' needs.

Integration of stakeholder engagement. Frameworks for effectively integrating and operationalising stakeholder engagement are still evolving.

Resistance to change. Practical resistance within organizations, especially those with rigid and hierarchical structures, impedes the adoption of new practices.

The subject involved
when seeking solutions
to a problem is not only
part of the **problem**, but
also part of the **solution**

Burns et al., 2006

Put people first.

Understanding the needs, aspirations and expectations of the people using a service.

Collaborate and co-create.

Work together and leverage diversity as a plus.

Iterate and improve.

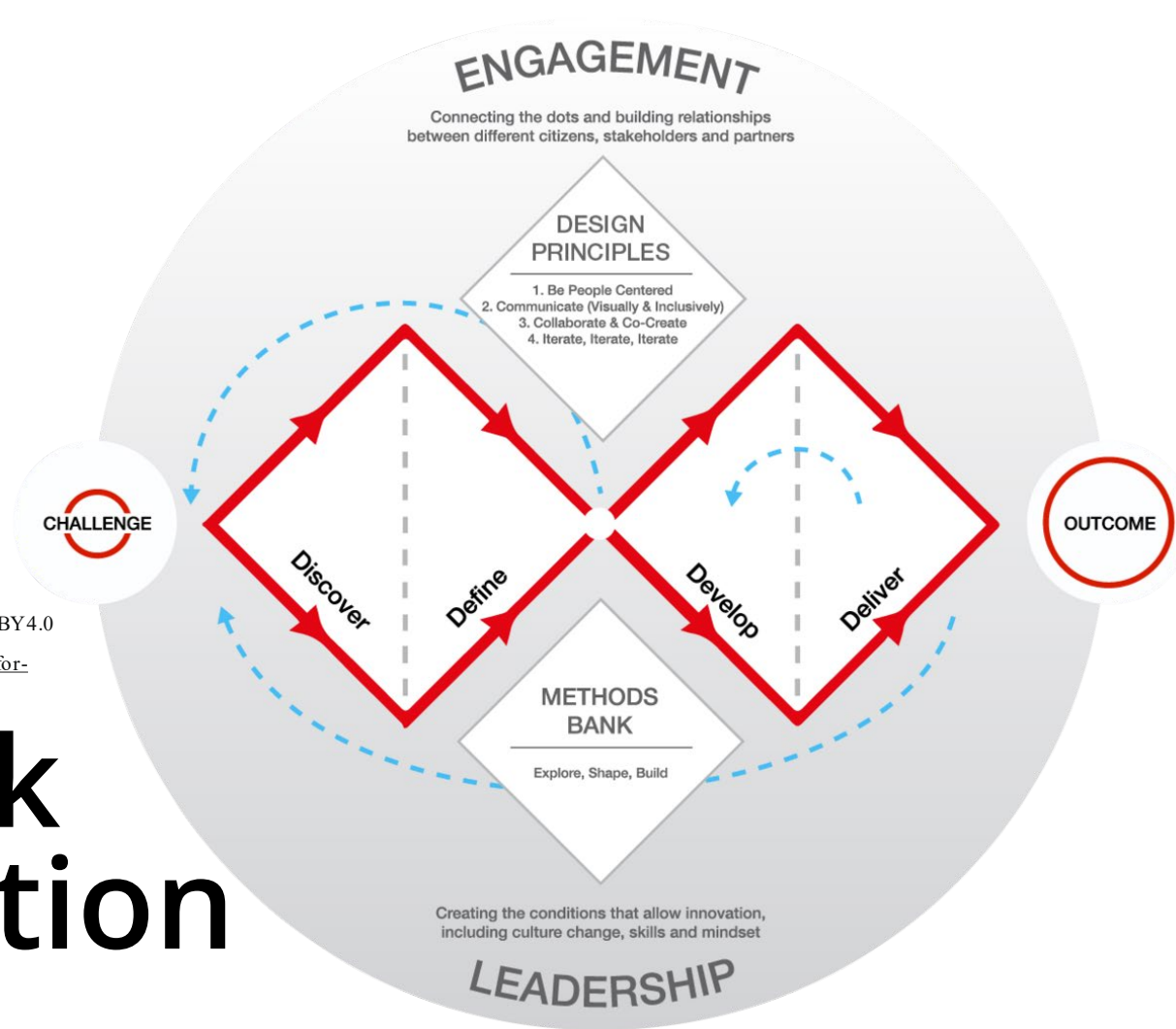
Spotting errors early to fix them earlier!



Framework by the Design Council, licensed under CC BY 4.0 license.
www.designcouncil.org.uk/our-resources/framework-for-innovation/

Framework for Innovation

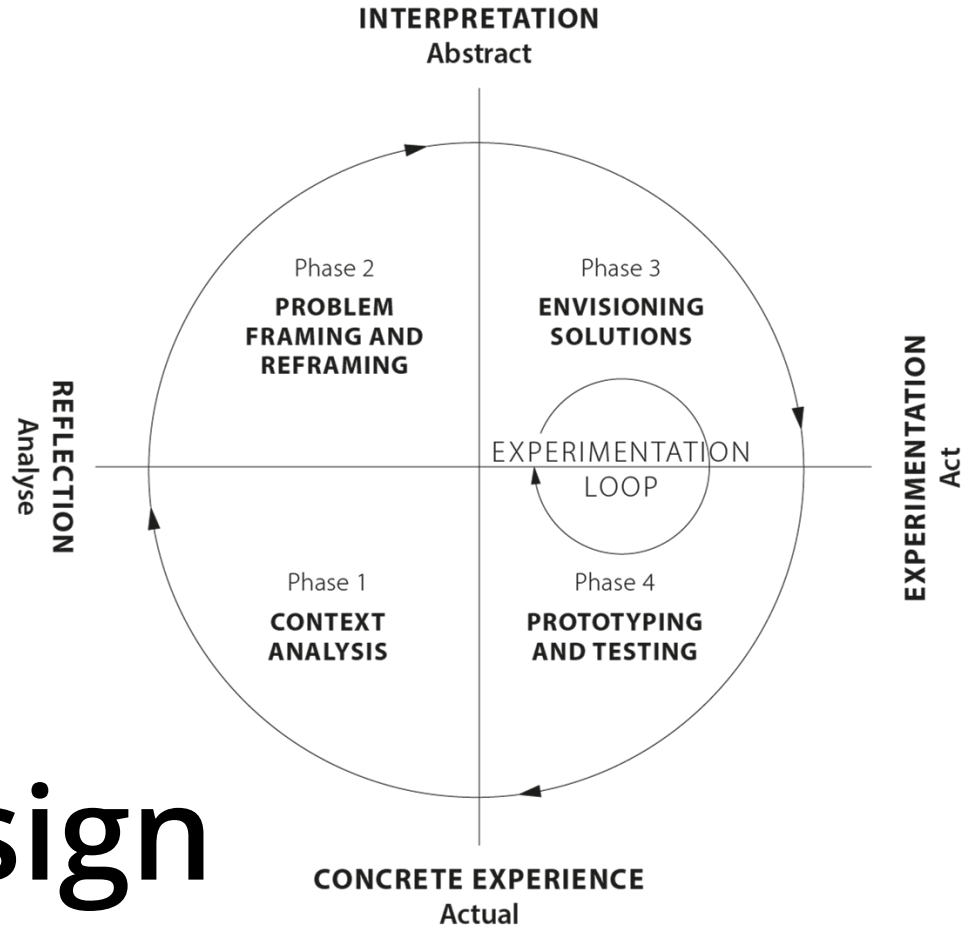
ILARIA MARIANI. PhD, Department of Design, Politecnico di Milano



Integration of **two frameworks** in an iterative process of **experimentation and learning**:

- The **Design Thinking process** (Brown, 2009) for **co-creating solutions**
- The **experiential learning process** (Kolb, 1984) depicting new knowledge acquisition

Approach to service design

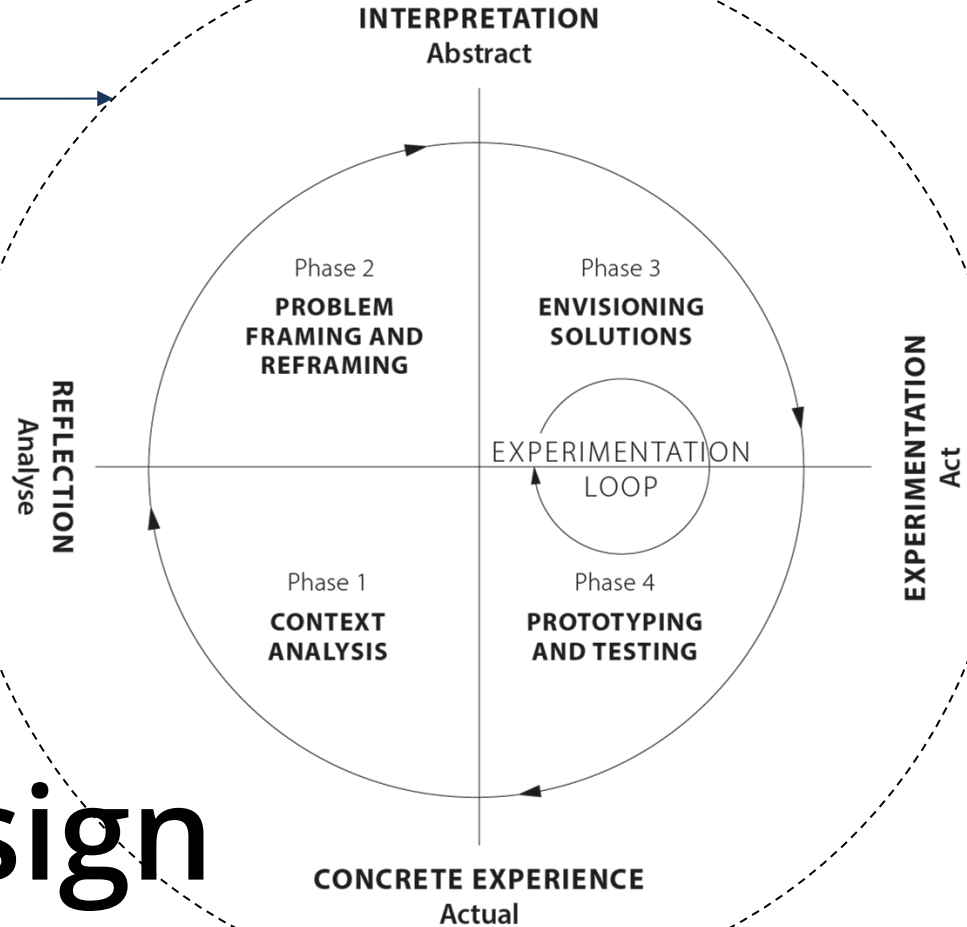


Approach to service design

HUMAN-CENTRED DESIGN + ENGAGEMENT

WHEN + WHY + WHO + HOW

RQ: How the use of **design thinking** methods for the effective engagement of different service users can enhance the development of more desirable and solutions for supporting public sector innovation?



From theory to practice: experimentation and piloting



easyRights

H2020 EU RIA
GA: 870980

Facilitate migrants'
access to rights
through more
inclusive services



orbis

Horizon Europe RIA
GA: 101094765

Facilitate citizens
participation to
decision-making
leaving AI



GovTech
Connect

Tender DG Connect
CNECT/LUX/2021/OP/0053

Supporting SMEs and
startups in designing
better GovTech
solutions



AI4GOV

CEF program
2020-EU-IA-0064

Master in AI
for Public Services

EUROPEAN DIGITAL SKILLS
AWARDS 2023

POLIMI GRADUATE SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT

Executive Masters for public
administrations

- ◊ AI for Public
Services
- ◊ City Management
and public sector
innovation

CO-DESIGN

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Socio-technical approach to innovation

Render the 'social' component a central concern throughout the entire process.

Small-scale experimentation

Controlled environments where to experiment innovation before going public

Multistakeholder settings and ecosystems

Environments featuring multiple stakeholders with different needs, to be engaged for steering desirable innovation

Innovation. Organisational change. Learning

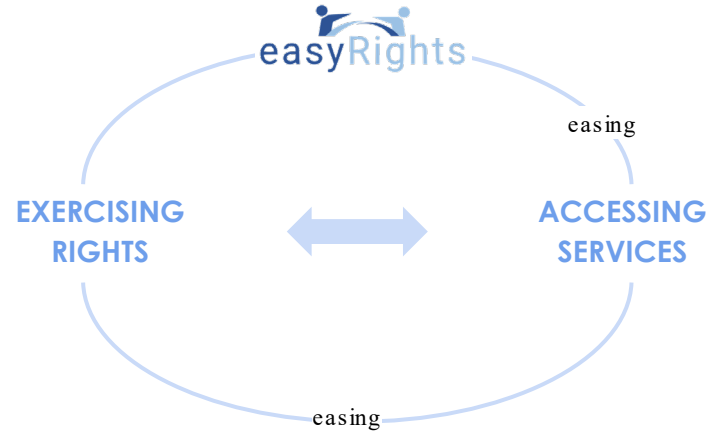
Study settings premises & limits

Possibilities and opportunities
that arise when citizens and
stakeholders actively participate
in shaping services

Potential pitfalls and challenges
that arise when citizens and
stakeholders actively participate
in shaping services


easyRights aims to facilitate migrants' access to their rights and thus their exercise of these rights:

- reducing language barriers for access to services
- improving services to reduce/eliminate problems due to bureaucratic procedures.

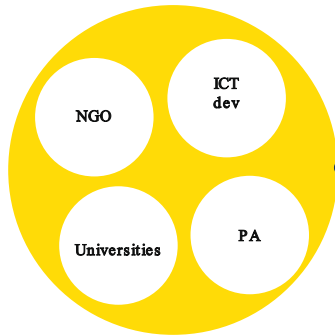


AI-enhanced services for supporting migrants

easyRights

 EasyRights has received funding from the EU H2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 870980

The consortium and its 4 pilots
as **ecosystems**
with quadruple-helix actors

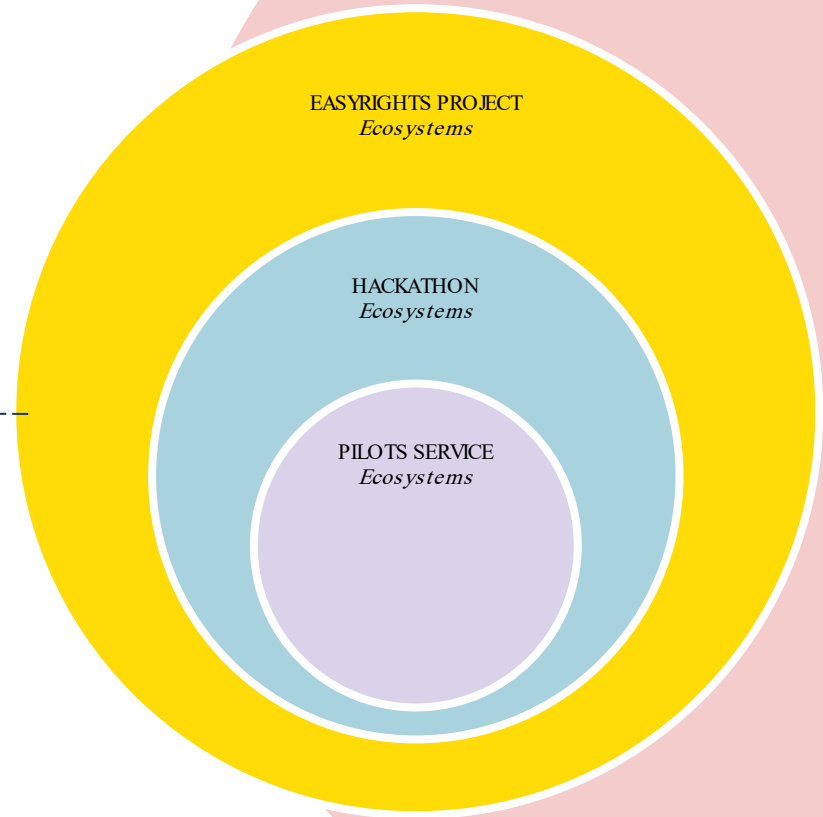


Amatrashka model

Ecosystems



EasyRights has received funding from the EU H2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 870980



4 experiments in 4 pilot cities codesigning with migrants, public authorities, civil servants, ICT developers, researchers, and other key stakeholders.

4 pilots in EU, 8 services



EasyRights has received funding from the EU H2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 870980

ILARIA MARIANI. PhD, Department of Design, Politecnico di Milano

Birmingham (UK)

Service 1: Clean Air Zone (CAZ)
Service 2: Access Learning
English

Malaga (Spain)

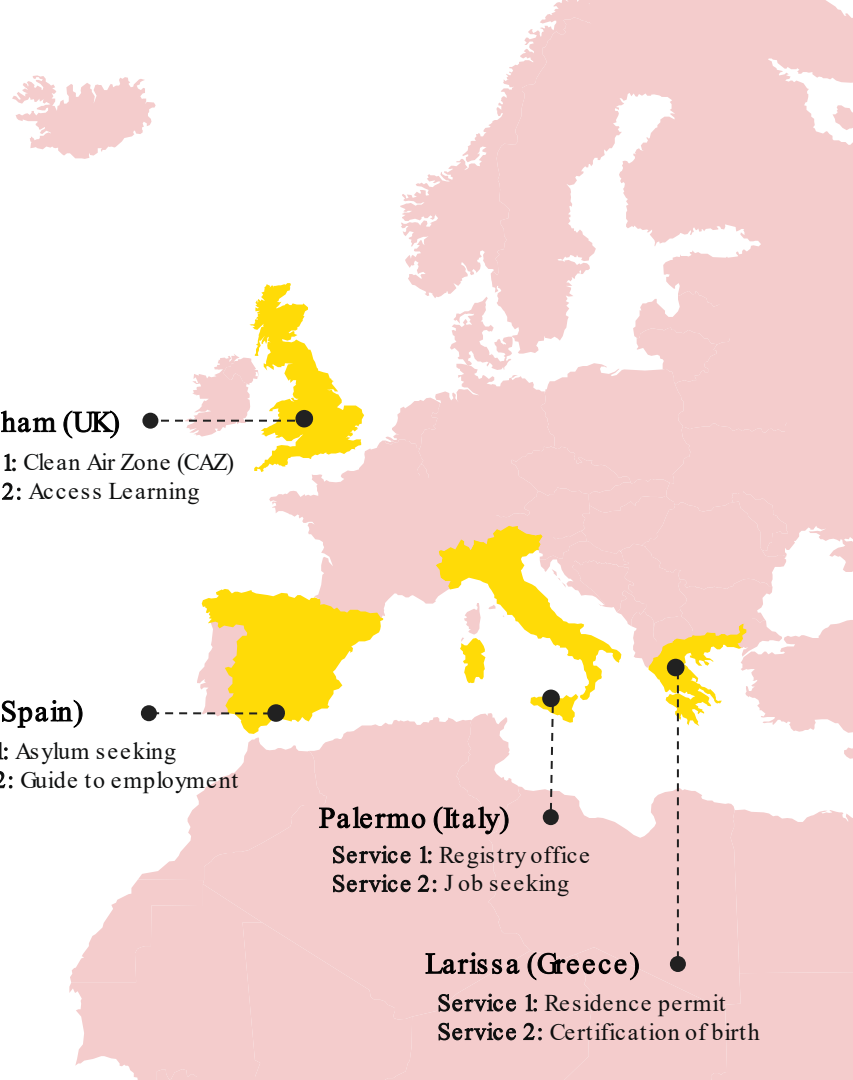
Service 1: Asylum seeking
Service 2: Guide to employment

Palermo (Italy)

Service 1: Registry office
Service 2: Job seeking

Larissa (Greece)

Service 1: Residence permit
Service 2: Certification of birth

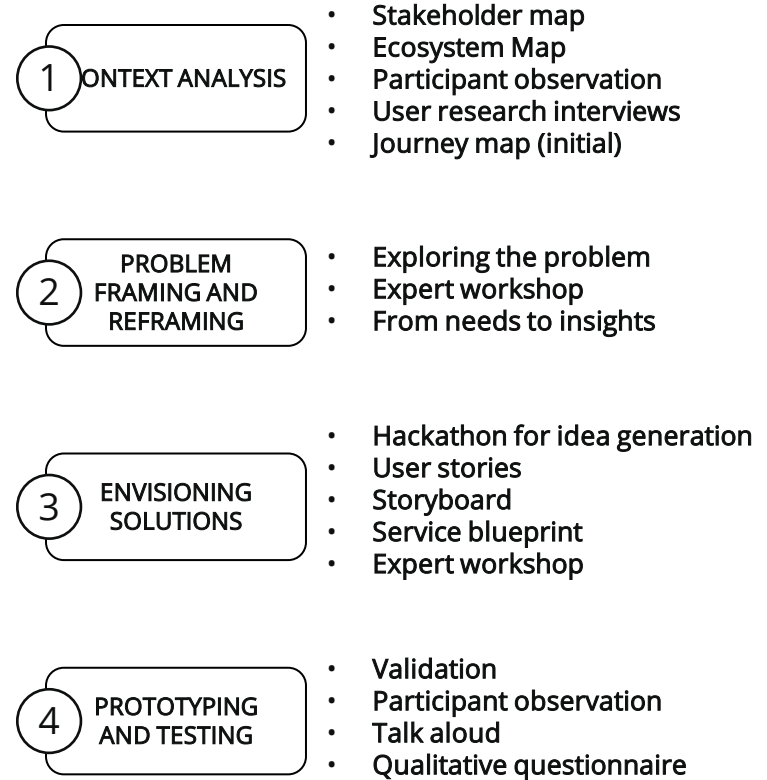


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4 pilots in EU, 8 services

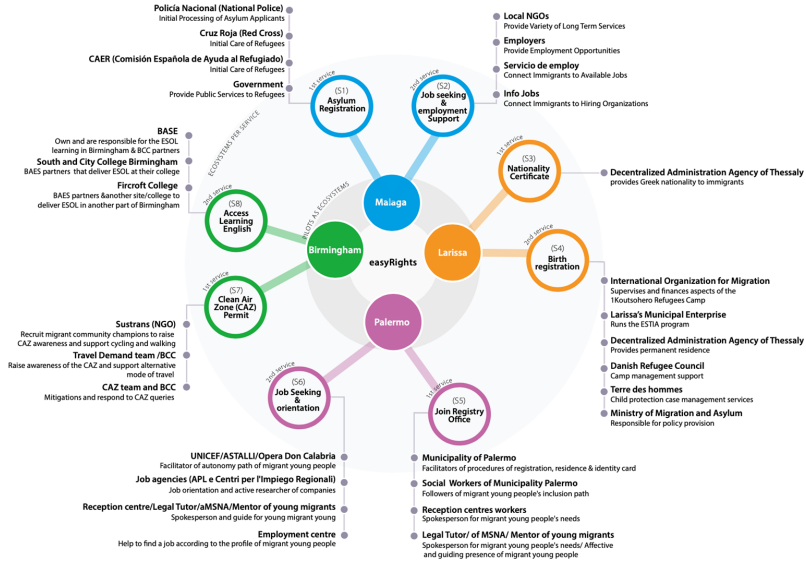


EasyRights has received funding from the EU H2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 870980



1 CONTEXT ANALYSIS

- Stakeholder map
- Ecosystem Map
- Participant observation
- User research interviews
- Journey map (initial)



4 PROTOTYPING AND TESTING

- Prototype
- Participant observation
- Talk aloud
- Qualitative questionnaire



METHOD: first stage of the questionnaire

As-Is. The first stage of the questionnaire is aimed at assessing the user experience of the situation "as-is", as to say prior to the intervention on the services that the pilot identified as in need of implementation. The questions should tap into different aspects of a service, describing and assessing the experience.



METHOD: the solution developed

Pilots conduct participant observation while end-users are testing the solution. Migrants can be asked to explore the tool through a **Thinking Aloud testing**



METHOD: second stage of the questionnaire

What-if. After testing the solution, the second stage of the questionnaire explores how the use of the solution developed would have impacted their experiences of the service. The aim is grasping to what extent their experience would have changed/improved if they could have gone through the service supported by the solution developed.



EasyRights has received funding from the EU H2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 870980

Lessons learnt

Hackathons as early engagement means

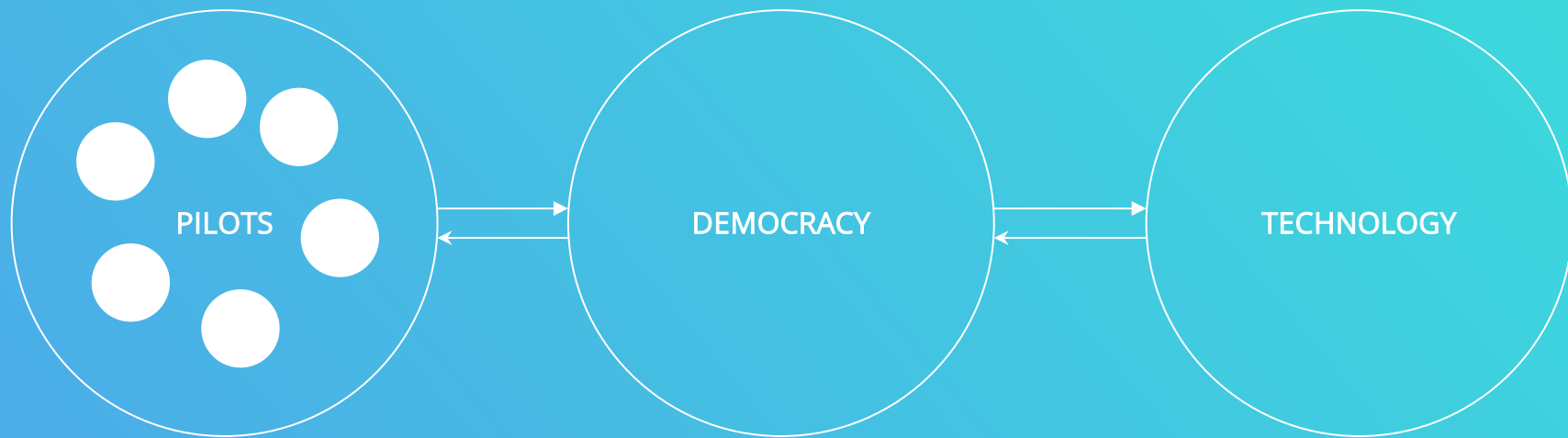
- + Bridging incomprehension between diverse groups by having diverse perspective at the same table
- + Fostering real collaboration that steered innovation

Challenges in multilingual and multisectoral communication

- Difficulties in bridging communication across various sectorial and domain-specific languages (beyond those of our migrants!)
- Designing inclusive, accessible, and desirable solutions spanning across various levels of digital literacies and language proficiency

Frictions due to stakeholder dynamics

- Stakeholders with established habits and mindset
- Stakeholders with varying interests and levels of influence bring power dynamics to be managed to ensure equitable participation



Augmenting participation, co-creation, trust and transparency in Deliberative Democracy at all scales

ORBIS



ORBIS has received funding from the European Union's Horizon Europe Framework Programme under grant agreement No 101094765.

ILARIA MARIANI. PhD, Department of Design, Politecnico di Milano

A human-centered and **socio-technical approach** for **user-driven** rather than technology-driven innovation. Elaborate novel democratic models and develop new AI-based tools for an inclusive deliberative democracy.

EXPERIMENTATION

P
1

REIMAGINING THE BUILDING BLOCKS OF DEMOCRACY

Org.	Democracy and Culture Foundation
Scale	International
Objective	Proposing policy recommendations to enhance democratic resilience, initiating global debates via DCF community and Athens Democracy Forum.
Team	2 persons from pilot
Method	Employs citizen assemblies, structured workshops, and policy advocacy sessions. Integrates top-down and bottom-up approaches.

P
2

TEENS FOR DEMOCRACY

Org.	Democracy and Culture Foundation
Scale	Initially European, to scale out to a global level
Objective	Engages teenagers (aged 13-17) in policy design through municipal councils in five cities. Aims to bridge the intergenerational gap.
Team	2 persons from pilot
Method	Annual Teens' Athens Democracy Forum, preparatory meetings, and collaborative sessions with policymakers.

P
3

YOUNG THINKERS AND EU DECISION-MAKERS

Org.	Center for European Policy Studies
Scale	European
Objective	Provide a platform for young minds to express innovative ideas and perspectives on the policy scene.
Team	4 to 5 persons from pilot
Method	Workshops, online webinars, in-person sessions, and Ideas Lab sessions for public events.

P
4

FUTURE4CITIZENS

Org.	Re-Imagine Europa
Scale	Initially national, to scale out to a European level
Objective	Enhance dialogue between citizens and policymakers to foster inclusive, transparent, and trustful deliberative democracy in Europe.
Team	4 persons from pilot
Method	Listen-Reframe-Act methodology integrated with ORBIS platform functionalities.

P
5

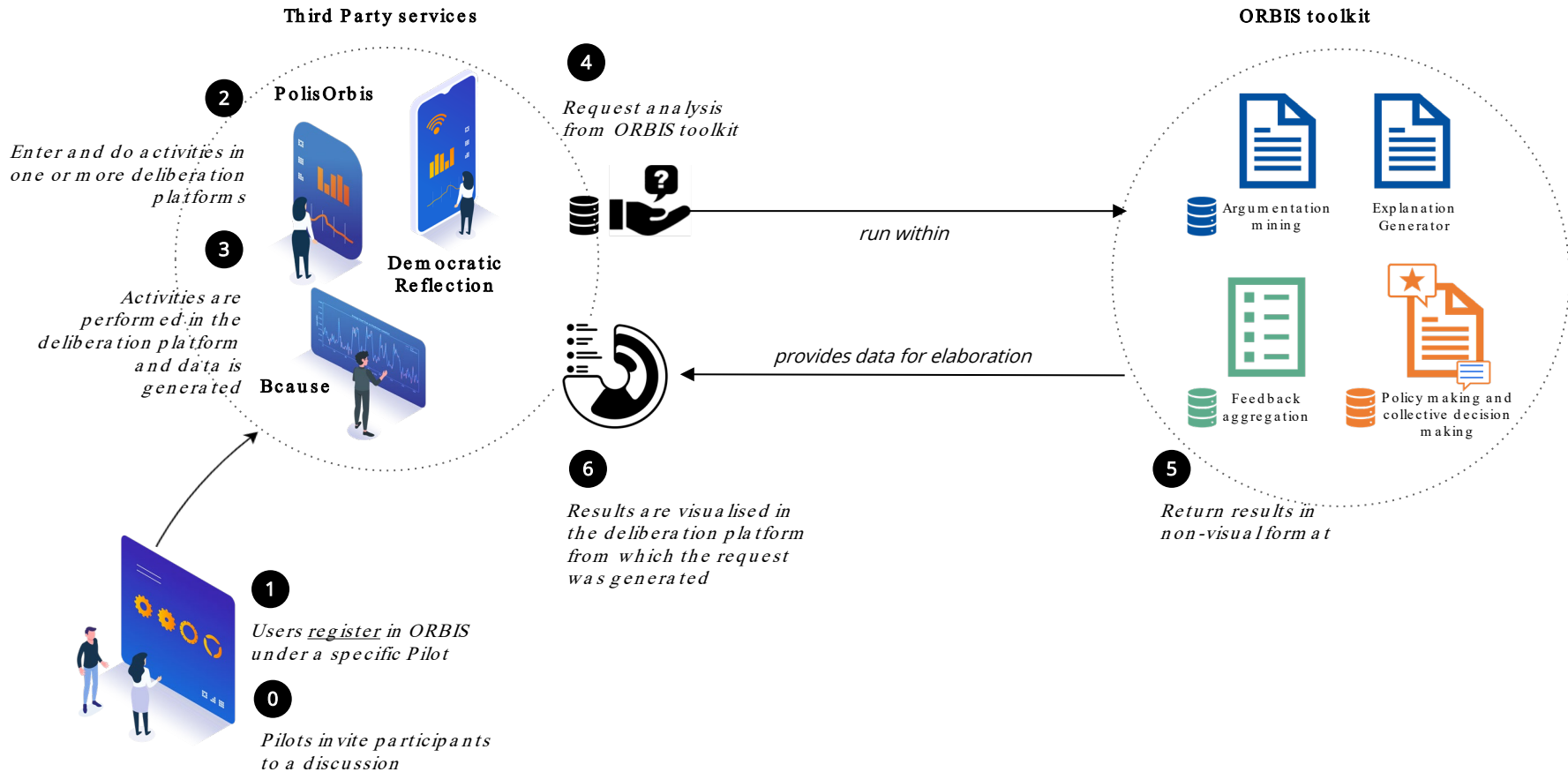
TRANSITION MECHANISMS FOR A DEMOCRATIC CITY


Org.	Rob De Matt
Scale	Initially local, to scale out to national and EU level
Objective	Collect diverse voices in Milan to foster democratic processes and participation in urban planning and policy-making.
Team	3 persons from pilot
Method	Structured dialogues, co-design workshops, and public consultations facilitated by RDM in collaboration with associations.

P
6

ALLIANCE FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND DEVELOPMENT IN WESTERN GREECE

Org.	Perifereia Dytiki Ellada
Scale	Initially regional, to scale out to the national level
Objective	Acts as a network to facilitate the principles of the Small Business Act, promoting economic and social development.
Team	2 persons from pilot
Method	Regional policy recommendation development, collaborative networks of entrepreneurs, and thematic assemblies.



 ORBIS has received funding from the European Union's Horizon Europe Framework Programme under grant agreement No 101094765.

CO-DESIGN WORKSHOPS 1ST SERIES

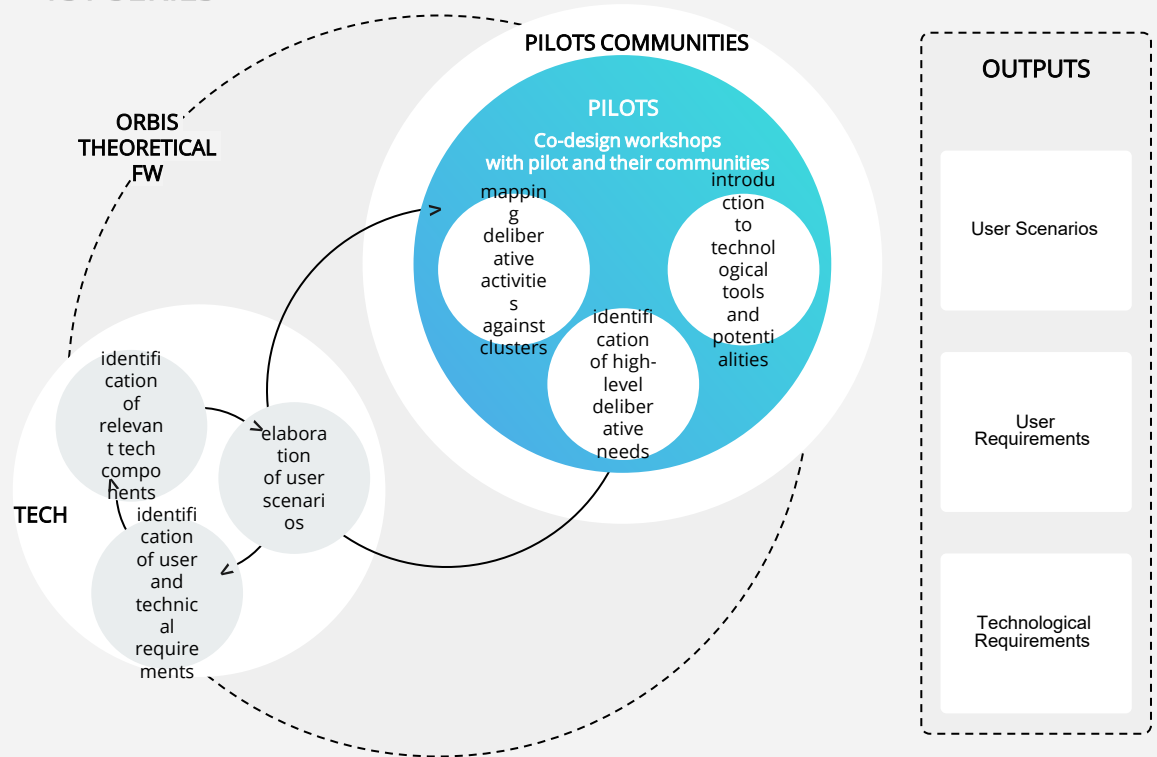
6 workshops, July 2023
35 participants from pilots + tech team

FOLLOW UP: 1 workshop in Milan, October 2023
26 participants from the consortiums

Considering pilot's needs and practices:

How can pilots inform technologies?

How to improve and develop tech solutions to answer real needs?



Co-design



ORBIS has received funding from the European Union's Horizon Europe Framework Programme under grant agreement No 101094765.

CO-DESIGN WORKSHOPS 2ND SERIES

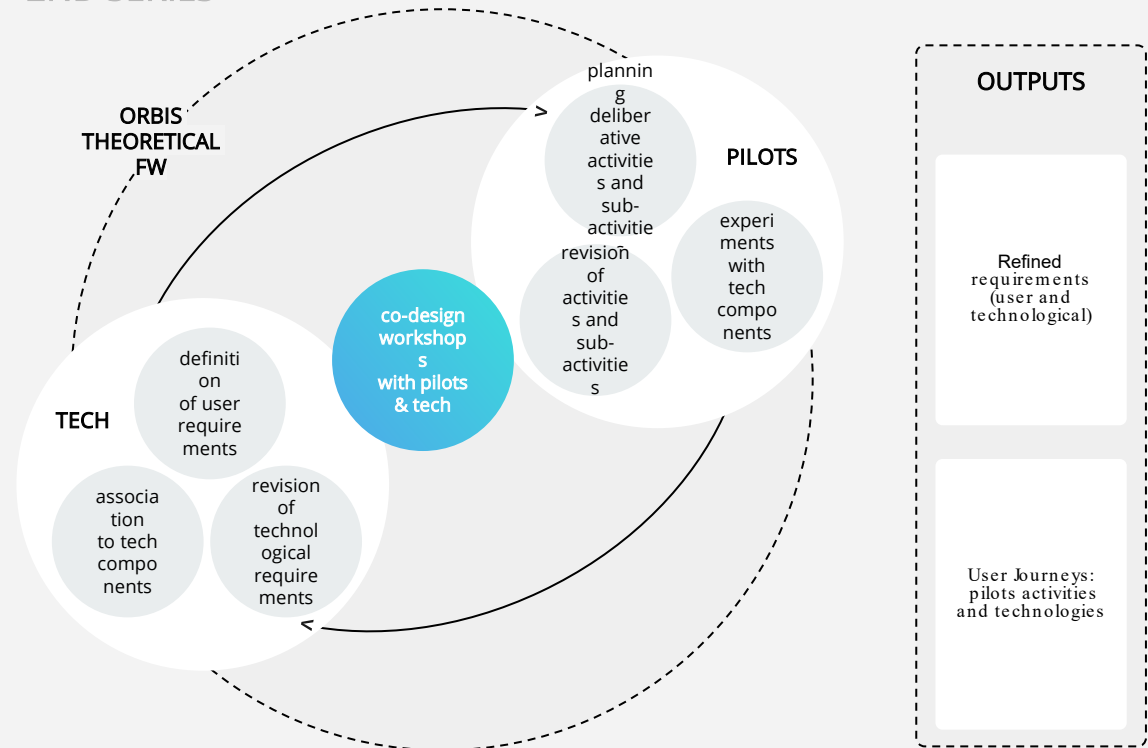
6 workshops, July/September 2024
10 participants from pilots organisations + tech team

FOLLOW UP: 3 workshop September/October 2024
10 participants from pilots organisations + tech team

Considering pilot's needs and practices:

Are needs **really** answered?

Are there additional **tech** features and tailoring that could improve deliberation?



Co-design



ORBIS has received funding from the European Union's Horizon Europe Framework Programme under grant agreement No 101094765.

Lessons learnt

Multidisciplinary co-design

- Participants from diverse domains bring distinct vocabularies and perspectives requiring efforts to align ideas and reach consensus, which sometimes slowed the process.
- Pilot organisers, often lacking familiarity with emerging technologies, struggled to grasp the potential of AI-enhanced tools into deliberative activities.

Bridging technology and deliberative practices

- + Continuous exchanges and co-design methods to foster a deeper understanding of the diverse contributions of all parties involved.

Risks of piloting within real organisation and with real communities

- Real organisations as pilot sites placed them at the forefront of experimentation, carrying risks of potential losses due to the experimental nature of the projects.



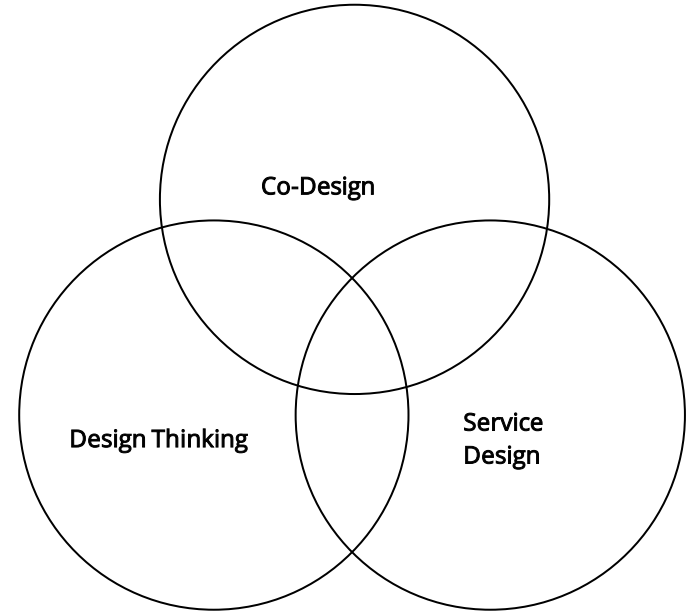
GovTech Connect was a multi-year, cross-border project, created under DG CONNECT of the European Commission to foster digitisation of public sector and green transition in Europe.

GovTech Connect

EMPOWERING STARTUPS

- Implement and disseminate **Design thinking methodology** and **user engagement into startups** for better GovTech solutions
- Experiment in **4 European bootcamps** for GovTech startups and refine results

This study proposes a **structured DT methodology** that combines (i) **DT** with (ii) **co-design** and (iii) **service design** to support the establishment of an ecosystem rooted in the **involvement of various user groups and stakeholders** to enhance the design and governance of GovTech solutions.



Approach to GovTech

Lessons learnt

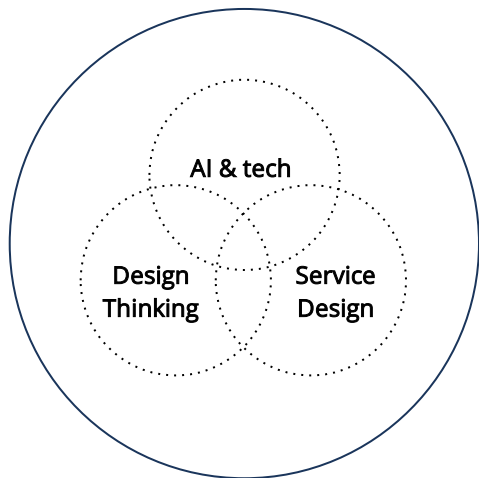
Prioritising user needs over technology

- Shifting from a tech-centric approach to a user-centric approach.
- Start from identifying real needs and practical challenges faced by users, rather than being driven solely by technological innovation.

Reframing engagement as an Integral part of development

- Stakeholder engagement is often relegated to the later stages of the process for purposes of testing and validation.
- Underestimate the need of a clear and strategic engagement plan that defines why, when, and how to involve stakeholders throughout the project, not just at the end.
- + Cases (better same domain!) to showcase the relevance of integrating stakeholder feedback and inputs at all stages

CITIZEN & STAKEHOLDER
ENGAGEMENT



Educational settings

4x

SETTING 01

Master in AI for Public Services

1 year master program in AI for Public Services

3 YEARS PROJECT FUNDED BY CEF
EUROPEAN DIGITAL SKILLS AWARDS 2023
CURRENTLY POLI.DESIGN MASTER

3x

SETTING 02

Executive master on AI for Public Sector

executive masters on public sector innovation at POLIMI GSoM

2x

SETTING 03

Executive master on City Management

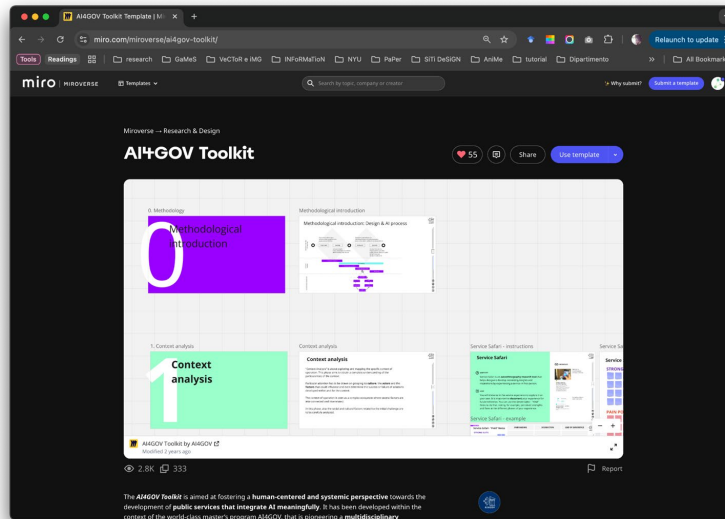
executive masters on public sector innovation at POLIMI GSoM

AI4GOV toolkit

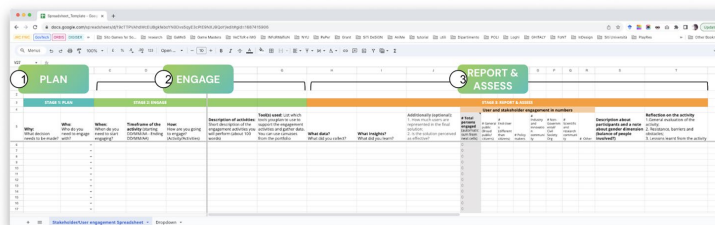
<https://miro.com/miroverse/ai4gov-toolkit/>

Stakeholder engagement plan

ILARIA MARIANI, PhD, Department of Design, Politecnico di Milano



- SETTING 01 Master in AI for Public ServiceS
- SETTING 02 Executive master on AI for Public Sector



- SETTING 03 Executive master on City Management

Lessons learnt

Enhancing organisational readiness through exposure



Previous exposure to interaction with social actors influenced participants' readiness to adopt new practices.

Influence of professional background on openness to engagement



Participants from NGOs and certain public sectors, accustomed to informal and adaptive practices, quickly grasped how to plan stakeholder engagement, realising they often do it already.



Participants unfamiliar with open-ended, divergent approaches often struggled to understand participation logics and benefits.



Targeted approaches and similar examples to foster adaptability.

Novelty of participatory approaches



Concerns about encountering failure led to apprehension, limiting willingness to experiment and potentially stalling the stakeholder engagement process.

Hands-on experimentation as a learning tool



Implement hands-on experimentation for experiential learning to demonstrate the tangible benefits of participatory practices

Traditional forms of civic engagement have typically involved public consultations, town hall meetings, and surveys as a way to involve citizens in governmental processes.

Technology allows for more dynamic interaction between the public and government bodies, overcoming geographical and temporal barriers, but requires open-minded approach and investments.

Tech-aided forms of engagement

ONE-WAY

DELIBERATIVE

TWO-WAY

Commitment to keeping the public fully informed

Valuing and reflecting on public feedback

Incorporating public insights directly into decision-making

Comprehensively Integrating public input into the development processes

Respecting and implementing public decision to the fullest extent

Provide objective information to assist the public in understanding the problem and options to tackle it

Gather public feedback on various options and analyse to influence decision-making

Directly involve the public, ensuring their concerns and aspirations shape the outcomes

Co-develop solutions with the public, considering all aspects of the decision, including alternative solutions

Delegate decision-making authority to the public, committing to implementing their choices

Level 1
INFORM

Level 2
CONSULT

Level 3
INVOLVE

Level 4
COLLABORATE

Level 5
EMPOWER



TKS!

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