

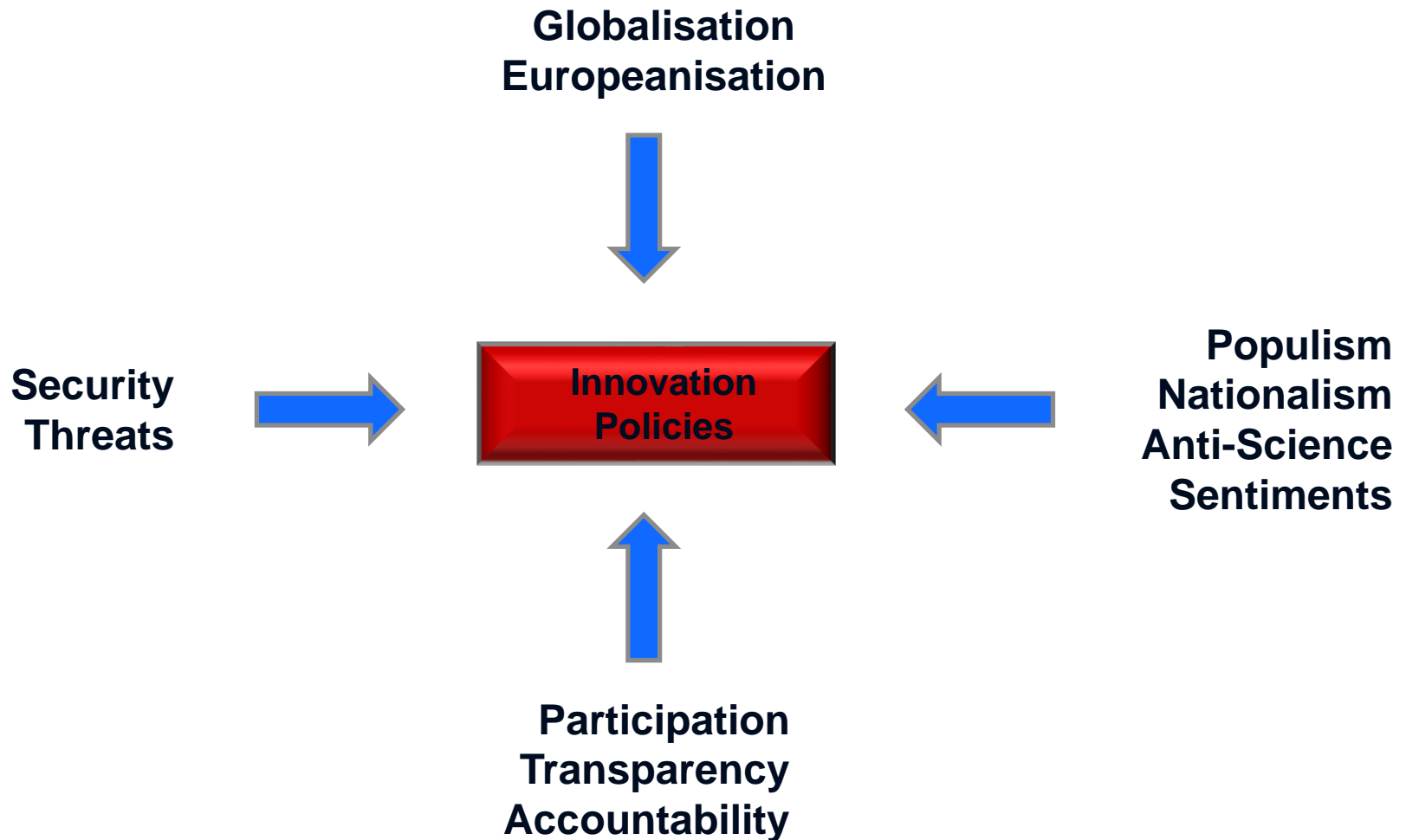
Policy Experiments:

An Answer to Disruptive Technologies and Disrupted Societies?

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(Innovation) Policies Under Pressure



Looking for New Solutions: Flexible Policies and Policy Experiments



Random Controlled Trials

Living Labs

- Random controlled trials: random assignment to treatment and control groups; natural science metaphors
- Living labs, experimentation fields, innovation zones et cetera: real life laboratories testing e.g. new technologies; action research metaphors

Pilot Project „Entrepreneurship Lab“

- Policy experiment in Austria; stakeholders Social Ministry, Public Employment Service Lower Austria, 2 firms carrying out the project
- Labour market policy measure targeting unemployed persons in supporting them to create their own business by providing necessary knowledge, skills and social/network capital
- 20 week training course for 15 persons each, 2 cohorts of participants with a chance to adopt the curriculum on the way from course 1 to course 2 as part of experimental setup
- Input by trainers, experts and participants, focus on innovative business ideas utilising ICT such as the Internet and social media
- Emphasis on diversity by combining participants with different skills, education, cultural background, vocations et cetera

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AIT Team Tasks

- Monitor progress, provide input for developing the pilot project through feedback to operational staff and political principals
- Methods: 25 days of participant observation, 39 short and 74 extended problem centred interviews with participants, 23 expert interviews with the trainers
- Several short feedback rounds with trainers, 4 focus groups with trainers and management of the 2 firms responsible for operations, 3 steering group meetings with Public Employment Service, Social Ministry, firms and AIT team
- Substantial changes in curriculum from group 1 to group 2 and also in group composition as an effect of AIT team's advice

Demography Participants

	Group 1		Group 2	
Participants	15		15	
Female	5	33,33%	9	60,00%
Male	10	66,67%	6	40,00%
Age Average	44,70 yrs		47,93 yrs	
Migration	4	26,67%	2	14,28%
No Migration	11	73,33%	13	85,71%
Tertiary Education	10	66,67%	4	26,67%
Secondary Education	2	13,33%	7	46,67%
Vocational Training	3	20,00%	4	26,67%

Early Results

- Success! Two thirds of participants of the first group had founded firms 6 months after the end of the programme, focus on Internet-based and social media related service innovations, some profit oriented, other NPOs
- The second group seems to be doing even better with results from obligatory Public Employment Service survey has been going from good to very good, feedback from participants in interviews likewise
- Pilot has been extended for 2018, decision on roll-out expected for fall 2018

Example: Babyou

- Providing services for pregnant women encountering health problems
- First stage: Internet platform, a community building measure allowing women to exchange first-hand experiences
- Second stage: groups on social media as for free services; cooperation agreements with NGOs
- Third stage: Internet-based courses, such as guided meditations, access to expert advice as paid services



Policy Experiments: Opportunities

- Opportunities:
 - pilot as proof of concept for programme idea
 - less money lost in case of failure
 - learning opportunity in case of failure and success alike
 - creating a solid knowledge base on programme theory and specifics, thus reducing the risk of failure in case of programme roll-out/scale-up

Policy Experiments: Risks

- Risks:
 - potential for heterogeneity/fragmentation of measures
 - possibility of spatial and/or sectoral disparities → Austrian education policy in 1970s and 1980s
 - who takes up the bill in case of failure → shoestring budget for pilot project
 - being close to a research subject, increases the risk of capture of researchers by stakeholders → responsibility for researchers/consultants



Entrepreneurship Lab

4,8★ · Unternehmer/in

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