BEHAVIOURAL INSIGHTS AND COVID-19: SUPPORTING BETTER REGULATORY DELIVERY

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BETTER POLICIES FOR BETTER LIVES

Outline

1. What are behavioural insights (BI)
2. Supporting the COVID-19 pandemic response with BI
3. Cases on BI for improved digital communication and technologies

WHAT ARE BEHAVIOURAL INSIGHTS?

Reminder: What are behavioural insights?

- Lessons derived from the behavioural and social sciences, including **decision making, psychology, cognitive science, neuroscience, organisational and group behaviour**, which are being applied by public bodies with the aim of making public policies work better

- Often involves the **use of experiment and observation to identify patterns of behaviour** and use these findings to inform policies and regulation

- It is about **inductive approach** to policy-making

OECD Regulatory Policy Committee and Network of Economic Regulators

- Regulatory Policy Committee (RPC): brings together over 100 central government officials to assists members and non-members in building and strengthening their regulatory reform efforts

- Network of Economic Regulators (NER): brings together over 70 regulators across sectors, 30 countries and regions of the world. Open forum that promotes dialogue, shares good practices, generates analysis and guidance.

Extensive work developed since 2013

Regulatory policy

Community building

Tools and support

oe.cd/nudge

SUPPORTING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC RESPONSE WITH BI

Broad resources available on the OECD Digital Hub

Variety of policy papers on regulatory policy and COVID-19

Framing paper: Regulatory Quality and Covid-19: Managing the Risks and Supporting the Recovery

6 technical papers

1. Removing administrative barriers, improving regulatory delivery
2. The international regulatory co-operation responses to the crisis
3. The use of new technologies to expand regulatory capacity (forthcoming)
4. Regulatory quality and COVID-19: The use of regulatory management tools in a time of crisis
5. ***Sector regulation during the COVID-19 crisis*** ***(see also blog post)***
6. ***Regulatory policy and COVID-19: Behavioural insights for fast-paced decision making*** *(forthcoming)*

Role for BI in the COVID-19 response

- Government's response to COVID-19 require rapid and wide spread behaviour change:
  - Macro level → Way society and the economy functions
  - Micro level → Daily lives and routines of individuals

- Central role for regulation: Need to contain and mitigate the transmission of the virus, while minimising effect on society
  - Discourage or encourage certain actions, tools and outcomes, including the role for digital technologies

Behaviours to contain the virus

Digital communication and technologies matter!

Source: West et al (2020), Applying principles of behaviour change to reduce SARS-CoV-2 transmission, Nature Human Behaviour, 4(5), 451-459

Encouraging behaviour change

- However, behaviour change is hard → social context and behavioural biases influence behaviours and efforts to change them
  - **Attention**: People's attention is limited and easily distracted.
  - **Belief formation**: People rely on mental shortcuts or intuitive judgments and often over/underestimate outcomes and probabilities.
  - **Choice**: People are influenced by the framing as well as the social and situational context of choices.
  - **Determination**: When it comes to long-term goals, people's willpower is limited and they often have difficulty staying motivated without any plans and feedback.

CASE STUDIES:
IMPROVED DIGITAL COMMUNICATION AND TECHNOLOGIES WITH BI

France: Connecting with consumers and businesses through better communication

COVID-19: Tips for an effective communication

MAKE THINGS CLEAR

- ❑ Use as many visual aids as possible
- ❑ Make the danger salient and visible
- ❑ Less information is more information
- ❑ Make sure the various communications are coherent
- ❑ Tell people what to do and what not to do (make things actionable)

HARNESS COOPERATION

- ❑ Appeal to duty rather than personal interest
- ❑ Inform about social norms when it's relevant
- ❑ Allow citizens to signal their efforts
- ❑ The best predictor of the acceptability of a reform is its fairness

HARNESS TRUST

- ❑ Don't be reassuring if the situation is not
- ❑ Give citizens the possiblity to act and contribute
- ❑ Rely on the trust people have in science
- ❑ Rely on influencers and the power of communities

ACCEPT UNCERTAINTY

- ❑ Take into account the specificities of different contexts
- ❑ It's ok to update information in light of new evidence
- ❑ Adress uncertainty, accept it, communicate about it
- ❑ Stay humble

Ireland: Improving digital tools with BI

Issues facing app developers:

- ✓ Make it *easy* to use
- ✓ Instil *trust* to use it

COVID TRACKER

Your Data

This app supports contact tracing while maintaining privacy. **Your identity will never be revealed to other app users.**

The only personal data collected by the app is your IP address and your phone number, should you choose to share it with the HSE to receive a follow-up call for contact tracing. **No other personally identifiable information (e.g. GPS location) is gathered by the app.**

Your personal data is processed in compliance with GDPR and Data Protection Acts 1988 – 2018. **Your personal data will never be used for any other purpose than to fight COVID-19.**

You can read the Data Protection Information Notice here

You can view this Notice at any time in Settings.

Gracias!

For more information:

oe.cd/nudge

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