

Governments are nowadays contending with multiple challenges: increasing instability and conflict, artificial intelligence, rising inequities, and growing cynicism towards democracy. One example of such complex challenges where government support is pivotal is with respect to climate change and the environment. The climate crisis is having profound effects across the globe. Whether in Asia, Europe, the Americas and beyond, floods, droughts, heat domes, and storms are increasing in severity and frequency with devastating impacts on our economies and societies. These impacts are only expected to increase. It is now globally acknowledged that effective decarbonization of our societies requires urgent, broad-scale changes.

Recently, scholars have advocated for governments to pursue Mission Oriented Innovation Policies (MOIP) to address these challenges. MOIP are purposeful, directional, transcend national boundaries and require a whole-of-government approach. Unlike conventional innovation approaches that tend to focus on firms, frontier technology and economic growth, MOIP have improving society overall as a goal.

These challenges are addressed in a context where there is a growing level of distrust of governments, experts (such as scientists), and institutions worldwide. The uncertain, multilevel and complex character of MOIP exacerbates the risk of policy failure, i.e., the risk of the policies not delivering their intended goals ultimately leading to inefficient policy support and to an increase in the already growing levels of distrust towards governments. As governments embark upon these ambitious MOIP, it is thus imperative that they identify these risks and their causes, and devise appropriate strategies for their governance.

Against this backdrop, the objective of our proposed research is to understand policy failure risks in the design and implementation of MOIP, and identify suitable risk governance approaches to address them. The research analyses 18 specific MOIP programmes in three selected countries (UK, Poland and Canada) with a focus on sustainability goals. We seek to understand the causal mechanisms at play in the design and implementation of the programmes and identify which factors generate risks of failure, and how these might be mitigated. We thus aim at answering the following research questions:

- 1) What are the main policy failure risks in MOIP?
- 2) What configuration of factors (causes) lead to specific risks?
- 3) Which risk governance strategies are suitable to address these risks?
- 4) What configuration of factors determine the selection of risk governance strategies?

In order to answer these questions we will conduct literature review, analyze the documents and conduct interviews with people responsible for MOIP. The research will consist of five stages:

- 1) scoping with collaboration of stakeholders
- 2) literature review
- 3) analysis of 18 MOIP programmes
- 4) comparison of 18 MOIP programmes
- 5) in – depth analysis of 6 selected MOIP programmes
- 6) communication and dissemination of research results

We will closely collaborate with the policymakers to make sure that our research will contribute to better policy making.