

Knowledge4Policy: Structure & Future

HIGHLIGHTS

- Knowledge4Policy (K4P) is the EC's platform for evidence-informed policymaking.
- It has launched its first online knowledge community, and can now engage its users on how it evolves

- This document supports that discussion by summarising K4P's current structure & approach
- More: [Building knowledge for policy](#)

'... Ultimately, a democracy cannot work without some kind of consensus on the facts'

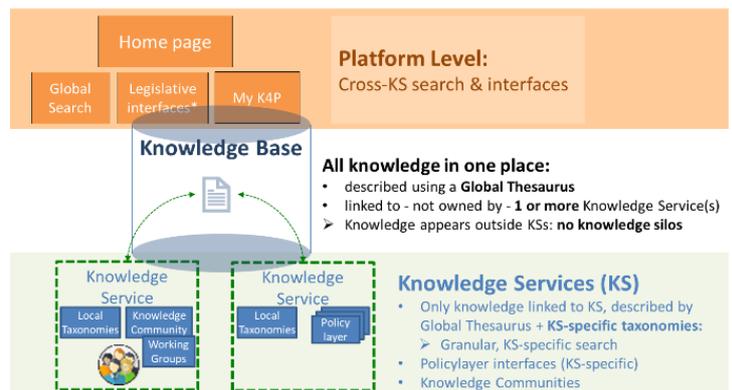
K4P ARCHITECTURE

K4P is published by ~20 "Knowledge Services": multidisciplinary teams led by the European Commission's Joint Research Centre and involving multiple Commission departments (see [About K4P](#)).

While each knowledge service has its own "Landing page", they all publish into a single shared database of knowledge. That means users can:

- **search everything** from the home page, using filters like type of knowledge (publications, visualisations, etc.), a global "Thesaurus" of keywords, etc.
- search just content relevant to a knowledge service from its Landing Page, using the above filters *plus* extra knowledge service-specific filters – i.e., **searching a subset of the knowledgebase with greater granularity**.

This way we **avoid 'knowledge silos'** (different teams publishing knowledge in different databases) while still providing each knowledge service's audience with highly granular knowledge management, which the scientists in our audience research, carried out as we launched K4P as a beta version in 2018, told us they needed.



* planned

POLICYLAYER: PRESENT AND FUTURE

But we didn't just talk to scientists: K4P must offer useful content and services to policymakers if it is to succeed.

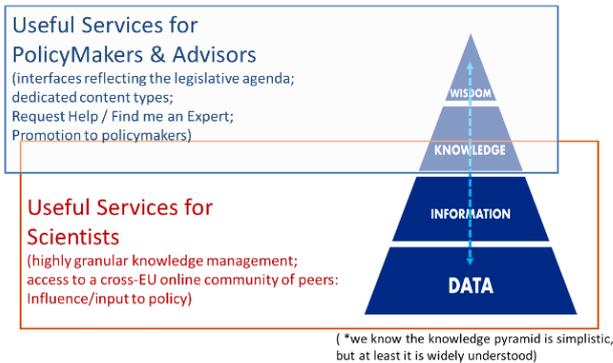
Hence most knowledge service have created [Topics and Tools](#): added-value interfaces dedicated to helping policymakers find policy briefings, data visualisations and other key knowledge.

These interfaces, along with the knowledge service's landing pages, are the first part of K4P's policylayer: a set of content and services which synthesise the data and information in the knowledgebase into "knowledge and wisdom" for policymakers.

Each Topic or Tool sits "within" a Knowledge Service, unpacking one of its knowledge subdomains in greater detail for policymakers.

Moreover, anyone reading policylayer content can “dig down” and discover the data and information underpinning it:

Content & Services across the Linked Knowledge Pyramid*



In the audience research, however, policymakers asked for “legislative interfaces”: assembling and synthesising knowledge from multiple Knowledge Services relevant to – for example – a specific policy dossier or parliamentary committee. These must appear in K4P’s Platform Level, “above” Knowledge Services (see figure, page 1).

But they do not yet exist – while we can *technically* create these new interfaces easily, we must first solve two *organisational* challenges:

- “policy patchiness”: 20 knowledge services is insufficient to cover all policy areas
- editorial resources: with all editorial resources located within the Knowledge Services, who will write, publish and manage legislative interfaces spanning multiple Knowledge Services?

KNOWLEDGE COMMUNITIES

One of the main questions driving our audience research was if and why our two principal audiences – scientists and policymakers – would join and contribute to a K4P online community.

In theory, an online community would allow scientists to contribute their knowledge, see it incorporated into K4P’s policylayer, network and collaborate with policymakers and scientists across Europe, and generally raise their (organisation’s) visibility.

Policymakers, on the other hand, could ask questions to scientists and network with other policymakers from across Europe, as well as benefit from the community’s wider pool of knowledge and expertise.
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The audience research confirmed some of this, but showed policymakers would join only under certain circumstances. Our focus is thus on building community for scientists so they can:

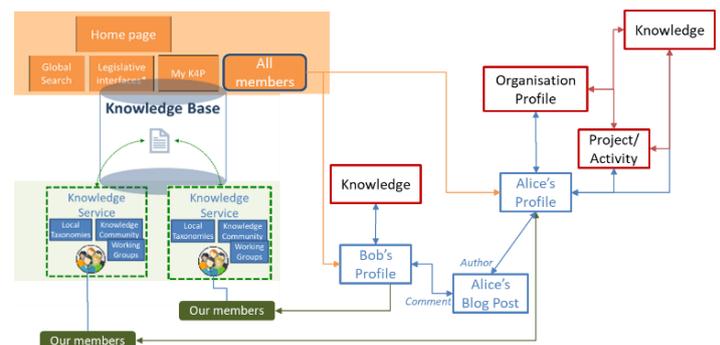
- contribute scientific knowledge and discuss the knowledge they find;
- ask questions to other scientists (also potentially useful to policymakers);
- stay up to date (subscribing to newsletters, following conversations);
- collaborate on informing policymaking with science.

And just as K4P avoids creating knowledge silos, it also **avoids creating people silos**. There is only one K4P community, with each Member having one account and personal profile. Members can then join one, some or all **knowledge service communities**, each managed by a knowledge service and bringing together a subset of K4P Members interested in a specific domain.

That means conversations between Members will be *in* the shared knowledgebase, rather than hidden in knowledge service-specific forums.

In the figure below, Alice has published knowledge and a blog post, and is linked to profiles of her employer and the project she manages, while Bob has published knowledge and commented on Alice’s post.

Conversations about Knowledge in the KnowledgeBase



Although they joined different knowledge service communities, they meet in the knowledgebase, where their conversation takes place. Conversation is a form of knowledge.

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