The Hague Recommendations
on Evidence Informed Policies and Politics

The Hague Conference "Evidence for Policymakers" brings together international experts to deepen our insights and develop recommendations on the following issues:

- *Which conditions enable policies and politics to become more effective through better use of evidence & data?*
- *How to improve timely access to data & research evidence for policymakers and politicians?*

These informal Recommendations help the conference reaching its goals. For the preparation of the conference, the organizers have assembled the following recommendations:

A. For Parliaments

1. **Towards a Spirit of Learning**
   Explore how politicians can allow 'learning' and 'experimental policies', focused on generating evidence on the effectiveness of policies, especially when addressing major transitions with many unknowns and uncertainties. Experimental policies might receive a special status, which should provide room for learning. Ideally, such an approach is supported by governmental- and non-governmental political parties.

2. **Ex-ante scientific scrutiny of policy proposals**
   Request academia to scrutinize substantial policy proposals, and to examine existing research evidence on the feasibility of policy targets and the effectiveness of its instruments. This can be organized as a supportive tool for parliaments.

3. **Monitoring of policy outcomes**
   Optimize the parliamentary use of new technologies and methods for monitoring policy outcomes in order to investigate if adjustments are desirable.

B. For Policymakers

1. **Building policies on evidence and assessment of costs and benefits**
   Underpin policy proposals with insights in "what works" and an assessment of the costs and benefits. If these insights are insufficiently available, policymakers should try to develop them, for example through pilots and experiments. In addition, policy proposals should be as explicit as possible on the goals and public values they aim for and on the anticipated theory of change, allowing for effective monitoring and evaluation after implementation.

2. **Strategic planning of policy evaluations**
   Let policymakers make strategic decisions about what to evaluate when and for what purpose in order to provide useful insights in the effectiveness and efficiency of policies throughout the policy cycle. Strategic evaluation agendas, including ex-ante,

ex-durante and ex-post evaluations, will increase the relevance of evaluations for decision-making about the start, (dis)continuation and continuous improvement of policies. The outcome of these evaluation agendas will further improve when aligned with relevant public research.

3. **Exchange of data and research outcomes; use of algorithms**
   Evidence informed policies need horizontal and vertical exchange of policy-relevant evaluations, scientific research results and public data on all levels (international, intergovernmental and with local authorities). Where relevant, consider using algorithms for effectively designing evidence informed policies, under strict conditions of privacy, full technological transparency and technological security.

4. **Internal organization of evidence informed policymaking**
   Evidence informed policymaking needs consistent role modelling and messaging from top administrators and political leaders. In order to develop the required knowledge, mindset and skills at both the individual and institutional level, leadership and capacity building are essential.

C. For Academia

1. **Connect science to public needs in thematic consortia**
   Improve the use of academic research for policymaking by organizing research around public challenges. Ideally, this combines an interdisciplinary approach, RCT's and data science and more responsive methods, dedicated to understand and serve specific public needs. Achievements may include new ready to use methodologies and an overview of scientifically proven policy interventions.

2. **Optimize the public use of scientific results while maintaining research integrity**
   Develop targeted communication methodologies to maximize the understanding of research results and internalization in society and policy activities. Discussing the political and societal consequences of draft research results may add to the quality of the final research outcomes, as long as researchers have the final say and remain independent and resilient throughout this process.

3. **Provide long term perspective**
   Pro-actively provide policy makers and politicians with long term perspectives, that may be outside the view and beyond the horizon of current societal and political debate.