

# Nudge policy analysis and its use in ecology

*Vallistu Johanna*

*Tallinn University of Technology, Ragnar Nurkse Department of Innovation and Governance, School of Business and Governance, Tallinn, Estonia*

*Raudla Ringa*

*Tallinn University of Technology, Tallinn, Estonia*

*Sarapuu Külli*

*Tallinn University of Technology, Tallinn, Estonia*

*Onno Kerli*

*Tallinn University of Technology, Tallinn, Estonia*

*Harbuzova Nastassia*

*TalTech Ragnar Nurkse school of innovation and governance, Tallinn, Estonia*

**Abstract:** The increasingly complex economic, environmental and societal context pressures governments to seek new ways to adapt the existing public policies and design novel policy solutions. Policy experimentation has been proposed as a key strategy for coping with the challenges and furthering more anticipatory forms of governance. Despite considerable academic discussion on policy experimentation, there is surprisingly little systematic analysis of the political dimensions of public policy experiments. In this paper, we analyse how the perceptions of blame avoidance and credit claiming by policy actors influence experimental policymaking. In the theoretical part of the paper, we synthesize insights from the studies on blame avoidance and credit claiming, and experimental policymaking. By juxtaposing these two hitherto disparate streams of literature, we outline expectations about how the mechanisms of blame avoidance and credit claiming can influence policymakers' attitudes towards experiments. In the empirical part, we probe the plausibility of the theoretical propositions by using a comparative case study of Estonia and Finland. As sources of data, we draw on policy documents and semi-structured interviews conducted with 66 public officials in Estonia and Finland in 2022-2023.