



**FRANCE STRATÉGIE**

ÉVALUER. ANTICIPER. DÉBATTRE. PROPOSER.

# France Stratégie

## A presentation

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General Marshall conceived the function of [the policy planning] group as being to look ahead, not into the distant future, but **beyond the vision of the operating officers caught in the smoke and crises of current battle**; far enough ahead to see the emerging form of things to come and outline what should be done to meet or anticipate them.

In doing this the staff should also do something else -- **constantly reappraise what was being done**. General Marshall was acutely aware that **policies acquired their own momentum and went on after the reasons that inspired them had ceased**.

These two tasks are extremely difficult to perform. Distraction lurks on two sides: **on one, to be lured into operations; on the other, into encyclopedism**, into the amassing of analyses of the problems of every area and country with the various contingencies that might arise and the courses of action that might be taken to meet them.

**Dean Acheson**, *Present at the Creation*, 1969



# An already long history

- **The origin**
  - 1946: Creation by President de Gaulle of the **Commissariat Général du Plan** (planning agency). Jean Monnet appointed first Commissioner
- **The golden decades**
  - The agency, initially the French hub for the Marshall Plan, plays a key role in the post-WW2 modernisation of the country
  - Consultation with the social partners, is an integral part of its functioning
- **Challenges**
  - After the oil shocks, medium term forecasting increasingly irrelevant
  - In the 1980s and the 1990s, 'planning' regarded with suspicion
  - But it keeps an important role in horizon scanning and preparation of policy reforms
- **Transformation**
  - 2006: PM Villepin renames it *Centre d'analyse stratégique*, turns it into a think tank
  - 2013: PM Ayrault broadens its role and renames it **Commissariat Général à la Stratégie et à la Prospective (France Stratégie)**



# Why?

## The strikeback of the medium term

- Increased policy focus on potential output growth and the need for 'structural' economic and social reform
- Major transformations under way (ageing / digital revolution / transition to low-carbon economy / metropolisation..) call for programming of government action

## Significant challenges for the French society

- Gradual deterioration of relative economic performance
- Concerns over competitiveness and the decreasing weight of the traded-goods sector
- Social model threatened by unsustainability
- Diversity of national and religious background within society

## Need for policy innovation

- Policymaking too much dominated by inertia
- Need to evaluate existing policies and assess options

## The role of debate and consensus-building

- Top-down approach to reforms ineffective
- Consensus-building essential ahead of formal consultation



# France Stratégie in a nutshell

## Our mission: Invent the public policies of tomorrow

- Assess coming challenges and awareness within society
- Reappraise policies and fight the 'own momentum' syndrome
- Promote an evidence-based policy culture, foster innovation in policy
- Help counter short-termism in decisionmaking
- Build trust and whenever possible, consensus on necessary changes
- Overall, contribute to the modernisation of the country

## How we do it

- **Evaluate** policies
- **Anticipate** challenges
- **Debate** with a variety of stakeholders
- **Propose** new ideas for policies



# Evaluate

## What

- Current policies
- Plans for future policies
- Lessons from international experience

## What for

- Separate out facts and policy preferences
- Promote evidence-based policy discussions

## How

- Ensure rigour and neutrality in policy evaluation
- Invest in methodologies and instruments
- Subcontract policy evaluation research to independent academics

## Examples

- Committee (with social partners and MPs) on evaluation of employment subsidies
- Ex ante evaluation (by independent academic committee) of an economic liberalisation bill (Loi Macron)
- Open-source, open-access model of the French personal tax and benefits system



# Anticipate

## What

- Demographic / technological / environmental / economic / societal / international challenges
- Variety of horizons depending on the topic, but mostly medium term (5-10 years)

## What for

- Prepare for the inevitable as well as for the unexpected
- Help economic and social actors (and government) to focus more on the future

## How

- Dedicated research
- Dialogue with practitioners
- Links with similar institutions in other countries

## Examples

- Reports on e.g. Internet 2030, the Silver Economy, sectors (agriculture, transport)...
- Dedicated committee work on pensions, health care, the financing of the social state
- Occupational outlook report



# Debate

## What

- Challenges for economy and society
- Policy options and proposals

## What for

- Increase awareness within society
- Clarify the nature of disagreements, narrow down the scope for divergence
- Test potential responses to policy initiatives and improve policy proposals

## How

- Preparation of reports generally involves workshops and conferences with academic experts, practitioners and stakeholders
- Ongoing exchanges with social partners, civil society associations
- Regular consultations with parliament and subnational governments
- Ad-hoc public debate initiatives
- Overall transparency (posting of documents, etc..)

## Examples

- Extensive debate throughout the country for preparation of *France in 10 years* report
- New round of country-wide debate for coming report on transforming the state
- Involvement of social partners in sectoral committee work (pensions, family, health care, the financing of the social model)





# Propose

## What

- Domestic policy reforms
- International (especially European) policy reforms
- Options for local governments (to be developed)

## What for

- Improve policies
- Strengthen interectoral dimension (as opposed to silo approach)

## How

- Public reports
- Private advice to PR and PM

## Examples

- Proposals for the economic integration of 2<sup>nd</sup>-generation immigrants
- Proposals for taxation in the digital age
- Report on transforming the state



# The *France in 10 years* report

Prepared at the request of President Hollande

- **Timeline**

- August 2013: Special government seminar introduced by France Stratégie
- Autumn 2013: Debate on the basis of consultation documents (5 national debates, 8 regional debates, involvement of parliament . Overall 700 active participants, 70 written contributions. Plus online vote on 1700 proposals submitted on the Internet)
- Spring 2014: Preparation of the report, in consultation with PR and PM
- June 2014: New government meeting and publication of report

- **Contents**

- Global trends
- France's economic and social performance over the last 25 years
- The limits of the French way to reform
- Key choices for the future
- 8 major objectives
- Strategy



# A two-sided institution

- Reflection / debate / consultation with civil society
- Advice to top decisionmakers

A positive synergy



# What kind of institution?

## Internal diversity of expertise and background

- A permanent team of about 40 experts
- Diverse expertise (economists, legal experts, engineers, sociologists, political scientists)
- Variety of backgrounds : civil servants, researchers, practioners

## Open-access expertise

- Constant interaction between France Stratégie team and a wider web of experts

## Cross-sectoral positioning

- As a PM service, ability to work with, and draw on the expertise of all ministries

## Transparency

- Work-in-progress documents posted on the web

## Autonomy

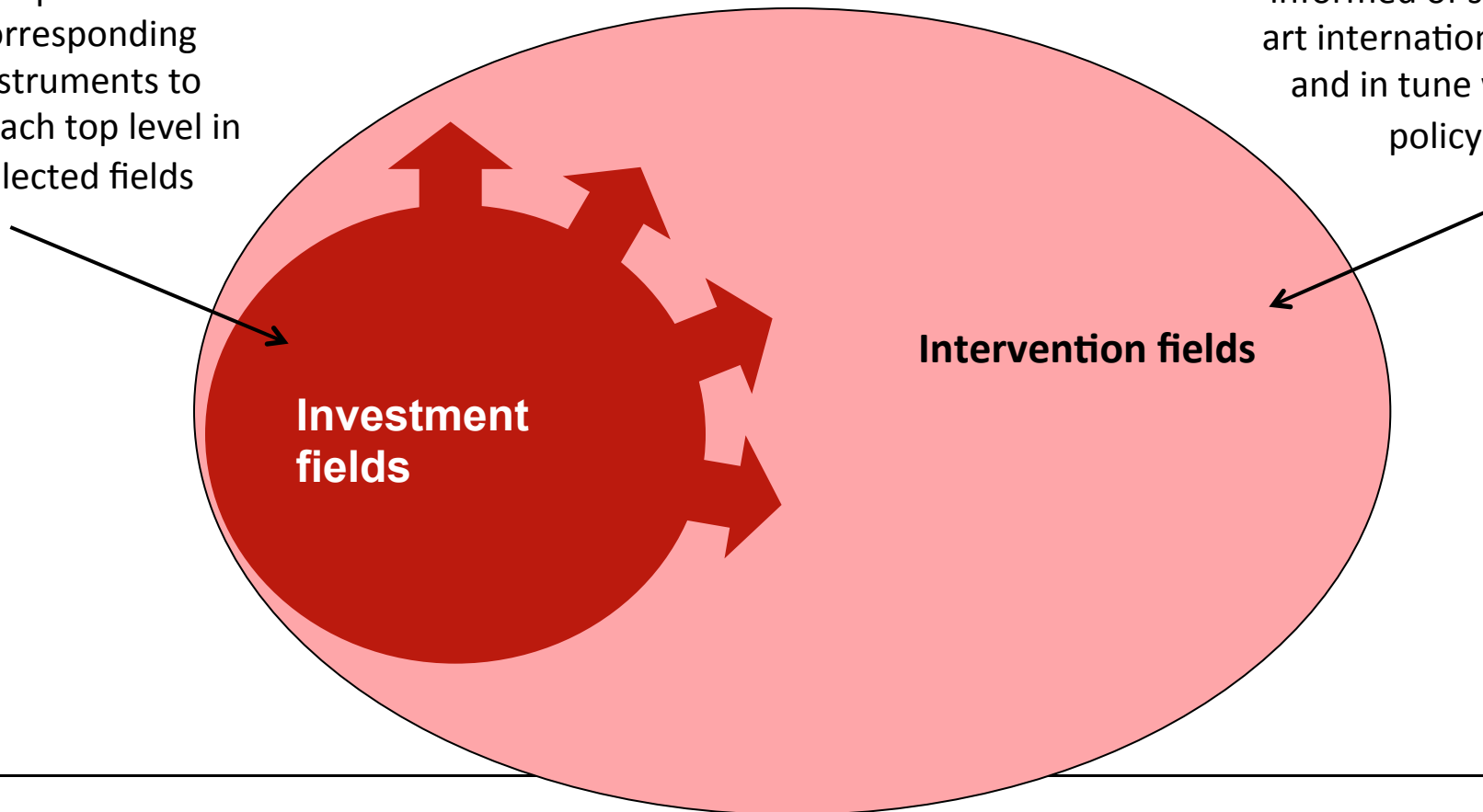
- France Stratégie recognised as closed to, but independent from government
- Works in the public interest but is non-partisan
- Able to interact with all parties in parliament
- Able to propose controversial initiatives
- Independent communication



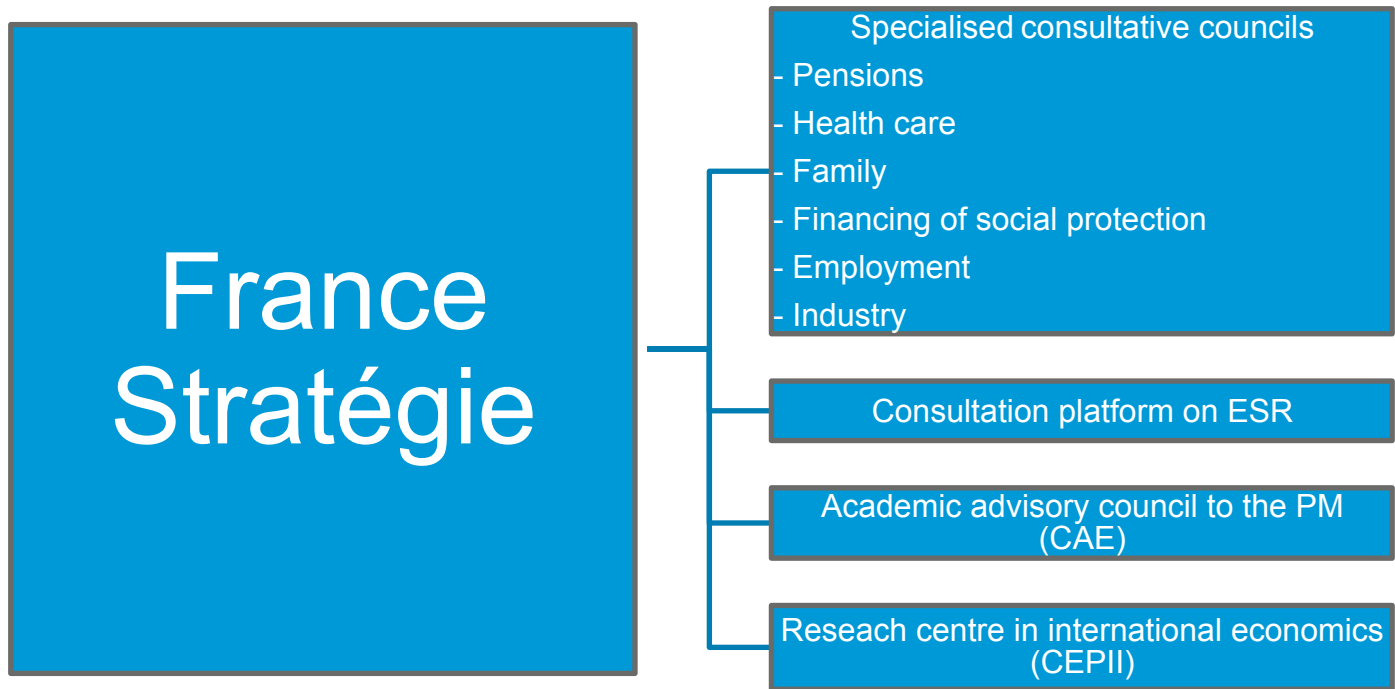
# Leveraging competences through a core-halo research model

We invest in core competences and corresponding instruments to reach top level in selected fields

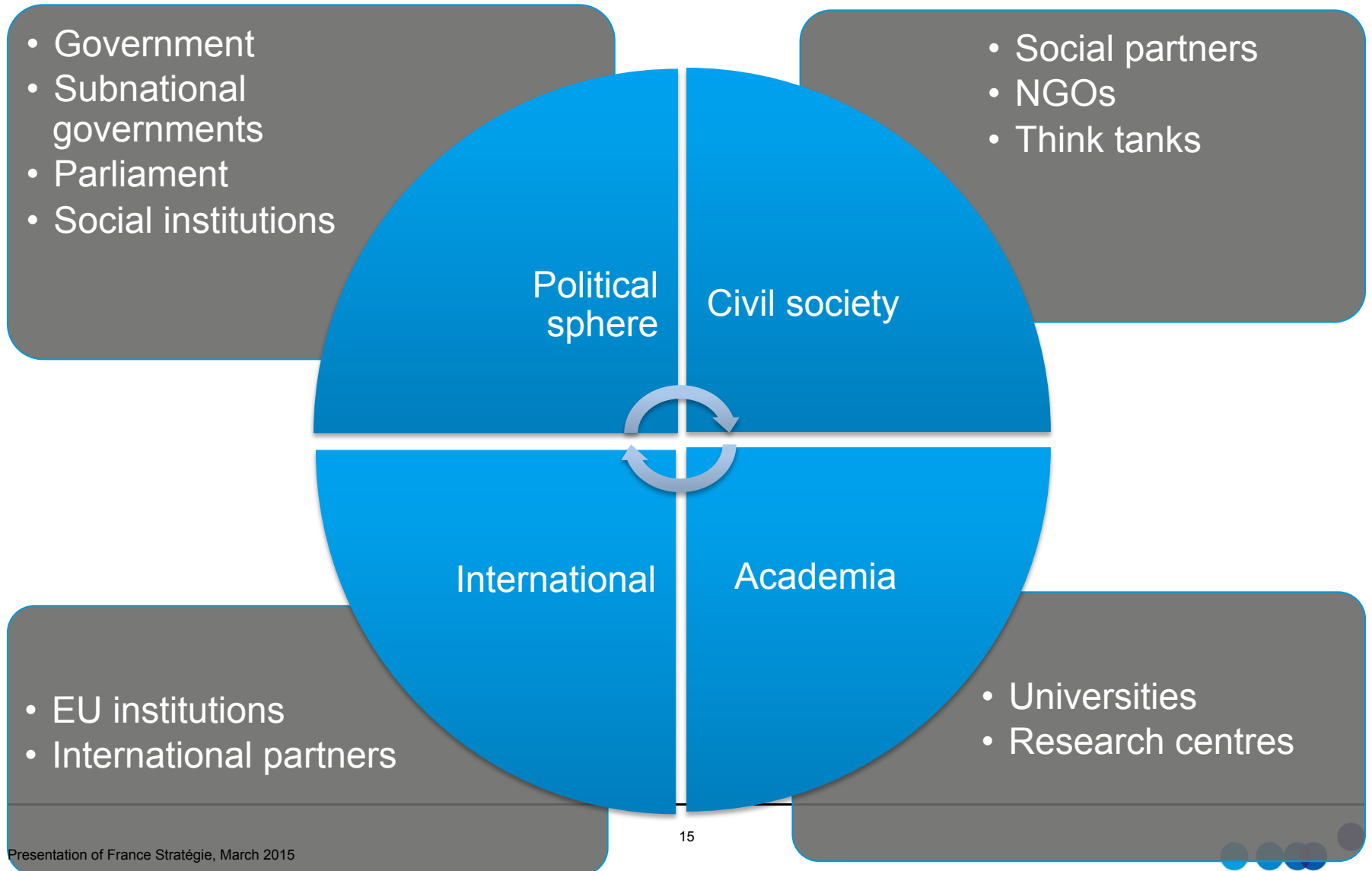
In related fields we keep informed of state-of-the-art international research and in tune with French policy discussions



# The network around France Stratégie



# The broader web of interactions



# Flagship reports and Policy Briefs since 2013

- What France in ten years? (August 2013)
- The evaluation of public investment projects (October 2013)
- The Silver Economy (December 2013)
- Overcoming gender stereotypes (January 2014)
- France in 10 years (June 2014)
- Public spending reduction strategies (July 2014)
- The occupational outlook (July 2014)
- Evaluation of the Competitiveness Tax Credit (September 2014)
- Investment in Europe (September 2014)
- The internationalisation of higher education (January 2015)
- Evaluation of the product market liberalisation bill (January 2015)
- The economic integration of 2<sup>nd</sup>-generation immigrants (March 2015)
- Taxation in the digital age (March 2015)
- The European energy market (March 2015)
- The future of the state (April 2015)

