



MSc Complex Systems & Policy (CS&P)

Information session 12 February 2026



UNIVERSITY OF AMSTERDAM
Institute for Interdisciplinary Studies



Today's Team



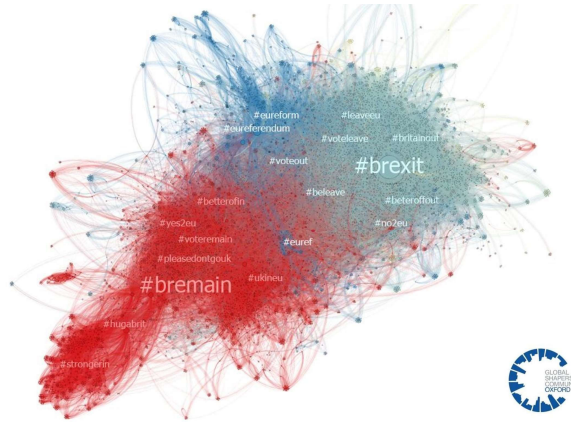
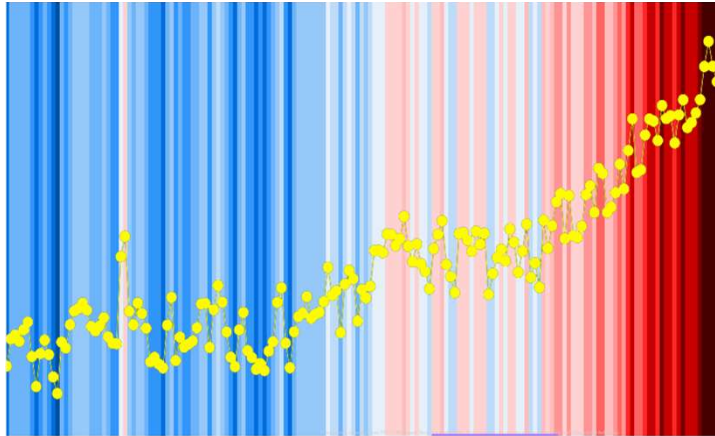
Vítor V. Vasconcelos
Programme Director



Josefina Rodriguez Zuloaga
Current CSP student



Mijke Taal
Current CSP student



Source: Data visualisation and analysis provided by Vyacheslav Polonski, a Global Shaper from the Oxford Hub



A time of complexity

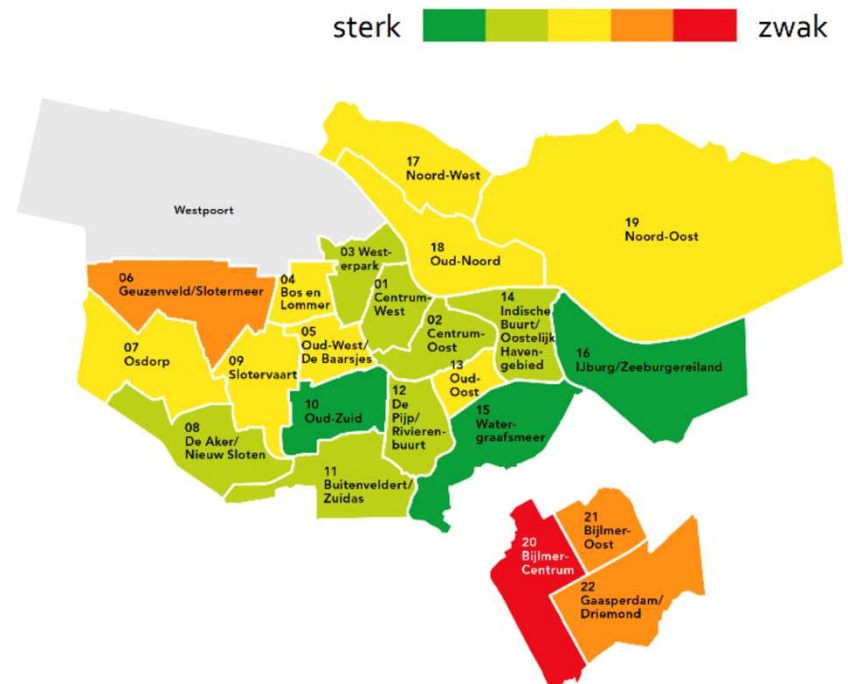
Scale, interdependency, and impact of world problems without precedent



Local examples too

Health inequalities in Amsterdam

- Where are we?
- Where do we want to go?
- How to get there?



Bron: GGD Amsterdam, Sterk en zwak in Amsterdam - jeugd April 2021

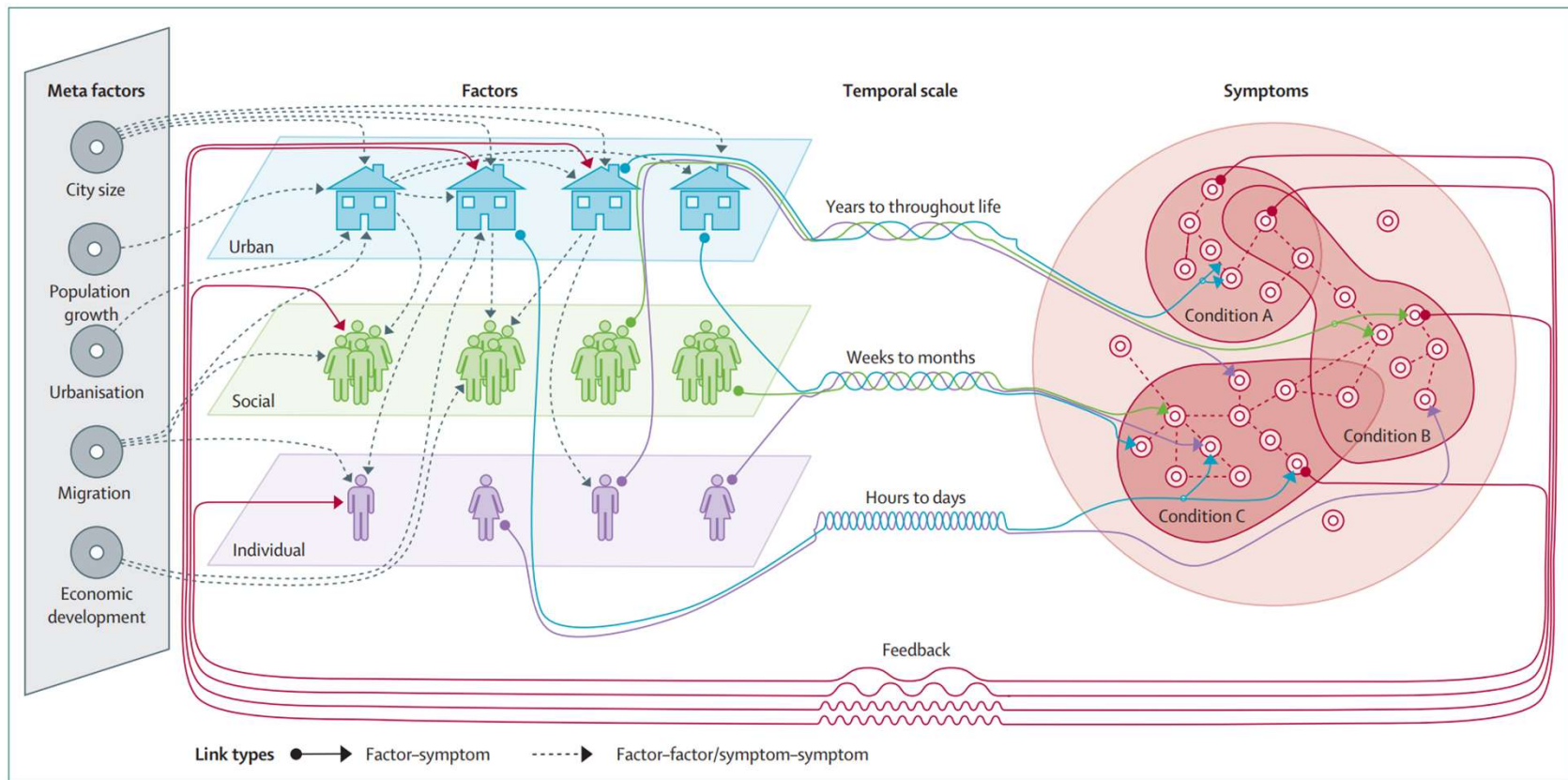


Figure 3: Conceptual framework of the relationship between factors in the urban environment and CMD outcomes

Source: Van Der Wal, Junus M., et al. "Advancing urban mental health research: from complexity science to actionable targets for intervention." *The Lancet Psychiatry* 8.11 (2021): 991-1000.



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Rich data

Social networks of Amsterdam

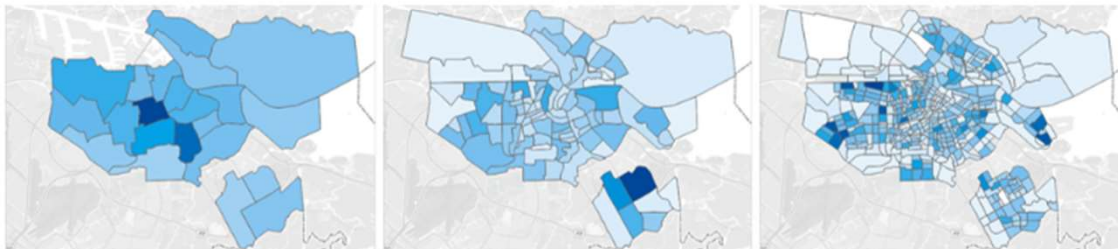
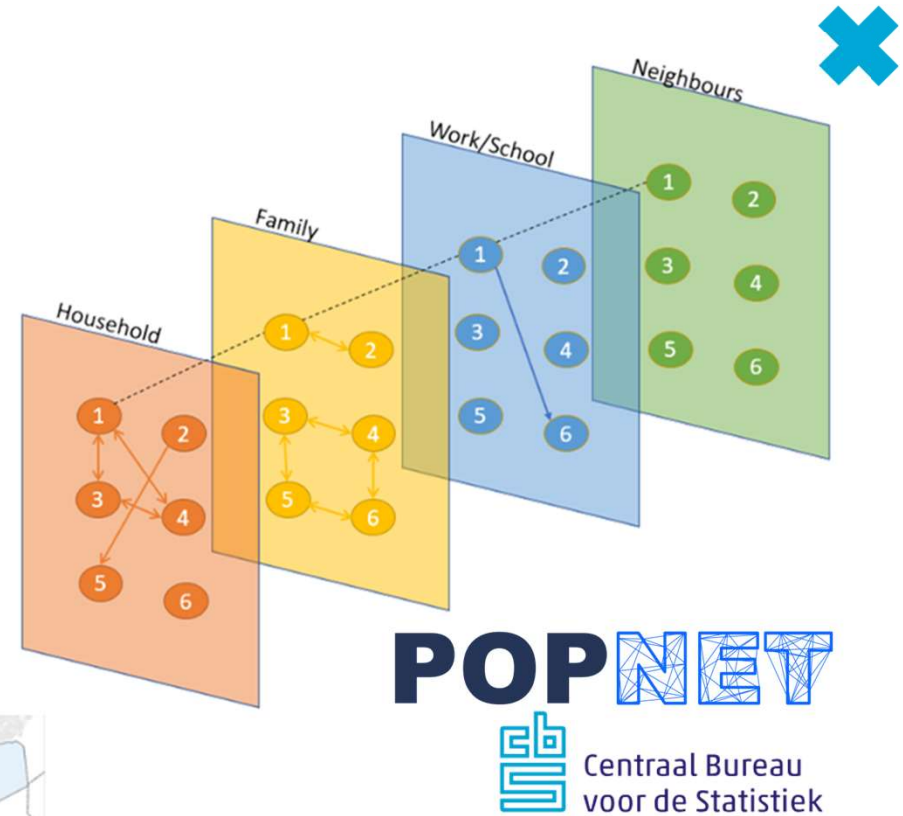


FIGURE 3.6: Amsterdam divided into 22 area's (left), districts (middle) and neighbourhoods (right).



POPNET
Centraal Bureau
voor de Statistiek



A new master's programme

- Why?



A new master's programme

- Why?
- Who?



A new master's programme

- Why?
- Who?
- How?



A new master's programme

- Why?
- Who?
- How?



A new master's programme

- Why?
- Who?
- How?
- What?



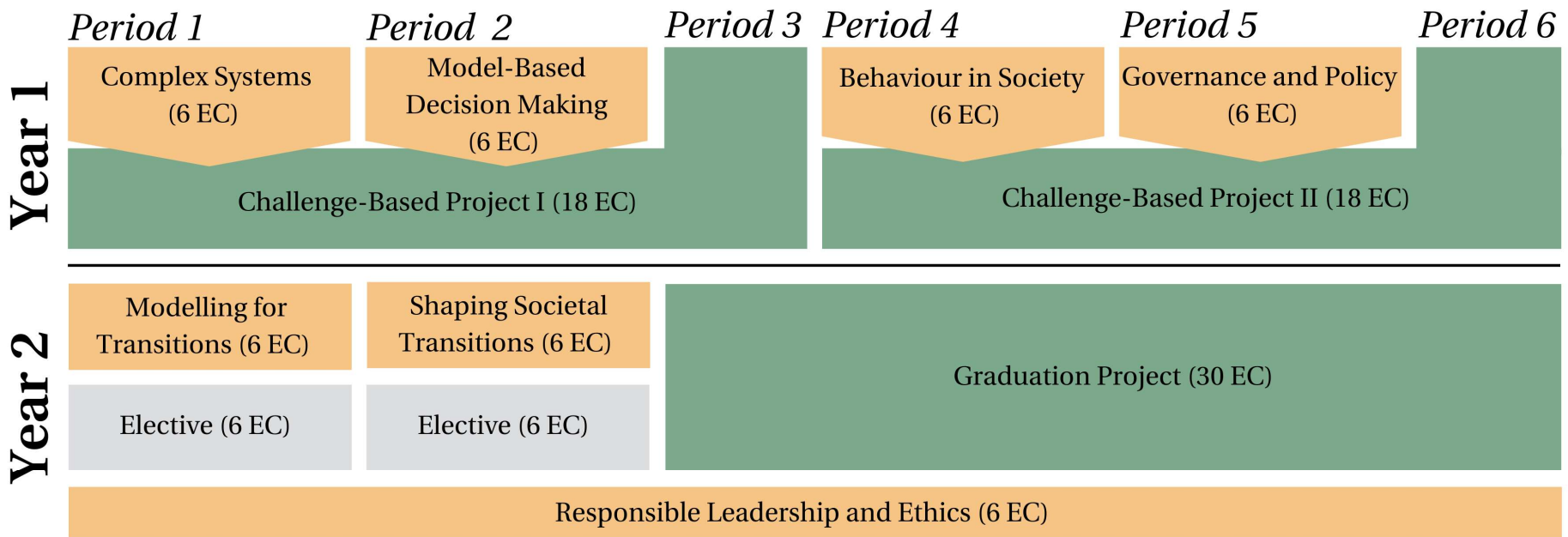
What is Complex Systems & Policy?



*The MSc CS&P anticipates the future where **complex systems tools** are an **integral part of policymaking and analysis**. It seeds the collaborative space where students, stakeholders, and researchers from various academic fields jointly gain deep and encompassing insights into policymaking, addressing urgent societal challenges.*

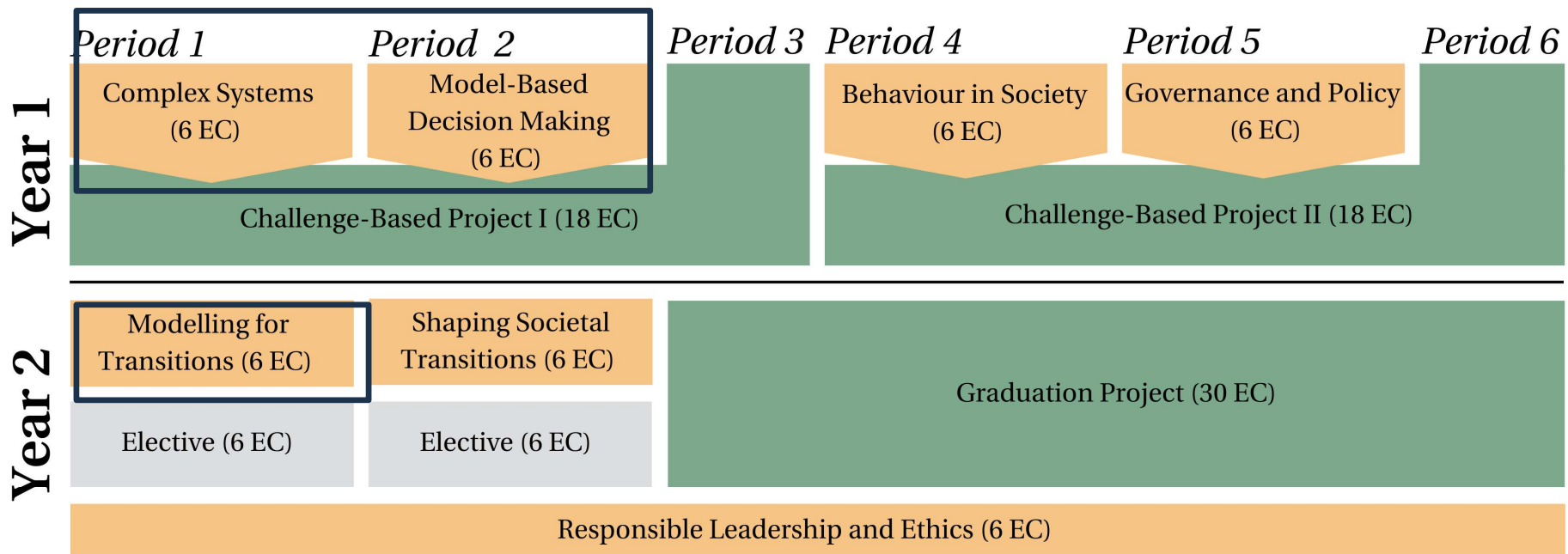


Curriculum





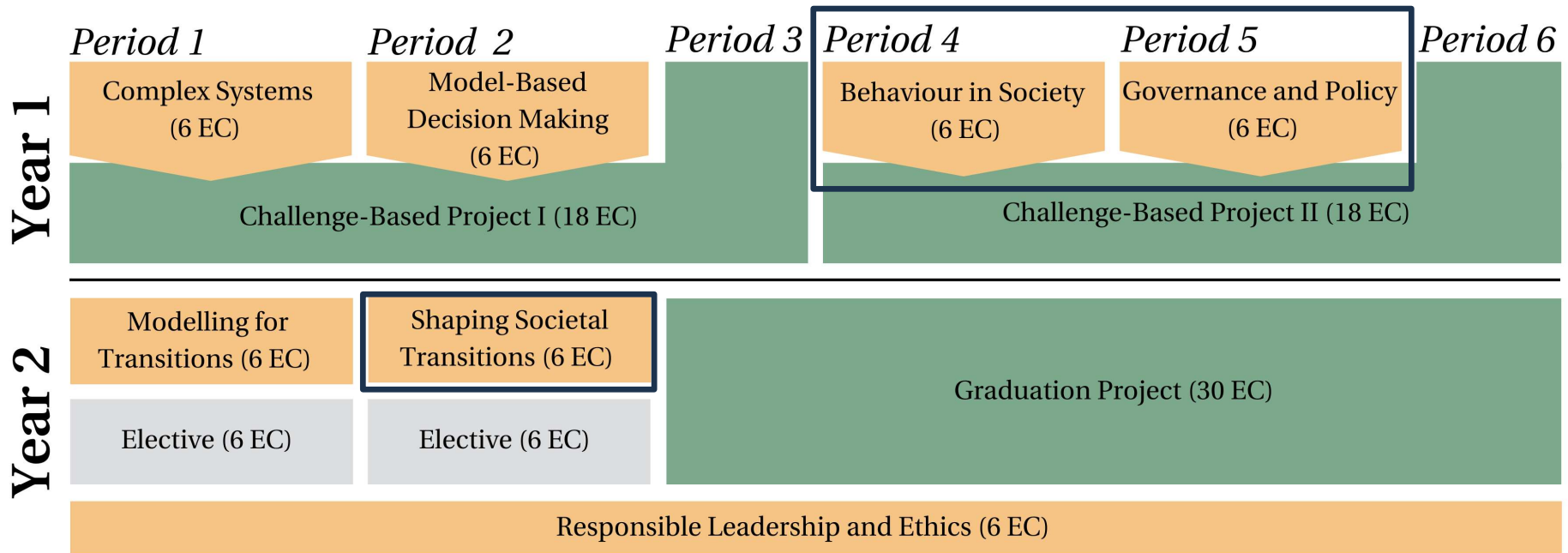
Curriculum



Data analysis, Causal Inference, Statistics, Mathematics, Programming, Modelling, Machine Learning



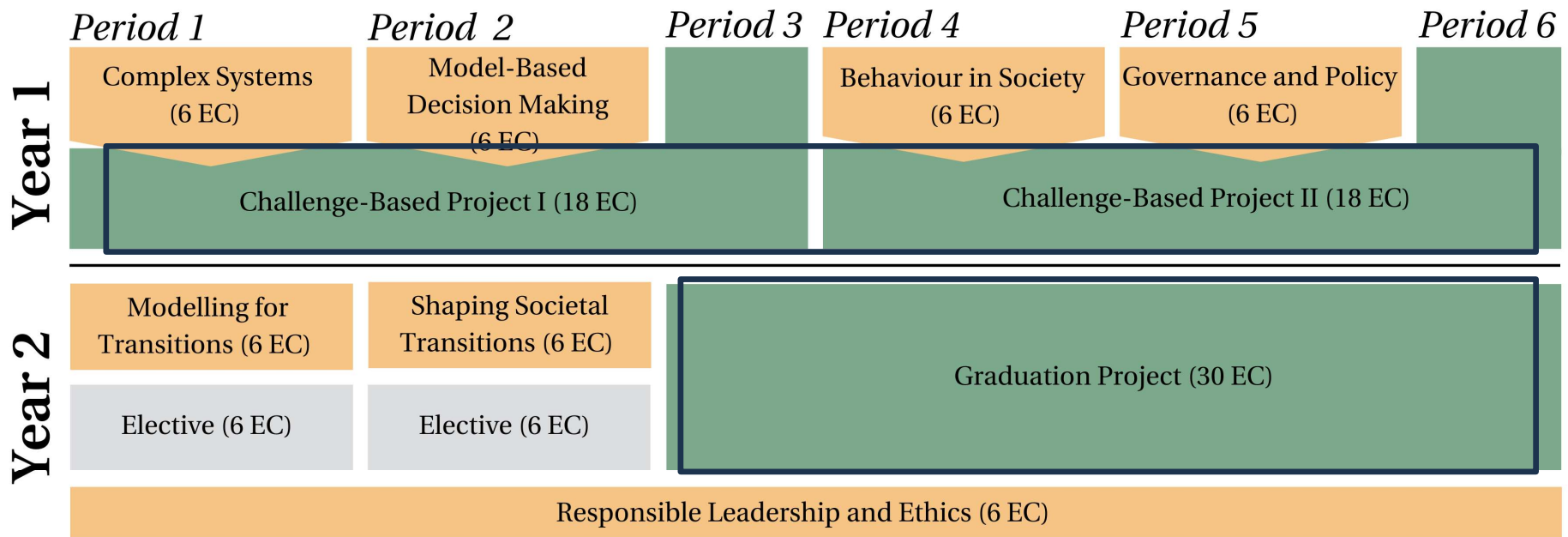
Curriculum



Behavioral experiments, Randomized controls, Natural experiments, Governance, Decision Making, Deep Uncertainty, Framework development, Innovation theories



Curriculum



Scientific framing of practical knowledge and additional tools



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Institute for Advanced Study

<https://ias.uva.nl/>



Institute for Advanced Study (IAS)



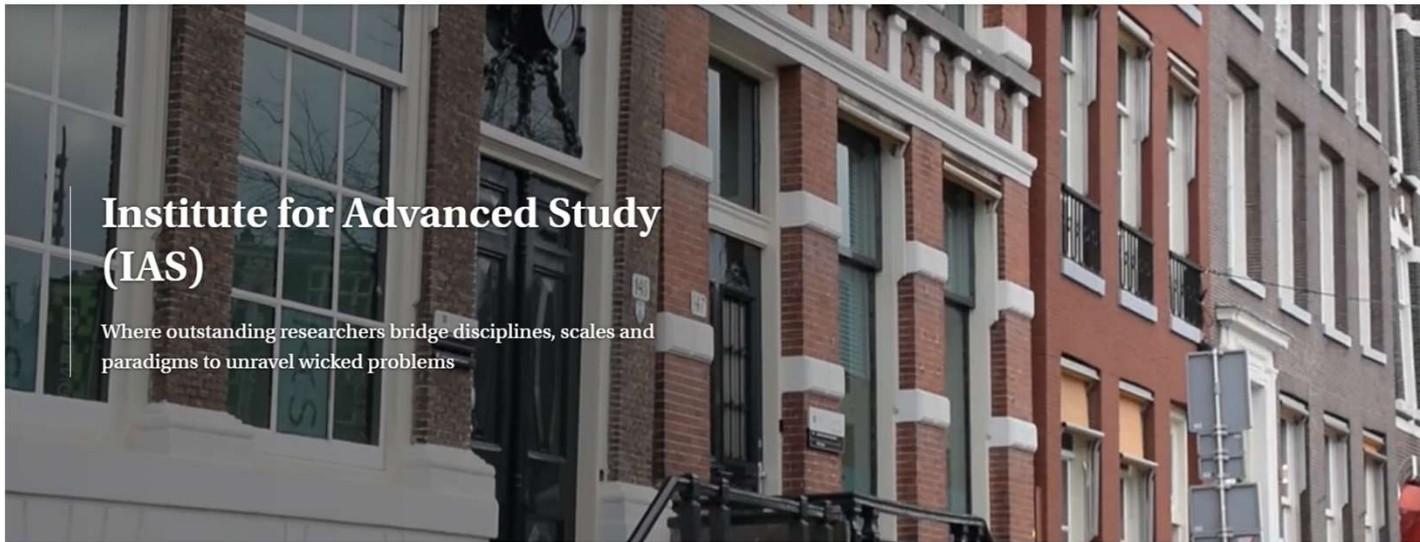
Research themes

Community

News & events

About the IAS

Apply



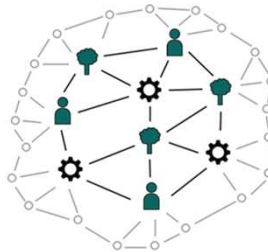
Institute for Advanced Study (IAS)

Where outstanding researchers bridge disciplines, scales and
paradigms to unravel wicked problems





1. Developing the problem understanding from a multistakeholder perspective



2. Deep dive into the complexity from micro to macro scale



3. Modelling and simulating policy interventions.

4. Test interventions

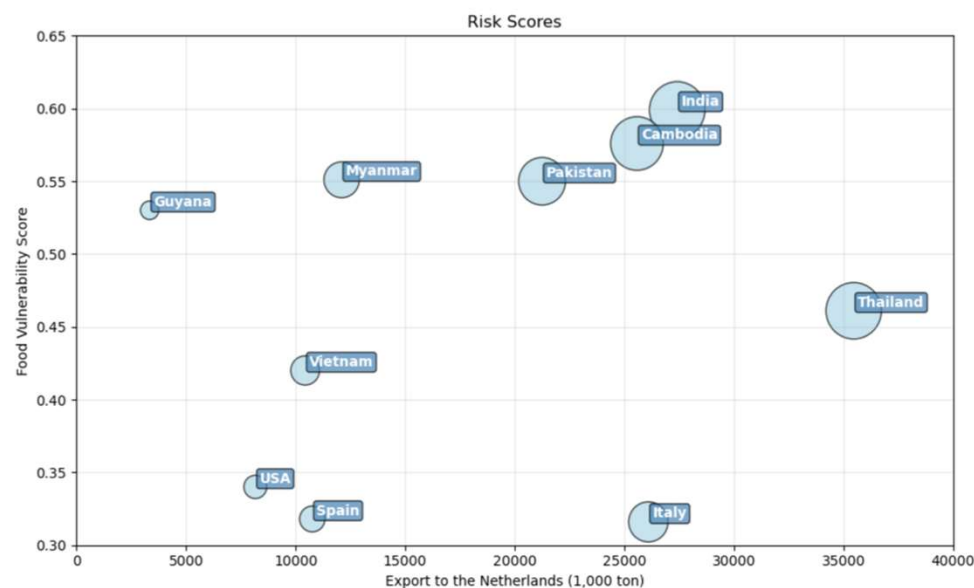
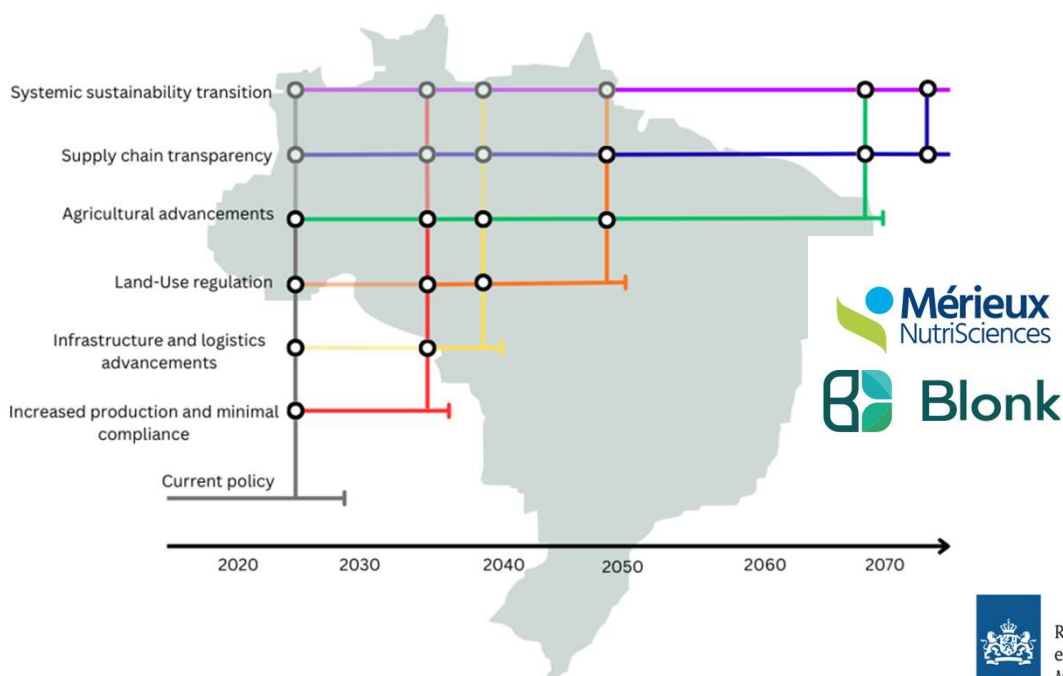
Importance of developing new methods for effective interventions



Example of challenge-based project

What are the **consequences** in key exporting countries if the Netherlands achieves its 2030 **protein transition target**?

How does **climate change** in distant regions affect **staple crops** in the Dutch diet?

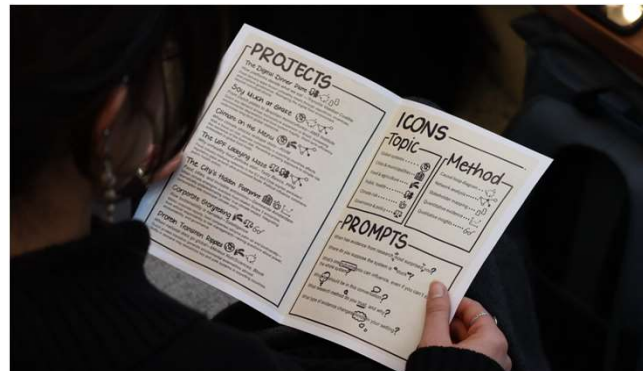




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Governance of complexity





First year

Developing a common language with transdisciplinary education

Focused on fundamentals and challenge-based education



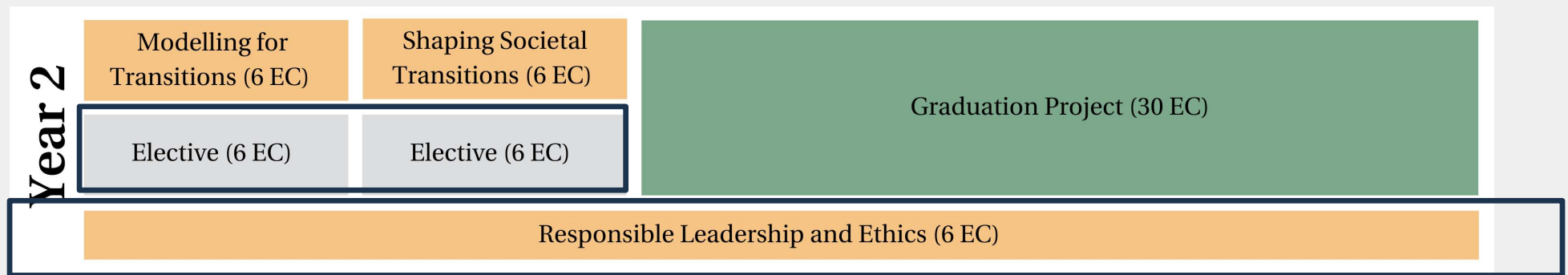


Second year

Advanced core courses on transition thinking

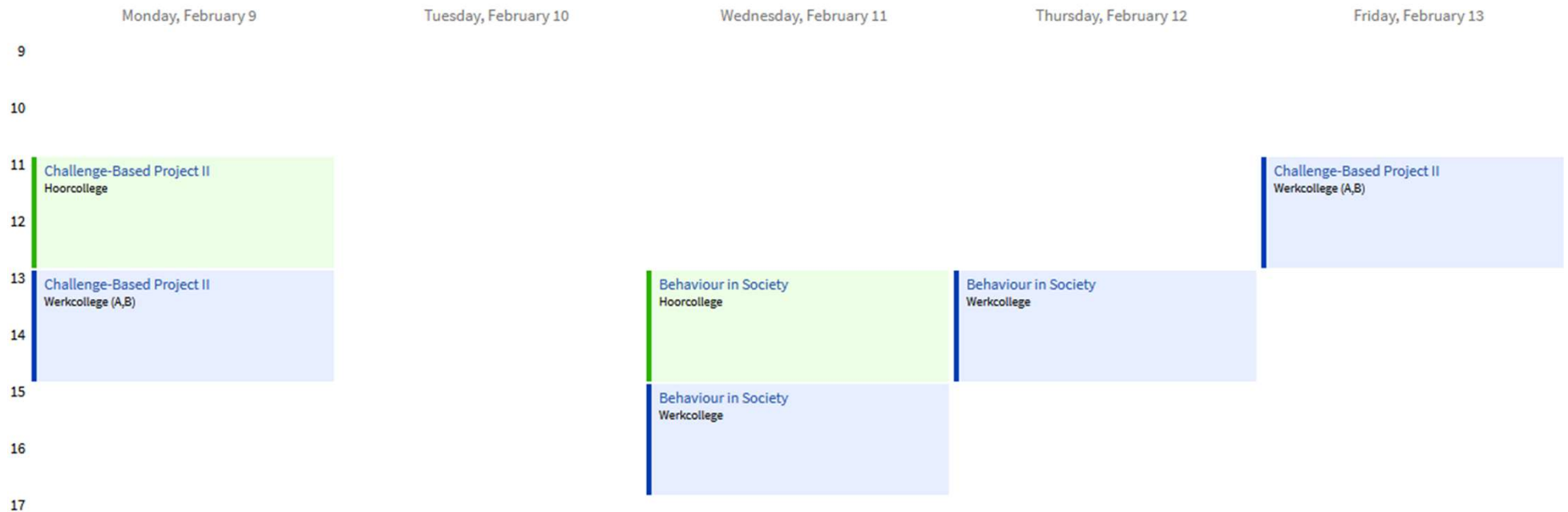
Electives: deepen knowledge (sustainability/health), and/or computational/policy skills

Find your compass and show your skillset in the graduation project





Week in the life of a CS&P student





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Ministerie van Volksgezondheid,
Welzijn en Sport



Ministerie van Economische Zaken
en Klimaat



World Food
Programme

(Inter)national or local government
'Researcher traffic models'



Planbureau voor de Leefomgeving

WKR Wetenschappelijke
Klimaatraad

Advisory agencies
*'Junior researcher on policy
scenarios for biodiversity'*

TNO

innovation
for life

Netherlands Organisation for
Applied Scientific Research
'Senior Scientist circular economy'

Career examples



125 jaar
Centraal Bureau
voor de Statistiek

Statistics Bureau
Netherlands

'Researcher social security'



GGD



Amsterdam



Public Health Service Amsterdam
'Junior data analyst'



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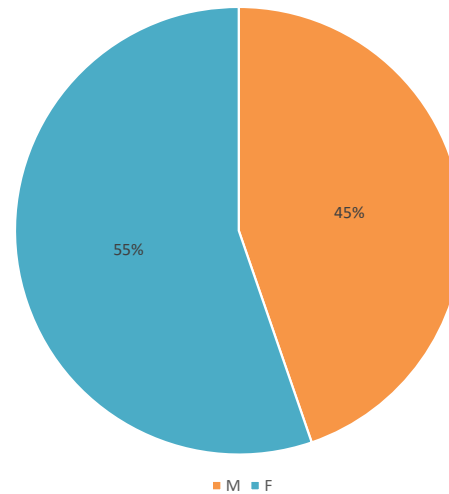
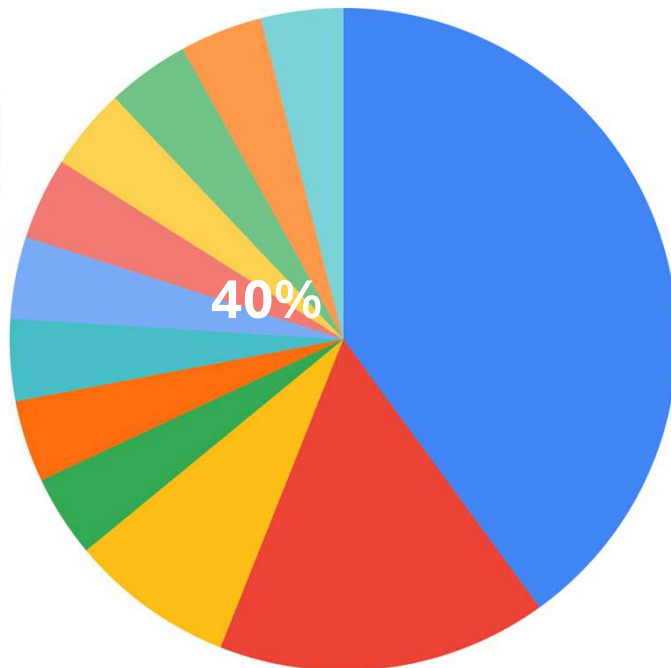
PhD student: *"Successful aging through resilience:
Exploring determinants and opportunities for intervention"*



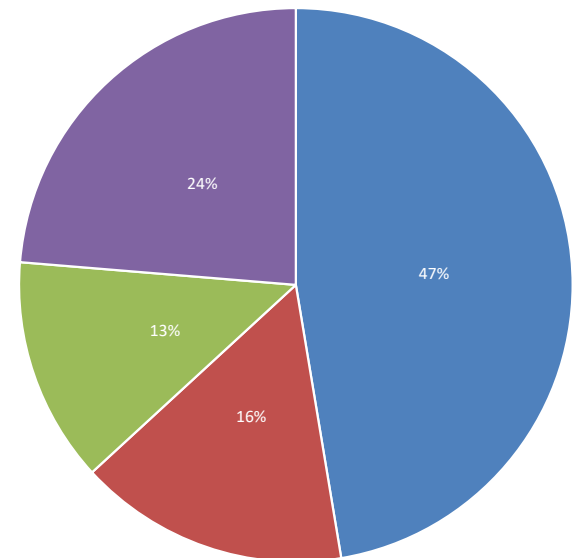
Current cohort



- Netherlands
- Romania
- Germany
- India
- Italy
- Malaysia
- Ireland
- Colombia
- Latvia
- Finland
- America
- South Africa



**Average age:
±25 years**



- University of Amsterdam
- Utrecht University
- Other Dutch universities
- International



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Student experience: Mijke

- Background: BSc & MSc Information Science
- What's unique about the master:
 - The diverse group of students
 - Interdisciplinary: looking at problems from different perspectives
 - High engagement of the teachers
 - Working with external stakeholders





Student experience: Josefina



- Background: Bachelor's degree in Ecology at the Pontificia Universidad Javeriana of Colombia.
- Diverse classroom:
 - Sociology, computer science, information science, political science, natural sciences, medicine related and public health.
- How my prior education relates to the programme:
 - Life Cycle Assessments
 - Externality analysis
 - Sustainability perspective
 - CLDs for the analysis of complex problems



Application & admission

Though entry requirements:

Bachelor's degree, including:

- Programming (10 EC)
- Calculus, linear algebra, probability theory and/or statistics (10 EC)
- Social and/or behavioral sciences (10 EC)

Application

- Deadlines
 - Dutch/EU: April 30th, 2026
 - Non-EU: January 31st, 2026

Admission

- Official registration now possible through Studielink
- By admissions committee



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More information

UNIVERSITEIT VAN AMSTERDAM

Zoek... Vergelijk EN

Onderwijs Onderzoek Nieuws & Agenda Over de UvA Bibliotheek

Home > Complex Systems and Policy



MASTER Vergelijk

Complex Systems and Policy

The Master's programme Complex Systems and Policy (CS&P) offers a unique approach to future-focused policymaking. It draws from a variety of academic fields, including social sciences, data science, and modelling. The programme aims to equip you with the tools to navigate and address complex societal challenges about health and sustainability and cooperate with different stakeholders. Do you want to make an impact by applying complexity thinking to today's issues? Then the CS&P programme is the right choice for you.

Language of instruction: English
Mode: Full-time
Location: Science Park

- Engage with real life societal challenges about health and sustainability
- Co-create with academia and non-academic stakeholders
- Focus on personal and professional development
- Good career perspective

NOV 17 Master's Week: 17-21
FEB 09 Master's Week 9-12

[Subscribe to the newsletter →](#)

[Download Programme Summary →](#)

<http://www.uva.nl/msc-csp>



Anna Daniels & August de Heij (study advisors):

studieadviseur-iis@uva.nl

Subscribe to
the CSP
newsletter!

Email the programme:

csp-iis-science@uva.nl

Extra online event 3 March



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Q&A



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**How much biomass
for the Dutch heat
and electricity sector?**



**Digital health tools
for promoting
healthy lifestyles in
urban environments**



**Stress and the
intergenerational
transmission of
(un)healthy behaviour**



**How to convert
organic nitrogen into
healthy and popular
food with high protein
content**





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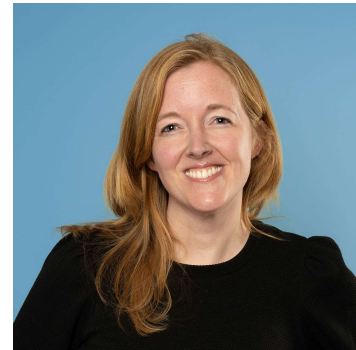
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Eveline Zandvliet

Programme Coordinator



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Study Advisor



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Myrthe van Buren

Programme Assistant