ANNUAL MEETING REPORT 2021

OECD

This report is a synthesis of background materials, presentations and discussions from the eighth Annual Meeting of the OECD Government Foresight Community, held 11-13 October 2021 via video conference. The contents reflect a variety of inputs and perspectives from nearly 200 leading public sector futurists and foresight practitioners from around the world. They also reflect a shared conviction that strategic foresight – the structured exploration of possible futures and their implications for decisions made today – is a core requirement of effective public policy making and good governance.

The OECD thanks all presenters and participants for their contributions, and for their ongoing efforts and commitment to strengthening foresight for better policies and better lives.

OECD Government Foresight Community
Annual Meeting Report

11-13 October 2021, hosted virtually from OECD Headquarters in Paris

The OECD Strategic Foresight Unit, situated in the Office of the Secretary General, leads the adoption of futures thinking across the OECD, strengthening the ability of Directorates and Committees to provide Members with future-ready policy advice. The Strategic Foresight Unit oversees the Government Foresight Community (GFC) which brings together experienced public sector strategic foresight practitioners from countries and international organisations around the world. It aims to strengthen foresight capacity by drawing on collective experience and bringing combined future insights to bear on key issues of our times.

The 2021 meeting marked the eighth Annual Meeting of the GFC. The sessions were designed to explore how strategic foresight contributes to the most pressing long-term issues facing humanity such as the climate crisis and existential risks. As always, the Annual Meeting showcased the incredible work happening in public sector foresight around the world with nearly 200 participants joining from every continent, except Antarctica. The Annual Meeting served as a forum for sharing best practices among strategic foresight practitioners and reflection on the purpose and vision for the work at a time when foresight capacity is being expanded by many governments around the world.

Strategic foresight plays a vital role within government and society more broadly. The tools and methodologies can act as society's eyes and ears on the ground, helping to identify emerging trends, obstacles and opportunities on the horizon that may otherwise be missed. Foresight has another purpose: acting as government's neocortex, the centre for imagination and reflection upon difficult questions which cultivates wisdom and prepares governments for how to react when faced with considerable uncertainty. The GFC Annual Meeting represents an important opportunity for leading experts and recent recruits to the practice of strategic foresight to explore how best to fill these vital societal roles that are so often neglected within government bureaucracies.

Contents

1. The Shifting Context of Government Foresight

What do governments and societies most need from foresight?

Guest speaker Ayaka Suzuki, Director of the Strategic Planning and Monitoring Unit in the Executive Office of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, began the session with some reflections about the UN's recent commitments to strategic foresight. The *Our Common Agenda* report presented to the General Assembly in September 2021named strategic foresight as part of the quintet of capabilities required to respond to future challenges. It posits that the world is at an inflection point in history where humanity must choose between breakdown or breakthrough to a better more sustainable future for people and planet. Strategic foresight will enable systems-wide anticipatory actions and more forward-looking policies to address these ever more complex and interconnected challenges. As part of the renewed commitment to strategic foresight, the report announces (i) a global futures summit hosted by the UN in the coming years, (ii) a strategic foresight and global risk report published by the UN, and (iii) the creation of a futures lab that supports states in developing foresight capabilities and enabling more forward-looking UN policies and programs.

Participants discussed the opportunities and challenges for foresight practitioners as they seek to best serve the global community in the years ahead. Foresight's ability to utilize emerging technologies but also help us mitigate the dangers and make sense of their potential social impacts was raised. As were the ways in which foresight could be better tied to civil society and grassroots efforts to reimagine systems, including mainstreaming ideas of intergenerational fairness. Finally, participants explored ways to mainstream anticipatory governance and how foresight could play a role in supporting innovation in government.

2. Community Exchange

In two rounds of member-led sessions, contributors presented findings and lessons learned from recent foresight work, or sought input on plans and priorities for the year ahead. Thirty-one breakout groups covered a wide diversity of topics relating to the practice and application of foresight in policy settings, cutting edge research into important long-term themes and institutionalizing foresight in governments and international organisations.

Breakout group	*Contributor and Institution*
Foresight methodologies and applications	
Moving from conceptual methodologies to building anticipatory institutions	Aarathi Krishnan
What would a good horizon-scanning service look like?	Louis Coffait-Gunn and Jack Hampton
How to use Foresight in Smart Specialization Policies for Sustainability	Michael Pazour
Improving foresight: from recommendations to action	Mikko Dufva, SITRA
Education for Citizenship: The role of foresight	Sheila Ronis, PhD and Leon Furth
Can foresight games expand our horizons of possibilities and help build anti-fragile visions of the future?	Shermon Cruz, PhD, Center for Engaged Foresight
Why Foresight Products May Fail	Taskeen Ali, UK Space Agency
Foresight and government	
Establishing a State of the Future Index in Greece	Christofilopoulos Epaminondas, PhD,

Risk monitoring within public administration	Eamonn Noonan, PhD Global Trends Unit, European Parliamentary Research Service
Government Report on the Future: remodelling the 30 year old tradition through whole of government approach and citizen engagement	Jaana Tapanainen-Thiess, Finland
Why we have to begin working on a global governance system for artificial general intelligence now	Jerome Glenn, Millennium Project
From scenarios to action through innovation: prototyping in Slovenia	Joshua Polchar, OECD Observatory on Public Sector Innovation
Towards systems of anticipatory governance: cases in Finland and Ireland	Joshua Polchar, OECD Observatory on Public Sector Innovation
Enable the shift from foresight practice to foresight governance: exploring multi-country cases with GOScience	Marius Oosthuizen, School of International Futures
Reading in between the lines. Advisory boards and planning agencies doing foresight	Patrick Van der Duin, PhD
Institutionalising Foresight in the German government	Philine Warnke, Max Priebe and Nels Haake
Lithuania's long-term strategy	Sigita Trainauskiene, Lithuania
From path dependency to multiple futures: Introducing Foresight in regional governance in the Eastern Cape province, South Africa	Siv Helen Hesjedal and Ian Assam

Scenarios and thematic foresight projects

The future of the state	Chor Pharn Lee, CSF Singapore
Rehearsing the future	Ed Dammers, Department of Spatial Planning and Quality of the Local Environment (PBL), The Netherlands
Thinking about rural region futures	Jenny Vyas and Andres Sanabria
What if continuous convergence of technology and biology raised significant ethical, social and political implications?	Jorg Korner
The Future of Business – work toward long-term insights for Aotearoa New Zealand	Katherine Silvester, Mark Lea and Huong Nguyen
The Fourth Industrial Revolution and inclusive human capital development in Africa: what implications for development co-operation providers?	Krystel Montpetit, and Ana Fernandez, Development Cooperation Directorate, OECD
#OurFutures - Stories for the future of Europe	Laurent Bontoux, Joint Research Centre, European Commission
The future of value in the next digital economy	Marcus Ballinger, Policy Horizons Canada

Trends and foresight reports

Global Strategic Trends 7 – regional analysis	Colonel Joachim Isacsson, AH2 Futures, Strategic Analysis Programme
European Commission 2021 Strategic Foresight Report	Hervé Delphin and Grzegorz Drozd, European Commission
2040 World Megatrends	Rodrigo Mendez Leal
Refreshing Australia's Global Megatrends 10 years on	Stefan Hajkowicz, CSIRO, Australia
The future of education	Tracey Burns and Marc Fuster, OECD Education

3. Strategic Foresight for Successful Net-Zero Transitions

External network presentations:
Transforming economies and societies for carbon neutrality is one of the most important challenges facing governments over the coming years and decades, and will likely implicate all areas of public policy. In two sessions at this year's GFC, representatives shared practical examples of the role that foresight can play in helping to prepare society for a net-zero transition.

OECD-led sessions exploring potential disruptions of the net-zero transition
The OECD is leading a collaborative strategic foresight project as part of the Organisation's horizontal project on *Building Climate and Economic Resilience*. The purpose is to support global and national efforts to design future-ready net-zero transition strategies in a context of high uncertainty. As part of this project, the Strategic Foresight Team is developing a foresight toolkit that can be used by governments and organisations to stress-test their net-zero transition strategies against possible future disruptions over the 2030-2050 period.

The OECD Strategic Foresight Unit has developed an initial non-exhaustive list of disruptions based on internal research and consultation with project partners at the OECD and European Environment Agency. These disruptions do not represent discrete events, but rather broad systemic changes that fundamentally affect the context in which the net-zero transition could occur. They include changes that could either emerge suddenly or develop gradually over a number of years.

Two sessions at the Annual Meeting were dedicated to further developing and refining the list of disruptions based on the policy experience and expertise of the 200 foresight practitioners present. The ultimate outcome of this project will allow decision makers to think more broadly by considering the policy implications of disruptions associated with net-zero transitions. This reduces the risk of costly misguided investments, counterproductive efforts and missed opportunities.

Potential disruptions to net-zero transition strategies explored:

Critical uncertainty	Baseline assumption	Disruption scenario	Potential implications
Will governments globally become more or less democratic?	With some exceptions, democracy will continue to be the preferred standard for good governance among the majority of publics.	**Authoritarianism Rising**: Support for populist authoritarian governments spreads to an increasing number of countries, including well-established Western democracies. Once in power, these leaders take control of the media, judiciary, elections, and security establishment to perpetuate their rule, and to assist other aspiring autocrats.	Potential need for far greater integration of authoritarians into global standard setting process.

Challenges to determine what the foundations of agreements are if there is not agreement about what the facts are. |
| **To what extent can emissions be offset by technologies?** | There is a need to drastically reduce carbon dioxide emitted. | **Carbon capture breakthroughs:** Advances in carbon capture, usage and storage and carbon dioxide removal change carbon reduction landscape. The IEA's | China-like development model (e.g. high-emissions) could be more acceptable for several emerging economies, |

		2050 targets for carbon capture volumes are reached 15 years early with continued acceleration in capacity in the decade that follows. The scale of industrial transformation in order to reach net-zero diminishes.	which in turn could contribute to greater deforestation and species loss.
Will potentially irreversible environmental tipping points be crossed, and which tipping points are interrelated?	If the world keeps to a <2℃ degrees of warming trajectory, no irreversible tipping points will be crossed. The world will continue to be able to rely on natural carbon stores to moderate warming.	**Cascading tipping points:** Multiple cascading tipping points are crossed which put the planet on a path to runaway climate change and a "hothouse Earth" scenario, in which dangerous warming is inevitable regardless of human action to reduce emissions.	Shift from mitigation to adaptation globally. Mass migration of climate refugees. Pressure for drastic climate interventions such as large-scale geoengineering. Huge disruptions to global value chains. Shortermism dominates in governments who are in constant crisis mode.
Will high levels of debt lead to a severe and ongoing financial crisis?	High debt levels prove sustainable and economic growth and confidence remain steady for all but the most dysfunctional economies.	**Debt contagion:** Over-spending by governments for the COVID-19 recovery in the early 2020s results in unprecedented debt levels and eventual debt crisis that severely disrupts global trade and investment. This is especially true in developing countries, which find themselves on the verge of insolvency.	Avalanche effect on the global economy as growth stopping in some places impacts growth everywhere. Debt servicing costs far surpass all other expenses for some low and middle-income countries. This could slow investments in essential green technologies and put pressure on developing countries to make unsustainable investments for short-term relief.
What progress will be made in the electrification and/or decarbonisation of heavy transport and aviation?	IEA net-zero transition pathway projections hold. 30% of new trucks sold are electric by 2030 and the number of	**Heavy transportation breakthroughs:** Faster than expected technological development sees ETrucks and eBuses reach short-term parity in terms of cost of ownership in the mid-2020s. Bio-kerosene and hydrogen-based fuels see innovation-driven price drops between 2025 and 2035, reaching	Governments and large businesses could be caught out if they underinvest in infrastructure to accommodate the technological breakthroughs (ports, charging stations etc.).

	flights globally peaked in 2019.	as low as $200/barrel 15 years sooner than expected. Jet engines are able to run on 100% biofuels by 2030. Many short-haul flights are fully electric by the early 2030s.	Breakthroughs could destabilize economies that are reliant on fossil fuel exports.
Will people's cognitive limits stay the same, along with their peak productive years?	Patterns of cognitive and physical decline and growing mental health crises will continue to place limits on people's intrinsic capacities, especially later life.	**Human augmentation** Cognitive therapies and technological advances in brain-computer interfaces and smart drugs enable advancements in baseline of human cognition. This enhances collective problem solving and extends the available working life. Where widely accessible, enhancers are being tailored to different kinds of tasks, from speed of thinking and memory to sociability.	Incentives and pressures grow for lifelong learning models that enable much more flexibility in traditional life stages. Companies invest as much in staff enhancement as they did previously in education and training.
Will consumption continue to determine quality of life? To what extent will consumption and gross domestic product continue to be the measure of societal progress?	Material consumption will continue to be main driver of better lives for coming decades.	**Well-being economies:** Development models placing attention on drivers of mental health and psychological well-being (e.g., quality of social relationships; liberty of gender expression) prove to have greater benefit to well-being than material consumption. Governments, international organisations, the media and corporations and citizens themselves pivot to assessing individual and societal progress on the basis of highly detailed real-time indicators of well-being.	Losses in standard of living due to decarbonisation may be offset by improvements in other developments more beneficial to well-being. Behavioural shift rather than technology driven transition to net-zero economy is possible. Potential for several competing narratives of societal and personal success.

4. Keynote Session: Longtermism as a Global Policy Priority
Interactive panel and breakout discussions.

OECD Secretary-General Mathias Cormann opened the session with a message in support of the important work done within the Government Foresight Community and the OECD. Mr. Cormann remarked on the growing number of governments and international organisations that are strengthening their foresight efforts and capabilities, in recognition of the growing need for future-focused policies in an increasingly complex world. He encouraged the Government Foresight Community to look for opportunities to collaborate and combine efforts to provide rigorous futures analysis to tackle the most important global issues.

This session explored the concept of longtermism and involved interactive discussions about how governments and international organisations can contribute to addressing global existential risks.

The panel session featured:

- **Toby Ord, PhD,** Senior Research Fellow in Philosophy at Oxford University and Author of *The Precipice: Existential Risk and the Future of Humanity*
- **Sophie Howe**, Future Generations Commissioner for Wales
- **Clarissa Rios Rojas, PhD,** Research Associate at the Centre for the Study of Existential Risk at the University of Cambridge
- **Natalie Cargill**, Founder & CEO of Longview Philanthropy
- Duncan Cass-Beggs, OECD Counsellor for Strategic Foresight (moderator)

Longtermism involves the recognition that future people matter and their lives can be effected by the actions that are taken by those alive today. However, future generations are not adequately represented for in societal decisions because they do not exist yet.

A variety of emerging risks such as artificial general intelligence and bioengineered pandemics could be so significant as to threaten the very future of humanity. There is a growing awareness that these risks, once viewed as being in the realm of science fiction, are now real enough and close enough that they deserve the attention of policy makers. There may be a role for the government foresight community to contribute to shaping the role that governments play in mitigating existential risks, promoting longtermism, and helping to reach the fullest of humanity's whole of species potential. Part of this work could be in changing short-termist incentives of government institutions as well as making the conversation about shaping humanity's long-term potential more inclusive of people from all walks of life.

5. Problem-Solving Circles
Member-led sessions

This first of its kind session at the Government Foresight Community Meeting drew on the collective intelligence of the community to brainstorm approaches to solving problems crowd-sourced from community members. The experimental co-learning design asked each participant to identify their level of familiarity and success with addressing the given problem (from novice currently struggling with the issue to someone having a developed strategy or approach to address the issue). The topics discussed were:

As a newly established foresight unit, what are the most important steps we should be taking?
- Context and related questions:
  - What **capabilities, skill sets and resources** are needed in an effective foresight team?
  - What **functions** can a foresight unit play?
  - How do we **consolidate and add value** to the practices of foresight happening in pockets across government?
- Strategies and solutions:
  - Bringing together groups of willing participants can build momentum.
  - **Highlighting recent commitments to foresight** can be useful for engaging colleages and building credibility. For example, the UN Secretary-General's announcements on futures and intergenerational issues and the European Commission's request that all countries in Europe establish a Minister for the Future and mainstream foresight.
  - Producing **practical and hands on guides** on how to apply futures can be useful to support and assist colleagues.
  - 5 key features of effective foresight units:
    1. Convening senior level conversations about the future with formal terms of reference,
    2. Developing a **sophisticated scanning process** to identify weak signals of change,

3. Developing an understanding of your audience and what kinds of foresight are most appealing to them,
4. Curate the **building blocks for foresight communication**: develop mechanisms to publish insights, weak signals, scenarios,
5. **Build networks** across government.
- Be ready to build slowly. Educate people and make them more comfortable with futures thinking.

How do you scale-up foresight work across an organization without compromising on quality?
- Context and related questions:
  - Turnover at the top means short time horizons for high level support.
  - Units often do sprinkling of foresight everywhere but rarely have time for deep dives anywhere. However, it takes time for people to form ideas of how the future can be different. **Creativity requires a time commitment that can be hard to obtain**.
  - What are the risks of scaling up something that does not meet foresight's end goals? How do we balance quality with efficiency and productivity?
- Strategies and solutions:
  - Build capacity by conducting trainings for people.
  - Establishing leadership buy-in from the top. **Create champions** throughout the organisation using the same language, approach and vision, while also seeking external champions.
  - **Borrow legitimacy from other institutions** (academic, international, established governments, private sector, civil society).
  - Provide guides on how to use foresight.
  - Make it clear **foresight is about both outputs and capacity**—much of the work is about building mind sets.
  - Build scalable products that can be used in processes ranging between a single workshop to a months-long engagement.
  - Design processes that **encourage learning by doing**.
  - Design processes that **develop a sense of ownership** among participants (e.g., let participants play a part in creating the scenarios that guide a workshop as opposed to just workshopping external scenarios which might not be internalized).

What are best practices for translating insights from foresight exercises into an actionable work plan for institutions?
- Context and related questions
  - Big reports are very crowded and space often goes to more economic research.
  - General scepticism about usefulness of foresight.
  - **Policymakers struggle see how multiple futures can be applied**.
  - Regime change makes continuity a challenge—action phase can often get neglected after a long process due to this.
  - Some related thoughts: (i) should we assume 'translating' is a linear process? (ii) Are foresight products a 'special' form of knowledge product in the 'reservoir' of knowledge products that inform policy? (iii) Is it more important to develop futures literacy or produce foresight products/ exercises? (iv) Does it matter what the prevailing appetite is for long-termism?
- Strategies and solutions
  - **Foresight should be demand driven**: look for projects that could easily benefit from foresight and approach the project leads.
  - Engage in visioning then translate vision to policy.

- Set up hubs that multiple levels and perspectives among the participants. Interdisciplinary and whole of government thinking (e.g. regular scanning clubs to discuss horizon scanning results or foresight brown bag lunches).
- Need to deliver insights related to deeply rooted assumptions.
- Can demonstrate the value of foresight by testing if policies are robust to multiple future scenarios. Presenting **foresight as a means of stress-testing** can be useful.
- Policymakers being included in the workshops and process is helpful.
- Be ready to push participants on what is possible/plausible. Push to overcome resistance to plausibility of a scenario and get clear on what constraints actually limit new courses of action.

How do foresight units best engage, demonstrate value and generate buy-in from senior leadership with little foresight literacy while preserving foresight's challenge function?

- Context and related questions
  - **Rivalry** from within the organisation **creates hurdles** for buy-in and acceptance of the foresight function.
  - The long horizon timeframe can challenge policymakers to take interest in foresight. Policy and political cycles are short and interest lie with announcements and immediate deliverables - this is a key theme.
  - There is a sense that **foresight may have a different use** – **'foresight washing'** to impress some stakeholders but in reality not taken into account/applied.
  - **The location of the foresight unit has significant** bearing on the influence its work. This means the proximity to very senior members of the organisation in both physical location and the nature of work.

- Strategies and solutions
  - To demonstrate value – foresight practitioners should:
    - use **language of the decisionmaker,**
    - Make foresight people and **products more accessible,**
    - Bear in mind people in higher positions have less time,
    - **Translation is important** for esp. policymakers **to increase foresight knowledge** in the organisation,
    - Ensure concise products packaged in small boxes for ease for policymakers.
  - **Relationship building is key** and a significant part of a foresight practitioner to generate acceptance and understanding of the field.
  - Involve **the most influential person** which may not be high in rank – but the most influential **in the room**.
  - **Create allies** for foresight and identify champions.

For multi-day foresight exercises, how can foresight teams convince participants that sustained engagement is worth their time (especially in the context of already stretched resources)?

- Context and related questions
  - Resources are constrained.
  - We are dealing with **wicked and complex problems**.
  - Without sufficient planning, initiatives may not have impact or end up short-lived.
  - Must meet immediate needs in order to get people thinking about the future.
  - Consensus takes time.
- Strategies and solutions
  - May need to have agreement upon synergies, **division of authority and priorities** prior to engagement of multistakeholder groups.
  - May need to plan out specifics of how much time is spent on each parts of discussions

How do you overcome scepticism of the value of strategic foresight within your organisation?
- Context and related questions
    - General scepticism of foresight: why do it?
    - Foresight increases workload and raises issues that are not within portfolios.
    - **Scepticism** often comes from economists or forecasters with different mindsets.
    - Foresight can be **perceived as disruptive** to existing culture and pre-existing forward-looking initiatives.
- Strategies and solutions
    - Consider shortening the time horizon to make the work more palatable (if you can do 20 years do 10 or even 5).
    - Understand and deploy the right methods for audience: some may get scenario planning but not more obscure methods.
    - **Embrace scepticism in ways that prevent groupthink**.
    - Aim for continuous engagement to slowly immerse stakeholders in futures and foresight thinking.
    - For decision-makers, conducting exercises where they list critical assumptions underpinning a policy or project and discuss them can be very valuable and easy to justify.
    - Highlight examples of where forecasting did not work out as a conversation starter to demonstrate that the perception of certainty in these projections can be misleading.

In the context of crises, how do strategic foresight units best contribute long-term perspectives and insights that will be used by rapid response teams?
- Context and related questions
    - Is there really a dichotomy between short-term and long-term?
    - Perceptions of short-term and long-term are important.
    - How to **incorporate the long term view in a crisis**?
    - Time is condensed during crises: How can we keep the long-term in mind when there might not be time for foresight?
    - How do you make long-term gains from short-term investments?
    - Covid has allowed us to get more traction for foresight under crisis conditions.
- Strategies and solutions
    - There is no need to wait for crises in order to be prepared for crises.
    - Foresight exercises can get people used to dealing with crises through simulation and **preparedness** exercises.
    - Framing and perception are very important to how crises are dealt with—need to be able to work with **multiple frames** not just default to one.
    - It is essential to take uncertainty into account—make it explicit. Foresight techniques that illustrate how uncertainty increases over time horizons can help.

How can we effectively measure the impact of our foresight activities?
- Context and related questions
    - Audiences often ask: Can you give me an example of when foresight influenced policy decisions? Can you give me an example of when your predictions turned out correct? (This can be a bit of a red-herring).
    - What, where and how do you assess impact?
    - **How can learning from applied foresight be shared** with others?
    - How to use qualitative and quantitative indicators
- Strategies and solutions
    - **Measure of participant understanding**: Moving participants from 'jellyfish' to greater awareness of foresight.

- o Regarding input vs outputs measures, people prefer the latter.
- o Regarding output measures – need to **be ready to collect that data over a long period.** The work may not be useful now. Important to have the research ready for when users are demanding it. Timing is important to achieve impact. Who is interested in the work?
- o **Measures to validate the legitimacy of internal work.** Are the materials used? What is the value of internal vs external materials? (Sometimes internal are valued less than outside consultants).
- o **Attention to the study:** downloads, tweets, research on media attention, insight on how study is used; a literature review could extend to a few years out because the impact may take a while; content analysis to learn if policy analysts refer to us; interviews with different groups to learn how scenarios are used, what could be improved.
- o Long term measure: are new research priorities established as a result of their foresight work (e.g., approved by government)?
- o Indirect measures: increasing productivity, increasing investments.
- o Impacts on policy- evidence of shaping priority setting or national innovation system.
- o Short term: increased satisfaction.
- o Key indicator- if the client comes back for more. Useful for government and businesses.
- o The priority can be placed on training—measure foresight as a capacity built.
- o Need to share stories of foresight's impact to contribute to a shared story of foresight can influence public policy conversations and decisions. Build collectively to support a field that is relatively novel in government.

How can we adapt foresight scanning practices to accommodate the changing media landscape?
- Context and related questions
    - o **Misinformation and fake news**, though not new, is evolving.
    - o Hype cycles around certain technologies.
    - o Many articles are bought out by companies trying to push an angle.
    - o How can I ground my scanning practice in ground truth realities.
    - o Closed apps can restrict foreign information.
    - o What is censored between platforms can steer what information is available.
    - o **What is bad information** when horizon scanning?
    - o Influencers are challenging the assumption that the government is the main source of power in seeding ideas.
    - o Online and offline personas change communication
        - ▪ Inventories not single identities (identities are a stack).
- Strategies and solutions
    - o Public education can help identify misinformation.
    - o **Analysts must determine what is a valuable scan hit**.
    - o People have stacks of identities.
    - o **Social media can attain a ground level view** that mainstream media does not have—useful for foresight to be aware of this.
    - o Foresight networks are useful to ground analysis in truth—bring in those who can confirm the validity.
    - o Alternative digital media outlets can be a good source of information (podcasts, newsletters).
    - o Engaging with memes and Reddit gives access to **diverse voices**.

What is the role of government foresight in distinguishing between effective and ineffective initiatives (e.g. foresight and "greenwashing")?
- Context and related questions

- Many **environmental metrics** reward places spending on green things without verifying if they work. An example sighted was a city that deployed machines to purify local air which upon review had no impact. However, the spending on them counted towards the climate investment totals, which fulfilled the political need to showcase spending on climate related issues.
  - Strategies and solutions
    - There is a role for **foresight in shaping what to measure** and what measurements may become less relevant over time due to certain types of system change. Foresight can also help identify how a metric may be exploited or lead to suboptimal results

6. The Decade Ahead: Futures of Government Foresight
OECD-led session with breakout groups

This session was a micro-foresight workshop on the future of foresight. This session involved a discussion of 9 possible disruptions that could occur by 2035 which could have major implications for the purpose, priorities or practice of public sector foresight. Participants were asked to identify an aspirational vision for foresight under each possible futures implied by the disruptions. The nine disruptions discussed were:

New issues:
1. **Crisis management:** *What if* frequent crises (pandemics, forest fires, floods, mass-migration, wars) dominate public and political attention, creating less band-width for long-term thinking and planning in public sector.
2. **Global Existential Risks:** *What if* rapid developments towards Artificial General Intelligence and bioengineered diseases have put existential threats at the top of the policy agenda?
3. **Ethical turmoil:** *What if* technological breakthroughs in capabilities for human augmentation (e.g., smart drugs, brain-computer interfaces, augmented reality) radically alter the productive capacity of those with access vis-à-vis those without?

New power dynamics:
4. **Grassroots governance:** *What if* hyper-connected, grassroots civil society movements successfully demand for deeper integration into the policy process and a say in imagining and shaping futures?
5. **Techno-plutocracy:** *What if* a group of trillionaire-owned companies govern humanity through a combination of electronic surveillance and alluring promises of a future of technologically-engineered harmony and abundance, after having successfully displaced outdated public services?
6. **Intergenerational fairness**: What if most countries have adopted legislation and created institutions to represent the interests of future generations?

New capabilities:
7. **Advanced forecasting:** *What if* AI and big data have significantly increased the capacity to predict and model across a broad range of areas of natural and human activity?
8. **Foresight skills abundance:** *What if* What if Google and Khan Academy teamed up to create a high quality gamified foresight course that was taken by over a billion people?
9. **AI government:** *What if* technologies have enabled governments to cut the size of their workforce by 90%?

After the breakout group discussions, participants engaged in a final plenary discussion about ways to build a future-ready strategy for the field of foresight. The discussion emphasized the need for foresight to act both as eyes for governments, spotting obstacles on the horizon, as well as the prefrontal cortex, providing the means of reflection on important questions so that societies are better able to act in times of crisis.

Annex: Resources Shared by Participants

Meissner D., Sokolov A. Foresight and Science, Technology and Innovation Indicators, in: Handbook Of Innovation Indicators And Measurement. Northampton, Cheltenham : Edward Elgar Publishing, 2013. Ch. 16. P. 381-402.

Makarova E. A., Sokolova A. Foresight evaluation: lessons from project management // Foresight. 2014. Vol. 16. No. 1. P. 75-91

Foresight Maturity Model (FMM) : Achieving Best Practices in the Foresight Field, Terry Grimm, Social Technologies and APF USA, (published in World Futures Studies Federation)
https://wfsf.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/GRIM-15-Foresight-Maturity-Model.pdf

The Futures School - the Foresight Profile Scale. It is a conversation piece with senior management and others. A snap shot of how we view foresight now and then to be done some time later after there is engagement with foresight

Good source for African continent issues https://issafrica.org/iss-today