

FUTURES OF FORESIGHT

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EU-SPRI 2023: Research with Impact

Falmer, University of Sussex, 14–16 June 2023



MOTIVATION

Complex, urgent, major challenges with likely fundamental impacts

- climate change, geopolitical uncertainties and severe tensions, migration, emerging disruptive technologies, social conflicts)

⇒ foresight would be even more in demand to underpin decisions by politicians, policy-makers, and business people

(actions of other (non-decision-maker) players and citizens?)

Can current foresight approaches and methods meet these demands (challenges) in the next 10–15 years?

Thought experiment to motivate (instigate and guide) dialogues on ,our' future

(RESEARCH) QUESTIONS

What new factors might reshape

- i) the context, in which foresight is used, and
- ii) foresight itself?

How do foresight practitioners and practices (need to) adapt?

Which drivers and trends influence these change processes?

What new opportunities open up to

- i) improve the current foresight practices and
- ii) increase the chance for wider and more effective use of the insights generated by foresight processes?

TRENDS AND DRIVERS THAT MIGHT HAVE DISRUPTIVE IMPACTS ON THE ENVIRONMENT OF FORESIGHT (‘EXTERNAL’ FACTORS)

Crises (geopolitical tensions, wars, climate change, pandemics, migration, food, energy and materials security, ...)

Pace of transformative/ disruptive changes vs. the time needed for
(prospective) analyses

...

External factors => Demand for, and Supply of, foresight

TRENDS AND DRIVERS THAT MIGHT HAVE (DISRUPTIVE) IMPACTS ON THE 'DEMAND' FOR FORESIGHT

Ideological stances, political regimes

(populist, autocratic, technocratic, deliberative democratic, ...)

Trust in foresight and participatory methods and processes in more general

Types of policy-governance sub-systems

- consensual vs. antagonistic
- systematic vs. sporadic use of policy preparation tools
- process vs. output legitimation

„Generations of foresight” (Luke Georghiou)

from standalone, highly visible to fully embedded, ‚invisible’ foresight processes

Foresight beyond STI

TRENDS AND DRIVERS THAT MIGHT HAVE (DISRUPTIVE) IMPACTS ON THE 'SUPPLY' OF FORESIGHT

New methods

Supply of foresight practitioners

...

EXPLORATION

How would the ways we explore possible futures change?

- more neutral vs. more value-loaded approaches
- more creative vs. more ‚automated‘ approaches and methods
- the ‚mix‘ of various approaches and methods

Which new methods are evolving?

Which new demands necessitate the development and use of new methods?

Ethics and disruptive technologies

ORIENTATION

Why and how clients would redefine their needs while searching for orientation to underpin their decisions and strategic actions?

What type of new clients might emerge with what needs for orientation?

How to support these rethinking – orientation and re-orientation – processes by foresight, in particular by sensemaking?

PARTICIPATION

What stakeholder groups need to be involved for more fruitful foresight processes?

In particular, what new types of stakeholders might need to be ‘represented’:

- ‘eclipsed’, neglected’ citizens (e.g., given the lack of their expertise);
- the nature;
- future (unborn) generations;
- artificial intelligence with ‘agency’?

New approaches and methods to express, include, and reflect upon their aspirations and visions?

New, ‘low-threshold’ participation methods to involve lay persons as active, committed participants? (e.g., gaming)

NEXT STEPS

Interviews with foresight practitioners and (potential) clients to discuss

- the proposed framework
- collect and discuss trends and drivers (factors of change)

A survey?

Short scenarios to describe some possible futures of foresight to spark a fruitful dialogue with foresight practitioners – and preferably with potential clients of foresight as well – to reflect on our current practices and the possible new requirements and opportunities

Hope you are interested in participating in this dialogue!

If yes, please indicate!

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