

Pathways to Institutionalised Foresight Case: Ministry of the Interior

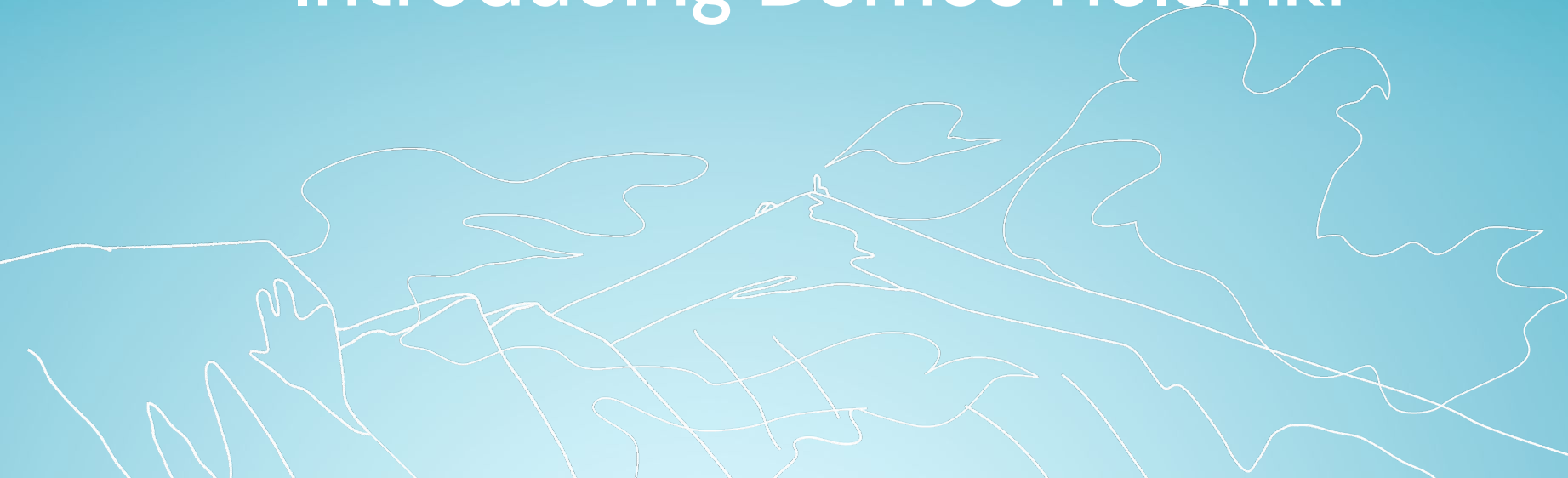
Design For Government

8.3.2023

Demos Helsinki

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Introducing Demos Helsinki



Existing institutions and division of labour have been unsuccessful at countering urgent trends. We need **NEW MODES OF COLLABORATION** that can lead our transformation.

We recognise this goal requires **SIGNIFICANT, URGENT CHANGES** in the society.

Only together can we fight for a fair, sustainable, and joyful next era.

We don't yet know how the future societies will be like – we need to **REIMAGINE AND EXPERIMENT** to find it out.

DEMOS HELSINKI



We are a globally operating, non-profit, independent **think tank**. We were founded in 2005 and are headquartered in Helsinki, Finland.



Our **mission** is to lead societal transformation towards a fair, sustainable and joyful next era.



Our impact model focuses on **four levers of change**: transformative governance, emancipatory economy, regenerative infrastructure, and expanding agency in decarbonization.



Through **our work**, we offer consultancy services, conduct research, and host a global alliance to reimagine and experiment futures, **Untitled**.

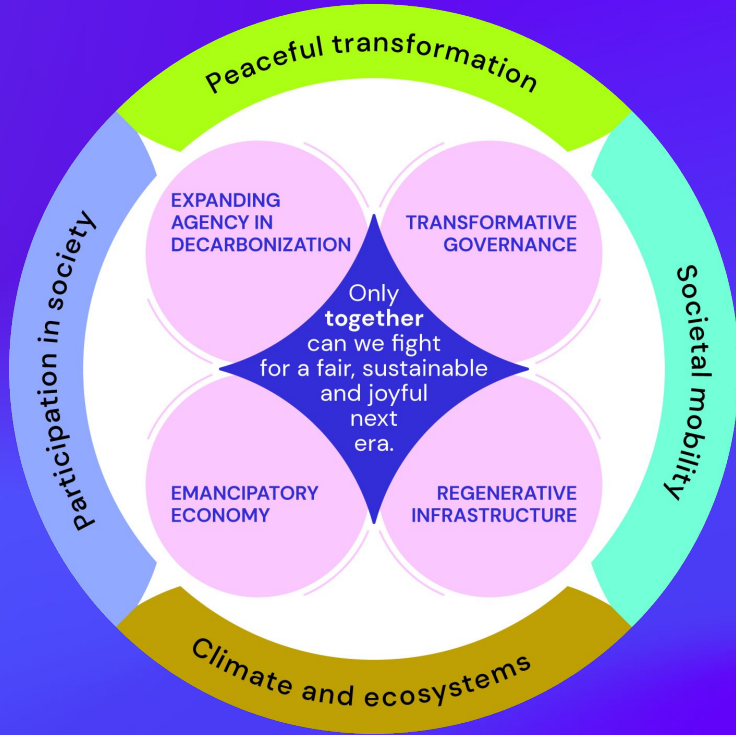


Our team consists of a community of over 50 curious and kind individuals with a vast international network of partners and contributors.



We are **project funded**. Our partners include progressive governments, international organizations, NGOs, corporations, and world-class universities around the globe.

Our Impact Model



WE, DEMOS HELSINKI,
promise that our approach aims to...

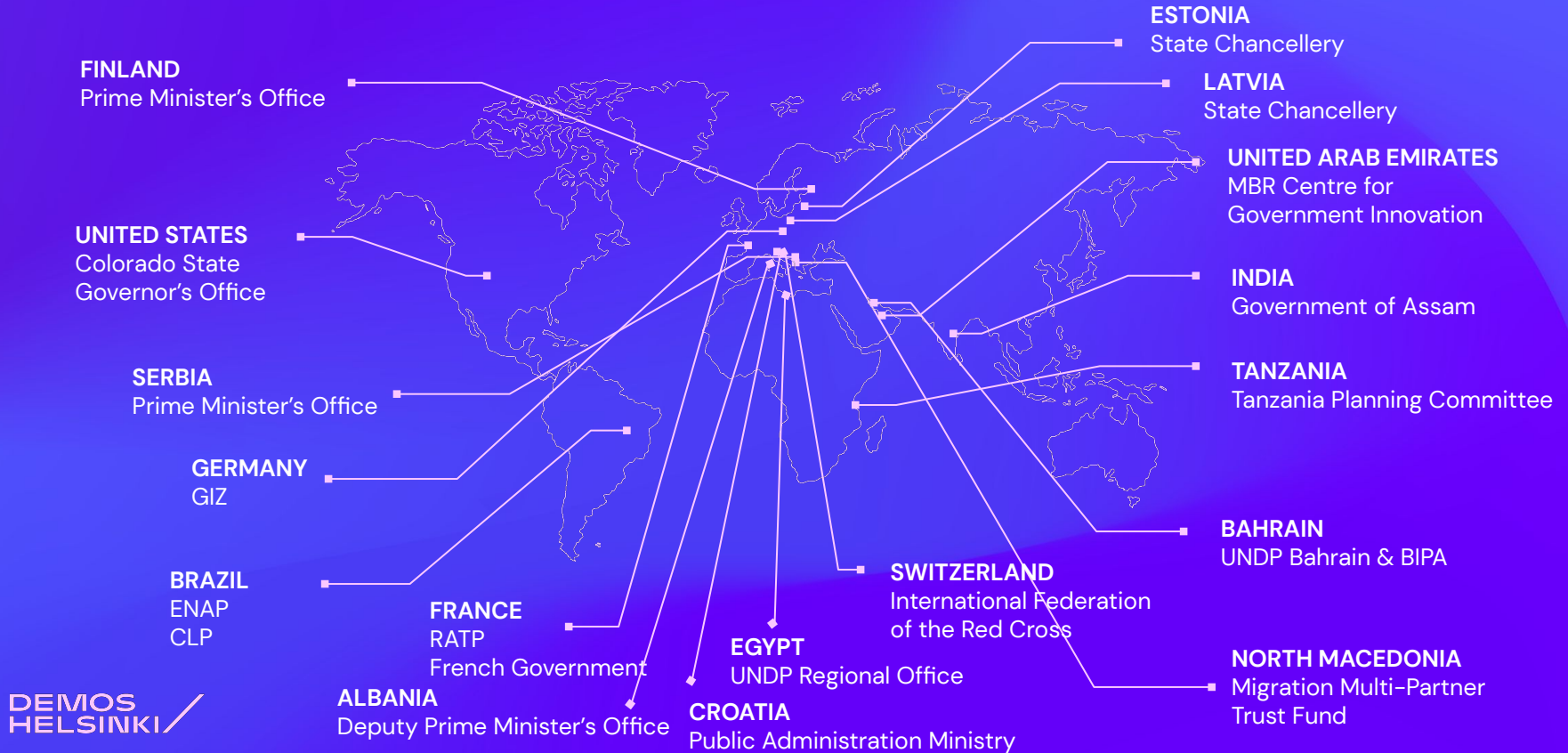


LEVERAGES
for transformation



THE HARD LIMITS
that we refuse to cross

Some of our recent collaborators



But first, the future

We are constantly thinking about the future, either consciously or unconsciously

Futures thinking = "A future-oriented way of thinking, interested in or concerned about future issues and phenomena. Based on the need both to gain clarity about what will happen in the future and to find the basis for choices made today."

The future cannot be **predicted** because...

- **Future doesn't exist**
- The world contains randomness and reality chaotic processes
- New information shapes people's beliefs, attitudes and behaviour
- Technological innovations transform practices



We can anticipate the future because we know

- People's **hopes** and **plans** for the future
- Trends in **demographic change**
- On mutually **agreed investments**
- Central cultural **customs** and **traditions**
- **Cyclical** and **linear** natural processes
- That we have the **capacity for both decision-making and imagination about the future**



We create future
through making the
alternatives visible
= **Foresight**

Without visions of the
future, our action is
diluted to reactions





WAR IN UKRAINE



THE ENERGY CRISIS



COVID-19

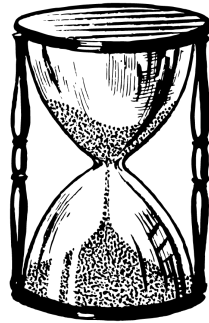


THE ECOLOGICAL CRISES

CRISIS OF ANTICIPATION



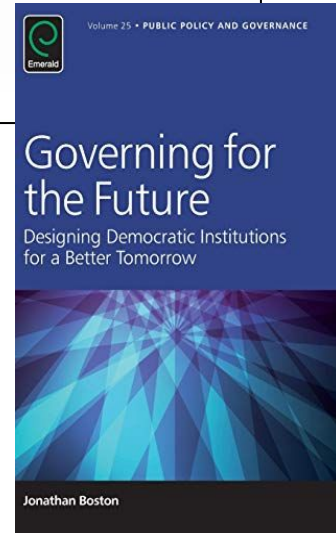
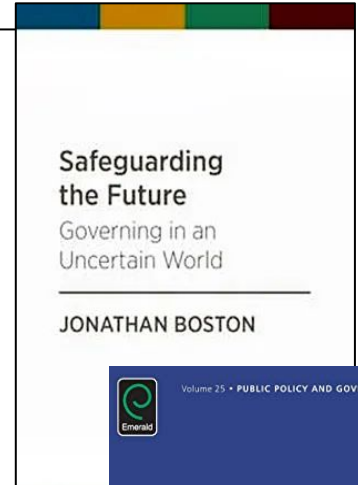
As our societies are facing questions of resilience, we are inclined to resort to familiar and safe seeming action and short-sighted solutions.



Even when governments do attempt to plan far, future orientation is often overridden by short-term pressures.

The “Presentist Bias”

- Anticipatory governance does not come easily: Governments face scarce resources, limited information, competing priorities, difficult policy trade-offs, and short electoral cycles
- The presentist bias in policy-making emphasizes short-term interests at the expense of long-term interests
- Anticipatory governance must be built on realism and humility, and governments must be prepared to be surprised. There are fundamental limits to what humans can foresee or predict.
- We need institutional mechanisms and procedural requirements that bring the long term sharply and repeatedly into short-term political focus, such as regular, dedicated, and independent analyses of intergenerational issues.



Finland – Preparedness in our DNA

- After stock market collapse and World War II, future studies became institutionalized in social sciences and decision making across Europe.
- In Finland, late 20th Century was an era of heightened awareness of uncertainties and vulnerability to crises.
- The volatile post-war political environment and the early 1990s depression had an indelible impact on the DNA of Finnish society.
- The lived experience of risk preparedness and crisis anticipation strengthened the need to more consistently engage with foresight and futures.



Finnish Society for Futures Studies

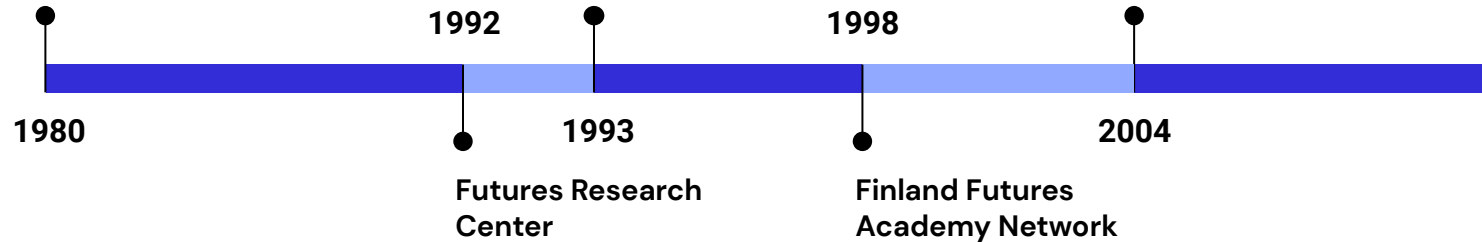
Established based on recommendation of government's Central Board of Research Councils → aim is to develop futures studies and promote its utilization to benefit Finnish society

Parliament establishes Committee for the Future + Government submits first Report on the Future

Report on the Future now produced each electoral term

National Foresight Network

Brings together foresight data producers across the country





FINLAND FUTURES
RESEARCH CENTRE



NATIONAL
FORESIGHT NETWORK

SITRA



PARLIAMENT
OF FINLAND



PRIME MINISTER'S
OFFICE

PANEL DISCUSSION
Futures with IMPACT

COMMITTEE for the FUTURE
GOVERNMENT FORESIGHT GROUP

FINLAND

EDUCATION
FUTURES LITERACY

CONTINUOUS MONITORING
FUTURE IS A MOVING TARGET

UNDERSTANDING UNCERTAINTIES
NETWORKS

CO-CREATION | **PARTICIPATION**
COLLABORATION



ACCOUNTABILITY

VALUE OF INVOLVING CITIZENS AND YOUNG PEOPLE

ENSURING DEMOCRACY

INTERGENERATIONAL FAIRNESS
PLATFORM

RICHNESS OF CONVERSATION

NATIONAL DIALOGUE

EMBEDDING FORESIGHT IN CIVIC ACTIVISM AND PUBLIC POLICIES

PUBLIC DIALOGUE

CONFRONTATIONS WITH PARLIAMENT

INSTITUTIONALISE LOCAL COMMUNITIES WORK/NETWORK



CREATING A CONNECTIVE TISSUE

In today's #SOIF2022 panel discussion @JaanaTapanainen shares success factors behind institutionalising foresight in #Finland –connecting representative democracy, government capability and a Committee for the Future–holding leaders to account #Strategicforesight

Still...

“Even within one of the most advanced governance and strategic foresight systems in the world, there are considerable gaps in anticipatory capacity and the ability to deal with complex problems systematically, with a long-term perspective.”

OECD (2022)



The Impact gap

- Lack of futures literacy. Need for individual and organisational capacity.
- Need to balance central steering with bottom up approaches and the autonomy to explore alternative scenarios.
- Lack of alternatives exploration.
- Fragmented use of anticipatory information.
- Traditional policy steering mechanisms – strategic, budgetary and legal – inhibit anticipatory innovation.
- Continued issues with continuity of reforms across policy cycles.

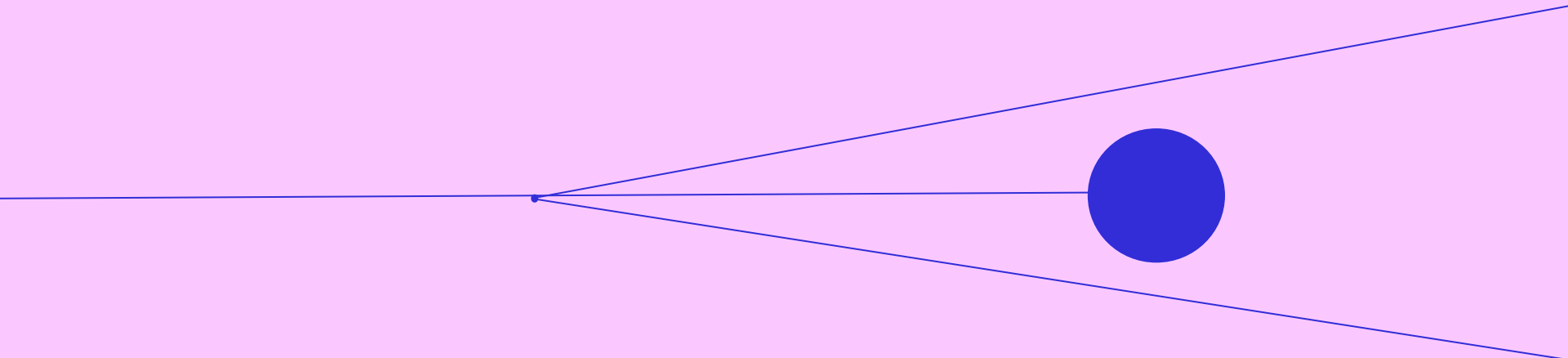


It takes a shift in the institutional mindset.

Building trust in the long term by balancing between short term needs and long term opportunities.

The purpose of institutionalised foresight is to equip governments with the means to balance between short-term needs and **long-term vision**: building resilience and driving transformation.

It requires embedding **foresight** in structures, culture and practices.



Closing the “impact gap”: Our work with the Ministry of the Interior

Background: Developing a foresight model supporting the strategy of the Ministry of the Interior

"Maintaining internal security is one of the most important responsibilities of the state -- our goal is to anticipate, and counter threats to national security. We are prepared for incidents and emergencies.

Joint Strategy for the
Ministry of the Interior's
Administrative Branch



// We all have the right to feel safe — Finland is the safest country in the world

Our work and experiments with the Ministry of Interior

Together with the Ministry we have developed a foresight model **where planning takes place and resources are allocated more wisely through anticipatory institutional arrangements.**

Foresight model

Describes the organisation's or administrative branches plan, its linked division of labour and the processes to conduct and utilise foresight and futures thinking.

Joint Strategy for the
Ministry of the Interior's
Administrative Branch





Ministry of the Interior



In our experience, institutionalisation of a new governance approach requires answering questions on many levels

Which processes it connects to?

How to standardize quality?

Who leads it?

How to codify it and where?

How to communicate about it? How to make it understandable?

What kind of capabilities are needed?

What kind of new tools are needed?

What kind of cultural shift it entails?

What kind of partnerships are needed?

How is it aligned with existing legislative and regulation frameworks?

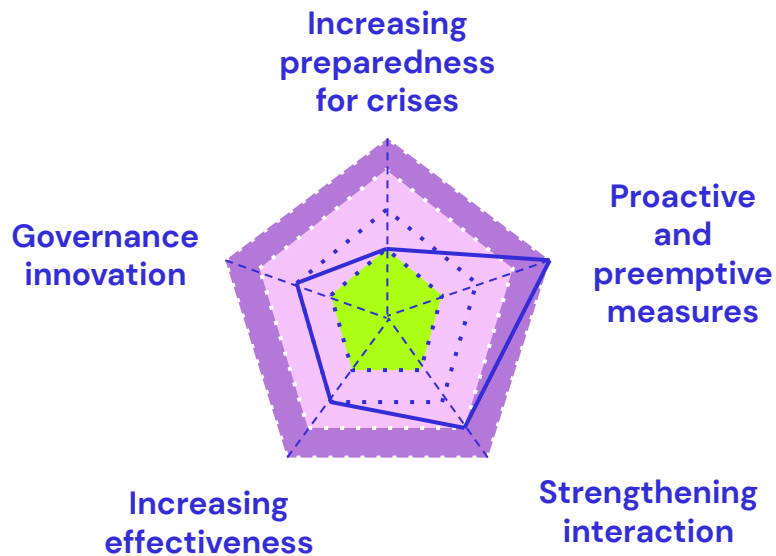
How to lead cultural change?

What is its primary function? Who needs it?

Challenges

1. The foresight work is fragmented, and the current model of foresight use and knowledge production is a collection of detached processes with siloed perspectives.
2. The main logic of anticipatory planning and foresight is reactive **risk-mitigation** rather than **proactive and preemptive**.
3. Attitudes are generally **foresight-friendly**. However, the existing expertise is fragmented and there are no clear goals for anticipatory activities in the agencies.

Overall goal of the model



Design of a strategic foresight model

1

Goal



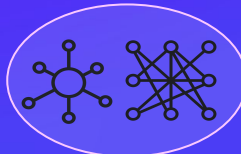
What sort of benefits should strategic foresight bring about?

2

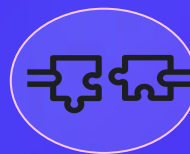
Functions



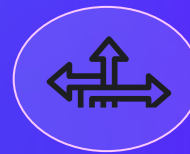
Sources of strategic foresight knowledge and data



Processes for sharing and refining strategic foresight knowledge



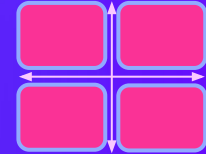
The agent / owner of activities



Link to decision-making

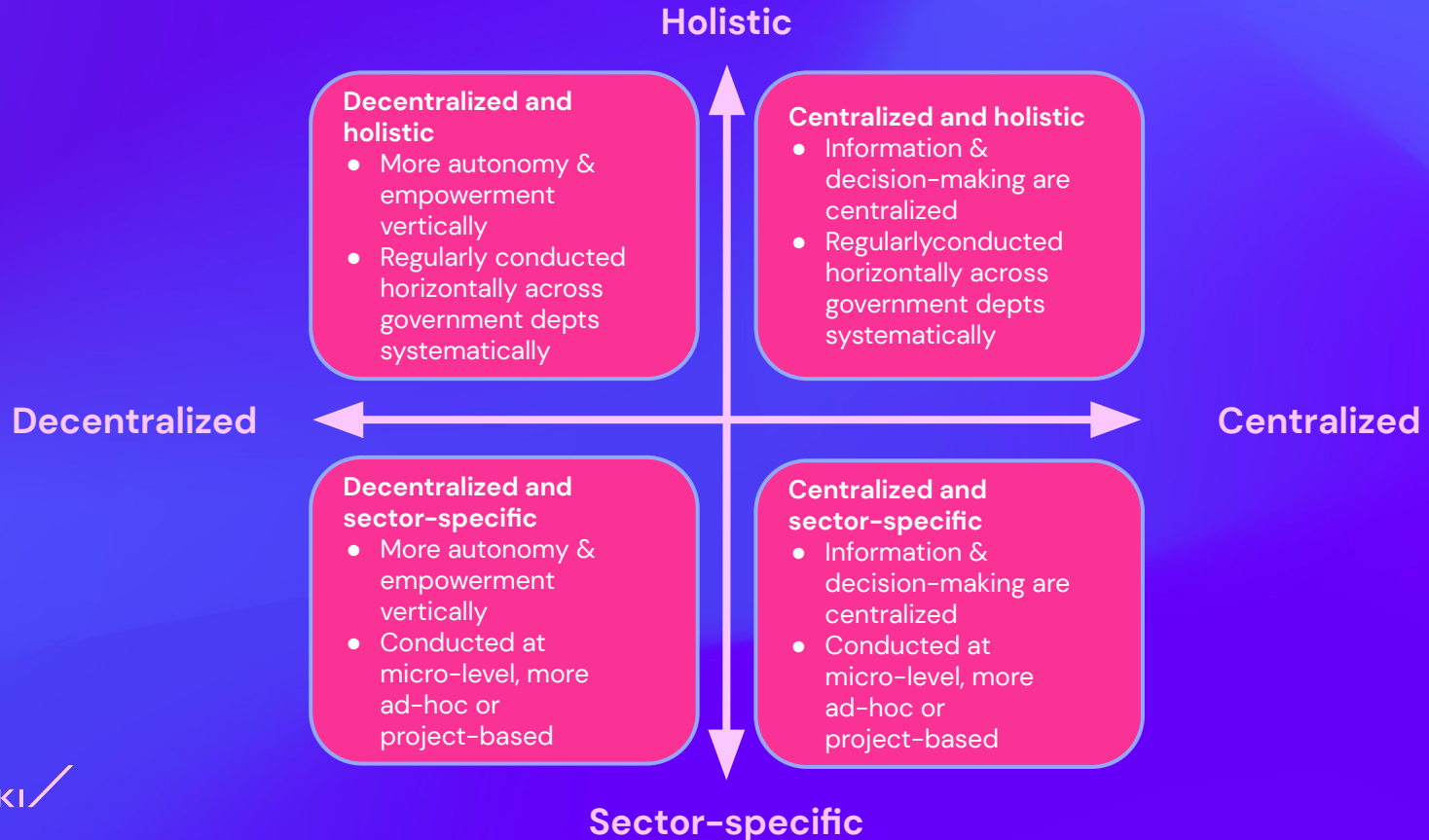
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Institutional structure

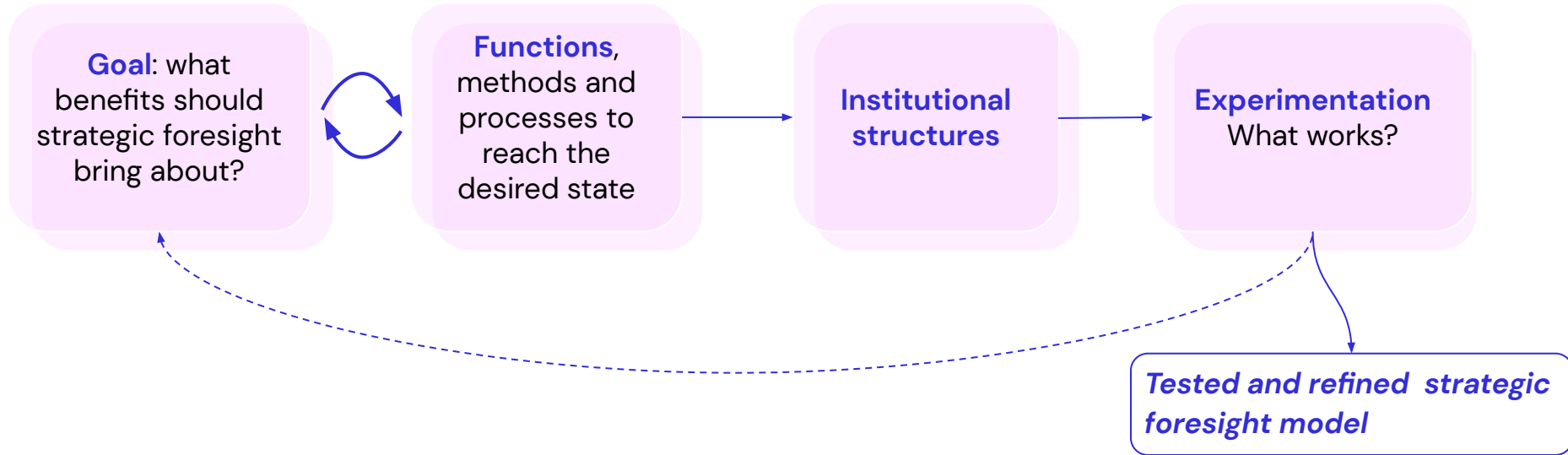


What kind of an institutional arrangement would best serve the goals and functions?

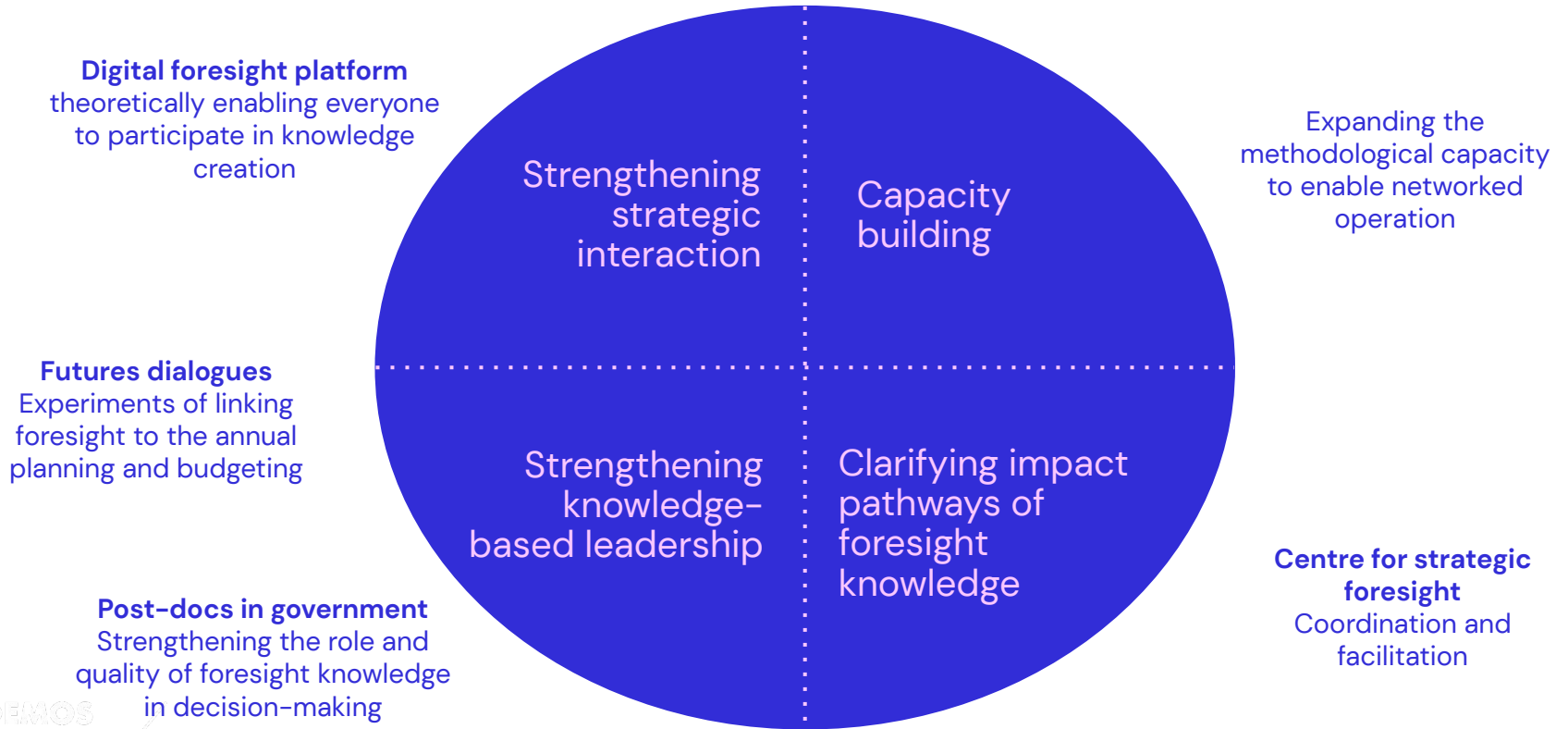
Mapping of foresight models



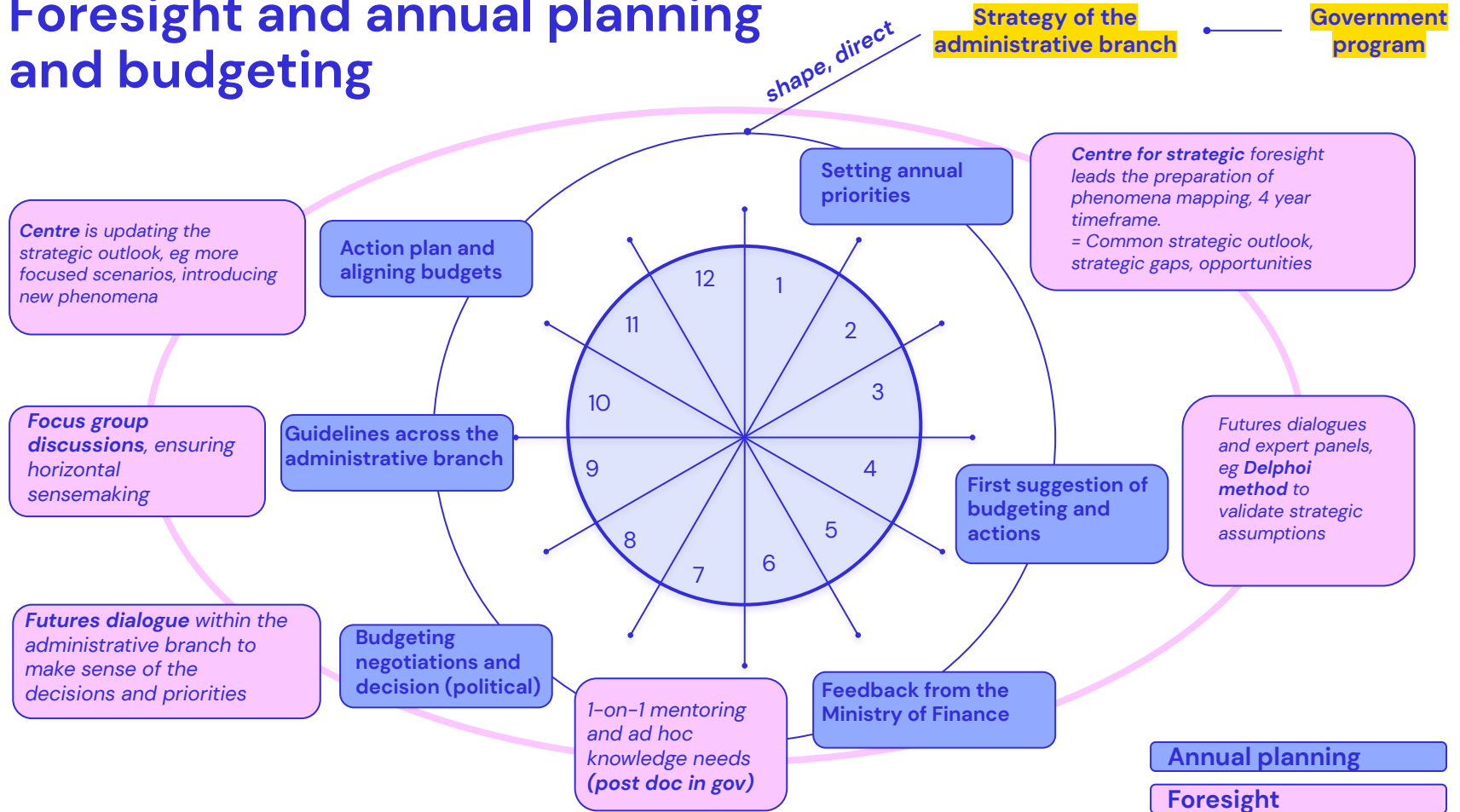
The experimentation-based process towards institutionalised anticipation



Institutionalised Anticipation: Dimensions



Foresight and annual planning and budgeting





**INSTITUTIONALISING ANTICIPATION
ALLOWS GOVERNMENTS TO ADAPT
TO THE FUTURE AND TO CREATE
THE FUTURE**

Pathways to Institutionalised Foresight

1. **Crystallise the goals of foresight:** what your organization gains from foresight and anticipatory methods
2. **Focus on setting up the primary foresight function** which aims to create knowledge to deliver value accordingly with your gov's needs. What kind of knowledge is most useful eg harmonizing policies through a vision, expanding on options through scenarios or monitoring of progress through predictions and models?
3. **Create an operational model** which explicates how foresight is done, by who, and when – and learn what works through experimenting!
4. **Build institutional connections** that seek to connect foresight activities to where it matters: e.g. strategy, steering, policy processes, budget
5. Build up your human capabilities accordingly with needs identified in the process: **co-creation of knowledge AND the use of it!**

Try to do most of this together with public servants from different levels and units of your administration.

Thank you!

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