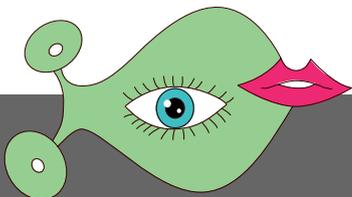


# European Foresight Platform

supporting forward looking decision making  
[www.foresight-platform.eu](http://www.foresight-platform.eu)



EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
European Research Area



SEVENTH FRAMEWORK  
PROGRAMME

Funded under Socio-economic Sciences & Humanities

## THE EUROPEAN FORESIGHT PLATFORM

Over the past years, a growing need for forward-looking expertise and foresight has been recognized in Europe and worldwide, as expressed in the growing number of foresight initiatives in a wide range of domains. At the European policy level, this development has been reinforced by a range of new policy initiatives that require a clearer vision of the future as well as enhanced cooperation between different policy areas and policy levels.

Apart from dedicated foresight initiatives, forward-looking elements have been integrated in several ERA-Nets and Technology Platforms (e.g., in the form of technology roadmaps), and policy areas as diverse as agricultural policy and energy policy have embarked upon initiatives to better coordinate sectoral policy needs and research agendas, both at the national and European level.

With the growing importance of foresight as a policy support mechanism, both in the public and the private sector, the requirements that a European foresight network must fulfill have changed. Apart from providing a unique central access point to foresight knowledge, there is particularly a growing need to link information on other existing networks in this area, integrate Forward Looking Activities (FLA), and enhance the exchange of practices and experiences among practitioners and users.

The European Foresight Platform started its work at the beginning of 2010. It has continued some of the successful activities that were introduced by the former FP6 projects EFMN (European Foresight Monitoring Platform) and ForLearn.



In this tradition, EFP comprises the following activities:

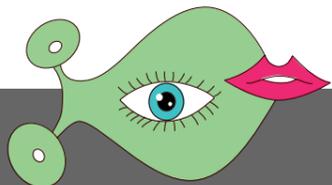
- Raising awareness of foresight and other forward looking activities as strategic policy instruments
- Providing and updating a knowledge sharing platform for practitioners and newcomers
- Profiling of foresight and related activities and experts
- Offering a discussion forum for new activities, approaches, methods, and outcomes

- Providing support to policy makers, foresight practitioners and a wider audience interested in foresight and forward looking studies

The EFP strives to become the central platform for forward-looking activities in Europe and beyond. To this end, the EFP team has launched several initiatives and pursued different approaches to collect and systematically present recent knowledge of FLAs and to raise the discussion on methodologies and future topics facing our society.

This brochure gives a brief introduction to the work so far accomplished as the EFP project reaches half-time. For the remaining period, several EFP Policy Workshops are planned on issues at the forefront of the European debate on innovation, science, and technology. A major event planned for 2012 will complete the four years of successful EFP work.

Other formats such as the website, the foresight guide, or the EFP Briefs are being continuously developed and complemented – not only by the EFP team but especially by the many contributions from the constantly growing FLA community.





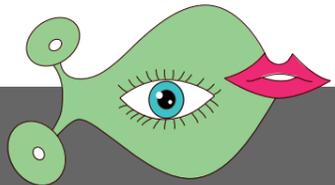
## OUR NETWORK

Apart from providing a unique central access point to foresight knowledge and forward-looking activities, there is particularly a growing need to link information on other existing networks in this area and to enhance the exchange of practices and experiences among practitioners and users. With the prominence FLAs have acquired as a policy support instrument, greater attention needs to be paid to identifying and

documenting the impacts they have had on decision-making. Over the last couple of years, more specialized foresight networks have emerged. Such networks are concerned, for instance, with exchanging experience in methodology, with specific geographic areas, or the coordination of national R&D policies in the context of ERA. EFP wants to connect these networks worldwide to facilitate mutual recognition and

exchange. The EFP, as a network of networks, demonstrates its usefulness for policy support not only by collecting evidence from exercises conducted elsewhere but also by providing input to foresight processes conducted at the European or member states level while placing the emphasis on exploiting the richness of secondary foresight information collected and the breadth of methodological experiences.

The importance of foresight information and methodology is further reinforced by the growing significance attached to the “Grand Challenges” to European research policy, European Society, and beyond. The picture is a snapshot of the current EFP partner network locations around the world. Expanding the network of networks is a goal for the EFP’s near future.



## WEBSITE

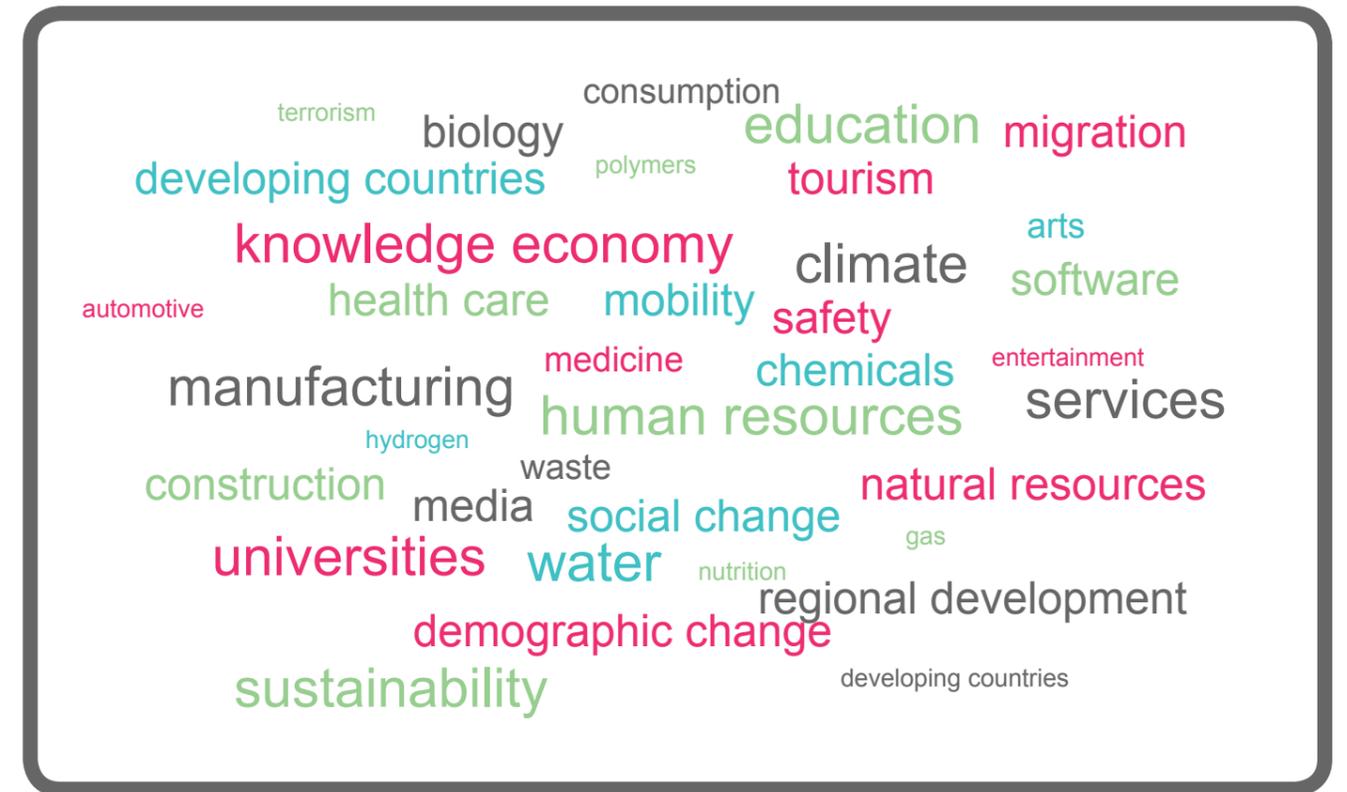
The EFP website has been developed as a knowledge exchange platform to integrate the results of the other work packages in EFP, to make these results available to the public, and to support community building in the foresight community. There are already a number of community sites for foresight and forecast available on the Internet. However, the EFP website is unique in that it has been developed with a network of networks in mind, open to all who are interested in forward-looking activities and offering information about different FLA communities.

An important goal of the EFP website is to inform about other foresight and forecast community sites. In doing research on other community sites, we found a considerable amount of national sites and a global forum with a large membership suggesting the need for an international community site. In addition, it seems that there is a kind of gap between foresight community sites and forecast community sites. As both approaches contribute to FLA, the EFP website will address both communities.

With services like a worldwide top list of FLA community sites and FLA education programs, we offer fast and easy access to valuable information about FLA activities. Results from other EFP work packages, such as the EFP Briefs and the ForLearn foresight manual, are already accessible via our website. The results of the mapping will be accessible on the website in the near future. Various community-building services, such as a calendar on FLA events and a media review of FLA news, are already available.

In the long-term we intend to develop the EFP website into a valuable worldwide platform for FLA activities. Therefore user interaction and user participation, in the discussion forum for instance, is very much

appreciated. Registration is possible right now and will be honored by access to a vast body of helpful information about the future for high-level decision-makers engaged in long-term strategic planning and political agenda setting, for FLA researchers, and for an interested public to see what they might expect from the future. Register now at [www.foresight-platform.eu](http://www.foresight-platform.eu)



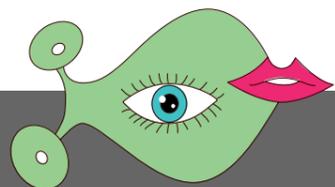
## BRIEFS

Is your foresight exercise not represented as a brief on the EFP website yet? Seize the opportunity and disseminate your interesting forward-looking project to a broad audience of practitioners and newcomers from the European Commission, the European Parliament, national governments, researchers from universities, and other research organizations, NGOs and international audiences, such as the UNIDO or OECD. Readers of EFP Briefs come from all over the world and would like to learn more about your experience. We know from many sources that the briefs are among the most appreciated products of EFP.

Foresight briefs have proven to be an important means of community building and policy information in the context of the forward-looking activities presented online at the EFP website (LINK) and as handouts

at various FLA events. They highlight new and interesting information from recent or ongoing exercises in a concise and standardized four-page format. The briefs provide selected insights into key findings from individual exercises or panels. These key findings can be of a thematic, generic, or methodological nature. They can also be policy briefs that are produced in close cooperation with the policy workshops of WP5.

If you want to share your knowledge with us, please contact Susanne Giesecke [Susanne.Giesecke@ait.ac.at](mailto:Susanne.Giesecke@ait.ac.at). You can find the template for the EFP Briefs on the EFP website. The new filter function on our website, which allows users to search, for instance, by topic or country, makes it easy for the EFP community to find their briefs of interest.



**SMART Futures Jigsaw**  
 Scoping Futures  
 Mobilising Futures  
 Anticipating Futures  
 Recommending Futures  
 Transforming Futures  
 Popper (2011)



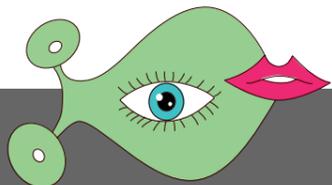
## MAPPING

EFP will provide a web-based mapping environment, which will be the first comprehensive structural library of foresight and forward-looking activities (FLA) in the world. It will help to shape and assess FLA by improving the understanding of these exercises and providing crosscutting analyses of ongoing and completed projects.

By 'mapping,' we mean a process of systematically analyzing a project according to thirty-six elements that make up the five phases of foresight and FLA: scoping, mobilizing, anticipating, recommending and transforming futures. The dimensions are described in the Mapping Jigsaw (see picture) and include criteria for the 'practices' (such as aims or the rationale of a project), 'play-

ers' (such as sponsors or target groups), and 'outcomes' (e.g., scenarios or policy options) of FLA.

These dimensions provide an excellent guide for planning FLA. Moreover, practitioners will be able to search and find, for instance, partners, methodologies, and other useful information. Every project mapped will automatically be presented in a short EFP Bulletin directed at policy makers and focusing on policy recommendations. The EFP team will map 50 FLA projects from around the world and will encourage FLA practitioners to map their own projects. We will invite 'ambassadors' in selected countries to nominate and map FLA and to promote the use of the EFP Mapping Environment in their countries.



## EFP POLICY WORKSHOPS

The EFP project team organizes policy workshops aimed at cross-fertilizing ideas by discussing forward-looking activities and with the goal of providing support to policymakers at the European, national and regional levels. This support aids those involved in policymaking in preparing strategic responses to the major challenges that Europe can expect to face in the coming decades. Three workshops have already been organized, and additional workshops are planned for the near future. The workshops so far have had mixed objectives, and each one has been a source of useful insights for the participants and target groups. The different workshops have also provided valuable input for better tailoring the EFP Briefs available on the EFP website to the needs of policymakers.

### Technology and Services in the Wake of Demographic Change (March 2011, Berlin)

A complementary policy workshop at the national level was held in Germany in cooperation with the Institute for Social Research, Saarbrücken. The goals of the workshop were to identify the future challenges that German society will be confronted with in the light of demographic changes and what this means for research dealing with the issues this involves. The audience was comprised of scientists and practitioners from more than 80 research projects whose major focus is to develop new technologies and services supporting the elderly and other physically impaired people to live independently and safely in their own homes.

### Screening of Urban Foresight Activities With a Time Horizon of 30+ Years (April 2011, Brussels)

A different topic was covered by the third workshop, which was organized to support the Urban Europe Joint Programming Initiative (JPI) in preparing forward-looking activities. In the Urban Europe JPI, forward-looking activities play a major role by providing new insights into urban requirements and developments, developing urban scenarios, and contributing to a long-term research agenda with a time horizon of 2050+. The main aims of the workshop were to map and analyze existing foresight activities to be better able to build activities for Urban Europe upon a solid base of existing findings and perspectives and also to identify topics of strategic interest for the Urban Europe JPI that could be addressed in its foresight program. The workshop proved to be an essential step towards a broad discussion and elaboration of Urban Europe foresight topics.

### Active and Healthy Ageing (January 2011, Brussels)

Although most people wish for a long life, a long life in good health is nothing that can be taken for granted. Even though human life expectancy has dramatically increased over the last century, this new prospect of old age comes with a burden if accompanied by failing health and disease. The European workshop approached the central question of how to increase the average healthy lifespan in the European Union from three main perspectives: (1) scientific and technological, (2) social innovation and acceptability assessment of ideas, and (3) policymaking. A number of interesting policy proposals were generated for better dealing with the challenge of making active and healthy ageing a reality.

## ONLINE FORESIGHT GUIDE

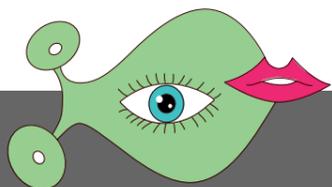
Through an interconnected Online Foresight Guide including case studies, the EFP aims to support action-oriented and participative ways of addressing future challenges. It provides clear and easy-to-access information on how FLA and foresight help us think, define, and shape the future and draws on illustrative real-case examples.

The aim of the guide is to become a reference point for all stakeholders involved in FLAs. The Online Foresight Guide is an updated and streamlined version of the FOR-LEARN guide (<http://forlearn.jrc.ec.europa.eu/> 15.7.2011) developed from 2005 to 2008 by JRC-IPTS with the support of the European Commission.



### The guide helps three different types of users

1. **Policy makers:** The guide helps policymakers navigate through the different phases of an FLA, showing what their role is, what benefits they may derive, and what potential impacts they can have.
2. **Practitioners:** The guide allows practitioners to take stock of current FLAs and identifies topics at the frontier of the debate. They are invited to contribute to the debate through forum and open-for-editing pages.
3. **Beginners:** The guide provides also a training tool, devised in three modules, which explains what foresight is, why it is important, and how it is done.



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[www.foresight-platform.eu](http://www.foresight-platform.eu)

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