

# Five European Possible Futures 2040 – PostCovid-19 Scenarios for the European Commission

**A Foresight on Demand project  
After the new normal:  
Scenarios for Europe in the post Covid-19 world**



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# AGENDA

1. Why the long-term future?
2. Process
3. 4 + 1 scenarios
4. Enough for preparedness?

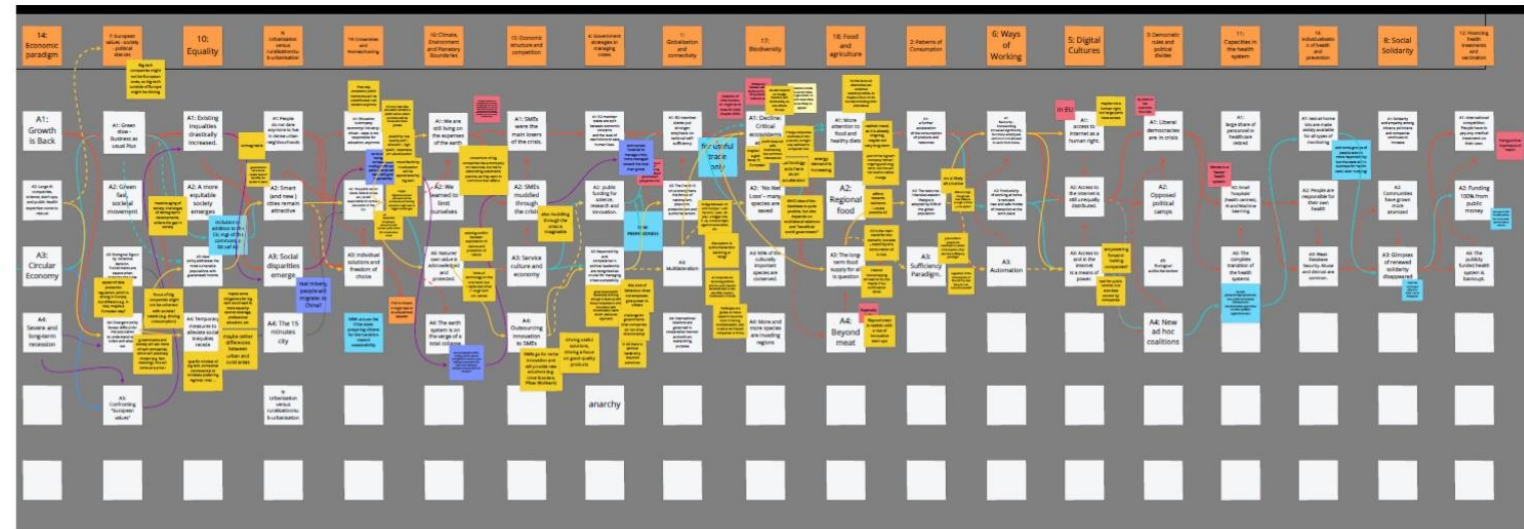
# 1. Why long-term future?

1. stuck into re-action mode in 2020
2. time to get into an action mode
3. we cannot flee
4. R&I is going on
5. other crisis are in front of our door – longer terms
6. How to cope with the shortcomings of the crisis?
7. How to get out of the crisis and beyond?
8. What kind of future do we want? Or to be aware - prepared...

## 2. The Process

1. Horizon Scanning: 2 background papers
2. Scenario Sprint with 3 workshops

Factor	1. Globalisation and connectivity	2. Patterns of Consumption	3. Democratic rule and political divides	4. Environmental strategies in emerging cities	5. Digital Culture	6. Ways of Working	7. European values - society - political choices	8. Social Solidarity	9. Urbanisation versus ruralisation/counter-urbanisation	10. Equality	11. Cooperation in the health system	12. Planning health treatment and vaccination	13. Environmental health and protection	14. Economic paradigm	15. Economic structure and competition	16. Climate, Environment and Planetary Boundaries	17. Biodiversity	18. Food and agriculture	19. Urbanisation and Remodelling
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3. Delphi survey
4. Sense-making

### 3. 4+1 Scenarios

The long  
recession

Back to  
'normal'

Big tech  
saves  
Europe

Circular  
trials and  
real-life  
errors

Green  
Utopia -  
New Hope

# The long recession

- Severe and long-term economic decline
- Regime changes around the world
- “My country first - me first”
- EU Member States have left or had their membership revoked
- Social disparities emerged, unsettled and disenfranchised population
- Disinformation undermined trust in governing institutions
- There is a lost generation and a stagnant SME ecology
- Paralyzed policy to address climate change



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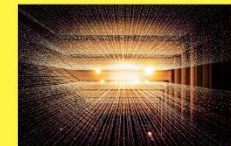
# Back to 'Normal'

- Citizens want their old 'normal' back
- Nationalism
- increasing disparities between member states of the EU
- consensus a scarcity
- continued growth paradigm
- wealth and consumption are highly valued
- increasingly unequal society
- tied economic recovery to industrial production
- worsening 'offshored' emissions
- increase of food insecurity



# Big tech saves Europe

- Large companies, science spin-offs, and start-ups rescue the European economy
- the companies are from all sectors: digital, AI, chemistry, bio...
- European businesses have entered the global market with innovative solutions
- Market-driven forces and libertarian views dominate
- Little attention to planetary boundaries
- New consumption patterns emerged
- Inequalities and widened the social divide
- High-quality vocational services provided by companies compensate for the lack of public education provision





# Circular trials and real-life errors

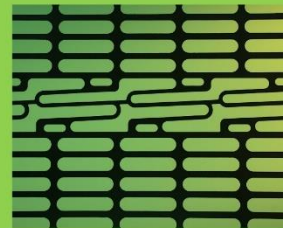
- circular economy
- a further acceleration of the consumption of products and resources
- Europe is on a 'green path'
- values changed, 'European values' of 2020 forgotten
- emphasis on national self-sufficiency
- New and safe modes of interaction at the work place
- some critical ecosystems have already been lost
- Access to the internet is a means of power and still unequally distributed
- bubbles create communities



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# Green Utopia - New Hope

- in Europe, and globally we are better prepared for the next crisis
- citizens and companies are supporting green values in a strong societal movement
- economic growth is no longer the prevailing paradigm
- Europe in 2040 has a strong SME landscape
- food has become an expensive trade good - 'real prices'
- quality more important than quantity - healthy diets
- new digital age with digital learning and agile working
- people have taken on more responsibility for their own health



# 3. The Follow-up Process – sense-making

Sense-making Workshop  
to discuss

a) Delphi results in the light  
of three scenarios

a) Discussion of future R&I  
policy in the EU



## 4. Enough for preparedness?

- scenarios between extrapolation, hopping into the future and some interesting ideas – create some awareness, but not surprises
- many facets of them ,new normal' = ,old normal' (Back to normal-scenario)
- when the Scenario Sprint was performed: anxieties dominated – that is reflected in the scenarios
- for real Circular Economy: much time needed, 2040 too early? (hints from the Delphi survey)
- positive is not positive in all aspects and not for everyone (Green Utopia – New Hope scenario)
- But: exercise interesting – integrating different divisions of European Commission and part of the European Commission Agenda (reference scenarios)