

eFORESEE

ARI - The Agricultural Research Institute in Cyprus

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An Introduction to ‘Foresight’ and to the Goals and Objectives of the eForesee Project

eFORESEE

- **The Generic ‘Foresight’ Toolbox**
- **A Working Definition of Foresight**
- **A More Modern Perspective**
- **The ‘eForesee’ Project**
- **The International Conferences**
- **The eFORESEE team, website and mailing lists**

The Generic Foresight Toolbox

Traditional foresight activities and arguably the most visible parts of many contemporary foresight activities, consist of one or more of the following actions:



An important element of foresight is the role of stakeholders.

A Working Definition of Foresight

Paraphrasing the FOREN Manual – ‘A Practical Guide to Regional Foresight’,
Foresight is:

... the systematic, participative gathering
of anticipatory intelligence
for vision building
to inform present day decision making, and to mobilize relevant actors.

A KM (Knowledge Management) definition proposed by eFORESEE is :
‘... the management of conversations about the future’.

It is a way to:

- Orient,
- Mobilise, &
- Synchronise

The efforts of independent actors on complex issues of common concern.

A Modern Perspective

The world is complex, fast changing, and subject to unpredictable external forces. Foresight should therefore be **a continuous process** not an occasional event, so that the ‘vision’ can be updated continuously changing as contingent factors change.

Foresight should take place at all levels of organisation – not just at a national level, but at the level of the region, the municipality, the industrial sector or cluster, the enterprise. We therefore speak of **foresight embedding** and the creation of a foresight culture.

A **Knowledge Management** (KM) perspective provides an understanding of the inherent complexity of ‘foresight’, it allows us to understand foresight as means for developing **organisational intelligence** at higher levels of socio-economic organisation.

The eForesee Project

eForesee is a project on two levels

- Collaborative research on ‘foresight’ by policy makers in Malta, Cyprus and Estonia involving 3 international conferences and a shareable web-resource,
- A series of 6 pilot projects undertaken separately and autonomously by the partners, in which they will learn about foresight by ‘doing and adapting’.

The goals of the collaborative research are as follows:

- Investigate the embedding of a ‘**Foresight Culture**’,
- Investigate the potential of foresight as a tool in the **Accession Process**,
- Contribute to research on foresight by understanding it from the point of view of **Knowledge Management**,
- Investigate the application of a **Quality** approach for continuous improvement,
- Establish foresight ‘communities of practice’ in the **ERA**, the **EU+15** and the **Euro-Mediterranean**.

The Pilot Projects

The themes for the Pilots Projects continue to evolve. This reflects a desire to 'seize the moment' in terms of what is timely, useful, and likely to receive broadly based support in the various stakeholder communities.

- Estonia:** **Boosting the Planning Capacity of IT Sector Companies** – Estonia carried out a cluster analysis of its IT sector companies. It discovered that the planning horizon of companies in this sector is very short - from as little as 2 months to 2 years max. The idea is to use a foresight exercise specifically to boost the capacity of the sector to prepare for the future. One element to be addressed is the dependence of certain players on outside contractors. How will this foresight action factor in such external variables?
- Malta:** **Biotechnology Applied in the Marine Sciences** – in this case foresight is being used as a tool to mobilize a sector with great potential but arguably unable to act due to fragmentation, dispersion of effort and lack of critical mass.
- Cyprus:** **Agricultural Policy Reform** – In the context of EU Accession, Cyprus is currently negotiating a number of issues related to the CAP. The tentative goal is to use the 'foresight' tool to improve aspects of these negotiations.

The International Conferences

Estonia in September 2002: ‘Foresight’ in the Development of RTD Policy for the Applied Biosciences.

Cyprus in October 2002: Knowledge Management Issues for ‘Foresight’ and Related Policy Tools.

Malta in 2003: ‘Foresight’ as a Policy Development Tool for EU Accession States.

The titles and themes continue to evolve, but to receive news about these events please subscribe to the mailing list via the eForesee web-site.

Our intention is to use these events to develop **Foresight Communities of Practice** in the ERA and EU+ and to provide (admittedly limited) support enabling experts from Accession countries to attend.

The Team, The Website, The Mailing Lists

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