

Committee for the Future

Government report: Strategic foresight report from the Commission 2020 “Strategic Foresight – Charting the course towards a more resilient Europe”

For the Grand Committee

INTRODUCTION

Initiation

Government report: Strategic foresight report from the Commission 2020 “Strategic Foresight – Charting the course towards a more resilient Europe” (E 130/2020 vp): The item has been submitted to the Committee for the Future for possible measures.

Experts

The Committee consulted:

- Jaana Tapanainen-Thiess, Chief Senior Specialist, Prime Minister’s Office
- Jyrki Katainen, President, Finnish Innovation Fund Sitra
- Katri Vataja, Director, Finnish Innovation Fund Sitra
- Sirkka Heinonen, Professor emerita, Finland Futures Research Centre, University of Turku
- Hannu Kemppainen, Executive Director, Business Finland Oy
- Risto Linturi, Futurist, R. Linturi Oyj
- Elina Hiltunen, Futurist, What’s Next Consulting Oy
- Atte Ojanen, Research Coordinator, Demos Helsinki
- Eero Paloheimo, Dr.-Ing., Ph.D.

The Committee received a written statement from:

- Annina Antinranta, Principal Designer, Futures Finland Ry & Futurice Oy
- Ilkka Halava, Futurist, Futures Finland Ry & Prime Frontier Oy
- Minna Koskelo, Futures Designer, Futures Finland Ry & Yksitoista Helsinki Oy
- Sanna Malinen, Manager, Corporate Foresight and Strategy, VTT Technical Research Centre of Finland Ltd

GOVERNMENT REPORT/FOLLOW-UP

Proposal

On 9 September 2020, the Commission published a Communication on the Strategic Foresight Report for 2020 (Strategic Foresight – Charting the course towards a more resilient Europe). The report

Statement of the Committee TuVL 3/2021 vp

explores the strengthening of the EU's resilience in four interrelated dimensions: 1) social and economic, 2) geopolitical, 3) green and 4) digital.

The report analyses the resilience of the EU in the context of relevant megatrends. The four dimensions were analysed from the perspective of capabilities, vulnerabilities and opportunities. Resilience refers to the ability to withstand challenges and undergo transitions in a sustainable, fair and democratic manner.

The Strategic Foresight Report contributes to the basis of EU policy and legislative work. According to the Commission, strategic foresight promotes inclusive and forward-looking governance and helps improve policy design, develop sustainable strategies for the future and ensure that short-term actions are consistent with long-term objectives.

Foresight mainstreaming in the EU includes systematic foresight activities on key policy initiatives, publication of annual strategic foresight reports, analysis of new trends and challenges in support of policymaking and decision-making, and development of foresight capabilities in the administrations of the EU and Member States. The Commission aims to develop foresight cooperation with other EU institutions, in particular in the context of the EU Strategy and Policy Analysis System (ESPAS). The Commission will also reach out to international partners and launch an inclusive EU-wide foresight network, drawing on Member States' public foresight capabilities, think tanks, academia and civil society.

Government position

Finland shares the European Commission's view that short-term initiatives must be grounded in a longer-term perspective and supports the aim of guiding the strategic choices of the European Union through strategic foresight.

The position of Finland is that the Commission's strategic foresight supports Member States' own efforts to integrate strategic foresight into decision-making processes. For Finland, this means, among other things, making greater use of the Government Report on the Future, issued once during each electoral period, in the strategic preparation by the Government. The strengthening of foresight and research information in the Government's strategic decision-making is also mentioned as an objective in the Government Programme.

Finland considers the EU Strategic Foresight Report's emphasis on resilience to be well-founded. The Union must improve its capability to deal with crises with a wider impact on society in a sustainable, fair and democratic manner. According to the position of Finland, the framework presented in the Foresight Report for reducing vulnerabilities and improving capacities from a social and economic, geopolitical, green and digital perspective provides a comprehensive overview of the Union's key policy packages and resilience-building measures.

Finland also supports the Commission's objectives to strengthen cooperation between Member States and institutions in strategic foresight. Finland has a nearly 30-year tradition of foresight in

Statement of the Committee TuVL 3/2021 vp

the form of the Government Report on the Future, issued to the Parliament on the long-term choices of society during each electoral period. In its position, Finland states that it will continue the systematic foresight carried out in cooperation within the Government and the use of this forward-looking work in national strategic preparation.

THE COMMITTEE'S ARGUMENTS

The Committee for the Future consulted experts on the strengths and shortcomings of the Commission's Strategic Foresight Report and about Finland's national foresight, the role of the Committee for the Future in national foresight and foresight assisted by artificial intelligence (AI).

In its statement, the Committee for the Future focuses on inclusion and power to define futures, futures literacy, future resilience, strategic foresight methods and tools, artificial intelligence as a method of foresight and the role of the Committee for the Future in national and international foresight and in Parliament.

Inclusion and power to define futures

Experts who addressed the Committee for the Future on the EU Strategic Foresight Report agreed that the development of the EU's strategic foresight is important and that Finland has much to contribute.

Since the Government's report in autumn 2020 (E 130/2020 vp), the Commission has already started work on the next Foresight Report on strategic autonomy. In autumn 2020, Maroš Šefčovič, Vice-President in charge of the Commission's foresight, announced the establishment of an EU-wide foresight network. At the moment, Finland is represented in the foresight network's meetings of ministers for the future by Tytti Tuppurainen, Minister for European Affairs and Ownership Steering, and in preparatory meetings by Jaana Tapanainen-Thiess, Secretary-General of the Report on the Future from the Prime Minister's Office. The civil servant members of the foresight network convened for the first time in April 2021 to prepare a ministerial meeting in May, at which Finland presented its own foresight model.

Finland's strategic foresight model has the same fundamental objective as the EU's strategic foresight: to ensure that short-term decisions are based on longer-term perspectives. Joint and continuous foresight by the ministries and the Government Report on the Future feed foresight information into key decision-making processes, such as the Government Programme, the Government's mid-term policy review and the identification of priorities and themes for the Government's analysis, assessment and research activities (VN TEAS).

While the Commission's Foresight Report suggests the development of a set of shared reference foresight scenarios for Member States, the first part of the Government Report on the Future currently in preparation in Finland will create scenarios of "Finland in the Next Generations" to serve as an overall picture for the ministries. The Government Report on the Future will also be accompanied by a continuous cross-administrative (inter-ministerial) dialogue on social, technological, economic, environmental and political-legislative themes affecting Finland's future.

Statement of the Committee TuVL 3/2021 vp

The Government and Parliament Reports on the Future also enable the Government and Parliament to have a systematic and long-term dialogue on the challenges and opportunities for Finland's future over several terms of government.

According to the experts consulted, Finland's national foresight system can be regarded as a good example of what the EU Commission is currently working towards. Our country has long been committed to foresight, both in academia and in the public sector, and increasingly also in business. Finland's particular strength is its versatile foresight ecosystem, which covers a wide range of topics and involves not only the ministries and Parliament, but also government agencies, regional councils, municipalities, associations, citizens and businesses. According to experts, inclusion supports the quality of foresight and the implementation of results, and cooperation is motivated by the facts that the work of Finland's national foresight network (KEV) is coordinated (by the Government Foresight Group and the Prime Minister's Office) and that the forums and processes of the network are integrated into decision-making processes (continuous foresight of the ministries and the Government and Parliament Reports on the Future).

Demand for strategic foresight in Europe and the world is also in Finland's interest. Common European foresight may also strengthen Finland's image as a forward-looking country at the leading edge.

The experts pointed out that, although the development of the EU's strategic foresight opens up opportunities for Finland to exert influence, the integration of national foresight systems into the EU's strategic foresight is also an important challenge for the future. The Commission's Foresight Report presents as a concrete structure an EU-wide foresight network drawing on Member States' public foresight capabilities, think tanks, academia and civil society. According to the experts, inclusion increases trust but, moving forward, it must be explained in more detail and in a more transparent way what the foresight work on which political decisions would be based would in practice involve. According to the experts, the information generated by the process should also be made openly available in the Member States to support the planning of organisations in different branches of government. At the same time, equality between Member States must be ensured. Future operating environments and related threats and opportunities differ significantly between Member States, and there are also differences in preparedness for threats.

The Committee for the Future agrees with the experts consulted that the development of the EU's strategic foresight is a worthwhile and even historic milestone.

The Committee for the Future notes that Finland has long had the kind of foresight system that the EU is aiming for. Therefore, the EU should make use of Finland's experience and expertise in foresight. Similarly, Finland has a duty to actively participate in the development of the EU's foresight.

The Committee for the Future considers that, while developing the EU's strategic foresight is a great opportunity for the EU and all its Member States, there is also a great risk related to the power to define futures. It is essential that the Member States' foresight systems are closely linked to the processes in which the EU's strategic foresight is carried out. Otherwise, in the future, Finland may also receive its visions, scenarios, images of futures, wild cards, black swans and its entire forward-looking policy from the outside, bypassing its own foresight system.

Statement of the Committee TuVL 3/2021 vp

The Committee for the Future also agrees with the experts' view that the information produced by the foresight process must be openly available in the Member States.

The Committee for the Future stresses the need for the EU to put significant effort in ensuring that the national foresight communities are built into a truly European and many-voiced foresight ecosystem. The Committee for the Future proposes that the EU use Horizon funding to combine research expertise from different countries with large-scale joint foresight projects.

Similarly, in the view of the Committee for the Future, Finland must actively work to foster the commitment of the actors of the Finnish foresight community to the development of the EU's strategic foresight. The Committee for the Future proposes that this should be supported, among other things, by Strategic Research Council and VN TEAS funding.

In addition to supporting the interaction of the Finnish foresight ecosystem with EU foresight processes, Finland must also continue to develop its own foresight system. In recent years, two studies have been carried out in Finland on the state of the national foresight system: National Foresight in Finland 2020 (VN TEAS project) commissioned by the Government and 'Tulevaisuustiedon lähteillä' ('At the source of futures knowledge') commissioned by the Committee for the Future (TuVJ 6/2020). The basic message of these studies is that the challenge of foresight is not generating foresight knowledge, but rather using the foresight knowledge generated. International and also national foresight reports have been able to quite comprehensively anticipate the risks faced by Finland and the world in recent years, such as pandemics, major data breaches and social unrest. If anything, the problem has been that the foresight knowledge has not been found and exploited. Due to the special nature and concepts of foresight knowledge, the solution to the situation requires, according to the experts, increased foresight capability and futures literacy at different levels of government and other organisations, along with systematic gathering of foresight knowledge produced by different parties.

In 2020, the Committee for the Future commissioned a study on how events such as pandemics and data breaches had been anticipated in national and international foresight reports and what other risks had been highlighted in these reports (TuVJ 6/2020). According to the study, the problem turned out to be that the foresight knowledge produced in various places does not reach parties that might benefit from it or lead to action. Decision-making systems are unable to leverage the foresight knowledge generated.

The Committee for the Future proposes that there should be a body to produce an annual summary of the knowledge produced by the global foresight community and make it publicly available. The EU would be well suited to this task, and the summary would then serve all Member States. However, the summary can also be produced nationally, if necessary, at least once during each electoral period to support government negotiations and the Government Report on the Future.

Futures literacy

Several experts considered it important that the EU Foresight Report sees foresight as an inclusive structure enhancing collective intelligence rather than as the work of a profession with silo mentality.

Statement of the Committee TuVL 3/2021 vp

Strategic foresight must first and foremost strengthen the capacity to create long-term goals and change. Foresight must therefore be understood not only as generation of diverse futures knowledge, but also as strengthening of futures thinking and related capabilities. It is not only a prerequisite for the quality of images of futures and future debate, but also for democracy, the people's experience of participation and well-being, that each person has the ability and opportunity to outline alternative futures, to make his or her voice heard regarding the desirability of those alternatives and to act to make desirable futures reality. Futures literacy must therefore be developed at all levels, from schools to administrations and decision-makers.

Good examples of improving the futures literacy of decision-makers and civil society in Finland include the future dialogues organised by the Timeout Foundation and the Prime Minister's Office as part of the preparation of the Government Report on the Future and the emergency dialogues organised by the Dialogue Academy, the Timeout Foundation and the Ministry of Finance to gauge citizens' experiences during the state of emergency in Finland. The purpose of the dialogues is not to reach consensus, but rather to increase understanding of different perspectives of the future between different actors. This helps them challenge their thinking and identify potential surprises and tensions.

Finland can play an important role as a trendsetter in including broader civil dialogue in foresight work.

While preparing its statement, the Committee also participated in a workshop facilitated by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in April 2021 on anticipatory innovation governance and supporting systemic change. The OECD is currently developing and modelling the Model of Finland. The workshop also highlighted the need for futures literacy as an equally natural part of the normal daily lives of people and companies as sustainable development. It is a skill that should penetrate society as a whole. The OECD workshop also discussed future assessment, where regulatory impact assessment would include ex ante and ex post evaluation of how well available foresight knowledge was taken into account in bill drafting.

The Committee for the Future notes that real strategic foresight is not so much a question of better justification of the desired futures and political decisions from the top down, but rather increased futures wisdom and capacity for change in a many-voiced and constantly changing operating environment. It is from this point of view that strategic foresight is one of the foundations of the resilience called for by the EU Commission. It should be a civic skill that penetrates society: futures literacy. Foresight capability must therefore be strengthened in administrations, other institutions and organisations and among citizens.

The Committee for the Future proposes that futures education be included in curricula throughout the EU. In addition, futures literacy training should be offered systematically to administrations and decision-makers across the EU. The OECD, which has long developed competences and methodologies related to futures literacy, can play an important role in this.

Statement of the Committee TuVL 3/2021 vp

The Committee for the Future also proposes the development of future assessment in such a way that regulatory impact assessment would also analyse how well the relevant foresight knowledge has been used in the impact assessment.

Futures resilience

The EU Foresight Report focuses on resilience, which is examined through four dimensions (social and economic, geopolitical, green and digital). The report defines resilience as the ability to withstand and cope with challenges and to undergo transitions in a sustainable, fair, and democratic manner. In the Finnish version of the report, resilience has been translated as 'selviytymiskyky' ('survivability'). The experts consulted by the Committee for the Future pointed out that this is a narrow interpretation: resilience requires not only the ability to withstand and recover from crisis, but also proactive adaptation to changes in the operating environment and the ability to innovate in relation to structures, practices, thinking patterns and even values and ideals. According to one expert, the ability to survive, prepare and recover, complemented by renewal capacity, can be called futures resilience. It means not only being able to cope with challenges, but to rise from them renewed. According to the experts, strategic foresight should support new ventures and the building of different, inspiring futures.

The Commission has also included in its strategic foresight the question of how to build a sustainable and modern digital world. According to the experts, the framing of the question is not new; ecological modernisation of the information society, for example, has been studied in Finland since the 1990s. According to the experts, the selected themes appear to be political decisions and not new themes raised by foresight. It would therefore be useful to bring forward and specify what the foresight work aims to achieve in relation to the strategic objectives that have already been decided politically. According to the experts, future forces of change and alternative developments should also be examined outside of politically pre-selected parameters. Foresight cannot only focus on probable and desired futures, but must also look at radically different futures and risks.

In the opinion of the Committee for the Future, resilience must be understood in the EU's strategic foresight and in Finland's national foresight as futures resilience, that is, renewing resilience. The renewal of society is supported by aiming not only to return to normal after disruptions, but also to entrench the new good practices that emerged during the disruption and to identify new opportunities.

Strategic foresight methods and tools

According to one foresight expert consulted by the Committee for the Future, the Commission has traditionally used impact assessment analysis, which plays an important role in shaping policy options. Such impact assessments are often based on econometric models in line with the tradition of quantitative forecasting. However, these models do not work very well with increased uncertainty, in a world of unexpected developments, complexity, chains of influence and crises. The transition from quantitative forecasting to foresight that charts possible worlds and even wild cards is a challenging quantum leap for policy preparation.

Statement of the Committee TuVL 3/2021 vp

As regards foresight methodologies, the Commission proposes to develop a set of reference scenarios which will 1) provide a reference for debating shared or alternative visions of preferred futures amongst leaders; 2) help ensure coherence across policies; and 3) serve as a common forward-looking framework for stress-testing policy proposals or launching ex ante impact assessments. The experts commenting on the reference framework supported the creation of scenarios to strengthen the common ground, while reminding that genuine inclusiveness and consideration of different perspectives are essential in this development work. In decision-making, foresight also helps increase understanding of which issues there is disagreement and strives to identify and distinguish facts related to developments from opinions. According to the experts, it is good to recognise that futures knowledge (and scenarios) always involves value judgements.

The Commission's communication also proposes the introduction of resilience dashboards with indicators for monitoring and assessing progress. The dashboards are intended to highlight vulnerabilities and resilience capacities in the EU and its Member States for more detailed analysis. The list of dashboard indicators is dynamic and will be selected in a participatory process involving Member States and key stakeholders.

According to the experts, the dashboards will serve to identify vulnerabilities at an approximate level, provided that the selected indicators and related data are validated for comparability between Member States. Therefore, the dashboards can serve as a basis for actual foresight, indicating and quantifying issues that require a long-term strategy. The challenge may be that the dashboards could lead to some weak signals being overlooked if they are not initially included in the table. It can also be asked whether the dashboards support debate on alternative futures, renewal and long-term policy objectives or whether they strengthen the old ways of thinking. The experts called for other foresight methods to support the dashboards.

In the opinion of the Committee for the Future, the ultimate lesson of Finland's national foresight is how to combine futures research, stakeholder involvement, strategic foresight and forward-looking policy.

In Finland, the first part of the Government Report on the Future prepared regularly during each electoral period is a joint ministerial foresight process, which utilises stakeholders of Finland's national foresight network and dialogues with different civil society groups. This process results in the ministries' joint snapshot and images of the futures of Finland's internal and external operating environment without political guidance. In the second stage of preparing the Government Report on the Future, the Government selects the themes it considers the most important and uses them as a basis for more strategic foresight in the second part of the report. At the same time, the Government Report on the Future and the continuous and joint foresight of the ministries become rooted in government decision-making. With the help of the Government and Parliament Reports on the Future, the ministries, Government and Parliament conduct a continuous and long-term dialogue on the future of Finland across parliamentary terms, because the resolutions laid down by the Parliament in its Future Report also bind the following governments.

Statement of the Committee TuVL 3/2021 vp

The Committee for the Future agrees with the experts that it is important that foresight does not focus solely on the desired futures and political guidance. Foresight must also provide information on weak signals and unpleasant alternatives. The greatest benefit of foresight is not always the information gained, but rather the many-voiced social debate behind the foresight, which builds political coherence and trust, increases commitment to joint action and reduces resistance to change. Participatory foresight also highlights tensions and confrontations in society in a democratic and constructive way.

The EU Foresight Report and its objectives jump directly to the second phase of the Finnish model, politically chosen strategic foresight. It is particularly important that the EU's future Foresight Reports are based on the social foresight processes carried out in Member States.

Artificial intelligence

The Committee for the Future also consulted experts on artificial intelligence when drawing up its statement. The Committee for the Future has been systematically following the development of radical, world-changing technologies since 2013 (TuVJ 2/2013 and TuVJ 6/2013). The latest report on radical technologies is from 2018 (TuVJ 1/2018, in English TuVJ 10/2018). During this electoral period, particular attention has been paid to blockchain technologies (TuVJ 1/2019), gene technology (TuVJ 2/2020) and artificial intelligence (under preparation). Reports have also examined the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on technological progress and the role of technology in addressing the pandemic (TuVJ 4/2020) and, most recently, the most important radical technologies for each of the objectives of the 2030 Agenda (TuVJ 5/2020). These forecasts show artificial intelligence (AI) as one of the most significant long-term drivers of change in many areas of economy and society.

The hearing was also underpinned by the threat raised in the Committee's statement on foreign and security policy (VNS 4/2020 vp) that interactive AI applications, such as GPT-3, would be able to hold millions of conversations at the same time, for example on social media. These developments make it increasingly difficult for people to recognise when they are speaking to a machine. At the same time, however, artificial intelligence creates health, safety, wellbeing and competitiveness in many fields of activity and sectors of society. According to studies commissioned by the Committee for the Future, artificial intelligence is also one of the most important technologies for the joint development of the green and digital dimensions of the resilience that is at the core of the EU Foresight Report.

Artificial intelligence also offers new opportunities for strategic foresight. According to an expert consulted by the Committee for the Future, most strategic foresight methods are qualitative. This is primarily due to the length of the time horizon under consideration: the longer the time horizon, the more challenging it is to identify factors already influencing the future at present or to mathematically model their interactions. A secondary cause may be the educational and work history of the people doing strategic foresight. Cross-disciplinary expertise in foresight is only just gaining ground with data and AI experts.

Statement of the Committee TuVL 3/2021 vp

According to one expert, quantitative methods and mathematical approaches, which bring repeatability, transparency and verifiability to foresight conclusions, can still be used to support foresight. Of these methods, artificial intelligence covers in particular algorithms that use machine learning, which are both taught by and utilised in the processing of big data.

The experts consulted by the Committee for the Future identified at least five interlinked areas of application for foresight assisted by artificial intelligence (AI), which can be linked to the development of the indicators and reference scenarios used as a basis for foresight.

The first area of application relates to an expert's observation that the Commission's report does not mention the importance of early or weak signals in foresight, but instead confines itself to analysing clear megatrends. Existing AI foresight applications are rooted specifically in the mechanical identification of weak signals and trends, for example in patent databases. Artificial intelligence can be developed to detect weak signals on all topics where comprehensive and cross-cutting data are available. From the point of view of resilience, this could mean, for instance, materials from which signals predicting disruptions could be identified. The same methods could also observe the beginnings of new growth.

The second possibility of foresight assisted by AI relates to automatic sorting, grouping and classification of observations. For example, it is possible to automatically detect what kind of signals form a cohesive whole that is as different as possible from other groups. This may support further work in the foresight process, where qualitative methodologies are used to assess developments following signals or groups of signals.

Thirdly, an expert pointed out how a mutual review of even just a few forces of change easily leads to a very large number of possible futures, which it makes sense to condense into scenarios contributing to further analysis. Here, too, mathematical methods, such as quantified expert data related to different images of futures, can be used as input.

As a fourth option, artificial intelligence can be used to monitor factors defined as sign posts measuring progress in a specific scenario.

Fifthly, it was mentioned that the contexts automatically sought by artificial intelligence, which surprise the human mind, can also be used as a stimulus to create the most diverse images of futures. Artificial intelligence does not understand the content of the text it produces and can therefore combine surprising things. The human mind, on the other hand, may be prone to a kind of path dependence and bubbling. Artificial intelligence, which produces atypical contexts, can therefore help find solutions 'outside the box'.

While preparing its statement, the Committee for the Future tested the use of GPT-3 artificial intelligence and 'consulted' it at its meeting. The experiment showed that different artificial intelligence profiles can argue in different ways like people with different attitudes in real-time text-based conversation. After the hearing, the committee issued a press release stating that the Committee for the Future may have been the first parliamentary committee in the world to consult artificial intelligence in a hearing.

Statement of the Committee TuVL 3/2021 vp

That is, not to consult a person about artificial intelligence, but to consult artificial intelligence about sustainable development.

The Committee for the Future has previously taken a position on the future of artificial intelligence and the ethics review of technology in its statements on the EU's Artificial Intelligence for Europe initiative (E 38/2018 vp — TuVL 5/2018) and the Digital Europe Programme (U 69/2018 vp — TuVL 7/2018 vp). The Committee for the Future also commissioned a study on social tensions and confrontations related to new technologies (TuVJ 4/2018). The Committee's experiment with artificial intelligence highlighted the clear need to continue developing the artificial intelligence dialogue, both with regard to the diverse potential of artificial intelligence as an augmenting intelligence and the threats posed by the ever-expanding use of artificial intelligence.

In the opinion of the Committee for the Future, Finland has strong artificial intelligence (AI) expertise that enables the country to be at the forefront and contribute to the development of European data-based foresight methods.

The Committee for the Future supports the suggestion made in the expert hearings that the development of artificial intelligence (AI) algorithms should benefit from European cooperation. The proposal is also in line with the European Strategy for Data, which aims at common data spaces and new data-driven services.

The Committee for the Future proposes that the EU launch a broad and multidisciplinary programme to support the EU's strategic foresight and Member States' foresight systems by developing methodologies using artificial intelligence.

The role of the Committee for the Future

Some expert statements raised the question of the role of the Committee for the Future in Finland's national foresight system and in the EU's strategic foresight. The Committee for the Future is responsible for two special parliamentary matters: the Parliament Future Report and the Parliament Agenda 2030 report. The resolutions laid down by the Parliament in these reports are a nationally important and internationally unique structure of forward-looking policy. In addition, the committee's task is to identify phenomena and matters that significantly affect Finland's future early enough that they can be influenced by politics. The Committee for the Future also acts as an internal think tank of the Parliament and develops the Parliament's own activities by piloting new operating models and technologies. It is also the task of the Committee to keep up to date with what is being said in the national and international foresight community.

The experts discussed whether the role of the Committee for the Future in Parliament should be similar to that of the Constitutional Law Committee, so that the position of the Committee for the Future should be asked on issues that have a significant impact on the future of Finland. The experts also asked whether the futures information produced by the Committee for the Future is being sufficiently taken into account in other committees and in the Government. Some expert statements also proposed the establishment of a permanent multidisciplinary panel on the future to support the work of the Committee for the Future.

Statement of the Committee TuVL 3/2021 vp

The Committee for the Future will be happy to contribute, among other things, to the development of EU and OECD foresight, and is organising the first global meeting of committees for the future in 2022. The aim is to create a permanent structure for cooperation between the committees for the future of the various parliaments in the world.

The Committee for the Future also notes that, in Parliament, the role of the Committee for the Future can best be improved in responding to social disruption, such as a pandemic. When the resources of the legislative committees are tied up in the necessary and urgent matters of day-to-day politics, the Committee for the Future will be able to look past the disruption and seek perspectives on futures resilience. For example, in the case of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Committee for the Future was one of the first actors in Finland to produce a systematic view on the recovery of Finnish society after the pandemic (TuVJ 1/2020, TuVL 1/2020, TuVL 2/2020, TuVL 5/2020, TuVJ 4/2020 and TuVJ 6/2020) as of May 2020. The Committee for the Future does this work without being asked, but with a more formal role and assignment the results of the work would be of greater benefit to all.

STATEMENT OF THE COMMITTEE

The Committee for the Future states

that it agrees with the Government's position on the matter, stressing the above points.

Helsinki, 5 May 2021

The following took part in decisive deliberation by the Committee:

Chairperson Joakim Strand (Swedish People's Party)

Vice Chairperson Pirkka-Pekka Petelius (Greens)

Members:

Marko Asell (Social Democratic Party)

Hannakaisa Heikkinen (Centre Party)

Mari Holopainen (Greens)

Katja Hänninen (Left Alliance)

Ville Kaunisto (National Coalition Party)

Pasi Kivisaari (Centre Party)

Ari Koponen (Finns Party)

Antti Lindtman (Social Democratic Party)

Merja Mäkisalo-Ropponen (Social Democratic Party)

Arto Pirttilahti (Centre Party)

Kristiina Salonen (Social Democratic Party)

Sari Tanus (Christian Democrats)

Sinuhe Wallinheimo (National Coalition Party)

Jussi Wihonen (Finns Party)

Alternate member:

Ville Vähämäki (Finns Party)

Statement of the Committee TuVL 3/2021 vp

The secretaries to the Committee were:

Olli Hietanen, Committee Counsel

Maria Höyssä, Senior Advisor