

Sesión 5. El estado del arte en materia de comisiones de futuro parlamentarias en el mundo. Experiencias exitosas.

Presentación 2, Freya Windle-Wherle. Parlamento Europeo, Dirección General de Asociaciones, Estrategia y comunicación de la democracia parlamentaria

Silvia Hernández: I would like to introduce Freya.

Freya is currently part of the General Directorate of Associations, Strategies, and Communication of Parliamentary Democracy in the European Union

and this morning she will share with us the experience of the European Parliament.

Welcome, thank you very much, and again it is a pleasure to have you here today.

Freya: It is a pleasure for me as well, thank you all for coming.

Thank you very much, for having outlined these points.

And first of all, good morning to everybody, and happy to be here,

and thank you for inviting me to this highly relevant and very timely point

about original confidence of parliamentary committees of the future and strategic foresight.

Before I start my intervention, I would also like to say that I find it key that you manage to invite the political side of our institution,

which is a member of Parliament, he outlined the way they work and his insights,

and that you are doing the same thing for the administration, so a representative of the civil service

that works on the foresight processes similar as Juliette just outlined,

and implements processes into structural policy making.

So, can I, oh I don't need to pick my presentation, sorry.

This is the magic, the technique of magic I love, otherwise I don't know what I can do about it.

There, so quick, I'll give a quick overview, I will give you an insight of where the new strategic foresight process comes from,

how it was structured, then we will look at the most notable lessons in the youth's foresight journey,

to then move on to the most notable challenges, at least in my view, that we face,

and if we still have time, the timekeeper is next to me here, Silvia.

I also came up with some ideas that might be helpful for you when structuring a culture of foresight,

but we can also leave that for later.

So, let's go to the first point, where does the youth's strategic foresight process come from?

And, so this is my slide, we started with the origins, with a set of crises that if Europe and the world,

their magnitude and long-term consequences could not be foreseen.

The supposed abilities of the years 2000 failed, and which were these crises?

We have there the financial crisis of 2008, the Great Recession that followed over years on the European Union with it,

and then the migration crisis leading to the Arab Spring that brought millions of refugees to our borders and in our countries.

So, after lots of short-term fire fighting, our members were very sure of one thing,

and that one thing was that the Union needed a new tool to read the future,

to anticipate and prepare responses.

The idea of anti-piscisoid governments emerged then.

So, ESPAS was born as a pilot project.

ESPAS is a scientific foresight process in the European institution.

It was born as a pilot project in 2010, securing a budget line within the EU budget.

It was extended in 2012, delivering the first global trends report.

After having been established by our members, so the legislature is right here in the Chilean Senate,

and our president here today, the parliament gave its green light in 2014 for a second phase of this project, and that put into place a parliament inter-institutional system that identifies and analyzes long-term trends.

So, how is our process structured?

Let's look at the balance and synergies.

Before that, I'll give a peek at the past, because we must value the inter-institutional framework,

in particular the new role of our parliament that was obtained in 2008 with the last inter-governmental treaty of Lisbon.

Here we received more important roles.

The one that is electing the European Commission's president, the executor's president, following the European elections,

the process we find ourselves in right now.

Secondly, becoming a co-legislator.

So, the legislative proposals and the budget of the Union have now to pass through our parliament,

and not only as before, the member states at national level.

In short, ESPAS, our strategic foresight process, was born as an institution, in an institution that was developing its prerogatives, including that of the agenda setting.

Soon after, the initiators of ESPAS realized that foresight would be more effective when working together,

something genetic also outlined just now.

So, ESPAS became an inter-institutional system.

A system that linked the foresight units of the EU, the European Parliament and others.

So, the council, where the EU leaders sit, setting the political agenda, and the European Commission,

so the executor's body, and later some others, such as the external action service,

so the correspondence to a ministry of foreign affairs, the external geopolitical view,

the committee of the regions to link the territorial factors of regions, provinces, municipalities,

and the economic and social committee.

This links the economic actors who are involved.

And now two more milestones.

2019, the Commission's first vice president of foresight was nominated.

So, we're taking it to the highest level possible in the executive.

Then, a network of ministers to the future was established on a nation-state level.

And lastly, another milestone for our institution.

In 2023, we nominated a vice president for foresight.

And the very latest news, just out of the press, I had to add this,

is that our members now are calling for a real committee of the future in the European Parliament,

now in July 2024.

So, let's see what happens.

This is one of the unknown unknowns.

We're waiting for the replies.

And with that, I'll move on.

I'll finish this section about how we came to the strategic foresight process

and move to the key question for this panel, which are the most notable lessons.

Which are them in our foresight journey?

I would like to highlight four capabilities here.

Because in the new institutions, we learned that a better foresight of policymaking can help us anticipate the future and compare better than the future we want, rather than making the past being driven by crises and unknown events.

So, after having set up the ESPAS process amongst now 1.9 new bodies,  
so we've grown, we've expanded,  
we can say that these four capabilities you see on the screen are useful to ensure  
that foresight can achieve its purpose.  
So, one, that's expertise and tools.  
So, a wide set of tools, methods, expert knowledge, science, academia  
should be involved and around the policy area.  
We need to create a foresight-friendly organizational structure.  
So, building a structural and functional capability within your organization  
helps to embed and integrate foresight in management processes.  
So, for example, I'll take us.  
We have foresight units, policy foresight,  
double-trend analysis, strategic foresight within the research service.  
The research service has a director-general,  
and the director-general is directly linked to the secretary-general,  
so the head of the administration.  
Then, identify and create a network of senior leaders, foresight champions.  
You just mentioned that, Sylvia, here we have foresight champions  
and other supporters within and beyond your organization to strengthen your efforts.  
And do make sure that these people really are committed to foresight,  
to promote it correctly.  
And we have Roberto here, because I think he is one of these examples.  
And lastly, effective communication.  
Ensure that your results are communicated as widely as possible  
with different stakeholders.  
And then, process and the value of foresight needs to be translated  
into the right vocabulary that matches your institution  
and into your vision and your strategy.  
Processes are linked to strategies.  
One last slide on this topic, three dimensions.  
My experience says that these can help you as soon as you have a foresight-friendly  
environment.  
Look at the time frame.  
Which time frame is relevant to your decision?  
What is the purpose of the exercise?  
Do you want to know resilience?  
Do you want to check strategies?  
Stress-test legislation?  
Look for alternatives.  
And then, bring together different perspectives.  
Go beyond your common ideas and expert views.  
Be participative.  
Be inclusive.  
And lastly, once you have made your decision,  
act in an aligned fashion.  
This equally should apply to your policy areas.  
Challenges.  
It all sounds so easy, but it's a longer process.  
Jeanette showed several years.  
We are much younger here.  
We are barely more than a decade.  
We are seriously working on this.  
These are the challenges, I would say, in my experience, that kept us busy.  
For one, it is building a solid network.  
And one that persists over the different policy cycles and legislative terms.

Make it to stay.  
Don't have it only for five years in one cycle.  
And then everything is cleared out when new people come.  
Another, for us, challenge is that we need to have a solid network.  
Another, for us, in the legislative key point is the Cassandra effect.  
We have found that the more negative the scenarios are, the less people want to deal with them.  
The challenge is to warn without overwhelming.  
And to give concrete ideas of action.  
So warning alone creates a sense of confidence.  
There is a psychology behind scenarios, I would.  
But they cannot all be dystopian.  
People run away from them.  
Success.  
A key question.  
People always ask.  
Does more side work?  
Is it successful?  
So how do you tell?  
And how can you tell?  
For us, we have established in the parliament impact assessment within the research service.  
So that is one thing.  
We stress test the different things at the beginning of the policy cycle.  
The new regulation has created a regulatory exclusionary board.  
This regulatory exclusionary board works and supports better regulation.  
It represents it should be a chance to protect individuals and the integration of policymaking.  
That's very abstract.  
So I hope you can more or less read it.  
I'm going to add this image of the cycle of the exclusionary board.  
And you see there, before implementation, you have an evaluation and fitness check.  
This sounds supportive, but it is supportive.  
To fit this check, we have impact assessment that is linked.  
And within the cycle, you see the arrows going up and down.  
It's also the foresight process.  
Before they go to the legislation proposal, the approval process, the legislation implementation.  
One thing, this is a slide I added.  
I know the time is short, but I thought following yesterday's discussion and Laka's mentioning of the budget.  
And not a Gidou, but Guido (Girardi).  
Sorry if I don't know how to get your name right.  
We also talked about the budget yesterday and how important it is.  
So that's why I wanted to add this question.  
So we have a multi-annual budget simply because foresight means a transition chain.  
In the European Union, we have a thanks to these interlinked steps that are outlined now.  
So every five years, ESPAS, our foresight process, provides a new global trends report.  
For example, in April 2019, we looked at 2030.  
This is the latest one.  
We published now in April, where we looked at 2040.  
So we're going a bit more than 20 years ahead.  
On the basis of these reports and considering the outcome of the late European elections, the heads of state and government will now adopt the so-called strategic agenda for the next five year legislature.

Our parliament plays a major role since it has to express its support via its vote in July, both on the strategic agenda and the designated president of the commission. This guarantees the democratic process. Thereafter, we start discussing about a multi-annual budget, so the so-called multi-annual financial framework. This MFF brings our strategic thinking to concrete policy choices and budgetary allocations, not for five, but for the next seven years. Finally, based on the agreed budgetary angles, investment plans of national, regional, and local level are implemented. And this is the way a work of foresight is also translated into concrete actions for local preparedness. Just to give you some numbers, in this transmission chain, the regional cohesion policy of the European Union plays a major role. It represents one third, so 30% of the Union's budget, and that is around 50 billion euro every year and constantly over the seven year period. This stability of funding allows our regional authorities, cities, and cities to plan and invest in the long term. So bottom-up, top-down, but yes, also bottom-up, our Union can thus move towards long-term fixed objectives and be prepared to address the risks and uncertainties detected by foresight assistance. One example, just for you to look at a longer and speak about it a lot, one example with a clear timeline, and a concrete example on a global trend and its policy action, climate change. So here you can see, April 2019, in the previous report, we mentioned the maker trend. Then it was implemented in the strategic agenda, so the heads of states proposed the strategic agenda, where the target was climate neutrality by 2050. That was linked to the multi-annual framework that runs until 2027, where 30% of the EU budget is dedicated to climate action. The regional and local plans have a mission, so that is climate neutral cities by 2040. And now in April of 2024, the EU has proposed the trends, takes it on again, not only climate change, but talking about the acceleration of the trend, and that we need added adaption and resilience. Three last things, quick, these are still the challenges because I am six, maximizing synthesis and condensing information. Being an inter-institutional process with nine bodies participating means a great source of information, not everything can be taken for granted. Building in-house capacity, Jeanette spoke about it, I will delve into this in a further, it's the same thing. Short-termism, a legislated topic, focused on the political mandates of politics, and we certainly often experience that solving the immediate comes before thinking ahead and changing the long-term. And so now up to the key person here, a moderator. And up to you, do you have time, are you interested in some ideas that came to mind? Of course, go on. This was on the airplane, I was sitting there, you know, 14-hour flight, something I'm getting more like the films they have, so here's some ideas. So what about creating a LAC, so Latin American and Caribbean network of political leaders who advocate the policymaking that considers the long-term

and complex issues, so the idea of foresight champions.  
Another one, I call developmental parliamentary platforms for exchange, fellowships, we have come to find that with the relations of the national parliaments and the union, fellowships are very helpful.  
Training, create a foresight network with regions and cities, why? Because your continent is huge, and your regions are very diverse economically, geographically, so have a network there to have the territorial level represented.  
One thing we learned when we started in 2015 with the global trends unit is it's no use trying to reinvent the wheel, commission X amount of studies and draft everything yourself.  
You cannot do it and it doesn't make sense.  
Use, especially when you're starting, use what's already there, use the publications on global trends, global risks, etc. by the UN, the EU, the National Intelligence Council is very good, the OECD, etc.  
The private sector also has interesting stuff to inform your foresight efforts. Facilitating support in the international network of parliamentarians with commitment to developing strategic foresight in national contents.  
We created, this is the next point, a handbook for the Ukraine a year or one and a half years ago on how to develop proposals for establishing a foresight.  
Also useful, collect case studies for capacity building, institutional strength for different countries, but realize always that foresight will be applied generally in your region.  
Thank you very much.  
Thank you very much.  
Thank you for this last slide.

#### ## Comments and questions regarding Freya's presentation

Senador Chahuan: parliamentarians who would be interested in the need to be able to generate the summit of future challenges commissions. Today we have a summit that has already had 12 global activities. The first in Finlandia, the second in Montevideo. We aspired to the third in Chile, the Chilean parliament. And it has been part of an effort to take advantage of the installed capacity of the different parliaments. In addition, from Chile's futures commissions, we have been talking about informing the futures commissions throughout the country. There is a very important effort and that really the effort is initial and then acquires a dynamic of its own.  
We have been talking about this in Argentina, but it could not be done due to a change of the executive exercise of the president. President Macri was compromised, but when we saw the change of government, we did not see the effort due to the decision of the country headed by the Senate.  
And the same goes for the decision made by Uruguay. Uruguay immediately agreed with Rodrigo Goñi, and this is an important effort. We are trying to do the same with Bolivia, we are working with the PNUD, and three representatives from the Bolivian Senate came to see an experience of the future challenges commission.  
Also in Parlatino, there was an effort that was initiated from the future challenges commission of Chile. There was another effort that was carried out with Brazilian parliamentaries, and

for different countries, to create critical mass.

So, how do we form the network? It is clear, because here what we have to take advantage of is the experiences of other countries. Another topic that we are going to talk about, and that we could not do, is the relationship with continuity, ensuring continuity. This is very important, the institutionality.

It has us worried, because it is precisely the parliamentarians who have been leading all this.

Guido Girardi left the parliament. Fortunately, we have created the "Encuentros del Futuro" foundation,

so it continues with this very powerful theme. But in the next 20 months, as far as we know, we will leave the parliament, we will leave the Senate, and this implies, indeed, a concern regarding continuity.

We're trying to enthuse some people who have the same logic in parliament, which implies generosity and not visibility.

And this is very difficult to find in politics, because this takes many hours, many hours of time, and therefore, more or less, political leadership is focused on doing the act of touch and go, more or less than really establishing long-term policy, which implies taking over, finding the point.

And on the other hand, really, it is that working with academia has been very important, working with the world of science has been very important.

I am going to put at your disposal, because I already would like to, our formulation of the

Committee for National Policies so that we can finally make work on what has been done in other countries. We know that the realities are not the same, the projections of each country are different.

I also gave a copy of the project of Foresight Institutions, which is a project that can be adapted in other countries, it is also accompanied by the work of the Executive Board,

it is also a work of the Executive Board, it is also a work of the Executive Board, it is also a work of the Executive Board, it is also a work of the Executive Board, but we can work on the text.

And this is very important because, for example, the government, the English parliament, exactly copied our law on neurorights. Exactly.

I mean, we the did like a copy-paste. Like copy-paste.

But that's not bad, right

That's not bad because, in fact, even if we haven't done it, even if we haven't given it the credit, it doesn't matter,

we would have been mentioned as a parliament.

If we hadn't given it the credit, we would have done something else.

I want to say thank you all for your decision so that other countries can work on the efforts that you have made.

I want to thank you for your position because it is really very interesting.

The topic, finally, the topic of training was relevant because, again,

foresight is not a rhetoric about the future. It is a method.

Flacso,  
is developing a master degree  
on foresight,  
which is the only one in Spanish  
so  
it would be very interesting  
because it would allow us  
to find these tools  
that provide us with  
training for the future.

So, thank you,  
Silvia Hernández: thank you.  
I'm going to take a question,  
an interaction,  
well, two additional ones,  
I'm going to ask that, please,  
please be very direct with the comment,  
Thank you very much.

Diputada Alvarez: Yes, very quickly. In terms of the necessary training for those who are  
going to generate this from the administrative part of the congresses, how can that  
training be achieved?

Does it have to be at the level, for example, of a degree or a master's degree?  
on Foresight in Costa Rica. Or can it be like shorter trainings that people would be given  
the tools to be able to work on this?

How deep does the training have to go? Thank you.

Silvia Hernández: Senador Coloma?

Senador Coloma: Thank you very much.

Particularly thinking about the European Union, how do you think about reviewing the  
process was successful?

Because this is not so easy. One looks forward and the foresight can be infinite.

Particularly, there are moments when one has to say this.

This was on the right way.

There are specific achievements, concrete achievements.

This is also part of the process.

When a project becomes successful, especially when it has a long-term logic.

Silvia Hernandez: Excellent. Thank you very much.

And I also find this inter-institutional framework very interesting.

Can you explain a little bit about that?

How is the interaction?

How is the format of participation with this network of actors that you interact with from  
the parliaments?

I find it very varied as an experience for the cases here present.

Freya Windle-Wherle: The difficulty with you as participants is that you ask really good  
questions.

But as Jeanette said, good questions are challenging and difficult to find.

So, Andrea Alvarez, on the question of training, this is something we've been looking at  
over the years.

And essentially speaking, we started out first with external training.

So training provided across the institutions by external providers specialized in the  
field.

Until we had a certain amount of our own in-house capacity.

Not only in the research service.

And so now we have got to the point where our research service trains any other level in  
the European parliaments administration.

So it can be a policy researcher.



It can be somebody that works in external policies.  
Somebody that works in internal policies.  
Or a specific policy area, such as AI, which is very big at the moment.  
And how long and how deep should they be trained?  
I think that was another question.  
What we have come to learn is that, yes, you need experts that know the details in depth.  
So the people that are really informed about it.  
Sort of like an academic, again, research service.  
That's why our foresight units are named research service.  
But we also learned that it is good to have sort of a mainstream basic idea of what foresight is.  
And how you can use it individually.  
And be a professional worker.  
So that is not so much in depth.  
But it is a conscience that it is there.  
And that you can apply it.  
Which motivates people then also to use it.  
Due to the circumstances.  
Freya Windle-Wherle: Regarding senador Coloma's question.  
The renewal of the process and how to ensure it is done successfully.  
So this is why we have it on different levels.  
So we have it at the administrative level.  
That goes for all of our new bodies in the council.  
The foresight unit is made to the administration.  
And the commission is made to the administration.  
In fact, the commission has a full director general that only focuses on these things.  
Behavioral insights.  
Scientific and technological foresight.  
For which I've analyzed, etc.  
It's called the Joint Research Center.  
So they have created full teaching.  
For several hundred colleagues that all interface.  
So you have it at the level of administration.  
The civil servants that stay.  
That are not there for cycles.  
But more or less for the full career.  
And training and development over the years.  
And that ensures continuity.  
And an example is the ESPAS report.  
That every five years in the cycle.  
Continuously we produce.  
And we tell the incoming presidents.  
This is it.  
Here it is.  
We put it on the table.  
It's a photo of our former commission president.  
With him arriving in office the first day.  
And the first thing you see on the desk is the report.  
And this is this awareness raising at this level.  
It is there.  
You cannot overlook it.  
It is relevant.  
I hope that helped.  
I thought that was your question.

Freya Windle-Wherle: And now (Silvia Hernandez question regarding) the inter-institutional framework.

That was yours.

And different stakeholders.

How do we communicate with them?

How do we develop with them?

So what we have is different.

Especially when we're writing the report.

We have different project teams.

That focus on different main trends.

And different policy areas.

These project teams.

Over the different institutions.

All this massive information we get.

Is collected.

And so it's sort of a scoping.

If you so want.

But after the scoping.

We do a wind tunneling.

And reduce the topics.

To come down to a more condensed amount of information.

But that is then presented to a steering group.

The steering group in the ESPAS process.

Consists of the secretary generals.

So again a high level administration.

And the vice presidents on foresight.

They look at the content.

And from there it is approved.

So this is the high level support you have to have in your process.

And then it goes down back to the people drafting the thinking.

And then these are our options.

Thank you very much.

Silvia Hernández: Thank you, Freya.

Thank you for your participation.

Thank you.