

2040

Scenarios for the future of RRI

Zooming out to the framework conditions of RRI: A scenario exercise
Stephanie Daimer

New HoRRizon Final conference, 26 May 2021

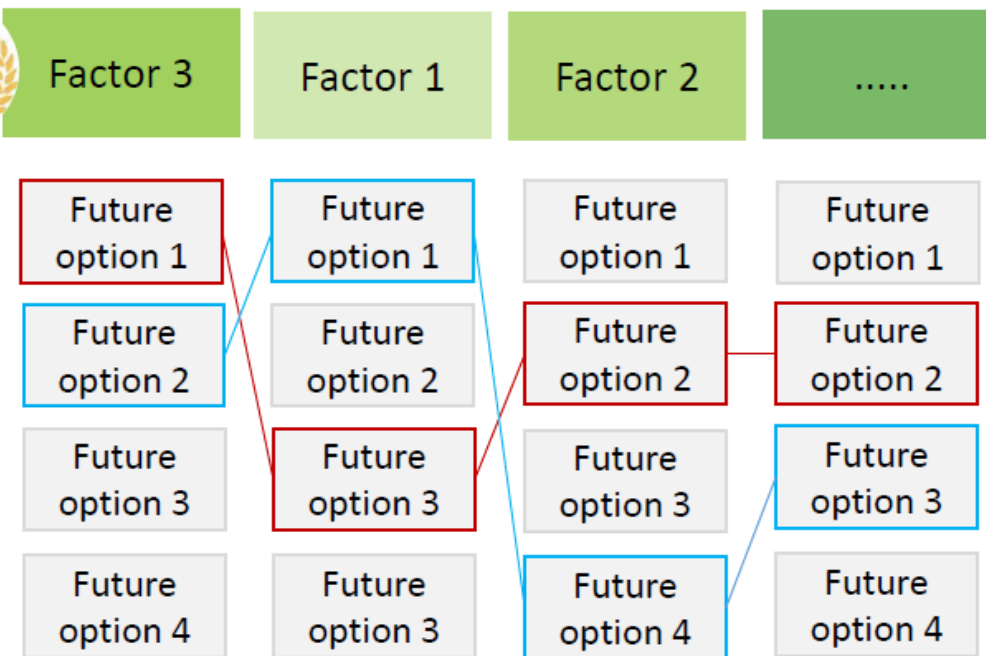


**Scenario Workshop,
28/29 Nov. 2019**



Scenario 1

Scenario 2



■ The future of RRI depends on...

Framework conditions / Factors shaping SSI

Political factors, e.g.

Political processes and practice,
Reaction to crises
Ideological stances

Societal developments, e.g.

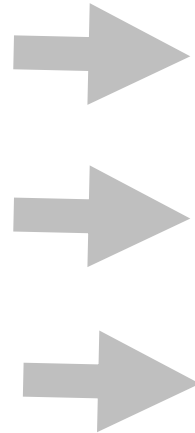
Social movements
Attitudes towards technology

Innovation System, e.g.

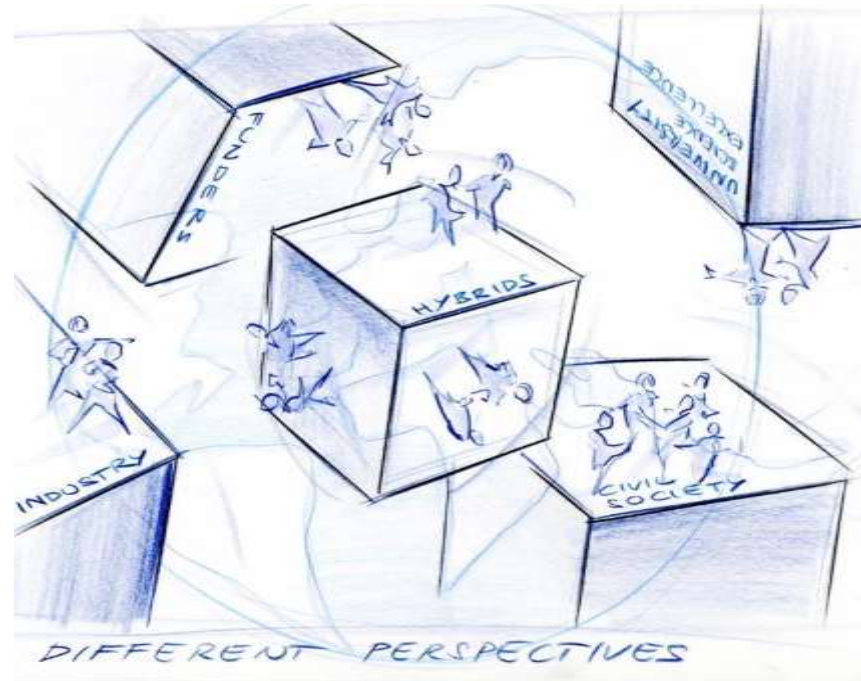
Funding and agenda-setting
(power and control)
Role of researchers

State of the economy

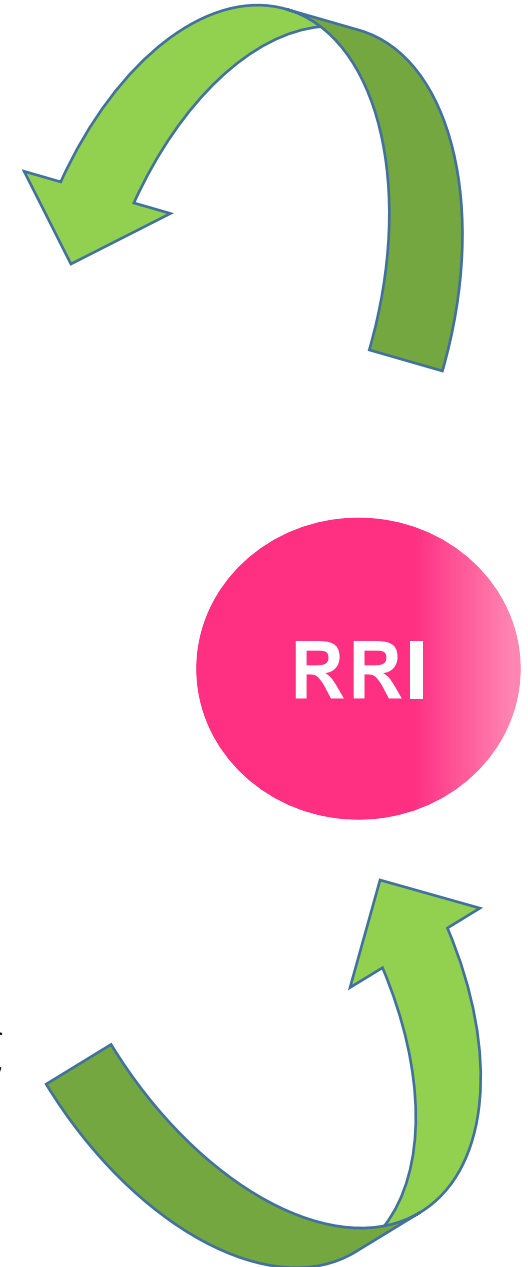
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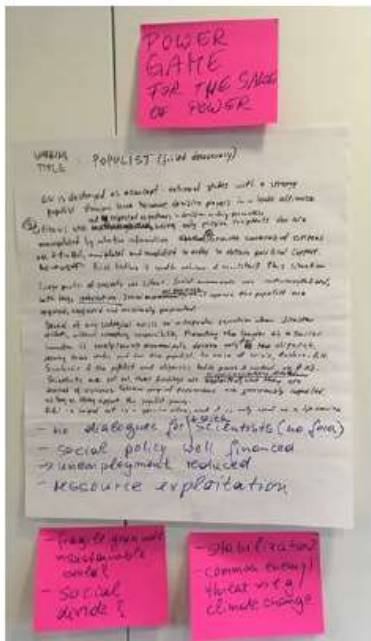
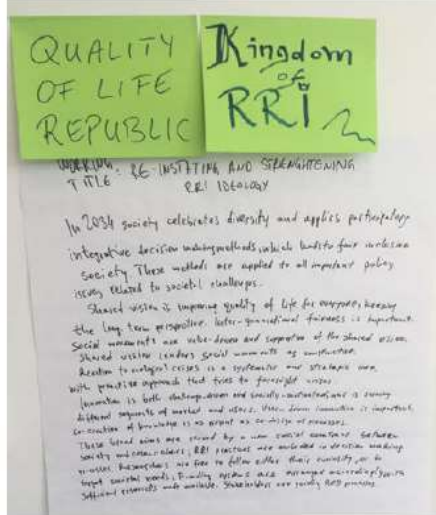
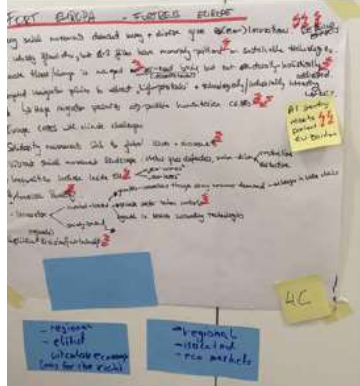
Science-society interactions (SSI)

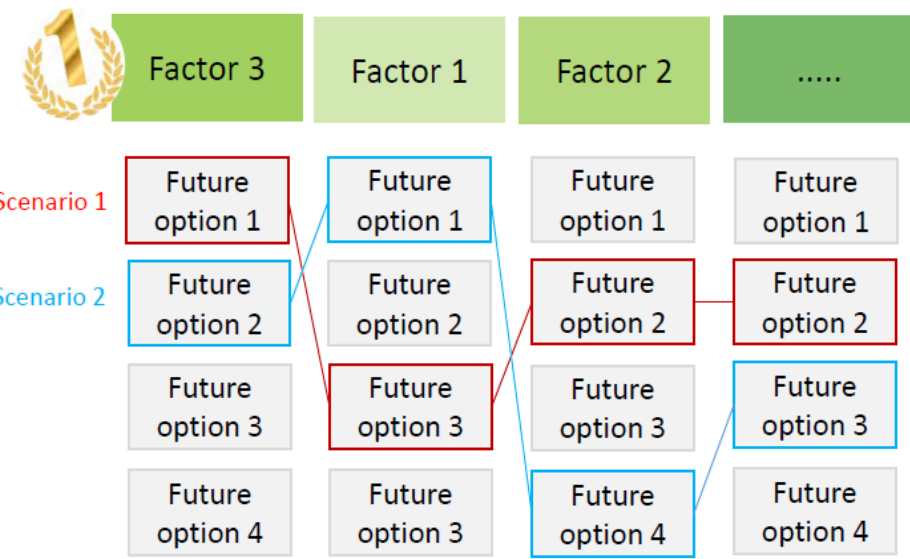
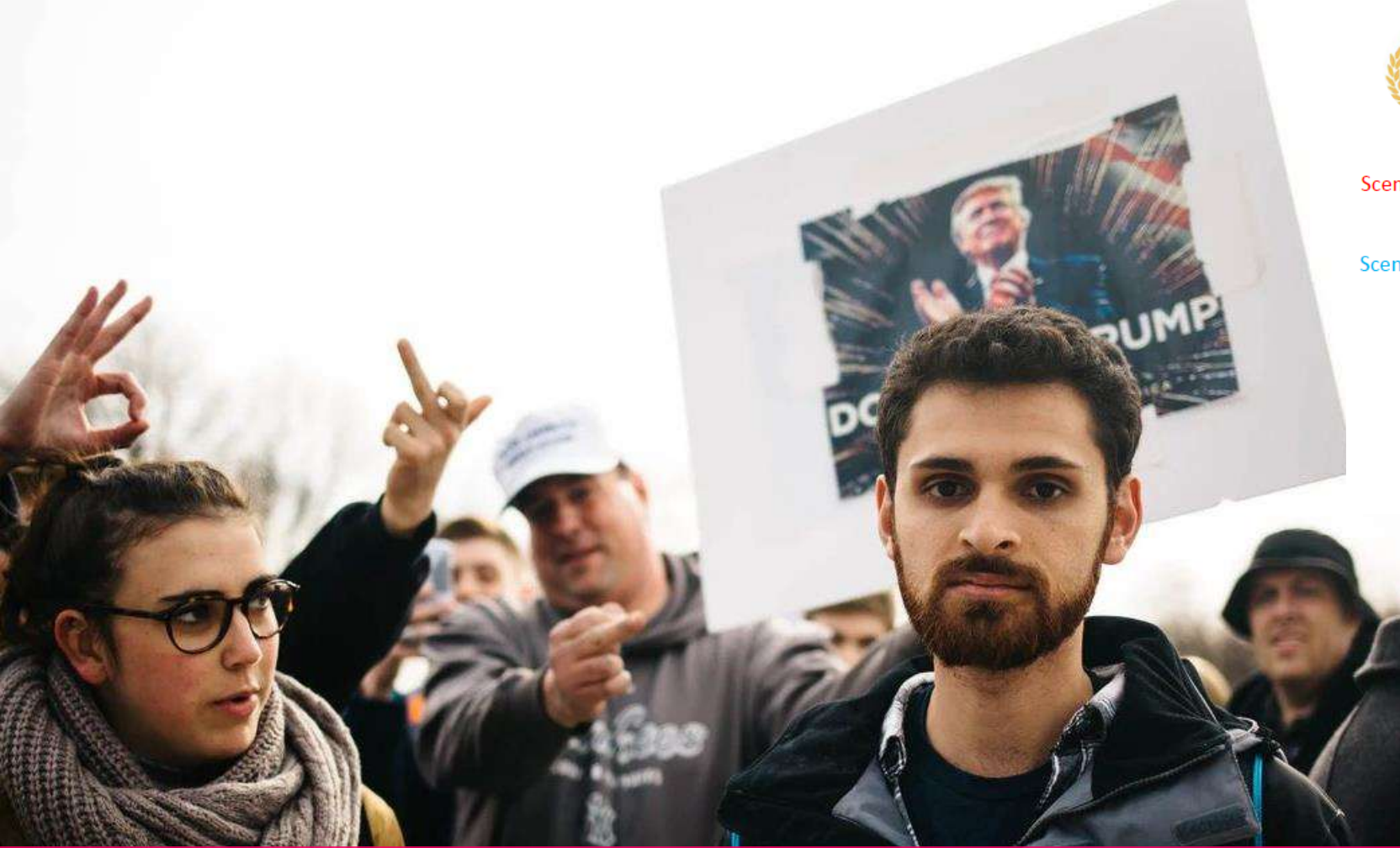


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New HoRRizon Visioning Conference, October 2017



	Influence no => 0 weak => 1 strong => 2											
	Factor name											
		Citizen capacity to become involved in R&I	Role of researchers	Power and control in R&D	Ideological stances and political practices	Innovation for what	Social movements	RRI Community	Meaning of technological developments for human life	Reaction to ecological crises		Total score
1	Citizen capacity to become involved in R&I				1	2	1	2	2	2		10
2	Role of researchers				1	2	0	2	2	2		9
3	Power and control in R&D				1,5	2	0	2	2	2		9,5
4	Ideological stances and political practices	2	2	2				2	2	2		12
5	Innovation for what	2	1	2				1	1	1		8
6	Social movements	2	1	2				1	1	2		9
7	RRI Community	2	2	1	0,5	1,5	1					9
8	Meaning of technological developments for human life	1	1	2	2	2	0					8
9	Reaction to ecological crises	2	2	2	1	1,5	0,5					9





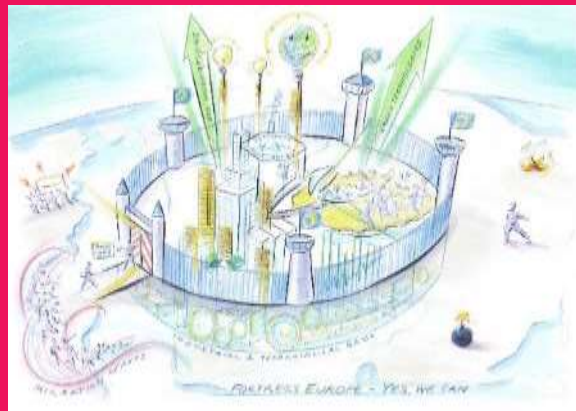
Most influential factors shaping our scenarios

Ideological stances and political practices
→ fundamentally different future pathways

4 Scenarios: Policy | Society | Research | Innovation | 2038



The Kingdom of RRI
– (E)Utopia?



Fortress Europe –
Yes, we can!



Long Live Populism
– Failed Democracy



Benevolent Green
Eurocrats



Starting in Scandinavia and spreading to Central Europe and some other countries, established green parties or new political movements were able to present **a new generation of politicians** to voters. Following a series of game-changing elections, new governments pursue agendas directed towards appealing and **bold societal goals (e.g., carbon-neutral mobility for all)** as the key to societal wellbeing. Participative processes are highly prevalent. Inclusive, open structures enable not only **participation**, but provide **empowerment**, and are a source of appreciation and societal satisfaction. Researchers follow **agendas jointly set with citizens**, understanding and accepting that targeting societal needs is a cornerstone of excellent research.

Scenario 1: The Kingdom of RRI – (E)Utopia?



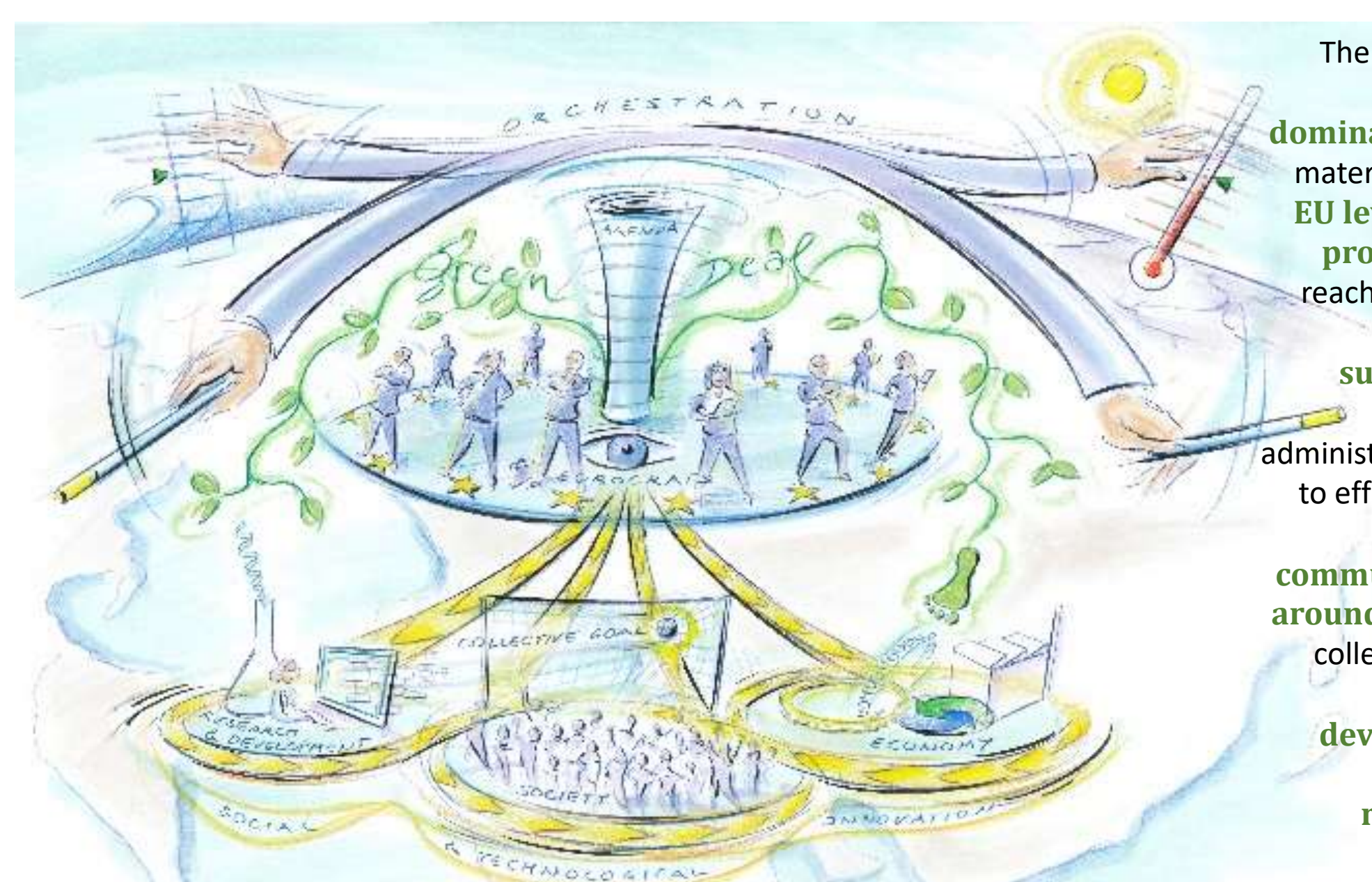
In this scenario, based on a dominant liberal ideology the EU has started setting its priorities towards **sustaining a strong economy with a sovereign technological and industrial basis**. Now, the EU is a global leader in a wide range of technologies, including green products. The EU keeps its **border closed**, only young professional, qualified migrants, who can contribute to easing skills shortage and other negative effects of an ageing society are allowed. Businesses and other private initiatives working on **technological and non-technological solutions for societal challenges flourish**, the group of innovators is large and diverse. Nevertheless, social and global disparities increase.

Scenario 2: Fortress Europe – Yes, we can!



In this future, populist parties won national elections in more and more countries, and thus **all over the EU, populist and even autocratic regimes emerged**. The political creed is "salvation and hope": The promise of stability and unity, and protection against external threats and enemies. **Social cohesion** exists in the way that large enough groups of society feel important and listened to. The media, as well as **research, technological development, innovation and other systems are directed (or controlled)** by, and support, the regime. The rulers involve societal actors in a tokenistic way. Societal challenges are addressed *ad hoc*, supported by technological solutions.

Scenario 3: Long Live Populism – Failed Democracy



The Benevolent Green Eurocrats scenario describes a **state-dominated, top-down approach**, materialized in our scenario at the **EU level**. Thus, in a **technocratic process**, a societal consensus is reached (or imposed upon) about the **absolute priority of sustainability missions**. The "enlightened" political and administrative system is in a position to efficiently and quickly generate rational solutions. **Political communication engages people around a shared narrative** about collective goals, the EU missions. **Research, technological development and innovation activities are centrally regulated**: challenge-driven, mission-oriented research, supported by public investments, serves green business and social innovations.

Scenario 4: Benevolent Green Eurocrats

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HORIZON

■ HOW TO WORK WITH THESE SCENARIOS

Depending on what kind of focus we want to choose for a debate on the future of RRI, we can use these scenarios in different ways.



PURPOSES



INSTRUMENTS



STRATEGIES

Purposes of RRI



QUESTIONS FOR WORKSHOPS OR FURTHER ANALYSES

1. What would be the purpose of RRI in the different scenarios?
2. Is it an approach to **intervene in the early stages of the emergence of new technologies** (going back to the roots of RRI)?
3. Is it an approach to **calm down the public** and make them trust science?
4. Is there a **trustworthy governance** for research, technological development and innovation activities?
5. Do research and innovation profit from the **diversity** of society? Are they **inclusive**? Do they contribute to **just transitions**?
6. Do RTDI deliver their parts to encompassing solutions and **transformative change** for grand global challenges like the climate crisis?



Problems of inclusion and social disparity: **Benevolent Green Eurocrats** and maybe also **Kingdom of RRI** might lead to elitist participation; **Fortress Europe** to global injustices



Policy Instruments to embed RRI

QUESTIONS FOR WORKSHOPS OR FURTHER ANALYSES

1. Would we find **today's RRI instruments** in those futures? E.g. the 5/ 6 keys (ethics, gender, open access, public engagement, science education, and governance).
2. Would they serve to foster **meaningful science-society interactions**?
3. Would there be other instruments?
4. Which instruments could serve to **mitigate unfavourable developments** in these scenarios?



Policy/ Science communication 2.0: Gathering societal support for the central grand sustainability narrative



(Science) Education becomes very important:
Empowerment or ideological tool?



Strategies



QUESTIONS FOR SELF-REFLECTION AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The future is not given 'out there', and thus, cannot be predicted, but can be shaped by today's action.

1. What would be the role of researchers, industry, innovators, civil society in the scenarios?
2. Who would fund and support RRI or any successor concept?
3. Have a look at your organisation's strategy and consider how well it shapes up in each scenario—are you confident it will hold up in any situation?
4. What would it mean for you to act responsibly in each of these futures?
5. What could your role be in any of the scenarios?

SUMMARY



- The most important framework condition for the future of RRI seems to be how ideological stances and political practices develop in EU member states and at EU level.
- How to work with scenarios? Discuss the purpose of RRI and policy instruments in these different futures: „Backcasting“ to identify issues, which already today need our attention and that of policy makers.
- Further: The future is not given ‘out there’, and thus, cannot be predicted, but can be shaped by today’s action: Our electoral decisions matter, our actor strategies matter and need to be checked whether they are “future-proof”.

Contact information



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Scenario long versions can be found here:

<https://newhorizon.eu/four-scenarios-for-the-future-of-responsible-research-and-innovation-rri/>

SOON TO COME: A brochure on how to use scenarios and a report about the Scenario-Sprint-Method we have used to create the scenarios.

Publication (under review):

Daimer, Stephanie/ Havas, Attila/ Cuhls, Kerstin/ Yorulmaz, Merve/ Vrgovic, Petar/ Griessler, Erich (2021):
Multiple futures for society, research, and innovation in the European Union: Jumping ahead to 2038.