



## The construction of a foresight process model based on the interest in collective knowledge and learning platforms

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In Wallonia, regional foresight seems to be particularly dynamic. Indeed, since the beginning of the millennium, there has been a flurry of exercises at regional level, as well as at communal and supra-communal level: *Wallonia 2020*, *Wallonia 21 Foresight Mission*, *Prospenwal – Foresight of Enterprises Policy in Wallonia –*, *Luxembourg 2010*, *Charleroi 2020*, *Wallonie Picarde 2025*, *Molinay Neighbourhood 2017*, *River Haine's Basin 2025*. It is also important to mention the significance of initiatives in mobilisation, diagnosis and monitoring developments in foresight: *Pays de Herve au Futur*, *Prospect 15* in the Arrondissement of Dinant, the work of the Employment Regional Committee of Huy-Waremme, or Wallonia's participation in transborder exercises such as those of the Large Region (Saarland - Lorraine – Grand-Duchy of Luxembourg – Rhineland-Palatinate – Wallonia): *Vision-Zukunftsbild 2020*<sup>(1)</sup>.

This movement is far from complete and we can consider that, in the short term at least, all the regions in Wallonia will have held discussions concerning foresight: in particular Ath, Ottignies - Louvain-la-Neuve, the provinces of Walloon Brabant or Namur.

The quality of the majority of these works owes a great deal to the interaction and confrontation of the methods used both on a Walloon and European level. Two instruments have played an important role here:

- the Mutual Learning Platform, set up at the beginning of 2005 upon the initiative of the Directorates-General for Research, Regional Policy and Enterprise and Industry, as well as the Committee of the Regions,
- the Wallonia Regional Intelligence Platform (IntelliTerWal), founded in 2006 by the Directorate-General for Land Development, Housing and Cultural Heritage for the Wallonia Region and The Destree Institute. This initiative was inspired by the first one as well as the European FOR-LEARN programme, run by the Institute for Prospective Technological Studies (IPTS) in Seville, one of the European Commission's Joint Research Centres.

The aim of these various approaches is to create collective learning processes for methods and practices, in order to improve the performance of various actors in terms of regional intelligence and in terms of what the IPTS has referred to as the Strategic Policy Intelligence Tools since the beginning of this century. It is of course a question of foresight but also of other instruments such as the assessment of technological choices or public policies, benchmarking, and regional profiles.

The most remarkable aspect of these approaches is probably the fact that, as regards regional foresight, they are fed by interaction and that through the various workshops, they have contributed to the foundation of a methodological core truly based on

(1) On these exercises, see Philippe DESTATTE and Pascale VAN DOREN, *Territorial Foresight as a Tool of Governance*, Charleroi, Institut Destrée, 2003. – Michaël VAN CUTSEM, *La prospective territoriale en Wallonie: un mécano à géométries variables* (to be published in 2009). – Numerous exercises have been listed on the Wallonia Territorial Intelligence Platform: [www.intelliterwal.net](http://www.intelliterwal.net)

concrete experiences in both European regions and Wallonia. The summarised calendar of their activity provides us with an initial overview of their vitality and their interactions.

**Interactions between the Mutual Learning Platform (MLP) (2005-2006),  
FORLEARN (2004-2007) and INTELLITERWAL (2006-2009) platforms**

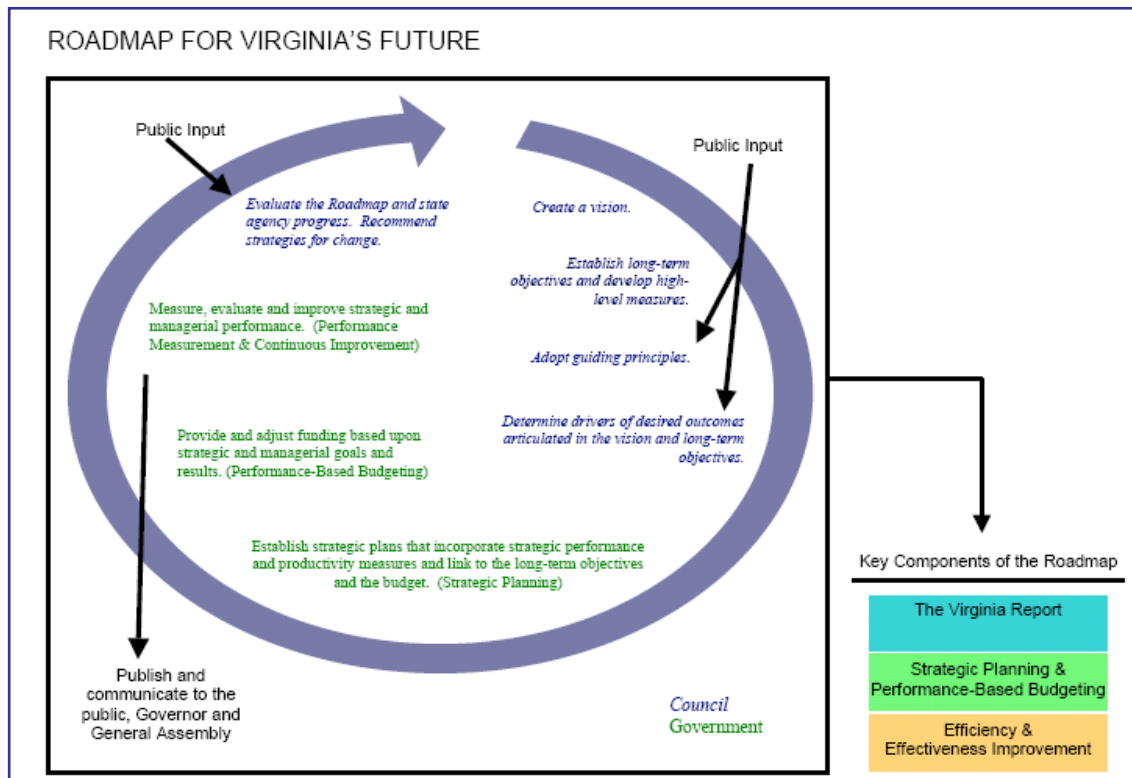
Place	Date	Type	Platform
Seville	1 <sup>st</sup> November 2004	Launch	FOR-LEARN
Brussels	18 April 2005	Conference	Mutual Learning Platform
Ljubljana	22 May 2005	Seminar	Mutual Learning Platform
Seville	30 May 2005	Draft Guide	FOR-LEARN
Brussels	19-20 October 2005	Seminar	MLP + FOR-LEARN
Seville	2 December 2005	Seminar	FOR-LEARN
Brussels	12 December 2005	Seminar	MLP + FOR-LEARN
Stuttgart	30-31 March 2006	Seminar	MLP + REGSTRAT
Namur	11 May 2006	Seminar	Intelliterwal
Namur	14 June 2006	Seminar	Intelliterwal
Namur	15 June 2006	Draft Guide	Intelliterwal
Namur	6 September 2006	Seminar	Intelliterwal
Luxembourg	1 <sup>st</sup> October 2006	Guide	Mutual Learning Platform
Brussels	13 October 2006	Conférence	Mutual Learning Platform
Namur	13 November 2006	Seminar	Intelliterwal
Namur	11 December 2006	Seminar	Intelliterwal
Namur	19 December 2006	Guide	Intelliterwal
Namur	22 May 2007	Seminar	Intelliterwal
Brussels	19 September 2007	Seminar	FOR-LEARN
Namur	25 September 2007	Seminar	Intelliterwal
Seville	13-14 December 2007	Seminar	FOR-LEARN
Namur	20 December 2007	Seminar	Intelliterwal
Namur	14 March 2008	Seminar	Intelliterwal
Seraing	24 June 2008	Seminar	Intelliterwal
Namur	5 November 2008	Seminar	Intelliterwal
Tournai	17 February 2009	Seminar	Intelliterwal
Namur	19 May 2009	Seminar	Intelliterwal

Of course, not all the moments in this process have the same impact or the same level of importance in terms of methodological construction. However, at least two elements should be mentioned:

- the various approaches have mostly called upon the analysis of experiences in the field as a source for their reflection. Thus, the combined Mutual Learning Platform and FOR-LEARN seminar, organised by the Committee of the Regions in Brussels on 12 December 2005, allowed the foresight work carried out in five different European regions to be compared and promoted: Mecklenburg-Vorpommern (Germany), South Great Plain (Hungary), Border Midlands & Western (Ireland), Lombardy and Wallonia. The same logic presides over the work of the Wallonia Regional Intelligence Platform.
- The gradual methodological capitalisation as constituted by the creation of foresight guides. The contributions of several processes resulting from European approaches (STRATA, FOREN, *Blueprint for Foresight Actions in the Regions*, etc.) have been capitalised in FORLEARN, then in IntelliTerWal, before being integrated into the *Mutual Learning Platform Guide* <sup>(2)</sup>.

(2) Günter CLAR & Philippe DESTATTE, *Regional Foresight, Boosting Regional Potential, Mutual Learning Platform, Regional Foresight Report*, Luxembourg, European Commission, Committee of the Regions, IRE Network, October 2006.

In addition, these processes were not conducted in isolation, on the contrary, they were clearly sustained by numerous interactions. Such is the case, for instance, in the remarkable workshop dedicated to foresight in the United States of America (*Foresight in State Government*) and in particular in the states of Virginia and Kentucky, held in Chicago on 30 July 2005 within the framework of the World Future Society's *Foresight Innovation and Strategy* conference. By understanding these experiences, it was possible to refine the idea of a continuous foresight process and even to draw inspiration from it in terms of representation.



Council on Virginia's Future, 12 May 2005

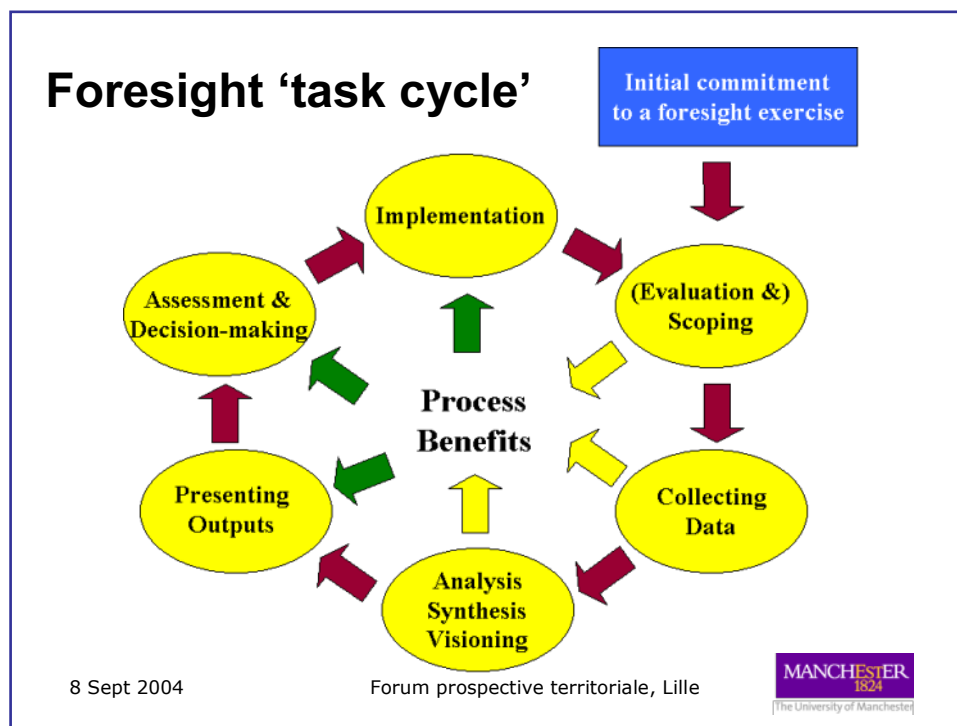
In the same way, we cannot ignore the influence of another learning platform, the European College of Regional Foresight, founded in April 2004 upon the initiative of the Scientific Council of the Delegation for Spatial Planning and Regional Action for the French Republic (DATAR, which has since become DIACT) and supported by Futuribles and The Destree Institute since the end of 2007. Indeed, numerous meetings organised in Paris, seminars held in Etioilles in 2005 (10 and 11 November), 2006 (5 and 6 October) and December 2007 (7 and 8 December), as well as the organisation of a European forum during the first summer school for regional foresight in Europe, on 8 September 2004 <sup>(3)</sup>, have contributed to the goal of convergence between what is called in France "la prospective" and foresight, both in terms of concepts <sup>(4)</sup> and methods <sup>(5)</sup>. This summer school was an opportunity to hear Michael Keenan (PREST – University of Manchester, one of the people who helped to renew European foresight) present the Foresight Task Cycle as a continuous process <sup>(6)</sup>.

(3) *Prospective et dynamique des territoires, Des clefs pour la prospective appliquée dans les territoires, Université d'été de la prospective territoriale en Europe, Lille, 8 September 2004.*

(4) Philippe DESTATTE & Philippe DURANCE (dir.), *Les mots-clefs de la prospective territoriale*, coll. *Travaux de la DIACT*, Paris, La Documentation française, 2008.

(5) See the seminar *Operationalization of Territorial Foresight as a Competitive Tool*, with the presentation of exercises from Bade-Wurtemberg, Marseille and Border, Midlands and Western Region, Etioilles, 7-8 December 2007.

(6) Michaël KEENAN, *A Framework for Organising Regional Foresight Exercises, Prospective et dynamique des territoires, Des clefs pour la prospective appliquée dans les territoires, Université d'été de la prospective territoriale en Europe, Lille, 8 September 2004, ppt.*



This point should be studied in more detail. The history of the efforts made to develop foresight in Europe and to bring Anglo-Saxon foresight closer to French or Latin foresight has yet to be written. It is fundamental to understand the new foresight ambitions of the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The European Commission – and especially Unit K2 Technology Foresight and Socioeconomic Research led by Paraskevas Caracostas between 2001 and 2005 – was a key actor in this process, greatly encouraged by the European – and Walloon – Commissioner, Philippe Busquin, during his mandate from 1999 to 2004. It is useful to remember the milestones that form the background which gave strength to foresight in Wallonia by also feeding on foresight.

### The European initiatives to develop foresight in Europe (2001-2006)

Place	Date	Type	Title
Dublin	13 December 2001	FOREN Conference	<i>Creating and Applying Vision in the Regions, Towards Agile and Networked Regions through Foresight</i>
Seville	December 2001	IPTS-ESTO Report	<i>Strategic Policy Intelligence: Current Trends, the State of Play and Perspectives</i> <sup>(7)</sup>
Brussels	December 2001	FOREN Guide	<i>A Practical Guide to Regional Foresight</i> <sup>(8)</sup>
Brussels	26 April 2002	HLEG Report <i>Foresight in Europe</i>	<i>Thinking, debating and shaping the future: Foresight for Europe</i> <sup>(9)</sup>

(7) Alexander TÜBKE, Ken DUCATEL, James P. GAVIGAN & Pietro MONCADA-PATERNO-CASTELLO éd., *Strategic Policy Intelligence : Current Trends, the State of Play and Perspectives, S&T Intelligence for Policy-Making Processes*, Sevilla, IPTS-Joint Research Centre European Commission, December 2001, p. 118

(8) James P. GAVIGAN, Fabiana SCAPOLO (JRC-IPTS), Michael KEENAN, Ian MILES (PREST), François FARHI, Denis LECOQ (CM International) & Michele CAPRIATI, Teresa DI BARTOLOMEO (Sviluppo Italia), *A Practical Guide to Regional Foresight*, FOREN (Foresight for Regional Development Network), European Commission Research Directorate General, Strata Programme, December 2001, p. 122

Place	Date	Type	Title
Seville	13-14 May 2002	Conference	<i>The Role of Foresight in the Selection of Research Policy Priorities</i>
Brussels	4-5 July 2002	Seminar	<i>Foresight to Scenarios Workshop: Landscaping Methods and Tools</i>
Brussels	24-25 September 2002	Conference	<i>Europe's Regions Shaping the Future – The</i>
Brussels	December 2002	Report (STRATA-ETAN)	<i>The Potential of Regional Foresight</i> <sup>(10)</sup>
Ioannina	15-16 May 2003	Conference	<i>Foresight and the Enlarged European Research and Innovation Area</i>
Dublin	2003	Guide	<i>Handbook of Knowledge Society Foresight</i> <sup>(11)</sup>
Dublin	14-15 June 2004	Conference	<i>Foresight for Innovations – Thinking and Debating the Future; Shaping and Aligning Policies</i>
Brussels	October 2004	<i>Blueprints for Foresight Actions in the Regions Report</i>	<i>Foresight and the Transition for Regional Knowledge-based Economies</i> <sup>(12)</sup>
Brussels	28 February - 1 March 2005	Seminar	<i>Shaping the European Dimension of Foresight</i>
Brussels	March 2006	<i>S&amp;T Foresight Knowledge Sharing Platform Report</i>	<i>Using Foresight to improve the Science-policy Relationship</i> <sup>(13)</sup>
Brussels	13 October 2006	Conference and final reports of the <i>Mutual Learning Platform</i>	<i>Regional Development Strategic Policy Tools – Regional Foresight : Boosting Regional Potential</i>

By being actively involved in this process throughout its development, The Destree Institute has acted as a facilitator of methods in both directions. This is confirmed by certain milestones, such as the symposium organised at the Castel de Seneffe on 28 September 2002, on the theme of *Regional Foresight as a Tool of Governance* or the

(9) Luk VAN LANGENHOVE & Robby BERLOZNIK (dir.), *Thinking, debating and shaping the future: Foresight for Europe, Final Report prepared by a High Level Expert Group for the European Commission*, Brussels, European Commission, Unit RTD-K2, September 2002, 32 p. \_ *La prospective, un moyen pour réfléchir, débattre et construire l'avenir de l'Europe, Rapport présenté par un groupe d'experts de haut niveau pour la Commission européenne*, Bruxelles, Commission européenne, Unité RTD-K2, Septembre 2002, p. 34

(10) Ortwin RENN & Meiron THOMAS, *The Potential of Regional Foresight, Final Report of the STRATA-ETAN Expert Group : Mobilising the regional foresight potential for an enlarged European Union – an essential contribution to strengthen the strategic basis of the European Research Area (ERA)*, Luxembourg, European Communities, 2002.

(11) Ian MILES, Michael KEENAN (PREST) & Jari KAIVO-OJA (FFRC), *Handbook of Knowledge Society Foresight*, Dublin, European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, 2003, p. 166

(12) *Foresight and the Transition to Regional Knowledge-based Economies, Blueprints for Foresight Actions in the Regions*, Synthesis Report + Specific Reports (FOR-RIS, UPGRADE, TECHTRANS, TRANSVISION, AGRIBLUE), European Commission, October 2004.

[http://cordis.europa.eu/foresight/regional\\_blueprints2004.htm](http://cordis.europa.eu/foresight/regional_blueprints2004.htm)

(13) Andreas LIGTVOET (RAND EUROPE), *Using Foresight to improve the Science-policy Relationship*, Brussels, European Commission, DG RTD, March 2006, p. 76



conference organised in Louvain-la-Neuve on 13 and 14 April 2005: *The Futures of Europeans in the Global Knowledge Society, A Meeting Place for Europeans creating Futures*. Acting once again as a bridge, a role Wallonia has often played between the Latin and Anglo-Saxon worlds, The Destree Institute took care – alongside others – to bring the resolutely voluntarist approach of French foresight to the European projects: a philosophy of action inherited from the Age of Enlightenment, whereby the human being is placed at the centre of the system, a real conceptualisation inherited from Gaston Berger's philosophy on foresight. At the same time, it capitalises on the qualities of Anglo-Saxon foresight: construction of formal visions, great attention given to systems of innovation, care taken over the operationalisation of the strategy, the quality of the implementation and monitoring.

## The construction of a foresight process

Retracing the path of a thought or intellectual process is a particularly difficult task, especially when the construction of this process is situated in an environment of interactions between different exercises carried out simultaneously on a regional or country level, and at a particular moment of listening to both global and European methods and practices.

### 1. The foresight process in exercises at regional level in Wallonia (2000-2004)

#### 1.1. Wallonia 21 Foresight Mission

The first regional foresight exercise conducted in Wallonia in the 2000-2005 period was *Mission Prospective Wallonie 21*. It was carried out with those who were stakeholders of the development of Wallonia. It was first based on a methodological approach entitled *Foundations of foresight in Wallonia* (2000) then on monitoring, the results of which were the subject of the report *Wallonia listening to Foresight* (2002), and finally, on a step of normative foresight aimed at preparing action proposals for a 2004-2009 future contract, leading to a final report entitled *Foresight listening to Wallonia* (2004) <sup>(14)</sup>.

The methodological approach primarily demonstrated the advantage of making foresight a part of good regional governance and, in particular, part of the Future Contract for Wallonia. The report was therefore mostly based on the work of Jean-Paul Bailly, carried out in 1998 for the French Economic and Social Council. In it, the CEO of the RATP revealed four phases of good governance leading to a good level of democracy:

- an awareness phase, involving diagnosis and identification of the issues;
- a phase including exchange, participation, and therefore empowerment, opening the debate for various solutions;
- a contractualisation and commitment phase, integrating the choices made by the authority with objectives, a schedule and means;
- an action phase requiring assessment and adaptation, i.e. participative and shared implementation <sup>(15)</sup>.

This analysis gave rise to four phases that were required to conduct a foresight exercise:

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(14) Philippe DESTATTE & Pascale VAN DOREN, *Foresight as a Tool to Stimulate Societal Paradigm Shift, European and Regional Experiences*, in Martin POTUCEK, Pavai NOVACEK & Barbora SLINTAKOVA éd., *The First Prague Workshop on Futures Studies Methodology*, p. 91-105, Praha, CESES Papers, 11, 2004. – Philippe DESTATTE, *The Foresight Mission Wallonia 21, A Blueprint to involve Regions in the Knowledge Society*, Mutual Learning Platform Launch Event, Brussels, Committee of the Regions, April 18, 2005. ppt.

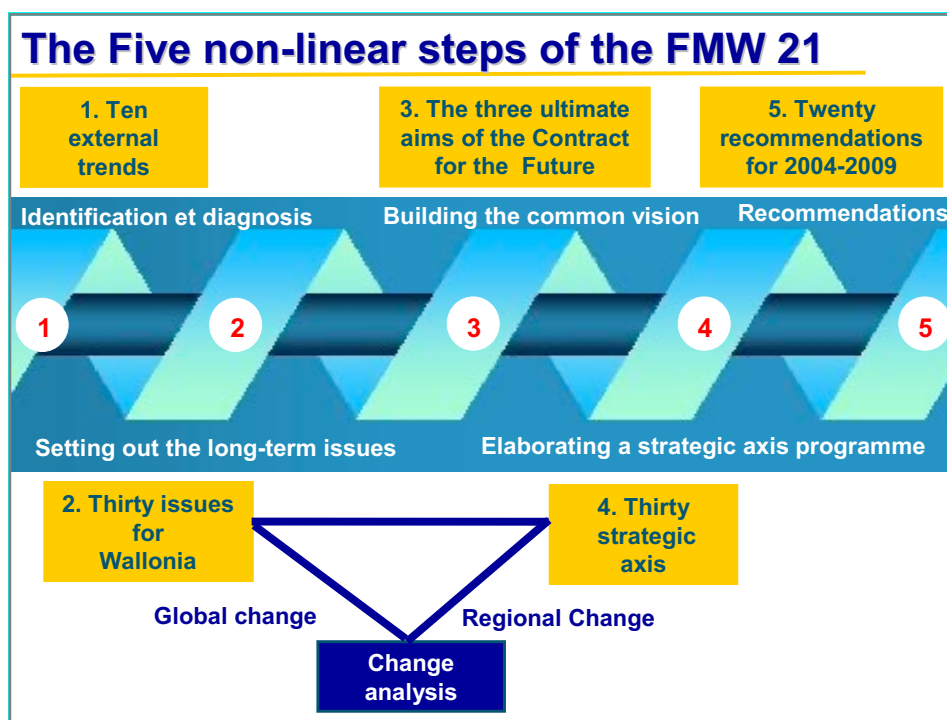
(15) Philippe DESTATTE dir., *Mission prospective Wallonie 21, La Wallonie à l'écoute de la prospective, Premier Rapport au Ministre-Président du Gouvernement wallon*, p. 16, Charleroi, Institut Destrée, 2002. – Jean-Paul BAILLY, *Prospective, Débats, Décision publique, Avis du Conseil économique et social*, in *Futuribles*, Octobre 1998.

1. diagnosis and identification of the issues;
2. determination of possible futures and desirable futures;
3. construction of the strategy;
4. implementation and assessment.

These four phases could be crossed with five fundamental foresight questions, taught at the time by Hugues de Jouvenel and Michel Godet in their Futuribles seminars in Paris:

The five foresight key questions		
Q0	Who are we ?	Identification
Q1	What can happen ?	Foresight
Q2	What can we do ?	Strategic Foresight
Q3	What are we going to do ?	Strategy (Decision)
Q4	How can we do that ?	Strategy (Means)

The Wallonia 21 Foresight Mission revealed five “non-linear” phases when it came to an end in 2004. Although it had begun four years earlier, the exercise capitalised on both the experience of Wallonia 2020, and the Foresight of Enterprises Policy in Wallonia, which began in 2001 and 2002 respectively, when it ended in the final year of the term.



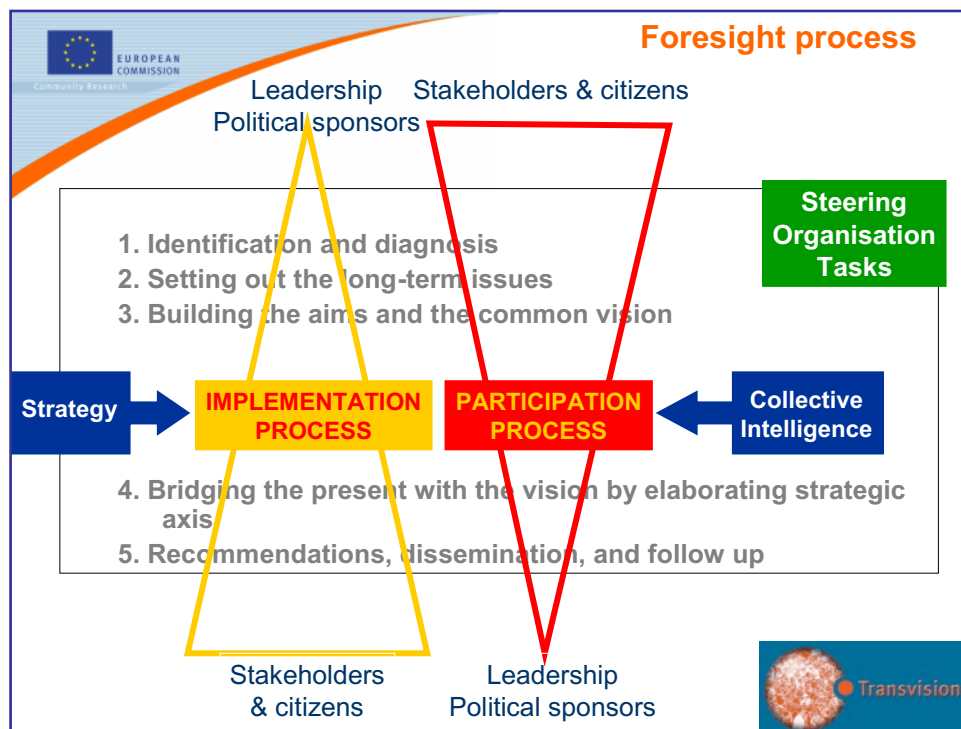
The five phases described, with the output per phase, are as follows:

Foresight Mission Wallonia 21 phasis	Products per phasis
1. Identification et diagnosis	Ten external trends
2. Setting out the long-term issues	Thirty issues
3. Building the common vision	Three ultimate aims
4. Elaborating a strategic axis programme	Thirty strategic axis
5. Recommendations	Ten recommendations

This process, proposed by The Destree Institute, was discussed in Luxembourg on 22 March 2004 and adopted by its European foresight colleagues in Brussels on 23 September 2004: the aim was to formalise the foresight steps in the European Commission's *Blueprints for Foresight Actions in the Regions* <sup>(16)</sup>: *Transvision, Bridging historically and culturally close neighbouring regions separated by national borders*.

This document included the following elements:

- Identification and diagnosis;
- Determination of the long-term issues;
- Construction of the objectives and common vision;
- Linking this document with the vision to elaborate key strategic areas;
- Recommendations, distribution and follow-up.



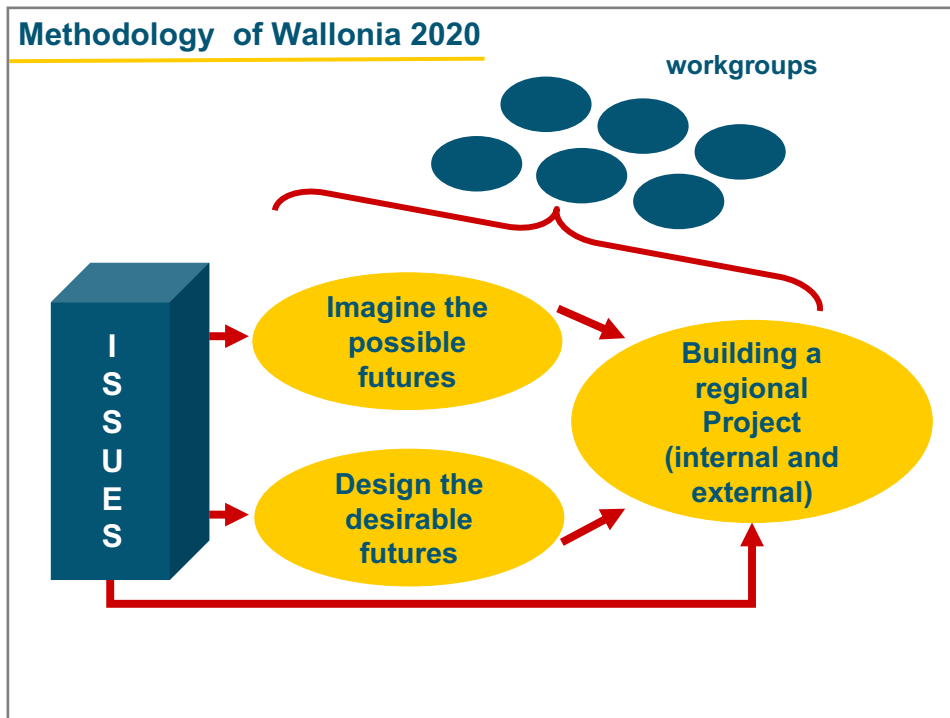
## 1.2. “Wallonia 2020, A social foresight reflection on the future of Wallonia ”

Inherited from the work *Wallonia to the Future*, which was conducted on a continuous basis between 1987 and 1999, the *Wallonia 2020, A social foresight reflection on the future of Wallonia*, regional foresight exercise organized from 2001 to 2004, was the first opportunity to formalise the foresight process in Wallonia, thanks to the methodological dialogue between the approach’s science council, The Destree Institute as operator and a French consultant. It appeared to be fairly succinct and three phases were essentially identified: the definition of the issues, the formulation of possible futures and desirable futures, the elaboration of the regional project, with the understanding that an information base should be constituted beforehand and recommendations afterwards <sup>(17)</sup>.

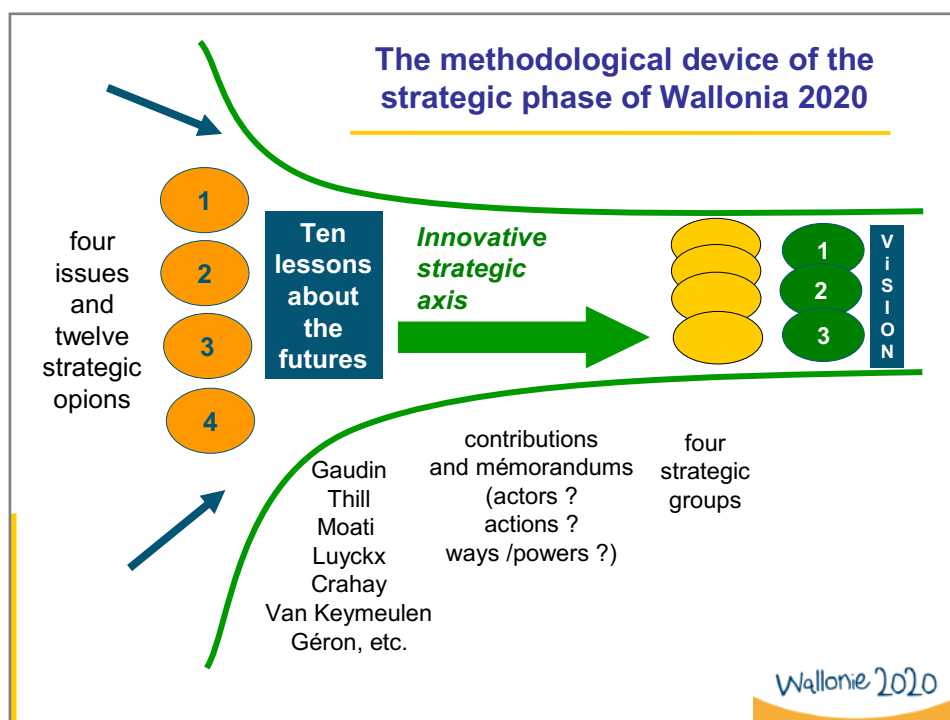
(16) Philippe DESTATTE and Pascal Van DOEREN dir., *The Transvision Blueprint, Bridging neighbouring regions belonging to different jurisdictions, i.e., historically and culturally close regions divided by national borders, Blueprints for Foresight Actions in the Regions*, Brussels, European Commission, DG Research, October 2004, p. 38

(17) Philippe DESTATTE, *The Experience of Wallonia 2020 as Regional Foresight Exercise, FOR-LEARN Regional Foresight Workshop*, Brussels, Committee of the REgions, October 20, 2005. ppt



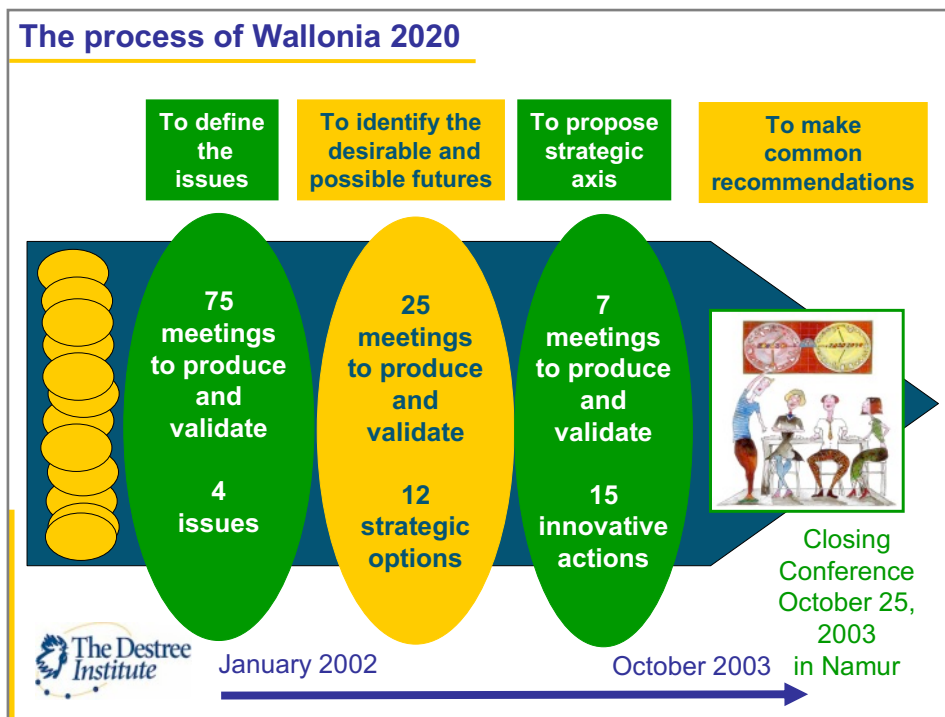


In February 2003, this process was remodelled by the team from The Destree Institute in order to clarify and reinforce the strategic phase, while separating it from the long-term vision, based on the prioritisation of formative desirable futures. It was clear that there was also a need to promote the output of citizens and actors by directly confronting them with expert advice, in order to “intellectually strengthen” – the word was used within this context – the positions of the participants in the foresight exercise.



At the end of the exercise, two phases clearly stood out: a foresight phase composed of three sequences – identification and diagnosis, determining the long-term issues,

elaborating the ultimate aims and the shared vision – and a strategic phase, including the definition of key strategic areas and the elaboration of recommendations <sup>(18)</sup>.

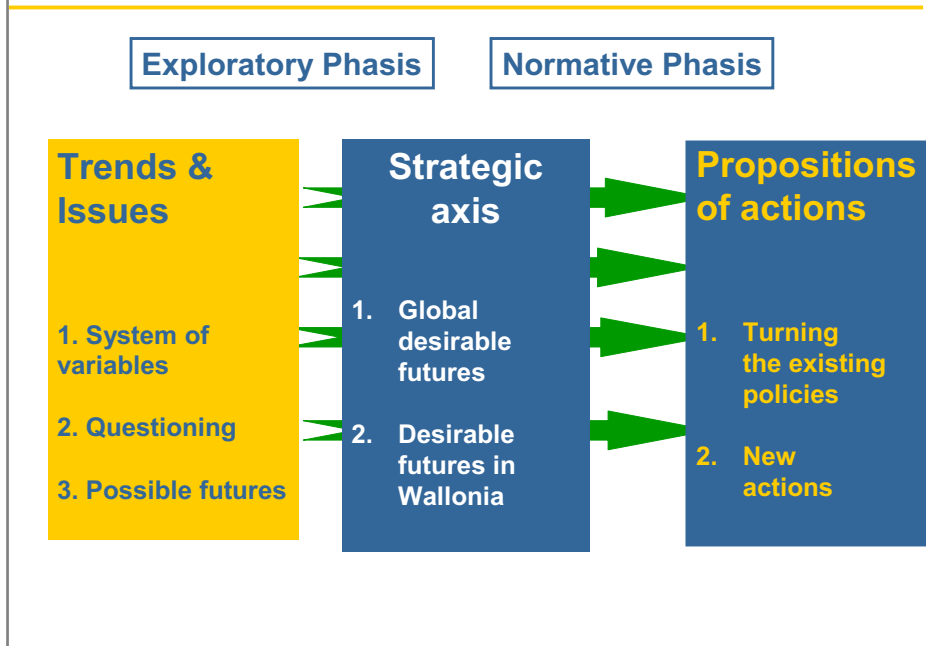


### 1.3. Prospenwal: Foresight of Enterprises Policy in Wallonia

Another regional foresight exercise was conducted at the same time as the Foresight *Mission Wallonia 21* and *Wallonia 2020*. It was also acted as a source for the reflection on the methodological process. *Prospenwal, Foresight of Enterprises Policy in Wallonia*, consisted of redefining corporate policies by 2020 for the benefit of the Government of Wallonia, Department of Economy. Conducted with company directors, civil servants and experts, this exercise fell under the scope of the *4X4 pour entrepreneurship* programme. It took place over one year, from December 2002 to December 2003.

(18) *Wallonie 2020, Une réflexion prospective citoyenne sur le devenir de la Wallonie, Actes de l'exercice de prospective mené en Région Wallonie de novembre 2001 à février 2004*, Charleroi, Institut Destree, July 2005.

## Methods and phasing of Foresight of Enterprises Policy



The foresight process was conducted in three successive stages. The aim of the first one was to identify the trends and issues. The second one consisted of defining the strategies likely to integrate these trends and issues. The third one saw the participants elaborating proposals for general and concrete actions in coherence with these strategies. A clear distinction was made between the exploratory and normative phases.

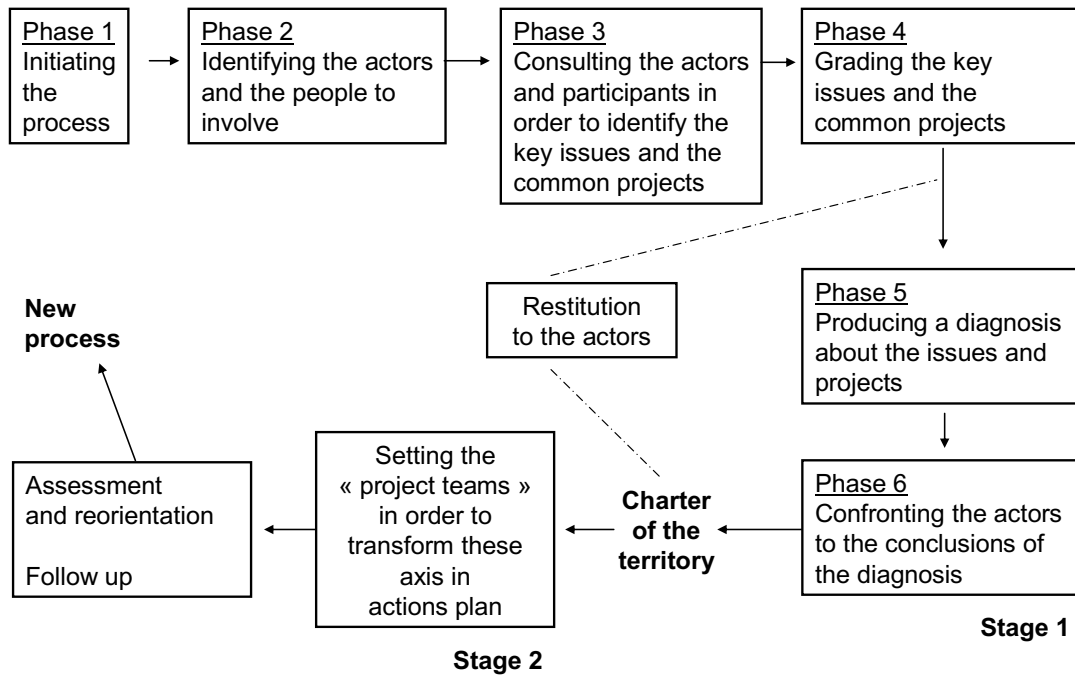
The context of the exercise, conducted in the premises of the Minister of Economy and Research with company directors and sectoral experts with little knowledge of foresight, justified the straightforward nature of the process as well as the use of vocabulary that was as simple as possible. This was also the concern of *Wallonia 2020* as regards citizens.

## 2. Foresight process in the exercises on a regional level in Wallonia (2002-2007)

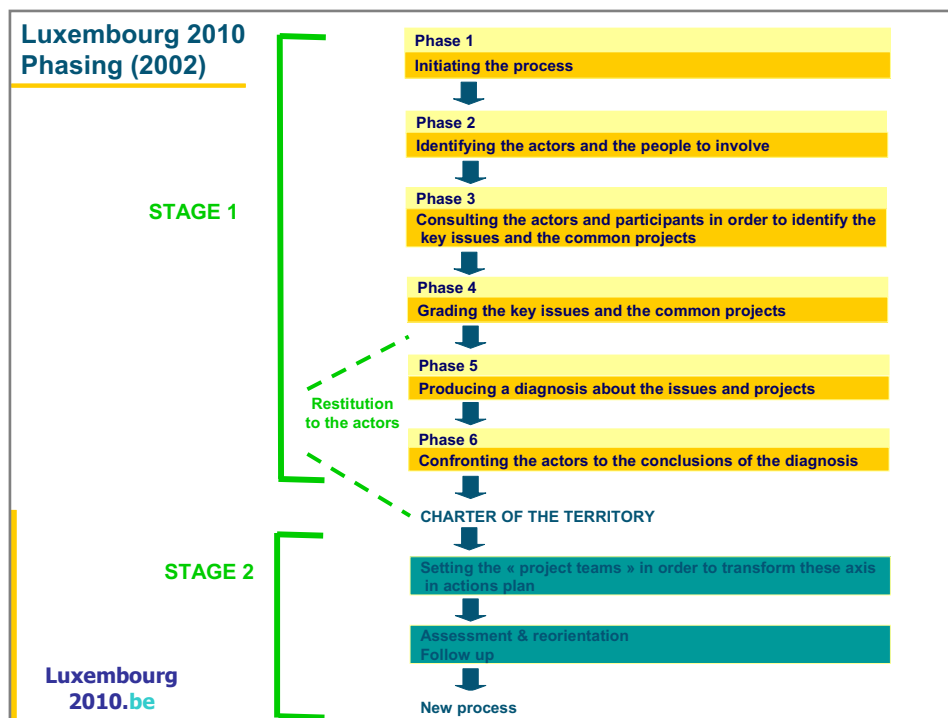
### 2.1. Luxembourg 2010

Luxembourg 2010 is a pioneer in Walloon regional – infraregional - foresight since the project actually began in January 2002, after a long period of development. It was actually in February 1999, within the context of the consultation of the Wallonia Spatial Development Perspective (*Schéma de Développement de l'Espace régional - SDER*) project, that the idea of creating a Provincial perspective (*Schéma de Développement de l'Espace provincial*) was mentioned for the first time. This goal was extended in order to create a real regional project for the province of Luxembourg. The method used was composed of eight successive phases, aimed at setting up a permanent process.

Phases of Luxembourg 2010 (2002) <sup>(19)</sup>



The process was inspired by the experience of the Meurthe et Moselle region and was based on the model developed by the joint committee of the employment basins committees (*Comité de Liaison des Comités de bassin d'emploi*) promoted by DATAR <sup>(20)</sup>.



(19) Luxembourg 2010, Dossier de présentation de la démarche, May 2002, p. 11

(20) Olivier MAZEL, Pascal VAZARD, Klaus WERNER, *Construire un projet de territoire, Du diagnostic aux stratégies*, Comité de Liaison des Comités de bassin d'emploi, Paris, DATAR, 1997.

It was adjusted in 2003, thus encouraging reflection on foresight and the reinforcement of stage 1 within this context. The Destree Institute was called in from June to December 2003 to provide methodological support. The nature of this intervention included:

- organising two methodological seminars with the technical team;
- support from the technical team to identify the issues concerning the region of the province of Luxembourg by 2010;
- support for the construction and prioritisation of macro-issues by the technical team<sup>(21)</sup>.

This work then led to the compilation of a highly prioritised list of 200 ideas, regrouped into *Four looks*, a document that was first presented to the Steering Committee in December 2003. These *Four looks* were then submitted for critical reading by the people and institutions encountered during an extensive survey (273 actors), and also by other actors and citizens during specific consolidation meetings.

Alongside these consultations on the *Four looks* for a future vision, the promoters of the approach wrote a charter aimed at ratifying the work on ownership of the *Four Looks* and to create a bridge between strategy and action. As a result, a call for projects was launched among all the actors who participated in this approach. The types of project sought after were, above all, projects that addressed several actors or multifaceted projects. Sixty-six projects – in the preparatory and/or realisation stage – emerged after this first call. In November 2006, these projects were regrouped according to the objectives but also according to the possibilities of actually implementing them on a regional level, leading to 20 action plans supported by as many "clusters" responsible for implementing them. In 2008, after seven years of progress, the Luxembourg 2010 authorities requested an assessment of the approach.

## 2.2. Charleroi 2020

The Charleroi 2020 exercise was launched in October 2003, initially in the form of an assessment of Charleroi Métropole 21, the town's project carried out ten years earlier.

Four phases were initially planned:

- a diagnosis based on this assessment;
- defining the issues in the evolution of the environment between now and 2020;
- determining the strategic areas;
- formulating and implementing innovative actions.

In June 2004, the phases of the exercise were reformatted as follows, with the methodological support of the Destrée Institute. This evolution reinforced the foresight aspect by organising the transversality between the twenty workgroups, developing a systemic approach, launching citizens' forums, and asking them to formulate desirable futures with experts in view of building a common and shared by 2020. Furthermore, this revision allowed actual foresight to be distinguished from strategy.

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(21) Pascale VAN DOREN et Philippe DESTATTE, *Proposition d'appui du Pôle Prospective de l'Institut Jules-Destrée à l'identification et à la hiérarchisation des enjeux et projets fédérateurs par les acteurs de Luxembourg 2010*, Namur, Institut Destrée, 14 March 2003, p. 31



Phase 1 : Shared diagnosis based on the assessment of *Charleroi Métropole 21*

Phase 2 : Long term issues - Evolution of the environment from now to 2020

Phase 3 : Common vision – The ultimate aims on the horizon 2020

F  
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Phase 4 : Strategic axis of development of Charleroi since 2004

Phase 5 : Formulating, grading and implementing innovative actions

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T  
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Y

In September 2005, this exercise led to a programme based on ten strategic areas, twenty major projects and 184 actions <sup>(22)</sup>.

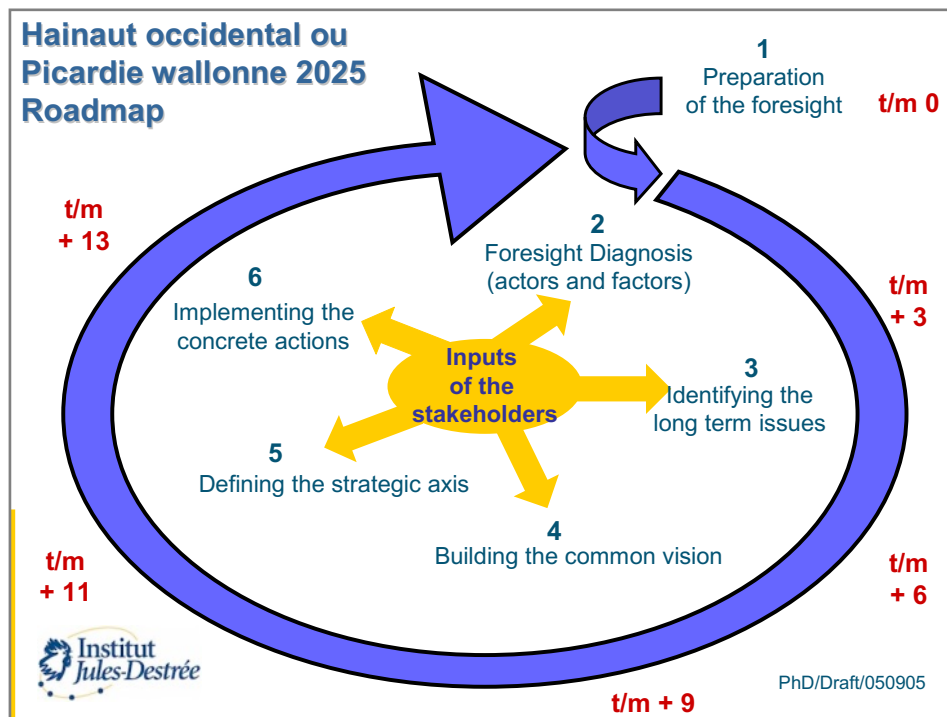
### 2.3. Wallonie picarde 2025

A more elaborate model of phases for a foresight process was elaborated, well before the launch of the exercise, in view of a presentation at the *Forem Conseil* in Tournai on 6 September 2005. It was a matter of devising a new initiative for the Hainaut occidental region – a territory between Lille, Brussels and Mons –, that was beginning to be known as "Picardie wallonne" and which would become "Wallonie picarde" a few months later. The process would be divided into six phases.

#### - Preparation of the approach (Phase 1)

The aim of this phase was to define the motivations and objectives of the exercise, identify the key actors to associate with the approach, to devise a work programme specifying the various key stages, the products of the approach, the means of participation and dissemination of the work as well as setting up project management structures. The last aspect is fundamental particularly as regards the composition of the Steering Committee, which plays an essential role in the different stages of the project. This initial phase also concerned the methods for constituting the information base useful to this exercise. The aim of this phase was to define the operational tools for network connectivity and communication, in particular, the design of the initiative's website that would allow everyone to participate, communication brochures halfway through (presentation of the vision) and at the end (presentation of the strategy and actions).

(22) Charleroi 2020, *Itinéraire pour demain*, Novembre 2005, p. 39 + CD-ROM.



### Foresight part

#### - Phase 2. Foresight diagnosis

This collective and transversal analysis was aimed at providing in-depth knowledge of the various characteristics of the regional situation, by taking into account both the reality of the indicators and the mental representations and perceptions it induces. This analysis gave an important place to the region's internal and external evolutionary trends, to possible evolutions and ruptures (*the possible futures*), as well as the region's transborder and interregional positioning. It was also a joint moment of capitalisation and ownership of the reflective work and strategic projects elaborated previously in all or part of the region.

#### - Phase 3. Identification of long-term issues

The knowledge acquired in phase 1 constituted the basis for the identification of the main determining issues for the long-term evolution of the region and the change factors that would have an impact on the region's activity in the coming decades. It was also a matter of identifying the actors' level of mastery of these various issues.

#### - Phase 4. Construction of the common vision

Based on the long-term issues identified, it was a matter of formulating a vision for the region that consisted of defining – as Michel Godet recommended for businesses – common values and ultimate aims, in order to mark out the region in the interest of its inhabitants. The collective formulation of a desired future for the region allowed the collective strategy of policy-makers, interested parties (businesses, public services, associations, etc.) and citizens to be guided in order to meet the issues identified in concrete terms.

### Strategic part

#### - Phase 5. Definition of the key strategic areas

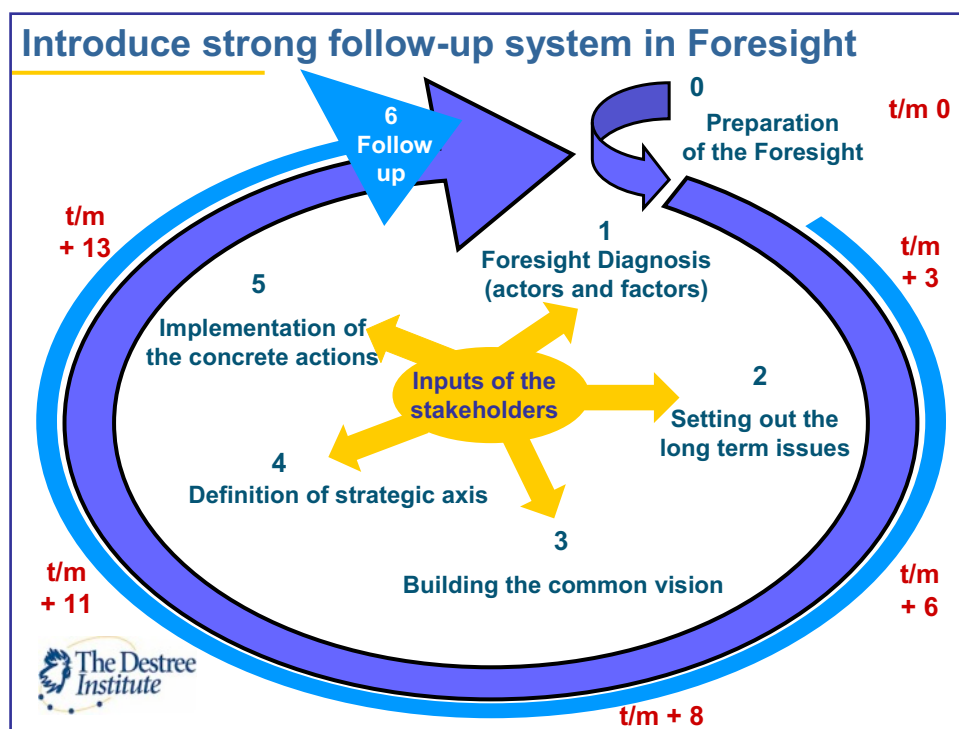
Here, it was a matter of proposing key strategic areas that were likely to help the region achieve the described vision of its desirable future by 2025, and meet the present and future issues identified collectively. These key strategic areas therefore constituted the structure of the regional project to be implemented at the end of the exercise.

- Phase 6. Implementation of concrete actions

The ultimate product consists of concrete actions that fall under the scope of a strategic environment defined for the region, taking into account the decision-makers frame of intervention. Particular attention was given to the convergence between the individual motivations of the actors and the strategic vision defined on a common basis. This final phase envisaged the time required to constitute the actors' commitments to the formulated actions, as well as when their implementation should start and finish.

The methods were the subject of an additional description corresponding to each of the envisaged phases. If we look closely, in keeping with the continuity of foresight – already present in the phases for Luxembourg 2010 – the plan draws inspiration from the experience of the state of Virginia's foresight approach, presented in Chicago in July 2005. The new process also adapts the formulation of foresight diagnosis, so dear to Philippe Mirenowicz (*Conservatoire National des Arts et Métiers* and *GERPA*), to show that possible futures should be studied as well as making a traditional regional diagnosis <sup>(23)</sup>. As for Hugues de Jovenel (*Futuribles*), who managed the Liège 2020 exercise, which we shall not focus on here, he uses the concept of “*diagnostic en dynamique*” (*dynamic diagnosis*) to refer to this particular aspect <sup>(24)</sup>.

Several weeks later, during a European FOR-LEARN seminar at IPTS in Seville, on 2 December 2005, the diagram representing the process integrated the importance of the foresight exercise's follow-up system in the form of a second arc of a circle parallel to the first one <sup>(25)</sup>.



(23) Philippe MIRENOWICZ, *Les sept étapes d'une démarche de prospective territoriale*, Séminaire Méthodes et pratiques de prospective territoriale, Paris, Futuribles, 10 February 2004.

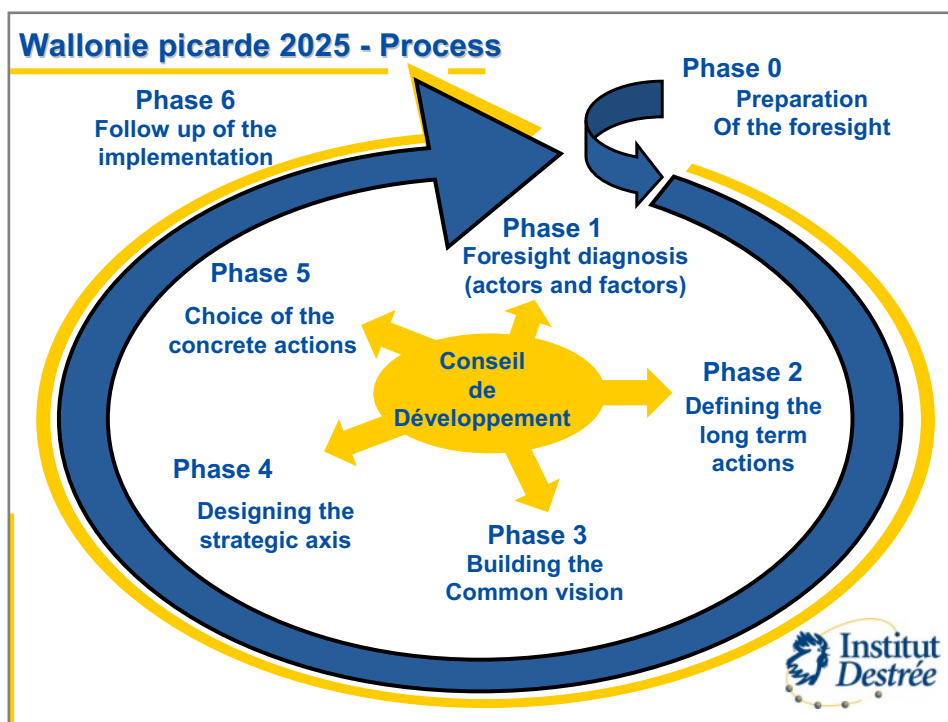
(24) Hugues de Jovenel generally use a five-step process:

1. Defining the problem and choosing the horizon;
2. Constructing the system and identifying key variables;
3. Gathering data and drafting hypotheses;
4. Exploring possible futures, often with the help of tree structures;
5. Outlining strategic choices.

Hugues de JOUVENEL, *An Invitation to Foresight*, p. 54-56, Paris, Futuribles, July 2004.

(25) Philippe DESTATTE, *The Place of Foresight in Policy Making System, The Experience of Wallonia*, FOR-LEARN Expert Workshop “Positioning the Foresight in the Policy Making System”, Seville, 2 December 2005, ppt.

It will accompany the entire process of the Wallonie picarde 2025 regional project under this new form, from the launch of the approach on 21 June 2006 at Tournai Expo <sup>(26)</sup>, up until the implementation of the project.



### 3. The platforms: Wallonia Territorial Intelligence Platform and Mutual Learning Platform

#### 3.1. The Wallonia Territorial Intelligence Platform (IntelliTerWal)

The Platform of information and networking for the emerging knowledge territories in Wallonia ("Wallonia Territorial Intelligence") project, set up in 2006 by the Town and Country Planning Department of the Directorate-General for Land Development, Housing and Cultural Heritage, now DGO4, has two general objectives:

- to ensure the visibility of the various initiatives to construct supra-communal areas of co-operation in Wallonia, their progress and their methods of construction and development;
- to produce information on the advances in regional intelligence and foresight in Wallonia <sup>(27)</sup> that are likely to benefit the processes in progress and in preparation.

It was then a matter of starting three projects:

- constructing an information and networking platform dedicated to regional projects in Wallonia, with a view to implementing the *Schéma de Développement de l'Espace régional* (SDER);

(26) Philippe DESTATTE, *Wallonie picarde, Un projet collectif à l'horizon 2025, Un développement commun dès 2007*, Tournai Expo, 21 June 2006, ppt.

(27) By regional intelligence, we are referring to the innovative, mutualized and networked organisation of all the information and knowledge useful to development, competitiveness, the attractiveness of a region, collectively and for each of the actors (definition of i-KM). By regional foresight, we mean an independent, dialectic and rigorous approach, carried out in a transdisciplinary and collective manner. Foresight is aimed at shedding light on present and future questions, on the one hand by considering them in their holistic, systemic and complex framework and, on the other hand, placing them in time, beyond historicity. Foresight is exploratory, therefore enabling evolutionary trends and counter-trends to be revealed, to identify continuities, ruptures and changes in environmental variables (actors and factors), as well as determining the range of possible futures. Foresight is normative, therefore enabling us to construct visions of desirable futures, elaborate collective strategies and possible forms of intervention and, subsequently, to improve the quality of the decisions to be taken.

- ensuring the most exhaustive information possible on the regional foresight initiatives carried out in the Walloon communal and supra-communal areas of co-operation;
- importing existing international expertise in the domain of regional foresight into Wallonia, particularly by bringing in experts from the four corners of Europe to present their experiences in the field in Namur.

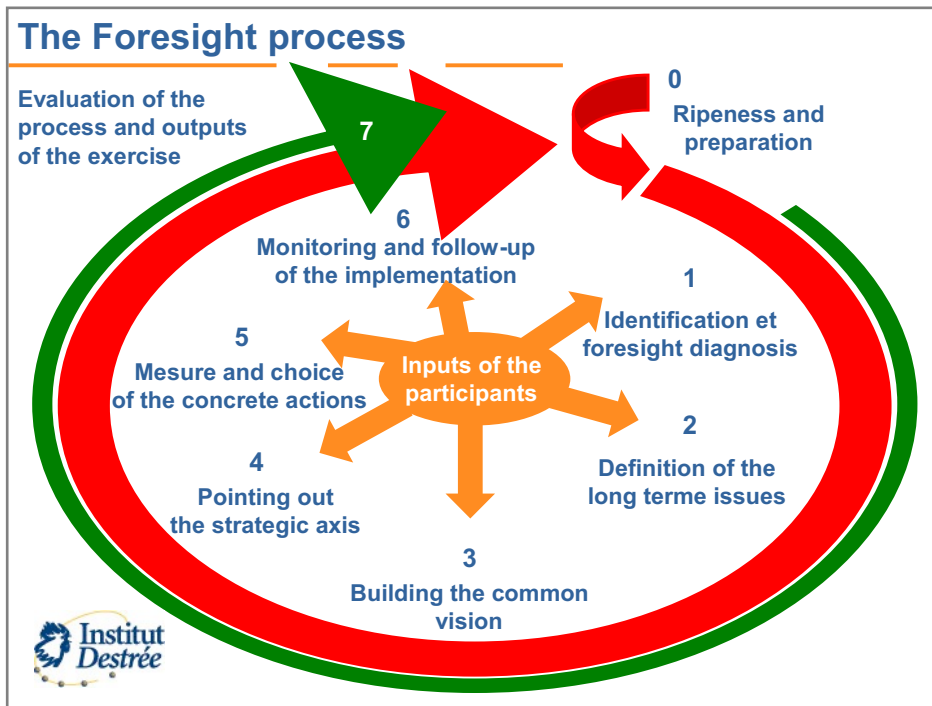
Over time, the Wallonia Territorial Intelligence Platform has constructed its collective learning approach based on the various experiences it encountered as regards the following seven areas:

1. Regional intelligence, its definitions and its tools;
2. Regional Walloon and European governance;
3. Areas of co-operation and regional projects;
4. Systems analysis and analysis of complexity;
5. Foresight assessment;
6. Observation and land development;
7. The phases, sequences and processes of foresight



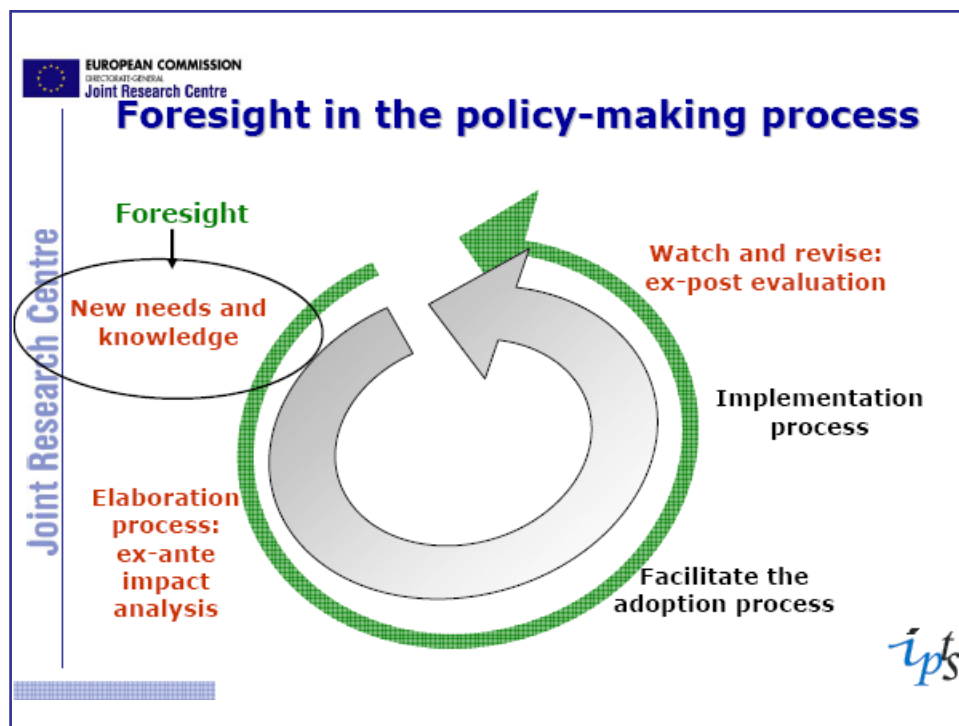
Right from its first seminar, on 11 May 2006, the Wallonia Territorial Intelligence Platform focused on designing a guide to foresight on the basis of experiences at a local level. It naturally adopted as a reference process the one that had been devised several months earlier according to the evolutions of the various experiences it came across.





### 3.2. The Mutual Learning Platform

We no longer present this three-directional horizontal European platform built by the Commission and the Committee of the Regions. Here too, interaction with the approach in progress in Wallonia is significant. Hence, during the joint seminar of the Mutual Learning Platform and REGSTRAT programme, organised in Stuttgart from 28 to 30 March 2006, Fabiana Scapolo and Philine Warnke of IPTS in Seville showed that the process presented in Seville on 2 December 2005, had had an interesting impact<sup>(28)</sup>.



(28) Fabiana SCAPOLO & Philine WARNKE, (Regional) Foresight Activities and their Impact, Joint Mutual Learning Platform – REGSTRAT Workshop, Stuttgart, 30 March 2006, ppt.

Furthermore, after the presentation of a series of analyses of European foresight cases and experiences, the conclusions of the seminar related to revealing the phases and sequences of foresight exercises with a view to creating a “guide of the guides” within the Mutual Learning Platform. The following sequencing was adopted, as well as the roadmap already presented at the FOR-LEARN seminar in Seville.

**Ripeness and preparation phase**

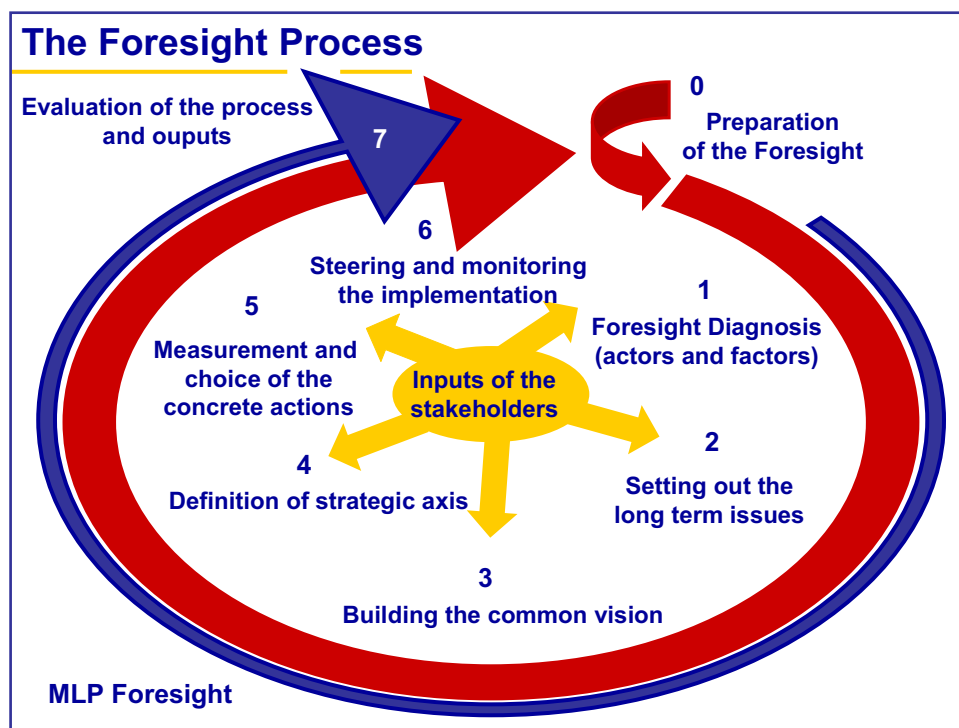
(Clarification of objectives, perimeter, timescale, desire, etc.)

**Foresight phase (Analysing, thinking and debating the future)**

1. Identification (actors and factors) and foresight diagnosis
2. Setting up the long-term issues
3. Building the common vision

**Strategic phase (Shaping the future)**

4. Definition of strategic axis
5. Measurement and choice of the concrete actions
6. Steering and monitoring the implementation
7. Evaluation of the foresight process and outputs



It is this model that was published in the European *Regional Foresight Report, Boosting Regional Potential* guide and distributed by the Directorate-General for Research, Regional Policy, Enterprises & Industries, the Committee of the Regions of Europe as well as the Innovative Regions in Europe (IRE) network in more than 2000 European regions as of October 2006<sup>(29)</sup>.

(29) Günter CLAR & Philippe DESTATTE, *Regional Foresight, Boosting Regional Potential, Mutual Learning Platform, Regional Foresight Report*, Luxembourg, European Commission, Committee of the Regions, IRE Network, October 2006.

## Conclusion: interdependence of foresight knowledge

*We are increasingly together, and we must work together*, wrote Gaston Berger in reference to the thinking of Teilhard de Chardin <sup>(30)</sup>. Without a doubt, knowledge and learning is developing in all areas of the world on the basis of experiences that are unique on the one hand, and collective in their distribution on the other hand. However, the places of exchange have to exist and be used, and allow real interactions through dialogue and deliberation.

In regional foresight, these tools tangibly existed during the first years of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The dynamism of the DG Research's K2 Unit, the willingness and availability of Paraskevas Caracostas and his collaborators, their ability to activate the networks and mobilise expertise as much as the centres of excellence, the willingness to make exchanges in the field – we welcomed them on numerous occasions in Wallonia –, all these elements were determining in the renewal of European foresight. At the same time, the Wallonia Territorial Intelligence Platform played its role and allowed numerous exchanges, in particular to test and reinforce an original process model.

Of course, this model is only a model. It has no more value than other models in progress. However, these are few and far between because unfortunately, not all the foresight teams, sponsors or operators formalise the processes they use.

The foresight cycle developed is, however, original in several ways.

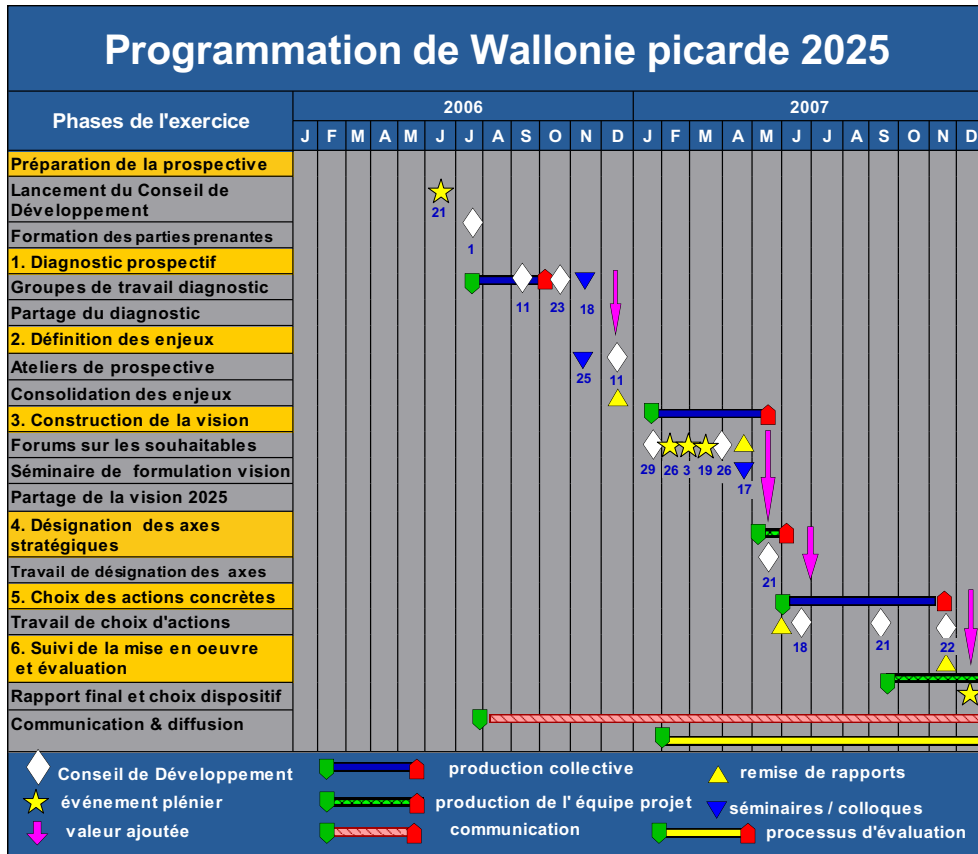
1. It is based on generic work and not methods. Methods must be divided according to need. What's more, these methods can be situated at different levels. For instance, exploratory scenarios could help to construct a foresight diagnosis insofar as they identify possible futures, but they could also be usefully employed to determine long-term issues. The foresight workshops are generally employed at different levels: diagnosis, issues, common vision, etc.
2. It focuses on the contribution of participants in all the steps that have to be taken, clearly placing regional foresight under the scope of a deliberate process and as a governance tool.
3. It shows and insists on the fact that the foresight process does not end with the actual foresight phase; it fundamentally integrates strategy, including implementation and, therefore, directly action. Our perception of the strategy is thus highly demanding since it considers that the strategy consists in the definition, co-ordination, implementation and adjustment of the operational objectives, the progress made as well as all the suitable actions and means, aimed at achieving the ultimate aims of an organisation or a region.

Like any model, this one is insufficient and therefore it cannot be fixed or act self-sufficiently. Therefore, it must continue to evolve with the methods, experiences and practices of foresight, both in the field and in the learning platforms. Furthermore, it must open up and complete itself with a link to the whole range and variety of methods. Insofar as it is possible, the process itself must be modelled and varied, by using instruments such as the Gantt Diagram or the PERT Chart (Program Evaluation and Review Technique).

Here is an example for Wallonie Picarde 2025.

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(30) Gaston BERGER, *Phénoménologie du temps et prospective*, p. 250, Paris, Puf, 1964.



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To conclude, we must return to one of the essential messages of Anglo-Saxon foresight: foresight is resolutely situated in innovative thinking and a world of innovation. While innovation once fell under the scope of collective, it must now set itself free in order to go forward, create, conceptualise before returning to confront itself once again in a fruitful dialogue. Breaking free from the models is essential to move forward according to the issues, visions and ambitions of the companies, and hence the regions, with which we work and in which we are involved.

As Teilhard de Chardin and Gaston Berger wrote, the world has not stopped, it is not standing still and it is not tired: it continues to change and evolve. Let us join with them and say that just like human beings, foresight is a young discipline. Its future lies ahead.