



# FUTURES

NEWSLETTER NO.2  
MARCH 2022

# FUTURE LABS

FOR PROFESSIONAL  
AND PERSONAL  
DEVELOPMENT

LATEST UPDATES  
ON THE  
ACTIVITIES



With great pleasure, we present to you the 2nd newsletter of the FUTURES project, where you will find the latest information about the project and the progress in its implementation.

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*Białystok University of Technology*  
*project coordinator*

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## WHAT IS FUTURES PROJECT ABOUT?

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**Future laboratories for professional and personal development - FUTURES (2020-2023)** is a European project which emphasizes the importance of high-quality adaptation skills as the means to support individuals in acquiring and developing key competences. A major part of these transversal competences and "soft skills" is the development of integrated and innovative ways of supporting personal development, resilience, adaptation, and critical thinking. As Futures Literacy (FL) increases individuals' capacity to 'use the future(s)' to explore the present, the project aims to adopt such a methodology also to foster professional development. In particular, the project underlines the need to develop skills of young people, for anticipating and promptly reacting to

scenario changes, and imagining professional career paths.

Within the FUTURES project, we aim to develop the innovative, future-oriented processes, tools, and methods that will foster personal and professional development among European University Students, Early Stage Researchers and High School Students, including also those that aspire to enroll in University. The training materials developed in the project will empower individuals to realize that their images about the future (anticipatory assumptions) have a significant bearing on (limit or open up) their actions and choices today.



## REPORT FOR THE INTELLECTUAL OUTPUT 1

**Please check out the report for the Intellectual Output One that has just been released.** The results of the desk research (first step of Intellectual Output One) were complemented by a series of empirical activities that involved anticipation workshops, aimed at collecting high-quality qualitative data on the anticipatory assumptions, future needs and future skills of target groups in partner countries, co-design sessions with the

consortium partners, as well as a Delphi Survey and a Delphi Group process.

The gradual analysis of the feedback collected in each step eventually led to the identification and validation of 19 design principles that were clustered into 5 overarching design principles, which should be taken into consideration in the following steps of the educational/training material design. [Read the report.](#)

## WHEN WE FINALLY MEET...

# OUR DESIGN/RESEARCH MEETING IN GRONINGEN, THE NETHERLANDS

by Loes Damhof

**After working online for more than a year, we kept our fingers crossed for our planned meeting in Groningen on October 13 and 14.** International travel nowadays forces us to be more flexible than ever, to seize the opportunity when there is a window and when restrictions are lifted. How one virus can dictate our lives becomes more and more a reality. But here we are. Groningen, at Hanze University, in the beautiful Art Academy, but tucked away in a tiny room where the smell of paint faintly lingered. Greece, Italy, Poland, Uk (with a Brazilian touch) and of course The Netherlands gathered in that room.



And as always, a space also partly dictates the meeting. It wasn't fancy or large, but we could open the window and we could see all the three major towers of Groningen from our window, against a blue sky. Oh how we appreciate the little things these days!

Our schedule was fully packed. Introductions, meetings, discussions, lunches, dinner, a Lab, more meetings and discussions. Day one started with a presentation of IO1: the design principals, by FORTH, and a discussion on the statements that hadn't reached consensus during the Delphi process. This took most of the morning till lunch. Longer than anticipated, yes. More discussions, other ideas, building on each others ideas... This is the benefit of being together. It may not save time at first, but it does something else. Being present adds to the collective wisdom. Besides expressing ideas, we add facial expressions, energy, body language, social dynamic, humor and we build a rapport. We slowly come to understand where the

other comes from. Connections with earlier meetings are made.

**We sense more, but things also make more sense.**

Our first day was very fruitful, moving after lunch towards the design of the workshops in IO2, led by BUT. This felt like a free brainstorm: building on each others creativity, which got more of a boost by the arrival of Pedro. We ended the meeting feeling energised, not in the least by the improv energiser of Jitske. We were ready to spent some social time together.

Our dinner was at a small lunch restaurant that opened its doors for us. Surrounded by curious memoralia and plants we were free to walk around, talk, and laugh. The evening ended on a high note: on top of the FORUM, the vertical and spiral living room of Groningen, looking over the city and its lights.



Day two started with a short Futures Literacy Lab of four hours, facilitated by HUAS. It had two objectives: to introduce the rest of the team to Futures Literacy as practiced by HUAS, and to gather new insights on the Future of Professional Development. A wonderful opportunity to try out some physical activities and to listen to the perspectives of three wonderful students. The Lab also deepened our understanding of each other as partners: to see each other at work, to negotiate shared meaning and to exchange ideas on a meta level.



**And... to be playful, to be light, to experience the joy of futures work. To be open to emergence.**

After lunch it was back to the world of planning and preparation, since we need to walk on both legs. Deadlines that could have been daunting, if it was not for the gentle approach of BUT. There was work ahead of us. Products to be developed, deadlines to be met. And finally time to say goodbye after two intense and fruitful days.

Now, being back in the virtual world of busy agendas and the occasional coffee meetings on Friday, the memory of our meeting fades away. What remains is the anticipatory joy of what is yet to come.

## LATEST UPDATES ON THE ACTIVITIES

Despite the difficulties and uncertainties of the historical moment we are experiencing, the FUTURES project does not stop and all the partners keep working together. After the fruitful meeting in Groningen, the partners started working on the training modules that will compose the learning course of the project.

The partners agreed to call the course **“Replay your futures - Labs for exploring undiscovered pathways”**. The course will be composed of an introduction module (prepared by Middlesex University) and three single modules on the different domains addressed by the project:

**1** **“Anticipation for the future”** (prepared by Bialystok University and Łukasiewicz-ITEE); the training contents will be: STEEPVL analysis, Scenario analysis, Futures wheel, Road mapping, Six thinking hats, Force field analysis, Scamper method. This module will develop and adapt foresight methods, tools and relevant non-formal educational materials;

**2** **“Anticipation for emergence”** (prepared by Hanze University and Forth) to introduce participants with Anticipation for Emergence (AfE) as an alternative way of ‘using the future’: a rigorous imagination of the later-than-now in a plural and open way, integrating spontaneity and improvisation;

**3** **“Performance for Futures”** (prepared by Middlesex University) to acquaint participants with concepts and ideas from the world of theatre and performance, which can be applied to thinking about futures in ways that will help their personal and professional development. The module will allow to understand how theatre and performance can be useful in fostering skills in *anticipation for the future* and *anticipation for emergence*, overall helping participants become more **futures-literate**.

During the last virtual project meeting, Bialystok University made a recap on the overall architecture of the course. The three modules should be conceived as self-standing, which means that they can be delivered consecutively or separated, respecting the principle discussed during the meeting in Groningen: “Meet the learners where they are”. It is important that each partner brings its expertise and that each of them will learn from the others. Instead of having a linear trajectory, the course will be conceived as a circle, giving the opportunity to “play” with the modules that can be followed both one after the other and separated.

The modules will be tested during the short-term joint staff-training event foreseen in Bialystok in spring 2022: the partners will have the opportunity to deliver their training sessions and to learn from this experience before replicating it within their institution.

At the moment, therefore, the partners are proceeding smoothly in the phases of the project, demonstrating great ability to adapt and understand situations that are not always easy to manage.



## ŁUKASIEWICZ AND BUT TIGHTENED COOPERATION



When the Łukasiewicz was established in 2019, the main assumption was to create a network of research institutes dealing mostly with technical issues. Thanks to two institutes belonging to the network, the Institute of Sustainable Technologies in Radom and the Institute of Organization and Management in Industry in Warsaw, which deal with foresight on a daily basis, the potential of working with the future was quickly noticed in the whole Łukasiewicz Research Network. As a result, in **November 2021, the Centre for Foresight and Internationalization (CFI) was established in Łukasiewicz, headed by Rafael Popper**, an expert with over 20 years of international experience in the field of foresight and supporting the development of innovation.



**The goal of CFI is to connect and support researchers and entrepreneurs in finding and using research and innovation opportunities and finding answers to social challenges.** In particular, CFI will help researchers build international partnerships and consortia. Using the inauguration of CFI, 10 leading international institutions expressed their will to cooperate with Łukasiewicz.

They include German ISI Fraunhofer, British University of Manchester, Irish Science Foundation Ireland, Austrian Austria Institute of Technology, Portuguese INESC Brussels HUB & INESC TEC, Finnish VTT Technical Research Center of Finland, Finland Futures Research Center (FFRC), Belgian Knowledge4Innovation and a representative Cabinet of the Secretary General in the European Parliament and OECD.

The representative of the Cabinet of the Secretary General, Freya Windle-Wehrle, said that in the European Parliament the strategic foresight is put in the centre of planning activities. She pointed the importance of having qualified staff with the best tools to help prepare for what is to come and that CFI is building a strong foundation for sustainable development in a rapidly changing world where the future may seem more uncertain than ever.

**But what is most important from the point of view of our project is the fact that the Białystok University of Technology has also**

**joined the group of academic partners of the Łukasiewicz Research Network and CFI!**

President of the Łukasiewicz Research Network, Piotr Dardziński emphasizes: *“As Łukasiewicz, we want to act in a perspective and on an international scale, and for this, we need strong partners who will help us translate the results of scientific research into a rational benefit for entrepreneurs and the development of the future. In the area of cooperation between Łukasiewicz and the Białystok University of Technology I see the great potential and look forward to joint R&D projects.”*

In addition, the rector of the Białystok University of Technology, Prof. Marta Kosior-Kazberuk of BUT [Polish title: dr hab. inż] pointed that the university puts a strong emphasis on cooperation with the economic environment: *“I am glad that the agreement concluded gives us the opportunity to expand our research areas together with researchers of the Łukasiewicz Research Network. I hope that the results achieved jointly will also find real application in individual branches of knowledge. They will be implemented to the benefit of the development of science and will bring measurable benefits.”*

Joint projects by Łukasiewicz and BUT will focus in particular on solutions in the field of transport and logistics, construction and environmental sciences, computer science, mechanics, electrical and electronic industries, and the most important for us, the use of foresight methods.

## PROJECT PARTNERS



**Łukasiewicz**

Institute for Sustainable Technologies



**ValueD**

## PROJECT INFORMATION

**Name:** Future laboratories for professional and personal development

**Number:** 2020-1-PL01-KA2023-082243

**Duration:** 36 months

**Funded:** Erasmus + Programme of the European Union

### Are you interested in:

- interpreting futures?
- imagining futures?
- professional development?
- personal development?

If you answered **YES** at least once, the results of the project could be appealing to you!



[/FuturesEuropeanProject](#)



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