

FUTURES OF SCIENCE AND CONFLICT

SUMMARY OF THE PILOT WORKSHOP

(ONLINE, 27 MARCH 2025)

2023-2026
18 PARTNERS



CONTEXT

EYE OF EUROPE OBJECTIVES

- Strengthen the integration of foresight practices into Research and Innovation (R&I) EU policy-making
- Support the Futures4Europe platform in nurturing an influential R&I foresight community

PILOT WORKSHOPS SERIES

- Address key topics relevant to the European Research Area (ERA)
- Experiment with innovative foresight methodologies and diverse groups of participants

KEY TAKEAWAYS

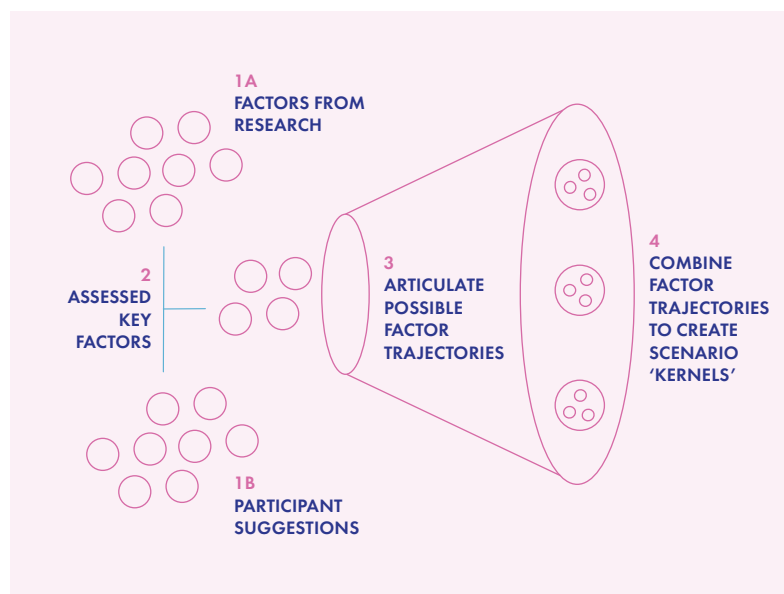
The Futures of Science and Conflict workshop explored how growing geopolitical tensions may reshape scientific research, international collaboration and innovation ecosystems. Bringing together experts from science, defence, diplomacy and foresight, participants identified the most uncertain and influential factors affecting the relationship between science and conflict, examined alternative trajectories through structured foresight methods, and

combined these into preliminary scenario „kernels“. The workshop highlighted that issues such as AI, social trust, geopolitical alliances, trade policy and disaster preparedness are not isolated challenges, but interconnected drivers that will shape the resilience, governance and openness of future European research and innovation systems.

WORKSHOP METHODOLOGY

1. THE FUTURES CONE

The workshop followed a structured scenario-building process that combined evidence gathering, expert participation and creative foresight methods. Participants first identified and prioritised the most uncertain factors influencing the future relationship between science and conflict, explored alternative trajectories using the Tetralemma method, and finally combined these trajectories into preliminary scenario kernels that can support future strategic foresight exercises.



2.

CRITICAL DRIVERS OF SCIENCE AND CONFLICT

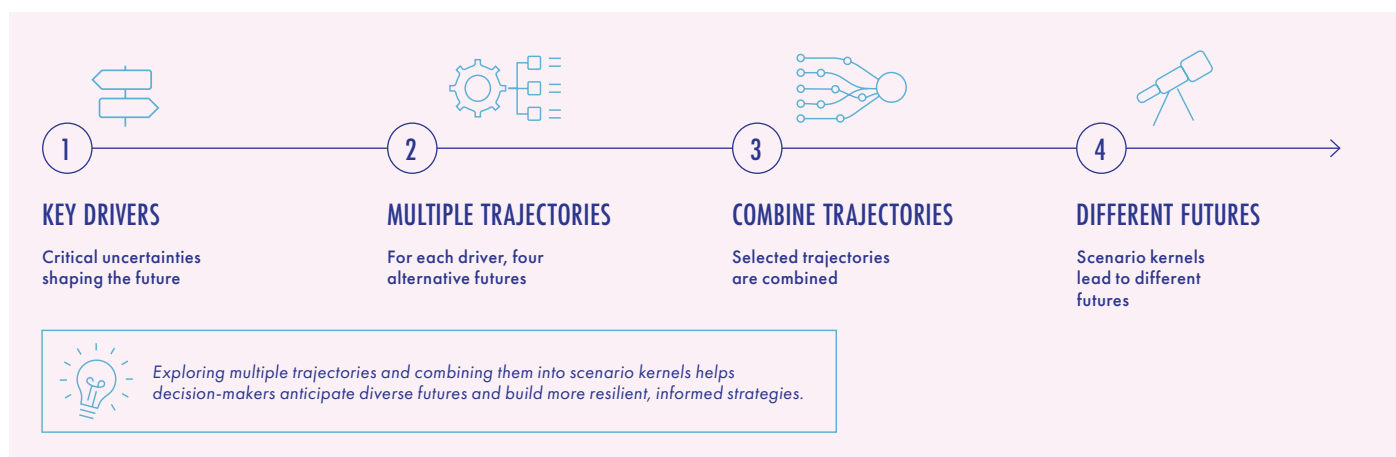
Participants assessed a broad range of social, technological, geopolitical and institutional factors before identifying those with the greatest uncertainty and potential impact. While emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence featured prominently, discussions also emphasised the importance of social trust, international trade, geopolitical alliances, disaster preparedness and research security. Together, these interconnected drivers form the foundation for exploring multiple futures rather than predicting a single outcome.



3.

EXPLORING ALTERNATIVE FUTURES

Using the Tetralemma method, participants examined multiple trajectories for each critical driver rather than assuming a single expected future. These trajectories were then combined into „scenario kernels“ - short narrative building blocks illustrating how different developments could interact. The resulting scenarios explored themes such as verified information ecosystems, information chaos, shifting geopolitical power, unequal preparedness, and evolving public–private partnerships, providing starting points for more comprehensive foresight work.



READ THE WORKSHOP REPORT

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