

# Advancing Long-Term Governance and Intergenerational Fairness in the European Union

Global Insights and Recommendations for  
Effective Action



School of  
International  
Futures

# Contents

<b>Executive Summary</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>1. The case for Intergenerational Fairness and protecting the rights of present and future generations</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>2. How the EU became a global leader on Intergenerational Fairness</b>	<b>7</b>
2.1 An unprecedented opportunity for long-term systemic transformation	9
2.2 Contributing to a global milestone beyond European borders	10
<b>3. From words to action: Insights and resources for advancing long-term governance (LTG)</b>	<b>12</b>
3.1 The need for an ecosystem approach	13
3.2 Where to start: Working across the Prism to drive systemic change	14
3.3 How to move forward: Capabilities and resources for implementation	14
3.3.1 Organisations are prepared: Strengthening institutional and sectoral capacity	14
3.3.2 Citizens are involved: Enhancing public engagement and citizen participation	15
3.3.3 Leaders act with Intergenerational Fairness: Supporting political leadership and governance reform	15
3.3.4 Connecting the dots: Building IGF ecosystems that look at the Long-term	15

4. Recommendations: A tailored agenda for turbocharging the EU capacity and capability to deliver	16
5. Seizing the momentum for equitable and long-term governance	22
6. Relevant resources developed by SOIF	23

# Executive Summary

From its inception, the European integration project has stood out for its commitment to fostering shared prosperity and ensuring long-term peace. Decades of social transformations and the growing interconnection of local and global challenges have reshaped its structure, but not its founding principles. Over the years, the EU has increasingly recognised that stability and resilience require mechanisms for participation and accountability, alongside political commitment to building frameworks capable of anticipating future challenges and opportunities without compromising the interests of present and future citizens.

Under Ursula von der Leyen's presidency, and inspired by pioneering examples from leading countries such as Portugal, the Netherlands, Italy, Germany, Finland, and Ireland, the European Union has the potential to consolidate a governance approach that addresses demographic, climate, and socioeconomic challenges in a fair, effective, and equitable way. The adoption of the Declaration on Future Generations (DFG) as part of the United Nations Pact for the Future in 2024 and the recent nomination of the first ever EU Commissioner dedicated to Intergenerational Fairness (IGF) represent a further step and an unprecedented opportunity for EU Member States to leverage and scale up these efforts.

Global and regional trends place the EU at a pivotal moment, offering a set of opportunities –and responsibilities– to genuinely transform what is needed to unlock the transition towards inclusive and resilient wellbeing-focused societies, emphasizing equity and prosperity for all generations. The integration of both youth leadership and foresight into governance structures is a prerequisite for visionary commitments to translate into tangible and transformative impacts. But a focus on intergenerational fairness also puts solidarity between current generations alive now –including older generations– and between them and those from the future at the heart of policy. By positioning the IGF agenda as a strategic governance priority, the EU can not only address the root causes of current trust deficits and transition delays but also set an example of leadership that aligns long-term resilience and competitiveness with solidarity and fairness. This agenda is urgent given there is only a narrow window of opportunity to address the drivers of growing intergenerational tension. It is also an agenda that offers hope in a turbulent world, inspiring citizens and leaders alike. The EU's decision to prioritise this universal governance principle promises to refresh democratic narratives, institutions and policymaking processes so they are fit for the twenty-first century.

This policy paper seeks to turn words into action. It **sets the context** by connecting the dots across decades of EU efforts to embed foresight systemically and its decision to position intergenerational fairness as a critical strategic dimension to policy-making. The brief **outlines the EU's achievements** in this space, and then focuses on **presenting actionable recommendations** to further strengthen its capacity to lead in embedding IGF principles through futures-oriented methodologies into governance

structures. The School of International Future's (SOIF) practical tools and networks, including those developed in partnership with EU institutions, offer a roadmap to operationalise these principles effectively.

The paper then proposes five core recommendations to advance the EU's IGF and long-term governance (LTG) agenda. These include strengthening the EU's commitment to the UN Pact for the Future and the DFG by institutionalising its principles and fostering participatory policymaking. It calls for enhancing EU and Member States' governance capabilities through learning networks, meaningful youth engagement, and tailored coalition-building efforts. It focuses on strengthening EU institutional capacities by embedding IGF principles into legislation, closing data gaps, and creating oversight mechanisms such as Committees for the Future. It also urges amplifying citizen voices through intergenerational dialogues, IGF assessments, and inclusive policymaking that engages underrepresented voices and younger generations. Beyond the EU, it recommends fostering the transformative foresight governance of partner countries through inter-regional parliamentary assemblies, thematic collaboration or the investment agenda, while leveraging the opportunity that represents the 4th International Conference on Financing for Development (FfD). A series of resources is displayed at the end for those willing to take a step further in advancing IGF principles and LTG in the EU.

## 1. The case for Intergenerational Fairness and protecting the interests of present and future generations

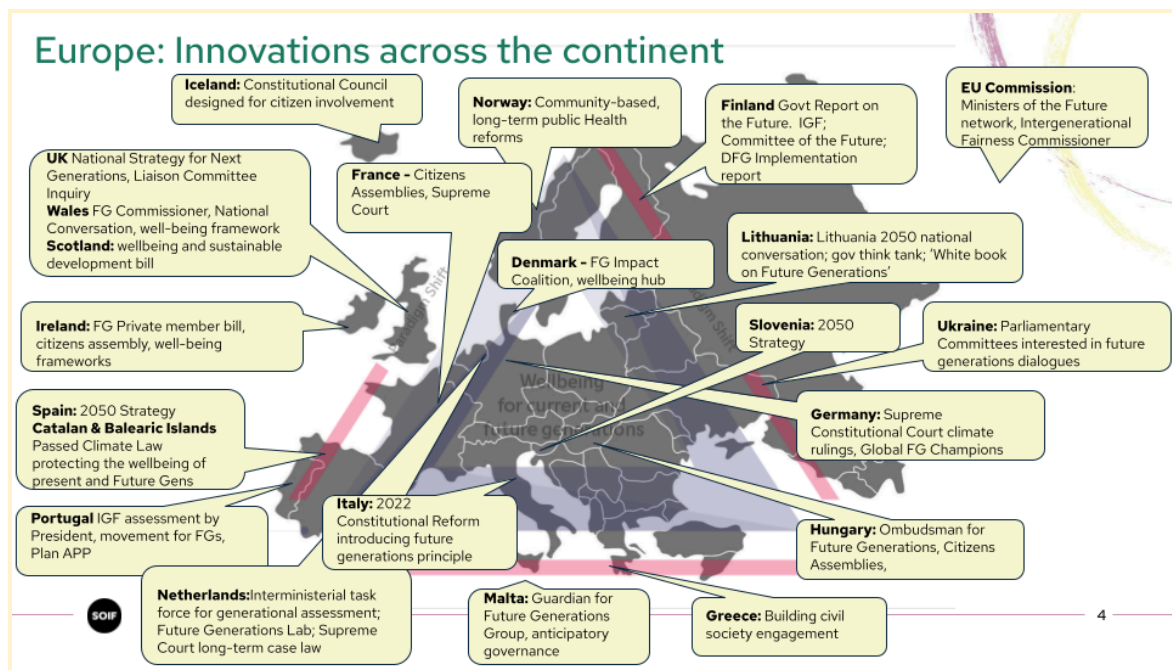
Policymakers and citizens increasingly recognise that the decisions –or indecisions– of today may irreversibly shape the world of tomorrow. At the same time, the interconnectedness of local and global challenges and the speed at which generational gaps unfold, starkly expose the inability of our governance systems to adapt and respond effectively to rapid change.

In Europe, shifting demographic patterns are converging with the urgent demands of green and digital transitions. These transitions are colliding with governance frameworks that remain largely unchanged, many of which were designed for a vastly different era more than a century ago. Humanity has also experienced a profound shift: we have moved from a historical norm of two to three generations alive at one time to now having four or more generations coexisting. This transformation poses generational distributional challenges to our political systems; and adds layers of complexity to public service demands, housing, key sectors such as agriculture, and therefore fiscal pressures and

challenges to social cohesion, with both rapidly aging and youthful populations creating regionally varied challenges.<sup>1</sup>

The green and digital transitions ahead bring immediate costs and uncertain long-term benefits, requiring governance systems to navigate an unprecedented degree of uncertainty and complexity. Lessons from COVID-19, recent United Nations Conferences on Climate Change, and the cascading geopolitical uncertainties and food security crises resulting from conflicts in Ukraine, the Middle East, and beyond –and most dramatically the recent changes in the United States– highlight a critical truth: incremental approaches to these transitions are no longer viable. Achieving the green transition and addressing these interlinked challenges will require bold, systemic change—and it must happen urgently.

Recognising these realities, influential EU leaders, including **Ursula von der Leyen**, **Angela Merkel**, **Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa**, and **Mario Draghi**, have championed the importance of intergenerational fairness (IGF) and long-term governance (LTG) as essential to the EU’s future. Member States like Finland, the Netherlands, Portugal, Italy, Lithuania, Ireland and Germany have already demonstrated leadership in adopting innovative governance approaches that incorporate IGF principles, showcasing the potential for transformative change. These governance innovations take many forms across the political system: constitutional rulings, policy assessments, new legislation and legislative institutions, or citizen dialogues are just a few examples. Across Europe and within the EU, there is a wealth of evidence on the transformative power of this agenda. The map below showcases some recent innovations in this regard:



<sup>1</sup> OECD (2020). Governance for Youth, Trust and Intergenerational Justice: Fit for All Generations?, OECD Public Governance Reviews, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/c3e5cb8a-en>.

These efforts remind us that intergenerational fairness is not merely a policy narrative, but a foundational pillar for achieving sustainable and equitable progress across the Union.

The IGF agenda provides a structured approach to addressing the long-term impacts of decisions through intergenerational dialogue, active citizenship participation, and mechanisms to safeguard the rights of those not yet born. These frameworks are essential for balancing the needs of today's aging and youthful populations while addressing critical challenges such as geopolitical tensions, climate justice, resource allocation, and socioeconomic transitions.

The EU's transformative initiatives, including the *European Green Deal* and *NextGenerationEU*, reflect its commitment to these principles. The appointment of the first Commissioner for Intergenerational Fairness marks a significant step in institutionalising long-term governance across Member States. By building on national efforts and advancing these agendas in pioneer states, the EU can position itself as a global leader in creating governance systems that are inclusive, sustainable, and equitable for all generations.

## 2. How the EU became a global leader on Intergenerational Fairness

Far from being a new initiative, the emphasis on intergenerational fairness reflects a deep-rooted legacy of efforts to establish a governance system that balances present needs with the capacity to anticipate and address future challenges and opportunities. Across decades, the EU has progressively understood that intergenerational fairness and long-term governance are not just ethical imperatives, but also strategic responses to some of the Union's most pressing challenges.

At the end of the 1980s, President **Jacques Delors** established the Forward Studies Unit (FSU) within the European Commission (EC) to address long-term socio-economic and political challenges. This approach was formalised in the **1993 Delors White Paper**, which emphasised sustainable development and future-oriented strategies. Subsequent milestones, such as the Lisbon Strategy (2000) and the European Research Area (ERA), further embedded foresight into EU governance, prioritising innovation and long-term competitiveness.<sup>2</sup> The EU research framework programs and the creation of the EU Institute for Security Studies in 2002 strengthened its capacity to anticipate and address societal challenges to help formulate EU foreign policy.

---

<sup>2</sup> ZOE Institute for Future-fit Economies. (2024). *Evidence-informed policymaking: A study of the future-fitness of impact assessments in the European Union*. Retrieved from [https://zoe-institut.de/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/ZOE\\_IA\\_Report\\_241211\\_final.pdf](https://zoe-institut.de/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/ZOE_IA_Report_241211_final.pdf)

The **2009 Lisbon Treaty** embedded sustainable development as a core principle of EU action. This focus was formalised in the 2010s with the European Strategy and Policy Analysis System (ESPAS), which institutionalised foresight as a vital component of EU governance. ESPAS championed anticipatory governance as an element of EU policymaking, across the Commission, Council and Parliament. Other key milestones include the **European Parliament’s 2013 Resolution on Intergenerational Justice and the EC’s “Long-term Strategy for Europe”**.

This groundwork paved the way for its elevation under the Presidency of Jean-Claude Juncker, who signaled institutional commitment to foresight. Under the leadership of Ann Mettler, foresight became mainstreamed into the decision-making system. The momentum was further solidified under Ursula von der Leyen’s leadership, with Vice President Maroš Šefčovič appointed as the first Commissioner in charge of Foresight, embedding futures-oriented strategies and tools into the heart of the EU’s governance structures.<sup>3</sup> This includes the integration of Foresight in the Better Regulation toolbox<sup>4</sup>, Member-state support and the Ministers of the Future network, networks across the Commission Directorates-General (DGs), and various other endeavours including innovations within the Joint Research Centre (JRC) as a centre of excellence, and the Secretariat-General (SG), as well as across Parliament and the European External Action Service (EEAS)<sup>5</sup> Sustainability and wellbeing were a key feature too.<sup>6</sup> The *Conference of the Future of Europe*, as well as the 2023 Year of Skills and Inclusion with partnerships beyond Europe –through the DG for International Partnerships (INTPA), but not only–, show the foundations of an ecosystemic approach.<sup>7</sup>

At the beginning of this term, the introduction of a Commissioner in charge of the IGF agenda within the EC represents a landmark in advancing EU leadership on long-term governance. With a concrete mandate to oversee the development of the EU’s Strategy on Intergenerational Fairness, the Commissioner has the opportunity to institutionalise tools like the Intergenerational Fairness Assessment Framework, mentioned during the Intergenerational Fairness Strategy Kickoff meeting on March 2025, and to identify developments that will impact future generations. Besides, the IGF Commissioner will play a pivotal role in the next stage of embedding long-term perspectives into EU policies

---

<sup>3</sup> European Commission. (2023). *Strategic Foresight Report 2023: Empowering the EU for future challenges*. Retrieved from

[https://commission.europa.eu/document/download/ca1c61b7-e413-4877-970b-8ef619fc6b6c\\_en?filename=SFR-23-beautified-version\\_en\\_0.pdf](https://commission.europa.eu/document/download/ca1c61b7-e413-4877-970b-8ef619fc6b6c_en?filename=SFR-23-beautified-version_en_0.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> The better regulation guidelines set out the principles that the European Commission follows when preparing new initiatives and proposals and when managing and evaluating existing legislation. The guidelines apply to each phase of the law-making cycle. See

[https://commission.europa.eu/law/law-making-process/better-regulation/better-regulation-guidelines-and-toolbox\\_en](https://commission.europa.eu/law/law-making-process/better-regulation/better-regulation-guidelines-and-toolbox_en)

<sup>5</sup> Westphal, K. (2022). *Strategic foresight in the European Union: Institutionalization and policy relevance*. *European Law Journal*, 28(4), 482–495. <https://doi.org/10.1111/eulj.12524>

<sup>6</sup> ZOE Institute for Future-fit Economies. (n.d.). Sustainability and wellbeing front and centre of EU strategic foresight. Retrieved [18/12/2024], from

<https://zoe-institut.de/en/news/sustainability-and-wellbeing-front-and-centre-of-eu-strategic-foresight/>

<sup>7</sup> European Commission. (2022). *EU Youth Strategy 2021-2027: Engaging, connecting and empowering young people*. Retrieved from <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52018DC0269>



and processes. This policy brief offers ideas to inform this next stage of EU innovation on LTG in service of intergenerationally fair policies for the wellbeing of current and future generations.

## 2.1 An unprecedented opportunity for long-term systemic transformation

Addressing intergenerational concerns is no longer a peripheral issue but a central political and governance priority essential to safeguarding the EU's ability to deliver on its long-term objectives.

When communicating about her State of the Union address<sup>8</sup> to the European Parliament on 14 September 2022, where she underscored the EU's commitment to IGF principles, President Ursula von der Leyen stated: ***“Every action that our Union takes should be inspired by a simple principle. That we should not harm our children's future. It is time to enshrine solidarity between generations in our Treaties. The moment has arrived for a European Convention”***<sup>9</sup> A rich legacy of foresight innovation has positioned the EU as a proactive policymaker, moving beyond short-term responses to systemic, long-term governance approaches – a role that the EU played internationally in showing solid commitment during the negotiations for the Declaration on Future Generations (DFG), an Annex to the Pact of the Future signed unanimously by 193 UN member states at the end of September 2024.

Under the leadership of the current President of the European Commission, **Ursula von der Leyen**, the EU has taken bold steps to prioritise IGF principles. The *European Green Deal* and the *New European Bauhaus* exemplify its forward-looking approach to governance. The appointment of **Glenn Micallef** as the EU's first Intergenerational Fairness (IGF) Commissioner in November 2024 further solidifies this commitment, ensuring long-term needs and interests are integrated across EU policymaking. The IGF Commissioner is tasked with delivering transformative outcomes, including:

- Developing the EU's Strategy on Intergenerational Fairness to align policies with long-term objectives.
- Establishing robust participatory mechanisms such as the annual Youth Policy Dialogues and the President's Youth Advisory Board, ensuring that young voices shape the EU's future trajectory.
- Leading the integration of foresight practices into EU governance, ensuring evidence-based approaches that anticipate and address future challenges.

---

<sup>8</sup> European Commission. (2022, September 14). *State of the Union address by President von der Leyen*. Retrieved from [https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/news/2022-state-union-address-president-von-der-leyen-2022-09-14\\_en](https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/news/2022-state-union-address-president-von-der-leyen-2022-09-14_en)

<sup>9</sup> Von der Leyen, U. (2022), [Tweet](#) from September 14.

**The unprecedented opportunity ahead extends beyond the leadership of the IGF Commissioner, emphasising the need to consolidate ecosystemic efforts to embed intergenerational fairness and long-term governance across EU policies and institutions.** Commissioner Micallef will play a crucial anchoring role, but this endeavour can be scaled and amplified through coordination with a set of institutions and initiatives with complementary mandates and responsibilities. **Teresa Ribera's** leadership as Commissioner on clean and just energy transitions and the support of the Secretariat-General, Joint Research Centre (JRC), as well as Eurostat, will be pivotal in driving this agenda forward. Strengthening the connections and foresight capabilities of these institutions will be critical to effectively embed IGF principles across sectors beyond tokenist attempts. The combination between political leadership and institutional preparedness and ambition have the potential to multiply the impact that each one of these actors would have alone.

Equally important are partnerships with the European Parliament, including its officials and political parties, the European Council, the EEAS, and the European Court of Auditors. This interconnected ecosystem not only strengthens the foundations for systemic transformation but also ensures that long-term governance and intergenerational considerations are seamlessly integrated into the EU's operational and strategic framework.

## 2.2 Contributing to a global milestone beyond European borders

The 2024 **UN Summit of the Future** revealed that concerns about demographic shifts, climate and technological transitions, and growing uncertainty are shared globally, including by the EU.<sup>10</sup> These interconnected issues highlight the need for collective action and governance approaches that address long-term risks and opportunities. Among the Summit's outcomes, the **DFG** stands out as its most transformative achievement. **Article 28** of the Declaration establishes a vital global norm for considering the needs of future generations, marking a quiet yet groundbreaking step in advancing LTG: *“Undertaking a whole-of-government approach to coordination, including at the national and local levels, on the assessment, development, implementation and evaluation of policies that safeguard the needs and interests of future generations.”*<sup>11</sup> By doing so, the DFG serves as a catalyst for systemic change, linking LTG efforts to the wellbeing of current and future generations.

Together with a group of global visionary countries, the EU played an important role in shaping the DFG and ensuring its adoption, offering its experience in foresight and intergenerational fairness as part of a collaborative process. Crucially, action at the national

---

<sup>10</sup> Hale, T., et al. (2023). *Toward a declaration on future generations*. Blavatnik School of Government, University of Oxford. Retrieved from <https://www.bsg.ox.ac.uk/research/publications/toward-declaration-future-generations>

<sup>11</sup> Pact for the Future, Global Digital Compact and Declaration on Future Generations: [https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/sotf-pact\\_for\\_the\\_future\\_adopted.pdf](https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/sotf-pact_for_the_future_adopted.pdf)

and regional levels is mutually reinforcing multilateral norm-setting and policy discussions. **Transformative change at the global level requires both –strong national implementation to demonstrate practical application and evolving multilateral frameworks to drive collective ambition.** The DFG provides the catalytic opportunity to bridge these efforts and embed intergenerational fairness into global governance. In the lead-up to the 2028 review of the Declaration, the EU is well-positioned to facilitate shared solutions and foster a culture of collaboration, turning these global norms into actionable frameworks. In this regard, the EU can contribute in three ways to this global agenda:

1. **Leading by Example:** As the EU further develops the role of its Commissioner in charge of the IGF agenda, it can showcase how futures-oriented methodologies and tools, as well as LTG can be effectively implemented at local, regional, and global levels. Demonstrating how these approaches translate into concrete outcomes—including into the Green Deal, infrastructure and housing programmes, social care, governance mechanisms, and education for future jobs—will be a valuable contribution. Systematically documenting and evaluating interventions and impact can further position the EU as a leader in embedding sustainability, equity, and resilience into policymaking.
2. **Fostering Global Partnerships:** The EU has an unprecedented opportunity to rethink and engage in international partnerships that proactively seek to overcome the structural unbalances of North-South approaches. By fostering collaboration and solidarity, the EU can play a role in facilitating the exchange of successful governance models and IGF assessments globally. Such partnerships are vital for advancing Agenda 2030 and ensuring that equitable futures are achievable for all.
3. **Influencing Global Norms and Policy:** Through its influence in key global governance structures, such as the UN, the G20, the EU-Africa Dialogue, the OECD and others, the EU can champion intergenerational fairness as a cornerstone principle for decision-making and policy design. This advocacy can help embed intergenerational fairness into international frameworks, fostering a global consensus around the need for sustainable and futures-oriented governance – and lead to different outcomes on long-standing global policy discussions like Financing for Development (FfD).

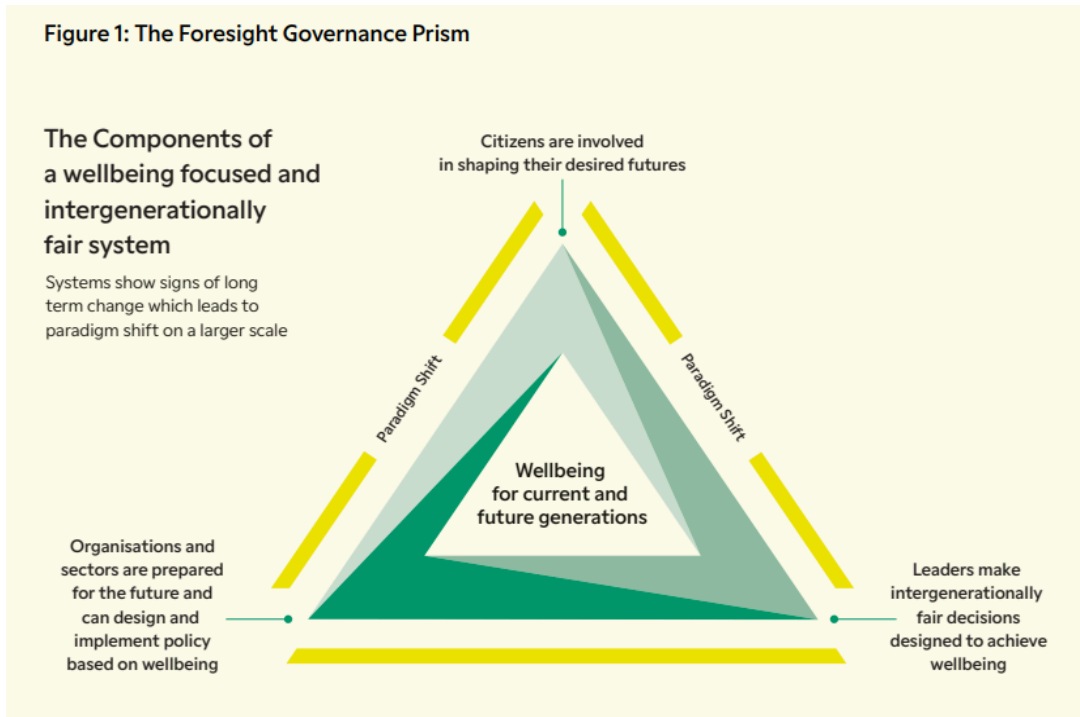
The following section provides concrete insights on how the EU and its Member States can advance a LTG agenda to achieve the above-mentioned goals, internally and globally.

### 3. From words to action: Insights and resources for advancing long-term governance (LTG)

By taking steps to embed foresight and long-term policy-making regionally and at Member-State level, the EU is showing strong willingness to protect future generations and advance intergenerational fairness. To succeed in moving from words to action, it will be crucial to leverage existing evidence on 'what works' and start from 'what already exists'. Fortunately, EU efforts are not isolated, but are part of a global coalition of early adopters and global champions leading on cutting-edge innovations to enhance the interaction between citizens, systems and political leadership in favour of the rights of current and future generations. In this regard, rethinking partnerships and joining the community of global change-makers will be crucial to help the EU address the complexities of integrating long-term thinking and representing the interests of future generations in policymaking.

Drawing on 14 years of hands-on experience with national governments and international organisations, the School of International Futures (SOIF) has developed a suite of tools and resources for IGF principles to effectively drive systemic change. These insights were refined through direct collaboration with policymakers from more than 50 countries, including Finland, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Portugal and Spain. The [Wales Protocol for Future Generations](#) and the [Handbook on DFG Implementation](#), launched in 2024 as part of the UN Summit of the Future process, synthesise this knowledge into a clear roadmap and a comprehensive set of tools for turning ambition into action.

These tools are grounded on the **Transformative Foresight Governance Prism**, an analytical framework that describes the core components of LTG. Building on action research and international good practice, it showcases the interplay of three critical dimensions: citizens, leaders, and institutions— that are proven to drive successful implementation of foresight and IGF practices. By addressing these dimensions holistically, the framework ensures interventions are sustainable, effective, and capable of delivering lasting impact.



**Figure:** Transformative Foresight Governance Prism, SOIF

### 3.1 The need for an ecosystemic approach

Experience shows that embedding IGF principles successfully requires intervention across all dimensions of governance, as illustrated by the **Transformative Foresight Governance Prism**. An ecosystemic approach is the one that ensures interventions span across three interdependent dimensions:

- **Citizens are involved:** Building public support for paradigm shift and connecting globally, by engaging the public, particularly young people and other underrepresented voices, in shaping long-term policies.
- **Leaders have incentives to make intergenerationally fair decisions:** Building political support and a bank of champions that create political conditions and support structures that empower decision-makers to implement intergenerationally fair policies.
- **Organisations and sectors are ready:** Influencing global systems through connection to local action, embedding IGF principles into all levels of governance frameworks through legal mechanisms, oversight bodies, and policy tools.

While efforts have been made in institutional design and public engagement, a crucial challenge has often been the leadership dimension. As former European Commission

President Jean-Claude Juncker put it, *“We all know what to do, but we don’t know how to get re-elected once we have done it.”* This reflects how political incentives often discourage long-term decision-making. The IGF agenda provides a mechanism to align these incentives, rewarding leaders for making future-oriented choices while maintaining political viability.

## 3.2 Where to start: Working across the Prism to drive systemic change

Far from a one-size-fits-all recipe, the Transformative Foresight Prism is a flexible framework for transformative change that addresses the interactions needed to break silos, ensure policy making follows a whole-of-society approach, leading through intergenerational participation and inclusion to transformative and not performative results. In this regard, the core tenet of this framework is that isolated interventions are not effective in the long term. Instead, working across the ecosystem, no matter the point of departure, is key to consolidate resilient governance approaches that are ready to anticipate and act long-term. The resources and tools developed by SOIF show that governments can apply the Foresight Governance Prism in three key stages:

- **Mapping and Identifying Entry Points:** Understanding the existing frameworks, policies, and institutions to assess where IGF principles are already being applied and where gaps remain
- **Building Coalitions of the Willing:** Identifying policymakers, institutions, and civil society actors committed to embedding IGF principles and forming alliances to drive change.
- **Developing and Action Plan:** Designing tailored interventions, drawing on tested approaches like country hubs model, to activate systemic transformation.

## 3.3 How to move forward: Capabilities and resources for implementation

As a means to support leaders and stakeholders in closing the gaps across the three dimensions of the prism, SOIF has developed a suite of tools and resources. These fall into three key categories (a detailed list of resources is displayed at the end of this brief):

### 3.3.1. Organisations are prepared: Strengthening institutional and sectoral capacity

- **Implementation Roadmaps:** Detailed strategies for embedding IGF frameworks at EU and national levels.

- **Foresight Ecosystemic Capability Model:** A framework for assessing and strengthening foresight capacity within governance structures.
- **Training and Capacity-Building:** Tailored support, including foresight retreats and technical assistance for policymakers to build their competencies as part of Community of Practices (CoP).

### 3.3.2. Citizens are involved: Enhancing public engagement and citizen participation

- **Participatory Dialogues and Foresight Initiatives:** Engaging communities in shaping policies through national intergenerational dialogues and community foresight exercises.
- **Youth and Civil Society Networks:** Platforms such as the [Next Generation Foresight Practitioners \(NGFP\)](#) and the [SOIF Pledge Network](#) build coalitions of citizens building competencies on futures-oriented methodologies and tools while advocating for the integration of IGF principles into governance structures.
- **Public Engagement Tools:** Resources to enhance foresight literacy and foster intergenerational dialogue.

### 3.3.3. Leaders act with Intergenerational Fairness: Supporting political leadership and governance reform

- **Intergenerational Fairness Assessment Frameworks:** Tools for evaluating policy impacts on future generations, including the citizen-led FutureCheck for parliamentary settings.
- **Governance Innovations:** Support for establishing Committees for the Future, legislation, IGF ombudsmen, and other accountability mechanisms.
- **Peer Networks for Policymakers:** Platforms such as the [Network for Institutions and Leaders for Future Generations](#), [SOIF Pioneers Network](#) and the Ministers of the Future Network to share best practices and lessons learned.

### 3.3.4. Connecting the dots: Building IGF ecosystems that look at the long-term

None of the above interventions can be taken in isolation. Building Intergenerational Fairness (IGF) ecosystems requires a holistic approach that integrates governance mechanisms, political leadership, and citizen engagement to ensure long-term sustainability. The [SOIF Handbook for Implementing the DFG](#) highlights the importance of establishing interconnected systems that reinforce intergenerational responsibility at multiple levels of governance. This requires a combination of programs, legal mechanisms, and institutional leadership. Efforts like the [National Strategy for Next Generations](#)



([NSxNG](#)), legislative interventions, and participatory foresight initiatives provide solid foundations for IGF, but **a linchpin institution holding the whole picture is critical to drive coordination and accountability**. Wales' Future Generations Commissioner, and the soon-to-be appointed UN Special Envoy act as powerful institutional champions to ensure that the IGF agenda is not just a set of isolated initiatives but a strategic principle and priority embedded across governance structures, guiding systemic transformation that delivers on long-term goals for future generations.

The establishment of the role of the **EU Commissioner in charge of the IGF agenda** and the development of the IGF strategy is therefore a critically important step. The next section outlines recommendations for key component parts of a powerful EU IGF strategy, that were derived from applying the Foresight Governance Prism approach to the EU context.

## 4. Recommendations: A tailored agenda for turbocharging the EU capacity and capability to deliver

The following recommendations are prioritised based on urgency and feasibility, leveraging existing strengths and areas of activity within the EC. While the recommendations are not exhaustive and no single action can achieve all goals, they propose a holistic, ecosystemic approach to strengthen the EU's capacity for long-term governance.

### I. Strengthen the EU's Commitment to the UN Pact for the Future and the Declaration on Future Generations (DFG)

To maximise the transformative potential of the UN Pact for the Future and the DFG, the EU and its Member States could take the following actions:

- **Commit to implementing the Declaration on Future Generations** as a guiding framework to safeguard the needs and interests of future generations in both multilateral and national decision-making processes.
- **Support the establishment of clear, effective multilateral and national implementation mechanisms**, such as annual fora, accountability measures, governance structures, and other commitments.
- **Publicly welcome the appointment of the UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy(s) on Future Generations**, ensuring the provision of adequate resources to support their work and establish connections between the work of the Special Envoy and the EU IGF Commissioner.



- Develop the **IGF Strategy in a participatory way** and in alignment with the Pact for the Future and with the DFG.
- **Prioritise alliances** with fellow UN Member States who are interested in a high ambition implementation –and working to address barriers to adoption.
- **Urgently establish a cross-EU implementation taskforce** to prepare for the coordinated implementation of the Pact, with particular focus on the Declaration commitments. This approach aligns with precedents such as the coordination mechanisms established for the Paris Agreement, the European Green Deal, and the implementation of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which have been instrumental in ensuring alignment, resource mobilisation, and accountability across diverse stakeholders.

## II. Continue to Strengthen EU and Member States Transformative Foresight Governance Holistically

By applying the Foresight Governance Prism framework, the EU could:

- **Maximise the potential of the EU Ministers of the Future network** as a key platform to support practical, actionable initiatives across EU Member States.
- **Expand cross-government learning networks** and other communities that bring together government foresight and future generations leads with a view to support knowledge exchange.
- Develop additional instruments to **resource meaningful youth and intergenerational engagement and leadership**.
- **Encourage Member States to inform the work in the EU and vice versa**, identifying innovations and policy solutions, as well as assessing progress in governance infrastructure and leadership that enables them to emerge.
- **Support in-country coalition-building** processes tailored to Member States' starting points in foresight governance, as seen in successful examples like Finland and Ireland, to advance efforts across the Foresight Prism dimensions.
- **Embed the principle of intergenerational fairness into independent institutions**, whether through new entities (e.g., a Parliamentary Committees for the Future or Ombudsman for Next Generations) or by strengthening existing ones like the EU Ombudsman.
- Include **IGFassessment process** to hold policymakers accountable at both the EU and Member State levels. This could also engage independent entities like the

Roundtable on Sustainable Biomaterials (RSB) to assess the future-fitness and IGF of Commission proposals.

- **Provide tools, infrastructure, and resources** that enable EU and Member States institutions and stakeholders to take practical steps towards embedding foresight and IGF and understanding its role in decision-making.

### III. Develop the Capacity of EU Institutions to Embed Foresight and Future Generations Agendas at the Heart of its Treaties, Policy, Legislation and Working Practices

There are various mechanisms that can support this, grouped below into five related priority areas.

3.1 Strengthening Policy and Decision-Making through Robust IGF Assessment Mechanisms that incentivise long-term perspectives. These mechanisms can be integrated into existing processes and strengthened through partnerships with experienced allies and through learning processes with leading countries across the world.

3.2 Closing the Data Gap: A robust foresight and future generations agenda hinges on high-quality, long-term data collection and monitoring systems. The EC can strengthen its capacity to:

- **Monitor Intergenerational Impacts:** Track the distributional effects of policies on different generations over time.
- **Align with Societal Stocks:** Support Member States in setting **targets based on societal stock** (e.g., natural capital, human well-being) rather than short-term outputs.
- **Leverage Eurostat:** Position Eurostat as a hub for long-term and generational data collection, integrating sustainability metrics into its systems.

Additionally, these efforts should link to the auditing roles of the **European Court of Auditors (ECA)** and national supreme audit bodies, ensuring policy impacts align with long-term societal and environmental goals.

3.3 Elevating the IGF and Futures agenda in the EC, Parliament and Council to institutionalise future generations' interests:

- **Continue Promoting Interinstitutional Communities** across the Commission, Parliament, and Council for a unified approach to foresight and IGF.
- **Build on Existing Work** by the Joint Research Center to build the strategic foresight capacity and networks across the Commission.

- **Strengthen the IGF principles of the Commissioners** with a clear mandate for Future Generations, including undertaking regular country-level mapping to identify progress, gaps and priorities over time.
- **Identify and Engage Intentionally with MEPs and Civil Servants** to build networks of those committed to understanding and integrating IGF principles into policy development.
- **Embed IGF in Foreign Policy:** Champion IGF principles internationally, leveraging on its alignment with founding EU values of peace and prosperity.

3.4 Exploring Financing, Legislative, and Treaties Levers: To create effective mechanisms for long-term decision-making, the EC can play a strategic role in incentivising and institutionalising the mandate, as well as transparency and accountability mechanisms for incentivising intergenerationally fair decision-making. In this regard, the EC can:

- **Advance Treaty Reform:** Building on Ursula von der Leyen’s commitment for Treaty Reform for Future Generations at the 2022 State of the Union.
- **Enhance Auditing Frameworks:** Work with the European Court of Auditors (ECA), INTOSAI and other supreme audit institutions to integrate a long-term and intergenerational lens to audit and assessment incentivising the system.
- **Learn from International Good Practice:** look at how New Zealand and other countries are using Wellbeing and Participatory Budgeting, alternative discounting approaches, and understanding the successes of legislation like the Wales Future Generations Act to design an approach that meets the EC and Member States’ needs.
- **Support Ambitious Judicial and Constitutional Reform at Member State level:** Encourage reform efforts, such as those led by the French Constitutional Council in France in 2024, to embed intergenerational accountability in legal frameworks.<sup>12</sup> This includes working with relevant stakeholders like lawyers, which can support a shift of mindset towards a rights-based approach to development and a strengthened role for countries in protecting the rights of future generations.
- **Support Business and the Financial Sector to become early Adopters of IGF Principles:** Promote long-term sustainability by tying green financing and investment to intergenerational accountability standards, encouraging businesses and investors to adopt forward-looking practices. One way to achieve this would be

---

<sup>12</sup> Constitutional Council of France. (2024). *Justice, future generations and the environment*. Retrieved from <https://www.conseil-constitutionnel.fr/sites/default/files/2024-02/generations-futures-programme-en.pdf>

to require long-run sustainability as a condition for investment in green financing and beyond.

### 3.5 Strengthening Parliamentary Oversight: Calling for Scrutiny and Establishing a Committee for the Future. This includes:

- **Support Scrutiny** of upcoming policy and legislation, as well as the next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) programming, to ensure it is intergenerationally fair, it respects the needs of present and next generations, and it considers longer-term and alternative futures. EC services like the Regulatory Scrutiny Board (RSB) could also be instrumental in this process.
- **Committee for the Future:** Establish a dedicated committee to represent future generations, ensure transparency, and oversee long-term impacts across EU policies.
- **Capacity and Capability Building for MEPs:** Provide training and tools to help MEPs apply foresight principles and engage constituencies in long-term challenges and opportunities.

## IV. Include and Amplify Citizen Voices across all Generations from pressures to Short-termism Behaviours to vision building on the Future of Europe

There is a general accountability and agenda-setting aspect to this, with the EC supporting member states, but also an opportunity for experimentation with desired futures as part of long-term policy design. There are specific mechanisms that can be used to help Europe-wide and national level conversations to be more inclusive, future-focused and representative of present and future generations' needs.

- **Convene Intergenerational Dialogues based on the principles of participatory futures:** fostering solidarity and bridging generational divides, connected to the different youth dialogues that each DG is mandated to deliver. These dialogues, amplified by the DG for Communication (COMM), could occur in urban and rural areas and include diverse stakeholders such as academics, business leaders, youth, business and civil society groups. Cross-cutting dialogues should be prioritised.
- **Integrate and Resource IGF Assessments:** Embed intergenerational fairness (IGF) evaluations into ongoing public dialogues and funding mechanisms to strengthen commitment to long-term decision-making and fairness.
- **Amplify Citizens and Youth Voices:** Develop communication strategies to help ensure meaningful intergenerational exchanges - including youth engagement - with policymakers and foster advocacy efforts with media and institutions. Support multi-stakeholder voices that advocate for Future Generations, like the [Fit for Future Generations](#) campaign.

- **Strengthen Political Awareness and Support Early Adopters:** Raise political awareness among early adopter politicians, support structured engagement with European Parliamentary groups and adopt advocacy approaches with the media.
- **Placing Youth Leadership, Wellbeing, and Governance Reform at the Center:** Support powerbrokering and improve youth engagement and its effectiveness through the use of participatory futures that help co-create liberatory and new visions for the future of Europe.
- **Institutionalise Foresight Accountability:** Implement tools like [FutureCheck](#), citizen-led assessments conducted by volunteers on live pieces of legislation which pass through Parliament, to evaluate legislative impacts on future generations.
- **Leverage the Expertise of Civil Society Stakeholders Proposing Rights-Based Long-term Governance Frameworks:** Collaborate with organisations like the ZOE Institute for Future-fit Economies, the Jesuit Social Centre, the Centre on Future Generations and SOIF to scale efforts and transform EU governance.

## V. Strengthen the Transformative Foresight Governance of Partner Countries in Service of Achieving Prosperity, Stability and Security.

EU institutions can drive their mandates to collaborate with different stakeholders from partner countries to strengthen their transformative foresight governance:

- **European Parliament:** the Directorate-General for External Policies of the Union, including cross-regional Parliamentary assemblies, as well as the Directorate-General for Parliamentary Democracy Partnerships.
- **European Commission:** RELEX-family DGs and agencies, thematic DGs following multilateral processes.

To activate the transformative power of intergenerational fairness in achieving prosperity, stability and security (including through the SDGs), financial and aid resources are a key to support transformative foresight governance in partner countries beyond EU Member States. Providing funds and technical assistance when needed for the adoption of future generations approaches and LTG innovations across all countries, including through the Global Gateway investment agenda and its 360 approach --global majority countries and LDCs included-- is critical for enabling legitimate and diverse representation around this agenda. This could be achieved directly through DG INTPA and the recently created DG for the Middle East, North Africa and the Gulf (MENA), but also through bilateral partnerships and multilateral channels, such as those behind the OECD DAC, the UN agencies, and development banks, including those implementing the Team Europe approach.

However, it is of particular importance to provide the support that is necessary to enable young people to connect to policy-making including through foresight literacy and intergenerational dialogues, as DG INTPA has started to do through its Youth4Foresight toolkit, already applied in some youth advisory structures at EU Delegation level. Further work in this sense could be done by the European Parliament and thematic DGs.

The 4th International Conference on Financing for Development (FfD) brings an unique opportunity to leverage IGF as a key principle in reshaping the global financial framework. Essential governance mechanisms, such as Integrated National Financing Frameworks (INFFs), alongside innovative blended financial instruments, should incorporate futures-oriented methodologies and harness IGF assessment mechanisms to drive sustainable transformation for both the EU and partner countries, in line with their national development plans.

EU institutions could therefore:

- **Support intergenerational and foresight engagement initiatives** within cross-regional parliamentary assemblies or by strengthening youth advisory structures at the EU Delegation level. Foster dialogues on the future of Europe and the Mediterranean, as well as thematic discussions led by the DGs for Climate Action (CLIMA) and Environment (ENV). These efforts should be closely linked to multilateral platforms, including the UN Conferences on Climate Change and Biodiversity, to enhance global cooperation and impact.
- **Integrate foresight capability and future generations governance into Public Sector Reform and Good Governance programmes as part of the 360 approach behind the Global Gateway investment agenda**, supporting partner countries adopting LTG practices linked to infrastructure projects that align with SDGs, including support to local communities and knowledge and provision.
- **Engage EU Delegations to collaborate with the UN system, including UN Resident Coordinators and UN Regional Commissions**, to build foresight capability, community and long-term data collection at national and regional levels.

## 5. Seizing the momentum for equitable and long-term governance

The European Union has reached a critical juncture where bold, decisive action can secure a legacy of sustainability, equity, and resilience for current and future generations. The newly appointed IGF Commissioner has an unparalleled opportunity to embed intergenerational fairness and long-term governance principles at the core of the EU and its Member States policy-making. By aligning the IGF Commissioner's mandate with

futures-oriented frameworks and participatory mechanisms, the EU can advance intergenerational equity and sustainable policymaking while addressing its competitiveness. Through ecosystemic transformation, the EU can continue to pioneer, translating visionary commitments into tangible impacts and working with other governments that are keen to transform the present while experimenting with futures. The DFG and the Pact for the Future provide the EU with a unique framework to bolster its IGF agenda. With global attention focussed on transformative governance, the EU has the opportunity to align its institutional reforms, policy priorities, and international collaborations to uphold the needs and interests of current and future generations. This is not only a responsibility but a strategic necessity in a world increasingly defined by interconnectivity and long-term risks.

Concrete opportunities lie within the EU's capacity to:

- **Institutionalise and assess for long-term governance:** Leverage this momentum with the new Intergenerational Fairness Commissioner driving systemic reforms.
- **Engage globally:** Amplify its commitment with multilateral forums, shaping international norms for sustainability and intergenerational equity.
- **Innovate domestically:** Strengthen the EU's transformative governance across its institutions and member states, ensuring futures-oriented policymaking, participatory mechanisms and intergenerational dialogue at every level.

The EU has the tools, the vision, and the responsibility to act. The question is no longer about whether to lead, but how boldly and swiftly it can take the reins. Now is the time to embrace this critical moment, demonstrating to the world that long-term governance is not just a concept, but a concrete action-oriented pathway for a fairer, more sustainable future.

## 6. Relevant resources developed by SOIF

### Toolkits, Frameworks and Policy Implementation

1. **Save the Children - The Future is Ours: Strategic Foresight Toolkit**  
A toolkit designed to aid decision-making through strategic foresight.  
**Source:** [Save the Children Foresight Toolkit](#)
2. **WCVA - Building Better Futures: Foresight Toolkit**  
A toolkit aimed at assisting organizations in strategic planning for future scenarios.  
**Source:** [Wales Council for Voluntary Action](#)
3. **California 100 - Beyond Strategic Planning: A Foresight Toolkit for Decision Makers**  
A comprehensive toolkit offering structured modules and resources to integrate

foresight into decision-making processes.

Source: [California 100](#)

**4. OECD – Liminal Blog & Guidebook**

Developed by the OECD Observatory of Public Sector Innovation's Project LIMinal, in collaboration with SOIF and other partners, this guidebook focuses on anticipatory innovation governance.

Source: [OECD LIMinal Project](#)

**5. Stewardship of the Future (UNDP GCPSE)**

A guide on systems stewardship for governance, emphasizing sustainable development and resilience.

Source: [United Nations Development Programme GCP SE](#)

**7. Future Check**

A process and assessment framework designed for legislative and parliamentary settings to evaluate the long-term impact of policies.

Source: [All-Party Parliamentary Group for Future Generations](#)

**8. California 100 – Intergenerational Fairness Toolkit**

A toolkit focused on designing policies and practices that consider the well-being of future generations.

Source: [California 100](#)

**9. Intergenerational Fairness Assessment Framework**

A Framework and a toolkit developed to evaluate policy impacts on future generations, ensuring decisions are equitable and sustainable. Training sessions and national dialogue designs focused on intergenerational fairness, including specific programs for Portugal.

Source: [Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian](#)

**10. Tully, C. (2024). *Welcome from the future*. School of International Futures.**

Retrieved from <https://soif.org.uk/blog/welcome-from-the-future/>

**11. Tully, C. (2023). *Operationalizing strategic foresight to better support governments in managing Sustainable Development Goal trade-offs and synergies in the post-COVID context*. In the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (Ed.), *World Public Sector Report 2023*. Retrieved from**

<https://desapublications.un.org/publications/world-public-sector-report-2023>

**12. SOIF – Handbook for Implementing the Declaration on Future Generations (DFG)**

A comprehensive guide providing actionable steps for embedding foresight and intergenerational fairness frameworks into national and EU policies.

Source: [SOIF](#)

**13. SOIF – Building a Coalition for Intergenerational Fairness in the European Green Deal**

A policy document detailing strategies for integrating IGF principles within the EU's Green Deal.

Source: [SOIF](#)



14. **UN CEPA – Strategy Guidance Note on Strategic Planning and Foresight**  
A guidance note on strategic foresight for governance.  
**Source:** [UN Public Administration Network](#)
15. **Foresight Ecosystemic Capability Model**  
A framework designed to assess and build foresight capabilities within institutions, promoting future-oriented policymaking.
16. **The Wales Protocol for Future Generations**  
A document outlining practices and recommendations to protect the interests and rights of future generations, developed under the leadership of SOIF and the Future Generations Commissioner’s Office of Wales.  
**Source:** [Wales Protocol for Future Generations](#)
17. **School of International Futures.** (2024). “Keynote from the future:”At the 83rd UN General Assembly, UN Special Envoy on Future Generations Celebrates Four Years of Global Transformation.” Retrieved from <https://soif.org.uk/blog/keynote-from-the-future/> ”
18. **Foundations for Tomorrow & School of International Futures.** (2023). *A statement of commitment for the Summit of the Future – Pledge.* Retrieved from <https://soif.org.uk/statement-of-commitment/> and <https://www.foundationsfortomorrow.org/statement-of-ambition>

## Reports and Research

13. **Governing for the Next Election or for the Next Generation? The Case of Portugal (1995-2019) – Catherine Moury (NOVA FCSH), 2022**  
A study analyzing long-term public policies in Portugal, identifying factors that influenced their successful implementation.  
**Source:** [Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian](#)
14. **Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation – Intergenerational Fairness Research Program (2017-2023)**  
A research program covering public finance, environment, housing, and labor market policies, including studies on societal attitudes toward intergenerational fairness.  
**Source:** [Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian](#)
15. **Foresight Methods from Around the World**  
A research project focusing on collecting, curating, and disseminating global foresight methods to inform policy and governance.  
**Source:** [SOIF](#)
16. **SOIF – Features of Effective Systemic Foresight in Governments**  
A report outlining best practices and lessons learned from implementing foresight in governance worldwide.  
**Source:** [Features of effective systemic foresight in governments around the world](#)

## Networks and Programmes

### 21. SOIF [Pioneers Network](#), [Pledge Network](#), and [Next Generation Foresight Practitioners](#) (NGFP)

Global networks connecting policymakers, civil society, and changemakers dedicated to advancing intergenerational fairness and futures-thinking.

**Source:** SOIF

### 22. **National and Local Intergenerational Dialogues**

Initiatives facilitating participatory foresight exercises and policy engagement with communities to shape future-oriented policies.

### 23. **National Strategy for Next Generations (NSxNG)**

A national planning model incorporating intergenerational fairness into governance structures.

**Source:** [NSxNG SOIF](#)