



The Scenario Exploration System: An overview

What is the Scenario Exploration System?

The Scenario Exploration System (SES) is an interactive and approachable foresight tool developed by the European Commission Joint Research Center based on a serious gaming methodology.

The game format allows participants to interact with different future realities and waves of change and to imagine how to respond. By taking on the role of different societal actors, participants are encouraged to have forward-looking discussions, develop strategies to meet long-term objectives, learn to understand and cooperate with other stakeholders and experiment how they can plan action to shape a better future - individually and collectively.

The game is highly versatile and tailorable to a variety of topics of interests and contexts.

Introduction

The Scenario Exploration System (SES) is an **interactive foresight gaming tool**. It provides a platform that engages a group of participants in **future-oriented systemic thinking** around a topic of interest.

The game aims to make participants **take action to reach their long-term objectives** in contrasting scenario-related contexts while interacting with other stakeholders. By creating a realistic journey towards the future, the SES generates a safe space to **stimulate possible responses** connected to the issue of interest and to lead to a **forward-looking discussions and decision-making**.

As an engagement platform, the SES helps to imagine plausible futures, to understand what opportunities and challenges lie ahead and what they could mean for individuals and organizations. Ultimately it encourages to think and experiment with what decisions need to be taken in order to shape the future we want.

The SES and can be used in a variety of context for different purposes, including awareness raising, educational purposes, increasing preparedness, strategic development or anticipatory governance.

In summary, the SES:

- is a future simulation tool to engage in **scenario exploration and systemic thinking**
- helps understand the **complexity of decision making**
- allows to experience different societal roles e.g. business representative, policy maker, civil society organization etc.
- is **adaptable** to a wide range of topics and contexts



Spotlight: what is foresight?

Foresight is the discipline of exploring, anticipating and shaping the future. It is based on systematic examination of information to **detect early signs** of important developments. can be defined as a sensitive exercise - using quantitative and/or qualitative methods - oriented towards the future with the aim to shape a more sustainable world.

Qualitative foresight is useful for the elaboration of long-term visions having a broad sociopolitical scope such as medium- to long-term policy strategies.

Leveraging a research-based, serious-gaming methodology, the SES makes engaging in a foresight exercise easy, approachable and entertaining for any context and group of participants, from students and citizens to senior experts and professionals.

How it works

The SES engages participants in taking on and building a societal role (e.g. policy maker, business, civil society organization etc.) and creating unique stories while exploring possible futures. The roles taken by participants can be their actual roles or they can be imagined.

Participants play by taking a series of **actions to reach the long-term objectives** of their role; some participants also take the role of public voices who observe and assess the impacts of the actions taken.

Key rules

- The game takes a **minimum of 2 hours** to explore 1 scenario and 3 hours to complete 2 scenarios. The highest impact is achieved by exploring 2 opposing/contrasting scenarios
- Every game session involves **5-7 players** facilitated by **one game master**
- Play consists of three rounds in which players are given a set of circumstances that unfold at 10, 20 and 30 years into the timeline, and must decide how they will respond
- The game can be run in person as well as digitally



6 -7 participants



1 game master



2 hours per scenario



A group of people are seated around a large white table in a meeting room. A man in a light blue shirt is leaning forward, pointing at a large circular diagram on the table. The diagram consists of many small colored circles (green, yellow, blue) arranged in a larger circular pattern, with some text and arrows. A laptop with the 'Kamstrup' logo is open on the table. A name tag with the number '2' is also visible. Other people are seated around the table, looking at the diagram. The room has large windows with blue blinds and a blue storage unit in the background.

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Where was it used?

- **Public bodies and international organizations:** European Commission DG SANTE, European Commission DG AGRI, European Commission JRC (Bioeconomy unit), City of Frankfurt, OECD
- **Companies:** The Colruyt Group (main Belgian food retailer), The Dutch Royal Airforce, Uber
- **Civil Society Organizations:** Friends of the Earth, Junior Enterprises Europe, SCO Linköping
- **EU projects:** Eu-Innovate, NANO2ALL, Circular Ocean
- **Higher education institutions:** Cranfield Business School, Copenhagen Business School, Free University Brussels, Henley Business School, Hochschule Bremen, Jönköping International Business School, Kent Business School, Kozminski University, Liverpool John Moores University, Manchester Metropolitan University, Politecnico di Milano, Politecnico di Torino, University of Stellenbosch, University of Westminster

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The role of ABIS

Since the engagement in the EU Innovate project, ABIS - The Academy of Business in Society has organized over 50 SES workshops, trainings and taster sessions across the public, private, academic and civil society sectors. As such, we are one of the most experienced organizations on the market in providing SES facilitation and training services. ABIS has also developed a **digital version** of the tool and provides both SES workshops and facilitation trainings **in person and online**.

We currently offer and deliver:

- **SES Tasters (1 hour)** - free, monthly webinars in which we give an overview of the tool with the opportunity to try it out in a practical and interactive way. Participants gain a better understanding about the SES benefits, learnings and dynamics. We have already organized **15 taster sessions** with over 100 participants and this number is increasing every month. You can sign up for our next session [here](#).
- **SES Workshops (min. 2 hours)** - tailored sessions for ABIS members and clients in which we facilitate the game experience as game masters. Workshops can be run as part of **events and conferences, teaching modules, strategic discussions, team building activities** etc. We take great care in co-designing our SES workshops with interested parties as the tool is highly versatile and can be tailored to a wide range of needs, topics and outcomes. Having organized **30+ workshops across 10 countries**, we have experience with Sustainable Lifestyles, Aviation, Circular Economy, Bioeconomy and Business Education scenarios.
- **SES Facilitation Training (2 x 2 hours)** - on top of one-off SES workshops, we also offer trainings for future facilitators (game masters) of the tool. The training aims to make organizations proficient and independent in the use of the tool according to specific needs, timelines and number of participants. We have trained around **60 facilitators** whom we can engage to facilitate workshops with larger groups of participants and in different geographies.



ABIS SES Facilitators



Ivo Matser
Chief Executive Officer



Karolina Sobczak
Knowledge Manager



Katarina Haluskova
Project Communication Specialist



Giulia Lizzi
Business Development & Membership
Officer



Antonino Mangano
Office Manager & Communication
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Interested to learn more?

For any further information and to schedule a call, please contact Karolina Sobczak at karolina.sobczak@abis-global.org.

About ABIS

ABIS - The Academy of Business in Society is a business-academic network working to advance the role of business in society through research and education. Our ambition is to make a significant contribution to the debate and the practice involved in equipping current and future business leaders with the knowledge, skills and capabilities for the long-term success of business in society.



The Academy of Business in Society

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