

**FROM FORESIGHT TO FORETHOUGHT.
AJM FORESIGHT SEMINAR 2023, July 1-2
MAISON JEAN MONNET, HOJARRAY**

During the first weekend of July the Association Jean Monnet (AJM) brought together in Houjarray a select group of academics, members of different think tanks, civil servants, brand consultants, representatives of civil society, business, social enterprises, media and the art world to discuss with members of the Association how to be better prepared in Europe to what is happening in the world. This was an event, on invitation only, and in respect of the so-called 'Chatham House Rules'. But we are happy to share with you the program, some highlights and a report of the plenary session at the start of the weekend. The different working groups launched during the seminar continue meanwhile to work online and before the end of the year we expect to come out with a first joint declaration and the conclusions of the seminar. An intermediate report will be presented at the General Assembly to be held on September 30 in Paris.

We are grateful to the staff of the Maison Jean Monnet (MJM) and the European Parliament as well as to the Belgian section of the Association of European Journalists for their active support, which made it possible for us to make this event a success.

You'll find here an overview of the interventions made by the guest speakers during the plenary at the start and some extensive quotes from the Q&A session that followed their conferences.

find here an overview of the interventions made by the guest speakers during the plenary at the start and some extensive quotes from the Q&A session that followed their conferences.

From the intervention by **Ricardo Borges de Castro** from the European Policy Center:
"The weaponization of goods, information, people, infrastructure, mundane events, etc. appeals for securitisation worldwide. In this trend for securitisation will we, in Europe, be able, particularly in the economic field, to do the transition to an economic security model without undermining prosperity?"

"Foresight is about preparedness, not about prediction"

"Use it! There is already a lot of foresight thinking done but it is not translated enough into active policies."

"Strategic foresight is an exploration of the future that deals with uncertainty in a structured and systematic way, using several different methods, and draws insights for robust planning, policy making and preparedness. It is not about prediction!"

"Foresight is about exploring the future while forethought is about what to do with the insights obtained in practice, and how to translate it into policies. It is about strategy: what is the end game? It is fuel for the executive and it deals with the capacity to respond to crises. It is horizontal in its approach: multidisciplinary and having an eye for

connections between the internal and external dimensions. It is flexible and agile, adapting to changes and anticipatory. If democracies cannot be faster, they need to be smarter.

Ricardo's intervention further developed an article he wrote together with his colleague in the EPC Think tank, Fabian Zuleeg:

<https://www.epc.eu/en/Publications/From-foresight-to-forethought-No-longer-lost-in-translation~51813c>

From the intervention by **Monika Sus**, professor at the Hertie School of Berlin, on what academia can bring to foresight: why academics should engage, what can be the added value of their work and what are the constraints?

“As academics we do have the competence to engage in foresight but why do we not engage in it?” It goes against the challenge to establish itself as irrefutable scientists while foresight is as much an art as a science.

“There exists a ‘do not touch’ approach as academics work with experimental data to develop models. Academics can analyze and respond to the complexity of data. We have the tools to grasp the complex issues. But no data are available for the future. How can we contribute to foresight without data to be trusted?”

“Politics obviously is a day to day business and especially when we talk about foreign policy or security policy, the agenda is run by events. We’ve seen it recently and I believe we’ll be seeing this for the foreseeable future. Politics and policy makers have to deal with that but academics they don’t right now.”

“Academics can bring in different perspectives to the table. They can inspect the outer counters of the events and investigate areas which may not necessarily be featured in the headlines of newspapers and magazines.”

“Academics have the comfort of time for their research, they can highlight some institutional languages and complexities and make clear the contradictions lumped in the nature of the issues that we face and bring in the longer term dimension in the shorter horizon policy makers have to deal with.”

“On the sight of constraints we can say academics are too far away from the actual process of decision making and in many countries of Europe there still exists a distrust in academia and in expertise. There is also a huge problem with the method of presentation academics are using, their specific writing style with a lot of jargon and if we want to see our knowledge transferred to policy work, this must change.”

“Our adult brains and especially those of scientists are not trained to use imagination. You need imagination though to develop new innovative scenarios.”

“Best practice is to combine the knowledge from policymakers, think tanks and academia and team them up together.”

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/604251cac817d1235cbfe98d/t/64776cf8cf297e359cfc9a45/1685548306837/ENGAGE+Policy+Brief+%231.pdf>
<https://www.eui.eu/people?id=monika-ewa-sus-1>

From the intervention of the 'Perspectivists', **Luca Marchetti & Emma Fric**, brand and communication consultants for fashion companies worldwide:

"We are active in a field between academia and more applied, more experimental approaches, design based." (Luca)

"I am a sociologist but left academia to work for business, but to me it remained always sociology applied to individuals and consumers. What is impacting their lifestyle? How will people live in the future? What will be their aspirations? Reading the signs and putting them back into context." (Emma)

"In a lot of our projects the question of knowledge project devices is central. What are people willing today and what perspectives do open new kinds of cultural activities? What can we learn from new sites? We are engaging with future storytelling and imagination, putting possible futures in context, reimagine stories and this with an international approach. We also appeal upon designers as they have the capacity to work out a scenario from the beginning to the end. Think e.g. about how they design new shoes whereby they foresee the use in different circumstances and what can be done with them once they are completely used. We work on this by way of prototyping on how people may respond to that. And this, for me, makes that we, as "prospectivists" are a very new organization" (Emma)

"Sometimes we need to work also on very short term notice on trends that need to be addressed now, examining what future they can have. But it also permits us to research on how people envisage the future and what is to be the future of the trends that are now present. What will be the future of our cities, of our homes? What will gender mean in the future? What will diversity mean in the future? Becoming really inclusive by design? It is as well understanding the issue of accessibility, an issue for beauty brands as it opens up. They require all these skills together to have people in the organizations understand this world better and make better profits from it. It is about understanding the potential of ideas so that we can start embedding them." (Emma)

<https://www.linkedin.com/company/the-prospectivists/?originalSubdomain=fr>

From the Q&A session:

Luca Marchetti in response to Monica and Ricardo:

"I was asked to develop in Montreal a 3 year program on fashion and cultural studies. One of the funniest discussions I got with the board of the University was precisely on a

foresight course. They didn't allow me to develop a theoretical course on foresight. It was turned into a workshop whereby I invited people to present how they worked with colors and trends, but trends to them were to be fashion trends only. It was very hard to explain how understanding macrotrends and social cultural trends helps to understand at the end how fashion, its economics and connected aspects and fields with fashion might evolve in the future.

And thank you for underlining this, Monica, and as Ricardo said it is not about predicting the future but it is about helping to make decisions. If scenario one happens what can we do? If scenario two happens how can the brand react, counteract, and stay ahead? How can we protect our business and our employees? ..."

"Secondly I can announce to you that I am organizing this fall a very informal gathering online for scientists on how to analyze the unanalyzable and I am inviting essentially four academics working on atmospheres and ambiances, in situations that put people in different sets of mind so that they are able to see what they normally don't see and take decisions they otherwise would not take and all this is fueled by cognitive science, neuroscience and other very other serious academic approaches." (Luca)

Umberto Triulzi in response to Monica:

"Regardless of the fact I am an academic having to deal with the difficulties you mentioned, I want to tell you something from my experience as an economist and how everyone is linked to the daily and the modern times.

What I am interested in is how do I interpret reality? What is reality in my head? I am not a lawyer, not a judge, not an expert in international relations, I am not in commercial activities but I know what is going on in economics. Now if I want to predict economics it is impossible but if I ask my colleagues what economics is to them we don't share the same ideas. One example: when we speak about common goods, there is a lot of literature on it and because people believe this should be available to everybody, a lot of people, of models, are discussed but if I ask it to myself what the common good is I have a different idea. What is important is not if water is a common good but what we do to prevent CO 2 to deteriorate the environment and here we have different ideas and it is not as easy as for Emma and Luca to sort out what to foresee. The best answer is to respond by the question: how is reality to you?"

Bruno Vever reacts by underlining he misses references to Jean Monnet and the fact that he always wanted concrete actions, limited in scope, and in action fields whereby things could evolve. He felt the interventions were too academic and did not tackle the problems of coming to a common foreign policy, a common European defense policy, unified custom and tax policies, questions that were of concern to Monnet.

Ricardo Borges de Castro:

I just want to make the point that the public sector and we that work on public policies need to team up more with the private sector in these activities of foresight. Insurance companies look at risk and might take the same angle as the public sector does but other companies that use foresight and forethought do it while seeking opportunities and trying to understand what the opportunities that are ahead. We don't think so much about opportunities. We think more about challenges and how to address these. On the point of the Monnet method on which you are certainly going to speak about I would make the argument that moving from foresight to forethought is precisely trying to do what he did. Making that foresight becomes more practical, more relevant for politicians and for decision makers. I think maybe the small step by step approach we could not do now because the challenges and the stimuli from the outside are so strong that we really can't follow that. We are not in a period of gradual change but in a period of radical change now. Of course things and decisions need to be solid, but I really believe we are in a moment where we need to be faster, respond faster, making foresight more practicable, more usable, more mainstream and this is to be the moment to make foresight more 'Monnet' wiselike. I also hope there will be many disagreements between you and not much group thinking among you because that is one of the main purposes of foresight nowadays and by discussions to reveal the blind spots and issues we sometimes do miss .

Monica Sus stresses from her side the need to institutionalize foresight. She deals a lot with questions of security and defense and especially in this field she feels there is a lot to do. *"We have a lot of scenarios and from scenarios you can actually derive good policies but you need to do it on a regular basis. Having one scenario exercise and then waiting for another 5 years is not effective as so many things are happening. I think institutionalization and bringing in foresight as a component into policy decisions is actually very vital."*

In response to Luca she mentions a very rewarding experience she had several years ago when some 80 people were brought together to reflect on security issues during 5 seminars on foresight in smaller groups. They came from different countries and from very different fields in cybersecurity, policy makers, people from private companies, academia, journalism and art working on different topics, all for the reason to break up perspectives and bring new perspectives to the table. It was very rewarding. She mentioned this because *"As academics we are not so much focusing our attention on finding normative solutions to the security order in the next 20, 40 or 50 years but we are looking for alternatives, how security might develop within a decade and if we see it developing in a certain way, what policies can help to control it and react better to it. I think that the alternative futures you mentioned are in fact very important to look at. Thank you for that."*

Michel Vermaerke. *“Someone once said today’s problems are caused by yesterday’s solutions. I want to go back 30 years when the Berlin wall fell and to the Washington Consensus we all had to go for open markets and the promotion of democracy and all the other good stuff. One of these was that we needed economic interdependence. Among European countries but also with other continents. This will bring peace and prosperity. It permitted millions of people to get out of poverty. So all great. But the other question is what do we do now? You have Russia, China... Taiwan’s foreign minister in Brussels raised the question. You have Ukraine now but what about Taiwan and China? Economic interdependence very well but don’t we need to rethink it? Mc Kinsey is already for over 40 years busy with scenario planning and we have a lot of these. But I have 2 questions: Have you looked at what Europe did not plan right? Did not foresee well and tackle well? And secondly of these learnings of the recent past how do we tackle the major challenges in the power stage we are entering in? What’s the area to play? How to reinforce strategic autonomy and how to find a new way of economic interdependence in Europe and with other continents?”*

Andre Safir. *“My question will be geared more to the subject of your presentation. You spoke about going from foresight to forethought. This means going from ideas to action. You want to raise the question of imagination. Going from foresight to forethought means disruptive ideas. Today Europe is about consensus building. How do you build consensus with disruptive ideas? I am very curious about your approach because so far I’ve not managed to get there.”*

Luca Marchetti. *“When speaking about disruption I guess we could continue to discuss for days. I want, a bit provocatively, to reply with a sentence from someone more credible and legitimate than me, Gilles Deleuze, in the little book of 1000 pages, “A thousand Plateaus”: “If you hope to find only what you are looking for it is not even worth starting.” “So you need to use imagination, you have to let in the unpredictable. In a way you have to look for what you are not looking for. This is what you do when you collect people of which you don’t know what is their approach, you try to make them cooperate, you try to listen and to cooperate outside models and theories to build new ones and even kernels of new models, you try to get something coherent and structured, it is all experimentation. It is not so open.”*

Monica in reaction to Luca looking for the things we are not prepared to find, brings in that this is for her maybe the most important in foresight. She adds this might be because she is an academic and otherwise than Ricardo she does not need to develop policy recommendations. We work with different methods and we can have different goals in mind when working with foresight. “One experience I can tell you about is that we did not have in view to develop policy recommendations but we only had the aim to

detect weak signals, so to look for things we didn't expect to find. There are some methods to this and I found it in fact very interesting.” And whether we are doing this in hard core fields such as defense, yes there are several think tanks, in Brussels but also in Paris, working on this and in previous years there were a series of analysis produced by the European Council for Foreign Relations (ECFR) whereby they came back in their analysis each year to see what changed and had to be adjusted in their policy recommendations.

Ricardo picks up by confirming that indeed we could discuss for days on the subject but a lot could be said also on past relationships, on how the West has engaged with China. *“As a foresighter, when looking back, I always try to remember that hindsight I am always right and I try to be careful with those assessments and planning mistakes. One of the biggest was to think that if we integrate China in our economic system , through economy and exchanges. China will become a democracy as if this would come automatically through certain mechanisms. This is what we collectively thought of as an outcome and we did not think about what was to happen if this did not happen. You could replicate this to many other policy areas. I would still say that peace through interdependence made sense at that moment in the world and that the world has changed. I believe this is now a course correction in our policies. The EU is not used to talk about power. It is not in her DNA and I think we all share that. In a lot of my discussions, and also as a former EU official, this was not present in our discussions and it was also not our métier, particularly of the Commission. She has grown into it at this moment. The lesson I’ll take from this is we should also look at what are the alternatives, other scenarios you are not expecting and also rehearse on what to do with that.”*

In response to the other remarks he refers to the latest economic security strategy the EC brought out which it is, without mentioning it, mostly about China and then, and the most recent European Council conclusions. *“So that is interesting. It is clear that the ‘de-risking, not decoupling’ now is taken up by European leaders in respect to China which was a bit surprising for me with all those European leaders that went to China in these last months insisting on increasing economic exchanges. It remains messy in the economic security field but there is an element there and it is basically about protecting European competitiveness and thus about de-risking but also about partnering. For me it would be better to actually have a strategy of smart diversification. We need to look beyond these main players, beyond the US and China. I fear that this smart diversification will become more difficult, especially on trade, if the European Parliament that is to be elected next year becomes even more fragmented than it is now. This is an extra difficulty in moving this free and fair trade agenda that you still want to pursue.”* He stresses he really likes the question of André concerning imagination and disruption because this is the most difficult issue in foresight at government level or in public administrations which is the ability to disrupt or to go against the tide and the group

thinking because these institutions tend to be very conventional and there is a lot of risk aversion with bureaucrats that are part of the system and that want to be promoted. This has actually also been identified in the private sector as well and these kinds of issues of conformity and of trying to advance in their careers leaves a lot of people that should do that, asking the hard questions, not to do that . And so to move from foresight to forethought there needs to be also an element of disruption because at certain moments it is the time to go against the tide and that is not easy in the public sector in many times.

Alberto Lorente Saiz. *“I am a consultant working in strategic planning for local and regional authorities in Spain. I am worried about the passing from foresight to forethought . As you said every new idea contains a risk and who is going to take that risk because at the end, when we talk about social problems, there is a solution foreseen by every person concerned by that risk. So, even if you have a good idea, that idea might not be good to all the people and it is very important we work at the consensus of different views as people are going to be affected by it. Otherwise , even the best idea, could be rejected and then the risk could be for the people who took the decision and maybe also for the political project they stand for. Think of the cities where they want to make the people pedestrians because they know, from what academics, researchers and examples from elsewhere in the world that it is better because it makes cities more alive and better for the individuals and for businesses, but the people who have to adapt their installations such as bars, restaurants etc their first reaction is negative. So, if you don't explain, if you don't put on the table the academic data, the research done to reach the targets, at the end you will not have that consensus and then you'll need to take two steps back. So of course sometimes you need to think about the future and be disruptive but you also have to take into account this and perhaps go more slowly but also more surely.”*

Autre question venant d'un participant. *“La présentation qui est faite est convaincante sur l'installation d'une crise permanente, affectant et croisant les enjeux démocratiques, démographiques, environnementaux, stratégiques, numériques ; tout cela confirme la complexité de notre monde contemporain où l'improbable, l'aléa est présent d'où la difficulté de prévoir, compte tenu des interactions entre ces différents champs et leurs implications, mais aussi d'où la nécessité de parvenir à mieux anticiper. L'esprit de Monnet est d'avancer par petits pas concrets mais c'est aussi la planification. Un tel effort d'anticipation, de préparation dans le temps est rendu plus difficile aujourd'hui, plus encore au niveau de l'UE. On prend des décisions et 6 mois après on a le sentiment que l'on court déjà derrière les événements, compte tenu des aléas, de l'accélération des phénomènes. Or nous avons plus que jamais besoin d'anticiper pour adapter, prévenir. Je vois la nécessité de collaborer avec le monde académique mais aussi avec la société civile, avec les autorités locales, pour mieux anticiper, affiner les*

actions en vue de répondre aux enjeux structurels qui se posent et de les mettre en pratique.

Quand on se réfère à la « permacrise » on peut souligner des facteurs plus spécifiques à l'Europe : le déficit démographique, le déficit de puissance, les difficultés qui affectent nos démocraties libérales ; ces faiblesses peuvent contribuer à nourrir l'arc de crises autour de l'Europe. C'est là que se pose pour l'UE la question de la définition de ses propres intérêts. Il est bien d'agir dans l'intérêt général et en faveur du bien commun, dans l'esprit des Nations-Unies mais dans un monde durci, il est tout aussi indispensable d'avoir également une vision claire de nos intérêts, une forte légitimité à prendre des décisions fondées sur une force démocratique. Dans une ère plus stratégique, marquée par le retour des puissances, il faut savoir ce que sont ses propres intérêts et être en mesure de les défendre.

Thierry Jeantet. “J'ai l'impression que ce matin nous mettons l'Europe dans un shaker en nous disant on va voir ce qui en ressort. Sur ce qu'a dit Ricardo et puis Monica sur la transversalité, je dirais plus exactement la multi-approche, je crois que là c'est effectivement une conception lucide, car les responsables politiques ont en effet jusqu'à ce jour traité les problèmes distinctement ou en tout cas les unes après les autres, de manière cloisonnée . Or vous avez démontré tous les deux qu'on est en face d'une multi-crise ou crise-continue comme vous l'avez qualifié. C'est donc effectivement le moment pour l'UE de traiter les sujets ensemble en tenant compte des interactions entre les crises et solutions concomitantes . Je rejoins là ce que plusieurs intervenants ont suggéré . De ce point de vue, il y a une économie qui a l'habitude de traiter les questions simultanément et non pas les unes après les autres: c'est ce qu'on appelle l'économie sociale et solidaire(coopératives, mutuelles, associations , fondations ...) qui vient d'être reconnue par un vote à l'unanimité dans l'Assemblée générale de l'ONU au mois d'avril, après 10 ans d'action pour l'obtenir. Ce qui est important c'est de constater qu'elle surgit dans tous types de pays maintenant et qu'elle grandit de façon accélérée .

L'Europe la connaît bien car il y a un programme Européen sur l'économie sociale et solidaire mais je crois qu'on est encore loin du compte car elle est encore prise comme quelque chose à part alors qu'elle devrait être mise dans une position centrale justement pour développer une démarche, une stratégie, comme vous l'avez dit, qui soit multidisciplinaire. Je pense que ceci offre une occasion à la fois de donner à nouveau corps à la pensée de Jean Monnet qui allait vers le concret, mais aussi de pratiquer des disruptions constructives, positives. C'est ce que j'appellerai la nouvelle efficacité européenne.”

Ricardo answers the different questions and comes back on the problem of consensus and disruption. “I think what you described there on the local level of the cities you also

say that they reject it in the first instance and then turn around after explanations and discussion rounds. What you described in my understanding is leadership, that we miss in a lot of these issues. What we have is the trend of democratic and freedom decline but what we have also seen is that our political systems, at least in Europe, have become more fragmented, more polarized which is a negative in itself, but we have also opened our systems to different voices and that we have now more parties and that this is a reflection of the diversity of the society and the issues we try to address. And I think from this perspective this is not necessarily negative. What is negative is when these issues become polarized. When the issues are too fragmented and there is actually not enough leadership to find consensus. That is an issue very important and I speak in this of anticipatory leadership. The ability to anticipate but also to deal with the real world and the questions that were brought in here. So I think leadership is very important to take into consideration.”

On the different reflections brought forward he reminds that “The issue with trends is that they can also be reversed and here I want to go back to the leadership question. If our democracies are failing we need to step up, to reinforce our democratic systems. We need really to build up our democratic infrastructure and take into consideration issues that are of importance to foresight which are questions on disinformation, fake news and even of deep fakes that can be very instrumental in the context of foresight. And also on the power question, i think this is a learning process. The EU is learning the language of power and it will need to spark that language more forcefully in the years to come. On the point of transversality or multidisciplinary approach I agree with you and it also goes for the other questions. I think that if our societies do not remain strong and resilient, if you don't have the possibility to offer decent conditions for what business, small and big, and families are hoping for, it will be much harder to do everything that we need to do and much more difficult to deal with the perma-crisis. I tend to speak of pillars of resilience and people is one of these as is democracy, as is our economy. If we can't reinforce these 3, it will be much harder for us to be a geopolitical player. Both questions are really to be spotted on.”

Monica picks on this by referring to her Polish nationality and how she can talk about the resilience of democracy and what actually the lack of this resilience in her home country has done to her country. Even if this is not the topic here, it is to her absolutely an increasing problem, not only in her part of Europe but in the whole of it and with the European elections coming up next year, she just wanted to come back up on the first question and the reference to the local level and how to connect it with the European one. “On the local level I found, and this is also the case in Germany, that using foresight methods can help to build consensus across communities. So, engaging e.g. citizens from a city or a village, a community to develop together foresight scenarios how the village can look like in the future can help to bring up alternative visions of this concept, of this problem and can bring in an integrative element into that. I experienced

that decisions taken by consensus are of course much better introduced and are more accepted by public opinion but also by the people in power. What Ricardo referred to as anticipatory leadership I'd call for more broadly anticipatory governance. This is important on the local level and also on the European level and actually on every possible level because all levels are also interconnected. Foresight and foresight thinking are for me important elements of this anticipatory governance."

Robert Wester. *"I am very happy to be here to discuss the future of Europe and the geostrategic position of Europe in the world. I must be honest and in my daily work that doesn't come out everyday. I am a consultant, working for Berenschot. We have as a company already worked for 85 years in the Netherlands, Belgium and the EU. From what I see I recognise very much what previous speakers have said. The public sector is working a lot on the perma-crisis. I myself was asked to help the governments with the migrant crisis and the environmental crises. We work a lot with the academia on the crisis of energy poverty, we work, Monica, with your colleague Gerhard, please give him my hello. We can see you are permanently working on this crisis and the main problem I see is that the public sector is focused on that and that's logic but there should also be more purpose on strategic foresight. You see that DG Research and Innovation (DG RTV) is interested but this is not the core business of the EC at the moment. I'd like to discover during this WE how we can get the longer term, the geopolitical position of Europe, higher on the agenda of the policymakers in Europe and also in the different member states?"*

Erika Stael. *"I am going to take it from a different perspective and I apologize for that. First of all thank you for this extraordinary and very interesting debate. We can continue for sure during lunch and in the following hours, but I'd like to make the following 2 short points that I think are very relevant. One is on Ricardo when he was mentioning in response to the question of what we did see wrong or what we did not understand I think the keypoint is there we are not neutral in the choices we make and how we decide to analyze something, how we choose to frame it and how we choose to go ahead will influence the future, so it is very difficult to be able to predict how things work out on different choices we have made. And this brings me to the importance of narratives. And we are here today and tomorrow to talk about narratives. And I think there is something there we can add to the process of forethought, a concept I like very much. To come back to my background I run a think tank called Re-Imagine Europe. So we think long term to imagine this but the starting point for this is to listen, reframe and act. It is a deep narrative analysis of how any issue is framed, how we understand the different narrative communities, we have a whole team of narrative scientists inhouse which reminds me a lot of what 'prospectivists' are doing but we need to analyze from a*

mutual binary perspective. What are the different communities? How do they see an issue and why isn't it an issue? Usually they say they are not listened to and I believe they never can have a real conversation and it is certainly the case in a polarized world with all these huge crises and all the time shifting narratives. We need to have as a starting point why is it that people think differently and when we do this we need to see what are the commonalities, what are the common objectives? 95% of objectives are usually common among people who are officially, politically, very much against each other. So on the one hand why is it about better understanding the issues and on the other to analyze how narrative communities and trends are developing. We just launched the first European narrative observatory, a very successful tool of which the launch was supported by the European Commission. And we see e.g. on the word Ukraine and democracy the negative sentiment is only some 10%, which means narratives are converging. New sentiments are emerging. This is going to be a very effective tool to bring the democratic process into foresight in a very easy way and I think this should be strengthened. Thank you very much for this interesting conversation."

Hans Vanderloo. *"I have a reflection on the tour we got in the house of Jean Monnet and a text on a banner in the room where he died. And there it says: only when people experience a lot of pressure will they be prepared to change. This fantastic morning there were a lot of good comments which you can expect when you bring so many intelligent people together. Very sketchy phrases such as are solutions today tomorrow's problems, I think this is very important when we talk about European interdependence and is it to reflect on Europe, what share do we have in world energy consumption, what share do we have in natural resources consumption and can interdependence ever be equal? Are we not more dependent on the outside world than the outside world is on us? So what will that interdependence look like? My Italian colleague economist referred to the remarketing discussion we had yesterday. I am an economist but these days I am more into physics. When you are talking about derisking notably to China, well it is a physical reality of the distribution of the elements of the physical table. 82% of the new Indium production which we need both for the turbines and the lcd screens is in China. No political policy is going to change that. So I would like to end with the fact that I agree we should move from foresight to forethought but we should not stop there. What we really need is future and reality-proof action. I'd like to conclude with a question to all of you, not only during lunch but for all of these 2 days: Are we not ignoring the reality and the elephant in the room? Are we not on the deck of a ship with a hole in the hull discussing? Those who have heard of Johan Rockström talking about the 16 tipping points which are developments or systems which currently support humanity, 9 are imminent to start to undermine humanity. These things are physics, not policies, not geopolitics. Policies can only happen within the limits that*

physics allow. The green deal that has been proposed by the European Union on a physical point of view can not even build the first set of equipment to be carbon neutral in 2050. I often am asked, Mr Vanderloo, what do you think of these plans from the Commissioner. And before I wrap my brain on that I ask myself can it actually happen? And if the answer to that question is no, it can't happen, then I don't even bother to think about how realistic it is. It will not happen because it can't happen. So my question to all of you is : are we not intelligent passengers working on the deck of a ship but a ship with a hole in its hull that we are ignoring?

Ricardo reacts that he agrees with the very first reaction that the EC is the place where you can think more long term at EU level. I think we also have to pay tribute to Commissioner VP Sevkovic to have built up foresight capacities not only within the EU institutions but also across the member states. I think this has been very, very important but certainly these need to be consolidated in the next mandate and there are questions whether the foresight will remain during the next mandate at the College level and what will the next steps be. So I am also curious about this and I am coming out with a paper on this by the end of the year on how this can be better integrated into the European Commission. So , I'll be happy to share it with you. On the question of narratives I totally agree. From my experience politicians and decision makers also like stories and wish to understand how these futures can come about and how narratives are important. But it needs to be in a language they understand. The issues of language cannot be minimized in the context of foresight because if we do want to influence and actually be able to give good advice, we also need to speak in the language they can understand. There is that effort to be made constantly and I also agree that the necessity to bring in narratives from other parts is really an important objective for which foresight should do more. It should be more diverse and there are so many other changes you need to do to it. On the final point of reality: it is Myke Tyson, yes? This is reality. You have the best plan and then you get punched in the face...that's reality, right? And everything in your competition goes out of the ring. So, but from my experience and perspective I'd say if we are too negative and if we also present scenarios that are overly negative for politicians or decision makers then it will just put them off. I think we should not hide the reality but it is also in the storytelling here and how things are passed on. The question I'll get from them is : I know there are problems: how can I make it better? What foresight or forethought needs to do is to try to make things better. How can we advise facing different possibilities and scenarios. How can we try to make things better?

Monica takes over fully agreeing with all these points and on the last point this is indeed what she was hearing a lot when discussing in the German Foreign Office about security. *"They repeat over and over: we know we did things not in the best way we could. We know there is a war on EU borders but tell us something more optimistic, how*

we can actually contribute to making Europe a safer place. So it brings us back to the narrative point that was mentioned and I'll look up on the narratives-observatory that has been mentioned. Narratives are very important for the work of foresight. How can we present things to different audiences? How can we actually coin a common narrative? Also e.g. when talking on geopolitics on the European level and again I agree with Ricardo a lot has been done these last 5 years in the EC but we need to move on and to break it down to the citizens because they actually do not have the feeling right now to participate in any of these foresight exercises. The Conference on the future of Europe was a very good attempt and I think I will encourage people in the EC and the other EU institutions to continue on this way and to bring in some foresight components into that because we need a new narrative for Europe, a narrative that gets to the younger generation that in the end will be responsible for the future geopolitics of Europe."

The moderator, **Lieven Taillie**, concludes the session taking up another reference to the maritime world. *"It was once common to say "Britain rules the waves". It has been since many decades no more so but one other important factor of British imperial power remained until today with the UK and that is, be it today together with other maritime powers such as the USA, the mastering of the vocabulary and the language used in international exchanges. They ruled the world also by their vocabulary and the narratives it makes possible. The same can be said from some other European powers such as France and Germany. This is also one of the main challenges Europe faces on how to give this mastership of vocabulary used worldwide further content. That is expressed e.g. in the way we are a forerunner with the EU in regulating. One of the most striking examples of this is to me the GDPR and how it also moved the rest of the world to act.*

We brought you all together here from often very different backgrounds, geographical and professionally, and one of the underlying objectives was to confront, to test how to reconcile your different professional and native languages, and how to find a common language for the challenges we face now and those ahead. I am confident we'll have following this excellent introductory debate, further fruitful discussions more in depth on all of this and come out with some interesting conclusions to feed our decision makers in Europe at all levels."