

NEWSLETTER

Southern Catalonia, Knowledge Region



Southern Catalonia 2040: Towards a region of knowledge

It is essential to know our potential as a region and to establish priority lines so we can face the future in line with intelligent, sustainable and inclusive European values.

In 2018, a foresight exercise was launched in our region under the heading **Southern Catalonia 2040**. The aim of the initiative was to define a preferred future at regional level. More than two hundred and fifty people from all productive and economic sectors, academia, institutions and public sectors, as well as numerous representatives of civil society co-created and designed a preferred future. The results and conclusions of the exercise presented last March show the need to transform our economic model to one necessarily based on knowledge. They also highlighted the need to establish a regional governance system that facilitates strategic decision-making.

This edition illustrates the foresight exercise and invites you to participate actively in the website www.catalunyasud2040.cat. The introduction is an article by Jordi Cartanyà, responsible for the foresight exercise Southern Catalonia 2040, which presents the main ideas of a culture of the future. Moreover, you will be able to download the book, in which you will find information on the exercise and its main conclusions. Finally, the personal experiences of a group of participants are presented.

We invite you to participate in this initiative that seeks to make Southern Catalonia a region based on knowledge.

Manel Vallès Rasquera, Director of the Chair for University and Knowledge Region

IN THIS EDITION

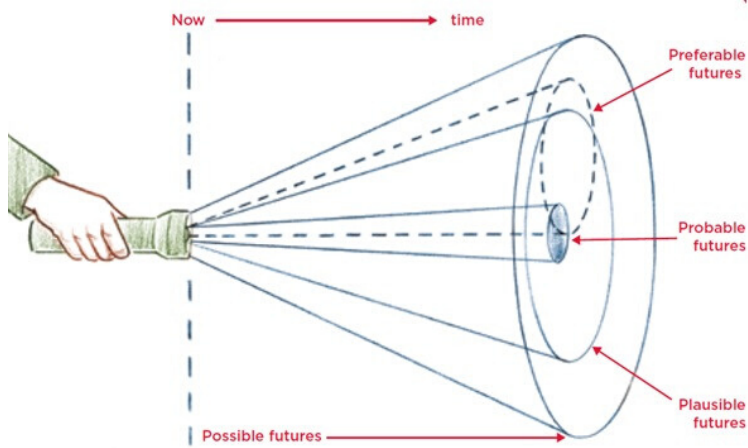
FORESIGHT: A WAY TO RELATE WITH FUTURE

THE PROCESS OF FORESIGHT EXERCISE

THE RESULT: SOUTHERN CATALONIA 2040

TESTIMONIALS OF SOUTHERN CATALONIA 2040

JOIN OUR COMMUNITY



FORESIGHT: a way to relate with future

To what extent does the future happen to us or do we consciously and deliberately create it? How do we relate to the future at the individual and collective levels? What culture of the future do we have? Do we have future awareness? For instance, do we know what we want to be and are we getting closer to that goal?

The answers to these and other questions about the future allow us to understand how people, communities, nations and civilizations live and coexist with the future.

Without going into it too deeply, we could say that there are two basic attitudes towards the future. The first is a reactive, wait-and-see attitude. From this perspective, we ask ourselves what kind of future would we like? In addition, we try to make predictions based on the past and the present using estimation methods. We ask ourselves how we will adapt in order to achieve our goals in this preferred future.

The other attitude is a build-and-test attitude. With this approach, we ask ourselves what kinds of future are possible and what do we want? We focus on understanding and creating the future we want and on how to make it possible by achieving our goals.

Foresight is the discipline that studies the future in order to understand it and be able to influence it. The figure below illustrates the different taxonomies used according to different types of future. Furthermore, there is a group of concepts that are directly related to foresight such as exercise, focus and culture.

Foresight exercise: This is a systematic and participatory process aimed at building visions for the long-term future and informing today's decisions in order to mobilise joint actions.

Focus of foresight: This is the specific theme (the region, the city or a specific topic such as work or aging, a particular sector or technology...)

Culture of foresight: This is a way of behaving that seeks to create the future collectively. It involves societal mechanisms and processes for cohesive decision-making and achieving the preferred future outcome.

The regional foresight approach has a tradition dating back more than thirty years in Europe. In fact, there are different formats and methodologies applied to regional experiences. The approach can be oriented towards the region or towards a specific field or dimension such as the economy.

In Southern Catalonia there was a need to plan for the future of a rich and diverse region. This led in 2018 to the implementation of the foresight exercise **SOUTHERN CATALONIA 2040** in order to define the preferred future in all its dimensions and to propose specific actions to move forward.

Methodologically, the process has focused on dialogue as a tool to generate synergies between people and agents. Interviews, creative encounters and focus groups are among the different formats used to guarantee the alignment of objectives. In addition, external visions such as trend analysis, benchmarking studies of other regions and reports on specific topics such as "The future of new governance" have provided a theoretical basis.

The vision of the future resulting from the foresight exercise and, therefore, the preferred future of Southern Catalonia is set out in the book **SOUTHERN CATALONIA 2040**, which is available from the website www.catalunyasud2040.cat.

The region now has an overview of what it wants to be in 2040 thanks to the alignment of its assets with global trends and the will and desire of people to build a preferred future. At the same time, the exercise has served to create regional awareness and a new culture of relating to the future to meet the region's main challenges.

Jordi Cartanyà Solé,
Coordinator of Foresight Exercise Southern Catalonia 2040

The process of foresight exercise

CATALUNYA SUD



2017

Formation of
GNI

February 3



Preparation of
foresight
exercise

May 9 and November 13



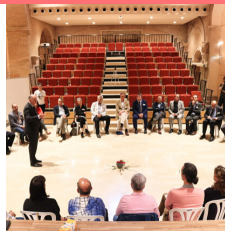
Tarragona

Poblet

2018

Economy
Workshop

May 22



Environment
Workshop

May 24



Social
Workshop

May 31



Alcover

Tortosa

El Vendrell



Interview with more than 50 agents of the region (March-June 2018)

Follow-up
meeting of
GNI

September 20



Future
scenarios
Workshop

November 8



Challenges and
future vision
Workshop

November 22



Tortosa

Reus

Tarragona

2019

Focus
group

January 24



GNI meeting

February 5



Results
presentation

March 12

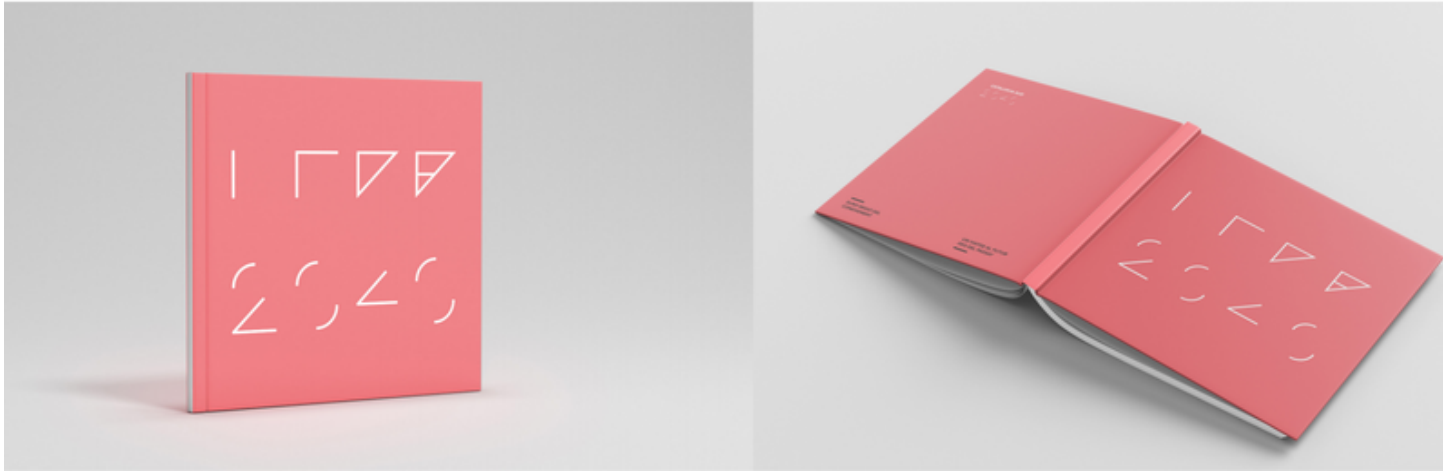


Tarragona

Vila-seca

Tarragona

The result: Southern Catalonia 2040



The book **Cataluña Sur 2040**, published by the Chair for University and Knowledge Region, is a compilation of the foresight exercise and expresses the vision of the future shared by the more than two hundred and fifty participants on the main challenges in the 2040 horizon. The future is in our hands.



[Download digital book](#)

Testimonials of Southern Catalonia 2040

Discover the opinion of participants in the foresight exercise



Cándido Álvarez, Public Health Coordinator of Reus City Council

Southern Catalonia 2040, as a foresight exercise for thinking about the future, has meant allocating time to gratification, to the pleasure of constructing a better space. Moreover, it has allowed me to flee for a moment from the harshness of reality, from the vulgar repetition of current problems, collectively imagining a kind, healing and creative future. Since nothing is created without thinking, this exercise is the first step towards 2040.



Marc Arza, Councillor for Economic Promotion and Urban Planning of Reus City Council

It has been a fruitful process. In the first place, because it has allowed me to learn about the region and gain awareness of that which surrounds us.



Armand Bogaarts, entrepreneur and CEO Messagenes

Since my participation in the Southern Catalonia 2040 process, I believe in the possibilities of this region and its people. If it is possible to define objectives together and achieve them, Southern Catalonia 2040 will become a reality. Little by little, it will take form and strength because we have already found a common future. I congratulate the organizers who, at all times, have been brilliant and attentive in leading the process towards success.



Montse Castellà, singer-songwriter and activist

The desire to create synergies and personal and collective enrichment. The involvement of different transversal sectors of society and the importance of giving value to the inner structure of Southern Catalonia. The territorial balance must not only be between the north and the south but also within the region itself. I would also highlight the fact that not only technical criteria but also emotions have been taken into account when shaping the final storytelling and preparing the final report.



Mercè Gisbert, professor at the URV specialised in technologies applied to education and member of the Consell Nacional de la Cultura i de les Arts

When I think about my participation in the project #CatalunyaSud2040 (Southern Catalonia 2040) the first two words that come to my mind are perspective and transdisciplinarity. Why these two words? The first one refers to moments of reflection and shared thinking, and the second to the diversity of perspectives of the people with whom I have shared the sessions, which have been an exercise in leaving my comfort zone and seeing things from other people's perspectives.



Àurea Rodríguez, Head of Innovation at ACCIÓ

The seed of the legacy that future generations will gather.



Meritxell Roigé, Mayoress of Tortosa

These meetings have been a meeting point for many different people. We are so small that if we do not move forward together at the regional level and with the same objective it is we will not achieve anything.



Meritxell Ruiz, director of Pia School of Vilanova and former Minister of Education of the Catalan Government

We have begun to think together about our territory's aspirations in the various areas of society, education, economics, environment, culture, etc., and together we have all begun to write down today what we want for tomorrow. Personally, it has been a very enriching process and, for the first time, I feel that we are able to go beyond our local boundaries and understand ourselves within the bigger picture and the many possibilities that this brings for everyone.



Nour Salameh, European Mediterranean Institute

Throughout this delightful journey, my sense of belonging to this territory grew deeper, and this made me more aware of my responsibility to contribute to the development, the prosperity and the conservation of this land, its people and its yet to be unearthed cultural and historical jewels. Furthermore, the project encouraged me to reflect on "neighbourhood relations" and to think about my role beyond my "eastern Mediterranean island's concerns". Our Mediterranean is now a cemetery, but it was once a space of cultural, intellectual and commercial exchange, how can we return to that?

Join our community

Would you like to join this pioneering initiative in Catalonia? Would you like to be updated on knowledge region? In the website www.catalunyasud2040.cat you will find all the information related.

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