Elina Kiiski Kataja

FROM THE TRIALS OF DEMOCRACY TOWARDS FUTURE PARTICIPATION

21.3.2017

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Preface

This memorandum is a part of the Next Era initiative launched by Sitra and Demos Helsinki, which aims to outline a future for sustainable well-being. The initiative examines three themes: work and income, democracy and participation, and growth and progress. This memorandum, "From the trials of democracy towards future participation", falls within the theme dealing with the current state and future of democracy. Further perspectives on the topic will be published on our Next Era website.

During 2017, the online publication will be complemented by a wide range of insights and opinions from leading experts, both Finnish and foreign. The essay on the first theme of work and income was published in January 2017 and the theme of growth and progress will be addressed in an essay that will be available in late spring 2017. Over the course of the year, these themes will pave the way for Sitra's vision work on the future of Finland, the changes under way, objectives and their attainment.

Helsinki, 15 February 2017

Paula Laine
Director, Foresight, Insight and Strategy, Sitra

Elina Kiiski Kataja
Leading Specialist, Foresight,
Sitra

Introduction

For years, it has been said that Western democracy is eroding. Voter turnout rates and party membership rolls have been in steady decline. Consciousness of the crisis has not resulted in action to reinforce democracy, however. And then came along the game-changing year of 2016. The UK's decision to leave the EU and Donald Trump's establishment-defying victory have highlighted numerous pressure points in democracy that require urgent attention. This article examines possible ways to address the current challenges.

The year 2016 demonstrated how unpredictable Western democracies have become. The buzzwords of the year – populist policies, post-truth era, the end of the West and the crisis of democracy – nonetheless all originate in a much longer-running debate on democracy and participation. A report commissioned by the Council of Europe back in 2004 had concluded even then that democracy must change significantly if it were to earn its legitimacy. Democracy cannot remain at a standstill when people, the economy and societies are undergoing radical change. In 2007, the Finnish Parliament's Committee for the Future released a report entitled Democracy in the Turmoil of the Future, authored by the late futures researcher Mika Mannermaa. The report continues to resonate, as it highlights the developments that will inevitably shape our future democracy. According to the report, there is nothing to guarantee future development that will uphold the modern democratic ideals of freedom, equality, compliance with the law and justice. Mannermaa also quoted Professor Olavi Borg:

> What matters is to note that the representative democracy based on majority rule that has been exercised over the past hundred years has in a way reached the end of the line; those who in their day formed the impoverished, badly educated and subjugated masses, i.e. the common people, have turned into an overwhelming majority of the people in developed democracies. It is a relatively well off, increasingly well educated governing majority that is exercising power through its own organisations and representatives. For some reason, a considerable proportion of this majority is not

satisfied with the results achieved, but yet these dissatisfied individuals are not willing or are unable to come together to bring about a different state of affairs. On the other hand, no such factor is discernible that could unite those in dire need, those excluded from the development of welfare and culture, the fragmented and heterogeneous minorities, to form a single force to change society. Is it enough for a society that the majority is in good shape? Can the majority not actually solve the problem of the ailing minority, or does it not want to? Or do we lack on the whole a model for taking democracy into the new century and the new millennium in a structurally very diverse society where its original ideals of majority rule were forged?

Olavi Borg in *Demokratia ja poliittinen osallistuminen* (2006)

It remains to be seen whether the current political upheaval involves a crisis of democracy that, when resolved, will take us into an entirely new period of democracy or a wholly new system of government, or whether what we are seeing is nothing more than ordinary seasonal variation that will result in democracy as we know it living on in the Western world, albeit in a somewhat different form.

Democracy presents a particularly thorny topic from the viewpoint of futures thinking. Western political culture exhibits many characteristics that are just about polar opposites to the fundamental premises of futures thinking. The difference is well illustrated by the following juxtaposition of the future paradoxes of democracy put forward in the Mannermaa report.

Tensions between democracy and futures thinking

Source: Mannermaa 2007

Futures thinking	Prevailing (representative) democracy
Futures perspective: long term, decades or beyond.	Futures perspective: short term, parliamentary cycle (often four years) or the budget year.
Long view – "sometimes you have to say 'no' today to have something better tomorrow".	Short view – "rewards and gratification have to be immediate".
Multi-sectoral systems thinking.	Sectoral, "not my job" thinking.
New mindsets (paradigms, ideologies) and ways of organising societal functions are generated in the information society and its successors.	Mindsets and ways of organising societal functions (party system, etc.) date from agrarian and industrial society.
Ever more complicated (complex) society; difficult and challenging to fully grasp ideas.	Simplification; temptation to sell citizens the simple solutions which "the nation" also expects.
Change – accelerating change, emerging issues, unpredictable surprises.	Status quo, clinging to positions achieved, predictable trends and lack of change.
Visions; objectives and the value debates that they spark off.	Modern information society has covered old ideologies; new ones are not born.
Proactive approach – "future there to be made"; futures analysis of change factors in operating environment and inspiring visions for a basis for strategies for grasping the future.	Reactive or passive approach – react at the last minute or "future there to be drifted into"; inadequate ideological or inspiring visions of the future.

Perhaps these future paradoxes are the reason why Western countries have not been particularly ambitious in seeking to develop democracy and developments have instead consisted of fine-tuning and repairing systems which already exist. In Finland, for example, the introduction of the citizens' initiative has proved an effective way of introducing into discussion and the legislative process issues which political parties have been unable or unwilling to raise. However, no radical reforms have been seen at the core of representative democracy, that is, political parties. The most radical shift in the field of Western politics indeed has to do with the rise of protest parties and populist parties and the effect these are having on the existing nature of politics and the system of participation.

Another important question is whether democracy will be able to address the challenges that people are wrestling with and, on the other hand,

whether it will be capable of delivering on the promises that form the foundation on which the current social order in Western countries is largely based. These core promises include the notion that education will lead to employment and income and thus allow the individual to become a fully fledged member of society. Another promise specifies that working will make the economy grow. Economic growth will deliver a tangible increase in the standard of living that culminates in material things such as housing, consumption, leisure activities and public services. Representative democracy meanwhile offers and promises the opportunity to choose the decision-makers who can best guarantee the achievement of the aforementioned.

Because of these core assumptions, in recent decades it would appear, at least superficially, that politics has been reduced to promises of jobs and economic growth. However, we are currently in circumstances where globalisation trends and the vast technological revolution are hampering delivery on these core promises.

The Nordic social model has been especially effective in delivering on several core social promises at the same time, and capable of broadly covering all groups in society. In terms of the future of the Nordic model it is therefore vital to continue to seek out solutions that reinforce well-being, inclusion and economic viability, all at the same time. On the other hand, the nature of democracy as a trade-off must also be accepted; no one can have everything they want and therefore disappointments and slow progress must be tolerated in order for the entirety of the system to function. Democracy requires not only system-level reform but also citizens with a grasp of how democracy functions at its most basic level.

This Next Era memo addresses the forces of change currently buffeting the Western countries and their impacts on the functioning of the various sectors of democracy and participation. The memorandum pools a wide array of discussions and perspectives on the future of democracy and participation. The background materials used consist of reports, statistics and research, as well as journalistic analyses and visionary ideas. The memo seeks to provide perspectives on the ongoing debate about the changes taking place in democracy, as well as concrete and pragmatic proposals on ways to reinforce democracy and participation in Finland and other Western nations.

It is our hope that the memorandum will also provide a basis for the future development of democracy and participation in ways that we cannot even imagine at present. This work will also be pursued as part of Sitra's vision work in 2017 to outline sustainable well-being in Finland and the Nordic social model of the future.

Perceptions of democracy

Source: Internetix learning materials

WHAT KIND OF DEMOCRACY AND PARTICIPATION?

The various ways of perceiving the nature of democracy provide divergent replies to the question of how democracy should evolve. The breakdown below illustrates the points of departure often used when discussing democracy.

ELITE DEMOCRACY

In this approach, society today is deemed to be so complex that it can only be managed by special elites, i.e. experts and decision-making professionals. According to this approach, democracy even at its best only means that voters are regularly given a chance to decide on the elite groups upon whom power will be bestowed for the forthcoming period.

DELIBERATIVE DEMOCRACY

Truly effective indirect democracy is not only about people being given a chance to vote from time to time to choose the decision-makers for the forthcoming term. It also involves two other aspects: first, an active civil society is required, meaning that people together discuss social matters and formulate their opinions in a number of forums, including streets and squares, associations and organisations, and online. Second, there must be effective communication between the decision-makers' political discussions and the discussions at the civic level. Both levels must be able to listen and hear one another. The goal in deliberative democracy is mutual understanding among people. This understanding can be achieved through discourse and finding common ground.

AGONISTIC DEMOCRACY

This approach considers that not all people are equipped to take part in deliberative democracy. This applies to the least advantaged in society in particular, who experience at first hand the many ills of society, yet may be unable to address these and voice their concerns in general discourse. Disadvantage and deprivation often go hand in hand with a lack of information, self-esteem and communication skills. According to this approach, democracy should make room not only for voting and proper civil dialogue but also for more emotionally charged forms of protest. In the agonistic view, politics is a struggle and it is vital for that struggle to be made visible.

An analysis of the changes taking place in democracy and participation as well as a survey of the related debates on the future reveal that all three approaches to democracy described above are relevant and present in contemporary discourse on the state of democracy.

1. Change in democracy and participation

The effects of megatrends such as globalisation, rapid advances in technology, climate change and natural resource adequacy on various sectors of society have been considered extensively in recent decades. What are the changes in democracy and participation that will arise as a result of these megatrends?

Globalisation

Globalisation has radically altered the way politics is done, especially since the early 1990s. An interdependent and path-dependent world where goods, services, capital, manufacturing, processes and people are free to move without limitation has resulted in a significant undoing of the political and democratic field where nation states and their democratic processes can make a difference. An increasingly interdependent world where things happening on the other side of the globe have an impact on people tens of thousands of miles away calls for a new kind of politics and a new kind of participation. The kind of participation required does not yet exist, however. A mood of uncertainty and tension is challenging the approaches and legitimacy of democracy in the West, while path dependency shapes the future on the basis of choices made in the past.

The rise of China and Asia has challenged the monopoly on economic well-being and growth once held by democracies. With jobs in Western nations disappearing into the maw of globalisation, the decline of traditional social classes has changed the political agenda. The "elephant chart" describes the change in global income distribution over the past three decades. The work of economist Branco Milanovic, the chart illustrates the vast shifts taking place in global income distribution over that time frame. The world's poorest five per cent remain destitute and have benefited little from growth while the hugely populous rising economies, which account for roughly half of all people in the world, have managed to latch onto growth and climb out of poverty. The increasingly affluent middle classes of India and China fall within this section of the chart, and are among those who have greatly bene-fited from the new income distri-bution. The traditionally affluent Western middle class has slumped, however. Incomes in this group have seen hardly any increase in the past 30 years, while the super-rich, a tiny global elite, have seen significant income gains.

Western nations face a serious dilemma: can democracy work even in the midst of a major restructuring of the economy?

Despite income disparities evening out in global terms, income disparity within groups of countries has increased. The dissatisfaction of the middle classes that are losing ground in the developed industrial nations has indeed been an underlying factor in Brexit, the victory of Donald Trump, the plight of social democracy and the rise of populist political parties. At the same time, Western nations face a serious dilemma: can democracy work even in the midst of a major restructuring of the economy?

In the future, credible political solutions will require a genuine local and also a global dimension. However, to date, not a single traditional political movement or party has adopted the creation of global solutions and policies on a planetary scale as its agenda. There is nonetheless compelling evidence to suggest that an increasing number of political issues now concern humanity as a whole.

Rapid advances in technology

Intense technological development in the 21st century, the rise of the internet and social media, and the transition seen in journalism and media are all developments often compared to the industrial revolution in terms of scale. The 1800s saw the beginning of a decades-long revolution during which the fundamental structures of society underwent a powerful change, the ways of earning a livelihood were radically altered and the distribution of wealth took place in an entirely new way. Democracy itself was reborn with the disappearance of the class society and the realisation of representative democracy by means of mass parties.

The post-Second World War world was one where major social visions in the West were forged and often also successfully put into practice in the field of politics. The hierarchy in politics was strict, the standing of the press as the fourth estate unassailable and the role of citizens was mainly to cast their votes in elections held every few years. The 21st century and technological change has significantly altered these established configurations.

The birth of the internet has democratised power in an unprecedented way and empowered people to become participants in their own name. The same applies at all levels, from neighbourhood activism to global debates, networks and action. However, the internet has also brought about a disconnect between the exercise of power, democracy and the political process. Western democracies are tuned in to the industrial era of the 20th century while the new power created by the internet, flowing unpredictably and atomised into digital networks, is creating new phenomena to which we are as yet unable to assign an established place or name in the democratic narrative.

In recent years, the transformation of jobs and skills brought about by technological change has received enormous attention. The primary challenge lies in the jobless growth generated by technology. At the same time, the objective of full employment has always been a cornerstone of Western democracies.

Ecological sustainability crisis

Political and demographic realities combined with climate change and the inadequacy in the supply of food and water suggest that the Middle East, Africa and parts of Central Asia have the greatest exposure to crises caused by climate change. Parts of the world may become uninhabitable if climate change continues to proceed apace. Such changes in the living environment may result in vast mass migration and conflict. National borders are unlikely to matter to people who are fighting to survive. Ecological sustainability issues therefore present humanity with a common set of questions about how to manage climate change, how to allocate resources and how to resolve global issues in a world of increasing mutual dependence.

How can a mandate for resolving issues crucial to the survival of humanity be obtained from people who are only indirectly affected by those issues?

Since the 1900s, Earth has become a very small planet for a very big human population. This is brought into stark reality when considering the earth's ecological capacity. No single country or nation state is capable of addressing this challenge on its own but in recent years important milestones have been reached towards a global response. The Paris Agreement imposes ambitious global objectives which should limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius. Many technological breakthroughs, such as those in the deployment of renewable energies, also constitute positive trends which have served to inject a modicum of optimism into concerns over the earth's ecological capacity.

The earth's ecological constraints have also presented humankind with many questions relating to democracy and participation. Does democracy lend itself to addressing global problems? How can a mandate for resolving issues crucial to the survival of humanity be obtained from people who are only indirectly affected by those issues?

2. How and why everything is changing

At present, researchers on democracy disagree as to the force and degree of the ongoing changes in democracy.

Slightly under half of the world's population now lives in countries classified as democracies but the expansion of democracy ground to a halt in the 2000s. The quality of democracy has been challenged in established democracies, as manifested by things such as talk about decision-making gridlock or the democracy gap generated by globalisation. Alternatives to democracy are being actively debated or experimented with. Other approaches are being developed in many authoritarian countries such as China or in nominally democratic countries such as Russia. In the EU as well, countries such as Poland and Hungary are thought to implement politics that could be considered to conflict with the EU's principles of democracy.

The pressure points coming to light in the discourse on the future of democracy and participation are examined in greater detail in the section below.

The unresolved conflict between globalisation and democracy

The two biggest political upheavals seen in 2016 in the Western world came from the UK's decision to leave the EU and Donald Trump's election as the US President. Both events shook the very political foundation on which Western leaders had based their policies for decades. One of the cornerstones of that foundation was the promotion of global trade, to the extent that the post-1990 era has been referred to as one of hyperglobalisation. Hyperglobalisation is characterised in particular by the deregulation of capital mobility and the strengthening of supranational institutions operating without a clear democratic mandate. The platform for hyperglobalisation has been provided by the World Trade Organization (WTO). In Europe, the EU has broadened its political role considerably since the 1990s and evolved into a hybrid of democratic federation and non-democratic international organisation.

Challenges are presented by the short-term view that in many ways is emblematic of politics, and by a conflict of sorts between democracy and globalisation.

The same period has seen an intense rise in the global mobility of people. According to the UN International Migration Report, international mobility increased by more than 60 per cent between 1990 and 2015. Migration in on the rise on all axes: within the southern hemisphere, from south to north, north to
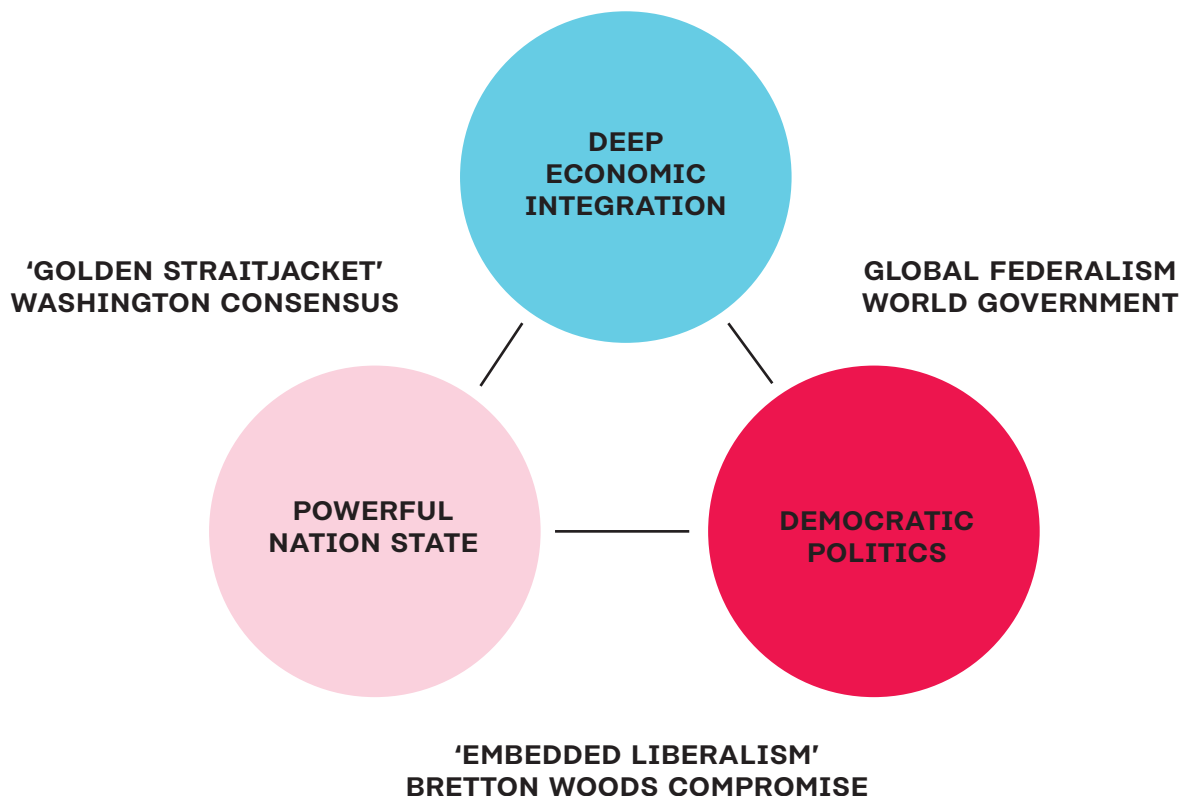
south, and north to north. At the same time, the post-Second World War economic and political dominance of the Western countries has been challenged by other nations, most notably China.

Addressing and managing climate change is a global challenge. The entire global community must be harnessed and as many mechanisms as possible introduced to steer the markets towards cleaner solutions in areas such as trade, if we wish to halt climate change.

These trends are related to the discussion of the future of democracy and participation. Challenges are presented by the short-term view that in many ways is emblematic of politics, and by a conflict of sorts between democracy and globalisation.

Dani Rodrik, Professor of International Political Economy at Harvard University, writes about the globalisation paradox. Rodrik's core assertion is that democracy, national self-determination and economic globalisation present an unsolvable "trilemma". According to Rodrik, two of the three can always be combined but never all three. Promoting globalisation means abandoning the nation state or democratic politics. A desire for maintaining or expanding democracy means choosing between the nation state and international integration. Keeping the nation state and the right of self-determination necessitates a choice between deeper democracy and greater globalisation.

THE POLITICAL TRILEMMA
OF THE WORLD ECONOMY

DEEP ECONOMIC INTEGRATION

'GOLDEN STRAITJACKET'
WASHINGTON CONSENSUS

GLOBAL FEDERALISM
WORLD GOVERNMENT

POWERFUL NATION STATE

DEMOCRATIC POLITICS

'EMBEDDED LIBERALISM'
BRETTON WOODS COMPROMISE

Picture 1. The Political Trilemma of the World Economy. Source: Rodrik 2011

Current pressure points in politics are often so complex that their sheer complexity deters intervention. The good global governance of globally relevant issues such as the climate, water supply and food production is often precluded by national interests. Any discussion on immigration also entails a discussion of foreign policy, global poverty, global labour rights, inequality, economic growth, the regulation of globalisation, the climate and wars. None of these has ever featured on the top-ten list of politics in the national arena, however. Having people believe that it is possible to bring back the good old days, or that chosen policies can be continued, is easier than radically challenging the conventional wisdom and having to explain this to the electorate to boot.

Having people believe that it is possible to bring back the good old days is easier than radically challenging the conventional wisdom

Futures discourse has also touched upon the idea of the ability of cities to serve as engines for major systemic change. The idea relates to the powerful megatrend of urbanisation visible all over the world and also to the intense political division between urban and rural areas in the West. According to UN estimates, 70 per cent of the world's population will live in cities by 2050, and cities are already acting as engines of growth in all parts of the world as they attract young people of working age, technology and investment.

The Global Parliament of Mayors states that its mission is to provide pragmatic solutions to vicious global problems involving issues like security, ecological sustainability and freedom, which individual nation states or the UN have been incapable of resolving. The underlying idea is that problems of this kind are both global and local by nature. Cities are units that are sufficiently large and consistent to allow truly effective systemic changes to be made. In cities, changes can also be made in a way that makes it easier for people to participate in decision-making by means of grassroots democracy. Civil society and enterprises can also naturally be incorporated into decision-making and the resolution of shared problems in cities.

While it is easy to envision vital metropolises of the future drawing in people, talent, technology and business, this vision alone is not enough because it fails to answer the difficult question of what lies beyond the cities. Several analyses of Brexit and Trump's election address this very issue with relation to the contrast between rural and urban areas and the loss of jobs in the hinterlands of the US and the industrial zones of the UK. In free trade, for example, considerably more ambitious standards and ground rules could have been enacted long ago to help control the downsides of globalisation. It is possible that the tools available to nation states to help allay the concerns and predicaments of people or to address issues such as climate change has been severely under-exploited.

Globalisation, urbanisation and technological consolidation have been huge mainstream trends between the 1990s and the 2010s. At present, nationalism appears to be rising as a counter-trend. The thorny issues of the

future nonetheless always boil down to the ways in which humankind as a whole is capable of solving global problems.

The industrial-era political machine is spluttering

Voter turnout rates and party membership rolls have been in sharp decline in the past few decades. Now in the 2010s, only an average of 3 per cent of Europeans belong to a political party. In Finland, the figure is 6%. Both are remarkably low figures considering that political parties remain the most important avenue for the exercise of power in representative democracies. People and parties going their separate ways constitutes a very worrying development because the democratic process should also create political inclusion.

The deterioration of representative democracy and political parties is a result of changes in the production and class structures in Western societies. The political map in most countries continues to reflect the class structure of the early 20th century: the working classes, farmers and the more affluent middle and upper classes each with their own party. These parties were also intertwined with everyday life, work, interests, place of residence and education. Political parties were a means of building identity and taking on commitment. The choice of party from election to election was often automatic for many people.

Now, the standing of parties in uniting social classes or providing identity has unravelled and political parties all compete for the same voters in the post-industrial world. Class parties have become big-tent parties which, armed with surveys, seek to bedazzle ever new groups of voters. These parties pledge to manage public affairs with efficiency and skill. In decision-making, however, the range of options available has shrunk. Governing parties, populists included, more and more often face situations where there are no political alternatives available to them. Parties' hands are tied by public finances and agreements between social partners and, for example, among EU member states.

Irish political scientist Peter Mair devoted his professional life to a comparison of party systems in various countries. In his 2013 book Ruling the Void: The Hollowing of Western Democracy Mair argues that the cause for the crisis of politics can in fact be found inside politics. Unable to react quickly enough to changes in the world, politics is steered on the wrong course by its internal structures. Mair's primary contention was that in recent decades, politics and politicians had to a considerable degree disconnected from citizens and civil society. The former had become a part of the administration, the latter spectators of politics.

According to Mair, representativeness has two ways of working in government. The first involves "government by the people" in the sense that parties are popular movements and politicians are elected to their posts as citizens and not as experts. The second is "government for the people" in which the affairs of society are managed by parties and politicians as if they were doing the people a favour. Mair also points out that in European

democracies over recent decades, government for the people has gained ground at the expense of government by the people. In politics, as elsewhere in society, expertise has been given increasing emphasis and positions on a growing number of issues can no longer be based on ordinary common sense. Politics has grown more professional and decision-making taken on a more information-based tone.

Ultimately, what is at issue is the inability of parties to put together new solutions to enable government by the people, as evidenced by the swelling ranks of floating voters and by the shrinking party membership rolls, which have fallen by between 25 and 67 per cent in all established democracies in the years 1980 to 2009. Mair ends up claiming that first and foremost, politics has become a channel for recruitment to the elites. Parties maintain a cartel on many duties and there are any number of positions both inside politics and out that are difficult if not impossible to land without party politics. This also entails an increasing uniformity in the skills and life experience of people aiming for certain positions. They are united in their political career development and the related rituals, topics and interests.

The notion of mass party relies on the idea of a society easily divided into social classes and groups whose interests can be promoted. Owing to the growth of the welfare state and the erosion of mass identities, the electorate can no longer be easily broken down into groups for which long-term goals may be defined. Party members have also become older over the past decade while young people no longer join parties as before. It is therefore a reasonable assumption that in the future party affiliation will grow increasingly tenuous. Political parties may no longer be the channel of choice for addressing ills and grievances. Many people may wish instead to have a direct effect on the world around them, and also more frequently than at intervals of four years. If party membership rolls continue to decline, it may be presumed that their mandate for the exercise of power will also be undermined. Therefore, parties must seriously rethink the ways in which they bond with voters and participate in their activities.

Technology and the shift in the nature of power

The early years of the new millennium were marked by huge enthusiasm for new technologies. Internet pioneers believed they had discovered the key to a golden era of democracy. The internet would give everyone access to unlimited information, the chance to create political movements and talk to anyone they wished, whether in their own neighbourhood or on the other side of the world. By the late 2010s, idealism appeared, for many, to have failed. Direct lines of communication between people have given rise to the by-products of hate speech, internet bubbles and a concern over the survival of democracy in the internet age.

Jeremy Heimans and Henry Timms are high-profile internet activists who have examined the nature of power both before the internet and after the internet revolution. In their much attention-garnering article in the Harvard

Business Review in 2014 the two stated that the power of the internet is easily either romanticised by believers in technology or dangerously underestimated by its sceptics. While the hopes of the early millennium regarding the idealistic power of the internet to democratise have been dashed, it cannot be denied that the internet is changing the world.

Heimans and Timms state that this is not a narrow either/or shift but a complex transition that is only in its nascent stages and characterised by tension between the old and the new power. They compare old power to currency. Old power, like currency, is held by only a few. Once gained, it is jealously

Is the organisation doing things that people want to commit to?

guarded and its use is closely rationed. Old power is closed down, it cannot be easily accessed and it has been intensely leader-driven.

New power works in another way. The authors employ the metaphor of a current generated by many. It is open, participatory, and peer-driven. Like flowing water, it is at its most forceful when it surges. The goal with new power is not to hoard it but to channel it. Heimans and Timms predict that this struggle between the two different perceptions of power will be a feature of society in the near future.

New power is characterised by not only consuming but also sharing, shaping, funding, producing and co-owning content in a manner that bypasses traditional institutions and agents such as banks, newspapers and representative democracy. Not only does this new power flow differently, it also empowers people to act in fields where this may not have been possible before. This role of the empowered actor extends from teenagers' personal YouTube channels with audiences counted in the millions to peer-to-peer loan platforms and sites and forums disseminating fake news and hate speech.

For many people, especially those under 30, there is no question: everyone has the right to take part, produce, share and act. For earlier generations, participation took place through elections, unions or the church. Now everyone is their own spokesperson, producer and publisher, with direct access to the attention and awareness of others via the internet.

In terms of governance or government, new power favours the informal networked approach to decision-making. The ethos emanating from the Silicon Valley in particular is marked by a faith in the ability of innovation and networks to generate the common good previously generated by state actors or major institutions. A disregard for formal representation is a part of the new ethos. Informal collaboration is rewarded and communities themselves write their own rules, for instance by ranking network users. In one example, a messy Airbnb guest may not find it easy to come by a new host. The culture is all about DIY, and amateurism has stepped out of the shadows of specialisation and professionalism and into the spotlight. The boundaries of the private and the public have become blurred.

New power gives fervent support to its causes but in the long term its connection is rather superficial. While people are quick to join communities

to further their cause, they are also quick to move on to the next. New power may therefore be short-lived and fickle. This approach does not necessarily acknowledge the importance of institutions in safeguarding things like the rule of law. New power has also been unable to transform into a collective force capable of delivering change in the long term.

New power will in any case radically alter the way people see themselves relative to institutions, authorities and each other. While new power empowers people to act and express their views, at the same time it can also provide a setting for bullying or even exclusion of whole groups.

Heimans and Timms urge traditional organisations to examine themselves from a new-power perspective. What would radical transparency reveal about the organisation? Could the organisation's ways of working stand up to public reviews? Is the organisation doing things that people want to commit to? What is the role of the surrounding community? Is there genuine room and potential for it to become involved? And how might the best qualities of new and old power be combined?

Erosion of equality and trust

The global Trust Barometer from consulting company Edelman, published in January 2017, featured some alarming findings. Two thirds of the countries surveyed were in a state of mistrust, compared with only half one year earlier. The barometer measures distrust by asking if the respondents trust mainstream institutions of business, government, media and NGOs to do what is right.

The analysis section of the barometer arrives at the conclusion that people's trust in institutions has grown weaker because institutions have been unsuccessful in protecting people from the negative impacts of globalisation and technology. According to the barometer, concern over jobs and insecurity in life is finding concrete expression in the perceived trust of people in the society around them. The analysis voices deep concern over the functioning of society in the first place in a setting of declining general trust. Fundamental assumptions of fairness, shared values and equal opportunity are at risk.

There is the perception across the political map that globalisation, innovation, deregulation and multinational institutions are not generating what they should. Corruption and globalisation are ranked as the greatest causes of concern. As many as 72 per cent of global respondents are prepared to protect local jobs and industries by means of government action even when this entails slower economic growth. Media trust is also in crisis: 59 per cent of respondents would believe a search engine over journalists. The respondents are also four times more likely to ignore information that does not support their existing views.

Issues relating to personal security, such as eroding social values, immigration and the pace of innovation were also mentioned as concerns. The respondents had very little trust in governments, officials and businesses to

be able to or to have the desire to solve the problems faced by them. Meanwhile, peers are trusted. "People like you" are deemed equally competent to express views on current topics as academic or technical experts, and peers are perceived to be considerably more trustworthy than officials or CEOs. Political trends are veering strongly towards the populist in countries where distrust in institutions is joined by deep social concerns, such as France, Italy, South Africa, the United States and Mexico.

Generally speaking, political research considers political trust to be a prerequisite for a healthy democracy. A high level of trust increases the efficiency of institutions and the functioning of the markets and reduces the need for supervision and control in society. In the longer term, a lack of trust may undermine the stability and legitimacy of the democratic system. Researchers disagree as to whether the decline in political trust is an ongoing trend or a sign of short-term fluctuation. Whichever the case, political trust merits watching.

Professor Robert Putnam, who has studied themes including social bonds, social capital and trust, is concerned over the sharp breakdown of American society into disparate social classes. This breakdown is also being reflected in the country's democratic system. Putnam considers this breakdown to entail two kinds of threats. Firstly, differentiation relating to class will make the American political system less representative. Gradually the voice of the weakest in society will go unheard in decision-making because they simply lack the desire or the ability to become involved in political decision-making, which in turn will undermine political equality and thus also the legitimacy of the entire system. According to Putnam, an even greater threat to the American system and the stability of democracy arises from the sheer numbers of socially excluded young people.

Putnam makes reference to the ideas of political theoretician Hannah Arendt and sociologist William Kornhauser regarding the causes underlying the rise of totalitarianism in the 1930s. According to Arendt and Kornhauser, under normal conditions an atomised and differentiated group of people who feel disconnected from social institutions only pose a minimal threat to political stability, but a rise in economic or international pressures, such as seen in the 1930s in Europe and the United States, can quickly make this group unpredictable and susceptible to anti-democratic manipulation. In her 1951 classic Origins of Totalitarianism Hannah Arendt writes about how the characteristics of such a group are less about being reactionary and unskilled and more about being isolated and lacking in social relationships and networks.

In an age where technology allows us in theory to connect with one another much more deeply, we are in fact witnessing a huge trend in segregation, filter bubbles and homogenisation. This is the topic examined by danah boyd (she chooses not to spell her name with initial capitals), who studies interactions between society and technology, in the article Why America is Self-Segregating. She draws her examples from university campuses and the military, both of which have provided important settings in American society for engagement with people from different backgrounds.

In the US military, it used to be that everyone did everything and was provided not only with battle training but also many other kinds of training for the future, for instance in logistics, catering or housing maintenance. These jobs also required people from all kinds of backgrounds to work together as a team. According to boyd, the military was a vital cultural melting pot in US society where Americans from different walks of life learned to trust each other and work together. Over the past 20 years, however, huge chunks of the US military have been privatised and the private contractors lack the same social mission of team-building. The military today also offers a narrower range of jobs, which leaves many recruits without the training that would benefit them in civilian life.

Another aspect of social segregation raised by boyd is the changed lifestyle of college campuses. The tradition at leading universities in the United States has been to assign students from widely diverse backgrounds as roommates and dorm mates. This has produced new social ties and helped create friendships among people from different walks of life. boyd states that even though life on campus is a huge hassle and people constantly complain about their roommates, students also learn to resolve conflicts and get along with all kinds of people. According to boyd, this has been a practice that for generations has fostered diversity in the structure of American society. Campus living has also promoted diverse networking among future elites, as contacts forged in college tend to persist both at the personal and professional level. Now, however, this practice has been undermined by Facebook and mobile internet. boyd reports having noticed the change with the emergence of Facebook back in 2006. Before term even started, freshmen were setting up Facebook groups and asking to switch roommates based on information garnered from Facebook. A couple of years later the phenomenon only grew stronger with the onslaught of smartphones. Homesick freshmen preferred to keep in touch with their friends back home instead of making new friends.

An understanding of different opinions hinges on trust and interactions with different people

Boyd uses the examples to examine the link between real-life practices and the tech-enabled potential for bypassing situations that would require us to encounter diversity. When Netflix guesses what we want to view and neglects to suggest alternatives that might broaden our horizons, or when an algorithm offers us only the news which it presumes will interest us, based on our earlier browsing history, this takes us farther and farther away from the practices that previously supplied the glue that binds society together, i.e. engagement and the ensuing trust.

Broader trends in the segregation of residential areas and schools polarise society without us even noticing. Adjustments to Facebook or search algorithms cannot address the deeper issue in the absence of genuine real-world engagement with diversity. An understanding of different opinions hinges on trust and experience of interactions with different people. Effective

democracy requires diverse social structures where engagement can take place. Such structures should not be undergoing systematic demolition but rather should be built up. "Social infrastructure" is every bit as necessary as the traditional infrastructure of roads and bridges – perhaps even more so in our technology-permeated world. The possible role of public authority in creating this social infrastructure is a question for the world of politics.

3. Will Finland remain a poster child of democracy?

Finland has a proud history as a poster child for democracy. Finnish women were the first in Europe to have equal and universal suffrage, in 1906. After the struggle for independence and the ensuing civil war, Finland managed to stitch up the tears in the fabric of its society so that it was capable of defending its independence in subsequent wars. In the largely totalitarian world of 1941 there were only 11 democracies in existence – and Finland was one of them.

The way the world stands today, it is important to review the state of Finnish political participation and democracy and to benchmark it against equivalent Western phenomena. The democracy indicators published by the Ministry of Justice in 2015 suggest that Finland is still faring quite well. They show that overall, Finns are happy with the functioning of democracy. Their degree of happiness is stable and high in international comparison. Finns also place in the top ten when measuring the overall interest in politics of citizens of various countries. The level of interest correlates positively with level of education.

However, only 6 per cent of Finns are members of a political party, and floating voters account for a relatively high proportion of the electorate. People in the older demographics are more likely to identify with a party while as many as three out of five younger voters feel no affinity with any party. Finns also find politics to be more complex and hard to understand than people in other Nordic countries.

In broad European benchmarking studies, Finland is among the countries with a fairly high trust in politics and institutions. Trust is generally considered a prerequisite for the functioning of democracy. The degree of trust varies among institutions. Finns have their greatest trust in the President of the Republic, followed by the police and judiciary, as well as universities and research institutes. Politicians and the European Union rank lowest on the trust scale, with political parties only slightly above them. It is interesting that in the OECD survey, trust in the national government dropped sharply between 2007 and 2015 in Finland but not in the other Nordic countries. The decline of roughly 20 percentage points is significant, but despite that Finland clearly remains among the countries where trust stands at a fairly sound level.

The democracy indicators of the Ministry of Justice were part of a wider study published by the Ministry in 2015 under the title The Differentiation of Political Participation. The study examines the state of Finnish democracy and the political participation of the population. As its title suggests, the study focuses on differentiation and its ramifications from the perspective of democracy.

The study revealed that Finnish society is also increasingly clearly becoming divided into the well off and the less advantaged, even though

social disparities in our Nordic welfare society are not as great as elsewhere. According to the study, roughly half of all Finns still consider themselves to be "in the same boat", and 82 per cent believed Finnish society to be threatened by growing inequality. Good financial standing boosts political participation, more precarious finances have the opposite effect. Disparity in participation has also increased in step with the decline in general voter turnout. The party affiliation and voting habits of parents are also passed on to children. The accumulation of power into the hands of the affluent elite presents a challenge in Finland as well. It is also important to realise that finances are not the only factor differentiating the haves from the have-nots: others include the nature of employment, family type, health status, type of residential area, education and training opportunities, social networks, and skills in the use of information technology.

Making informed political choices can be difficult for all people, not just the uncertain and floating voters. The resources available to the individual have an impact on the extent to which the individual is capable of not only acquiring information about politics but also making use of it. Deprivation would appear to be a central underlying factor for "poor" choices. Different groups in society face different types of deprivation. Employees in low-paying sectors may suffer from material deprivation whereas people working in higher-paid jobs may be deprived of time. The effect is the same, however: a narrowing and tunnelling of one's mental broadband. Deprivation in its various forms forces individuals to focus on surviving its effects, for instance paying rent or completing a delayed project. Under these circumstances, it is difficult to capitalise on, let alone build on, one's personal knowledge capital. The notion that some voters are innately more capable of making better decisions than others thus simply does not hold true. Some only have access to better resources and are thus better placed to make political decisions. Moreover, the decisions of all voters are influenced by factors beyond the rational.

A central scenario to the endurance of democracy has to do with economically marginalised people no longer finding it meaningful to take part in collective activities

The most effective way of increasing political equality would be to narrow the overall social inequality gap. A scenario central to the endurance of democracy has to do with economically marginalised people no longer finding it meaningful to take part in collective activities. A study in the Netherlands, for example, found that economic inequality erodes social trust in other people, particularly among those working in low-paid sectors.

The endurance of democracy is indeed measured by its ability to rectify its own shortcomings. The solutions are not always straightforward, however, as they touch upon a wide range of matters. Political participation is always linked to the overall social system. The study of inequality is also the study of

democracy, and an examination of the state of democracy permits an evaluation of the standard of well-being in society as a whole. The 2015 parliamentary election study proves that there is much good in the Finnish democratic system. A high degree of social trust among people prevails in society. Political institutions are also trusted.

Compared with the other Nordic countries, the traditional channels of political participation are underused in Finland, however. Voter turnout rates in Finland are nearly 20 per cent below those in Denmark and Sweden, and only reach average EU levels.

For the time being, it would appear that most Finns still have faith in the possibility of social mobility, which is why we are also prepared to tolerate a degree of financial inequality. By analogy, when stuck in traffic, seeing the next lane start to move ahead gives faith in one's own chances of getting a move on. Thus, faith in social mobility is a vital factor also to democracy and social integrity.

How does Finland fare in social equality benchmarking? In recent years, Finns have grown accustomed to top ratings in all kinds of international comparisons. In 2016, for example, Finland was rated the most socially progressive country in the world in the global Social Progress Index when social progress was defined as "the capacity of a society to meet the basic human needs of its citizens, establish the building blocks that allow citizens and communities to enhance and sustain the quality of their lives, and create the conditions for all individuals to reach their full potential".

Finland has also placed at or close to the top in analyses on the freedom of the press, freedom from corruption or state stability. We have every reason to be proud of these achievements. Unlike the other Nordic countries, however, Finland failed to reach the top ten in the World Economic Forum's 2017 economic inclusiveness ranking, which measured the proportion of the population that benefited from the fruits of economic growth.

Despite indicators suggesting that democracy is of a fairly high standard in Finland, we should not and cannot be lulled into believing that this state of affairs will automatically persist. Global trends of an uncertain environment and increasingly volatile international political situation are reflected in Finland as well, which is why it is essential to develop effective new approaches while the sailing is still fairly plain.

4. Proposals for delivering on the promises of inclusion and democracy

The following contains a set of proposed solutions which may provide tools for reinforcing participation and democracy in Western societies and Finland in particular.

Proposal A

THE BURNING ISSUES OF WEALTH DISTRIBUTION MUST BE RESOLVED

Democratic societies must be able to distribute the wealth they create in a manner that generates a sense of fairness and "being in the same boat". Inequality is a mechanism which clearly contributes to a democracy gap. Though difficult to address, inequality must be tackled if democracy is to work in the future. When economic growth does not create jobs, Western nations need to rethink the organisation of their society. This calls for bold and innovative approaches to livelihood and income. Basic income, for example, could be the future version of Nordic universalism. The essential consideration is to provide a common bedrock on top of which people could build a better livelihood for themselves.

A sense of fairness and trust in both others and institutions are fundamental prerequisites for democracy and participation. These perceptions are strongly linked to the perception of "being in the same boat".

The transformation of work has long been discussed. The topic was first brought to the fore in the 1990s by the increasingly intense globalisation trend that started the shift of jobs to cheaper countries. As the 2020s approach, discussion has focused on the vast automation of work and the introduction of artificial intelligence into the performance of ever more complex tasks. Digitisation and globalisation would appear to be severing the connection between growth, productivity and well-being. At present, this change is being manifested above all in the intense division of the labour market into highly skilled jobs of high productivity and unskilled jobs of low productivity, with the jobs in the middle – requiring average skills and having average productivity – rapidly dwindling. The estimates as to the scope and rate of job losses and the volume of replacement jobs created vary greatly.

Entirely new kinds of jobs, often found in the most unexpected places, have already perhaps even more than made up for the jobs lost.

Paid employment is not the only way of creating value in society, which is why an income equalisation scheme cannot rely wholly on benefits linked to employment income either. An updated version of Nordic universalism could build on a model in which everyone is provided with a basic degree of financial freedom that allows them to come up with ways of making themselves useful. One way of accomplishing this could be the provision of basic income, which could then be supplemented by earned income. This would improve the ability of people to build their income while also giving everyone a common bedrock for such efforts.

Basic income has indeed been debated in many countries and it is being piloted not only in Finland but in selected towns in the Netherlands and in the city of Oakland, California in the United States. Interest has also been expressed in Iceland, Canada and India. In Finland, the prevailing notion that people should earn a living by working has been strongly upheld. All political groups have agreed that employment should be the primary source of income. Social security, education, employment policy and taxation have all in their distinct ways steered and encouraged people towards this outcome.

However, the history of the world provides numerous examples of other approaches. These political decisions reflect their respective circumstances in terms of labour, production and activities. For nearly 40 years, for example, the state of Alaska has distributed to all its residents an "oil dividend" of roughly 1,000 dollars annually from the state's tax revenues from oil. The aim has been to share the wealth equally among all members of the population rather than to line the state's coffers. In Finland, our traditional exporting industries have been our "oil". Their well has now run dry, and there will be no more dividends.

If new kinds of income transfers are to become possible, tax revenues must be collected in a new fashion that considers the new logic of value generation. Digitisation has brought about increasingly precise data records on every activity. In other words, we are being monitored and measured to an increasingly detailed extent. In principle, this provides a new opportunity to levy taxes on things like work performance and to collect fees on the use of commodities, such as roads.

Digitisation allows all exchanges in society to be made transparent and to be taxed fairly and in real time. Corrective taxes, for instance, offer interesting new potential.

Even though it is hard to make up for the decrease in income tax revenues with other types of taxes, there are nonetheless things on which the nation state might in future levy taxes to make up for at least some of the dent in income tax revenues. These include capital, immovable property and consumption. Various kinds of steering taxes aimed at modifying behaviour also offer significant potential, as their relevance is heightened by the availability of data and by ideological resistance to absolute prohibitions. The talk about expanding international co-operation in the field of taxes that has

intensified in recent years may also lead to action to reinforce the tax base in the global digital economy.

The grave risk posed by the current economic and social situation is that in the absence of job creation, precious little else will be going on in the lives of people. This will disrupt the dynamic between economic activity and human activity.

People's ability to launch new ventures can be reinforced through political decisions. However, this requires politicians to have the courage to allocate benefits and drawbacks in constantly new ways, through adaptation to the conditions of the surrounding world. A new era of production calls for the identification of new political questions much like the industrial era did in its time. The industrial era gave rise to great ideologies such as capitalism and socialism, as well as their central political issues relating to labour and ownership.

In their book Second Machine Age, Erik Brynjolfsson and Andrew McAfee describe the long-term productivity effects of digitisation. They emphasise the effects of politics and the democratic process on the livelihood and income of individuals. Many considerations guided by technological development, such as the distribution of the wealth generated by labour and production, are ultimately also political considerations. Equivalent dilemmas were faced at the time of agricultural mechanisation, for example. If it starts to look like digitisation and robotisation are causing wealth to accumulate intensely and an increasing number of people are starting to fall by the wayside in this development, the allocation of taxes must be reconsidered and the equalisation of income distribution must be pursued by means of new and innovative policies.

Proposal B

REINFORCING TRUST AND DIALOGUE IN THE SOCIETY

Trust lies at the very core of democracies and participation. Just about any form of collaboration in communities, workplaces, politics, science and the arts requires people to trust one another. Trust building relies not only on effective democratic institutions but also on social engagement. Just as societies need roads and bridges or digital infrastructure, they also need social infrastructure in order to function. The challenge lies in determining the building blocks for such social infrastructure in the 21st century.

Education policy, housing policy and social policy provide the tools for building social infrastructure. In everyday life, social media in the form of local neighbourhood groups, for instance, opens up potential for a new sense of community. In future, this social glue might also arise in forums created for the specific purpose of social engagement and trust building. Meanwhile, institutions must deliver on their promises. A better understanding of the numerous functions of social institutions and services is also required. Comprehensive school, for example, is not only a place of learning, it also generates social cohesion.

Communities having a high level of trust and a perception of reciprocity demonstrate a higher degree of security, flexibility and accomplishment than communities governed by isolation, distrust and suspicion. Things can also be accomplished with greater ease and efficiency when the individuals involved are not preoccupied with constantly tallying up their presumed gains and losses.

In Finland, there has thus far been a high degree of trust in both other people and institutions. The shared experiences and rituals where cohesion and engagement with a diverse range of fellow human beings take place provide a vital social glue. Comprehensive school and, largely for men, national service have so far remained fairly established institutions where people from diverse backgrounds come together and where societal trust is built. Housing policy is governed by the principle of blending publicly and privately funded housing.

However, there are signs of stronger segregation among Finns as well. Despite the fact that income disparity in the Helsinki region has risen only moderately, the degree of differentiation of city districts into neighbourhoods of haves and have-nots has increased sharply. In studies, this is

demonstrated for example by the differentiation of schools when examined on the basis of household income. OECD benchmarking reveals that income disparity in Finland is at its highest for 30 years, which lays a fertile ground for further segregation. The policies adopted will determine the future development of income disparity and thus also regional differentiation in Finland.

Technology is unlikely to provide any magic answer for boosting cohesion and trust, even though early internet visionaries fervently hoped this would be the case. It is worth remembering that the internet age is still only beginning, as the technology has only been widely available for a scant two decades. In its time, the invention of the printing press radically changed the way people interacted with one another. Change takes time, however, which is why new technology may well enable spectacular developments, trust and community-based action in a future that as yet we are unable to even imagine.

Another point of interest is the way in which social media groups can be used to generate trust in neighbourhoods, for instance: swapping and lending things, providing warnings about roadworks, seeking out leisure activity opportunities in the neighbourhood, or bringing together a group of like-minded individuals to throw a block party. This could be described as individualised collective action in which everyday activities are a way of participating in society and also changing it. Engagement of this kind has been studied by the Swedish Michele Micheletti, who describes it as shouldering responsibility for shared well-being in a way where people from their own starting points create arenas for interaction and the joint processing and resolution of the challenges of good living. In this sense, everyday activities may be political in nature. They are not directed at the political system, however, but at one's own neighbourhood or the networks in which one wishes to be involved. It is also a way of building a new kind of social infrastructure and having an impact on things deemed to be important in one's own life.

A bold examination of the avenues for creating shared spaces for engagement and opportunities for social dialogue is required. In the context of political reform, attention should also be paid to the question of whether the envisioned reforms push us apart or bring us closer together. Sweden has envisaged a "citizen service" for all. In an article analysing the current government programme, youth researcher Sanna Aaltonen writes that a "leap in caring" might be more relevant to increased trust than any digital leap. This would entail an allocation of resources to meaningful face-to-face meetings with, for example, young people who are seeking jobs and their place in life.

Trust and cohesion are qualities that cannot be achieved at the level of speech alone. Discourse and a genuine dialogue may provide an excellent tool but forums created top-down are, as such, unlikely to be enough. Examining instead the structures and institutions that give rise to and maintain mutual understanding and trust could deliver long-term effects. It is indeed vital to pay attention to the hidden functions served by social structures and institutions alongside their obvious ones. Village schools and libraries are examples of services whose hidden functions should be given greater visibility.

Values besides economic and financial ones should be taken into account in our complex world. A library may give rise to costs, yet it is necessary to evaluate not only the expenditure but also its broader effectiveness in terms of well-being, education and social interaction. This broader understanding of effectiveness should be employed more extensively in politics as well.

Proposal C

FROM CONSULTATION TO CIVIC DIALOGUE

The experience of political participation could be significantly augmented if political issues —divisive ones in particular — were routinely discussed in facilitated civil dialogue. Decision-makers willing to try out deliberative civil dialogue and take part in it could well gain a broader understanding of people's concerns. At best, the introduction of deliberative civil dialogue in the context of things like citizens' initiatives and eventual referendums could generate far more advanced and refined views about the matter in hand for politicians and the populace alike. Parties could also capitalise on civil dialogue in their programme work. In future, politics must shift from consultation to genuine dialogue with citizens.

The challenges now facing Finnish society require a new culture of democratic dialogue and ways of channelling civic opinion into decision-making. Growing inequality calls for forms of participation that safeguard the representation of different population groups in decision-making. Immigration is a prime example of an issue that divides people into entrenched camps. Communication between the camps is difficult to achieve without facilitation. Voter turnout rates are in decline and young people in particular increasingly often choose to go with single-issue avenues of participation instead of the more traditional avenues of voting and party activity.

Widely deployed methods of deliberative democracy might contribute to a higher degree of participation in democratic processes and enhanced attention to civic opinion. Deliberative democracy refers to democracy rooted in discourse and deliberation. It includes the idea that all citizens should have the right to take part in making decisions that concern them and to be informed of all matters affecting that decision-making. Those making the decisions should meanwhile be required publicly to justify their choices. Deliberation models also include the idea of facilitated civil dialogue that would allow political issues to be considered by means of discussion with the

aim of coming up with better and more acceptable outcomes. In concrete terms, it is about bringing people together to talk about things that matter to everyone. The value of actual, real-life meetings instead of online discussions is also highlighted in the internet era.

Experiences with deliberative civil dialogue are widely available the world over. One application is randomly selected citizen panels which assess various options relating to the possible outcomes of direct referendums. Insights into the various voter outcomes are arrived at by means of civil dialogue. In Oregon in the United States, for instance, these insights are then mailed to every home as a "voter pamphlet" to aid in voters' decision-making. The Oregon citizen panels, officially the Oregon Citizens' Initiative Review Commission, have generated voter pamphlets on topics including criminal policy, economic policy, genetic engineering and pensions policy. Citizen panels have been convened in Denmark to evaluate the impacts of the deployment of various kinds of technologies.

Studies of citizen panels convened in Oregon between 2010 and 2014 showed that the majority of voters were aware of the existence of panels and that two out of five voters also reviewed the panel's recommendations. What is also encouraging is the finding that citizen panels have boosted voters' awareness and knowledge about the political issues subject to referendum by 10 to 20 per cent. In Finland, citizen panels could well be employed in evaluating referendum alternatives at the level of state, county or municipality.

Rather few deliberative model pilots have been put into place in Finland to date. There have been dozens of citizen panels and deliberative World Café events, however. Åbo Akademi university has implemented three extensive civic deliberation experiments drawing on the ideals of deliberative polling. Experiments with participatory budgeting have also taken place, although it is debatable whether participatory budgeting qualifies as a deliberative democracy practice.

Deliberative democracy experimentation in Finland could be greatly expanded. The projects to date have been done with minimal funding, have concerned relatively minor issues and lacked any clear-cut pre-established link to decision-making.

If Parliament, for example, were to decide to apply the deliberative model to the consideration of a broader issue together with the people, this might raise Finnish democracy, participation and decision-making to a whole new level. The concern of deliberative dialogue only reaching those who were active to begin with has often cropped up in explanations as to why deliberative methods cannot be implemented on a wider scale. While the concern is justified, similar problems also plague traditional elections, as some proportion of the voting population will always remain dormant. Particular attention in deliberative method experiments should therefore be paid to the quality of the methods, attracting participation and engaging the masses, and to providing a genuine link to decision-making and decision-makers. This in turns calls for those involved, such as political parties and

government, to acquire new skills in implementing and taking part in facilitated dialogue.

In 2017, Sitra will experiment with various ways of launching constructive societal civil dialogue as part of its Timeout project. Timeout events will take place across Finland. The goal is for the model to be available in 2018 for use with any topic on which constructive public discourse is desired in the interests of increased understanding and engagement.

Proposal D

RADICAL REFORMS IN THE WAY POLITICAL PARTIES WORK

Political parties must find new ways of working if they wish to retain their legitimacy for working at the very core of democracy and participation. People must be able to influence the actions and policies of the parties. A greater understanding of party membership, policy development and preparation, brainstorming and voting should be fostered. Political parties should engage in genuine interaction with people and surrounding society. The range of tools could be broadened extensively. Parties could have several leaders depending on the topic of each agenda. Parties should exist for the people and their participation, not vice versa.

Political parties are one of the vehicles at the very core of representative democracy. Much power has been accumulated by parties. The future may see the genesis of new channels of organised influence that we are as yet unable to imagine. For the time being, the agenda and candidates for elections are set by political parties which draw party subsidies to fund their activities. Political parties also wield a great deal of invisible power in the form of things like appointments to public office.

There are several indicators showing that political parties and party systems no longer meet the requirements for which they were once established. The refrain of democracy only being realised by means of the party system is nonetheless heard time and again in political speech. If this is the case, political parties should be very worried that only 6 per cent of Finns hold party membership. If political parties are made a prerequisite for the functioning of democracy, their erosion signals the erosion of the entire system.

People are unwilling to wait years to exert influence through a party. Complex and quasi-democratic power structures and organisational

structures, inefficient meeting procedures, red tape in general and the obscure jargon of party politics do nothing to enhance the attractiveness of political parties. Keeping up the organisation's traditions should not have priority over contemplating the future.

Recent years have seen numerous proposals on ways in which parties could rejuvenate their practices in response to 21st-century needs. Some reforms have been put in place, and some parties have opened leadership elections to the entire membership or enabled direct membership to the mother party, yet reforms that could help revitalise party activity still await implementation.

Two very pragmatic publications providing parties with ideas for regeneration came out in 2016. The Finnish Social Democratic Party's think tank, the Kalevi Sorsa Foundation, released the report entitled Kenen demokratia? (Whose Democracy?), while the Finnish Business and Policy Forum EVA came out with the pamphlet Pelastakaa puolueet (Save the Parties). Both are of particular interest because they come from within politics; one originates from a party think tank and the other from long-term political insiders. Both also strongly emphasise interaction between parties, people and surrounding society. The proposals put forward in these publications provided the basis for the set of solutions outlined below for improving the functioning of parties and lowering the threshold for participation in party activities.

Party memberships could consist of different categories such as traditional members, stakeholder members and registered supporters. The rights of these members could also differ, but all types of members would be allowed a vote on party leadership, for example. All activities should be directed outward. The potential contribution of people should be more important than orthodox thinking. Various preparatory groups should be open to all comers, for whom this would provide a means to directly influence the party's work.

Parties could seek out and recruit reinforcements on non-ideological grounds among a wider pool of talent and thus strengthen their expertise in numerous fields. At present, a new party first elects a chairperson and a party secretary. A new kind of party would create a network that could be headed by more than one individual.

Flatter hierarchies and crowdsourcing would result in power being divided among more than one holder. This could also create new stars to join the ranks of existing leadership. Instead of its chairperson, the party's public face could consist of a cavalcade of political luminaries with diverse ideas. The world could be changed through various projects, each headed by a different person. At times, parties could have more than one leader depending on the themes raised. One person for health themes, another for security policy and so on. Ideas would compete, and those ideas could well be inconsistent with one another. In all current parties, the key decisions are ultimately made by a very small group of insiders who determine the role, mode of address and mood of the party. Politics becomes narrow when only a small group of people are contributing to public debate and drafting its contents.

Parties should engage in organic and ongoing R&D. Party organisations should not be permitted to kill off novel ideas. The surrounding world will surely do this when necessary. New learning should reside at the very core of party activities. Parties of the future would no longer issue clear-cut directives but rather create a range of scenarios to choose from. Parties would then focus their energies on how best to improve their odds of moving towards the chosen best scenarios.

Parties are still a long way from fully embracing the potential of the internet. One avenue for evolution would be the adoption of an online party system that would allow citizens to provide input on matters important to them on a project-specific basis by voting for different parties on different issues. Online voting could also be employed as a means of contributing to elections of party officials and the contents of policies. Parties should realise that floating voters may well support more than one party at the same time. Parties should make their decision-making more transparent and lower the threshold for participation. The wider use of referendums by using new technologies could provide support to decision-making and also be leveraged for votes by party members on policy issues and party leadership. Parties should accept that while votes by party members may not necessarily deliver a permanent boost to the membership rolls, they could nonetheless increase the activeness of members.

One of the biggest problems with parties is their lack of genuine interaction with the outside world. Many of the challenges to participation could be addressed by tackling this single issue. Advances in science or technology could also provide important lessons, as the ongoing improvement of approaches and solutions is a key component of both. This entails a critical review of one's own outputs and their submission to a wider public for further development. It is inconceivable that such an approach would not be crucial to policymaking in the 21st century.

Proposal E

MAKING USE OF LONG-TERM POLICY TOOLS

Democratic decision-making must better cater for the rights of future generations. Finland has in place excellent futures-oriented long-term policy tools, including Parliament's Committee for the Future, the Government Report on the Future and the National Foresight Network. The work carried out within the framework of these should be more strategically and comprehensively adopted as a support for decision-making.

Any discussion of topics such as climate change, pensions, disaster prevention, immigration, security policy, education policy, future demographic change and technology must address a time frame far longer than the electoral period.

The challenges of democracies in addressing such issues are related to the functioning of the political system. Futures-oriented decision-making is hampered by the interest of politicians in re-election, informational challenges relating to the future impacts of complex problems, limited resources and the impatience of voters. As calls to upgrade the political toolkit for the 2020s grow louder, the manners of acting strategically and with a long view must also be contemplated. How should long-term policies be made? There are no magic answers for doing away with short-term policies. If government is to be effective, it must constantly adapt and seek new directions in order to have the capacity to act in the now while also catering for challenges in the longer term.

A system of government that caters for long-term strategic goals has certain qualities: it is proactive, systems-driven, resilient, knowledge-based, experimental and participatory. The tools for achieving these approaches could derive from law, for instance, such as the legal instruments contained within UN conventions. The UN Charter from 1945 proclaims the determination of the United Nations to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war while ending poverty and hunger, and is part of the mission for global governments under the UN Sustainable Development Goals of 2015. Governments in countries like South Africa and Wales have incorporated long-term thinking into legislation relating to the rights of future generations.

Various countries also have in place committees and councils tasked with reviewing policies from the viewpoint of generations to come. New Zealand has a Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment and the

UK has the Natural Capital Committee, which takes the long view on protecting and improving natural capital. Wales has a Future Generations Commissioner and Sweden's government has included a Minister of the Future.

Finland already has in place a range of mechanisms to support long-term policymaking. These include the following.

Government Report on the Future – The Government Report on the Future is prepared once every four years on a given theme and it examines strategic issues on that theme over a time frame of 10 to 20 years. The report provides the basis for futures debate by Government and Parliament.

Committee for the Future – Parliament's Committee for the Future was established in 1993 and made a permanent body of Parliament in 2000. The Committee prepares Parliament's response to the Government Report on the Future and provides Parliament with insights into future drivers of change and their impacts.

Future Reports – Ministries prepare Future Reports on their respective administrative sectors to provide the basis for stocktaking and assessment of future developments in support of decision-making.

National Foresight Network – The National Foresight Network is an open network of Finnish organisations that conduct regular foresight work. Headed by the Prime Minister's Office and overseen by a Foresight Steering Group made up of seasoned experts in foresight, futures work and administration, it also promotes the use of foresight data in decision-making.

Sitra – Sitra is a fund-cum-think tank established to mark the 50th anniversary of Finland's independence. It both probes and puts into practice future-oriented processes of change in Finnish society.

Finland Futures Research Centre – Operating under the auspices of the University of Turku, the Research Centre conducts multidisciplinary academic futures research and also generates data for use in support of decision-making.

In the international perspective, Finland is a pioneer in the creation of long-term policy tools. Looking ahead, the existing long-term administrative tools should nonetheless be maximised more widely while also reinforcing the links between foresight data and decision-making. The aim of adopting the long view while retaining agility have been pursued by means of strategic government programme drafting, for example, which should be further developed.

Proposal F

REGENERATIVE, OPEN AND PEOPLE-CENTRIC GOVERNMENT

Politics and government should be more flexible and smart in responding quickly to the challenges of an evolving environment. Extensive human resources are required for development projects and problems cannot be addressed by means of isolated decisions. The management of government should be strategic and knowledge-based, a primary goal being effective collaboration across administrative boundaries. This calls for new capabilities in interaction, debate and service development in co-operation with the people and across traditional silos. To an increasing degree, people are rating government on the basis of the quality of the services and interactions that it generates. Dealing with government is the practical manifestation of policy outcomes in everyday life.

Government should be capable of being proactive, open and collaborative with its population and other bodies in a challenging and complex environment. The problems of modern society, such as youth unemployment and social exclusion, cut across multiple administrative sectors and can only be addressed with sufficient speed and efficiency by adopting new approaches and ways of thinking. Effective co-operation calls for a jointly crafted and shared vision of the future. Sitra has been involved in promoting the adoption of the strategic government programme, which enables long-term visions while at the same time making room for the agility needed by rapid change in the environment.

People should also be provided with greater opportunity to take part in the development of government and services. An effective model comes from participatory budgeting, where the people in a given neighbourhood decide together on the allocation of funds in their particular part of the city. The internet has made available new tools for contribution that people have actively started using on their own initiative. Street happenings first set in motion in social media have become a natural part of the cityscape and government has often proved an effective partner for these.

The civil service should be educated in open government. Effective shared development in co-operation with the people is becoming increasingly relevant. New forms of co-operation often require public administration to embrace new capabilities such as skills in facilitation, design, empowerment and technology. Disciplines like anthropology and the humanities could provide

useful perspectives on these pursuits, which is why it is vital that diverse skill sets of this kind are actively recruited and incorporated into government.

Major societal changes cannot be implemented in one go and any changes should instead be introduced gradually in order to be able to learn from eventual mistakes. Those affected by the change should be brought together in an environment where they may, without inhibition and with guidance, jointly arrive at a vision of the desired future, as well as finding pathways to achieve it. Experiments limited in duration and scope could be inexpensively put into place and would serve as R&D for new ideas. The wider societal viability of a new approach could quickly be tested by experimentation. In Finland, public administration has indeed made great strides in the development of experimentation, which is also included in the current government programme. In the international arena, a great deal of attention is focused on Finland's basic-income experiment that was started in early 2017. Put together by a multidisciplinary consortium, the basic-income experiment is a prime example of the collaboration between politics and government on the one hand and researchers and think tanks on the other. It also serves to illustrate a new way of crafting extensive social reforms.

Proposal G

SHARED LEARNING PROCESSES FOR DECISION-MAKING

In a world brimming with information it is becoming increasingly difficult to come up with straightforward answers. The notion that decision-makers are the holders of all wisdom no longer applies. It is also unrealistic to presume that decision-makers would automatically be up to date with the latest research findings. In future, decision-makers, knowledge generators and solution formulators should get together to learn from one another. No one alone holds the answers to the pressing problems of the world. This approach is not about learning for its own sake but is instead a vital prerequisite to sound decision-making. The entire concept of decision-making is undergoing a sea change. One-off decisions on the proper state of affairs should be replaced by a commitment to a shared journey of learning and evolution.

There are no easy cures for the ills of a complex world. No single person can possibly be in possession of all information relating to decisions. It has become increasingly difficult to envisage and push through major political reforms.

Complexity researchers indeed emphasise the importance of shared learning processes when complexity presents a challenge to customary models of information usage. Such processes should be integrated into decision-making to a significant extent. Individuals have a limited capacity for knowledge but this capacity can be boosted through collaboration with others to uncover previously hidden potential solutions.

The current approach to the use of knowledge in decision-making has a very mechanistic point of view: universities and research centres generate knowledge that should then be adopted by decision-makers. In reality, this is seldom the case. Information injection models of this kind were abandoned decades ago in the field of communications. A world of rapid change calls for more and more meta-research and syntheses that are based less on communicating research data and more on the interaction of scientific expertise and decision-making.

The challenge in creating shared learning processes lies in the current culture of political decision-making. The industrial-era notion of an all-knowing leader perched at the pinnacle of the hierarchy is hard to shrug off. Political decision-making and the use of knowledge in it should be viewed as a learning process and as problem-solving. In practice, this would require those involved to step outside their comfort zones and let go of their preconceived notions and ideological premises.

In a seminar on the legacy of Georg von Wright, President Tarja Halonen offered an interesting perspective into the kind of authority required in our current age of complexity:

> *Based on my personal experience in various global bodies it would be my opinion that decision-makers, science, business and NGOs need to find a way of looking in the same direction and seeking out answers to the ills of the world together. At present, we are seeing people turn to authoritarian leaders for answers, yet they cannot provide effective responses to the burning issues of the world. Authority should be re-created as a result of people-to-people learning.*

The answers to which President Halonen refers are not to be found by a few people working behind closed doors but by bringing together a wide range of expertise. Rather than make a one-off decision on the proper state of affairs we should look to embark on a shared journey of learning and development.

To date, funding for the generation of knowledge has not been allocated in a manner that sees these shared learning processes between decision-makers and other quarters being a part of government. Instead, funding has strongly been allocated to knowledge generation (research funding) and to a lesser extent to the use of knowledge in interaction with society (strategic research funding). In future, these may be joined by a new dimension of knowledge that would expressly encompass the shared processing, interpretation and use of knowledge in problem-solving.

Proposal H

LIFELONG EDUCATION AND LEARNING

Education is one of the cornerstones of effective democracy. With people in Western countries living longer, ways to make learning a part of the entire lifecycle must be discovered. The provision of education only at the start of life will no longer be enough. Lifelong learning should become a reality instead of a mere catchphrase. The components of the solution might consist of a study account for people over the age of 25, abridged study modules related to retraining and technology-aided online learning. Another aspect of lifelong learning is to locate incentives to prevent additional education becoming the prerogative of those who are well off to begin with.

One of the most effective treatments for the friction in society caused by the technological revolution is proper basic education and basic research. The population is ageing rapidly and in future it will no longer be enough for education to be available only at the start of life. Lifelong learning should be transformed from a catchphrase into reality. Young people are becoming a minority, and this puts the capacity of society to regenerate and the chances of future generations to secure a good life at risk. This issue also touches on equality, intergenerational learning and the potential for being an active member of society throughout one's lifetime.

The rapid advances in technology and the changes wrought by these in society and workplaces also support the increasing importance of lifelong learning in the future. Technological advances with their numerous ripple effects may easily give rise to inequality in other aspects of life as well. Even today, those with higher education are more involved in politics. Equality is intertwined with democracy and participation. Political participation is always tied to the entire social system.

High-standard education has traditionally been one of the cornerstones of Finnish society and it has also created equality. The significance of education in societies with long lifespans should therefore be approached with boldness and an open mind. Non-formal education is widely provided and highly popular in Finland, with as many as 2.1 million Finns enrolled in 2015, according to Statistics Finland. Massive Open Online Courses, or MOOCs, are new kinds of online learning platforms that allow the pursuit of studies ranging from basic courses to degree programmes at leading universities, and these are growing in prevalence. New technologies will change education, and a wide range of learning platforms and learning materials will grow

increasingly accessible. Artificial intelligence will soon help us mine data of ever higher equality, while virtual reality may help take global learning platforms to where students are. Many forms of instruction, such as peer support and mentoring, are also becoming more and more accessible with the advent of technology and new platforms.

At present, lifelong learning opportunities are mostly taken by those who are already well off and highly educated. For example, over 80 per cent of students taking courses on the online platform Coursera already hold a university degree. This warrants an examination of whether broader and more inclusive support and encouragement could be provided for lifelong learning.

In Singapore, everyone over the age of 25 holds personal education accounts which are used to pay for adult education studies. Finland would do well to consider an equivalent solution. The topical basic income could be linked to periods of elective education interspersed throughout one's life. Singapore's experiences with the education account have so far been highly positive, and France is planning a similar initiative.

Learning in one's mature years is highly effective when it takes place in the context of work. Trade unions, for example, could play an important role in innovating new educational opportunities. Unions have access to industry trend data and thus practical insight into educational needs. In Denmark, employees' unions, employers and the government meet on a regular basis to review the future outlook and trends of each industry from the perspective of skills requirements, with an eye to matching educational measures to future developments. In Finland, the Central Organisation of Finnish Trade Unions (SAK) has put forward proposals on topics including open vocational colleges, abridged study modules for retraining purposes, a reform of the adult education subsidy to extend it to part-time studies or shorter study modules, and career counselling for the employed.

Potential also lies in the identification and recognition for employment purposes of skills acquired through volunteering and work with NGOs. Sitra has been working with the Guides and Scouts of Finland to develop an initiative on advancing the identification of skills acquired through volunteer work.

Online learning will certainly continue to grow rapidly. It will be interesting to see if community-based approaches arise in support of online learning, for example in providing learning support for students struggling with motivational issues. Global learning platforms could perhaps be used in non-formal education while also creating physical communities or study circles.

The huge innovations in education made in the 20th century were pivotal to the development of democracy. It would be unfortunate if our level of ambition in the 21st century fell short of our predecessors.

Proposal I

GLOBAL DECISION-MAKING AND STRONGER GRASSROOTS DEMOCRACY

The world is faced with several wicked problems that cannot be solved within the boundaries of nation states. The benefits and drawbacks of globalisation, sharing natural resources and clean air, water and arable land are examples of topics which affect every single inhabitant of planet Earth. Solutions must be found for the global challenges relating to these, yet, locally, people should also feel that they can truly influence their own living environment. This is why it is more and more important to develop grassroots democracy and participation.
Many scientists and NGOs are working on ways of improving global decision-making. These proposals deserve real attention. Politicians should also offer their own input regarding the solutions to global challenges openly known in public debate.

Global governance and global democracy are themes that have long been ignored in political debate. They have been deemed too arduous or too utopian to belong on any serious political or party agenda. In 2016, globalisation nonetheless returned to the political agenda when president-elect Donald Trump announced that the United States would withdraw from its free-trade agreements in order to stop the drain of manufacturing jobs from the country. It remains to be seen how Trump's intentions will play out. The discussion on the effects of globalisation can no longer be sidestepped, however.

Developed economies are simply no longer built on the manufacture and export of goods. Nowadays countries belong to global value chains that provide them with revenue. Finland, for example, produces high-tech components but the finished product made with these components is not necessarily manufactured here. Ending globalisation may not be as easy as fiery rhetoric would suggest. Then again, decision-making could long ago have better catered for those left by the wayside as a result of globalisation. Research institutions and NGOs have long proposed models for increasing global governance and democracy. Every politician and political party should also take the global dimension seriously and let the people know their views on addressing global challenges.

Dani Rodrik has examined global governance and finds that the alternatives for managing globalisation are the creation of a genuine supranational democracy or the restoration of nation-state centricity.

The first alternative would entail a handover of decision-making authority to global institutions by means of a democratic political process of some

kind. Global governance of this kind would manage many of the central functions of constitutional democracies on a worldwide scale.

The second alternative would have democratic governance and political communities centralised for the most part in nation states. This would require the reinforcement of fundamental democratic structures and processes so as to improve the legitimacy of globalisation. The notion of total hyperglobalisation would be abandoned but it might be replaced with a more moderate form of globalisation better capable of tackling the drawbacks. Provided that the institutional infrastructure of the world economy is properly constructed, taking into account the nation states and their differences, countries could then come up with the local legislation and institutions that are best suited to them. Europeans lean towards comprehensive income security and the ensuing high taxes more than Americans, for example.

In Finland, researchers including Teivo Teivainen and Heikki Patomäki have outlined political initiatives that could reinforce global participation and democracy. As an example, they mention a world parliament, which would perhaps be the most straightforward way of democratising the world order. The world parliament could conduct global debates and implement referendums among a statistically representative sampling of world citizens on issues relating to global democracy. Teivainen and Patomäki also propose global taxes, such as currency exchange tax, pollution tax and telecommunications tax, the revenues of which would be funnelled into use via a global fund.

Inequality must be addressed in order to strengthen a sense of fairness in society. As long as the lot of developing countries consists of drought, extreme poverty, violence, famine, disease and lack of opportunity, many of their inhabitants will wish to emigrate in search of a better life. In the long term, real global collaboration is the only way for Western societies to relieve their internal tensions relating to immigration.

In future, local aspects will in all likelihood be underscored alongside the global. Effective democracy requires people to feel that they can make a difference in things that affect their own lives. In addition to global governance models, models put forward by researchers and NGOs for improving grassroots democracy also warrant a great deal more attention than they are being given. Finland is on the brink of a massive change with the impending regional government reform. It is far from obvious that an administratively ambitious reform will suffice, and instead attention should also be paid to reinforcing democracy and participation. When decisions on health and social services are made outside local government there is the risk that the connection of the population to local decision-making will be undermined. Then again, the reform provides an opportunity to consider ambitious means to reinforce grassroots democracy in the future. It is obvious that the local dimension must be given increasing emphasis alongside the global policy dimension in the interests of reinforcing the inclusiveness of decision-making.

Proposal J

IDENTITY POLITICS IS A DIFFICULT BUT NECESSARY TOPIC FOR DISCUSSION

Economic inequality is not the only factor underlying the popularity of populist parties. Other factors include views related to values and identity. Discussions about identity and values tend to be difficult because differences in opinion may simply prove unbridgeable. Religion is often also entangled in these discussions. Deliberative methods, for example, might nonetheless help prevent confrontations coming to a head, thus enhancing the quality of discourse. An essential consideration would be for communities to find a shared goal or purpose to commit to even if their members hailed from highly diverse backgrounds.

The economy has been a central theme in the search for explanations for Brexit and Trump's rise to the US presidency. The elite growing even richer with globalisation while income growth for the vast majority grinds to a halt has been considered to be a significant explanatory factor underlying populism.

Researchers Pippa Norris and Ronald Inglehart have found that the relevance of income and social class to voting behaviour has been in decline since the 1960s. The new dividing lines come from the realms of values, culture and identity politics.

This development is considered to have its roots in the cultural revolution of the 1960s and 1970s when young people highlighted the rights of women and minorities, as well as environmental values, in the political agenda. Post-materialistic values have continued to grow more popular in subsequent decades and may be said to have entered the mainstream. Supporters of traditional values shifted to parties that sought to delay change. New populist parties arose in Europe and these have on average doubled their support in a few decades. In the American two-party system, increasing numbers of white working-class voters became alienated from the Democrats' agenda of cosmopolitanism and value liberalism and switched into the Republican camp that was more representative of their conservative values. Age, education, gender, national identity and religious affiliation would seem to correlate more strongly with populist beliefs than income or class. In many countries, less-educated older white men in particular feel that traditional values have become marginalised. Young people fear the negative effects of immigration the least.

The hugely popular Tea Party movement in the United States was initially seen as a reaction to President Obama's economic policies. Surveys have

revealed, however, that the prime motivation of the movement lay in cultural and value issues. Donald Trump's rise to the presidency is also indicative of this: he understood that the Republican rank and file were much more moved by cultural threats than by free trade or tax cuts. In a study by Justin Gest, up to 65 per cent of white Americans stated that they would be prepared to vote for the party whose platform was "stopping mass immigration, providing American jobs to American workers, preserving America's Christian heritage, and stopping the threat of Islam".

Complexity and trust in societies are the topics studied by Charles Heckscher, who differentiates between the old and new community. The old community involves family, neighbours and friends, while the new community means seeking interaction also with strangers. This gives rise to new kinds of communities which Heckscher dubs "rich communities" in that they allow very different people to work together and to enrich and diversify the community. According to Heckscher, this is accomplished when a group of people are able to define for themselves a purpose, for instance a safe and secure place to live in or a clean natural environment, and strive to understand one another in the interests of that purpose. Highly disparate people are capable of working together towards shared goals. According to Heckscher, we are at a point when new approaches must be found to replace the old dysfunctional ones; globalisation and mobility have created the conditions where people must find ways of forming "rich communities". The pursuit of a bygone era on the one hand and the striving for new communities on the other are currently giving rise to enormous tensions in Western countries.

The differences in the values of different generations will continue to wreak havoc in the politics of Western countries. Political parties should address these issues in their programmes. Politicians and political bodies must confront questions as to how identity-related topics could be addressed in societal debate in a better way, more constructively and with better identification of the concerns and motivations of people. For example, deliberative methods and mediation are among the tools that could be introduced at the local government level to achieve discourse of higher quality on difficult topics.

Proposal K

CONVERTING TECHNOLOGY FROM A THREAT INTO A SERVANT OF DEMOCRACY

At present, technology when examined from the perspective of democracy involves a huge volume of unresolved issues. Technology experts and decision-makers should get together to discover innovative solutions to problems such as hate speech, disruptive online content generated by (ro)bots and disinformation and its use to influence others. Disclosing algorithms, making bot-generated content recognisable and understanding user profiling to be an instrument of political influence are all topics that warrant immediate and in-depth attention. Email was a system that was damaged almost beyond repair by spamming, but in the end technology companies were able to fix the problem. The same resolve should now be applied to fixing the internet.

The writing has long been on the wall for the transition from hard-copy newspapers to digital formats, yet the impacts of the switchover on the revenue model of traditional media has been perhaps even more drastic than expected. People are unwilling to pay for content regardless of its quality and the growing prevalence of ad-blocking only further serves to shrink the revenue streams of traditional media. Trust in traditional media is furthermore faltering among citizens. In the United States, for example, trust in mass media has been in steady decline for years and it bottomed out in the run-up to the presidential elections.

The numbers of social media users are constantly rising and social media has already become the primary source of news for the under-24 demographic in the United States. According to Pew Research, as many as six out of ten Americans now get their news on social media. There is great disparity in social media usage between countries and age groups but it is obvious that social media are becoming the mainstream media of our time also in news reporting. Reuters Institute ranks Facebook as the most popular source of news among social media outlets, with YouTube and Twitter following close on its heels. These online giants attract wider audiences than any media before, which is why they also wield tremendous power to modify our perceptions of reality by means of algorithms. Social media furthermore lack the incentives of traditional media to ensure the truthfulness of their content. False information is easily disseminated and is in fact a part of the internet's logic of freedom. Conspiracy theories, urban myths and legends are nothing new but until now, they were mostly circulated among small and

limited audiences. Online, skilfully disseminated disinformation may reach an audience of millions all over the world in a matter of seconds.

Simplistic dichotomies making traditional media the noble defenders of truth and new media suspect distributors of disinformation should be avoided, however. The truth of the matter is much more complicated. In the UK, for instance, the wildest rumours about the EU banning shirtless working, double-decker buses and haggis had been circulated by Eurosceptical mainstream media.

After the US presidential elections, researchers at the University of Southern California's Information Sciences Institute analysed the origin of tweets sent during the debates. They observed that up to a fifth of all tweets sent during the three televised debates were produced by bots, i.e. computer programs purporting to be human. The figure justifies concern over the impacts of bots. Bots can easily fan the flames of online discussions and create online buzz for false claims. A massive bot army allows its wielders to stir up public debate, align people behind a cause, or even get them to vote for a specific candidate. As early as 2013, the World Economic Forum stated that digital disinformation constituted one of the greatest risks of our time to society.

Decision-makers are only now realising that there is a need to discuss the societal impacts of algorithms and artificial intelligence. Calls have been made in Germany for greater transparency in the algorithms of internet platforms so that users know how their internet content is filtered for them. The role of fake news in the election results was the topic of much debate in the US presidential elections. Facebook and Google have in fact promised to try and rein in the spread of false news.

Many have doubts as to whether self-regulation is an adequate means of addressing the problem. It has been suggested that independent researchers should be allowed access to the algorithms and data of proprietary internet platforms so as to gain a better understanding of the societal impacts of artificial intelligence. All detailed information on the spread of fake news on Facebook in the run-up to the presidential election, for example, is held by Facebook alone. The situation could be compared to a tobacco company alone having access to patient information.

User profiling taking place by means of social media is a new and interesting development. Psychological user profiling is based on a person's behaviour on social media and it can generate vast amounts of data on individuals, for example for personalised political campaigning purposes. There has been speculation in the United States about the link between the use of such data and profiling and the election results, but to date no proof one way or the other has been established.

In their book Big Data: A Revolution that Will Transform How We Live, Work and Think, Viktor Mayer-Schönberger and Kenneth Cukier propose the creation of an entirely new profession to police algorithms: algorithmists. This would not be the first time that increased complexity in society resulting from technical advances has required enhanced policing. Just as external auditors were once introduced to oversee the conduct of businesses, we now

need professionals capable of reliable and independent assessment of big data analyses and projections. With social media, the primary duty of algorithmists would be to protect the public interest. Like ombudsmen, algorithmists too could deal with consumer complaints. In broader terms as well, internet operators are unlikely to escape more stringent regulation. In future, political decision-makers the world over will have to grapple with the equation of addressing new media-related issues without restricting the freedom of expression. This is no mean task. Internet giants are powerful lobbyists and they strongly hold on to their freedom to publish. Regulation might moreover have unforeseen side effects. A clean-up in mainstream social media might well translate into a rise in the popularity of unsupervised alternative media or dark networks.

In future, personal data will certainly become a political issue as well. The more data is accumulated on people, the more the issues of how it may be used, by whom and on what terms will require consideration. These are questions to which the My Data movement is alerting people. The movement states that people should have access to and authority over data collected about them. Privacy issues are to be addressed by strengthening the rights of individuals to manage their own data. People themselves should be able to control the collection, processing, use and sharing of data. The crucial difference lies in whether the mechanisms and legislation pertaining to data collection and exploitation arise from the perspective of people or of organisations.

While more effective regulation may prove difficult, more research into the effects and ethical aspects of artificial intelligence is still required. Decision-makers must also sit up and take notice of the topic. People have the right to know how algorithms are affecting their behaviour and their understanding of the reality around them, who benefits from the systems that monitor user behaviour and what are the goals pursued with these new technological tools.

Proposal L

INTRODUCTION OF RADICAL REFORMS

The debate on the future of democracy abounds with exciting and radical ideas for reform. These tools should be examined with an open mind rather than be dismissed out of hand. If democracy is a value per se, could representation partly be realised by means of representatives chosen by drawing lots? Or, if nowadays we put such trust in "people like us", why not set up a parliament of peers? Might artificial intelligence after all be better than people at making decisions? Ideas that seem radical today may well be the reality of tomorrow.

Developments in politics, participation and democracy are difficult to anticipate at present. Some speak of a widespread threat against democracy arising above all from the rise of populism and the power of the internet, others recall that progress always moves in waves and the ongoing turbulence in democracy could be nothing more than ordinary seasonal variation. The same uncertainty applies when listing proposals aimed at reforming participation and democracy. The radical notions of today may well be the reality of tomorrow – or then again they could be as "pie in the sky" as ever. Despite this uncertainty, a list of radical suggestions for reforming participation and democracy is provided below. The radical notions of today may hold the seeds for valuable solutions and therefore they warrant examination with an open mind.

Sortition – The separation between the people and the power elites is a recurring theme in debates on the state of democracy. Decision-makers are feared to no longer understand the problems of everyday life and to make decisions while out of touch with ordinary people. Choosing some of the members of parliament or local government councils by sortition, i.e. by drawing lots, could address this issue of alienation.

Peer representatives – Peer-to-peer has been a rising trend in the 21st century. The Trust Barometer indicates that people are putting increasing trust in their peers. "A person like yourself" ranks above experts or officials in many trust surveys. Representative democracies could also introduce alongside their representative bodies peer parliaments consisting of members elected by people strictly in the capacity of peer and not in the capacity of representative.

Term limitations – The short duration of electoral terms presents a challenge to representative democracy. Decisions that make sense in the long term may be vexing for voters in the short term. Limiting the time allotted for representatives to remain in office would do away with the pressure of re-election and representatives would then have greater freedom to make the necessary decisions extending far into the future.

Incorporating artificial intelligence into the work of the government, parliament and local government councils – Many businesses have already incorporated artificial intelligence into their management and artificial intelligence is already used as a tool in difficult problem-solving. Incorporating artificial intelligence into decision-making could introduce a calculated and rational alternative alongside emotional and human arguments. In Finland, for instance, the powers of one government minister could be exercised by AI and one parliamentary committee could be comprised of AI(s). This committee could then issue recommendations on difficult and controversial legislative issues.

Scheme for decision-makers to combat disconnection – The risk of decision-makers becoming disconnected from the everyday life of ordinary citizens could be combated by tailoring a scheme for decision-makers to visit and stay with ordinary people in various parts of Finland, thus giving them insight into their daily lives.

Voters to join decision-makers on courses – Finland has a long tradition of courses for decision-makers. Sitra, for instance, has been providing courses in economic policy for decades, and national defence courses are already an institution. Many stakeholders also organise courses for decision-makers in a bid to expose them to topics they deem to be of national relevance. The same courses could just as well be attended by a group of randomly selected people who could thus gain a feel for the kinds of issues that decision-makers grapple with.

Parties replaced in elections by ideological interest groups – Since participation in party political activities has been in decline for decades, bringing ideological interest groups to the election table might spark participation and revitalise the political landscape. The political party scene of today was based on the demographics of an industrialising society. In future, interests could provide a basis for defining the contours of the political landscape.

Ongoing mobile voting and deliberation – The current mobile technology could enable citizens constantly to express their views on various topics, for example in an advisory capacity. Taken further, the model might consist of a randomly selected group of Finns being appointed to serve for a few months at a time on a mobile panel that could frequently vote on issues and also assign them weighted values, from "very important" to "not very important". The members on each panel would also attend a deliberative workshop on one to three occasions, for example, to allow them to consider topics on the political agenda face to face.

Reining in robots in politics – The internet is already crawling with bots designed to influence people and these bots are largely controlled by extra-political forces. Current parties, civil society and international institutions should come to grips with this if they wish to remain effective. In future, they should also know how to exploit bots for their own purposes. Unidentified bots should be made subject to verification and blocking. Bot legislation should be made a priority so as to level the playing field.

What else? Send us your ideas on the form in the web page of this memorandum (nextera.global) and we will make use of your contributions in our vision paper that will be published towards the end of 2017.

5. A time for new promises

At the time of writing this memorandum, democracy and participation are living in interesting times. No one knows for certain how Western democracies, their institutions and NGOs will look even five years down the line. This uncertainty makes it that much more difficult to envision the future for participation. It is possible that digitisation, data and artificial intelligence are funnelling us towards a super-democracy where everyone can easily participate in decision-making, and that we will see entirely new instruments of influence. It is equally possible that we are headed for an era where democracies, faced with authoritarian governance, will have to fight for their very survival. One can only hope that communication and the associated sensitivity, respect, participation and collaboration will abide as the cornerstones of democratic thought in the future.

This memorandum explores the forces currently at play in democracy and participation in Western societies. The article seeks to highlight potential solutions capable of providing the necessary ingredients for a new promise of effective democracy and sense of participation.

To date, the fundamental promises of democracy have revolved around employment, social advancement, economic growth, faith in social progress and the ability of elected representatives to make decisions that serve the best interests of their constituents. Promises for the future have to do with politics being capable of distributing wealth and providing a sense of fairness as the structures of production change. Trust and the social glue must hold also in the age of the internet. We need social infrastructure as much if not more than digital infrastructure: the ability to engage with diverse people, understand each other's ways of thinking and build trust among strangers.

The core members of any representative democracy – political parties – should have the courage to reform their approaches in a way that would make them true conduits for people to further issues close to their heart. Members should shape the party, not vice versa. A rapidly changing digital world still needs sustained strategic policies, and institutional reorganisation could provide the necessary platform. In Finland, we have Parliament's Committee for the Future, the Government Report on the Future, strategic government work, the National Foresight Network, and futures and foresight research of a high standard to work with. The use of these bodies and instruments should be subject to ongoing and ambitious improvement. Institutional decision-making requires a new layer of shared learning, innovation and problem-solving.

The challenges of global governance and democracy must be tackled without preconceived notions, because humankind is becoming a big species on a small planet. Issues such as clean air, water, food and, above all, the right to live in peace concern all of humankind irrespective of political or religious alignment.

Mika Mannermaa's report Democracy in the Turmoil of the Future was mentioned at the start of this memorandum. Published a decade ago, the report extensively reviews democratic development options and related issues. In the report, Mannermaa analyses forms of democracy with an open mind and identifies the change whose prime drivers are rapid advances in technology and globalisation. The questions and challenges to which democracy must respond if it is to retain its vitality revolve around these specific phenomena. Mannermaa writes:

Democracy is perhaps at its best when society lives within one paradigm (or reference framework); on the other hand, major changes to the frame of reference, such as the transition from the industrial era to the age of information societies, are more problematic. It is easier to draw up new versions of the same mindset than to change basic ways of thinking in a revolutionary manner.

Mannermaa states that a real watershed demands a radically new way of thinking on the part of all supporters of democracy. He also notes that "more important than trying to decide now what the model of democracy will be in 2057 is ensuring that the best possible preconditions are in place for people themselves to steer democracy in the direction that they desire, as fully fledged members of civil society." Nonetheless, visions still serve a purpose. The memorandum in hand puts forward ideas that could help reinforce the prerequisites of democracy and participation. We hope that the memorandum will serve as an impetus for vision work and brainstorming going much, much further than outlined here. We have also exercised our right and our duty to hope for the best in the future.

About the author

ELINA KIISKI KATAJA is an expert on the future at Sitra. Her job involves tracking the important developments that are already taking place in society and that might play a major role in our future. Her work includes exploring the future opportunities, threats and solutions related to these developments. In addition to future-oriented work, Elina has worked in societal training and communications and has also gathered experience of EU competence and international co-operation.

CONTACT INFO:
+358 (294) 618 275
elina.kiiski-kataja@sitra.fi

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