

# Long term insights briefings: An international perspective

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## Selected small economy examples of foresight

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- ✦ **Several other jurisdictions have developed strong capabilities around foresight. Consider the following selected small economy examples:**
  
- ✦ **Singapore**
  - Centre for Strategic Futures, PMO Strategy Unit, agency foresight units
  - Regular strategic review processes (Committee for the Future Economy, Economic Strategies Committee); ongoing engagement with MNCs, thinkers, etc
  
- ✦ **Finland**
  - Once every legislative term, the Government submits a report on the future to Parliament on a strategic policy topic (the 2018 report looked at the future of work)
  - Government agencies also prepared futures reports, coordinated by the PMO
  
- ✦ **Denmark**
  - Production Council, Globalisation Council
  
- ✦ **Other countries produce national strategy documents that rest on a view of the future (Dubai, Ireland, etc)**

## Key elements of successful foresight processes in government

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- ✦ Importance of framing the right policy questions
  - Contribute to answering key questions that are/should be on the strategic policy agenda
  
- ✦ Clear link to policy decision-making and resource allocation processes (the ‘so what’)
  - These are strategic policy processes rather than intellectual exercises
  - Distinguish between time horizons (H1 v H2 v H3)
  
- ✦ Demand from Ministers/senior decision-makers
  - There is a broadly-shared understanding that this work is important for good policy-making
  - Foresight is embedded into the ongoing work of policy agencies
  
- ✦ Strong role for central agencies/whole of government machinery
  - Most of the important issues are cross-cutting in nature
  - Sustained investments in capability in agencies and across the system
  
- ✦ Involve the private sector and others; governments don’t have a monopoly on wisdom

## Thoughts on implications for New Zealand

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- ✦ **Select the right issues/questions that need to be on the strategic agenda – issues need to have the right level of altitude**
  - Big ‘grey rhino’ issues have not been picked up (population policy, risks of climate change)
  - Covid has caused major disruption (tourism, migration) as well as accelerating existing dynamics (technology, climate change response)
  
- ✦ **Build senior (Ministers/CEs) demand for foresight by demonstrating the value from these exercises (foreign or local examples) - and by creating public demand**
  - If not, these initiatives will not lead to change – as has been the case historically
  
- ✦ **Build strategic capability across government agencies, develop role of central agencies in cross-cutting foresight work, reward agencies that do this well**
  - Strengthen coordination of the Insight Briefings across agencies
  - There is a tendency to outsource strategic issues to Commissions and others
  
- ✦ **Approach this exercise in an internationally-oriented way, build offshore networks**
  - Small economies are deeply exposed to external dynamics, are facing many similar issues to New Zealand, and have invested heavily in understanding the world around them

## Contact details

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