

## WINDOWS ON THE FUTURE: Making Strategic Planning More Strategic with Scenarios

The pilot scenarios shown here were created by the BEMINE project, as part of its Integrated Visioning Toolkit ('IVT'). They were developed in scenario workshop in 2017, by 30 participants, coming from 9 institutions from Finland and other countries. The scenarios are not forecasts or projections: they are structured 'what-if' questions, or 'stress-tests'. The aim is to explore and visualize alternative versions of an uncertain future, in order to look ahead and be prepared.

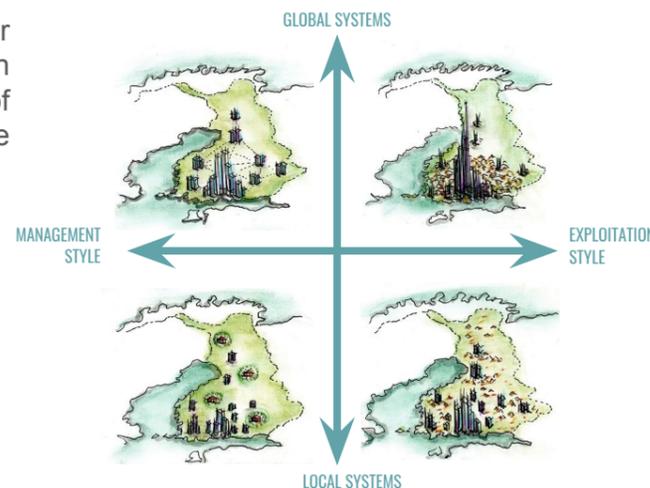
In Finland at the moment there is rapid urban expansion and urban / rural restructuring: this may be not only about numbers of houses and roads, but other deeper forces. We can use the scenario approach to explore these and bring them to the surface – not to forecast, but to be prepared. As for the applications and uses of scenarios, these are both technical and social. The technical uses include: landuse and transport modelling, economic models, demographic projections, housing market analysis. The social roles help to look wider and deeper, to underlying changes in society and culture. The BEMINE scenarios are organized around 2 main types of uncertainties:

- Global systems or local-regional systems: in technology & socio-political organization
  - Management style or exploitation style: in resources, climate change, and socio-economic structures
- The combination of these produces a 2x2 structure. The scenarios have a time-scale of 2040-2050, at the edge of the normal timescale for spatial planning and infrastructure investment. The scenarios were developed from a regional approach: the workshop sub-groups explored the issues in different locations, from the Helsinki metropolitan region, to other major cities, rural towns, and remote regions.

### OVERVIEW OF SPATIAL DEVELOPMENT SCENARIOS

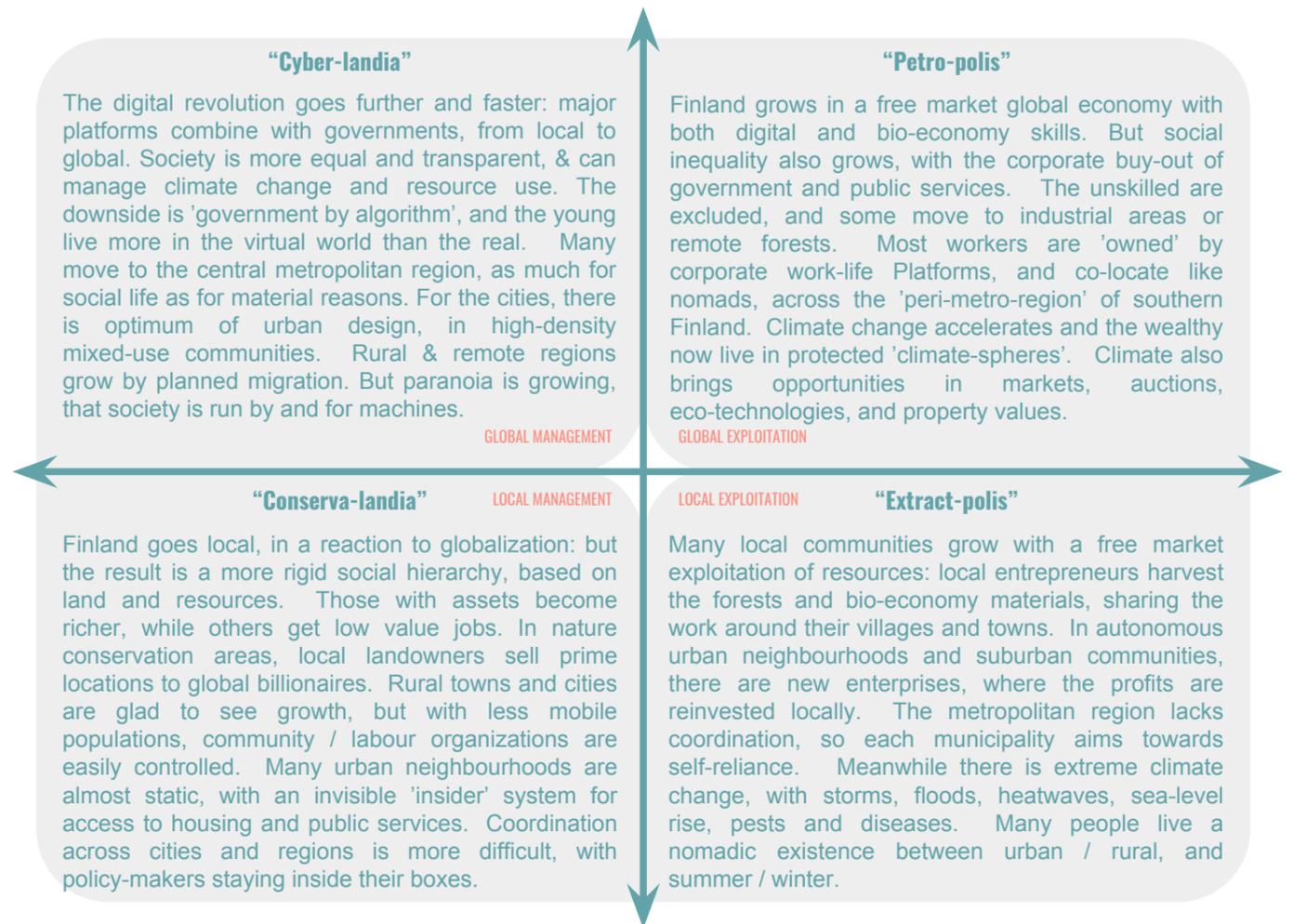
The graphic here shows the scenarios with their implications for spatial development: this can then be used as an input for technical modelling of economic development, population, infrastructure and land use.

- **Global management:** coordinated, balanced, metropolitan focus.
- **Global exploitation:** entrepreneurial, ad-hoc, metropolitan and peri-urban focus.
- **Local management:** autonomous municipalities, enclaves of protected eco-wealth.
- **Local exploitation:** entrepreneurial, ad-hoc, decentralized rural focus.



When cities are planned and built, they might last 50 or 500 years – but too often the horizon for investment, or for planning and design, is much shorter. We need ways of exploring a very uncertain future, and then stress-testing the plans and policies and investments, against the possible risks and opportunities. This is the role of scenario planning. BEMINE developed a 'pilot' set of scenarios, to inform the research, and as an important part of the Integrated Visioning Toolkit ('IVT'). The scenarios are shown here in summary, with short outlines, a 'day in the life', and some raw graphics coming from an interactive workshop.

### SUMMARY OF SCENARIOS



### QUESTIONS FOR POLICY

These are typical questions to be explored by policy makers and stakeholders, using the scenarios. For urban / rural / regional planning (including MAL network), also for other government and business organizations:

- What are the risks or opportunities for your plans / strategies, in each scenario?
- Which of these could be 'game-changers'?
- Can you design a 'future-proof' plan or strategy, for success in all scenarios?

For researchers in urban / rural / regional planning:

- What are the risks or opportunities for your research themes & methods, in each scenario?
- Which scenarios are 'game-changers' for your research, and the whole scientific system?
- What are the differences between the projects & what can we learn?