

Experimenting Innovative Social Services

Case Universal Basic Income Experiment

Digital Government Conference
Helsinki 22th October 2019

DEMOS
HELSINKI

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Demos Helsinki

Demos Helsinki is the leading independent think tank in the Nordics. We work to solve societal problems and challenges.

We aim towards a **fair and sustainable society** in which everyone can shape the future.

Demos Helsinki always has **two customers** – the one who orders the project and the society, which benefits from each project.

Two drivers are shaping our way of life fundamentally

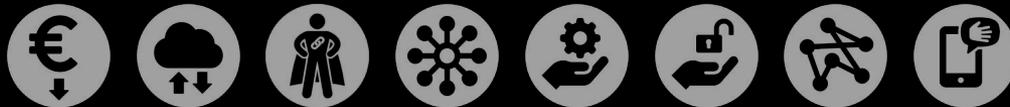


**Non-linear
climate change**



**Rapid
digitalisation
of life**

**By 2030,
our societies
and our way of life
have to look different.**



We have already seen the first backlashes



Technology hasn't solved our biggest challenges

Opinion

It's Time to Break Up Facebook

By Chris Hughes

May 9, 2019



Fit for purpose tools for a
government to be able to support the
emergence of industrial economy,
provide jobs, and promise better
future to its people **do not provide**
the solutions we need today.

**It's about
governance,
stupid.**

Traditional Government

- Planning and execution happens predominantly in siloed structures.
- Limited utilisation of knowledge networks.

- Policy approaches are presently fragmented and lack alignment.
- Policy and service design are challenged by increasingly pluralistic and diversified needs.

- Low tolerance for failures in public governance.
- Primary focus on reactivity and on updating existing policies and services.

Next-Era Government

- Planning and execution happens predominantly in siloed structures.
- Limited utilisation of knowledge networks.

**UNBOUNDED
GOVERNMENT**

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- Policy and service design are challenged by increasingly pluralistic and diversified needs.

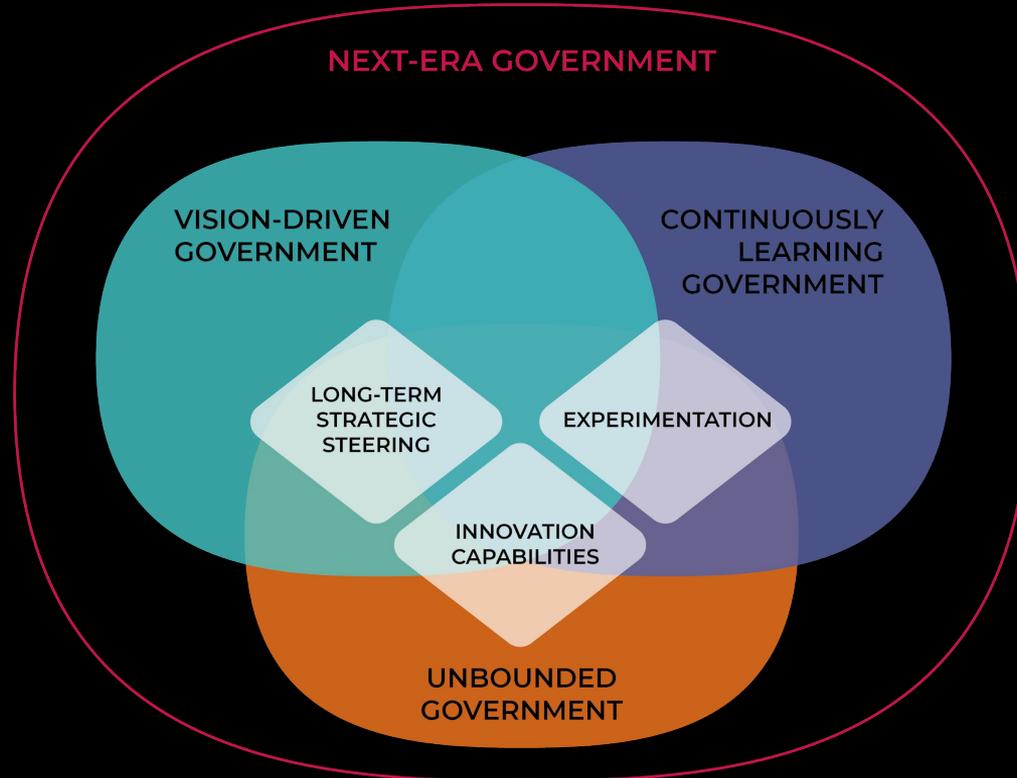
**VISION-DRIVEN
GOVERNMENT**

- Low tolerance for failures in public governance
- Primary focus on reactivity and on updating existing policies and services.

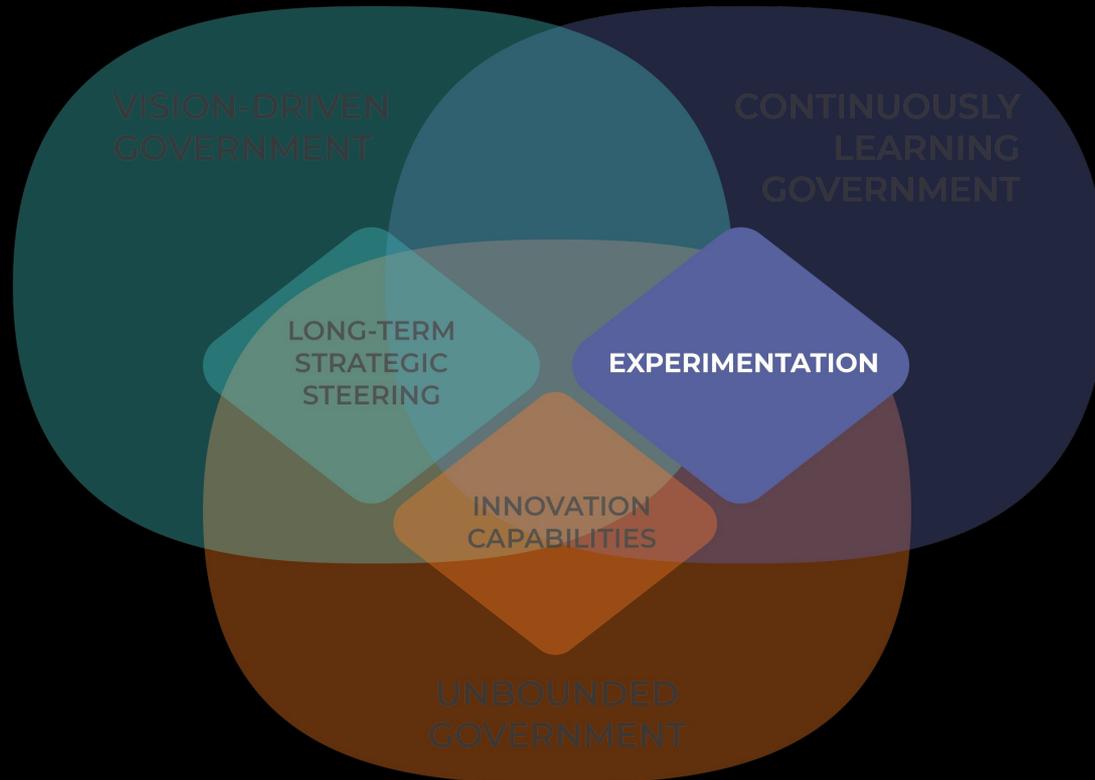
**CONTINUOUSLY LEARNING
GOVERNMENT**

**For the past 200 years
the governance has been
about stability,
now it has to be
about transformation.**

Building a Vision-Driven, Continuously Learning, and Unbounded Government



Building a Vision-Driven, Continuously Learning, and Unbounded Government





EXPERIMENTATION

**Policy experimentation is an
approach to fundamentally
re-think
and experiment with
new transformational policies.**

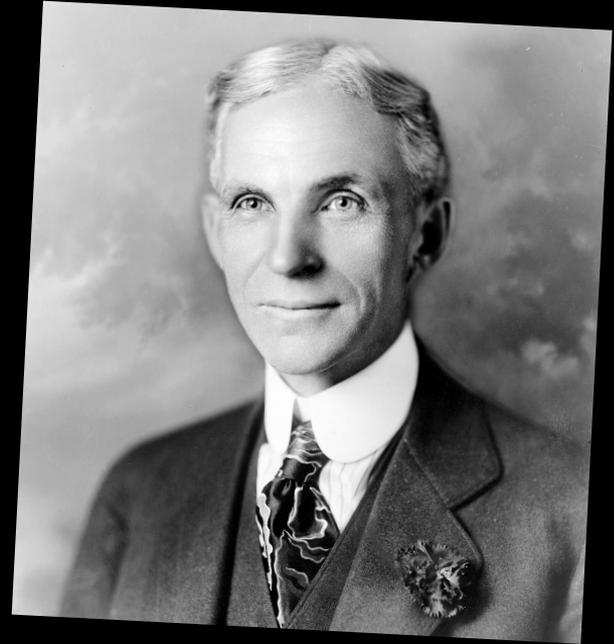
**Experimentation
is nothing new.**

But **its societal role
is constantly evolving.**

100 years ago...

"If i had asked people
what they wanted,
they would have said
faster horses."

– *Henry Ford*





We are facing the **next industrial revolution**. Experimentation and new ways of operating are needed in public sector.

– Angel Gurría,
Secretary General of the OECD

“In Finland, the Nordic think tank Demos Helsinki could challenge the modus operandi of public sector institutions, thus creating the conditions for introducing experimentation in government.”



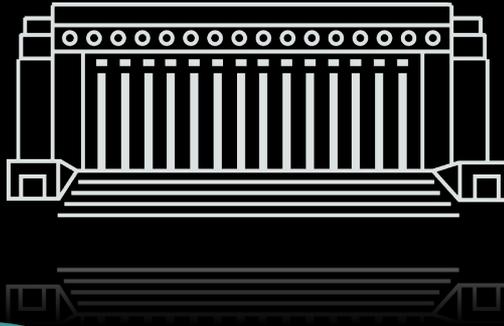
**For us, experimentation provides
a structured and constructive
way to unleash your imagination
to transform societies in a
systemic way.**

Case: Policy experimentation in Finland



Core Motives for Creating the Experimental State in Finland (2015)

“Finnish governance is under pressure, so tools of governing must be developed to become even more efficient and targeted.”



Need for trust,
wellbeing, and equality

Scarce
resources

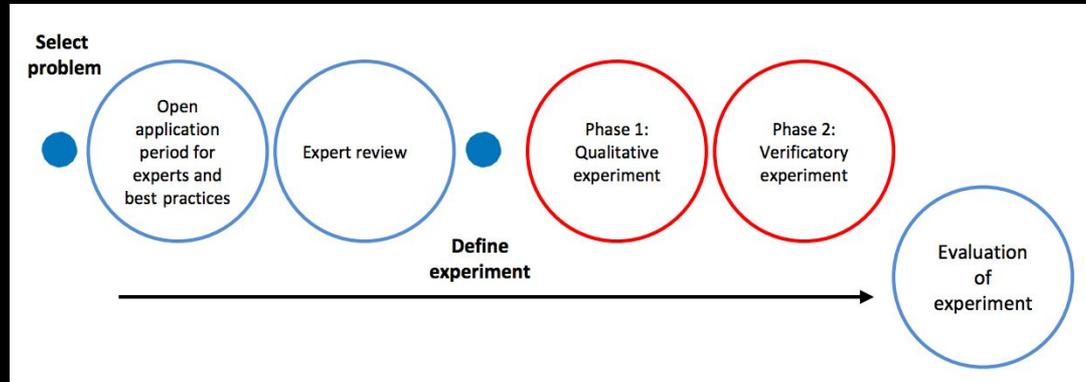
Wicked
problems

Digitalisation

The aim: Could experimentation provide answers to the challenges?

The model was co-created together with the civil servants and the experts.

It was adopted in the Government's Programme (2015 - 2019).



The Learning State of Finland: Infrastructure for Experimentation

EXPERIMENTATION MODEL

National model for integrating experiments into policy-making process. The model is highlighted by the OECD as one of the world's key examples of systemic level innovations.

NATIONAL CODE OF CONDUCT

National code of conduct for making strategic experiments in the public sector.

Finland is the only country in the world with this type ethical code.

DIGITAL PLATFORM FOR EXPERIMENTATION

Digital platform for supporting and crowdfunding of citizen-led experiments connected to the government's goals.

CULTURE OF EXPERIMENTATION

Networks and 'godparent' models to support experimenters, day of failure to celebrate failure experiments.

EXPERIMENTATION PROGRAM

Integrated in government program. It builds experimentation into ministries' policy making functions.

EXPERIMENTATION IN LEGISLATION

Experimentation laws are implemented, results i.e. in allowing driverless vehicles to be tested in urban conditions.

PORTFOLIO OF 25+ STRATEGIC EXPERIMENTS

These experiments are run by the ministries and their agencies. Basic income experiment is one of them.

DECENTRALISED NETWORK

There is a central experimentation office in the Prime Minister's Office, but there are also various sectoral innovation labs facilitating multistakeholder collaboration.

Experiments with education, mobility, employment, arts and health...

Tied to the goals of the government

27 policy experiments in 2015–2019.

Based on these, ministries gave policy recommendations in 2019.





EXPERIMENTATION

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Case: Basic Income Experiment in Finland

A screenshot of a New York Times article. The background is a photograph of a snowy landscape at dusk or dawn, with bare trees in the foreground and a city skyline with lights in the distance. The text is overlaid on this image.

Home The New York Times BUSINESS DAY

Free Cash in Finland. Must Be Jobless.

Finland will soon hand out cash to 2,000 jobless people, free of bureaucracy or limits on side earnings. The idea, universal basic income, is gaining traction worldwide.

By PETER S. GOODMAN DEC. 17, 2016

Basic Income Experiment

- Duration **2 years**; 2017–2018
- Nationwide pilot
- Covered **2,000 unemployed Finns**
- Age between 25 and 58 years
- Guaranteed sum of **560€ / month** which equals average monthly unemployment benefits in Finland.
- Unemployment benefits were replaced
- Payments took place even if the recipient worked or had other income.



Preliminary results

Impacts on employment:

Receivers of basic income did not differ from the control group in terms of level of income or acquired jobs



Preliminary results

Impacts on well-being

Receivers of basic income

reported their **subjective well-being** higher than those who did not receive basic income;

had **less stress, concentration and health problems** than those who did not receive it;

had **stronger belief towards future and stronger feeling of being able to influence the society** than those who did not receive basic income;

felt that their income was better than those who did not receive basic income;

were **less stressed about their own economic situation**, also when they had difficulties of getting along



The new Government's Programme (June 2019)

Pledges to citizens for new kind of governance

"We want to reform our political culture and decision-making"

1.1 Our pledges to citizens on policy reforms

We want to reform our political culture and decision-making. Reforming society and increasing equality can succeed only if we strengthen people's trust in the ability of our democratic system to function.

This is why we are making the following pledges on policy reforms to our citizens:

1. Pledge for continuous learning in government

Amid constant changes, we do not imagine we know in advance what will work and what will not. Instead, we will seek out information and conduct experiments so that we can act in ways that will benefit our citizens.

2. Pledge for a new kind of interaction

We need a more cross-sectoral approach to the preparation of matters and decision-making. We will develop ways to engage a broader group of stakeholders in reforming society. A new kind of interaction means both involving people much more strongly in public administration activities and searching for and testing new ways of interacting.

3. Pledge for long-term policy-making

We commit to taking account of long-term objectives and to engaging in systematic parliamentary cooperation between the Government and Parliament. We can reach our long-term objectives by introducing new practices for cooperation between Parliament and the Government.

4. Pledge for knowledge-based policy-making

Legislative preparation of a high quality is a key condition for the credibility and legitimacy of policy-making. We commit to knowledge-based policy-making and systematic impact assessment in all legislative preparation. We will engage in deeper cooperation with the scientific community.

The new Government's Programme (June 2019)

The first pledge to citizens is about experimentation

"We want to reform our political culture and decision-making"

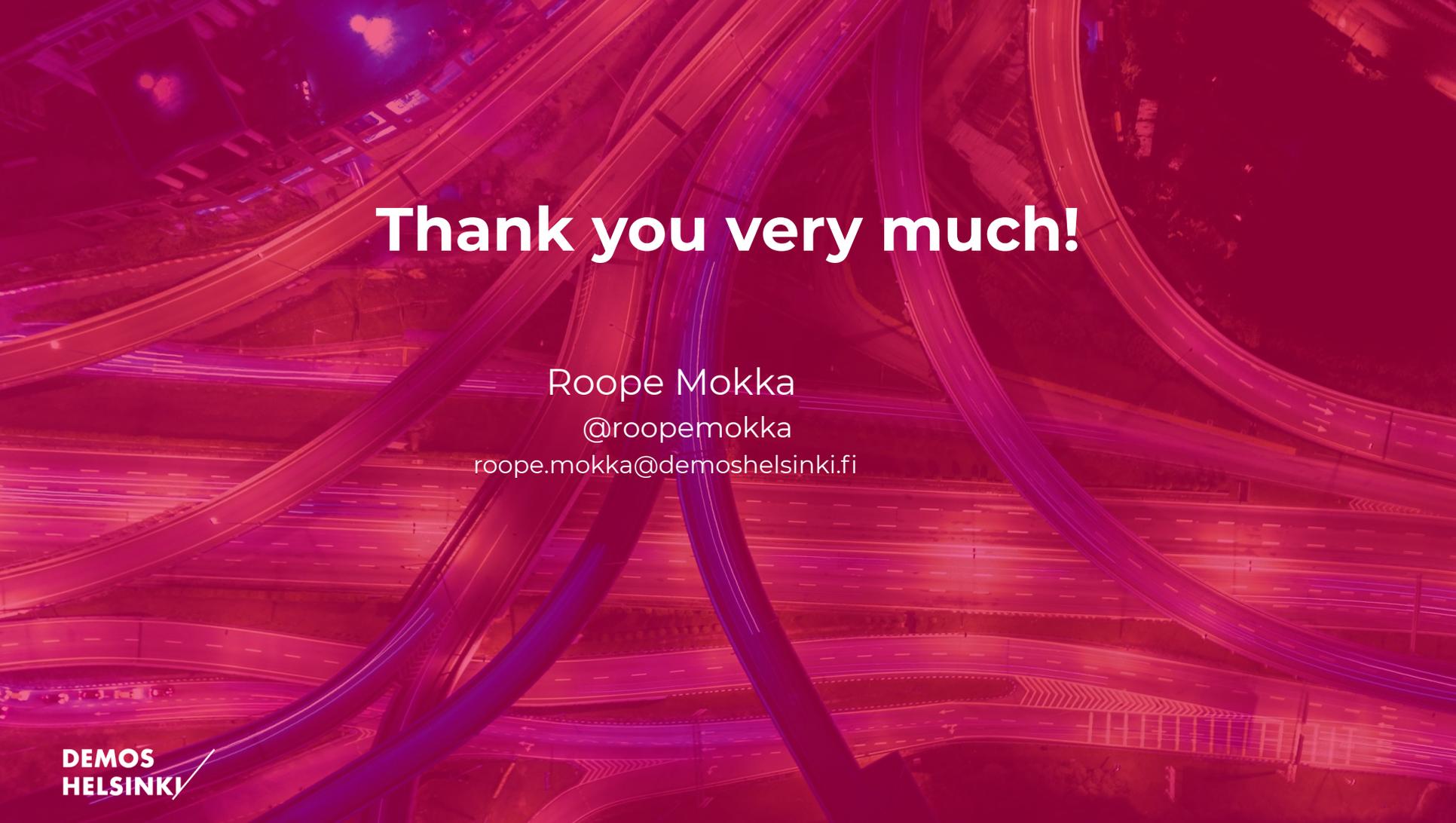
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Thank you very much!

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