



This essay documents the Foresight Wiki content development guidelines. It is a generally accepted standard that all members should attempt to follow these guidelines, even though it is best to use common sense while doing so. In order to avoid substantive edit, the page has been frozen.

The **Bucharest Dialogues** are a series of ten *mutual learning* workshops, to be organized in Bucharest between September 1st 2009 and October 31st 2011 as activities in the project Quality and Leadership for Romanian Higher Education implemented by the Executive Agency for Higher Education and Research Funding from Romania. The events are designed as variations of Bohm dialogues, where experts can get together and discuss fundamentals of foresight.

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The FOR-LEARN Mutual Learning Workshops

The concept of *mutual learning* workshop was first introduced during the **FOR-LEARN project** developed by the Institute for Prospective Technology Studies (IPTS) from Seville. The FOR-LEARN "Mutual Learning Workshops" were intended to become spaces that "foster the sharing of Foresight experience and know-how in Europe"^[1]. Hence, the workshops were meant to provide a meeting place, where practitioners, managers and policy-makers could "reflect upon, share, consolidate and transfer experiences and lessons drawn from Foresight processes and methodologies, and their outcomes".

At a FOR-LEARN *mutual learning* workshop there were typically invited between 5 and 15 experts, involved in problem-oriented sessions during which they exchanged experiences and lessons learned. IPTS organized two series of *mutual learning* workshops until now. The first was devoted to the impact of foresight on policy-making, while during the second series the topic was the evaluation of foresight activities.

Concept of Bucharest Dialogues

The Bucharest Dialogues are designed as variations of **Bohm Dialogues** on the fundamentals of foresight.

Concept of Bohm Dialogues

The concept of Bohm Dialogue was developed by the Nobel Prize laureate David Bohm, together with Donald Factor and Peter Garrett. A Bohm Dialogue is conducted in groups of 20 to 40 people, with no predefined purpose in mind. Participants are asked to suspend their assumptions - thoughts, motives, impulses and judgments ? and explore the topic while attempting to "think together" collectively.

But of course such communication can lead to the creation of something new only if people are able freely to listen to each other, without prejudice, and without trying to influence each other. Each has to be interested primarily in truth and coherence, so that he is ready to drop his old ideas and intentions, and be ready to go on to something different, when this is called for. If, however, two people merely want to convey certain ideas or points of view to each other, as if these were items of information, then they must inevitably fail to meet. For each will hear the other through the screen of his own thoughts, which he tends to maintain and defend, regardless of whether or not they are true or coherent. The result will of course be just the sort of confusion that leads to the insoluble ?problem of communication? which has been pointed out and discussed earlier.

—David Bohm, *On Dialogue*^[2]

A Bohm Dialogue is a meeting without an objective or agenda, aimed at creating a common space where something new might happen. According to David Bohm, a dialogue should not be confused with a discussion, lecture, discourse or debate, which all suggest working towards a goal.

Contrast this with the word ?discussion,? which has the same root as ?percussion? and ?concussion.? It really means to break things up. It emphasizes the idea of analysis, where there may be many points of view, and where everybody is presenting a different one - analyzing and breaking up. That obviously has its value, but it is limited, and it will not get us very far beyond our various points of view. Discussion is almost like a ping-pong game, where people are batting the ideas back and forth and the object of the game is to win or to get points for yourself. Possibly you will take up somebody else?s ideas to back up your own - you may agree with some and disagree with others - but the basic point is to win the game. That?s very frequently the case in a discussion.

—David Bohm, *On Dialogue*

Principles of a Bohm Dialogue

A Bohm Dialogue is a method of conversation based on the principles of dialogue as established by David Bohm:

1. The group agrees that no decisions will be made during the conversation.
2. Each participant agrees to refrain from judgment during the conversation, especially if he/she hears an idea he/she doesn't like.
3. Participants are as honest and transparent as possible, and agree to share ?good ideas? even if they seem controversial.
4. Participants try to build on the other participants? ideas.

Characteristics of Bucharest Dialogues

The Bucharest Dialogues represent a form of conversation between Foresight practitioners, managers and policy-makers which follows David Bohm's principals of dialogue. During a Bucharest dialogue, key speakers present the discourse of distinct voices within the Foresight community on a pre-established topic. This initial moment is followed by a conversation during which the participants are invited connect personal experiences and lessons learned with concepts presented before, building-up the discourse and unveiling new ideas.

Past events

Two Bucharest Dialogues had already taken place up until now, and several more are *in preparation*.

Systems Thinking for Foresight

The topic of the first **Bucharest Dialogue**, organized between September 23rd and September 25th 2009, was proposed by Dr. Ozcan Saritas: Systems Thinking for Foresight. Discussion were aimed at improving the Foresight practice with the introduction of ideas from systems thinking. Keynote speakers were Dr. Ozcan Saritas, Prof. Denis Loveridge, Dr. Riel Miller and Dr. Philine Warnke, while the conversation was facilitated by Dr. Campbell Warden.

To read more about this mutual learning workshop click [here](#).

Scenario Building in Higher Education

The second topic for a **Bucharest Dialogue** was proposed by Prof. Dragos Aligica: Scenario Building in Higher Education. The Workshop was organized between October 30th and November 1st 2009. Keynote speakers were Prof. George M Cairns, Prof. Murray Turoff, Prof. Gil Ringland, Dr. Elie Faroult, Dr. Kiira Karkkainen, Prof. Starr Roxanne Hiltz. The follow-up colloquium was moderated by Prof. Ziauddin Sardar.

To read more about this mutual learning workshop click [here](#).

References

1. [FOR-LEARN website](#). *FOR-LEARN Mutual Learning workshops*. http://forlearn.jrc.ec.europa.eu/guide/8_mutual/index.htm. Retrieved 15 October 2009.
2. [David Bohm](#) (1996). *On Dialogue*. Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group. [ISBN 0203180372](#).

External links

- [Executive Agency for Higher Education and Research Funding from Romania \(ro\)](#)
- [Romanian Strategic Projects for Higher Education](#)
- [The National University Research Council](#)
- [The Wikipedia article on Bohm Dialogues](#)