



## Pre-workshop questionnaire for participants: Gathering assumptions about a domain

Below is an example of a homework questionnaire that could be sent to participants in advance of a Horizons foresight workshop. When gathering assumptions, the domain of interest can be narrow (e.g. the Canadian tourism industry) or very wide (e.g. the global economy), depending on the needs of the group.

### **What are some assumptions about the future of the Canadian economy that are either embedded in policy OR that currently influence policy makers?**

We are looking for commonly held assumptions that you feel are currently informing and shaping the thinking of policy decision-makers in areas concerning the Canadian economy.

The assumptions reflect current understanding about the future, and might include statements like:

- Despite Canada's innovation gap, Canada will be fine.
- Through trade negotiations, Canada will be pushed to adopt stronger intellectual property frameworks, which may inhibit innovation and the flow of ideas.
- Consumers will continue to expect protection from government.
- Canadian SMEs are selling to North American markets (and this will continue).
- Tax incentives are an effective tool for promoting innovation and development.
- Canada will continue to develop and recruit world-leading research talent.
- Industry knows best. Government cannot lead industries, it can only support.

To answer this question, think about Canadian policies today and the time we live in. If you are reviewing a policy document this week, you might use it as a focal point to examine what assumptions are implied. Listening for assumptions in the policy discussions around you is another approach.

Alternatively, you might think about economic policy objectives: What do Canadian policy makers likely assume about economic growth, market efficiency, competitiveness, knowledge and innovation, etc.?

The assumptions we are trying to surface are ones that you see underlying government or departmental thinking. Note that these may or may not coincide with your personal views.

**Make a list of as many assumptions as you can identify. Plan to bring your list with you to the workshop to draw on for discussion.**

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