



# Samforsk

**The Social Science  
Research Institute**

## **Annual report 2021**



FUTUDEM | FIRIPO | BAROMETERN | HORIZON 2020 | PALO

# 2021

## Another pandemic year

**At Samforsk**, we as everyone else look back at 2021 as another pandemic year. It was disappointing not to be able to meet with our international colleagues, due to many cancelled conferences and

other events. Despite this, 2021 resulted in many successful projects and publications at Samforsk, which we are delighted to share with you in this annual report.





# Events 2021

## The Future of Democracy, FutuDem

**The center** was launched in 2019 and it studies the current condition of democracy and tests new deliberative and participatory models of democracy. A special interest lies in democratic deliberation in moderated small groups on a certain topic. In 2021, the center's funding period was extended until February 2024. FutuDem's seven WP-leaders conducted many interesting research projects during 2021. For instance, the Citizens' panel for the Freedom of Expression in

February, as part of the OECD Civic Space Scan of Finland.

The panel discussed methods and possibilities for protecting people working in the public sphere from hate speech. The panel was conducted in close cooperation with the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Justice. The final report can be accessed via the link: <http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-367-711-1>

For more information, please visit our homepage: [www.futudem.fi](http://www.futudem.fi)



# FUTUDEM

The Future of Democracy, FutuDem  
A Center of Excellence in Public Opinion Research



## FIRIPO GRANTED ADDITIONAL FUNDING

The Finnish Research Infrastructure in Public Opinion research, **FIRIPO**, was granted additional funding by The Academy of Finland in December. Since 2021, FIRIPO has also been on the Finnish National Roadmap for Research Infrastructures. The FIRIPO Consortium, headed by Samforsk at Åbo Akademi University with Tampere University and the University of Turku as partners, received over 1.1 million euros in funding. The additional funding will contribute to further developing and improving public opinion research in Finland. The new financing aims at digitalizing all FIRIPO activities, including the laboratories for experimental research. The FIRIPO infrastructure



consists of: an online pool of survey respondents, which provides essential tools for examining public opinion in Finland. The Decision-maker panel, which consists of elected politicians on the local level. Barometern, the online citizen panel measuring the opinions of the Swedish-speaking minority in Finland. The Decision making lab at University of Turku, which is the oldest and the largest experimental decision making laboratory in Finland. Lastly, the two brand new Deliberation labs at Åbo Akademi University and Tampere University. Read more about FIRIPO at [www.firipo.fi](http://www.firipo.fi)

## SURVEYS DURING 2021

- Survey on the municipal elections 2021
- Survey experiment on Covid-19
- Survey on polarization & filter bubbles
- Survey experiment mini-publics
- Survey on culture consumption
- Survey of decision-makers' political attitudes (FIRIPO decision-maker panel)

## BAROMETERN – online panel survey for Swedish speaking Finns

**Barometern** is an online citizen panel consisting of 4700 Swedish-speaking Finns. During 2021, several surveys were launched. In January, we examined opinions on media, social media and media usage. A report in Swedish was published based on the survey: *“Den finlandssvenska mediekonsumenten – De unga går sin egen väg”*. In February – March, we examined opinions on referendums and opinions on corruption in Finland, resulting in two reports. In October, we launched a survey focusing on opinions on culture and the Swedish language in Finland. In November, the Barometern survey (conducted every other year) was done. All the reports can be downloaded from [www.barometern.fi](http://www.barometern.fi). Barometern is funded by the Swedish Cultural Foundation in Finland.

## HORIZON 2020, EUComMeet

**EuComMeet** is a research consortium consisting of nine partner institutions and

funded by the European Commission. Åbo Akademi is one of the partners and is represented by Professor **Kimmo Grönlund** (WP-leader) and Postdoctoral researcher **Nanuli Silagadze**. One of the objectives of EuComMeet is to explore how deliberation and participation can help reduce polarization, strengthen European identity and encourage inclusiveness. Since its launch in March 2021, project members have undertaken an inventory of digital platforms for deliberative and participatory processes, elaborated further the theoretical underpinnings of the research design, selected schools and universities for pilots, and decided on the topics for the final deliberation experiment, which takes place in spring 2023.

More information and recent updates about the project's activities are available at: [www.eucommeet.eu](http://www.eucommeet.eu)

## PALO

**Participation in** long-term decision-making (PALO) is a multidisciplinary research project that focuses on the problems related to long-term decision-making practices. The PALO project aims to strengthen democracy by developing better practices for deliberative citizen participation and public decision-making. Director of research at Samforsk, **Lauri Rapeli**, is also one of the work package leaders within PALO. In 2021, PALO produced several publications concerning future-oriented decision-making in democracies. PALO final conference was held as a hybrid event together with the University of Turku on December 15-16, 2021. Read more about PALO at: <https://paloresearch.fi/en/>



## OTHER NEWS

### Professor Kimmo Grönlund received recognition for successful research

**At the opening** of the academic year on 9 September 2021, the Chancellor of Åbo Akademi, **Carl G. Gahmberg**, awarded **Kimmo Grönlund**, with the Chancellor's Prize for successful research. The Prize sum is 25,000 Euro.

The recipients were chosen by a prize committee after reviewing the faculties' suggestions and considering the quality and impact of the research. The awarded prize sums were given to the discipline the recipients represent. Carl G. Gahmberg, the Chancellor of Åbo Akademi University, presented the awards. The second recipient was **Sepinoud Azimi**, Docent in Biomedical Data Analysis and project researcher in Computer Science at Åbo Akademi.



On 9 September 2021 Chancellor Carl G. Gahmberg awarded Kimmo Grönlund (on the far right) and Sepinoud Azimi with the Chancellor's Prize for successful research.

### ECPR Standing Group on Democratic Innovations

**Kimmo Grönlund**, together with **Brigitte Geissel**, founded the SG in 2011. He has ever since been part of the steering committee but is now stepping down. Samforsk will continue to take an active role in the lead of the SG. For the period 2022–2024, **Marina Lindell** was elected to the steering committee and will act as Convenor of the SG (together with **Hannah Werner** from KU Leuven).

### The Finnish National Election Study Consortium

**Lauri Rapeli** and **Peter Söderlund** were elected as board members of the Finnish National Election Study Consortium on March 18th 2021. In addition, Lauri and Peter were appointed as the editors of the 2023 main report in Finnish. The electoral period ends on 17th of March 2025. Lauri and Peter are also among the principal investigators in the Finnish National Election Survey 2021–2023.

### New project on a polarised societal climate in Swedish-speaking Finland

**The project** (2022–2025) led by Docent **Marina Lindell** and Professor **Kim Strandberg** was granted € 400.000 from the Society of Swedish Literature in Finland. It takes on the task of systematically examining the causes and effects of polarization among Swedish-speaking Finns. In recent years, signs of polarization have been observed in, among

other things, the poor social climate in municipal merger issues and the fact that emotions often take over in debates about wind power, immigration and monolingual versus bilingual solutions. The project will use survey material from the online citizen panel Barometern. The project will also identify and examine factors that can counteract polarization and its effects.

### Collaboration with Stanford intensified

**Samforsk** has received four-year funding from the Ministry of Education and Culture (so-called 'USA Pilots') via Åbo Akademi for an intensified collaboration with the Center for Deliberative Democracy at Stanford. As part of this funding, **Albert Weckman** has been hired as doctoral student. The funding enables research mobility, workshops and experiments in Finland with the Automated Moderator for deliberation, developed by Stanford.

### Keynote lecture

**Lauri Rapeli** held a keynote lecture titled 'How can democracies become more future-oriented?' at the colloquium of The Finnish Society for Environmental Social Science (YHYS) on 26th of November 2021 at Aalto University.

### Vetenskapskarnevalen (The Science Carnival in Vasa)

**The Science Carnival** is a multilingual popular science event open for everyone. During 19-20 November, a total of 45 hours of discussions, lectures and

presentations were arranged. From our institute **Marina Lindell**, **Thomas Karv** and **Fredrik Malmberg** gave presentations. See [vetenskapskarnevalen.fi](https://vetenskapskarnevalen.fi) for more information about the event.

### Time to discuss municipal elections (Dags att prata kommunalval)

**In spring 2021**, we arranged five facilitated discussions online together with Bildningsalliansen and Folktinget. The discussions were held before the local elections and the citizens discussed issues they thought important, such as services in the Swedish language, the language climate and the population structure in bilingual municipalities.

### Visiting Scholars Program

**As part of** our visiting scholars program, Samforsk had the pleasure of hosting Dr. **Annika Lindholm** from the University of Lausanne (Switzerland) during May–October. During her stay, Dr. Lindholm worked together with the Samforsk staff on her research regarding populist attitudes.

### Panel discussion at Suomi Areena in Pori "The democratic consequences of the pandemic"

**On July 13**, Samforsk organized a Swedish panel discussion titled The democratic consequences of the pandemic. In the panel sat: Professor **Anu Koivunen** (Tampere University), Professor/Director **Mika Salminen** (THL), and Professor **Kimmo Grönlund** (Åbo Akademi). Journalist **Baba Lybeck** led the discussion.



### Nanuli Silagadze received her doctoral degree

**Nanuli Silagadze** defended her doctoral degree in political science on July 2. The Opponent was Professor **Georg Lutz** from the University of Lausanne. Due to travel restrictions, the seminar was held via Zoom. The title of her dissertation is Direct Democracy and Policies: Mapping Out Practices and Success Factors.

### Fika efter kunskap in Vasa (Research webinars for the public)

**Fika efter** kunskap is a popular science forum where science, citizens and opinion leaders meet. The forum was launched by Svenska Bildningsförbundet and the Social Science Research Institute in Vasa in 2019. Since then, 14 seminars have been arranged. Due to the COVID-restrictions, the webinars were arranged online in 2021. The use of AI in health care, political campaigns now and then, the role of emotions in politics and the consequences of a referendum are the themes for the webinars 2022.

# Select Publications

## Journal articles and other refereed publications

Bankov, P., Gherghina, S., & Silagadze, N. (2021). Walking the Walk or Just Talking the Talk? VMRO-BND's Efforts to Become a Mass Party. *Politics and Governance*. 9(4), 307–316. <https://doi.org/10.17645/pag.v9i4.4562>

Curato, N., Farrell, D., Geißel, B., Grönlund, K., Mockler, P., Pilet, J.-B., Renwick, A., Rose, J., Setälä, M., & Suiter, J. (2021). Deliberative Mini-Publics: Core Design Features. *Bristol Shorts Research*. <https://bristoluniversitypress.co.uk/deliberative-mini-publics>

Gherghina, S., Saikkonen, I. & Bankov, P. (2021). Dissatisfied, uninformed or both? Democratic satisfaction, political knowledge and the acceptance of clientelism in a new democracy. *Democratization*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13510347.2021.1947250>

Gherghina, S., & Silagadze, N. (2021a). Calling referendums on domestic policies: how political elites and citizens differ. *Comparative European Politics*. 19, 642–661. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41295-021-00252-7>

Gherghina, S., & Silagadze, N. (2021b). Party Cues and Pre-Campaign Attitudes: Voting Choice in Referendums in Eastern Europe. *Problems of Post-Communism*. 10.1080/10758216.2021.1963780

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Karv, T. (2021). Does the democratic performance really matter for regime support? Evidence from the post-communist Member States of the European Union. *East European Politics*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21599165.2021.1878150>

Karv, T., Lindell, M. & Lauri R. (2021). How Context Matters: The Significance of Political Homogeneity and Language for Political Efficacy. *Scandinavian Political Studies*. 1–22. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9477.12215>

Karv, T. & Strandberg, K. (2021). Lowered Expectations and Shifting Standards? - Two Survey Experiments exploring Neo-po-

pulist Political Scandals and the Perceived Trustworthiness of Politicians. *Scandinavian Political Studies*. 1-24. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9477.12221>

Koskimaa, V., Rapeli, L. & Hiedanpää, J. (2021). Governing through strategies: how does Finland sustain a future-oriented environmental policy for the long-term? *Futures*. 125. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.futures.2020.102667>

Nyqvist, F., Näsman, M., Lindell, M., Nygård, M. & Björklund, S. (2021). Being small and outnumbered? Service and socio-cultural exclusion amongst older linguistic minorities in Finland. *Linguistic minorities and society*. 15–16, 39–64. <https://doi.org/10.7202/1078476ar>

Rapeli, L., Bäck, M., Jäske, M. & Koskimaa, V. (2021). When do you want it? Determinants of future-oriented political thinking. *Frontiers in Political Science*. 3. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpos.2021.692913>

Rapeli, L. & Koskimaa, V. (2021). Concerned and willing to pay? Comparing policymaker and citizen attitudes towards climate change. *Environmental Politics*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09644016.2021.1970458>

Saikkonen, I A.-L. (2021). Coordinating the Machine: Subnational Political Context and the Effectiveness of Authoritarian Electoral Strategies. *Acta Politica*. 56, 658–676. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41269-020-00187-z>

Setälä, M., Serup Christensen, H., Strandberg, K. & Leino, M. (2021). Beyond polarization and selective trust-a Citizen's Jury as a trusted source of information. *Politics*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/02633957211024474>

Sieberg, K., Herne, K., Kendall, R. and Maunula, M. (2021). Do the Rules to Select Rules Matter? An Experimental Analysis of Voting Rule Selection. *Munich Social Science Review, New Series*. 4, 55–92. <https://www.ccr-munich.de/MSSR.htm>

Strandberg, K., Backström, K., Berg, J., & Karv, T. (2021). Democratically sustainable local development? The outcomes of mixed deliberation on a municipal merger on participants' social trust, political trust and political efficacy. *Sustainability*. 13(13). <https://doi.org/10.3390/su13137231>

Suuronen, A., Reinikainen, H., Borchers, N. & Strandberg, K. (2021). When Social Media Influencers Go Political – An exploratory analysis on the emergence of political topics among Finnish influencers. *Javnost - the public*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13183222.2021.1983367>

Värttö, M., Jäske, M., Herne, K., & Grönlund, K. (2021). Kaksisuuntainen katu: Poliitikit osallistujina puntaroivassa kansalaiskeskustelussa. *Politiikka*. 63(1), 28–53. <https://doi.org/10.37452/politiikka.98388>

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Grönlund, K. (2021). Kansalaispaneelien rooli vaalidemokratiassa: Miten harkittua yleistä mielipidettä voi hyödyntää kaupunkien kehittämisessä. In Kaupungit murroksessa (Helsinki Symposium): Kaupunkitutkijoiden puheenvuoroja tulevaisuuden kaupungeille. *Helsingin kaupungin keskushallinnon julkaisuja*. 32–25. <https://www.hel.fi/helsinki/fi/kaupunki-ja-hallinto/kaupunkisymposium-gronlund>

Grönlund, K., Herne, K., & Jäske, M. (2021). Opas kansalaispaneelin järjestämiseen kunnissa. *Suomen kuntaliitto*. <https://www.kuntaliitto.fi/julkaisut/2021/2128-opas-kansalaispaneelin-jarjestamiseen-kunnissa>

Jäske, M., Sormunen, H., Schauman, J., Sirén, R., Weckman, A. & Rapeli, L. (2021). Citizens' Panel on the Freedom of Expression: Citizens' Panel Final report. *Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Justice, and Åbo Akademi University*. <https://vm.fi/en/-/publication-of-final-report-of-citizens-panel-on-freedom-of-expression-im-plementation-of-panel-s-recommendations-to-begin>

Karv, T. & Backström, K. (2021). Följderna av en folkomröstning - Lärdomar från Korsholm. *Forskningsrapport: Institutet för samhällsforskning vid Åbo Akademi*. [https://www.abo.fi/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Foljderna-av-en-folkomrostning\\_svenska.pdf](https://www.abo.fi/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Foljderna-av-en-folkomrostning_svenska.pdf)

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# The Samforsk team

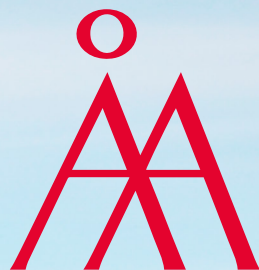
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# Find out more

For more information about Samforsk please visit our webpage at [www.abo.fi/en/samforsk](http://www.abo.fi/en/samforsk)

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