



Next Normal: A Path Towards the e-Government of Tomorrow

Trond Arne Undheim - Futurist, Venture Partner, Author

TrondUndheim.com

We are entering the deep digital age

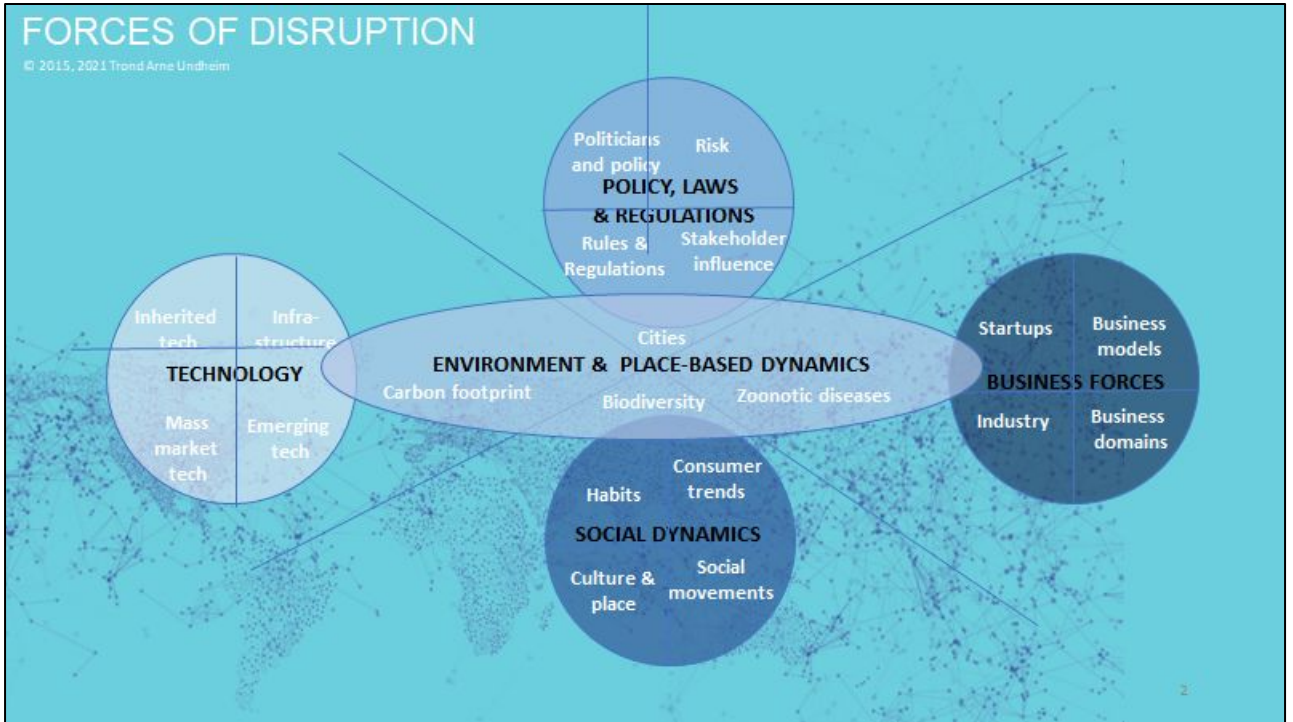
Photo by [Marius Masalar](#) on [Unsplash](#)



As Elon Musk says: “things will get weird”. The rules are different than 30 years ago when the internet was created. Web is a given. Big data is a commodity. Big money (even deep pocketed governments) must be accompanied by innovation, skills, and entrepreneurship to achieve societal scale. Algorithmic decision making is starting to affect everyday life, government decisions and service delivery, consumer behavior, military deployments. Much of this is relatively invisible to most of us: data streams, sensor networks, data lakes in big tech. Some of it is more visible: robots, autonomous cars, augmented reality, 3D printing, cryptocurrencies replacing fiat, synthetic biology vaccines ready in hours, remote work. This has not been a fast process, but rather, it took 30 years, but the impact is felt this decade in particular. Privacy, security, all up for vote now. Oh, turns out-broadband (fiber and 5G) is everything - the electricity of our age.

FORCES OF DISRUPTION

© 2015, 2021 Trond Arne Undheim



Changing social dynamics where micro-social identities, chameleon consumers and personalization opportunities need to capture government attention and vice versa.

Marks the end of centralized e-government projects & the beginning of distributed ones



Small, no-code, cloud/edge based deployments that require no skills, no lead time, no training should be the way to go for any new government services being put online. The effort should be on the hybrid service delivery mix of online and offline, globally, 24/7. If small is going to work, it needs to be enabled by a standardized, no-code infrastructure layer.

The Five roles of Government

1

CONSULTATION
(QUESTIONING)

2

POLICY
(FACILITATING)

3

RISK TAKER
(SCALING)

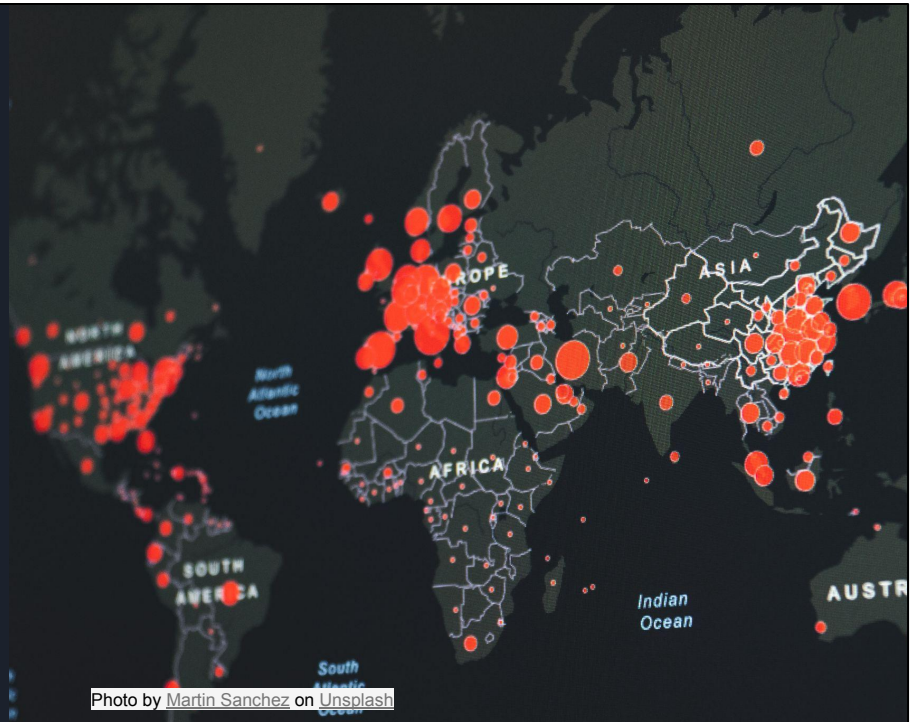
4

INNOVATION
(ENABLING)

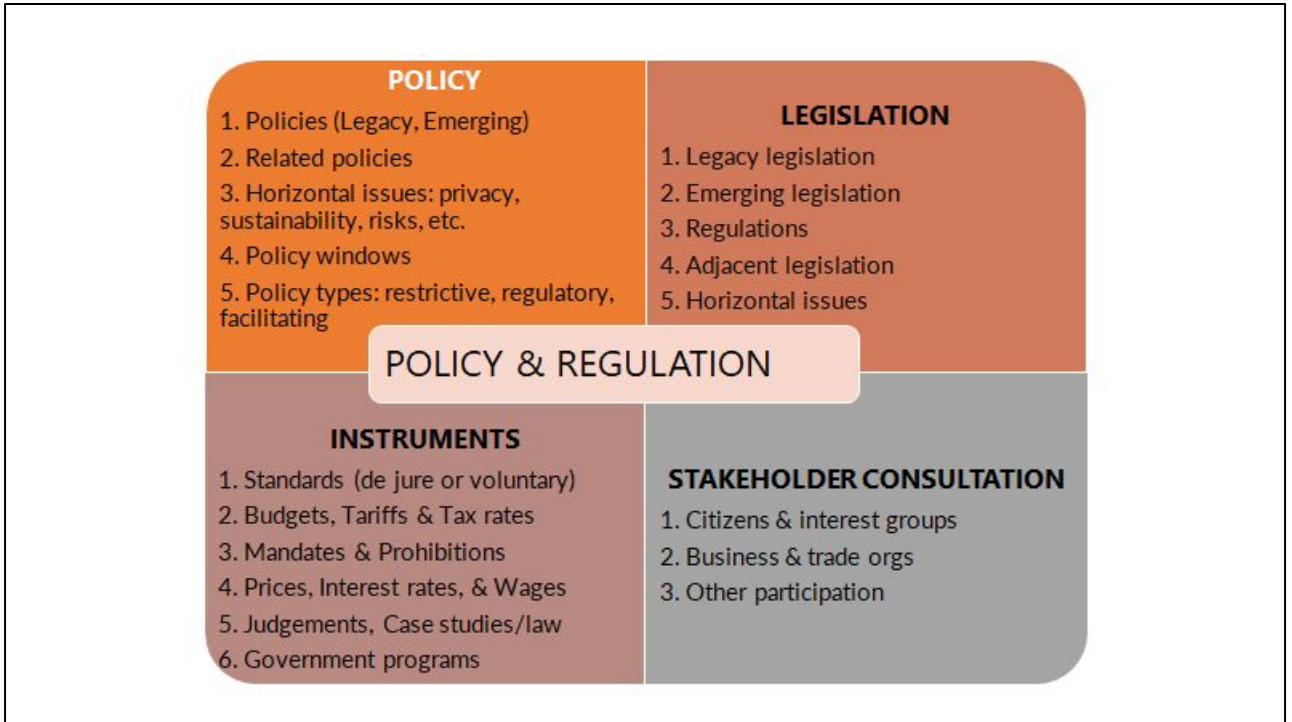
5

REGULATION
(RESTRICTING)

Governments don't control e-governance



Governance is networked across many stakeholders. Governments are both more powerful than many think (proactive role in systemic platform innovation and market creation, very easy to regulate big tech, if we only knew how and what to impose) and less powerful than desirable, at times (mandates don't work). Governance is a multi-stakeholder game where other entities (big tech, social movements) have higher stakes than ever before. The regulatory effort required is therefore different. Resilient infrastructure. Data must be FAIR - Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, and Reusable (FAIR).



E-government has, so far, only scratched the surface. The era of quick wins is over. Now comes the era of hard work. It will take two decades. Just as wells--because many missteps along the way. Important: learn from mistakes whilst we still can (revert).

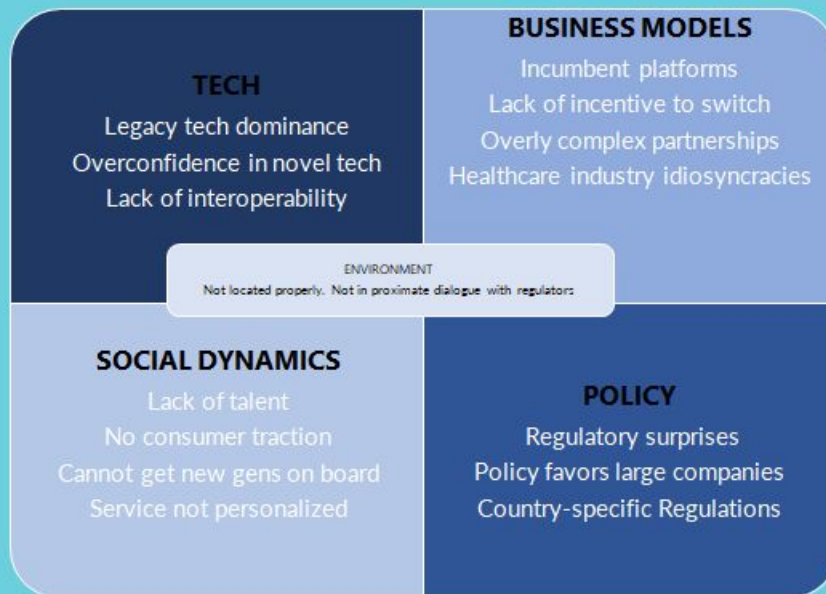
What drives technology is not technology

Photo by [Mahdi Bafande](#) on [Unsplash](#)



Needs are discovered but can also be unearthed by looking under a rock. The next normal is about preserving human dignity. With COVID, that race was almost lost. We were very lucky to have digitalization, manufacturing innovators (vaccine startups BioNTech, Moderna), videoconferencing, email and pockets of a skilled labor force. And, no, AI will not lead to singularity in the next 30 years, but there are simpler issues to tackle (big data, big brother, big tech), trust, privacy, security, cybersecurity, skills, and the big, decentralizing opportunity of blockchain for government.

Why healthtech fails



Let's just take the health field, which many governments never even considered part of e-government, even though it delivers services of public interest and even in partly or fully privatized healthcare markets. What have we learned? So far, as a global collective, very little.

Deep digitalization
requires polymaths

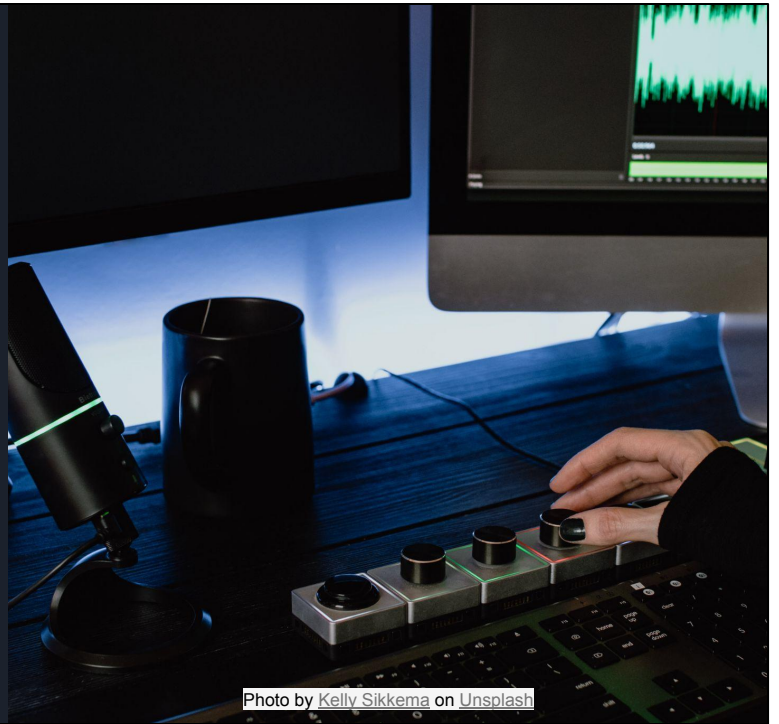
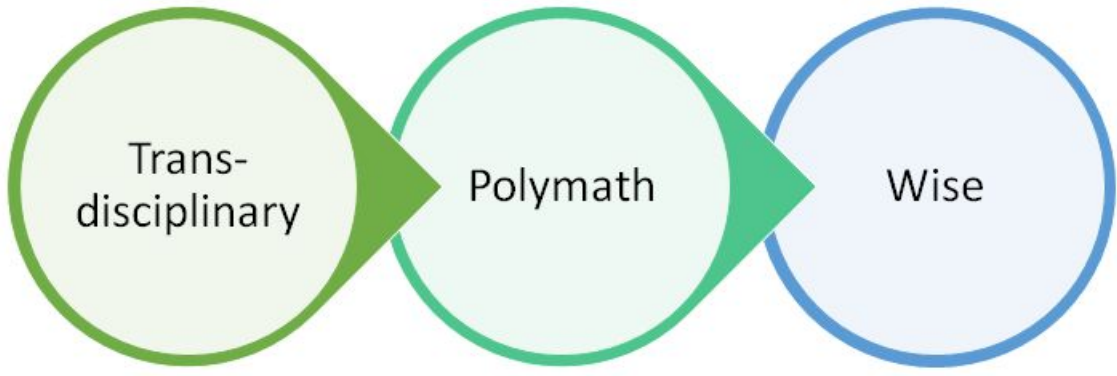


Photo by [Kelly Sikkema](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Skills in public sector, in leadership, across society



Trans-disciplinary

Polymath

Wise

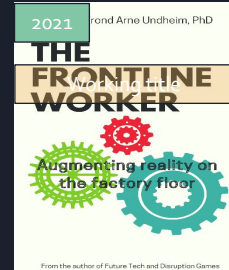
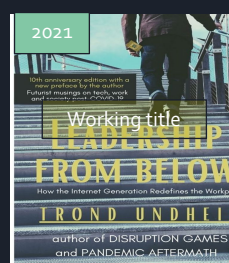
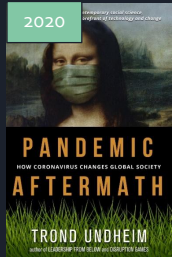
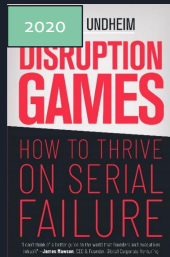
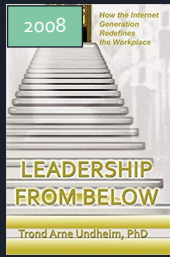
Global e-governance will require more than treaty based international cooperation



Photo by [Fernando @cferdo](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Plurilateral frameworks are emerging as the most realistic approaches. When will a global constitutional convention movement start? How long would it take to gain quorum? Estonia's e-Residency is leading the way, allows non-Estonians access to Estonian services such as company formation, banking, payment processing, and taxation. The program gives the e-resident a smart card which they can use to sign documents. The program is aimed towards location-independent entrepreneurs such as software developers and writers. In the near future, all countries will want to do this and much more. But will it be enough? Doubtful. The UN charter of rights never had a true governance body to defend those rights or implement them. Even in niche areas such as Global Health, the current e-governance scheme emerging is a patchwork--and is arguably undemocratic. The first area of focus should be the regulation of algorithms. Algorithms should be regulated the way open standards are developed now: in public/private fora and consortia such as W3C and OASIS -> but need better civil society representation. Treaty based regulation of algorithms is a recipe for disaster. A lot of these things are obvious-but they need to be codified lessons widely embraced and relearned and continuously adapted and improved, fine tuned.

IN MARKET



If you want to learn more about my thought leadership approach...I have plenty of books to read.

FUTURIZED



HOST
FUTURIST
TROND UNDHEIM
PHD



@futurized2



@futurized2



Futurized.org



FuturizedPodcast