

Welcome to the future of Government

CityState

CityState is a world in which authority is decentralized to the city level and pragmatism trumps idealism in addressing collective issues.

How did we get here?

Urbanization leads to the growth in the number of cities and their size and consolidation. The scale of cities means they can innovate and get things done more easily, which raises their relevance and power vis-à-vis national governments. This is the time of the mayor, who now has political star power.

Strong urban rural divide: Cities and city states become the main centres of political power, given economic interdependence and shared values among people.

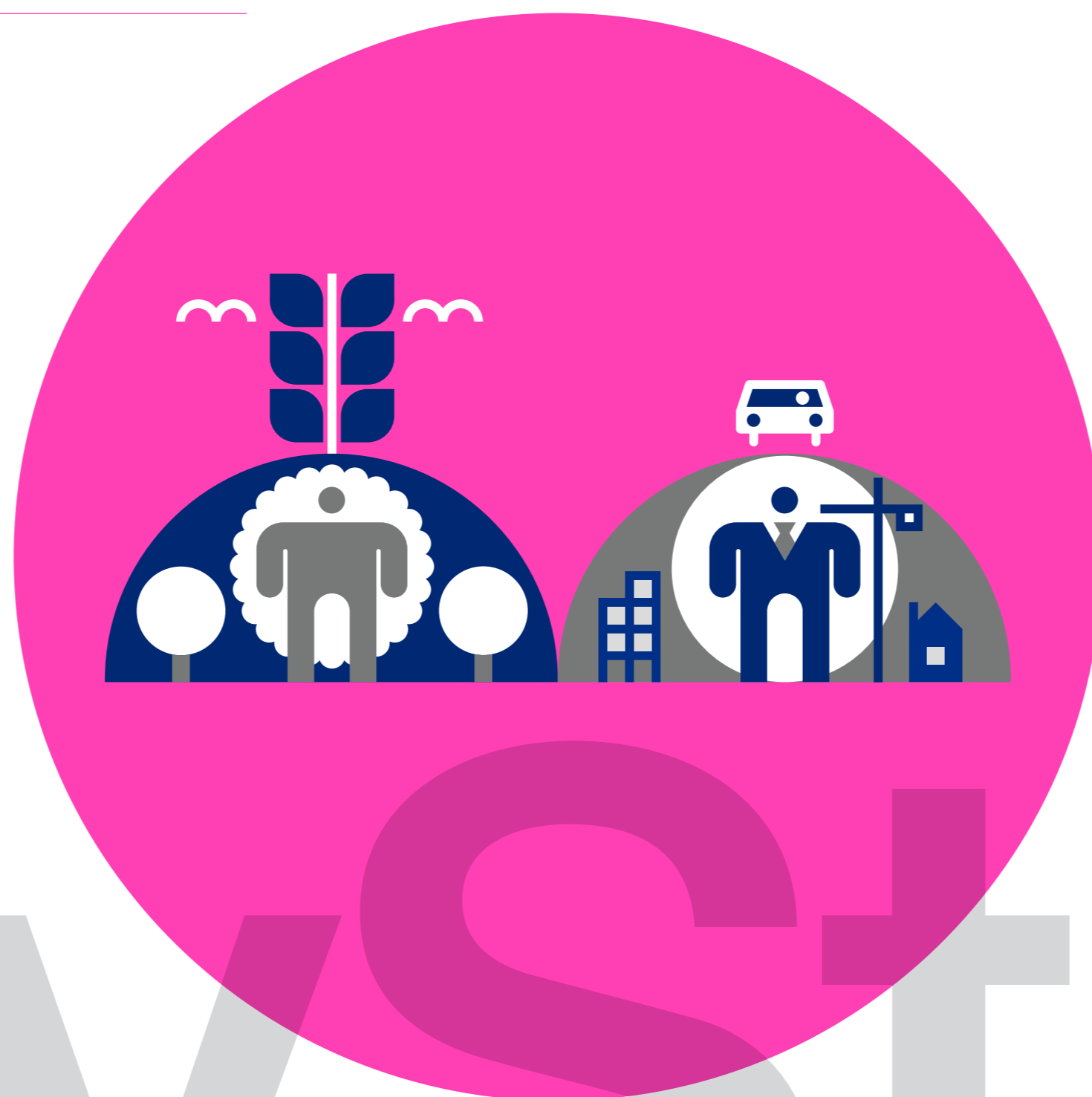
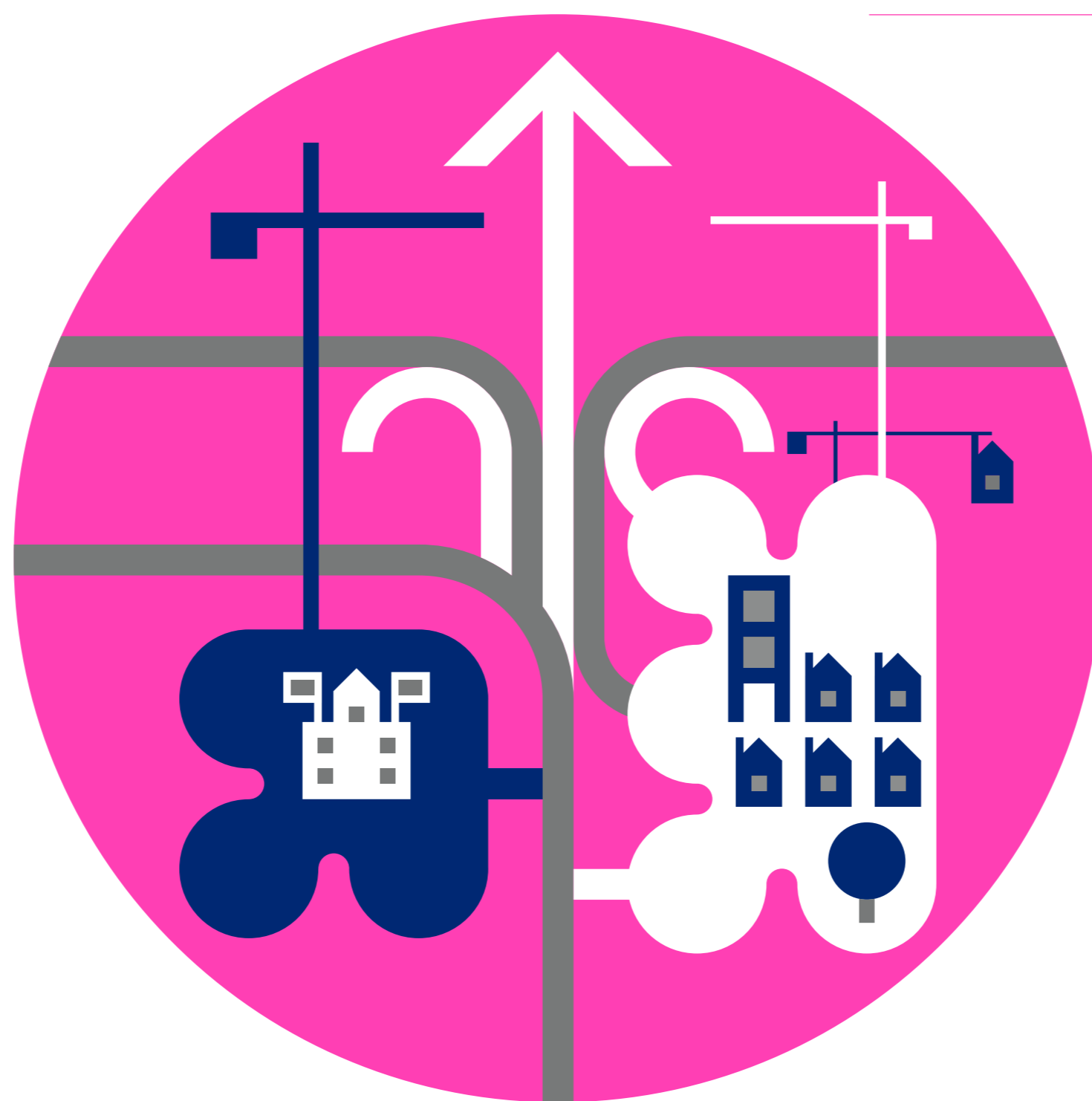
Cities collaborate on local problems: Cities, rather than nations, are centres of innovation as the scale of policy-making and service delivery allows for rapid and responsive change. Collaboration between cities and mega regions on policies and best practices also shapes selected global issues.

Setting the Scene
The future can be imagined in different ways. The World Economic Forum's Strategic Foresight team and the Global Agenda Council on the Future of Government have developed three scenarios on how the world of governance could evolve by 2050. The scenarios aim to support strategic dialogue on the options we have in the present to shape desired governance systems of the future.

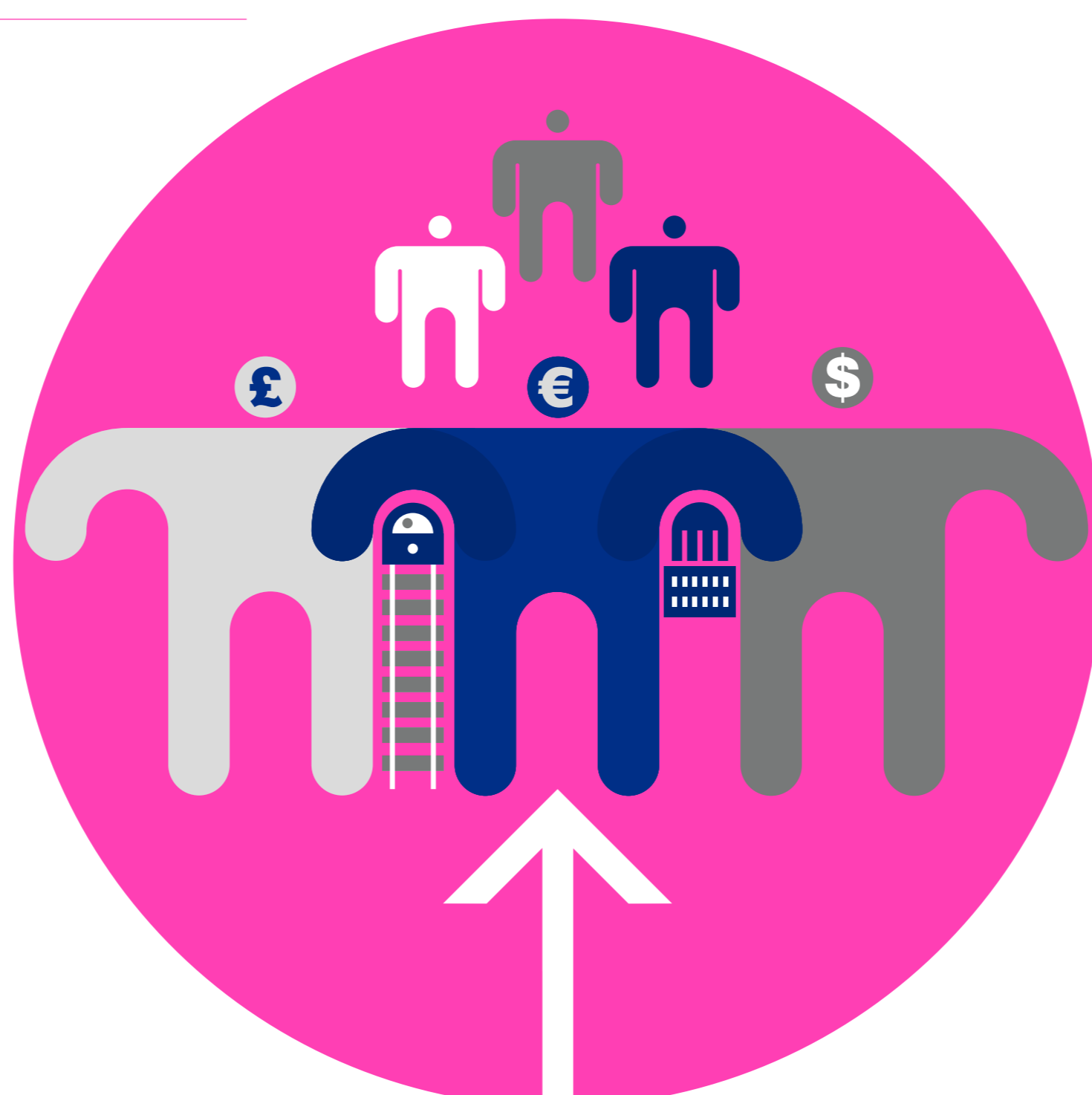
Through its Strategic Foresight activities, the World Economic Forum aims to support stakeholders in better understanding and addressing the complex problems and turbulence that societies are increasingly facing.
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Connections are made between cities into mega-corridors: The consolidation of cities into mega-corridors, which span national and state borders has also led to more autonomous city states. Government has decentralized from national to local authorities with most of these located in the growing number of cities.



Wide diversity of political systems across cities: Citizens identify more strongly with the cities they live in, which provide them with a sense of belonging, rather than concepts such as nation states.



What could you be asking yourself in CityState?
How can cities best promote policy and governance innovation?
Is this world prone to conflict? Is global collective action still possible and, if so, how?
What becomes of national and regional political constructs?
What are the consequences of rising charisma and personality politics?
What will be the impact of migration and how will it be managed?

Welcome to the future of Government e1984

e1984 is a world in which the promise of Big Data is realized; economic, geopolitical and cyber threats are omnipresent; and collective solidarity is a core societal value.

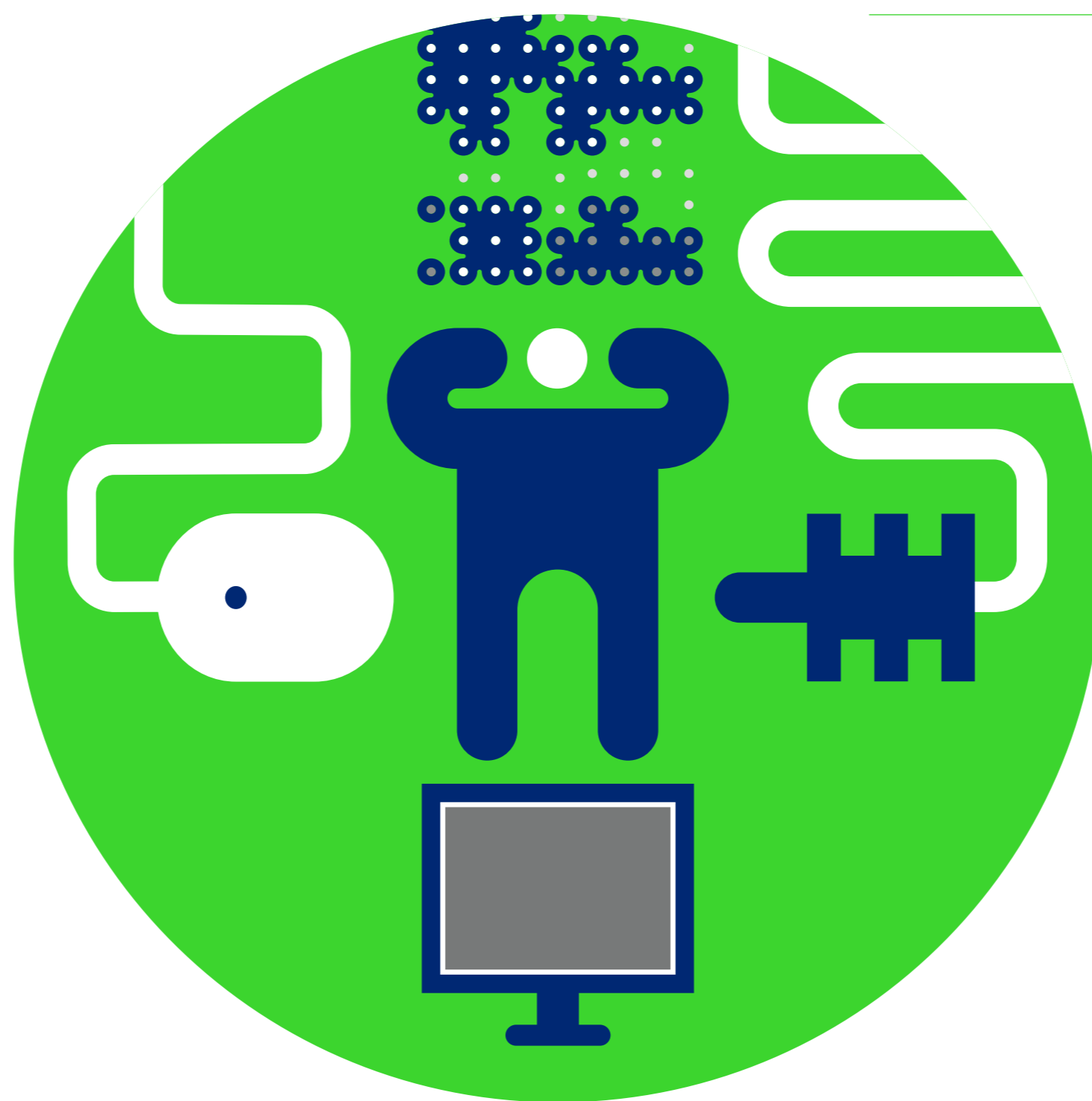
How did we get here?

Amid economic volatility, geopolitical instability and the rise of cyber security concerns, there is an upsurge of nationalism. People are willing to trade in some freedoms and privacy for an increased sense of collective security.

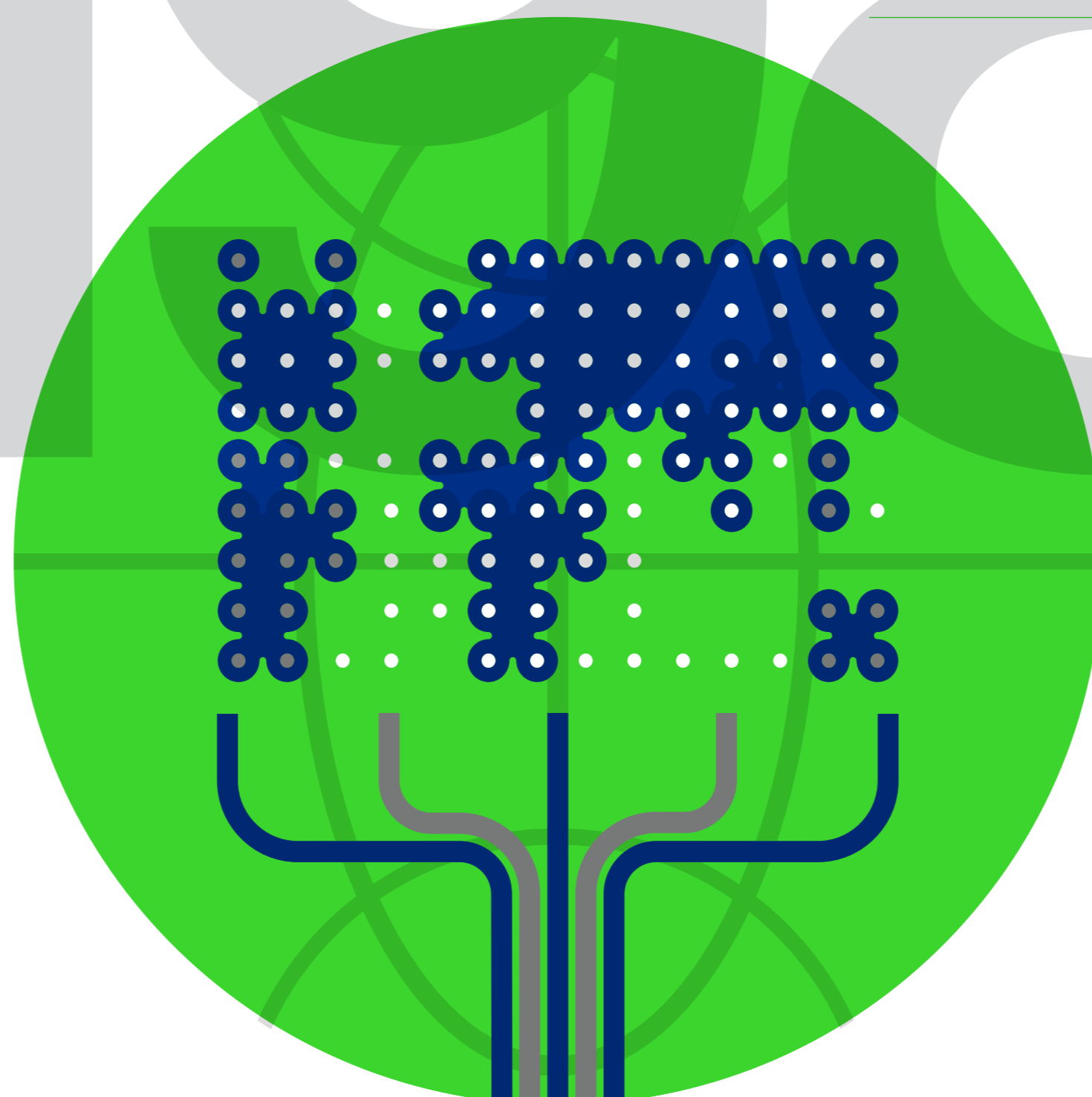
Fatigue around politics, the trade-offs caused by plurality of interests and the desire for efficient provision of public services lead citizens to seek traditional governance systems that emphasize efficiency.

Power is entrusted to technocratic governments: Power is centralized at a national level as citizens trade individual preferences for collective security.

Big Data defines policy design and delivery: The trust citizens put into the government allows for the harvest and analysis of Big Data. In this way governments can effectively and efficiently assess citizen behaviour, values and interests, thereby creating and implementing targeted policies and services.



Physical borders are extended into the virtual world: Guarded State Intranets are created as cyber-attacks become increasingly sophisticated.



People trade privacy for security: Citizens are increasingly complacent and lack motivation for personal involvement in traditional political institutions.

What could you be asking yourself in e1984?
 Will Big Data lead to better policies?
 What policies could be implemented effectively and efficiently?
 Will citizens let their data vote on their behalf?
 What will be the role of the private sector?
 How will innovation be supported?
 How are individual rights protected?
 Does democracy function in this world?
 How do societal values change in a world of ubiquitous surveillance?



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Gated Community

Gated Community is a world in which Big Government is broke. Political power rests with individuals and private sector organizations. Individual responsibility and choice prevail in society and the private sector has become the main provider of collective services.

How did we get here?

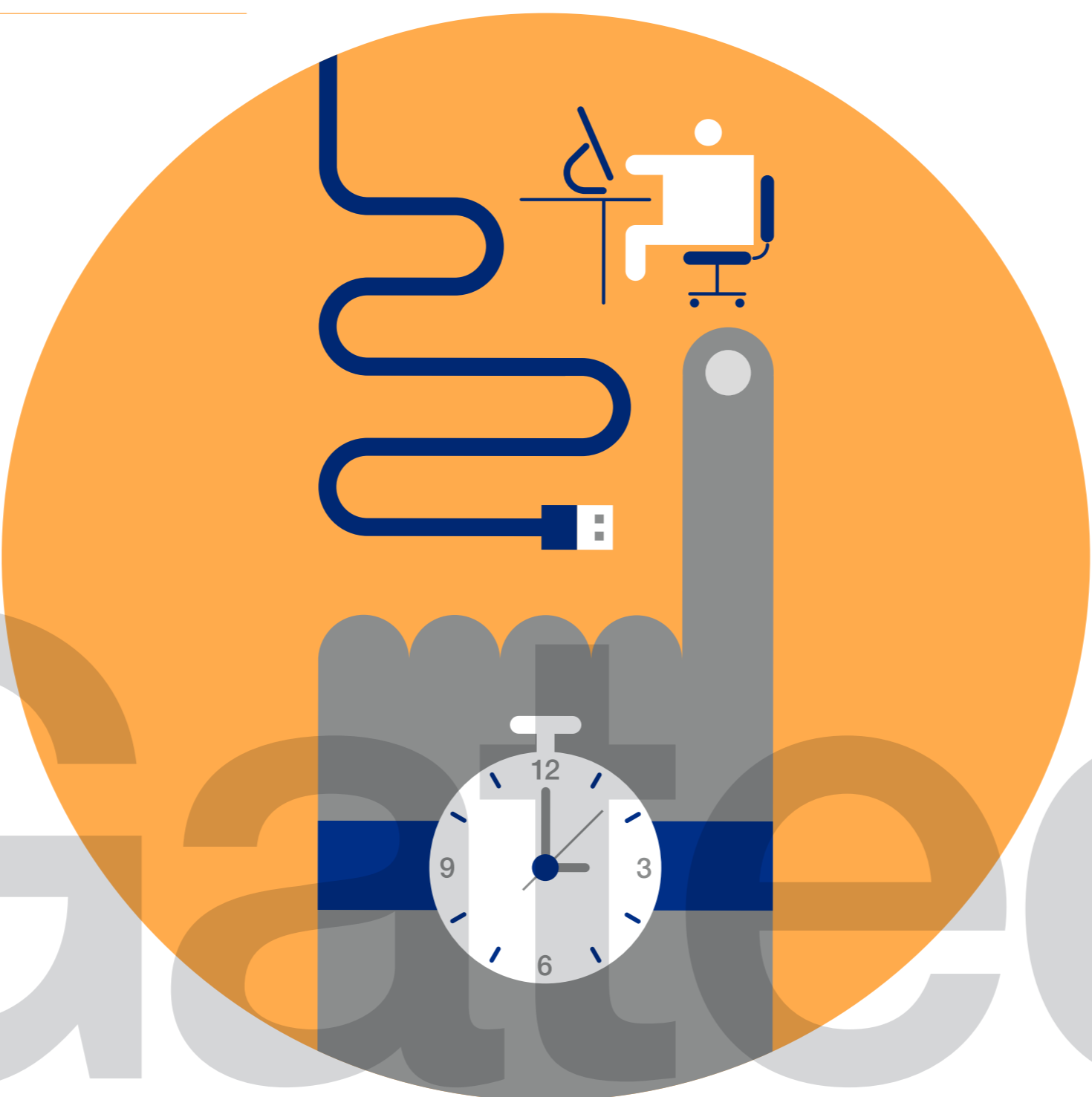
Inefficient management by government, coupled with the efficient privatization and tailoring of core services, leads to increased support for the private provision of collective services. Individual preferences over historical collectives and the desire for differentiated, tailored services, lead to the decline in collective solidarity, and an increased willingness for individuals to be more directly involved in public policy development and execution.

Citizens evaluate policy in real time: Governance representatives have strong incentives to be responsive, as technology offers the means to provide real-time policy evaluation.



Highly competitive markets for collective services: People have come to look to the private sector for a more efficient provision of collective services. People value individual choice and seek living environments and personalized services that reflect their individual core values and lifestyle choices.

Gated Community



People co-design their living environment: People become highly involved in public policy-making and implementing, and are actively volunteering in their communities.



Social inequality is high: Individuals pay only for what they want and need, and express their preferences by moving to areas or by buying from providers who tailor to their desires.



What could you be asking yourself in Gated Community? What innovations might we see in this world? Is there no more cultural solidarity? What is the role of national governments? What collective goods will be public goods or private goods? What will be the implications of inequality? How does society solve collective action problems? How will the governance system manage changes in popular opinion?

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