Valdai Discussion Club Report

Valdai | Discussion Club

The Social Global Commons: Is Global Inequality Solvable?

Oleg Barabanov, Anton Bespalov, Xenia Ibragimova, Vasily Koltashov, Dmitry Poletaev, Ekaterina Savorskaya

valdaiclub.com
#valdaiclub

January 2020

The views and opinions expressed in this report are those of the authors and do not represent the views of the Valdai Discussion Club, unless explicitly stated otherwise.

ISBN 978-5-6043044-8-8

© The Foundation for Development and Support of the Valdai Discussion Club, 2019

42 Bolshaya Tatarskaya st., Moscow, 115184, Russia

About the Authors

Oleg Barabanov
Doctor of Political Science, Professor of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Programme Director at the Valdai Discussion Club, Professor of MGIMO University

Anton Bespalov
Candidate of Political Science, Deputy Editor-in-Chief of Valdaiclub.com

Xenia Ibragimova
Leading Expert at Science Policy Department, MGIMO University

Vasily Koltashov
Head of New Society Institute

Dmitry Poletaev
Leading researcher at the Institute of Economic Forecasting of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Director of Migration Research Centre

Ekaterina Savorskaya
Associate professor at Lomonosov Moscow State University

Contents

3 Introduction

4 Global Society in the Modern World

9 Chapter 1. The World in a New Era of Transformation

21 Chapter 2. Migration and the Global Commons

25 Chapter 3. Freedom of Information as a Global Common

30 Chapter 4. Innovations as a Global Common

33 Conclusion. Global Governance Through the Prism of Global Commons

- Global Socioeconomic Equality
- Aspiration for a Decent Standard of Living
- Information Freedom
- Access to Scientific Knowledge and Innovations

Introduction

One of the key current trends in global politics is the gradual shift from 'pure' geopolitics and the hard/soft power of sovereign states to global problems (environmental, resource, demographic, and social). The past decade saw the term 'global problems' itself crystallize into a new concept, the Global Commons, understood in a narrowly environmental and a broader social sense. It is discussed both at the UN in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals and at various international venues. The 14th Annual Meeting of the Valdai International Discussion Club in October 2017 included a series of discussions of these subjects (The Conflict Between Man and Nature, The Conflict Between Rich and Poor, The Conflict Between Progress and Humanism).

To be sure, interpretations of the term Global Commons diverged right from the start. In the narrow sense, it is understood as the environment, including the air (and the climate), potable water, arable land, biodiversity, and so on.[1] In a broader sense, it comprises the common social heritage of human society at the planetary level, including access to healthcare, the minimum (and later high protein) food basket, a comfortable urban and social environment, etc. The most radical and expansive interpretation treats the Global Commons as the planetary (i.e. trans-border) unity of the human race.

[1] *The Valdai International Discussion Club published a report on the environmental aspects of the Global Commons in December 2018. See: Barabanov, ON & Savorskaya, YV, 2018, 'Globalnye Ekologicheskiye Ideologii: Mozhno li Razreshit Konflikt Cheloveka i Prirody?' [Global Environmental Ideologies: Can the Conflict between Humans and Nature Be Overcome?'], Valdai, Moscow. Available from: http://ru.valdaiclub.com/files/24162/*

Global Society in the Modern World

The crumbling of the world order and the old system of international relations and unions, as well as the increasingly real prospect that the world will plunge into total chaos affect both politics and global society, which is also increasingly changing. This, in turn, influences relations between society and the government in individual countries as well as world trends.

As a consequence, the feeling that social change is of global importance is reflected not only in political practices but also in the domain of values and ideology. A case in point is the evolution and expanding value of the Global Commons. While previously this value was understood primarily in the environmental sense as the need for a global commitment to nature and climate conservation, today there are increasingly frequent calls for a social understanding of the Global Commons as a universally shared basis for a harmonious global society in the coming decades.

The point of departure for this change was the *alienation of elites from society* that occurred in all leading countries of the world. While in previous decades, protests against this alienation, though taking bizarre forms in the anti-globalization movement, failed to move the general public, today the situation is different. At first, the economic crisis at the turn of the century turned consumer society into a civic society. The feeling of civic responsibility and of belonging (and the demand that the authorities feel the same) led to powerful street protests and the emergence of new left progressive movements that refused to recognise the old elites and the old order (*l'ancien régime* of sorts). In some countries, they managed to achieve important electoral successes.

Nevertheless, this was not the end of the story. Their open criticism of not just individual officials or party coalitions but the entire existing political system lifted taboos on protest thinking in even deeper strata of society — ordinary people in the neutral sense of the word. These segments of society were not prepared for serious political self-organization and street rallies and, unlike the progressive movements, they did not attract the attention of the left-liberal media. They could voice their discontent only by voting in elections.

The prevailing sentiments in these strata are evident in the recent electoral success of outsider forces on the right, an outcome that shocked the old elites but was quite logical in reality. Their conscious rejection of political correctness and displays of populism on the campaign trail were only a means, not an end in themselves. As a result, we see a growing sense of an accelerating democracy deficit on both the political right and left. Thus, the changed relationship between society and the elites is growing stable and qualitatively different both in the West and on the global scale. Consequently, real democracy as a feature of a global common good (as opposed to the habitual electoral reproduction of elites in consumer societies) is emerging as a matter of key importance for the future socio-political dynamics of the world.

Yet another serious challenge is the 'toxicity' of international relations spilling over to public opinion in many countries. The current situation is distinct from before in that the sides consciously reject whatever remained of the Cold War ethics against utterly demonizing the rival. Hence, the new terms – 'toxic relations' and 'toxic war'. In this context, there is again a great need for a media image of an external enemy, in part as a convenient pretext for deflecting attention from domestic problems and crises. The resulting picture is revealing: an election (or a referendum) is lost because of a 'toxic' external enemy's meddling rather than by dint of societal disappointment with the elite. Naturally, this approach requires special (if not total) information and media support. Now, for the first time in decades, the public in leading countries has been directly targeted by government manipulation of the media. This strategy has proved somewhat effective in the medium term, it must be acknowledged. The new phobias transmitted to society by the media have the effect of changing public opinion, making it less susceptible to open and self-critical discourse. By drastically curtailing the right to freedom of thought, it also serves as yet another accelerant of the growing democracy deficit mentioned before.

There is again a great need for a media image of an external enemy

The information war between the West and Russia is clearly the main if far from the only, example of this approach. Just reading what the UK press writes about the European Union and its leaders is enough to demonstrate that this media demonization and 'toxicity' trick is widely employed in West–West relations as well. The progressing deterioration of US–European and US–Chinese relations is also amplified by media support. Once used, it is tempting

to keep on using a forbidden trick *ad infinitum*. Therefore, Donald Trump's 'fake news' remark is not just an emotional retort but also a rule of information policy in leading countries that is transforming society in a major way, regardless of whether people believe or reject the news in question. This raises the question of whether *information freedom* is a feature of the Global Commons, both in individual countries and globally as part of a newly appreciated common inheritance.

The *global migration problem* has only grown more urgent in recent years. A prime example is the migrant crisis in the European Union that has led to the collapse of European solidarity. Right-wing forces from outside the system are openly exploiting xenophobia for political purposes and their electoral successes prove that these views are resonating in society. The Trumpism phenomenon is mostly based on opposing immigration. Trump's wall has come to symbolise the desire of a wealthy global elite to fence themselves off from the rest of the world. It has also brought into the present the debate on the gap between North and South and raised the very urgent question of whether solidarity with migrants should be viewed from the perspective of values as an element of global ethics and the Global Commons, or whether migrants are a threat that demands an appropriate response.

Projecting the migration problem into the future, it fits into the broader ideological context of human unity on a planetary scale. The key premise in this respect is the universal right to *equal access to resources* (where 'universal' encompasses both individual countries and the world as a whole). Generally, this meets no objections (the imperative of global ethics), but in fact the situation is much more complicated. The developing world's political ideology is exposing neocolonialism and its various forms (environmental, demographic, educational, technological, and more). Political scientists are coming to the conclusion that the West/North is using various pretexts to deny the Global South its right to development, when during their own industrialization the advanced countries were unconcerned about the environment or labour protection and felt no scruples siphoning resources from their colonies. Paradoxically predicated on concern for the Global Commons, this neocolonialism will only grow stronger in the future. This is why, the Global South countries will never reach the same level of development as the West/North. As such, the global right to equal access to resources will remain a figment of the imagination.

Under these circumstances, migration appears to be the only path to securing this right. According to this logic, migration figures as an inalienable right rather than a despair-driven forced move. After all, if everyone has the right to a better life (which is not contested under the imperative of global ethics), it is but a tiny logical step from there to saying that everyone has the right to live where life is better. If a hypothetical Germany is a better place to live than a hypothetical Eritrea, then residents of Eritrea have the right to migrate to Germany. Here, the motto of 'Germany for Germans' underlying German sovereignty becomes outmoded and clashes with the right to development, with prosperous Germany emerging as the property of both its citizens and the rest of mankind – property that everyone has the right to enjoy. A new motto (and value), 'Germany for everyone', is coined and this eventually leads to potentially the tensest and most explosive situation where the right to migration is perceived as a global common good. Clearly, such global socio-political dynamics are an extremely serious challenge to sovereignty (and the state as an institution) and can cause fundamentally new types of conflict that will differ in kind from traditional geopolitical disputes.

If a hypothetical Germany is a better place to live than a hypothetical Eritrea, then residents of Eritrea have the right to migrate to Germany

The migration crisis, the proliferation of right-wing ideas from outside the system, and the current trends in the Islamic world have, each in its own way, highlighted yet another problem inherent in the global social dynamics, the *issue of identity*. In this area, there is also a growing challenge to the stereotypical perception of globalization as a tool for the inevitable erasing of differences between people at the planetary level. Understandably, this is accompanied by politically correct talks about 'unity in diversity' or how all ethnic groups will still sing their folk songs. However, this does not change what the trajectory of development is. Paradoxically, the antiglobalization movement of the past decade did not decry the trajectory, focusing its criticism solely on corporations and global financial institutions and posing as 'alterglobalists' rather than antiglobalists.

Today, however, the right to identity (religious, cultural, historical, behavioural, etc.) and the even more dramatic right to defend one's identity everywhere (both at home and away) and under all circumstances are drawing increased scrutiny. In this way, the identity issue is being transformed into the right to reject globalism as a global common good. Brexit and

the Euroskeptics have shown that even West–West integration projects are perceived as an unacceptable threat to this perception of identity, and this goes double for relations between the West and non-West.

Perceived as non-globalism, individual identity is actively defended by states that put forward typologically similar arguments in favour of their right to defend their sovereignty and perceive external political pressure applied for the sake of global values and the Global Commons as a threat to their own 'sovereign identity'. This is preparing the ground for the rise of concepts such as 'sovereign historical memory', 'sovereign environment', 'sovereign democracy' and the like.

The debates around social globalism/identity are spawning more and more politically incorrect and often dangerous arguments to support the moral superiority of some groups over others. For example, Western demands that migrants obey the host society's rules often degenerate into open racism and Islamophobia. It is here that 'Western moral supremacy' comes through most strongly. As should be expected, the response is one of rejection. On the one hand, migrants claim the right to their behavioural identity in any place as a global value and demand respect for this right of theirs. On the other, they insist (often with good reason) that their religious and cultural values are superior to the godlessness of the Western host society and that they feel better grounded morally than the Westerners with all their pretences to Western moral supremacy. This fragmentation of globalism is rapidly turning into a tug-of-war based on just one question: who is better? Naturally, this leads to increased hostility and extremism on both sides, and effective attempts to reconcile these incompatible stances have been few and far between.

As a consequence, the destruction of the world political order is accompanied by a serious deformation of globalization's social systems. The controversial and occasionally provocative views that are currently taking shape in regards to social perceptions of the Global Commons are emerging as a challenge not only to the 'old order' of relations between elites and society in the sense of *l'ancien régime* but also to the traditional perception of sovereignty and the state as a whole. Will this lead to a surge of new global conflicts at various levels (society vs elites, poor vs rich, South vs North, and others)? This rhetorical question can help flesh out our conception of the 'typical' geopolitical conflicts we can expect in the future world after the breakdown of the old order.

Chapter 1. The World in a New Era of Transformation

The socioeconomic aspects of the Global Commons changed in 2008–2018 under the influence of an entire era of global crisis. That period was in some ways like the 1973–1982 crisis years, when the latest wave of global economic development had come to an end – an ascending wave, according to Nikolai Kondratiev. The second decade of the 21st century, too, is closing a downward phase in global development, when the world was dominated by the Washington Consensus and there was some mutual understanding between states (albeit fragile and incomplete).

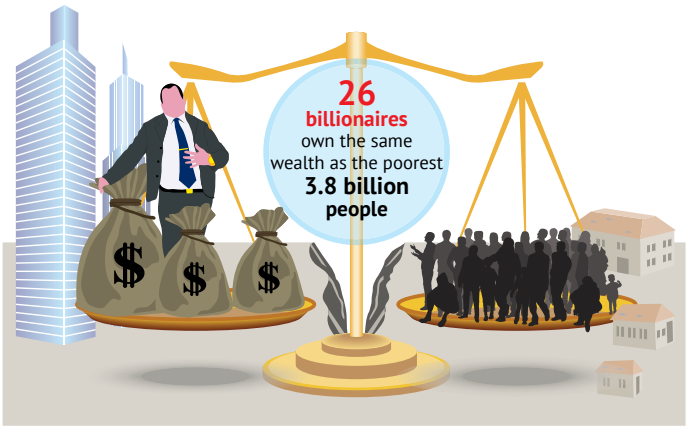
Describing the turning point of the 1970s, French historian Fernand Braudel noted that it was not a usual recession, as many economists thought, but a pivotal moment that would change not only our lives but also the lives of our children and our children's children. That crisis was followed by globalization, and detente in international relations, culminating in the end of the Cold War. This misunderstanding of the 1970s turning point was best expressed by US President Richard Nixon in his famous phrase, 'We are all Keynesians now.' Nevertheless, eras in economic and political doctrines are finite, and Keynesianism gave way to neoliberalism, whose weaknesses were exposed in 2008–2018.

This analogy with the 1970s is chosen for a reason. The world has travelled part of the road called financial globalization and began developing on the basis of new mercantile principles — the rivalry of economic centres. Essentially, this analogy is not even an analogy, but a new turning point that is changing our understanding of the Global Commons and our practical relation to existing universal values. The era of globalization has ended, replaced by regionalization, and the ongoing discussion of the Global Commons is about summing up these past decades and raising questions for a future that does not at all look cloudless or conflict-free. However, all the questions about development and values raised today are questions for an entire economic, cultural, and political era of the next 20–25 years. These are necessary questions to comprehend what to expect in the future.

The destruction of the world political order is accompanied by a serious deformation of globalization's social systems

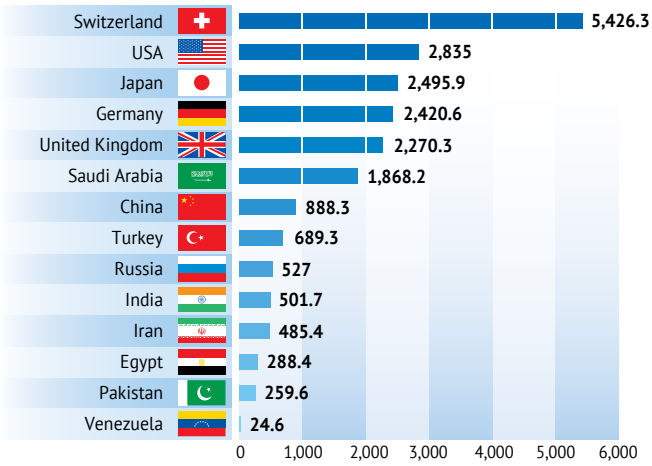
GLOBAL WEALTH DISTRIBUTION

Wealth in the world



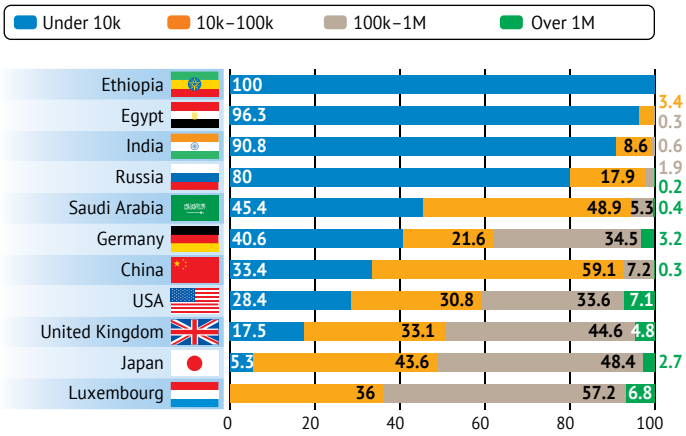
Source: Oxfam, 2019.

The average monthly salary in the world for July 2019 ($)



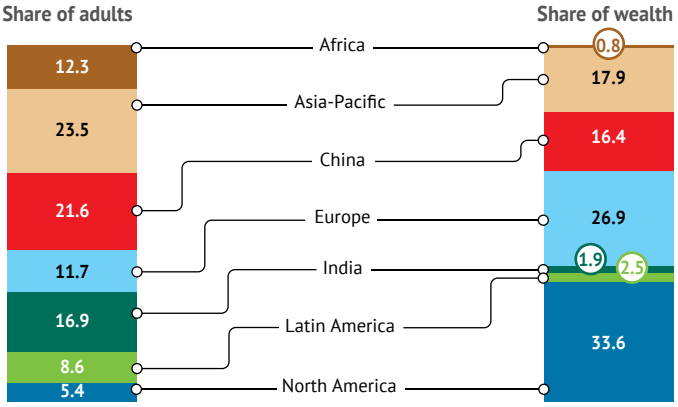
Source: The International Labour Organization, 2019.

Distribution of adults (%) by wealth range ($)



Source: Credit Suisse Global Wealth Report, 2018.

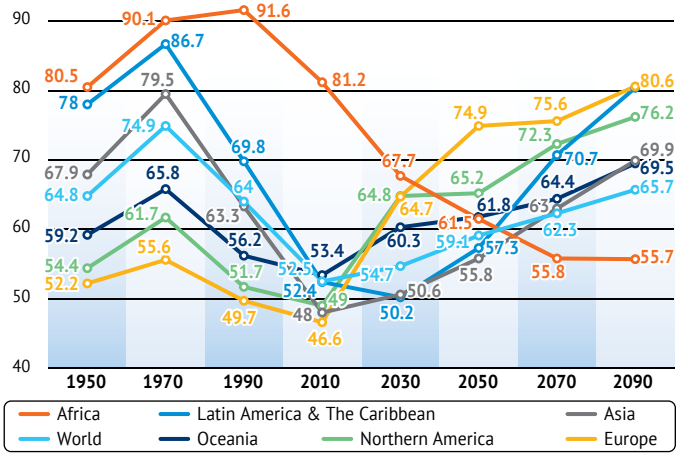
Regional composition of global wealth distribution in 2018 (%)



Source: Credit Suisse Global Wealth Report, 2018.

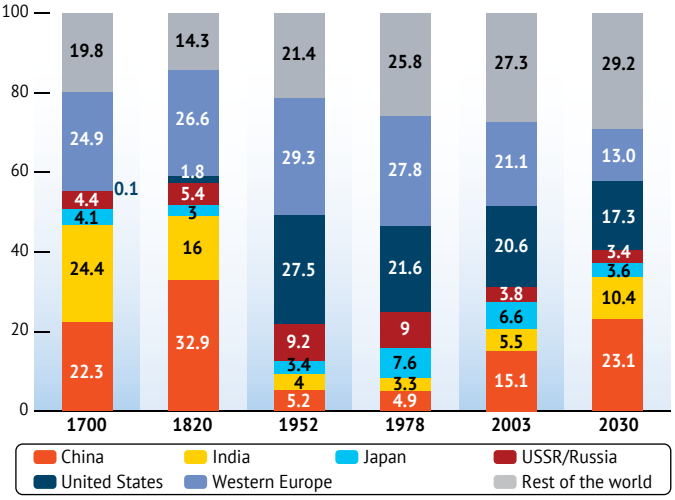
Total dependency ratio by region

Demographic dependency - the burden on the working population by the unproductive population (children 0-14 years old, elderly and old from 60 years and older)



Sources: United Nations Population Division, World Population Prospects, 2017.

Shares of world GDP (% of world total), 1700-2030



Sources: Maddison A, 2007, 'Chinese Economic Performance in the Long Run, 960-2030 AD'. Second Edition, Revised and Updated. OECD Publishing, Development Centre Studies.

What have we left behind? The free movement of capital and goods, for example. Those freedoms were never 100% respected anyway, but they were proclaimed a global value. However, as is known, creating a full-fledged national market also required another element – the freedom of movement for people or labour. That element was quite limited in the era of globalization and ran contrary to the existing rules. The number of borders around the world increased with the emergence of more countries, followed by more visas, and migration policies became more rigid overall. Therefore, the unification of the world that the evangelists of globalization proclaimed never happened the way they had promised.

The 1970s ended with a very strong environmental agenda, when people in the United States and Western Europe started asking whether it was possible to keep living in such a polluted environment. But the reality of the last three decades was somewhat different, because the World Trade Organization (WTO) rules did not provide for restricting the importation of goods based on how they were produced: the use of dirty production technology causing enormous harm to our planetary environment, the use of child or even slave labour — such considerations were bracketed out as if they did not matter. All that mattered was the price of the goods involved in international exchange.

Migration was limited, although it was still quite significant. Mostly, it was capital that migrated – not people moving closer to jobs, but many jobs moving closer to people, because capital came to Mexico, then to the Asia-Pacific region, then to China. In other words, investment flowed more easily. Therefore, migration existed outside the bounds of the freedom of movement principle. People were told in universities and colleges that the world was unified and that they all had rights, and could live where they wanted but, in reality, were restricted in that. Such restrictions could be found around the world in many countries. China actually softened its rules not so long ago, after 2008.

This is what the past era was like. It was an era of trust to a certain degree – trust between countries. Moreover, the last manifestation of that trust was the period of 2008–2009, when the G20 actually relied on some kind of consensus. They agreed that we needed to stabilize the financial system, to prevent the economic collapse of the United States, and avoid

tumbling into a never-ending downward spiral as a result of problems in the US. The period 2008–2009 was seen as a moment when the world was able to come together and move beyond a kind of economic misunderstanding, as the recession of those years was considered. Overcoming the crisis together should have left behind a legacy of even greater consensus among elites.

In 2013–2016, however, the situation changed dramatically. That period turned out to be crucial in the transformation of the global environment and perceptions of the world. A second wave of the crisis hit, mainly affecting the BRICS countries and smaller economies. The US and Western Europe almost got by unscathed. In 2014, when large commodity exporters encountered economic turbulence, the US was still bringing in capital from abroad, and the positive dynamics were touted by the country's government. That was the moment when the first serious disagreement occurred, with long-term implications that changed the global reality in late 2018.

What happened? The clash between world's two groups of capitalist development centres came into full view – the old industrial countries, the old centres of capitalism versus the new centres of capitalism, above all Eurasian — not South American or African but Eurasian centres. This group includes China, Russia, Iran, Turkey, Pakistan, and India which may be a partner of the US but an inconstant one at best. India is rather making the best possible use of the circumstances, without becoming directly involved in conflict. Brazil has been side-lined, and South Africa is not in the game either, although these used to be powerful centres with great potential.

Looking at this division from an economic point of view, it clearly reflects a conflict between financial capital (the West) and production capital (Eurasia). The old centres of capitalism are first and foremost a financial base – New York, London, and to a lesser extent Berlin. Japan, Singapore and several other economies also fit this description and are fairly well-knit together. Meanwhile, the above listed countries of Eurasia are production countries, some of them are new industrial economies. From that moment on, social processes have been moving in different directions in these two groups of states.

The financial centres – the old industrial countries (G7) – proved strong and resilient enough and able to make claims on the other group,

essentially telling them to supply resources, cede control to Western corporations in the form of 'opening up their economies' and adopting 'liberalization and deregulation programmes'. For China, it is called 'make China really open'. In Russia's case, it means forcing Russia to obey the demands of the international community. These are some of ways this group conceals its real aim with, which is to overcome their socioeconomic crisis using the other group's resources, or rather the economies that used to be the periphery and semi-periphery but are now in a different position.

In the old centres of capitalism, the elites are seeking a new expansion that superficially resembles the 1980s–1990s expansion. At that time, after the recession ended, expansion through dialogue was the trend. That is, Western countries, or rather the Global North as they are often called, reached out to 'developing economies' to get them to open their markets in exchange for investment, provide labour in exchange for market access for their products, and accept global trade rules. Thus, a deal was made between the elites of countries of the centre and periphery, including the semi-periphery.

The old deal between the elites is no longer on offer. The new centres (until recently the semi-periphery or periphery of the global system) are now expected to abandon their positions – simply to capitulate and provide support for the old centres. By pursuing this policy, the leadership in the old centres is exerting a peculiar influence over the lower classes of society. This influence is often thought of as public opinion of the West. In reality, it is not public opinion, but an act of playing on the minds of plain ordinary people, replacing some of their own ideas but at the same time generating the desired effect. As a result, every taxi driver in Tokyo or Paris knows about the Skripals and what happened to them – a story they should only have a passing familiarity with as it has nothing to do with their immediate concerns. Nevertheless, their thoughts are being deliberately steered in this direction, to prevent them from thinking about really important things.

It clearly reflects a conflict between financial capital (the West) and production capital (Eurasia)

At the same time, the ruling elites in the old centres are pursuing a policy of fragmenting the lower strata of their own society and then

managing the fragments. Following this logic, Muslims from backward countries are encouraged to preserve their identity and culture, for which they are granted special rights. Special rights are also granted to sexual minorities, including, for example, a quota for immigration and entitlement to a special 'social' package of government support. Belgium, for instance, has immigration quotas for such minority groups. All this concerns cultural, ethnic, and religious minorities. This clearly undermines the principle of unity and equality of rights and duties, that is, their equal distribution among people as in classical bourgeois society. This is a shift towards the neo-feudal fragmentation of society from the perspective of legal practice, with differentiated rights for different classes. Migrants are a necessary component here, as they contribute to the fragmentation of society and render it powerless to resist the economic, social, cultural, and other policies that are disadvantageous to the majority of citizens.

The processes observed in the countries that are part of the new Eurasian capitalist centres are quite different. Although there are significant differences among the group and the practices they have been using, they show similar results in the 2008–2018 decade: their leadership is staked on protecting their international commercial positions and their corporate sectors while their products are expanding into foreign markets. Since they are keen on expanding sales of their products, they are not interested in financial bubbles bursting in the West, because the end customer is there anyway – in the US or the EU. As for the masses in such countries, they find themselves in a melting pot situation.

A more or less homogeneous environment is being formed purely as a function of the production process – with the expansion of cultivated acreage, with new industrial, trade and service enterprises opening, where local citizens work alongside foreign migrants who have moved there for employment. Notably, the launch of new industrial enterprises in Russia in 2017–2018 contributed to the development of this process. Even before that, migrants from Central Asian countries began bringing their families to Russia, so the number of migrant women increased, and they are now considering a future in a country where they initially came to work. With continued economic growth, more and more people will need to be accepted, and these people should not be isolated, but on the contrary, they should be more actively involved in economic activities to help them adapt.

As a result, though certain areas on the planet are still in the throes of the neoliberal fragmentation of society, a number of Eurasian economic centres are spontaneously shifting to the classical 'smelting' of a relatively homogeneous mass. This process of smelting a novel entity in the cultural and social sense will be associated with the interaction between the new Eurasian centres of capitalism, and that interaction will apparently be taking place amid a very strong competition, already budding as sanctions and trade wars. As a result, the classical division of the world into the rich Global North and the poor, ever backward, and peripheral Global South has been clearly disrupted by the course of history, when – as has happened more than once – new development centres (in continental Eurasia) appeared on the stage, still tied to the Global North's markets, and yet more and more independent. Without becoming financial centres, they still have a chance to become centres for a rapid accumulation of real capital, which means development.

The Global South remains the same. Huge swathes of the planet are in an ambiguous situation – they have not transformed up to the hilt that the global crisis launched by changing global rules and national policies. However, Eurasian countries, on the contrary, are going through this transition now. Painfully, reluctantly, they are expanding their product ranges and exports, changing their economic strategies, even jailing some of their economics ministers allegedly only for accepting bribes. In China, Xi Jinping puts on Mao Zedong's jacket as a symbol of national sovereignty and communist revolutionary traditions, giving a special signal to the public.

The Paris Climate Agreement proved a mere utopia amid this new rivalry. It was not acceptable, and perhaps no cooperation agreement would have been acceptable in the new conditions between objectively opposed groups of countries, each of them pursuing their own interests. Now, every country is actually free to complain about other countries and sanction them in any way for how they make the products they export. In addition, this is precisely why the European Union is so concerned about the WTO reform now: it is clear that all the rules are undergoing turbulent change, everything is changing, but it is changing in response to the empirical challenges of the moment, as was the case with CO_2.

Another socioeconomic aspect of the reality in which the Global Commons are now interpreted is the unevenly distributed economic status

RESOURCES: LEADERS OF PRODUCTION

Water (km³/year)

Brazil	1	8,233
Russia	2	4,508
USA	3	3,069
Canada	4	2,902
China	5	2,840

Oil (thousand barrel/day)

Saudi Arabia	1	10,460
Russia	2	10,292
USA	3	8,875
Iraq	4	4,48
China	5	3,981

Grain (mln t/year)

China	1	134
India	2	99
Russia	3	86
USA	4	47
France	5	37

Natural gas (bln m³/year)

USA	1	666
Russia	2	642
Iran	3	226
Qatar	4	182
Canada	5	174

Electricity (GWh)

China	1	6,495,140
USA	2	4,350,800
India	3	1,400,800
Russia	4	1,091,000
Japan	5	999,600

Rare earth metals (t/year)

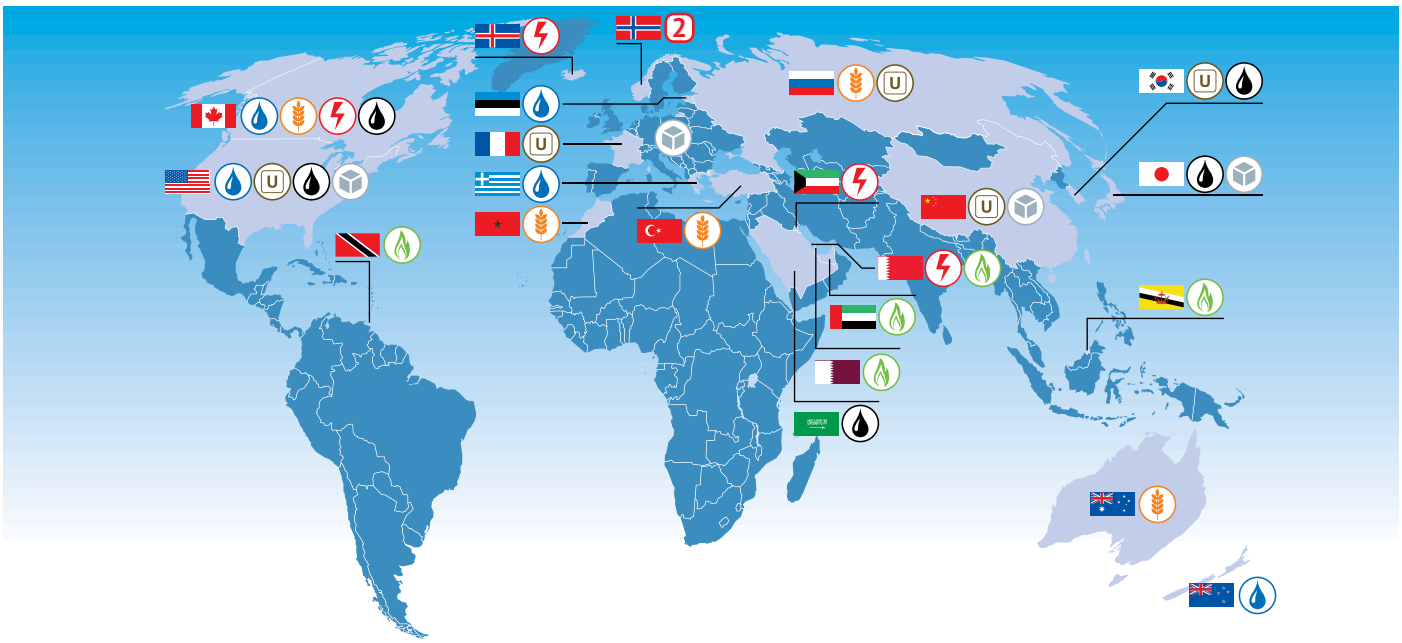
China	1	120,000
Australia	2	20,000
USA	3	15,000
Myanmar	4	5,000
Russia	5	2,600

Uranium (t/year)

Kazakhstan	1	22,574
Canada	2	9,332
Australia	3	6,350
Niger	4	4,528
Namibia	5	4,315

Source: The World Factbook, WB, OPEC, internet sources.

RESOURCES: LEADERS OF CONSUMPTION



Water (m³/year/per capita)

New Zealand	1	2,162
USA	2	1,583
Estonia	3	1,338
Canada	4	1,017
Greece	5	883

Oil (barrel/year per capita)

Saudi Arabia	1	36
Canada	2	24
USA	3	23
South Korea	4	19
Japan	5	11

Grain (thousand t/year per million people)

Australia	1	308
Turkey	2	254
Russia	3	246
Canada	4	241
Morocco	5	208

Natural gas (m³/year per capita)

Trinidad and Tobago	1	17,474
Qatar	2	16,881
Bahrain	3	11,014
Brunei	4	8,736
UAE	5	7,677

Electricity (kW/year per capita)

Iceland	1	53,832
Norway	2	23,000
Bahrain	3	19,597
Kuwait	4	15,591
Canada	5	15,588

Rare earth metals (thousand t/year)

Китай	1	104
Япония	2	24
США	3	20
Европа	4	7

Uranium (thousand t/year)

USA	1	19
France	2	9
China	3	8
South Korea	4	5
Russia	5	4

Sources: The World Factbook, WB, ENI, internet sources.

of the working class. Around 1950, a sort of proletarian economic revolution triumphed in the world, as in industrial countries the mass of wage workers became the main consumers for production and started to benefit from stimulative Keynesian policies. That change was brought about by the growing numbers of wage workers and the impossibility of selling off the increasing quantities of goods without mass consumption. Western workers have become the main consumers of the global economy.

The uneven distribution of this specific, market-oriented stratum of wage workers remained after 2008–2018. The average American earns more than the majority of workers in the new industrial countries. This high cost of labour was the result of the stock market's rise and the high rate of the national currency. Its downside has been and still is the high cost of the end product that is not terribly competitive even in the domestic market. That is why the US is boosting hydrocarbon exports, even though America could have consumed all those hydrocarbons in the 1950s and 1960s and manufactured its own products to export to foreign markets. However, the modern US will hardly be able to do so. A similar situation has developed in the EU. The consumption in these zones is very profitable for the new industrial production centres, and China is especially afraid of losing this market.

The economic reality in the West is such that governments are trying to make wage workers even poorer as a class in order to forestall the depreciation of the dollar and the euro. They are also treating them as a socio-political subject: making the broad public think about things, which it is not interested in, things it does not even care about, forcing people to play the game of subcultures, which are promoted as legal ghettos. This is also part of the new reality. Yet, no one can guarantee that this division will continue into the coming decades. Perhaps a new phase of the global crisis will change the existing equilibrium, upend the current status quo, but in any case, this should be taken into account as a long-term factor.

The G20, in the new socioeconomic conditions, is becoming a platform for debate and controversy rather than for consensus. The participants are arguing that it has changed from the meetings before 2014, where everyone understood each other, and turned into a platform for debate, where different positions and different visions of the world collide. This

happens in the UN as well as, which has ceased to be a working anti-crisis body and a structure for resolving political disputes. Under the new conditions, the current role of the G20 is to take into account the interests of the new centres, as without their consent there can be no consensus at all on the most important issues. That consensus cannot be offered ready-built, neither can it be imposed, as was often the case before. Another side of the G20's work may be to restrain the parties, so that the existing controversy does not intensify even more.

All this is happening in a world where restrictions on the movement of goods and capital are tightening. And yet, a lot of people around the world have for the first time truly realized that the world is one. Only this does not mean that they will find equal acceptance everywhere they might relocate to. In certain economies, they will be accepted as workers, as well as material for the forging of a new entity – most likely a nation – or perhaps even a supranational entity. In the case of Eurasia, it is not yet clear where Central Asia is heading, but obviously neither Moscow nor Beijing are willing to cede Central Asia to the United States. This much is evidenced by the ongoing struggle over Afghanistan, where the US is being blocked in a substantial way by the common efforts of Russia, Pakistan, and China. The interests of the old and the new centres will clash in many parts of the planet, which will certainly affect society.

There is popular discontent in the old centres of capitalism. The events of late 2018 – early 2019 in France have shown that a radical left-wing revolt is possible, but its success is likely to lead to an outflow of capital and international pressure. This is why, the word 'revolt' is justified here. The middle classes in the old centres may be discontented, but they are embedded in the service sector, in the office economy, and would simply be ruined by a sharp break with their partners, be it the EU or the US. People might want to escape from a flawed model, but it is extremely difficult to do. The elites are blocking change and scaring the public with realistic rather than fantastic problems created by abrupt decisions. This is how the resistance in Greece and Spain was broken, and many British people no longer want to break relations with the EU.

The moderate position of the new Eurasian centres stands out against the background of the high social tension in the old centres,

but Eurasia is not interested in exacerbating the situation in the West but rather in turning the existing imbalance to their own advantage. For example, Russia seeks to use the upside of the accidentally devalued rouble to increase economic capacity and expand its range of exported goods as much as possible.

Migrants play fundamentally different roles in the two groups of countries. If we take Russia, migrants that arrive begin to somehow integrate into the local environment. They are motivated enough to do this, and the obstacles are not many: the authorities are not erecting or maintaining them artificially, except for the regulatory system. In the old centres though, migrants are more likely to end up in ghettos, including cultural ones. Various liberal social projects tell them they should preserve their identity, not adapt to local rules, but rather the rules should be changed for the sake of expanding diversity. Most often, however, migrants find themselves confronted with extremely conservative communities, where there may be more rules than at home. This all comes in the place of a social integration policy, as such a policy is unlikely to be approved by the entire local population, given that countries plagued by these types of problems also have high unemployment. This prepares the ground for right-wing revolts.

In the US, Donald Trump has harnessed the emotions of right-wing revolt. The classical working class, especially the production class, is discontented – they elected Trump, but Trump does not want to rely on that class as a driver of transformation. He simply used them and is now pursuing a narrower set of policies, which, however, offers a chance to satisfy his voters' economic demands. The specific problem is the left-wing revolt: mass rallies under leftist slogans aimed to protect the welfare state, reduce taxes, or create a system of social and labour protection. Left-wing revolts are as characteristic of the old centres as right-wing ones. They are the product of low confidence in the existing political parties and a lack of major left-wing parties.

The economic polarization in the world between the old and the new centres is resulting in a continued lack of consensus on the Global Commons, and so we increasingly see global development strategies that are in tension with one another.

Chapter 2. Migration and the Global Commons

One of the most contentious issues of world migration is linked with the freedom of exit and lack of the freedom of entry. Freedom of movement mostly concerns the free exit of citizens from their own country. As for the freedom of entry into the countries with the best socioeconomic conditions, it is rather tightly controlled. These countries want to monitor those who will cross their borders and to install filters in line with their views on immigration.

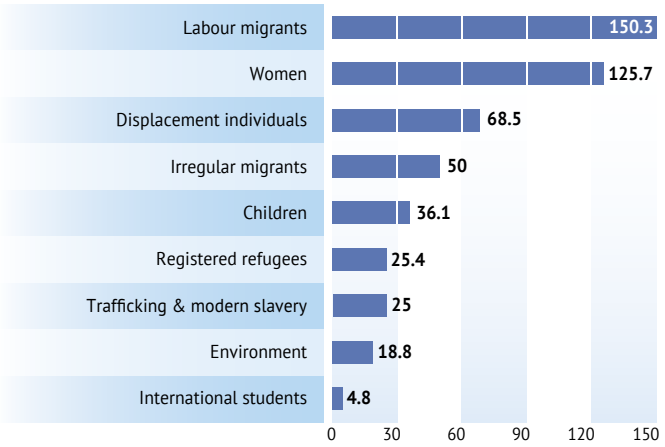
That is not the only difference between receiving and sending countries. Sending countries willingly sign international agreements at all levels which are aimed at protecting the rights of different types of migrants. However, receiving countries are very cautious in such matters. They reluctantly sign such documents and wish to avoid obligations that imply, among other things, a financial liability.

These contentious issues have existed for a long time, but in the past few decades they have become more pressing and a real challenge of our time considering the rapid advances in all forms of communication, from information technology to transport, when it has become easy to move around the world and information is transferred almost instantaneously. The only path to a solution is multilateral dialogue. This is the most time-consuming but also the most effective way forward.

Environmental migration is yet another challenge. In the Eurasian migration system, environmental problems encourage migration to some extent, for instance from some regions of Uzbekistan. However, there are already regions where environmental problems have become a tangible factor in both internal and external migration and shape the lives of millions of people. Climate scientists predict that the number of such regions will grow with time. The situation in Bangladesh is extremely alarming. The flooding of territories with the gradual rise of the sea has already compelled hundreds of thousands of people to leave their homes. This situation only grows more dire. If environmental problems are not resolved, or at least

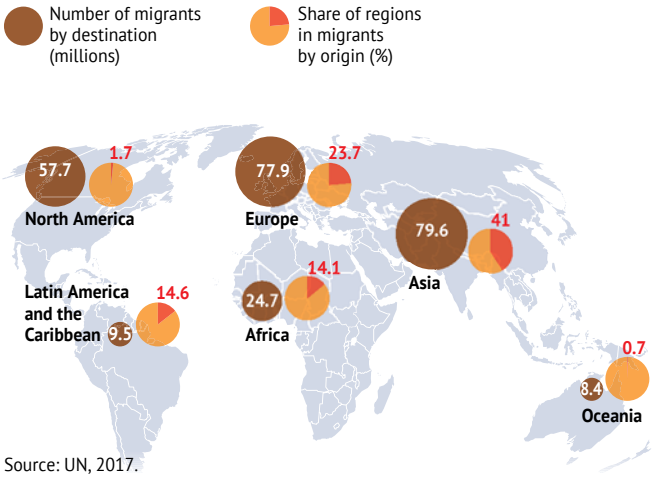
CHALLENGE OF MIGRATION

Migrants by category (mln)



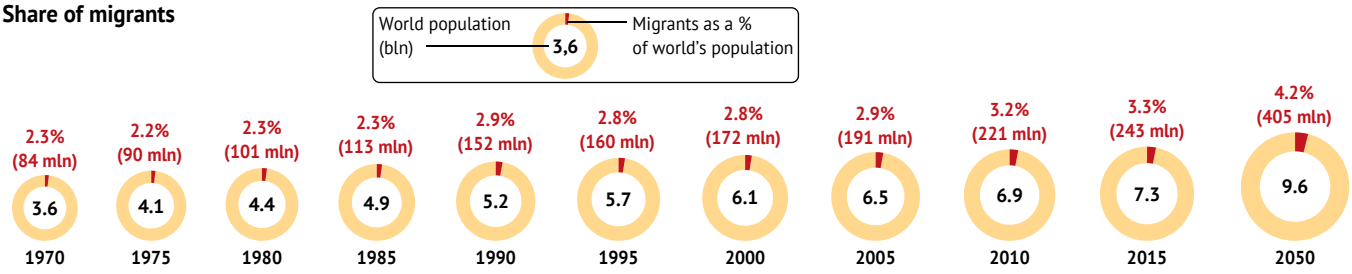
Source: International Organization for Migration 2018.

Number of international migrants by destination and share by origin, 2017



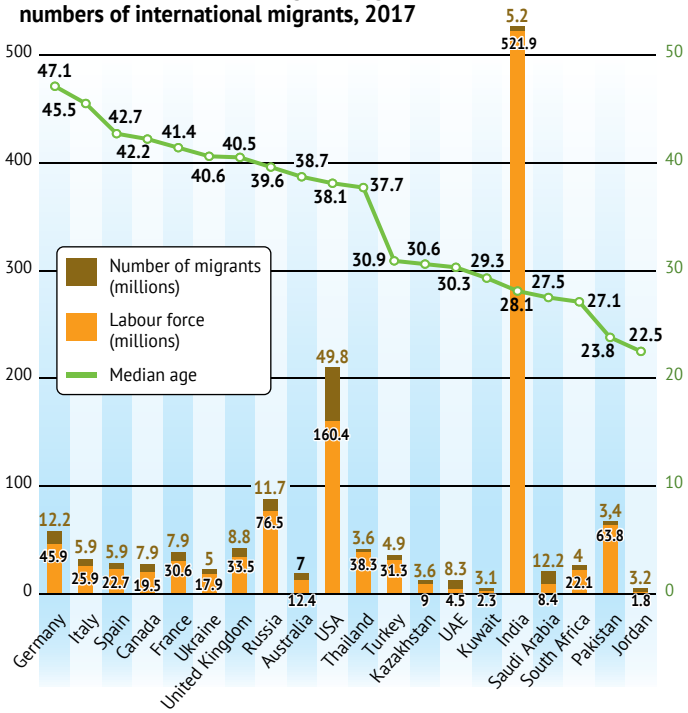
Source: UN, 2017.

Share of migrants



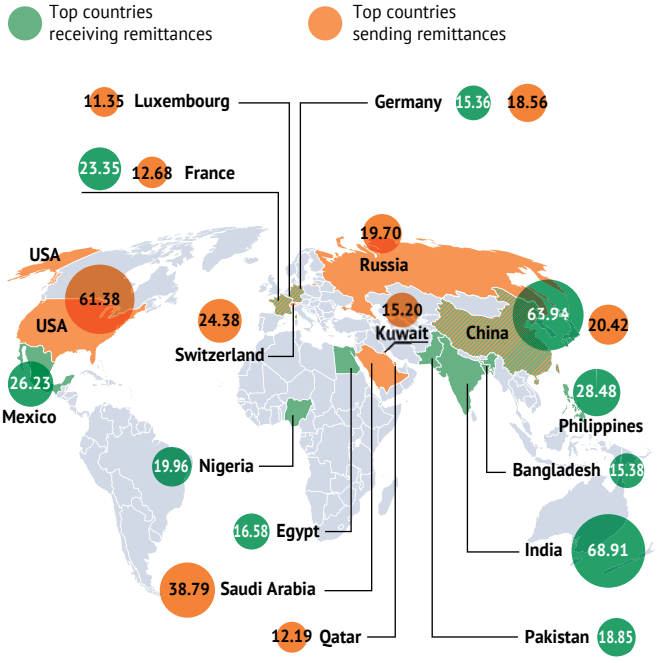
Source: International Organization for Migration, UN DESA.

20 countries or areas hosting the largest numbers of international migrants, 2017



Source: UN, The World Factbook, 2017.

Top countries receiving/sending remittances (2000-2015), billion $



Source: World Bank, 2017.

substantially mitigated, millions of people will become environmental migrants in the next few decades and no pre-emptive immigration measures will halt their movement.

Another challenge is posed by large flows of refugees triggered by local wars and armed conflicts. The indirect or direct intervention of advanced countries in local armed conflicts has increased the number of refugees to these very same countries regardless of their openness to accepting such migrants. This situation is an awkward fit for the migration programmes and migration policy of these advanced countries. Moreover, a considerable part of their population is increasingly concerned over the durability of their social safety net and security systems. Regrettably, these new migration flows are becoming a true test of the security systems of the advanced destination countries. To solve this problem, it is necessary to step up adaptation and integration programmes, paying special attention to vulnerable groups (youth, women, and children).

The *aging of the population* in the advanced EU countries and the mounting demographic pressure in developing nations will not make it possible to limit migration to the EU to migrants from 'new' EU countries. One more migration challenge is that the flow of migrants to advanced EU countries will not follow the rules mapped out by the existing measures of migration policy. The already mentioned discrepancy between receiving and sending countries will result in the toughening of migration policy in the near future under pressure from voters in advanced EU countries.

If in the future local wars or environmental factors will trigger the movement of millions of people, not all of whom will legally settle in advanced countries, these countries will receive a whole new layer of people of unstable financial status that are not fully legalized and are certainly displeased with their predicament. These people will be vulnerable to recruiters of terrorist organizations and radical groups. Specific examples of terror acts that have already become widely known will not be the last ones. The stronger the resistance to uncontrolled migration, the more complicated the barriers and the road to legalization, the easier the job of recruiters from radical groups amidst the 'new poor' – migrants arriving in developed countries. In these conditions, it is important to take preventive adaptation and integration measures.

The question of the *'one and half generation'* can be considered yet another serious challenge. When migrants, fathers and mothers of today's teenagers and young people, moved to the advanced EU countries, they had strong motives for doing so and quite definite aims. Their children no longer have strong motives and find it more difficult to determine their identity as a citizen of the receiving country. Some of them are outside the cultures of both the sending and receiving countries. While citizens of the country where their parents moved, they do not always manage to become part of its social environment. It is necessary to conduct special work with these young people just as with the children of foreigners without citizenship.

Another challenge is the difference between the city culture of receiving communities and the rural environment of migrants from sending countries. In conditions of urbanization, this challenge is already well known in many countries, but due to mounting external migration from rural areas of sending countries, the difference between rural and urban cultures is aggravated by the difference in the cultures of rich receiving and poor sending countries. It is also essential to conduct systematic adaptation work with the involvement of non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

The *feminization of migration* is yet another challenge. The migration of women as family members or single women and the gradual feminization of migration are raising the question of gender-oriented migration policy that is far from always understood in receiving countries. Women form a vulnerable category and are more often subjected to violence and discrimination. They are even more vulnerable when travelling with children. Female migrants often come to advanced countries from societies that are more patriarchal, which makes it necessary to develop special programmes to ensure their adaptation to the new conditions.

There is also a challenge that attempts by advanced receiving countries to aid the economic development of sending countries have produced only limited results. Receiving financial aid as development grants or for building various types of infrastructure, the donor countries of migrant workers do not use it effectively due to ignorance or corruption. In a situation where money transfers by migrants support the economy of sending countries, their elites often fail to do enough to support the kind of national development that can effectively deter further labour migration because they are content with the status quo. In these conditions, it seems sensible to help the countries sending migrants to adopt new administrative and strategic planning practices.

Chapter 3. Freedom of Information as a Global Common

The current stage in the development of information technology is noted for the rise of the information society and *network frontier* (also known as electronic frontier, cyber frontier, virtual frontier, and digital frontier), a phenomenon that took shape in American academic and public discourse in the 1990s and was later adopted by Russian researchers. The network frontier stands at the nexus of online and offline space, operates in the virtual environment, and serves as a communication channel for various social and political groups, networks, as well as financial and data flows, spreading information, labour, and capital to other networks.[2] In the 1990s, the world was barely aware of the potential influence of information on the economy, politics, and society. Today, we see the development of a new kind of digital environment, which is changing the life of a large part of the global population and is also influencing national and global politics.

According to the World Bank data, 53% of the world's population had access to the Internet in 2018,[3] but the picture is lopsided because the largest number of Internet users lives in Europe and North America. The notable exceptions are Japan, South Korea, Bahrain, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates, where the figure is as high as 90–95%.[4]

A distinctive feature of the network frontier is the myth of cyberspace,[5] with the network frontier presented as an environment that is free from state and corporate regulation. This myth is popular with cyberlibertarians, that is, active proponents of the anarchic freedom of cyberspace who claim that the network frontier, as well as cyberspace, should not and cannot be regulated because

[2] *For more on the network frontier, see: Morozova, EV, Miroshnichenko, IV & Ryabchenko, NA, 2016, 'Frontir Setevogo Obshchestva' [Network Society Frontier], Mirovaya Ekonomika i Mezhdunarodnye Otnosheniya, vol. 60, no. 2, p. 83-97; Gandaloyeva, MT, Miroshnichenko, IV, Morozova, EV, Plotichkina, NV, Ryabchenko, NA, Tereshina, MV & Yachmennik, KV, 2017, 'Frontir Setevogo Obshchestva Kak Prostranstvo Politicheskogo Vzaimodeistviya. Monografiya' [Network Society Frontier as Political Interaction Environment. Monograph], Krasnodar: Perspektivy Obrazovaniya, 272 p.*

[3] *'Individuals Using the Internet (% of Population) Data', The World Bank. Available from: https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/IT.NET.USER.ZS?end=2016&start=2016&view=bar*

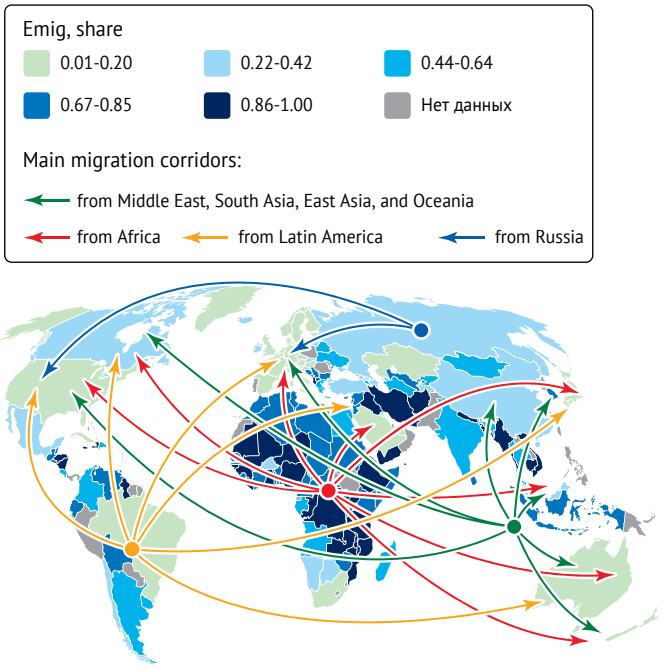
[4] *Ibid.*

[5] *Plotichkina, NV, 2018, 'Mifologiya Elektronnogo Frontira' [The Mythology of the Electronic Frontier], Vestnik Nizhegorodskogo Universiteta im. N.I. Lobachevskogo. Seriya: Sotsialnye Nauki, no. 1 (49), p. 80–88.*

UNEQUAL ACCESS TO TECHNOLOGIES

Brain-drain

Emigration rates, 2001-2010



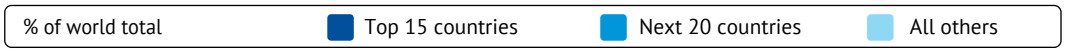
Source: WIPO, 2013.

R&D Spending

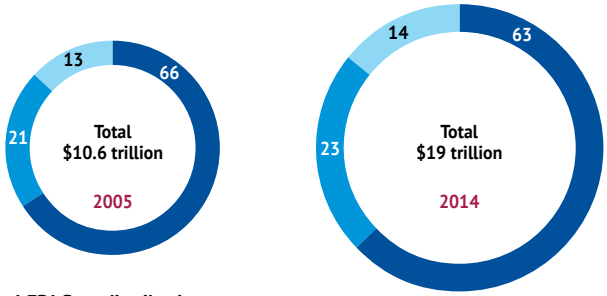
	R&D Spending (PPP), $ млрд	Global share (%)
USA	1 476.5	26.4
China	2 370.6	20.6
Japan	3 170.5	9.5
Germany	4 109.8	6.1
South Korea	5 73.2	4.1
France	6 60.8	3.4
India	7 48.1	2.7
United Kingdom	8 44.2	2.5
Brazil	9 42.1	2.3
Russia	10 39.8	2.2
Italy	11 29.6	1.6
Canada	12 27.6	1.5
Australia	13 23.1	1.3
Spain	14 19.3	1.1
Netherlands	15 16.5	0.9
Other countries	249.8	13.9

Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics.

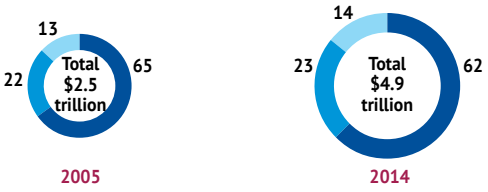
Global goods, services, FDI and data flows



Global goods flow distribution

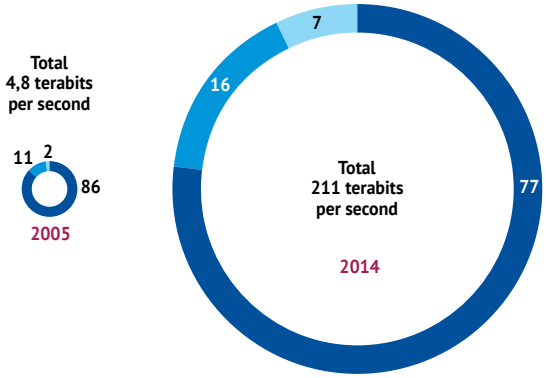


Global services flow distribution



Global FDI flow distribution

Global data flow distribution



Source: UNCTAD: IMF: TeleGeography.
Global Internet Geography. McKinsey Global Institute analysis.

they simultaneously exist everywhere and nowhere. These views have their opponents as well, the so-called cyberpaternalists, who claim that the Internet architecture can and should be used to advance regulatory practices.

The important thing is that interaction in the new system and the adoption of the network logic will likely determine the system of domination and 'subjectness' in the new information space.[6] In other words, physical existence is not enough for an Internet society. This trend alarms hierarchical structures, primarily nation states whose 'subjectness' and national sovereignty have been attacked along the line for decades.

One of the most contentious issues of world migration is linked with the freedom of exit and lack of the freedom of entry

Seeking to respond to the challenges of information society in the early 2000s (in the 2010s in Russia), governments started to integrate into the electronic space by creating government services to regulate the creation and distribution of content and to screen websites. In Russia, the government adopted federal laws setting the rules and norms of storing Internet traffic, including federal laws no. 276 and 241, which ban anonymizers (anonymous proxies) and means of accessing prohibited content and oblige messenger services to identify their users. This means that the state is becoming part of the network frontier in order to regulate it.

This mythologizing has led to the development of a new kind of myth, fake news, which can be described as the knowing distribution of hoaxes or false information in social and traditional media for the purpose of deception or political/financial gain. Fake news has been used for political gain even by politicians, who see it as a weapon of information warfare.

The transition to an information society and the overlapping of the political and virtual space has given rise to numerous problems and challenges that originate both in the information space and in adjacent spheres due to the extreme interdependence of global problems. They include the ethical regulation of the information environment, personal identity in an Internet society, the safety of personal data and cybersecurity, censorship and information security, intellectual property and the digital economy, the openness, transparency, and accountability of government agencies and private companies, modernization, information overload, and mental health, as well as the freedom of information in all possible forms. The latter is a key problem, because

[6] *Morozova, EV, Miroshnichenko, IV & Ryabchenko, NA, 2016, 'Frontir Setevogo Soobshchestva' [Network Society Frontier], Mirovaya Ekonomika i Mezhdunarodnye Otnosheniya, vol. 60, no. 2, p. 83–97.*

information in an Internet society is becoming a valuable resource and hence a part of Global Commons in the broad meaning of this term.

In legal terms, the freedom of information is the right of individuals to access information, which is why laws on the freedom of information usually set out the rights and procedure for accessing open information. But there is an alternative interpretation, which rejects patents, copyright, and intellectual property in general. This interpretation of the freedom of information is hailed by lovers of free content and is also facilitating the development of new political movements, such as the Pirate Parties International.

In light of the global challenges facing the international community, it would be logical to assume that solving the problems of the Global Commons calls not only for contributions from a wide range of actors and stakeholders as well as big money, but also for applying current – and creating new – technology and knowledge, which is impossible without the advancement of science. Yet, restricted *access to scientific data* is hindering technological progress.

In the modern world of science, researchers have to publish their results in peer-reviewed journals, most of which are subscription based ($4,000–$5,000) or require the reader to pay for access (the average fee is $20–$30 per article). Alternately, such journals are available to the staff of subscribed organizations. To do their own work, researchers need to rely on dozens or hundreds of articles by their peers, which makes research a prohibitive luxury, especially in the developing countries. Research centres and universities are suffering as well, forced to spend between $500,000 and $2m on subscription to core publications a year. In 2012, Harvard University warned its teaching and research staff that it could no longer afford the price hikes imposed by many large journal publishers, which bill the university's library around $3.5m a year. Prices for online access to articles from two major publishers have increased 145% over the past six years, Harvard's faculty advisory council said in a memo.[7]

There are legal ways to bypass the required fee, such as looking for a preprint or contacting the author, but these methods are unreliable and time consuming. The desire of academics and researchers to reshape publishing in their fields and make it more open led to the creation of the Open Access Movement, which began with the Budapest Open Access Initiative (2002) on free and unrestricted online access to scholarly journal literature in all academic fields.[8] Although this initiative led to the establishment of many open access

[7] *'Harvard University Says It Can't Afford Journal Publishers' Prices', 2012, The Guardian, April 24. Available from: https://www.theguardian.com/science/2012/apr/24/harvard-university-journal-publishers-prices*

[8] *'Budapest Open Access Initiative'. Available from: https://www.budapestopenaccessinitiative.org/read*

(OA) peer-reviewed journals, it has not achieved its declared goal, partly because OA journals are often looked down on by the academic community, as well as because efforts to promote open access often come across aggressive resistance when it comes to the large publishing houses that can hire the highest paid legal professionals to represent their interests.

Many pre-digital practices are fading out or have been rejected by modern society

A radical step in the battle for access to scientific data was the creation of Sci-Hub by Alexandra Elbakyan in 2011. Like The Pirate Bay online index of digital content of entertainment media and software, Sci-Hub provides free access to millions of research papers and books with the unique document identifier DOI, which the law identifies as piracy and infringement on the publishers' copyright. However, this is not stopping users. Sci-Hub allows anybody in the world to download for free over 64 million academic papers.[9] The majority of download requests come from Iran, China, India, Russia, the United States, and Brazil.[10]

Not surprisingly, this has provoked the wrath of rights holders, in particular, Elsevier and American Chemical Society (ACS). Sci-Hub offers free access to some 99% of ACS articles, which has had a hugely negative impact on its operation. ACS sued Sci-Hub for unlawfully disseminating its copyrighted content, and in 2017 the US District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia issued a default judgement in favour of ACS, granting all of its requests, including $4.8m in damages.[11] Later that year, a New York District Court awarded Elsevier $15m in damages for copyright infringement by Sci-Hub, the Library of Genesis (LibGen) project, and related sites.[12] It is notable that the attempts to block the resource (most of them unsuccessful, because it reopened under new domain names) and litigation against Sci-Hub have backfired by dramatically increasing the website's popularity, which soared tenfold when the court ordered the defendants to pay statutory damages to Elsevier.[13]

As the above makes clear, the network frontier is located in a twilight zone. The example of Sci-Hub shows, first, that the situation is badly regulated

[9] *'Science's Pirate Queen', 2018, The Verge, February 8. Available from: https://www.theverge.com/2018/2/8/16985666/alexandra-elbakyan-sci-hub-open-access-science-papers-lawsuit*

[10] *Bohannon, J, 2016, 'Who's Downloading Pirated Papers? Everyone', Science, no. 352 (6285), p. 508–512.*

[11] *Kwon, D, 2017, 'American Chemical Society Wins Lawsuit Against Sci-Hub', The Scientist, November 7. Available from: https://www.the-scientist.com/news-opinion/american-chemical-society-wins-lawsuit-against-sci-hub-30648*

[12] *Schiermeier, Q, 2017, 'US Court Grants Elsevier Millions in Damages from Sci-Hub', Nature, June 22. Available from: https://www.nature.com/news/us-court-grants-elsevier-millions-in-damages-from-sci-hub-1.22196*

[13] *Himmelstein, DS, Romero, AR, Levernier JG, et al., 2018, 'Sci-Hub Provides Access to Nearly All Scholarly Literature', Elife, no.7, March 1.*

and, second, that many pre-digital practices are fading out or have been rejected by modern society, primarily young people who are used to greater digital freedom. Then national governments and companies will have to look for more effective methods to regulate the network space or adjust to the new reality created by technological and communication innovations, which are changing the very logic of relations in the economy, *politics*, and society.

Chapter 4. Innovations as a Global Common

Aristotle wrote in Politics: 'Even supposing that it were best for the community to have the greatest degree of unity, this unity is by no means proved to follow from the fact "of all men saying 'Mine' and 'Not mine' at the same instant of time". However, 'they will call property "their" meaning the property of them all, not of each of them severally. [...] And furthermore, the proposal has another disadvantage. Property that is common to the greatest number of owners has the least care bestowed upon it.'

In the case of innovations, when technology becomes the property of all the people, they tend to forget about the inventors and the financial and intellectual investments, spent for its creation. Everyone can copy and use new technology, which is a boon for it. If the technology is upgraded, the upgraded version is licensed to protect intellectual property rights, thereby restricting free access to it.

The right of *access to innovations* is directly connected to the issue of access to information, including technical and scientific data, up to and including practices and methods developed and used by business. The private initiative of those who really know what people need plays the greatest role in this respect. Many theoreticians and practitioners alike agree on the need to stimulate the development of new generation innovations, the so-called open innovations that are created with the assistance of society as a whole. Their advantage is that, instead of sole generators of innovative ideas, there is a distributed network of 'average experts' who can manage the process faster and more efficiently. This accelerates information exchange among users and adaptation of innovations.

There are two main methods for exchanging resources. The monetary (financial) method involves market actors (agents) who are engaged

in competition. Relations on the market are based on mistrust rather than trust. The market is regulated by the anti-monopoly policy while the boundaries of private property are clearly defined. The other method was described by Hazel Henderson as a 'love economy', or an economy not based on money but on cooperation, free exchange, and mutual assistance. Such exchanges take place when people share knowledge not for financial gain, but because this can help promote achievements and find solutions to problems. This resource exchange and cooperation benefits all actors and shapes a basis for innovations.

The West will be attempting to preserve its technological leadership by the constant innovation adoption and the control of key technologies

The transition to new distribution technology, including green technology, is part of the transition to a new model of society. The households that use solar panels can accumulate electricity and transfer excess back to the grid, helping cover supply shortages elsewhere and distributing power more efficiently. The use of local communities (Internet-based or in-person) and NGOs for creating, testing, and improving goods and services is evidence of this trend.

Anything that serves to increase the value of assets can be described as innovation. When civil society institutions join the process, they do a great deal on a voluntary basis, which helps coalesce society around some goal. Yochai Benkler pointed this out in his book *The Wealth of Networks*.

Cheap computing capacities and networks can lead to the development of new values and new products. Under these circumstances, people are not mere economic agents but self-organizing groups, including groups focused on new technologies. This leads to the development of informed communities that appear spontaneously even before the marketing or commercialization of new technologies is taking place. These communities create the rules for managing new technology, which will ultimately become a global common good rather than the property of a corporation or a nation state. As a result, we will have a resource to which the whole of society will have unlimited access.

The subject of openness can be considered from different perspectives, including science, education, the Global Commons, and technology. Numerous actors are involved in all innovation processes, and openness in this case means that anyone should be free not only to access but also to use and change a novel technology and to distribute the results of this work. It is difficult to talk about national competitiveness in the new environment, because poor countries can only receive new technology from industrialized economies or not to get access to them at all. The problem is that the developing countries that receive existing knowledge and technology lack the capacities and research potential

to develop or improve them. Industrialized countries can only provide technical assistance. Therefore, we see a kind of geographical predetermination that prevents the proliferation of technology as a global common good.

How does the principle of openness work in real life? Do global corporations apply it in any way? Let us imagine that the Internet community has involved in the software development process. How can this benefit technological companies? It could help cut costs, with the freed-up money used to invest in other spheres to develop new local markets in other countries.

Broadening the lens to include the scientific potential of innovation, it is important to consider the impetus it gives to science, including crowd science, which has become an independent sector. For example, volunteers from around the world were encouraged to join the Galaxy ZOO project to assist in the classification of galaxies. Had the project been left in the hands of individual researchers, it would have taken 83 years, whereas contributions from volunteers made it possible to complete this crowdsourced project within seven months. The use of network resources and civil society to boost science and technology and to improve goods and services is conducive to increasing industrial capacity and labour efficiency. Any exchange of research results helps raise financing for state-run companies. The use of modern technology to share information helps accelerate the publication of results and collaborate on research, the results of which may come in one country but soon are available to people in other countries. Consequently, the sharing of research results and know-how even within the company where they are produced increases the quality of output.

Innovations can be indeed seen as an element of the Global Commons because they help solve practical problems in many spheres, including healthcare, water availability, climate change, transitioning to clean energy, as well as security. Moreover, technology helps build up trust among people in the form of common asset management. A relevant example is the blockchain and the replacement of centralized resource management with a network of blocks for resource distribution where management and programmers take the place of central banks. Another example is clean energy, which implies the redistribution of energy without any need for centralized management. Network institutes in healthcare can be used more effectively to prevent disease.

Innovations are necessary for the growth and development of human potential. They can be used to increase labour efficiency, computerize low-skilled jobs, shut down hazardous production, and phase out dangerous low-skilled jobs. However, skilled professionals are also being replaced with artificial

intelligence (AI) technology. Computerization has affected all social groups, both the lower classes and the elites. And therefore, new competences and qualifications will be in demand in this new world.

What will happen to those who will not live in the innovation-driven technology hubs but in the technological ghettos without access to the new benefits? This calls for reflection on the question of global inequality and also the rapid depreciation of technology. The constant upgrading of technology in the industrialized world stimulates economic competition, while it takes time for the developing world to gain access to the new technology, which may become obsolete by that time and hence cannot boost the recipient countries' competitiveness. The global innovation gap will remain. The West will be attempting to preserve its technological leadership by the constant innovation adoption and the control of key technologies, which the developing countries will see as a political challenge.

In the case of 'catching-up economies', including the BRICS countries, the political challenge is that, while these countries are capable to create new technologies as well as the world's leaders, they lack the necessary resources. As for the developing countries, the political challenge is the need to create knowledge accumulation systems and a policy for producing products, services, and business models that can contribute to fight poverty. Another challenge concerning innovation policy in poorer parts of the world today is that it is very expensive to be poor and to support the poor. Therefore, the countries that need modern technology more than anybody else often have no access and are left outside of this system. At the same time, the population of these countries is growing rapidly, and with skilful policies can potentially become a consumer of innovation.

Conclusion. Global Governance Through the Prism of Global Commons

The Global Commons are directly affected by problems related to the efficacy of global governance. The term Global Commons is used not only in the narrow environmental sense but with a broader social connotation as the generally shared basis for a harmoniously functioning global society in the coming decades. The considerable store of global problems is linked

to the fundamental inequality, including where access to resources is concerned. Although it is postulated that everyone has the right to equal access to resources (an imperative of global ethics), the real situation is much more complicated. In many cases, the right to equal access is nothing more than a fiction.

The leading nations should take concerted action to at least lessen inequality, if not overcome it on a global scale. In the social area, one can single out several spheres of the Global Commons that require special attention.

Global Socioeconomic Equality

Challenge. Despite all efforts undertaken by international organizations, global inequality remains perhaps the key problem in the modern world. The traditional global North–South divide has been complemented in recent years by growing friction between the West's 'old' financial centres and the new producing economies of Eurasia and Latin America, a controversy that is undermining stability both in individual countries and globally. Hence the surge of civic protest sentiments in many world countries. The existing constraints on access to resources, innovations, technology, knowledge, and the global labour market are a source of growing disaffection. Global fragmentation is prevailing over global cohesion.

Proposal. Global solutions should be developed in such a way as to avoid exacerbating inequality. All strata of the global population as well as states (groups of states) with different levels of socioeconomic development must be granted extended representation at international forums and venues and equal influence on decision-making. What is needed is dialogue, not trade wars, between financial and producing centres of the world economy.

Aspiration for a Decent Standard of Living

Challenge. In a situation where the right to equal access to resources remains a figment of the imagination, the right to migration is the only way to make this right achievable. Given this logic, migration becomes an inalienable right rather than a forced step in an impossible position. But migration is also a source of problems for both home and host countries.

Migrants are an economic asset in rich countries of the Global North with their ageing populations and shrinking workforce. At the same time, the integration of immigrants is a source of social tensions and leads to the growth of radical right-wing sentiments. For millions of people in the countries of the Global South, migration is the only chance to make a decent living. Migrants' cash remittances support their families back home and help dampen the growth of social tensions. But they also act as a brake on structural changes in those societies, while many people who migrate to better-off countries cannot achieve the status they aspire to.

Proposal. It is impossible to stop migration – the demographic pressure in Global South countries will only grow (it is predicted that Africa's population will reach 2 billion by 2040). Initiatives to encourage development in countries that supply migrants are unlikely to succeed because the status quo benefits the local elites.

Migration has been increasingly feminized in recent years: the number and share of women crossing state borders to find employment in other countries is on the rise. And this holds out some promise. Practice shows that these women and their children are the best citizens, and host countries must give them all manner of support and protection. As for the countries that supply migrants, the biggest transforming effect is produced by them emulating the best practices of more successful countries. Rethinking the status of women in society is playing the key role here as well.

It is primarily possible to reduce the global migration flow by phasing out inequality between the Global North and the Global South and between West and East. A broad debate is needed on the draft Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration, as is a discussion of flexible approaches to perceptions of state sovereignty in the context of migration.

Information Freedom

Challenge. The Internet era is characterized by previously unheard-of freedom and speed of information. But the unprecedented growth of the number and type of information sources is accompanied by a decline in the quality and reliability of information. Fake news is now the rule in the information policies of leading countries. In international relations, there is a conscious and almost total renunciation of Cold War ethics:

everyone is seeking to utterly demonize their rivals. Media wars transform individual societies by polarizing and demoralizing them.

Proposal. Restoring the hierarchy of trust in the communications sphere is the sine qua non of successful audience navigation in the modern information ocean. This pyramid should be topped by professional media. If a truly international community is being created in the Internet and communications space, it will need new public media capable of generating information of their own as well as aggregating and verifying information from others. A new journalistic renaissance is around the corner.

Access to Scientific Knowledge and Innovations

Challenge. The restricted access to scientific knowledge, technologies, and innovations is a crucial factor of global inequality. Publisher policies are leading to a situation where the price of subscriptions to scientific journals is too much even for leading universities (as acknowledged, for example, by Harvard in 2012). Researchers from middle- and low-income countries are clearly on the losing end when it comes to access to scientific information, if they remain at home. Global inequality in this area is also restraining development in the wider world.

Proposal. It is necessary to promote openness in the sciences and innovation. A positive example in this sense is the 2001 Budapest Open Access Initiative. Inequality in access to scientific knowledge and innovations is producing 'intellectual piracy'. However, fighting with the help of firewalls or multi-million-dollar lawsuits is as futile as fighting migration by building real walls. New approaches to intellectual property rights are in order.

On the whole, perceptions of the social Global Commons are complex and divided. Moreover, some of these divisions have caused serious conflicts. They are still grounded in global inequality in all of its dimensions, and any talk of the Global Commons will remain a utopia or nothing more than good intentions unless we solve this problem.

ValdaiClub

ValdaiClub

ValdaiClub

valdai@valdaiclub.com

Council on Foreign and Defense Policy

RIAC
Russian International Affairs Council

MGIMO UNIVERSITY

HIGHER SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS
NATIONAL RESEARCH UNIVERSITY