

Networked thinking



The Survey on the Global Agenda provides insights on the interconnections between global trends and issues global trends and issues are deeply interconnected. In this special fold-out infographic, we take a Council perspective to examine the webs of cause and effect that connect the world's greatest challenges, and highlight the fact that today's decision-makers need to adopt a systems-wide view to gain a deeper understanding of the connections between issues.

The greatest strength of the Global Agenda Councils is their interconnectivity; bringing together experts from very different fields and very different parts of the world, they're a platform upon which otherwise unconnected individuals can come together to share their ideas and opportunities. Turn the page to see the ways in which some of the Councils coalesce around values and employment, two issues that require greater connectivity in policy design and action.

To see a complete picture of the Councils and their interconnectivity, try our interactive infographic at <http://wef.ch/GACinterconnect>

Values

Values are at the core of all our societies and organisations, shaping notions of mission, objectives and operating procedures. In today’s fast-paced world, values can sometimes seem like slow remnants of a forgotten time, but standing for something is more important than ever in an age when individuals, movements, companies and entire nations face seemingly impenetrable challenges.



Global Agenda Council on Values

“The values conversation is the future of the business conversation.”

The old social contract between citizens and public institutions is broken. Growing inequality, corruption and a global financial crisis have eroded public trust in governments and business, while shared notions about fairness, mutual benefits and communal values have disappeared.

The Global Agenda Council on Values believes a new social covenant between citizens, businesses and governments needs to be designed. At its core would be certain universal principles: human dignity, the primacy of the common good and stewardship of the planet. Such a covenant would aim at the promotion of human flourishing, happiness and wellbeing as social goals. We want to affirm the movement from a shareholder model to a stakeholder model of business.

We have political leaders, NGO leaders, human rights campaigners and CEOs in the conversation already. We’re aiming for nothing short of a global movement to renew values in crucial decisions and policymaking.

Jim Wallis, President and CEO of Sojourners, and Chair of the Global Agenda Council on Values



Global Agenda Council on Anti-Corruption & Transparency

“At its heart, corruption is a misuse of power and a form of theft.”

There’s really no value system I know of where theft is acceptable, and corruption is in fact a very expensive, dangerous, corrosive form of theft. From a values perspective, anti-corruption is the notion that it is unacceptable to steal from your fellow citizens through the misuse of your office, the misuse of your authority or the misuse of your position. From a corporate standpoint, we will not be able to invest and create growth in those places in the world where corruption endangers our investments.

The mission of the Global Agenda Council on Anti-Corruption & Transparency is to unify the various anti-corruption activities around the world to create a common agenda and turn words into action. The main focus has been to promote and implement the B20 recommendations on anti-corruption. We’ve been very encouraged to see the recent adoption of a recommendation for operationalising a Collective Action Hub, where business, government and civil society will work together on anti-corruption initiatives in the public and private spheres.

Peter Solmssen, Member of the Managing Board and General Counsel, Siemens, and Chair of the Global Agenda Council on Anti-Corruption & Transparency



Global Agenda Council on Institutional Governance Systems

“Nowadays we have the universal conviction that organisations should be guided by values. But sometimes there’s a mismatch between real practices and values.”

Many of our global institutions were designed for the world of the mid-20th century and are not as effective today in delivering global public goods. We need new institutional arrangements that match the real division of power, the interconnectedness and complexity of the new economics of the world.

The Global Agenda Council on Institutional Governance Systems is analysing values in international institutions – in particular transparency, accountability and how organisations select leaders. We are diagnosing the state of elements such as legitimacy and meaning, and asking whether institutions are truly reflective of their membership. Do they have clearly specified missions, reflected in a set of values and by-laws? How are the institutions held accountable and are they transparent about their rules and the results of their operations?

These elements are key to governance, and quite simply, governance will have an impact on performance.

Ernesto Zedillo Ponce de Leon, Director of the Yale Center for the Study of Globalization, and Vice Chair of the Global Agenda Council on Institutional Governance Systems

Employment

Creating sustainable, quality employment is at the top of policy-making agendas worldwide; job growth strategies of the past no longer have the same impact on today’s labour markets. While millions of students are investing in developing skills, millions more find themselves unemployed. New startups have vast potential to create jobs, yet established businesses continue to report talent shortages. A rethink is underway with companies, governments and researchers pioneering interconnected models for employment.



Global Agenda Council on Fostering Entrepreneurship

“People like to do something of value. Not only does entrepreneurship solve unemployment, it knits up the social fabric.”

Everyone believes in the dynamism of the new economy and everyone loves startups. Now that we are faced with high unemployment rates in many countries, startups can be one of the solutions. Entrepreneurship has the ability to take unemployed people and turn them into productive workers, who in turn contribute to a prosperous and dynamic economy.

Corporations want some of that magic and the Global Agenda Council on Fostering Entrepreneurship has a simple message for them: it’s easy. Work with entrepreneurs. We collaborate to advance successful entrepreneurship ecosystems that allow enterprises to scale. There’s an optimal company size in the middle of startups and large corporations, where the productivity of each individual is enhanced. The goal is to create more companies that are on this plateau.

One of the big problems facing startups is that they don’t know how big companies work. If they are going to grow, they need to learn that. We’re encouraging larger companies to share their resources, not as a charitable act, but as something that will help them. I’d say our major work is in encouraging corporates to look at these startups as potential suppliers.

Esther Dyson, Chairman of EDventure Holdings, and Vice-Chair of the Global Agenda Council on Fostering Entrepreneurship



Global Agenda Council on Youth Unemployment

“The consequences of youth unemployment are generational – and the costs are huge.”

In 2010, almost 358 million young people were not in education, employment or training (NEET) and the number is rising. Young people who aren’t employed for a few years after entering the job market are so scarred by the experience that they may never work.

At the same time, emerging-market multinationals face challenges finding the right talent to support growth. We need to do something about this mismatch between demand for labour and the supply of young people desperately looking for employment. Enterprises can play a major role in engaging young talent, and we are exploring a framework that helps them to do so successfully and economically.

TEN Youth is a joint initiative between the Global Agenda Councils on Youth Unemployment and Emerging Multinationals. It has three components: a skills framework that identifies the behavioural skills important for a young person to develop, such as reliability, flexibility and problem-solving; an apprenticeship model that’s more intense and less costly than the traditional model; and a mentoring programme to support and further develop these skills on an ongoing basis. We are now building platforms and protocols so we can start a pilot.

Branka Minic, Founder, Future Work Consulting, and Member of the Global Agenda Council on Youth Unemployment



Global Agenda Council on Education & Skills

“The demand for educated workers is greater in a world economy in which knowledge increasingly rules.”

It is vital to improve education worldwide because, as we’ve seen, many students are either inadequately educated or possess skills that are not highly valued by the job market. Education encourages productivity, job creation, technological progress, and ultimately economic growth. It is a powerful promoter of innovation, and in a world economy in which knowledge increasingly rules, education responds to the demand for educated, skilled workers.

The central focus of the Global Agenda Council on Education and Skills is building human capital through formal and informal systems of education and training, and learning on the job.

The Global Agenda Council on Education and Skills is preparing a book for publication, tentatively entitled ‘Education and Skills 2.0: New Targets and Innovative Approaches’. It looks at the diverse challenges facing education and skill-building throughout the world and the most innovative, scalable and financially sound means for addressing them.

The policy environment is key: policies that support the accumulation of human capital and competitive rewards can provide strong support for economic growth.

David Bloom, Professor of Economics and Demography at Harvard University, and Chair of the Global Agenda Council on Education & Skills

Discover how Global Agenda Councils work together to tackle the issues of values and employment

