

Welcome to the Outlook on the Global Agenda 2014



Martina Gmür
Head of the Network of
Global Agenda Councils

As the year draws to a close, many organisations unveil their predictions for the year ahead. But the publication you're holding in your hands does something a little different.

We harnessed the insights of our Network of Global Agenda Councils to understand what the next 12 months will bring – but we haven't simply asked our contributors to gaze into their crystal balls.

Instead, we partnered with the Saïd Business School at Oxford University to redesign our Survey on the Global Agenda and with Pew Research Center to identify the most pressing issues of the year ahead. Using this tool, we collected insights from more than 1,500 global experts across business, government, academia and civil society. The majority of respondents came from within the Network, but we also wanted to include the perspective of the world's youth, so for the first time we also asked the Global Shapers and Young Global Leaders – young people who are transforming today's world – to participate.

Using this data, we selected the most interesting themes and contextualised them with commentary from some of our community's brightest minds. In this publication, we look at the 10 biggest trends for the year to come; we evaluate how they will play out globally and in different regions; we examine the new developments that are finding a place in the global agenda; and we take a look at how new technological advances will change our world.

We hope you will find the results of our research compelling and thought-provoking. The outlook for 2014 is complex. Our experts overwhelmingly agreed that rising societal tensions in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) will be the defining trend of 2014, alongside increasing inequality and unemployment. Respondents also showed their dissatisfaction with the state of global co-operation on major challenges such as climate change, youth unemployment and poverty. But on a brighter note, they were optimistic about the future and about mankind's ability to address emerging issues in biotechnology, surveillance, energy security and a host of other issues.

The Outlook owes its success to the exceptional calibre and creativity of the Global Agenda Council Members, to whom we would like to extend our most sincere appreciation ■