

Income Gap and Unemployment to Dominate International Agenda in 2014

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- The Outlook on the Global Agenda 2014 finds structural unemployment, widening income gaps and falling confidence in economic policies among the top ten trends for world leaders in 2014
- Tension in the Middle East and North Africa and inaction on climate change also rated as top concerns
- The Outlook report, which is based on a survey of more than 1,500 global experts, represents a unique attempt to map the consequences of the world's challenges in 2014
- Download the full report profiling the Top Ten Trends, Future Trends and Regional Analysis [here](#)

Geneva, Switzerland, 15 November 2013 – An urgent need to address long-simmering economic problems such as widening income gaps and structural unemployment, coupled with growing concerns over the quality of economic policies and tension in the Middle East and North Africa, rank among the Top 10 trends for world leaders in 2014, according to the World Economic Forum's [Outlook on the Global Agenda](#), which is published today. These economic trends are accompanied by a broad swathe of concerns, including inaction on climate change and a lack of values in leadership, that demonstrate the complexity and interrelatedness of the challenges for leaders in the year ahead.

The findings of the Outlook come from a survey of more than 1,500 experts from the World Economic Forum's Network of Global Agenda Councils and the Forum's Young Global Leaders and Global Shapers communities. As well as indicating the emerging trends for the year ahead, the survey also attempts to map the connections between them, with the aim of helping leaders and policy-makers formulate effective responses.

The Top 10 trends in the Outlook on the Global Agenda for 2014 are:

- 1) Societal tension in the Middle East and North Africa: war in Syria, political instability and unemployment in North Africa.
- 2) Widening income gap: ramifications for health, education and social mobility across all regions of the world.
- 3) Structural unemployment: a global issue demanding a global solution
- 4) Intensifying cyber threats: electronic armies and government agencies are threatening the fabric of the Internet
- 5) Inaction on climate change: extreme weather events may be occurring more frequently, but there has been no breakthrough on action to tackle the problem
- 6) Diminishing confidence in economic policies: the scale of the global downturn and the pace of recovery have left deep scars, particularly among the young
- 7) Lack of values in leadership: this has led to a crisis of legitimacy in governments and other institutions

- 8) Asia ' s expanding middle classgreater hope for increased prosperity – but also environmental and resource challenges
- 9) Growing importance of megacities: these original social networks are home to more and more people, yet we still understand surprising little about how they grow and evolve
- 10) Rapid spread of misinformation online: the speed of social media – and the scale of big data – is making it harder for people to know that information received is real

In addition to ranking the top trends for leaders in 2014, the Outlook also highlights emerging trends that experts believe will grow in the coming 12 months. These include the implications of shale gas extraction, the failure or inadequacy of democratic institutions, the rise of emerging market multinational companies and the role of space in improving our world.

“ The complexity of the trends that will shape the global agenda in 2014 and the nature of their interaction clearly demonstrate the need for cooperation on a global level. Such cooperation must be pursued as a matter of urgency if we are to mitigate the harshest effects of these trends and channel their positive momentum, ” said Klaus Schwab, Founder and Executive Chairman, World Economic Forum.

“ The year 2014 is absolutely not the year for complacency. The global economy may be recovering from the global economic downturn but this survey shows there is an incredible amount of work to be done to turn the world to a sustainable footing, economically, politically and environmentally, ” said Martina Gmür, Senior Director, Head of the Network of Global Agenda Councils, World Economic Forum.

The Outlook also offers insight into how different regions and age groups perceive global trends, as well as data from Pew Research Center ' s Global Attitudes Project, which conducts public opinion polling on issues, attitudes and trends that are shaping the world.

Notes to Editors

Read the Outlook on the Global Agenda 2014: <http://wef.ch/outlook14full>

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